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THE COOL SCOOP ON A HOT STUDENT ENTREPRENEUR

MANY STUDENTS ASPIRE TO BECOME ENTREPRENEURS AFTER THEY GRADUATE. ADAM LACHMAN '03 CREATED A SUCCESSFUL START-UP BUSINESS WHEN HE WAS BARELY A FRESHMAN—AND NOW HE'S LOOKING TO EXPAND.

When considering a new business opportunity, most entrepreneurs think about location, client base, access to supplies, demographics, and marketing. But Adam Lachman '03 was thinking only about the taste of ice cream.

"We were on the way home from Maine, where we have a vacation home, and we always stop halfway at Annabelle's, a popular ice cream shop in Portsmouth, New Hampshire," says Lachman, who is from West Hartford, Conn. "I started talking with the owner about the shop. The more we talked, the more interested I became."

Lachman began to think about ice cream in Vinalhaven, an island 15 miles off the coast of Maine where his family vacations.

"There was an ice cream shop there, but I didn't think it was very good," he says. "Or at least, I didn't think it was really reaching its potential. I thought I might be able to do better."

Those were entrepreneurial thoughts. He began scouting locations on Vinalhaven for a drop-in style shop with

a few seats indoors and out. He found a small 15-by-8-foot storefront on the water about a quarter-mile from the ferry and the center of town. "The location was right on the main road. Everyone coming on or heading off the island would pass us."

Suddenly, owning and running a summer business seemed viable to the then-17-year-old student. All he needed was venture capital. Luckily, he was able to borrow the \$15,000 estimated start-up cost from his father with the expectation that the loan would be paid back in two years.

"I thought those were pretty reasonable terms," he recalls.

As it turned out, his assessment was much too pessimistic. He was able to pay back the money, in full, 35 days after starting his business.

Six years later Lachman has a string of successes attributable to a good product and an eager market. After all, serving gourmet ice cream to a community whose summer population exceeds 6,000 people seems like an easy winner.

Then again, nothing is easy with a start-up business. Lachman made his venture work with tenacity, intuition, and ability to adapt his business to his environment: a textbook execution of entrepreneurial skills. Except he never read any business textbooks.

"Actually," he says, "I'm a sociology-art history double major."

A keen observer of his environment, he recognized early on that despite the annual summer population swell, the key to success would be support of the island's year-round population.

"It's the islanders who really make the businesses go. And there is a resentment factor if you're perceived as someone who is just coming on the island to make some money for a few months and then disappear."

He began appearing with free ice cream at the Thursday night baked bean supper, a popular community fundraiser at a local church. The ice cream quickly became a favorite, and Lachman was soon met with applause when he arrived at dinner.

He added gourmet Italian coffees and crepes to his store menu, drawing people in during the morning and at night. At the annual Fourth of July parade he used his brother's '64 Volkswagen Beetle as a parade float and handed out free mini-samples of ice cream from the hood.

"By the second year, when we got to the center of town the whole parade stopped because we were mobbed by people and kids. They had to put us as the very last float."

The Vinalhaven Ice Cream Shop, or "Annabelle's" as it is often referred to by the locals (for the brand of ice cream Lachman stocks), had become a destination of habit. He was accepted into the tight-knit island community.

"We'd see regulars every day and night, coming down for coffee, coming by after dinner for a sundae or whatever. The shop also quickly became a favorite hangout for local kids in the 13- to 20-year-old range."

Not content with this success, he started branching out. After people on the neighboring island of North Haven

BILL BURKHART

SPRING '03

expressed interest, he opened a bigger shop there. Serving ice cream from late morning into the night, he also offered a lunchtime grill and evening pizza bar. “I partnered with two friends from North Haven, plus my older brother, Jamie. I hired a close friend from Wesleyan, Tucker Reed ’02, as head chef (later as partner).” Over the last six years he has hired nearly a dozen Wesleyan students to work at his shops.

The North Haven location also started doing a profitable business, which led to an interesting request from a new patron. “We were asked if we did catering. We didn’t at the time, but I talked to the person and found it was for a party of about 40 people. We decided to take the job, even though we’d never done anything like this. We thought, How hard could this be?”

Lachman and Reed pulled together some recipes, ordered the food, and went about preparing for the dinner. As the day arrived, however, he and his co-workers found that timing everything properly, maintaining service, and fixing the little problems that crop up as things unfold were major challenges. As if that weren’t enough, the party was thrown by some of the most prominent islanders and their guest of honor was Sigourney Weaver.

“It turned out to be the single most stressful night of my life. But somehow we pulled it off.”

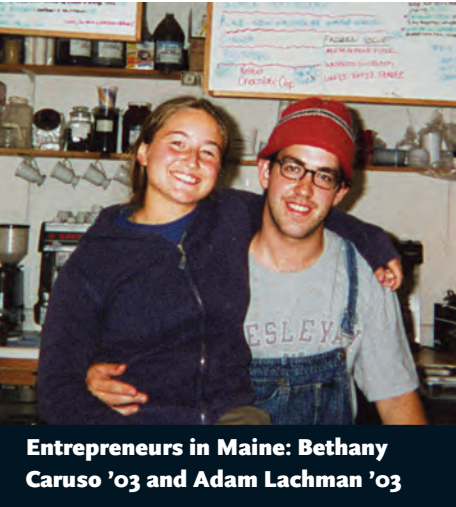
Pulled it off so well, that in the next week he found himself with half a dozen requests to cater more parties. So a catering business was born as well.

“Once you build a reputation and prove what you can do, that confidence consumes you. That first night catering we went from a point of, ‘We don’t know if this is going to happen,’ to, ‘We are doing this and doing it well.’”

The stress of running three businesses without a break in two years eventually left him mentally and physically exhausted. He decided to take some time off from school. “I’m on the six-year plan,” he says, smiling. “But Wesleyan has been very accommodating. They’ve really worked with me to make continu-

ing my education as smooth as possible.” He has since pared his business activities and remains active as a student. He is a student representative to the Board of Trustees, a sociology major coordinator, and on the Ultimate Frisbee team. This year, after he receives his degree, he will be starting a new business venture with Bethany Caruso ’03, who had managed the store on Vinalhaven.

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Entrepreneurs in Maine: Bethany Caruso '03 and Adam Lachman '03

“I’m moving the original shop to a bigger location in the center of town and plan on operating it year round. This will be a full-blown coffeeshouse.”

He is also investigating locations in Camden and Portland, Maine, for additional shops.

“I don’t know that I want to open and run ice cream cafés for the rest of my life,” he says, his face serious. But then he smiles. “Right now, though, it’s a lot of fun. I’m enjoying it.”—David Pesci 🍷

JULIA GLASS BREAKS RULES
FIRST JOAN JAKOBSON
VISITING WRITER

As an avid reader of fiction by new authors, I was intrigued by the title of Julia Glass’s debut novel, *Three Junes*, when I first saw it displayed in the local bookstore last summer. I assumed it might be about three women with the same name whose lives intersected in some mysterious way. I bought the book on a whim, mainly to support an unknown writer, and hoped for the best. When I got home, I found something else entirely—a rich, character-driven narrative about three summers in the lives of a Scottish family whose members live on both sides of the Atlantic. I was so impressed by the quality of Glass’s prose and so moved by her treatment of her characters’ deaths that I read almost the whole book in one sitting, something I rarely have the time to do these days. I was excited to discover a marvelous new voice, one that leaped through time and space so confidently. So I wasn’t too surprised when I heard that the book received the 2002 National Book Award last November.

Much to my delight, I was able to hear Julia Glass talk about her work at Wesleyan because she inaugurated the Joan Jakobson Visiting Writer Program with a reading and a lecture at Russell House in February. With the generosity of Joan and John Jakobson ’52, P ’05, who have supported Wesleyan writing projects over the years, this program is intended to bring an author to campus for several days, usually to give a public reading or talk and meet informally with students.

Glass, who was suggested by Anne Greene, director of Wesleyan’s Writing Programs, was an inspired speaker, particularly for anyone who has struggled with the writer’s craft. She captivated the audience by describing unconventional twists and turns along her path to becoming a successful novelist at the age of 46.

Glass is a graduate of Concord Academy in Massachusetts, which has produced a number of professional writers. But she did not pursue creative writing in college, nor did she apply to an

MFA program in writing; instead she studied art at Yale. After graduation she concentrated on painting for a few years, exhibiting her work at the Brooklyn Museum of Art and other galleries. She even designed hats for a time.

Glass turned to writing to deal with some of the darker moments in her life. Her younger sister committed suicide 10 years ago and Glass herself is a breast cancer survivor. She wrote while juggling her responsibilities as a mother and a freelance editor of romance novels and magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*. When she revised a short story she had first written many years ago, turning a minor character into a protagonist, the result was an unpublished novella, *Collies*, which nevertheless won a literary prize. The novella was expanded into *Three Junes*. Glass found her way to novel writing partially through persistence, a quality essential for getting published.

The next morning I had the good fortune to hear her talk about fiction writing to students enrolled in the Distinguished Writers class. Consistent with her unconventional career, she recommends breaking several standard rules often prescribed by the experts to aspiring writers. Rather than “writing about what you know,” she suggests “writing about what you want to know” and “writing from the heart, not the head.” Although many writers use outlines to write stories and novels, Glass likes to follow her instincts in shaping her characters and enjoys discovering the growth of a character, rather like a psychotherapist dealing with a client. She doesn’t see any imperative to keep a journal or write every day. Write when you can make the time, she said, since the lion’s share of writing is thinking about and observing people and their experiences. Glass also dispelled the notion that a writer must have a room of one’s own since she has written for years at a dining room table in the small apartment she shares with her partner and children. She concluded by saying, “Fiction requires making trouble for those we love...fiction is only about trouble.” She added that “trouble can bring you both wisdom and joy.”—David Low

CONCERN OVER VIOLATIONS
TASK FORCE URGES EFFORTS TO
REINVIGORATE HONOR CODE

A university task force appointed by President Bennet is recommending the adoption of new measures to reinvigorate the Honor Code, which the report says has “been dying a slow death due to neglect for a number of years.”

After conducting numerous interviews, holding community forums, and gathering statistics, members of the task force concluded that the campus lacks “a culture that embraces the Wesleyan Honor Code as a positive aspect of campus life.” It urges that steps be taken to make the code more central to the lives of Wesleyan students.

“Integrity is at the heart of the academic enterprise,” said President Bennet. “This report provides a clear signal that we must do more to ensure that all members of the community value the code as a statement of principles to be lived day by day.”

Violations of the Honor Code have increased dramatically from the academic year ’98–’99, when 12 cases were recorded, to a high of 55 cases the following year. The average for the past two years has been about 35, and although data is not available for earlier years (permanent records are not kept), anecdotal evidence indicates the historical trend was much lower.

Data from a limited number of schools with comparable statistics (Bowdoin, Bryn Mawr, Colby, Middlebury, Trinity, and Williams) show that Wesleyan has the highest number of violations per student, more than twice as many as low-ranked Bowdoin.

Dean of the College Freddye Hill expressed concern over the types of recent violations, including downloading papers from the Web and failing to respect the conditions that professors establish for collaboration.

Despite the rise in violations, the task force reported strong support for the Honor Code among faculty and students. They found that the current Honor Board system works reasonably well, but recommended that the Honor Code be

rewritten so that it is more than just a laundry list of violations and procedures.

Among the report’s many recommendations, the single most important step needed to restore the Honor Code’s role in campus life is for faculty members to discuss it with each of their classes, the task force emphasized.

“We were convinced that faculty participation is one of the most important parts of the package if the Honor Code is to regain some semblance of respect and acceptance on campus,” said John Salzer, chair of the task force and associate professor of astronomy. The recommendations were “heavily informed” by meetings with large groups of faculty members during the fall, he added.

The task force found that students are largely unaware that the Honor Code was enacted by undergraduates more than 100 years ago, and that it is supervised and controlled exclusively by students. The report urges students to reclaim their ownership of the code. Toward that end, the report recommended that all students affirm the Honor Code when they register for courses.

The task force also reviewed the Code of Non-Academic Conduct and found that it “suffers from some of the same problems of underdescription and lack of visibility that characterize the Honor Code.”

Violations have risen substantially in recent years from an average of 225 in the years ’98–’00 to 471 for the subsequent two years. Stricter enforcement of the university drug and alcohol policies accounts for most of the increase, and the majority of violators are first-year students or sophomores. In addition, the number of more serious violations, such as reported date-rapes and physical assaults, has been increasing.

“My office will develop initiatives to introduce new students to the Honor Code and the Code of Non-Academic Conduct during orientation and throughout the academic year,” said Hill.

WORLD MUSIC’S 40TH ANNIVERSARY
FOUNDING FACULTY ATTEND

Nonesuch Records plans to release 92 CDs of world music during the next



Ryuko Mizutani, who studied at Wesleyan for two years as a special student from Japan, plays the koto as part of the celebration of World Music.

two years (including some by Wesleyan artists), but when Wesleyan began its World Music Program 40 years ago, non-Western music was a virtually untouched field in the United States.

Bob Brown, a former music department faculty member, recalled the origins of Wesleyan’s program as part of a 40th anniversary celebration in February that featured a weekend of music and discussion on campus.

Brown, who had studied in India, joined a faculty in 1961 that included Professor of Music Emeritus Richard Winslow ’40; Professor of Anthropology Emeritus David McAllester, one of the founding fathers of ethnomusicology in the United States; and President Victor Butterfield, who supported the effort to develop world music. John Cage, in residence for a year, had opened minds to new musical possibilities.

With the leadership of these founding faculty members, Wesleyan held its first celebration of the Indian festival Navaratri in 1962, and soon acquired its first gamelan ensemble. Before long, non-Western traditions were thriving on campus.

“Wesleyan was uniquely in balance,” said Brown, “and that balance has never been duplicated anywhere else.”

Friday night “Curry Concerts” held at “the farm,” a Wesleyan-owned house on Long Hill Road about two miles from campus, produced one of the most sophisticated audiences in America for listening to Indian music, he added.

After 40 years, Wesleyan’s music department remains uniquely integrated in the world music tradition, according to Mark Slobin, professor of music and chair of the department. “Undergraduates can customize their majors from a wide variety of concentrations and participate, along with graduate students and the 16 faculty members, in shared artistic projects not offered by any other liberal arts college.”

Music alumni echoed Slobin’s perception. Neil Benson ’88, vice president of ICM Artists, was a classically trained pianist who found at Wesleyan “a place where I came to appreciate all kinds of new music and global music.” Carl Sturken ’78, a Grammy-winning writer and producer of pop and R&B, said he came to Wesleyan “because I loved every kind of music I ever heard.”

More than 200 alumni from the classes of 1956 onward attended the celebration.

“The weekend had a deep spirit of fellowship and collegueship among alumni, past and current faculty, and students, who all shared a glow, not only from the reminiscences about the history of the program, but also from the extremely high level of the performances at the event itself,” said Slobin. “The presence of founding figures Richard Winslow and David McAllester, along with early builder Bob Brown, lent a special atmosphere.”

Off the Set with One of Hollywood's Top Agents

Fact: After Wesleyan, Rick Nicita '67 started in the mailroom. But now he is one of Hollywood's most respected talent agents. Professor Jeanine Basinger introduces Nicita by describing what it takes to reach this pinnacle, and Nicita reveals how he works with Hollywood stars.

In Hollywood today, the most powerful talent agency is CAA and the most powerful person at CAA is Rick Nicita. (Rick would modestly duck that statement. He once said, "Agents don't have power in themselves. Their power is ceded to them by their clients.") Nevertheless, Rick is at the top of the top. He understands that a good agent's role is not just about making money, but about finding the way for his artists to have the widest range of creative choices available to them.

Movies are a business that puts people in boxes with labels: Clint Eastwood is an actor, not a director. Tom Cruise belongs in adventure films, not in serious roles. Nicole Kidman is a glamour girl, not a rival to Meryl Streep, etc. Stars and directors are supposed to become safe investments. Rick is different. He helps his clients take risks and develop themselves in new ways. "When they are able to do any possible part," he says, "then I feel I've truly done my job."

No one who is not in the business can possibly imagine how hard it is to become a top talent agent, or how much harder it is to stay on top. To have Rick Nicita's longevity and superb reputation takes a list of astonishing abilities. Incredible stamina. A great sense of humor. A shrewd understanding of people. A charming personality. A formidable intelligence.



An ironclad integrity. Creativity and imagination coupled with number-crunching smarts. A calm and controlled ego. And probably a really good left hook. Rick's got all of that, except maybe the hook.

To be honest, I've never heard anyone say a bad word about him, so maybe he's never needed to punch anyone's lights out. But I'll bet if he had to, he could. More likely, he'd talk his opponent into having lunch at The Grille and then sign him up as a new client for CAA.

—Jeanine Basinger, *Corwin-Fuller Professor of Film Studies*

Q: How long have you been in "the business," and how did you come to be an agent?

RICK NICITA: I've been in "the business" since May 1968, when I started working in the mailroom of the William Morris Agency in New York. I had dropped out of Fordham Law School when I realized that very little of the study and practice of law interested me. I spent many weeks trying to figure out what I wanted to do...not what I should do, or what was easiest, or what society wanted me to do, but what I wanted to do. I always loved movies so I decided that I would be in the movie business. I called a fraternity (Psi U) brother, Robert Levy '67, who was temporarily working at William Morris, and asked him to help me get a job there. I didn't even know what an agent did. I loved it the minute I started.

Q: What is the hardest thing about your job?

RN: The hardest thing about my job is to match the needs and de-

sires of the clients with the opportunities available to them, while making everybody feel that they got the best possible resolution. The most important function of an agent is to advise clients of which option they should take of the many that are offered to them.

Q: What are some of the more interesting and exciting trends that you see on the horizon for the film industry?

RN: The remarkable advances in technology make it possible to bring to the screen things that were literally unimaginable just a few years ago. Technological advances also allow for movies outside the "system" to be filmed very cheaply. Also, the rise of ancillary platforms such as the DVD makes it easier for people to enjoy movies while creating a major source of revenue for the industry.

Q: What are some of the trends you're less enthusiastic about?

RN: I am concerned about the rapid rise of the production cost of movies so that they have to be made and marketed to appeal to everyone in order to make a profit.

Q: How much of a hand do you have in shaping a film?

RN: Artists shape the films, and the agent's role in placing the artists in the film is of major importance. While I'm not influencing the picture during its making in any overt way, my contribution has already been made and felt.

Q: How different is this from shaping the career of someone you represent?

RN: A film is a singular, specific thing, but a career is somebody's life. The responsibility of having someone's hopes, dreams, and finances in my hands is sobering, but the joys of helping clients get what they want is exhilarating. It's a dangerous business, and every decision has major impact on the client's career.

Q: You are a partner in one of the most

successful agencies in the world and were named one of the most powerful people in Hollywood recently. What's next?

RN: I take pleasure in what I do, and I enjoy my colleagues and clients. I don't plan any changes. My non-family time is spent on my business, which is actually an all-encompassing lifestyle. My wife is an extremely successful movie producer, so we have mutual interests that make our life very full.

Q: What's the most important thing you've learned from your experience as an agent?

RN: Everyone deserves the chance to realize their dreams.

Q: Are there differences in representing an actor, a director, and a writer?

RN: Actors tend to see the film through their roles, while directors see it as a whole, and writers see it in pieces.

Q: You are on Wesleyan's Board of Trustees. What motivated this?

RN: I couldn't have gone to Wesleyan without receiving financial aid, and I always resolved to pay back the institution however I could. I hope that my point of view and skill set contribute.

Q: What, in particular, from your Wesleyan experience as an undergrad prepared you for a life in the film industry?

RN: The Wesleyan experience prepared me for the film industry because I met so many outspoken, motivated people eager to make their mark on the world.

Q: What do you find most fun about your job?

RN: The great fun of my job is that it allows me to deal with incredibly talented, smart, and fascinating people who need the service that I perform in order to achieve their dreams.

Q: What's the best advice anyone ever gave you?

RN: "Always tell the truth...artfully." 🍷



STEPHEN ANGLE,

Associate Professor of Philosophy, selects *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* by Mary Ann Glendon

Thriller, biography, learned analysis, and polemic—*A World Made New* is all these and more. Mary Ann Glendon takes us back to a brief period of possibility after the end of World War II and before the Cold War had fully taken hold, telling the stories of a remarkable group of men and women who struggled to define the ideals of a new world. Eleanor Roosevelt plays an important and too-little-remembered role in the drama, but this is really an ensemble cast: Glendon's story is neither "America Made New" nor "America Triumphant." Roosevelt and America sometimes play a leading role, sometimes learn from others, and sometimes obstruct. So, too, for other nations and their representatives. Beyond these particular people and their particular moment in history, though, this is the story of a document claiming universal relevance—a relevance that Glendon endeavors to defend by appealing, in part, to the very diversity of the particular people and nations whose efforts, arguments, and vision made the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) into a reality.

A World Made New is not the definitive, scholarly account of the genesis of the UDHR; it is not an authoritative biography of Eleanor Roosevelt; and it is not a detailed philosophical argument

PICK OF THE SYLLABUS

for the universality of human rights. By drawing together elements of each, Glendon has written an important book for an age in which the origins and ideals of the UDHR are too little known. For students in my Human Rights Across Cultures class, *A World Made New* offered an opportunity for synthesis, reflection, and a brief break from more conventional scholarly writing and analysis. For readers no longer in college, it is a book that engages from the beginning, while all throughout it teaches and stimulates reflection on the role of human rights—and of efforts to reach international consensus—in our world today.

A central and instructive theme of Glendon's book is the efforts taken by the crafters of the UDHR to work for true cross-cultural consensus. Roosevelt wrote of P.C. Chang, a Chinese diplomat who was one of those most responsible for the final text—along with Charles Malik of Lebanon, John Humphrey of Canada, René Cassin of France, and, of course, Roosevelt—that "Dr. Chang was a pluralist and held forth in charming fashion on the proposition that there is more than one kind of ultimate reality. The Declaration, he said, should reflect more than simply Western ideas." Put into more political terms, this fit well with a sentiment that Roosevelt shared with her husband; as FDR had put it in 1943, "The doctrine that the strong should dominate the weak is the doctrine of our enemies, and we reject it."

The UDHR was passed unanimously, albeit with eight abstentions, by the United Nations General Assembly on Dec. 10, 1948. Many of its proponents had also hoped to be able to produce a more binding Covenant, which would be ratified by each member nation individually, and thus have some ability to enforce compliance. The opportunity for constructive international conversations

about shared norms had passed, however, overtaken by the Cold War. A month after the UDHR's passage, the president of the American Bar Association derided it as a manifesto on "pink paper" whose adoption would "promote state socialism, if not communism, around the world." It was not until the mid-1960s that two International Covenants on human rights were established; one of them, the Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, has yet to be ratified by the United States. For all its public support for many of the values enshrined in the UDHR, and despite Eleanor Roosevelt's leading role in the document's creation, another lesson we can take from Glendon's book is how hard it has been for the United States to compromise, to participate in dialogue, rather than to dictate. Roosevelt understood this: just before the final vote on the UDHR, she noted to a friend, "We will have trouble at home for it can't be a U.S. document & get by with 58 nations, & at home that is hard to understand." Perhaps the most important contribution of *A World Made New* is to help us to understand what it means to live in a shared world.

