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Q & A

The Legacy of *Brown v. Board of Ed*

Two alumni who are deeply engaged in the ongoing struggle for civil rights and social justice reflect on the legacy of this historic legal decision.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the landmark decision handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The court ruled that separate was not equal and segregated public schools nationwide had to enact and implement racial desegregation programs.

Although there has been tremendous positive change since the decision was handed down, no one could claim victory in the fight for social justice. That's where Ted Shaw '76 and Melissa Woods '94 come in. Shaw is president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Woods is an assistant counsel. Recently they answered questions for *Wesleyan* about *Brown's* legacy.

Q: Many say that without *Brown*, there is no Civil Rights Act, no Voting Rights Act. Did *Brown* offer a large dose of courage in a society where so many racist beliefs were deeply entrenched?

TED SHAW: *Brown* changed the operating assumptions in America. Even though it didn't get rid of segregation and discrimination, it broke the back of American apartheid and signaled the end of the "separate but equal" era. It was a spark for the entire Civil Rights movement.

Q: If you could wake up tomorrow and change the educational system in the United States, what would you do?

MELISSA WOODS: First, I would create a trust fund for the public education system that contains the same amount of money that this country spent on the war in Iraq, with the goals of more teachers who are better trained and better paid, smaller class size, and better programming (e.g., sports teams, music classes, theater). Second, I would remind the American public that education is not a fundamental right. It is recognized as such in many of our states. But nowhere is there an affirmative statement that you are entitled to it. LDF believes that we need a national dialogue about public education and how we support it and enshrine it as a fundamental right.

Q: How did *Brown v. Board* affect you personally?

SHAW: I was born six months after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown*. The Civil Rights movement was the whole background and context for my early years. I remember when my grandmother went to the March on Washington in August 1963. She wanted to take me, but my stepmother wouldn't allow it.

The handbill my grandmother brought back from the March is in my office now. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 had a profound impact on the country and on me personally. After that, I knew I wanted to be a civil rights lawyer.

Q: *Brown* opened doors, but many are now saying that these doors are being closed by what is often termed "voluntary segregation"—specifically, families of color refusing or avoiding having their children bused out of neighborhood schools. How do we guarantee the level of access to every child that *Brown* promised?

SHAW: LDF was intimately involved in the University of Michigan litigation that led the Supreme Court to determine that diversity is of compelling state interest in colleges and universities. We believe the same theory should apply at the primary and secondary school level. School districts, as well as colleges and universities, should foster meaningful interaction amongst students of varying backgrounds through integrated classrooms and learning environments as components of a quality education.

Q: The initial experiment with vouchers done by the Milwaukee school system showed some promising academic outcomes for students from poor and working-class families. And yet, vouchers have drawn a lot of criticism.

SHAW: Voucher programs offer little promise, or even hope, of achieving equal educational opportunity for the millions of poor children of color in our nation's urban school districts. The

way the programs currently exist, only a tiny fraction of public school students can be selected to receive vouchers or scholarships. Further, these programs typically offer payments that do not cover the full cost of tuition, forcing parents to make up the balance, thus dramatically constricting the number of impoverished public school students able to benefit from a voucher. Voucher programs that would reduce funding to already struggling public schools may worsen the prospects of those students remaining in public systems.

Q: The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) seems to address economic disparity in theory, but not yet fully in practice. Where does it fall short? Should it be scrapped or is there value in this measure?

SHAW: We should strive to create and support legislation that is going to promote educational opportunity for all children. While the federal NCLB law does fall short of that goal, we must recognize that it is a complex piece of legislation with both positive and negative components. Positively, NCLB fosters the premise that all children learn and the requirement that schools set high expectations for all students. Negatively, NCLB relies on a rigid regime of high-stakes testing which 1) narrows curriculum, 2) is used to label and punish under-resourced schools affected by poverty and struggling against extraordinary odds, and 3) encourages the misuse and abuse of standardized tests. NCLB has not been adequately funded, and this imposes unrealistic expectations and demands on overburdened school dis-

tricts and their students.

Q: During an event commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Brown*, Bill Cosby had some biting comments, including saying that some parents are more willing to spend \$500 on a pair of sneakers than \$200 on *Hooked on Phonics*. He also said black men in prisons are not political prisoners, they are felons. Many in the crowd bristled at the comments, and Cosby has repeated them several times since that appearance. Yet NAACP President Kweisi Mfume was quoted saying, "Much of what he said, I've been saying in my speeches." Why did Cosby's words cause such an outcry?

SHAW: Predictably, conservatives are applauding Bill Cosby for saying that the problems of the black community stem primarily from personal failures and

moral shortcomings. But just as we in the progressive African-American community cannot countenance the demonization of poor people, we must not cede the issue of personal responsibility to ideological conservatives. Dr. Cosby is right to urge parents to parent, children to read and to take advantage of every available educational opportunity, and all people to repudiate crime and violence. Even if all that is done, it will not eliminate poverty. In poor black communities, too many public schools fail students. Opportunities for meaningful employment with living wages are insufficient. Decent housing for poor people does not meet demand. Adequate health care is lacking. Concentrated poverty in black communities is accompanied by massive disinvestment in human and financial


capital. Racial discrimination runs rampant throughout our criminal justice system and racial segregation, not mandated but yet tolerated by law, remains a fact of life in our nation. Personal responsibility is a notion that I embrace, but it must be understood in the context of systemic problems facing the African-American community that are not self-inflicted.

Q: Reparations for slavery have been an ongoing discussion during the last few years. Where do you come down on this issue?

WOODS: There is no question that this country has benefited from hundreds of years of hard labor performed by enslaved African Americans. There is also no question that this country has created and condoned a system of compensation for generalized loss, such as

that experienced by the descendants. The only real question is whether reparations can be distributed in a meaningful manner. The first step to achieving that goal should be a public apology from the United States government.

Q: What are other hot issues you are involved with now at LDF?

SHAW: We continue to fight against prosecutorial misconduct, inadequate legal counsel for indigent defendants, and sentencing and incarceration disparities; to provide voting rights and political empowerment for people of color and the poor; to guarantee that employment opportunities are equally available to all Americans; and to ensure that the economic gains achieved by the African-American community are not stripped away. 



Melissa Woods '94 and Ted Shaw '76 of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund believe that, as in higher education, primary and secondary schools have an obligation to promote meaningfully integrated environments for their students.

UNSYMPATHETIC PORTRAYALS
CARTOONS REVEAL
ATTITUDES TOWARD ISLAM

Next time you stumble across one of those witty political cartoons in the newspaper, pay close attention to it. Chances are, says Peter Gottschalk, assistant professor of religion, you will see depictions of Muslims that reveal more about the American perspective toward Muslims than they do about Islam.

This American perspective toward Muslims is largely negative, according to Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg '04, a history honors thesis student. The two spoke during a recent Reunion seminar titled, "The Scimitar and the Veil in American Political Cartoons."

Gottschalk, an expert on religious cultures in South Asia, says antagonism between the West and Islam has prevailed since before the time of the Crusades. The Western expressions of this antagonism can be clearly witnessed, for example, with the geopolitical ascendancy of European nations

during the 19th century, when Western imagery caricatured Muslim men as barbarians and Muslim women as residing in harems.

Greenberg examined three themes that exacerbate the negative view of Muslims: portraying them as violent, as backward, and as oppressive toward women. He studied symbols of Islam used repetitively in American political cartoons, including oil, weaponry, and violence.

"During the 1950s, the Middle East was seen as a power vacuum," said Greenberg. "Artists sketched women in political cartoons to illustrate the feminization of the Middle East. During this time, the West was protecting and wooing the Middle East, partly because we needed its resources," he added.

Symbols of Muslims as violent and irrational arose during the 1970s. During the U.S. oil crisis of the early '70s, cartoons portrayed Arabs and sheikhs hoarding oil, while indulging in its wealth.

"A simple capitalistic move by OPEC, such as increasing the price of oil, left the United States with the sense that Muslims were untrustworthy and were 'shooting us in the back,'" says Greenberg.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
PETER GOTTSCHALK SAYS
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The 1990s Gulf War featured cartoons of American soldiers with machine guns on tanks fighting Muslims wielding swords and riding horses.

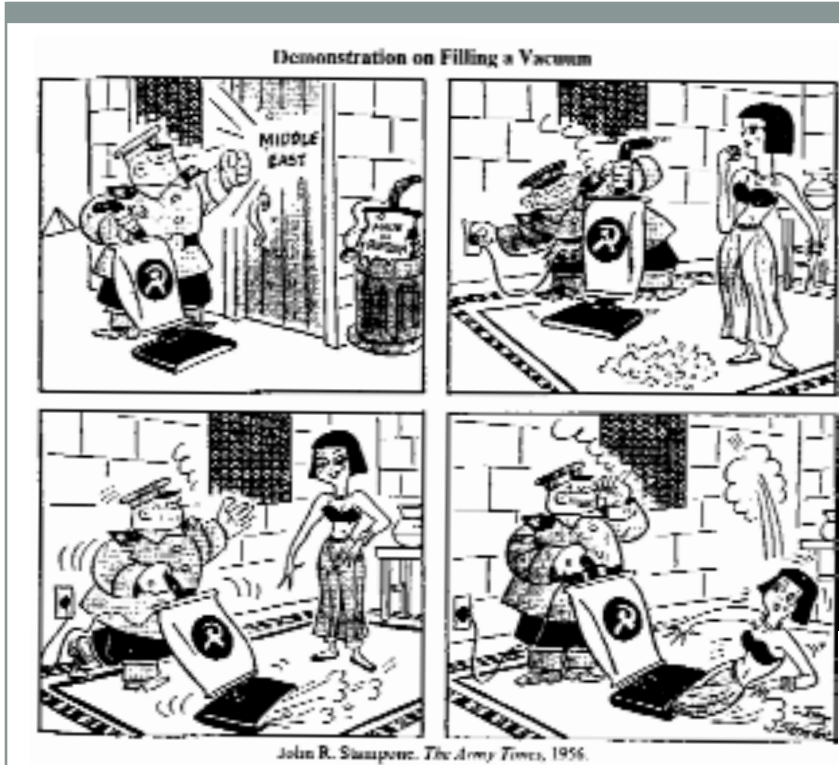
After the 9/11 attacks, political cartoons have often depicted certain Muslims as evil. Greenberg's research shows that many cartoon artists have sketched Muslims as Satan, and as a

backward and untrustworthy people.

Today, if you were to ask the average person on the street what comes to mind when s/he hear the words "Islam" and "Muslim," people will most likely answer with negative words such as "terrorists" or "suspects," says Gottschalk.

"In response to recent events, many non-Muslim Americans have been wanting to know more about Muslims and Islam," asserts Gottschalk. He and Greenberg hope to prompt their audience to examine their cultural presuppositions regarding Muslims as the first step in this learning process. In doing so, Gottschalk uses the analogy of a map for navigation.

Maps require users to know not only where they wish to go, but from where they are starting. "What we need to ask one another is, What are the mental maps that non-Muslim Americans have towards Muslims? We can't know where *there* is, unless we know where *here* is," he said.



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Pick of the Syllabus

BILL BURKHART



JOHN FINN,
Professor of Government, Selects
The Supper of the Lamb:
A Culinary Reflection
by Robert Farrar Capon

What are we to make of the following recipe for Swedish meatballs?

- 3 TABLESPOONS MINCED ONION
- 2 TABLESPOONS BUTTER
- 1 POUND EACH OF BEEF, VEAL, PORK GROUND TOGETHER
- 1 TABLESPOON ALLSPICE
- 1/4 TEASPOON GROUND GINGER
- 1/4 TEASPOON GROUND CLOVES
- 1/4 TEASPOON GROUND NUTMEG
- 1/2 TEASPOON FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER
- 1 CUP FINE DRY BREADCRUMBS
- 1/2 CUP CHICKEN OR BEEF BROTH (APPROXIMATELY)
- 2 EGGS
- 1 QUART BEEF BOUILLON, BROTH, OR STOCK

Sauté onion in butter until golden. Combine all ingredients except the last, and mix well by hand. Shape into balls and fry until nicely browned in a little butter or oil. Put in a large pot with the bouillon and simmer for 45 minutes.

This dish is better made one day in advance and refrigerated. The hard-

ened fat on top then can be removed easily and used in place of butter to thicken the gravy.

- 4 TABLESPOONS FAT OR BUTTER
- 4 TABLESPOONS FLOUR
- GRAVY FROM PAN

Make a roux of fat and flour, add gravy, bring to a boil, whisking well, and simmer for five minutes. Add meatballs, reheat, and serve.

How quaint. Why make meatballs by hand when we can buy them pre-made and precooked at the supermarket? Who makes meatballs from beef, pork, and veal, when ground turkey is so much healthier? Sauté (in butter?) and simmer for 45 minutes? Our meals must be made, served, and eaten in less time than that—the dishes thrown in the Bosch by then, too. Save the fat (horrors!) and make a what? Isn't that why God invented cream of mushroom soup?

Robert Farrar Capon's *The Supper of the Lamb: A Culinary Reflection* is full of such relics and other peculiarities, all of which seem equally unfashionable—such as "Finnan Haddie Rabbit" or "Scrap Soups,"—or, even worse, utterly needless, such as a recipe for "Grilled

SACRAMENTS AND
SWEDISH MEATBALLS

Cheese Sandwiches." Capon's recipes seem, at first glance, to be of interest only in the way that the clothing fashions of earlier generations are of interest—as a source of wonderment and amusement. People actually *wore* those clothes? You mean folks actually thought Swedish meatballs made for fine and elegant dinner party fare, especially if served in a silver-plated chafing dish? What *were* they thinking?

Nothing about Swedish meatballs seems obviously to invite serious scholarly reflection. But if there is any underlying theme to Capon's cherished and enduring little book, it is that it tells us recipes are not so much about food, but more about who we are and what we believe. And because those issues are contemporary and eternal, *The Supper of the Lamb*, as dated as its recipes seem, continues to appeal to readers, and sometimes to cooks.

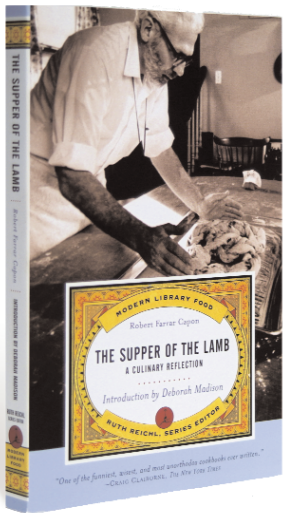
An Episcopalian priest, Capon begins with the premise that cooking is an "epiphany of the greatness of our nature—or, to use the most accurate theological word of all, it is a sacrament, a real presence of the gorgeous mystery of our being." Capon insists that a recipe "is a way of life" and a way to God; that nourishing the body and nourishing the "sole" are intimately con-

nected. His message anticipates the Slow Food Movement and, perhaps, our current fascination with all things culinary. But Capon implies that watching television cooking shows and following the exploits of chef personalities is not unlike televangelism, more a spectator sport than authentic experience.

None of this, by itself, makes for much of a book. What makes the book special is Capon's insistence that it is the *experience* of cooking that connects us to the sacred. "I shall," he writes, "spare you the chapters on aesthetic principles, personal integrity, popular taste, and political morality..." What follows is an intensely detailed discussion on the care and use of good knives. The divine, Capon tells us, is in the details.

His opening recipe is "Lamb for Eight Persons Four Times." First up is the cutting of the onions, no small matter. "You must firmly resist the temptation to feel silly...You will note, to begin with, that the onion is a *thing*, a being, just as you are. Savor that for a moment. The two of you sit in mutual confrontation. Together with knife, board, table, and chair, you are the constituents of a *place* in the highest sense of the word...You have, you see, already discovered something: The uniqueness, the *placiness*, of places derives not from abstractions like *location*, but from confrontations like man-onion. Erring theologians have strayed to their graves without learning what you have come upon."

So. Why make Swedish meatballs (and "mix well by hand") when we can buy the Healthy Choice version, nuke it, and be done eating it in less time than it takes to read and prep Capon's original? Because, as Capon notes, "One real thing is closer to God than all the diagrams in the world." Forget "30-Minute Meals" and "Bamm!!" Capon's book is one real thing.



THREE ALUMNI-ELECTED SEVEN JOIN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Seven individuals are joining the Board of Trustees, three of them through the alumni election process.

The trustees elected by the alumni this spring are:

Dr. Joseph J. Fins '82, chief of medical ethics at New York Presbyterian-Weill Cornell Medical Center, where he also is a professor of medicine and public health. He was appointed by President Clinton to the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy. He is the recipient of a Wesleyan University Service Award and delivered the Hallie Memorial Lecture in the College of Letters.

Kate Quigley Lynch '82, a Wesleyan volunteer for more than 20 years. Her service includes chair of the Alumni Association (2000-'02), chair of the Binswanger Prize for Excellence in Teaching Committee, chair of the WESeminar Committee, and president of the Wesleyan Club of Greater Hartford.

Melissa S. Woods '94, an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in New York. She has been litigating at the trial and appellate levels in the areas of employment discrimination and affirmative action in higher education, including the University of Michigan affirmative action case.

Also elected to the Board are:

Stephen S. Daniel '82, managing director with Allco Finance Corp., a provider of cross-border and domestic leasing structures to tax-exempt entities, including state and local governments. A member of the Wesleyan Campaign Council, he is active in fundraising for Wesleyan and is co-chair of his 20th Reunion.

Mora McLean '77, president and chief executive officer of the Africa-America Institute in New York, the oldest and largest nonprofit organization in the United States engaged in promoting African development. In October 2001, President Bush announced her nomination to the board of directors of the Institute of

Peace; the U.S. Senate confirmed her nomination. She has served as chair of the Black Alumni Council and received a Distinguished Alumna Award in 2002.

Michael S. McPherson P'98, president of The Spencer Foundation, which supports improvement of education worldwide. He served as president of Macalester College from 1996 to 2003, and is a nationally known economist, writer, and authority on the financing of higher education. He serves as co-chair of the Ford Policy Forum, which identifies economic issues affecting higher education.

Dr. Shonni J. Silverberg '76, an associate professor of clinical medicine at the Columbia University Medical School in New York. She is a member of the Jewish Studies Steering Committee at Wesleyan, was co-chair of the Dalton School's campaign, and is active in Lawyers for Children and in a traveling medical clinic.

At its May meeting the Board named John Hobbs '58 and Ted Shaw '76 as trustees emeriti. Hobbs retired as chairman and chief executive officer of Jennison Associates in 2003. Shaw is president and director-counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the nation's oldest legal organization fighting for equal rights under the law.

LAST LION TO BE FINISHED MANCHESTER DIES AT 82

William Manchester, one of America's most noted writers and historians, died June 1 at his home in Middletown, Conn., less than two weeks after his publisher announced that an agreement had been reached to help him finish the final volume in his biography of Winston Churchill: *The Last Lion, Volume III*.

Manchester, professor of history emeritus at Wesleyan, was 82 years old and had been in declining health after suffering two strokes.

The author of 18 books translated into 20 languages, Manchester first acquired an international reputation in 1967 with his account of the assassination of President Kennedy, *The Death of*

a President: November 1963, which he had written at the request of Jacqueline Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy.

His other books include *Goodbye Darkness: A Memoir of the Pacific War*, which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, and his biography of Douglas MacArthur, *American Caesar*, nominated for a National Book Award.

Manchester had expressed doubt that his Churchill trilogy would ever be completed. The first two volumes, *Visions of Glory: 1874-1931* and *Alone: 1932-1940*, were published in 1983 and 1988, respectively, but poor health had prevented him from completing the third.

On May 21, Little, Brown and Co. announced that, with Manchester's consent, Paul Reid, a feature writer at the *Palm Beach Post*, would help complete the final book about Britain's World War II leader.

[Editor's Note: Arthur Wensinger, professor of German studies emeritus, recalls his friendship with Manchester.]

We both came to Middletown in 1955, Bill to AEP as an editor, I to the German Department at the college. We knew each other only socially at first, at

parties with the Lockwoods, Winslows, Knapps, Thompsons, Reeds, Boyntons, Gomez-Ibanezes, Coleys, Greens, Burfords, McAllesters, Viggianis, Seases—the other names of 45 years ago. But it was not until I was living at 10 Wesleyan Place that I saw more of him and Judy at Ruth and Joe Peoples' non-stop evening open house at that address.

Our friendship ripened very gradually, though it was never what I would call a really close one, more of a collegial intimacy. Still, more often than not, if the two of us were at a gathering, we would find ourselves sitting together—me mostly listening to him. He fascinated me with his profound occupations and preoccupations, his talk of his books and the men he wrote about, his invasions and absorptions of their personae. It was a kind of utter commitment that I rarely, if ever, saw in another... And I much enjoyed his gossip about the high and mighty.

What he saw in me, I do not know. Was it the Mencken in Bill's past and his strong attraction for German history and culture? Along the way, and especially later when he was working on the Krupp family history, he

would exploit my knowledge of the language and its literature. It can also have been his interest in my (tenuous) connection with the Marine Corps: my uncle Walter W., a lifetime Marine, a general who among many other ventures led his regiment in the invasion of Iwo Jima. Bill could "identify."

And there were other little connections. As a newspaper man, Bill was once inordinately amused by a rare piece of ephemera I had kept from my time in Munich in 1948, an issue of the *Muenchener Merkur* that had, uniquely, picked up the *Chicago Tribune's* notorious blooper about Dewey defeating Truman. He had never heard of it and absolutely had to have a photocopy of it for his office. That was one of the very few small favors I was ever able to do for him. It doesn't begin to compare with the inscribed copies of his books that he regularly sent me, some with that cartoon self-portrait sketch.

It was hard to know what one could do for Bill Manchester. He was a most guarded man; he had to keep that massive encyclopedia and that trove of serial archives delicately balanced in his mind, lest it should spill over—which, of course, it did on occasion. Then he took his retreats. The last time I saw Bill was about a week and a half before he died. He asserted that he was quite ready; it was an unequivocal assertion. Driving home after not quite an hour with him, I pulled over and, I'm not sure exactly why, wrote down a few things he had said, some of them verbatim:

"After all those other things, now the doctors told me I have stomach cancer, inoperable. I will not have chemo or radiation just to eke out a few more undignified weeks of life.

"Have you heard that I've decided to go with this fellow from Florida? He'll work on the third volume. He seems good for the job. I have quite a few pages already written, he'll work in my Olin office...It's not an act of final desperation. I've already turned down others who did not seem

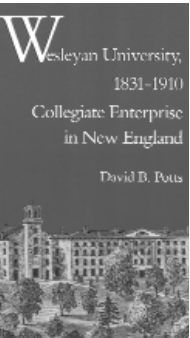
right. I want that trilogy finished.

"My house goes to Wesleyan, you know—they have been good to me. But there is a string attached. It is for the use of faculty only. It's a nice place. John [Martin, the architect] did well by us. Now it's for someone else.

"I am prepared for death and not afraid of it. I have been close to death before and seen a lot of it." Some people claim, he said, that you can help a person die. "You can't. It is something you must do by yourself."

And this, verbatim: "I am unencumbered by any notion of an after-life....If there is one for me, it will be in my books."

He was very tough, no sentimentality. I had said I would stay for ten minutes, but it was now almost an hour. It was clear that it was time for me to go. He had a surprisingly firm handshake. I asked if I might return for another visit. The last thing he said was, "You can come back any time you want," and he said my name. But I didn't go to see him again.



Wesleyan University, 1831-1910: Collegiate Enterprise in New England BY DAVID B. POTTS '60

A lively narrative connecting Wesleyan University's early history to economic, religious, urban, and educational developments in 19th-century America. "This is the best college history to appear in many years. Potts manages to cover all of the interesting topics, from students and football to curriculum and trustees, without ever dropping a thread in the narrative fabric. *Wesleyan University, 1831-1910* is full of new insights for students of higher education, and yet at the same time it is an exceptionally good read."—Stanley N. Katz, President, American Council of Learned Societies Just \$9.95 in paperback Order from your local bookseller or call 1-800-421-1561

Wesleyan!



CAMPAIGN NEWS

JOHN SHAPIRO '74 AND SHONNI SILVERBERG '76 MAKE ENDOWMENT GIFT TO JEWISH STUDIES

Wesleyan has received a major gift commitment from John M. Shapiro '74 and Dr. Shonni J. Silverberg '76 to endow a professorship in Jewish Studies. The gift is in addition to an earlier donation the couple made to establish an endowment for a Visiting Scholar in Jewish Studies. John and Shonni have supported Wesleyan in countless ways, from establishing scholarships and professorships to being consistent donors to WAF since they graduated from the university. They hope that their leadership gift will inspire others to contribute to Wesleyan's ongoing fundraising effort for Jewish cultural programs and Jewish student life.

LIFE SCIENCE PROGRAMS BENEFIT FROM \$1.3-MILLION HUGHES GRANT

Wesleyan has received a \$1.3-million, four-year grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute for curricular enhancement, undergraduate student research, and faculty development in undergraduate life science programs. The grant will support the development of collaboratively taught new courses and modules within existing courses; new staff, including a life sciences computer programmer; state-of-the-art laboratory equipment; and the Hughes Summer Research Program for faculty-mentored students in the life sciences.

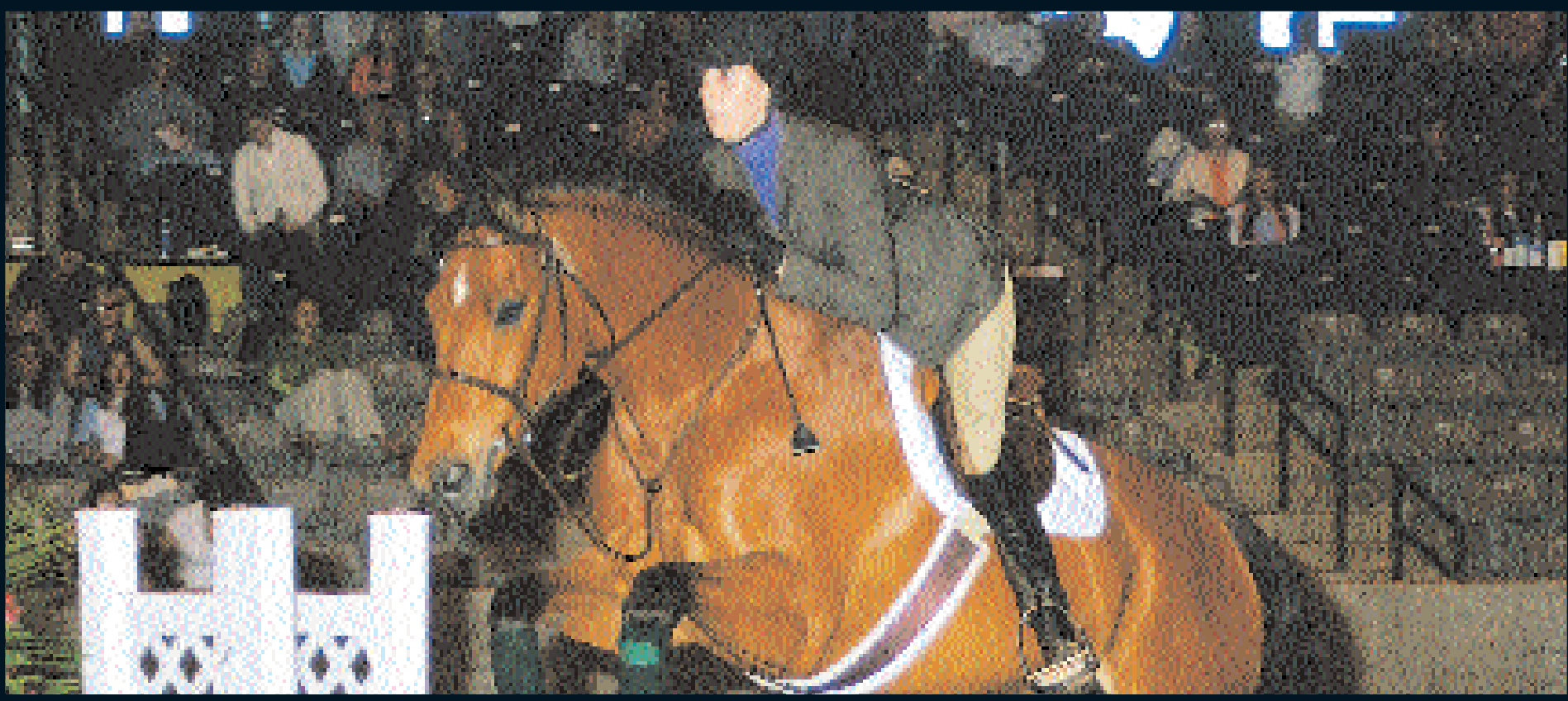
CLASS OF 2004 BOASTS 93 PERCENT PARTICIPATION IN SENIOR GIFT

In a record-breaking show of support for Wesleyan, 93 percent of the Class of 2004 contributed to the senior gift. The previous record for participation was 91 percent, set last year by the Class of 2003. This year's graduates gave \$6,511 to financial aid through the Wesleyan Annual Fund. Senior gift co-chairs Becca Gelenberg and Johara Tucker expressed pride in their classmates and hope that their example will inspire others to give back to Wesleyan.

WILLIAM MERCER



Recipients of the 2004 Binswanger Prize for Excellence in Teaching are Sean McCann, associate professor of English; James McGuire, professor of government; and Allan Berlind, professor of biology.



Elizabeth Perry '06 puts Wesleyan's equestrian club on the map by winning a national collegiate competition in her event: individual novice fences.

**LOCAL/REGIONAL ISSUES ARE KEY
A SEARCH FOR CAUSES OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS**

Professor of Government Martha Crenshaw is not satisfied with easy answers to the question, Why do terrorists attack the United States?

Pat explanations have centered on anti-Americanism and the hatred terrorists have for our free, tolerant, and secular society. Or maybe terrorists are disenfranchised and are taking out their frustration on us. Or perhaps their anger stems from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"There may be some truth to these arguments," Crenshaw told a Reunion seminar audience. "Certainly, anti-Americanism is a real force in the Middle East. But there are millions, if not billions, of people who suffer from one or more of these conditions. And terrorists are usually not themselves from the impoverished classes. More often they are middle class. So something else has to be going on."

To dig deeper, Crenshaw has teamed with criminologists at the University of Maryland who became interested in terrorism after 9/11. They set about developing a database of groups that have attacked U.S. targets since the 1960s and discovered that determining the identity of groups behind these attacks is no small feat.

Help came from an unexpected quarter: the Pinkerton Agency, which has been tracking terrorists for decades to advise business clients on security risks overseas. Pinkerton's records consisted of vast numbers of notecards in shoe boxes. With the help of 100 students and expert advice from Crenshaw, one of the world's leading authorities on terrorism, the researchers are developing an extensive database with this material.

Crenshaw has also drawn on records kept by the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security, which keeps an eye on groups that might attack U.S. diplomats. From their records, she developed a list of 50

groups out of about 500 active on the international scene; all of these 50 organizations attacked U.S. targets in some significant way.

The historical record raises some significant questions. Why, for example, doesn't Hamas attack American

targets? Why don't all radical Islamic groups attack us? There is no formula for predicting which groups will target the United States. Yet the question becomes more pressing with the passage of time, since terrorism is becoming increasingly internationalized.



Martha Crenshaw believes that terrorists attack the United States for reasons that often have little to do with us and lots to do with local problems.


"This I regard as an inevitable feature of globalization," she said. "Just as mobility and communication are easier for all of us, so are they for groups who use violence. It's easier for them to cross borders, to get weapons, to organize and plot. They are completely adept in the modern technological world; they raise funds on the Internet. They buy cheap disposable cell phones and make one call before throwing them away to avoid being traced."

Crenshaw suggests that terrorist groups often attack U.S. targets for reasons that have little to do with the United States itself. Their motivation might be to appeal to their own constituencies. All these groups need popular support. They need to recruit and raise money.

"A good way of distinguishing yourself might be by attacking American targets in order to convey an image of audacity and power," she noted.

Sometimes groups attack the United States in hopes of persuading us to withdraw from an area where the terrorists have a local interest. The bombing of the Beirut barracks was an example: Islamic groups thought the United States was supporting the existing government of Lebanon and they wanted us to leave. Sometimes attackers hope to highlight a local problem. In the '60s and '70s leftist groups carried out a series of kidnappings and killings of U.S. and other diplomats in Latin America in order to expose the proxy relationship between the United States and local governments.

Even al Qaeda, which professes extreme anti-Americanism, is primarily focused on the overthrow of the governments in Saudi Arabia and Egypt for religious and political reasons, Crenshaw said.

Her long-standing interest in the causes of terrorism was, surprisingly, once out of favor. "Back in the 1980s, referring to the root causes of terrorism was enough to get you in trouble with the Reagan administration," she says. "Their view denied root causes; terrorists were just bad guys. Now everyone is interested in root causes." 

BILL BURKHART