Noteworthy Music

The Sounds of SCHOLARSHIP

Music from Mali by Neba Solo and Ingrid Monson

ALSO

The Unclear Future of Water

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By Pat Harrison

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Noteworthy Music  
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**Look Here**

Actor and arts advocate Jane Alexander will receive the Radcliffe Institute Medal on Radcliffe Day, May 31, 2013.

The day will also include a panel about the arts and audiences in America featuring participants from the visual arts, music, and theater arts.

More information is online at www.radcliffe.harvard.edu.

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FROM THE DEAN

Productive Connections and Collaborations

This issue of Radcliffe Magazine is a snapshot of a truly remarkable fall here at the Radcliffe Institute. With three major conferences and a range of public lectures and fellows’ presentations, along with private seminars, workshops, and fellows’ talks, the Institute has been hard at work supporting innovative thinking across the spectrum of academic disciplines and the arts. And we have been able to share that research with a broad public audience here in Cambridge and, thanks to technological upgrades, with our friends around the world via live webcast and video on our new website, www.radcliffe.harvard.edu.

This fall has been exciting because of the connections being made across disciplinary and geographical divides and the transformative work coming out of those collaborations. ‘Take Note,’ our conference on the history and future of note-taking, brought together historians, computer scientists, librarians, and others to explore how and why we take notes. The conference also featured an online exhibit, with materials from a variety of Harvard libraries and museums, that allows our global audience to participate in the conversation going forward. Our water conference, ‘Cloudy with a Chance of Solutions,’ and a lecture series on water brought experts from around the world and across Harvard to address the challenge of providing clean, accessible water from a variety of scientific and social perspectives. In the Fellowship Program, our scholars continue to form productive alliances, such as the one between Ingrid Monson, a current Institute fellow and Harvard faculty member, and the renowned Malian balafonist Neba Solo, who came to the Institute as a visiting scholar to work with Ingrid. Some connections are more introverted, as in the case of the Radcliffe professor Annette Gordon-Reed, whose deep personal interest in Thomas Jefferson has led to her work on an intellectual history about him. And the recently launched Radcliffe Institute Public Art Competition, a contest for Harvard students to design an installation for a new garden space in Radcliffe Yard, offers us exciting connections with Harvard students and with the Harvard arts community.

You can read more about all these fascinating developments and many more in this issue of Radcliffe Magazine and on our website. I hope you will join us soon, whether in person or online, to experience firsthand all that the Radcliffe Institute has to offer.

LIZABETH COHEN
Dean, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study

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ASIA KEPKA

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announcements The latest happenings at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study
In October, the Radcliffe Institute announced its first annual public art competition, dedicated to giving Harvard students—singly or in groups—the opportunity to create new art for the community.

The Radcliffe Institute Public Art Competition offers students a unique opportunity to design and create an outdoor installation in a highly visible public space while contributing to the enrichment of intellectual and aesthetic life at Harvard. “The Institute is committed to fostering the creation of art and arts making at Harvard and beyond,” says Radcliffe Institute Dean Lizabeth Cohen. “Our fellowship program is distinctive among its peers for including artists along with academics and public intellectuals, and the arts play an important role in our public events.”

The winning student or team of students will receive a $5,000 prize and funding for construction of a public art installation in a prominent new garden space on Brattle Street at the Radcliffe Institute. In coordination with the Institute and professionals in the field, the winner will oversee construction of the design in the 72’ x 54’ space, which will be equipped with water, drainage, electricity, Internet access, and seating. “We hope the versatility of the space will inspire a wide range of submissions using everything from natural plant material to public sculpture and audiovisual resources,” Cohen says. “I look forward to seeing what bold ideas the competition’s inaugural year will bring us.”

The competition is open to all students enrolled in a Harvard degree program, with submissions due on January 30, 2013. The winning installation will be displayed in Radcliffe Yard through the spring of 2014. Keep up with the Radcliffe Institute Public Art Competition online: www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/publicart.
If a neighborhood could talk, what would it tell you about its citizens, its resources?

A lot, it turns out, as the newly launched website of the Boston Area Research Initiative (BARI) makes clear. By offering aggregated data sets and mapping tools, the site provides a platform and a network through which to share information about Boston's people, places, and events.

On November 9, BARI—an interuniversity research partnership led by Harvard’s Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study with the Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston and the City of Boston—held “Teaching Boston,” a workshop that introduced an array of web tools and data to a packed room at Boston City Hall. The nearly 60 participants included city officials, representatives from local nonprofits, and 35 faculty members from eight area universities who are all teaching courses about Boston. This is an unprecedented collaborative endeavor for the City of Boston and the people who teach about it, noted Bill Oates, the city’s chief information officer, in his opening remarks.

Robert J. Sampson—the director of BARI and of the social sciences program at the Radcliffe Institute and the Henry Ford II Professor of Social Sciences at Harvard—shared with the assembled crowd his vision for the initiative: that the researchers gathered that day at City Hall would add new layers of sources and data, further enriching what’s available to the city and to researchers.

“We believe that there’s great opportunity in the city to spur original research,” said Sampson. “But the amount of energy being focused on Boston is perhaps not living up to its potential.” For Sampson, this means information that goes beyond demographics—giving a taste, for example, of a neighborhood’s arts resources.

This information is valuable to city officials as well as to area researchers. “Boston is a laboratory for students and academics,” said Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “The city provides an ideal location for fieldwork on urban life issues. By connecting with area academic institutions, we can take the good ideas being developed in the classroom and put them into good use in the city.” BARI is dedicated to connecting scholars with policymakers, practitioners, and civic leaders.

Barbara Berke, a senior policy advisor to the mayor, drove this point home at the workshop. “We have never had the kind of assets that we have in this room today to ask how we make Boston a city that learns faster about
itself than any other city,” she said. She encouraged “Teaching Boston” participants to share ways in which BARI tools—such as Metro-Boston Data Common and the Boston Redevelopment Authority’s myNeighborhood Census Viewer—could facilitate more concrete collaboration between academics and policymakers or nonprofits. A short discussion period yielded a number of ideas, including harnessing the young talent in the area—whether by structuring student work to help solve city concerns, awarding prizes to the best student papers on urban issues, or holding intensive brainstorming sessions similar to “hackathons” to tackle specific projects.

“With its long history, Boston offers a unique opportunity to understand the past, present, and future of cities and the challenges they face,” said Radcliffe Institute Dean Lizabeth Cohen, who is a 20th-century urban historian at Harvard. “We are very grateful to our partner in this project, the City of Boston, for giving students, faculty, and other researchers remarkable access to data that will improve teaching about urban life as well as the livability of cities for their citizens.”

As the event drew to a close, Christopher Winship—a codirector of BARI, the Diker-Tishman Professor of Sociology at Harvard, and a member of the Harvard Kennedy School faculty—marveled at the power and potential of BARI, the only initiative of its kind. It positions Boston at the forefront of city-university—and interuniversity—research and collaboration.

**STUDYING CITIES**

Several Radcliffe leaders and a current fellow discussed the city as subject in a Radcliffe on the Road event held in Chicago in January. Lizabeth Cohen talked about the great legacy of Chicago’s urban scholarship, which served as the backbone for her dissertation and, eventually, her first book. Robert J. Sampson, the director of the social sciences program, described BARI’s evolution, from early studies of Chicago as a “lab” to a project that originated at the Radcliffe Institute. Nancy Hill, the Suzanne Young Murray Professor at the Radcliffe Institute and a professor of education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, talked about education research and policy. Radcliffe fellow Lydia Diamond RI ’13 discussed how Chicago has, in one way or another, inspired her playwrighting.
Clarifying Water’s Murky Fate

**SYMPOSIUM draws experts to discuss the state of our water**

*by Steve Nadis*

It’s called—with good reason—the most precious substance on earth. We’re predominately made up of water, more than 70 percent of our planet’s surface is covered with it, and everything we eat depends on it. Life as we know it would not exist but for the extraordinarily special molecule composed of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen.

Yet this priceless commodity has forever been taken for granted, squandered, overused, and abused. We clearly need to do a better job of understanding and protecting our water resource while we still have the chance. Indeed, that was the main topic of conversation last October at the Radcliffe Institute’s Annual Science Symposium, “Cloudy with a Chance of Solutions: The Future of Water.”

In her introductory remarks to the crowd of some 350 people, Radcliffe Dean Lizbeth Cohen said she couldn’t think of a better subject than water to satisfy the Institute’s criteria for a theme that would benefit from a multidisciplinary approach. Challenges around the world include pollutants, deadly bacteria, overwhelmed governments, and fractious political disputes. “Fortunately,” she added, “we don’t have to look too far to find great minds focused on these problems.”

To show how timely the symposium’s topic was, Joan Ruderman, Radcliffe’s senior science advisor, cited numerous headlines from recent newspapers, including one about plans for using desalinated seawater in San Diego. Menachem Elimelech of Yale followed on with that general topic, claiming that, in principle, seawater desalination could furnish practically an unlimited supply of water. The main drawback is that it takes three to four times as much energy to desalinate seawater as to treat water coming from, say, the Charles River. The key question, he said, is whether the energy efficiency of desalination can be improved enough to make this approach sustainable. Elimelech led the audience through a technical review of reverse osmosis and other water purification methods before concluding that desalination should be considered “a last resort.” Yet in some countries, such as in the Middle East, it may be the only way of adding to tightly constrained water supplies.

Bruce E. Rittman of Arizona State University focused on energy conversion techniques modeled after nature, which use water frugally. Instead of growing “energy crops” like corn to produce biofuels—a dubious strategy given that agriculture already accounts for 70 percent of the world’s water consumption—Rittman proposed, we should employ photosynthetic bacteria, housed in slurries within transparent “photobioreactors,” to convert the sun’s energy into fuels. His approach, in contrast to fossil fuel combustion, emits no net carbon dioxide. Water recirculates within a “closed-loop system,” keeping consumption down. “In this way,” Rittman said, “we let water work for us rather than against us.”
A CITIZEN SCIENTIST RALLIES AGAINST FRACKING

Scientists ought to engage in “the big issues of their time,” urges Sandra Steingraber, a biologist based at Ithaca College. That’s why she’s leading the fight against “fracking,” which she says poses “irremediable” threats to our drinking water. Short for hydraulic fracturing, fracking offers a way of releasing natural gas and other products from underground shale deposits. Steingraber decries this invasive process, which vents appreciable quantities of toxic gases into the atmosphere while taking large amounts of freshwater out of the hydrological cycle and depositing it in rocks below the water table.

Steingraber described the implications of this unprecedented, wholesale water removal to the Radcliffe crowd while reading a passage from her book, Raising Elijah: “What happens to water during fracking is different from what happens to water when you leave the tap running while brushing your teeth. When a single well is fracked, several million gallons of freshwater are removed from lakes, streams, aquifers, and entombed in deep geological strata. Once there it is removed from the water cycle permanently, as in forever . . . . It will no longer ascend into clouds, freeze into snowflakes, melt into rivulets, cascade over rocks, turn with the tides, soak into soil, rise through roots, or flow from your tap. It will not become blood, tears, sweat, urine, milk, sap, nectar, yolk, honey, or the juice of a fruit . . . . It’s gone. Not that you’d want it to come back. It’s poison now.”

Both Charles Tyler of the University of Exeter and Washington State University geneticist Patricia Hunt warned of the hazards posed by endocrine-disrupting chemicals in our waterways and drinking supplies. Tyler discussed his 20-year investigation of hormonally active pollutants that interfere with the reproductive capacity of fish, causing the “feminization” of the male wild roach observed in numerous English rivers and streams. Hunt has studied the increased incidence of chromosomal abnormalities—in animal test subjects and presumably in humans—caused by the chemical, bisphenol A (BPA). This organic compound is of particular concern, because it can leach from plastic water bottles and from the PVC pipes that bring water into many homes.

University of Houston historian Martin V. Melosi offered a broader perspective, disputing the contention that “water is the new oil.” Unlike fossil fuels, “water is not something we can substitute for,” Melosi said. “As a resource it stands alone.” In the past century, he said, water use has been growing twice as fast as population—a consumption rate that obviously cannot be supported far into the future.

As for rectifying this situation, University of Maryland engineer Gerald E. Galloway was hardly encouraging. Although we tend to think in increments of three to five years, he said, “we should be thinking 30 to 50 years ahead.” He cited a dismal history, stretching back to the 1960s, of repeated failure by the government to implement sensible water policies.

Given the task of summarizing, Peter P. Rodgers, a Harvard professor and the author of Running Out of Water, was not optimistic. He noted that US drinking water is currently regulated for 86 contaminants, but more than 100 other contaminants, including endocrine disrupters, should be added to that list—which, alarmingly, keeps growing. Our current wastewater treatment plants, however, are not equipped to remove those additional contaminants, posing a huge problem. The only things Rodgers could cheer about were the insights and cogent analyses provided by the speakers who preceded him at the symposium.

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STEVE NADIS is a freelance writer.
Waterworld

by Steve Nadis

Radcliffe unofficially deemed 2012 the year of water. The Institute hosted a “Future of Water” symposium in October and ran a Water Lecture Series throughout the fall, featuring four Harvard professors. The theme for 2012 was timely, given the extreme drought in the United States—where more than half the nation’s counties were declared “disaster areas” by the Agriculture Department—and the extreme flooding inflicted upon New Jersey and New York by Hurricane Sandy.

James McCarthy, the Alexander Agassiz Professor of Biological Oceanography at Harvard, kicked off the series with a broad introduction to the subject, describing the hydrological cycle and the general distribution of water. The vast majority of the earth’s water—more than 97 percent—is in the ocean; only about 2.5 percent is freshwater, most of which is locked up in the ice sheets of Antarctica and Greenland, leaving just 0.4 percent as surface freshwater and water vapor. In the summer of 2012, the extent of Arctic sea ice hit a record low. And for four straight days in July, Greenland’s entire surface remained above water’s melting temperature, “which has never been seen before,” McCarthy said. “This set off alarm bells that gave us all pause.”

As the oceans warm, water expands, triggering a rise in sea level; the melting of ice sheets and glaciers contributes to that rise. If humans fail to curb global emissions of greenhouse gases, the earth could become as warm as it was 30 million years ago, when sea level was 20 to 30 meters higher, McCarthy said. “But back then we didn’t have cities like Boston sitting just a meter or so above sea level.”

Pollutants Disrupt Hormonal Function

JOAN RUDERMAN—Radcliffe’s senior science advisor and the newly appointed president and director of the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole—talked about her current research focus, “environmental estrogens,” which she defined as “synthetic chemicals that are designed for one purpose but are later found to have the additional property of being able to mimic estrogen or antagonize estrogen.” Estrogen is a hormone that plays a critical role in human fetal development and in later stages of life.

Environmental estrogens pose an insidious problem, given that 200 chemicals—including one-fourth of the pesticides tested so far—are known to interfere with hormonal function. Meanwhile, the list of environmental contaminants keeps growing. Complicating matters is the fact that the risk posed by a synthetic compound from its chemical structure can’t be determined. “More than 100,000 chemicals are used in agriculture, manufacturing, and consumer products, and very few of them have been tested for toxicity or the ability to mimic or disrupt estrogen,” Ruderman said. She advocates a large-scale screening program and recommends zebra fish—which reach maturity in about a day—as convenient and economical test subjects.
AFTER THE 2010 EARTHQUAKE, a relief worker may have brought cholera to Haiti, where it killed more than 7,000.

Climate Change Drives Disease

JOHN MEKALANOS, who heads Harvard Medical School’s Department of Microbiology and Immunology, discussed the biology of cholera—a disease that is spread by feces-contaminated water and has plagued humanity for at least 2,000 years. Cholera is an intestinal disease, caused by the bacterium *vibrio cholera*, which is often lethal if left untreated. Unfortunately, new and more deadly strains of the bacterium have emerged, including one that appeared in the 1960s and another in the 1990s. “These two strains cause basically all of the cholera today,” Mekalanos noted, adding that it’s a moving target. “As microbiologists, we’re faced with a challenge in the future as these organisms respond and adapt to their settings.”

A cholera pandemic broke out in Haiti in 2011, following the massive 2010 earthquake, and killed more than 7,000 people; 20,000 additional cases occurred in the neighboring Dominican Republic. Mekalanos and his collaborators sequenced the strain responsible for the Haiti outbreak and determined that it was practically identical to the strain behind a previous outbreak in Nepal. He suspects that a relief worker from Nepal brought the disease to Haiti, which had been cholera-free for roughly a century. “In the future,” Mekalanos said, “relief workers and security forces need to be treated with antibiotics or vaccines to prevent the introduction of cholera in regions that are at high risk for the disease.”

We’re All Test Subjects

In a sense, suggested DANIEL SCHRAG, the Sturgis Hooper Professor of Geology at Harvard, we’re all test subjects in the ongoing experiment known as global warming. “Nobody understands the earth’s system well enough to predict what will happen,” he said, “and there are going to be surprises.”

Hurricane Sandy provided some indication of the surprises ahead. Late-October hurricanes normally die out quickly as they move into cooler northern waters. But Sandy gained strength as it went from North Carolina to New Jersey, because ocean temperatures were four to five degrees warmer than the long-term historical average. In addition, changes in the jet stream, stemming from the loss of Arctic sea ice, could be causing more hurricanes to make landfall rather than stay at sea—a phenomenon observed with increasing frequency since 2007. Storms like Sandy, Schrag warned, could become “the new normal.”

When a high school student in the audience asked Schrag what she and her classmates should do to make their school more sustainable, he said the most important thing would be “to educate each other, read and be aware, and educate your parents.” For every hour you spend trying to cut down on your school’s greenhouse gas emissions, he added, “you should spend 10 hours teaching each other the latest information on climate change.”
A fall conference brought together experts in book history and the digital humanities to look at notes as artifacts of creative thought.

by Deborah Blagg

Given the timing, it wasn’t surprising that the Institute’s November 1–2 “Take Note” conference on the history and future of note-taking included a nod to the role of notes in presidential elections. In her welcoming remarks, Leah Price, a conference co-organizer and a senior advisor to the humanities program at Radcliffe, mentioned former vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin’s famous reliance on notes penned on the palm of her hand and President Obama’s apparent preoccupation with his own notes during the first 2012 presidential debate.

Had the gathering happened a few days later, Obama’s “Four more years” election-night tweet might have entered the discussion in the context of the most fundamental question conference panelists considered: What is a note? “Tweets are not usually considered notes, maybe because they are not instrumental,” ventured Geoffrey Nunberg, an information scientist from the University of California at Berkeley, who shared the podium with scholars from the fields of literature, history, media studies, and computer science. “Tweets aren’t used in the process of doing something else. They just are, by themselves,” he continued, sparking debate and some dissent among correspondents who were contributing their own tweets while following the conference online.

The “doing something else” essence of notes was highlighted in Tiffany Stern’s presentation on note-taking in Shakespeare’s era. “The early modern period was a time in which different bits of material were being gathered up and put into logical order,” said Stern, a professor of early modern drama at Oxford University. In that era, she said, a student would copy “snatched fragments” from texts, “creating his own book from the books around him.” These “commonplace books,” which helped their compilers organize and store information for later reference, differed from the “table books” of the same era. People attended sermons and plays with their table books—which Stern called “something like an iPad now”—not just to record memorable excerpts for sharing later with others (or even for publishing illicitly), but also to show off their own literacy.

Because table books had erasable pages, their contents were often short-lived. This ephemeral quality of notes was underscored in a panel on the past and future of note-taking. In that session, Lisa Gitelman, an associate professor of media and English at New York University, talked about the services-for-hire, lost pet, and yard sale notices that are posted,
read, and torn off utility poles in modern cities, leaving a “tangled crosshatch” of empty staples. “It’s impossible to know who takes the notes down or, indeed, who has taken note,” Gitelman observed.

In contrast, Peter Burke, an emeritus professor of cultural history at the University of Cambridge, cited examples of extraordinary notes, such as those inscribed on clay tablets in ancient Rome, that have survived the ages and now reside in museum collections. The panel moderator, Harvard Divinity School professor David D. Hall, referred to the richness of notes that have been preserved in Harvard’s libraries and other collections of ephemera, despite the “vast amount of bills of credit, money, forms, and almanacs which simply have vanished from the archive of print.”

The conference opened with the launch of a virtual exhibition of notes from Harvard’s extensive collections (http://bookhistory.harvard.edu/takenote) and featured a half-day of field trips to the libraries and museums that contributed to the online display. (See page 12.)

“Catching thoughts on the wing” was Burke’s poetic description of the experience of studying the notes of distinguished scholars from the past, bringing to mind the Radcliffe dean and social historian Lizabeth Cohen’s remarks at the beginning of the conference, when she called notes “the tracks we leave in the sand as we head toward our ultimate goal of discovery, publication, or policy.” Although the panelists were drawn from diverse institutions and academic fields, they shared the perception that notes are artifacts of creative thought. As Ann Blair, a conference co-organizer and the senior advisor to Radcliffe’s humanities program, observed, notes “offer unique insights into the content and methods of thinking of previous generations.”

The impact of the digital age on note-taking was the focus of a panel moderated by the Harvard professor Jeffrey Schnapp, the director of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society. Schnapp said, “The process of designing tools for the future practices of notation is connected to ideas we have about the cognitive role of notes.” David Karger, a professor of computer science at MIT, shared his experience developing NB, an innovative software program that, he said, “turns annotation into a synchronous collaborative discussion.” A next generation of online discussion forums, NB enables students to read, comment, and ask professors or classmates questions about assignments in real time, on shared PDFs. A key advantage of the tool, Karger said, is the facilitation of peer learning.

Bob Stein, the founder and codirector of the Institute for the Future of the Book, observed that putting texts in browsers gives us the advantage of one another’s intelligence. “The power of multiple points of view focused on a text—not about a text, but in a text—is incredibly exciting,” he said.

The University of Washington professor David Levy left participants to ponder the question “If we now have the most remarkable tools for scholarship and learning the world has ever known, how is it that we have less time to think than ever before?” The driving force behind technology development has been a “more, better, faster” mentality. The challenge scholarly note-takers will face in the future, Levy predicted, is the tension between the power and speed of technology and the imperative to read and think deeply.

Deborah Blagg is a freelance writer.
“Take Note” opened with the launch of an online exhibition of notes from Harvard’s extensive collections and an afternoon of site visits hosted by the librarians, curators, and scholars who contributed to the online project. Participants chose from sessions that broadly spanned interests, languages, continents, and centuries, from a talk on field notes about nature at the Museum of Comparative Zoology to a discussion of stories told by East Asian materials at the Harvard-Yenching Library.

Radcliffe’s Schlesinger Library hosted two site visits, titled “Women Take Note,” that featured a selection of diaries, annotated publications, and other materials.

In a presentation titled “The Social Life of Objects,” scholars from Harvard’s metaLAB demonstrated how new technologies can enhance and expand students’ access to and understanding of museum-held artifacts. The senior researcher Matthew Battles, who presented along with metaLAB’s director, Jeffrey Schnapp, and the senior researcher Yanni Loukissas, observed that capturing objects’ dimensionality and annotating other vital information in visually rich online records can spark discoveries by establishing something akin to a “social network” that links objects to related artifacts and documents.

At the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library, the recordings curator Robert Dennis and the reference and digital program librarian Kerry Masteller invited visitors to study handwritten notations on sheet music and other documents that illuminate composers’ and conductors’ nuanced intentions and provide historical context for well-known works.

At the Schlesinger Library, Alice Rich Northrop’s diary from 1906 features the flora and fauna of Jamaica.

At the metaLAB session, Ben Brady MArch ’12, a Harvard Graduate School of Design teaching fellow, demonstrated the “Active Susan,” a device rigged with rotating cameras that create multidimensional photos, bringing museum objects to life online.

** WHETHER ON PAPER or online, notes enhance and expand understanding. **
Matthew Battles passed around an iPad loaded with a three-dimensional scan of a Chinese artifact, giving participants a close look at new techniques for capturing and displaying objects’ physical features online.

Librarian Kerry Masteller shares a treasured volume from the Loeb Music Library’s collection with the Oxford University scholar and “Take Note” conference presenter Tiffany Stern.

Despite the speakers’ focus on cutting-edge technology, many who attended the metaLAB presentation took notes the old-fashioned way.

Curator Robert Dennis talked about many of the library’s prized holdings, including scores heavily annotated by the influential conductor Sir Georg Solti.
by Deborah Blagg

Part of the joy of reading a memorable Shakespeare quotation or a lyrical passage from Cervantes is the sense of connecting with the ideas of a celebrated literary mind. But for scholars who study the history of literature and publishing in the early modern age, finding the threads that connect a published text with its author’s original thoughts is a challenging task. In a late-October Radcliffe lecture titled “From Author’s Hand to Printer’s Mind: When and Why Do Literary Manuscripts Survive?,” the distinguished historiographer Roger Chartier shared insights from the painstaking work of tracing and documenting the creative process for texts that predate the mid-1700s.

In his presentation, Chartier, the director of studies at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, a professor at the Collège de France, and Annenberg Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania, noted that prior to 1750—or, as he put it, for the first three centuries after Gutenberg’s invention—original manuscripts and records related to publishing and printing were rarely preserved. He cited “the decisive role of scribes in the publication process” as a key reason for the lack of preserved authorial manuscripts before the mid-18th century.

To illustrate, Chartier described the process by which works of literature were published during Spain’s Golden Age. By the time a 17th-century text arrived at the printer, he explained, the author’s original text had been copied by a professional transcriber, altered by censors, and corrected for spelling and punctuation. Before printing, the scribal copy was “further prepared by the corrector, who added accents, capital letters, punctuation, and casting-off marks so the sheets could be set into type,” Chartier noted. “After these textual interventions were made, the autograph manuscript lost all importance,” and even the printer’s copy was generally destroyed.

Cultural, philosophical, and judicial factors were instrumental in changing the treatment of autograph manuscripts after 1750. In 1710, an act of the British Parliament known as the Statute of Queen Anne shifted the vesting of copyright from printers’ guilds to authors, ushering in an era in which the authenticity of authors’ manuscripts gained value. Part of the new conceptual configuration that made literary archives possible and necessary after the mid-18th century, Chartier noted, was the notion that authors’ manuscripts were “original creations that express the most intimate sentiments and decisive, singular, and personal experiences.”

Chartier’s lecture was introduced by Lizabeth Cohen, the dean of the Radcliffe Institute, who emphasized Radcliffe’s longstanding interest in the study and preservation of books and manuscripts. Harvard’s Mahindra Humanities Center cosponsored the event, which ended with a “20 Questions” session with Chartier, moderated by the center’s director, Homi K. Bhabha, the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of the Humanities at Harvard.

The Decisive Role of Scribes

For the first three centuries after Gutenberg invented movable type, original manuscripts were rarely preserved.
Novelist and Radcliffe fellow Margot Livesey described how artists borrow from one another to make their work new. She herself “wrote back” to Charlotte Brontë in *The Flight of Gemma Hardy*, her latest novel.

**Keeping It New**

by Lynne Weiss

Despite the title of this year’s Julia S. Phelps Lecture in the Arts and Humanities, “Neither a Borrower nor a Lender Be: Homage, Appropriation, and Influence,” Margot Livesey is all in favor of borrowing, quoting, and appropriating from other writers.

Livesey, the Evelyn Green Davis Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, delivered a rich and engaging lecture to a full house at the Radcliffe Gym in December. She freely acknowledged her own literary borrowing, starting with taking the title of her lecture from *Hamlet*. And her most recent novel—*The Flight of Gemma Hardy* (Harper, 2012)—is a highly praised reimagining of *Jane Eyre*.

It is through such interactions, Livesey argued, that artists can achieve Pound’s dictum “Make it new.” “He was not referring to the world but to art,” Livesey explained; she pointed out that James Baldwin offered a similar message in “Sonny’s Blues” when he wrote that the blues keep “the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted” new because “it always must be heard.”

Livesey herself is a lender—even a major donor, in the artistic sense—within the world of literature. In her introduction to the lecture, the former Radcliffe Institute fellow Claire Messud praised Livesey for her generosity as a teacher and a mentor and for the eloquence of her ongoing literary conversation with other writers. But Messud, the author of the acclaimed *The Emperor’s Children* (Knopf, 2006), also said that Livesey is “insufficiently sung,” which she attributed to a critical gender bias toward stylists rather than writers who, like Livesey, offer readers “prose that is beautiful but not obtrusive.”

Livesey punctuated her talk with slides juxtaposing works by Titian, Edouard Manet, Brice Marden, Mickalene Thomas, Joan Miro, Alexander Calder, and Sarah Sze RI ’06. She interwove discussion of poets ranging from Christopher Marlowe to Anthony Hecht to examine the ways they have grappled with familiar themes of love and mortality by responding to one another’s work, often with comic effect.

Referring to writers such as Jane Smiley, Cynthia Ozick, Jean Rhys, and Michael Cunningham, Livesey said novelists pay tribute to their predecessors in many different ways. Some retell an old tale scene by scene. Others attach a familiar beginning and end to a different storyline, place characters in a different setting to explore political and cultural changes, or tell a well-known story from a different point of view. Still others incorporate elements of a beloved book into an autobiographical narrative.

Livesey said that when she wrote *The Flight of Gemma Hardy*, she was “writing back” to Charlotte Brontë, “recasting Jane’s journey to fit my own courageous heroine and the possibilities of her time and place.” At the Institute, Livesey is working on her eighth novel and the first that’s set in the United States. Judging from the warmth with which her talk was received, many readers are waiting to see what she might borrow to make the old story of human suffering and delight new again. As James Baldwin said, “There isn’t any other tale to tell.”

Lynne Weiss is a Boston-based
What Drives the Electorate?
The Answer May Surprise You

The political scientist Larry Bartels explained how droughts and shark attacks have affected the political fortunes of incumbents.

by Ivelisse Estrada
For US pundits, each national election is an opportunity to discuss whether the results indicate a mandate for one party or the other. But the political scientist Larry M. Bartels, in a November 27 lecture at the Institute titled “The Elusive Mandate: Searching for Meaning in Presidential Elections,” warned that the idea of a mandate is “so elusive as to be unhelpful.”

Just three weeks after the presidential election, Bartels said his aim was to immediately dispense with the idea that the 2012 election provided anyone with an impressive—or even a slim—mandate. Rather than focusing on a particular election, he offered an “interim report on a career spent thinking about the American electoral process and what it means.” Bartels fleshed out his argument by applying recent research to influential books on electoral politics, most notably The Responsible Electorate: Rationality in Presidential Voting, 1936–1960 (Belknap Press of
Bartels offered a point-by-point analysis of the major arguments in Key’s book, saying that in his opinion, the subsequent political science literature has not upheld Key’s optimistic portrait of the electorate and the electoral process.

Bartels suggested that many Americans are low-information voters who make decisions on the basis of first impressions, choosing their candidate and then adjusting their policy views according to what that candidate believes.

So what do American voters vote on? As it turns out, Key’s emphasis on governmental performance and executive personality has largely been supported by many additional studies. “Elections can be viewed as referenda on presidential performance and some version of economic performance or income growth,” said Bartels.

There’s a catch, however, which is that voters are myopically focused on current conditions. “The best predictor of a president’s reelection chances is the level of income growth in the 14th and 15th quarters of his term, which is the middle of the election year,” said Bartels, and what happens during that six-month period is more likely to drive voters’ opinions than the incumbent’s overall performance.

According to Bartels, voters seek alternatives to the incumbent party in times of economic hardship, whether that hardship is the product of the markets or of the natural world. “The incumbent party is punished at the polls when weather is too wet or too dry—or even when shark attacks go up,” he said.

“Election outcomes have very significant and systematic policy consequences,” Bartels said. “But I’m forced to conclude that those election outcomes themselves are largely random, shaped much more by short-term income growth and other idiosyncratic factors than by what Key referred to as ‘relative questions of public policy, of governmental performance, and of executive personality.’"
Beyond Mourning

SCHLESINGER LIBRARY’S Rothschild Lecturer honors murdered migrant workers with online altar

by Sarah Sweeney

Alma Guillermoprieto RI ’07 wandered a drought-stricken town in El Salvador, where cattle carcasses poked from the dirt. “It was so poor, so poor, so poor,” she says with a wince, telling the story now.

Guillermoprieto’s visit was prompted by the discovery, on August 25, 2010, of the bodies of 72 migrant workers, men and women hailing mostly from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, who had been heading north to the United States through Mexico, along a stretch of railroad known as la bestia—the beast. News of the massacre sent chills around the world, reinforcing notions of chaos and terror in Mexico.

In El Salvador, Guillermoprieto found the family of one of the 14 women among the victims and learned that others of her kin and from her small impoverished village had perished along la bestia. Guillermoprieto, a Mexican-born journalist and author, recalled asking the woman’s 13-year-old daughter, where we bring the dead.

“Perhaps this is the main reason why the altar in its various manifestations has lasted so long,” said Guillermoprieto, “because singing is a traditional component of Día de los Muertos, as is preparing the dead’s favorite foods. That would obviously be a problem on an online platform, so Guillermoprieto began taking online donations, which are directly funneled to a priest-run migrant shelter in the southern state of Chiapas. The shelter is a pit stop for migrants in need of a good meal before embarking on their voyage.

Additional help comes from las patronas, kind strangers along la bestia who are often just as poor as the fleeing migrants, said Guillermoprieto. Las patronas work without funding and out of sheer altruism, making tortillas and tacos and stuffing them into plastic bags. Daily, they walk to the tracks and wait to throw the bags of tacos to the blurred migrants aboard the fast-moving trains.

The online altar has multiplied in many ways, inspiring theater productions, books, and, on the first anniversary of the massacre, a dramatic reading by famous actors of the site’s testimonials, presented by Radio UNAM, the station of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

“It’s a terrible thing for a young man or young woman to be sitting in one of these villages with no opportunity. What else are they going to do?”

Guillermoprieto returned to Radcliffe on November 13 to deliver the Schlesinger Library’s 2012–2013 Maurine and Robert Rothschild Lecture, with a focus on the still-unsolved mass murder, believed to be connected to Mexico’s ongoing drug war, which has claimed more than 50,000 lives.

Men and women daily risk their lives along la bestia, leaping onto a passing train car for a ride that they hope will usher them to a better life. Some die trying, or lose limbs; others make the jump but are assaulted, sometimes sexually, along the route—only to then face corruption among authorities at the border. The threat of cartel violence is an added danger to the already treacherous journey.

Although Guillermoprieto continues to write about problems plaguing Latin America in venues such as the New Yorker and the New York Review of Books, she said that after learning of the 72 murders, her first impulse was to keep her distance. “I’d written enough similar horror stories,” she said.

Guillermoprieto envisioned an altar like those built for Día de los Muertos, the Mexican day of remembrance for the dead. “A true altar de muertos,” she explained, “is a site where we bring the dead back to life by talking about them, letting them know that we haven’t forgotten, letting them know that they’re welcome back into our home.”

But, she noted, “being that the dead in Mexico are so numerous that they’ve become statistics . . . there was no way I could talk or write about each of the 72 migrants myself, so the answer of an online virtual altar imposed itself as the only practical solution.”

As a result, 72migrantes.com was born. Guillermoprieto sent out an international call, and writers near and far chimed in, each choosing a migrant to write about. Pictures arrived—some of the murdered migrants, others of la bestia, men and women pooled on the tops of speeding train cars. Artists donated songs, because singing is a traditional component of Día de los Muertos, as is preparing the dead’s favorite foods.

Sarah Sweeney is a staff writer for the Harvard Gazette. This piece was adapted from the Gazette.
To honor the lives of 72 murdered migrants, Alma Guillermoprieto established an online altar inspired by those built for Día de los Muertos, the Mexican day of remembrance for the dead. “A true altar de muertos,” she explained, “is a site where we bring the dead back to life by talking about them, letting them know that we haven’t forgotten, letting them know that they’re welcome back into our home.”

“The lecture and other links, including to 72migrantes, are online: www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/video/travelers-in-hiding.”
From Two Seminars, One Glorious Book

A new anthology of writing by and about Americans

by Corydon Ireland

Go to any good bookstore and you will find A New Literary History of America (Belknap/Harvard, 2009). All 1,095 pages and 219 essays of it. All four pounds and two-inches-thick of it. A volume that begins in 1507 (with Amerigo Vespucci) and ends in 2008 (with a just-elected Barack Obama). A book with such an ecstatic sprawl that it covers, conjures, and (sometimes) conflates the likes of Chuck Berry and Barry Goldwater, Anne Bradstreet and Gertrude Stein, Steamboat Willie and Emily Dickinson. (“Linkages,” one reviewer wrote, are “the single most impressive achievement in the book.”)

This ambitious anthology is an artful gathering of resonant personalities and dates—a celebration of American invention, from the Winchester rifle to the telephone. But in the end, A New Literary History of America is dependent on what the anthropologist Loren Eiseley called “the wonder of words”: the assemblies of alphabet and rhythm that are the only guarantee that not all will vanish. The book is “a reexamination of the American experience as seen through a literary glass,” its coeditors Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors write, “where what is at issue is speech, in many forms.”

Those “many forms” gathered in the book owe much to the Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study and its Exploratory Seminars program. Late in 2006, Sollors and 11 others gathered at Radcliffe to discuss the possibility of a new anthology of writing by and about Americans. Sitting in one place made “a very, very big difference,” said Sollors, who is Harvard's Henry B. and Anne M. Cabot Professor of English Literature. “Having 12 people in the room and brainstorming . . . was just invaluable. There’s no way one could replicate that.”

Commonly, an anthology is made by one or two prime movers who write a lot of letters and round up entries that way. “But you don't have the collective overview,” Sollors said. “Bit by bit, through that first meeting, we got over the shell
shock—Should something exist?—to actually having a proposal.”

In May of 2007—with both a concept and a contract in hand—Marcus and Sollors led a follow-up four-day seminar. By then, the members of the editorial board had more than half the book’s essays in front of them. By November 2008, a completed manuscript was ready for the printer. The Radcliffe seminars helped shape the book’s 219 essays, along with a few of its eccentric and contrarian editorial principles. Among them: “Avoid the kitsch of multiculturalism,” in Sollors’s words—that is, for instance, avoid having African Americans write just about African American figures. Instead, invite the writers of color to take adventurous side trips: to write about Edith Wharton, Theodore Dreiser, Tarzan, and the Wizard of Oz.

Another editorial principle: avoid narrow channels of acknowledged expertise. The anthology’s essayists were encouraged to explore events, artifacts, and figures that fascinated them but may have fallen outside the bounds of their previous scholarship. “We have quite a few entries that have this kind of freshness,” said Sollors—writers exploring a “long-standing passion” instead of an established field.

The seminars also fned up another editorial principle: Hang each essay on a date and on a fi gure or artifact—but don’t stop there. “Roam back and forth, as seems appropriate,” said Sollors of the plastic, inclusive, and eye-opening essays the board encouraged. For instance, Kirsten Silva Gruesz’s essay “1836, February 28,” on Richard Henry Dana Jr. does not just dwell on the author of Two Years Before the Mast. It swings back and forth in time, touching along the way Robinson Crusoe, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, Jack London, Jack Kerouac, and Joan Didion, the Californian who reversed Dana’s east-to-west pilgrimage.

But consider what was left out of the anthology. Within a year of the fi rst Radcliffe seminar, the editorial board had to reduce about 400 candidate essays to just over 200, jettisoning along the way entries on Christopher Columbus, the potato chip, blue jeans, and other explorations. In some cases, favored subjects were saved by conflation: Absalom, Absalom and Gone with the Wind—“two southern novels dealing with the myth of the South,” said Sollors, that “couldn’t be more different”—were provocatively, invitingly, amazingly joined in Carolyn Porter’s essay “1936.” A fnst, surely. Yet Porter uncovers what makes them both glow, one like gold and one like radium: racism. She writes of the Faulkner novel, “At the source of the American Dream itself lies slavery.”

Sollors said he has “two sea chests” of correspondence left over from the labor of making such a big book. He may get back to them someday, but meanwhile, he remembers the Radcliffe seminars and what they helped deliver when the project was new.

Corydon Ireland is a staff writer for the Harvard Gazette.
Thomas Jefferson is back on the public stage (if he was ever absent), the subject of new books, discussions, conflict, and scrutiny. Like Lincoln, Jefferson still has a hold on us, perhaps because he’s so complicated: a slaveholder who wrote in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal.

One of the foremost scholars of Jefferson, Annette Gordon-Reed, is currently in residence at the Radcliffe Institute. The Carol K. Pforzheimer Professor at Radcliffe, the Charles Warren Professor of American Legal History at Harvard Law School, and a professor of history in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Gordon-Reed has been writing about Jefferson since 1995, when she began work on her first book, *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy* (University Press of Virginia, 1997).

An investigation of the controversy about whether Jefferson fathered children with his slave mistress Sally Hemings, the book established Gordon-Reed as a historian, although her academic training is in law. She went on to write her bestselling book *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*, for which she won the Pulitzer Prize and 15 other awards. And she’s currently working on a book about Jefferson’s intellectual development, ‘The Most Blessed of Patriarchs’: *Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of Imagination*, excerpted on page 24.
public imagination, perhaps because his views were so complicated.
THOMAS JEFFERSON’S favorite granddaughter Ellen, newly married at Monticello to Bostonian Joseph Coolidge, traveled north to start a new life in her husband’s home in July 1825. She covered territory familiar to her grandfather, for her route through upstate New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts closely tracked the “botanical expedition” that he had taken with James Madison in the summer of 1791, his deepest penetration into the heartland of his archenemies, the Federalists.

By the time Ellen visited the North country, much had changed. The new state of Vermont had only been admitted to the union in March 1791, and its booming population of 85,425 was just beginning to transform forests into fields—where its mountainous terrain allowed. Her first, glowing report on the progress of civilization on the Yankee frontier offered a gratifying image of America’s future, a demonstration of the benign effects of the republican revolution that Jefferson, the author of “the great Charter of our Independence,” had helped initiate. Ellen reported, “the country is covered with a multitude of beautiful villages.” She was amazed that Yankee farmers had wrung such abundance from “the hard bosom of a stubborn and ungrateful land.” Despite a cold and forbidding climate, “the fields are cultivated and forced into fertility; the roads kept in the most exact order; the inns numerous, affording good accommodations; and travelling facilitated by the ease with which post carriages and horses are always to be obtained.”

The contrast with Ellen’s native “country” was striking. Virginians were blessed with the “great gifts of Nature,” she wrote, “but had squandered the “advantages of soil and climate which we possess over these people.” Improvement was the great watchword of an enlightened age, and her grandfather was the foremost proponent of the concept. There was, however, precious little improvement to be seen in Ellen’s native state, more than two centuries after its first settlement. Jefferson’s Albemarle County was located on the provincial frontier at the time of his birth, and more than 80 years after that, travelers to his mountaintop home still encountered a near wilderness. What had Virginians been doing in those intervening years? Not much, according to one witness. “No vestige of the labour of man appeared,” Washington socialite Margaret Bayard Smith wrote in her diary in 1809: as she ascended Jefferson’s mountain, “nature seemed to hold an undisturbed dominion.” She was shocked to encounter the progressive philosopher in such retrograde physical surroundings. But for his spectacular house, there was no sign of civilization.

Ellen had spent a great deal of her early childhood at Monticello. She knew her grandfather well and knew that he would be particularly interested in her observations, for he had devoted his public career to the improvement of the new nation and particularly of his beloved Virginia. Ellen had a simple—and devastating—explanation for the stark differences between New England and Virginia: “our Southern States cannot hope” to match the “prosperity and improvement” of the northern states “whilst the canker of slavery eats into their hearts, and diseases the whole body by this ulcer at the core.”

Ellen could have read a similar indictment in her grandfather’s only published book, Notes on the State of Virginia (1787), in which Jefferson decried slavery’s “injustice” and its demoralizing effects on the “manners” of white slave owners and their children. How could these self-professed republicans sustain their experiment in self-government when “the whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other”? Slavery turned whites into tyrants and impaired their capacity for self-control. The masters could not really master themselves, a critical ability for the kind of responsible citizenship Jefferson championed.

While living in Paris in 1785, Jefferson fleshed things out a bit in a letter to the Marquis de Chastellux in which he set forth what he thought were the differences in the characters of northerners and southerners. Although he did not mention slavery by name, Jefferson referenced the effects of its operation. Southerners, he wrote, were, among other things, “vulgarly,” “indolent” and “unsteady” people who were “jealous for their own liberties, but trample[ed] those of others.” By contrast, Jefferson saw northerners as, among other things, “sober,” “laborious,” “persevering” people who were “jealous of their own liberties, and just to those of others.” The picture that Jefferson painted was close to predictive. Of those two putative “types,” who would be more likely to have had the inclination—and the drive—to create the tidy villages and farms that Ellen found so appealing, or institute the tradition of the town meeting, that site of participatory democracy that Jefferson admired so much?

As a bookish child growing up in East Texas, Gordon-Reed was more interested in biographies of Jefferson than in those of George Washington Carver or James Madison. “I thought it was interesting that he was a slave owner but wrote the Declaration of Independence,” she said recently in her office at Radcliffe’s Byerly Hall. “That was a real introduction to paradox for me at a very young age.” She continued to be interested in Monticello and slavery, but never thought she’d write a book about any of these subjects, much less several books.

During college at Dartmouth—in one of the first classes that admitted women, when the ratio was three men to one woman—she majored in history. Deeply affected by the civil rights movement, she also wanted to do good in the world, so she went to Harvard Law School, where she met her husband, Robert Reed, now a judge in New York City.

In 1995 Gordon-Reed and her husband were living in Battery Park City with their two children and she was teaching at New York Law School when she saw a film called Jefferson in Paris. “Even before it came out, a number of people were outraged because the movie was going to treat the Sally Hemings story as if it were true,” she said. “That’s when people were saying there’s no evidence for this, that Jefferson wouldn’t have been involved with a slave girl.” Reacting to this reaction, Gordon-Reed sat down to write an op-ed piece and couldn’t stop writing.

“I was not tenured yet, and I should have been writing a law review article, but I wrote the book,” she said. “I didn’t tell anybody I was writing it except my husband.”

She started writing in January and had a first draft by April. She talked to people at Monticello about it and also shared the manuscript with several scholars, including Peter Onuf, the chair of the history department at the University of Virginia, which Jefferson founded, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation Professor. Onuf urged the University Press of Virginia to publish it.

In the meantime, one of Gordon-Reed’s colleagues had read the manuscript and sent it to Robert Weil, an editor at St. Martin’s Press, who also wanted to publish it. “But I wanted to go with Virginia,” she said, “because of the subject matter and because that’s Jefferson’s university.” Several years later, she signed a contract with Norton, where Weil had become an editor, for The Hemingses of Monticello.

Gordon-Reed was recruited to the Harvard faculty in the spring of 2010 with a Radcliffe professorship, a term position that provides her with four semesters at the Radcliffe Institute’s Fellowship Program during her first five years at Harvard.

Time and fellowship are two things she will sorely need to complete the books she intends to write. After the one on Jefferson’s intellectual development, which she’s writing with her friend Peter Onuf, she’ll return to the Hemingses and follow several branches of the family further into the 19th century. (Her earlier book leaves them at Jefferson’s death in 1826.) Then she plans to write a two-volume biography of Jefferson.


Master of the Mountain: Thomas Jefferson and His Slaves (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), by Henry Wiencek, attracted attention that “most authors can only dream of,” as Jennifer Schuessler ’90 put it in her New York Times article on November 27. Master was excerpted in Smithsonian and featured on the magazine’s cover; reviewers spoke highly of it. And then the scholars began to weigh in. Schuessler mentioned Rutgers historian Jan Ellen Lewis’s review in The Daily Beast as being especially blunt. “It’s hard to know what to make of this train wreck of a book,” Lewis wrote. “Much of what Wiencek presents as ‘new information’ has already been published in the groundbreaking work of Annette Gordon-Reed, Lucia Stanton, and others, while the most headline-grabbing charges crumble under close scrutiny.”

Gordon-Reed reviewed Wiencek’s book in Slate, in a piece under the headline “Thomas Jefferson Was Not a Monster.” Wiencek “loathes Thomas Jefferson,” she wrote. “In his attempted takedown of the man, the third president appears as a demonic figure warped one summer day by a sudden discovery that being a slaveholder could pay.”

Master of the Mountain “fails as a work of scholarship,” she wrote, partly because of Wiencek’s erroneous thesis: he interprets a note Jefferson wrote in the summer of 1792 about making a 4 percent profit every year on the birth of black children as applying to Monticello slaves, when the note was generally understood to be about slaves in all of Virginia.

Scholarly considerations aside, Gordon-Reed’s view of Jefferson appears to be much more complicated than Wiencek’s. After she published her first book, she told an interviewer from PBS’s Frontline, “I believe [Jefferson] is ordinary in his prejudices… A critical mass of people have, over the years, acted as if whites are more intelligent than blacks, that whites are more attractive than blacks. It’s part of a common currency, more common than people want to admit. And so he is used, I think, in some ways, as a scapegoat.” In other words, if we can make Jefferson a monster, the rest of us can be less monstrous.

With her base still in New York, Gordon-Reed travels between there and Cambridge every week. Last spring, her daughter graduated from Harvard, so now she has no family in Cambridge. (Her son is at Dartmouth.) But she has her work and the Radcliffe community.

“I had one sabbatical in my career before I came here, and even then I was teaching,” said Gordon-Reed. “The Radcliffe professorship is giving me time to do my work.”
Ingrid Monson

By FRED BOUCHARD

THE BALAFON, from West Africa, is a kind of marimba—with wooden keys mounted on a wooden frame that surrounds resonating chambers made from dried gourds.

Neba Solo arrived from Mali with two balafons in tow—a bass and a treble balafon—both of which he made himself. Neba Solo and Ingrid Monson played together before (pictured here) and during the concert. Monson had previously traveled to Mali to study the instrument with the renowned musician and master craftsman. “I didn’t have time to practice enough to perform well,” she says of her time there. “But playing the music helps me explain the music.”
Solo's music and culture of change in Mali

Neba Solo is a riveting singer-storyteller, a hypnotic performer and virtuosic improviser on his handmade five-foot balafon with buzzing gourd resonators on a raked frame. The balafon is one of Mali’s signature cultural instruments, heard at births, weddings, dances, and funerals nearly as often as the ngoni and the kora, Mali’s famous stringed instruments. As artist and artisan, Solo crafts balas in breakthrough designs (pentatonic, not heptatonic, with extra bass notes) and sells them to a growing cadre of fans and emulators.

Although Solo’s impact outside Mali doesn’t match that of Salif Keita or Ali Farka Touré, he has toured France, China, South Korea, and the US. His music connects to the blues, and his political messages in lyrics of discontent resonate with those of Woody Guthrie, Marvin Gaye, and James Brown.

“Solo’s an iconic bandleader like [the jazz bassist] Charles Mingus,” explains Monson. “He composes brilliantly, plays many instruments, knows his band’s capabili- ties, and jazzes up traditional music with expanded bass lines and virtuosity. He also has a keen political awareness. Solo's cultural tradition is to exhort people to 'do the right thing,' promote common justice, tell the truth, and join forces in national unity, and he accomplishes it with tunes that exemplify unity through interlocking rhythms and counterpoint.”

Solo has exerted his cultural voice with songs of gentle protest, attempting to shore up Mali’s eroding, imperiled culture. His no-nonsense lyrics (sung in his native Senufo, Bamana, or sometimes French) candidly condemn bribery, habitat destruction, and dishonesty, and praise AIDS education, vaccination, and political integrity.

Monson studied balafon with Solo while in Mali in 2005 to help inform her research. “It was not like jazz, and this made me humble . . . . I didn't have time to practice enough to perform well, but playing the music helps me explain the music: how the musical patterns work. Solo had me play a loop pattern and he'd improvise over it, vary it, slowly, one to the next.” Malians quickly identify the sets of patterns with specific groups: cultivators (farmers), acrobats, clowns. In an ideal performance, Solo would add professional dancers in his own fast, synchronized choreography, its gestures giving the music a singular visual unity.

Solo’s concert at the gym prompted vociferous applause and a particularly lively question-and-answer session. “I’m grateful that Radcliffe offers such a stimulating environment for the arts and scholarship,” says Monson. “Few institutes have that perspective or offer such unstinting support.”

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FRED BOUCHARD writes about music for Downbeat Magazine, Boston Musical Intelligencer, and New York City Jazz Record and teaches at Berklee College of Music.

TWO MEN FROM MALI SMILE AT RICH APPLAUSE AS they briskly hammer rustic wooden marimbas. Their music fairly bubbles, bright and buzzy, in highly infectious, interlocking rhythms. The leader sings with heartfelt warmth, the joy and humor in his voice belying the urgency of his messages: “Please tolerate others!” “Vaccinate your children!” “Don’t destroy our heritage!” “Treat women as equals!” “Don’t practice bribery!” “Beware of sex predators!” and “Don’t kill the children! They’ve done no wrong.”

The scene was Radcliffe Gym last November, and the singer was Neba Solo, a visiting scholars performer, thanks to Ingrid Monson, this year’s Suzanne Young Murray Fellow. Solo is the subject of Monson’s Radcliffe project and her book in progress, “Kenedougou Visions.” The man of the hour, he is also a man for his people in war-torn Mali.

But the show almost didn’t go on. “Since Mali’s government collapsed last March,” Monson explains, “the infrastructure has failed, Islamist forces are making havoc, and travel has become difficult, treacherous.” Monson scuttled her planned year of research in Mali; passage to America was a rocky odyssey for Solo—a cultural icon and voice of change in Mali—and his brother and bandmate, Siaka Traoré.

Monson, the Quincy Jones Professor of African American Music at Harvard University since 2001, is enjoying a distinguished career as an ethnomusicologist. She earned her musical spurs playing trumpet in classical and then jazz orchestras. A keen ear for Miles Davis and Charlie Parker drove her to tackle bebop at the New England Conservatory. “Learning bop in jazz ensembles was tough but inspirational,” she says, “and exposed me to salsa, klezmer, and world music.”

Working in various bands made Monson aware of “the importance of ensemble interaction” and “how culture informs different ways of organizing bands.” After earning her PhD at New York University, she taught and wrote while at the University of Chicago and Washington University in St. Louis. Her book Freedom Sounds (1998) brought her to Harvard first as a visiting professor and later as the inaugural occupant of the Jones chair. “I did not want to reduce jazz scholarship to technical issues,” Monson says, “since large parts of the story are community, race, culture, dignity, emotion, honor. I always wanted to find that balance between musical substance and its deeper meaning: struggle, unity, harsh debates on civil rights.”

“Ingrid Monson is a remarkably diverse scholar, musician, and educator,” avers Tom Everett, the director of Harvard’s Bands and jazz advisor to the Office for the Arts. “She’s respected for her published writings and research in African, African American, jazz, and American social/political musics. Her performance experiences have earned her unique perspectives and insights into those subjects.”
TAMAR DIESENDRUCK
Branching pathways

Tamar Diesendruck’s major project this year for large wind ensemble and percussion is inspired by processes and branching patterns of evolutionary biology. Her recent works use varied notations and strategies that result in webs and networks of sound. She delights in creating highly varied music based on the same musical “DNA.”

Diesendruck is an independent composer based in the Boston area. Her compositions have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Performers of her work include the Pro Arte Quartet, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Lions Gate Trio, Speculum Musicae, and New Millennium Ensemble.

KURT ROHDE
Choosing subjects from Disney to Queen Kristina

The violist turned composer Kurt Rohde never trained formally, yet he writes engaging, intuitive chamber music. His Radcliffe works are amazingly diverse. One is a piece for the Brandeis-based Lydian String Quartet, inspired by Renaissance treatises by Fludd, Vicentino, and Kircher. Another is a chamber opera about Queen Kristina of Sweden’s self-exile in Rome. The protean life and mythology of Walt Disney is the subject of yet another piece. A professor of composition at the University of California at Davis, Rohde plays viola with the Left Coast Chamber Orchestra on Double Trouble, his new Innova CD.

He’s intrigued by the range of methodologies he encounters among other musical Radcliffe fellows. “Like Venn diagrams, we overlap,” he says. “We find appreciation for music’s purpose and honest sounding boards for how creators, performers, and listeners make it part of their lives.” He also enjoys Harvard’s libraries. “I’m finding so many useful journals for my operas. It’s like being loosed in a candy shop!”

KATE SOPER
Exploring interactions between voices and instruments

As a composer and new-music soprano, Kate Soper delves deep into the interactions between voices and instruments. A 2012 Guggenheim fellow, Soper often seeks to find her voice through establishing dramatic tensions.

In her vocal duos—with flute, violin, or percussion—“music and voice offer mutual support, exchanging and sharing roles, and mirroring responsibilities,” she says. Her flute and voice duo interpolates text by the poet Lydia Davis, as the singer’s “desperation to be understood unleashes an inner monster,” as Soper puts it.

Her main work as the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Fellow is Here Be Sirens, an opera for voices and electronics. “What,” Soper wonders about these timeless seaside seducers, “are they doing on the island in their downtime?”
Discovering art songs at the Schlesinger Library

Tsitsi Jaji, this year’s Mary Bunting Institute Fellow, specializes in the music and literature of transnational exchanges among African, African American, and Caribbean cultures. As she wraps up final revisions of Africa in Stereo (Oxford University Press, 2013)—about how African American popular music contributed to modernism and pan-Africanism in Ghana, Senegal, and South Africa—she’s also exploring the history of art songs in the Black Atlantic, from the 18th-century African-born composer Ignatius Sancho to contemporary works.

A professor of English and Africana studies at the University of Pennsylvania, Jaji has made her biggest find at the Radcliffe Institute in the Schlesinger Library’s papers of the composer Shirley Graham Du Bois, including “Compensation,” a setting of a poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar. Jaji plans to perform the work, along with Dunbar settings by Avril Coleridge-Taylor and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, with her research partner in her spring Radcliffe presentation on art songs as a form of literary commentary.

MICHAEL SCOTT CUTHBERT
Detecting trends in music using computers

Michael Cuthbert, the Rieman and Baketel Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute, delves into scores of medieval and Renaissance Europe—worm-eaten codices, repurposed palimpsests, faded parchments, and all—to analyze and reconstruct them for musical trends and pattern studies. In his Radcliffe study, “Digital Musicology of Late-Medieval Polyphony,” he’s examining and digitally enhancing fragments of Italian sacred music (1350 to 1420) to overcome difficulties such as overwriting and bleed-throughs.

Cuthbert developed software—called music21—that attracts thousands of hits from researchers and composers eager to use computers to “listen faster” to find trends among hundreds of works at a time. Musicologists also use the program to parse patterns in, say, Bach’s 369 chorales.

An associate professor of music at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cuthbert recalls growing up a “Navy brat” in San Diego, where he developed interests in music and math by “playing clarinet, composing on a Commodore 64 computer, and hearing Beethoven’s Fifth,” the only classical music recording he had access to. Later he studied early European repertory’s complex notational systems and composed music for cutting-edge ensembles.

Listen Faster, Listen Different

Whether writing music or code, some of this year’s fellows ask for your ear.

By FRED BOUCHARD
Photograph by Joshi Radin
The Plutocracy’s Political Myopia

Once upon a time, a woman mastered the principles of contemporary economics and wrote about them simply and persuasively, making herself one of the best-known authors in the English language. That was Harriet Martineau, whose nine-volume *Illustrations of Political Economy*, published almost two centuries ago, helped general readers understand the powerfully disruptive forces of the Industrial Revolution then at work in their lives. It’s taken that long for another technological revolution to remake the world’s economy and another woman—Chrystia Freeland—to chart its course for a wide audience, earning international renown with two books so far, *Sale of the Century: Russia’s Wild Ride from Communism to Capitalism* (Crown Business, 2000) and her latest, *Plutocrats: The Rise of the New Global Super-Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else*.

Like Martineau, Freeland writes anecdotally, providing vivid profiles of real people—in this case, a sampling of the 21st-century robber barons, “the global 0.1 percent,” who control a vastly disproportionate share of the world’s wealth. Freeland takes us to chic book parties, to plush boardrooms, and, most curiously, to the deliberately downscale digs of the “tech-nerati of the US West Coast,” who affect the “billionaire in blue jeans” style, where we overhear the conversations of these often very young titans of new industries: financial consulting, internet marketing, communications hard- and software. Freeland tells us what they’re thinking and how that makes a difference in the lives and futures of the 99.9 percent—everyone else.

The “political myopia of the plutocrats,” evident on nearly every page of this book, was a chief source of the economic downturn of the past five years, Freeland shows, even as the super-elites continued to amass great fortunes and fortify their super-sized holdings, their confidence in the virtues of membership in a plutocracy supported by a full-court press of ideologues trained in conservative think tanks funded by themselves. The result has been an enriched class of winner-take-all politicians governing in Washington, where the net worth of lawmakers rose 15 percent from 2004 to 2010. Nearly half the members of Congress are millionaires, Freeland writes, and ten are “full-fledged plutocrats” sitting on fortunes of more than $100 million.

In a brief conclusion, Freeland hints at how this not-so-virtuous circle might be put right; the vividly narrated tales of empires rising and falling through the ages that amplify her here-and-now accounts make a powerful case that it must be.

As writers and scholars in all genres and disciplines seek to understand the poorly document- ed history of race, portrayals of black and mixed-race individuals in the visual arts have come to play an increasingly important evidentiary role. A good portion of the poems in *Thrall*, the fourth collection by Natasha Trethewey, recently named poet laureate of the United States, are inspired by pictorial representations—paintings, drawings, a photograph—that Trethewey describes and interprets with characteristic hard-edged eloquence, uncovering in each case “the story beneath this story.”

One series of lyrics derives from a set of “casta” paintings from colonial Mexico, dated 1715, that depict the “precise shade of in-between” used to identify children of “crossbreed” couplings as “mulato,” “mestiza,” or “castiza”—a “typology of taint,” Trethewey writes, an atlas for the “dark geographies of sex.” Interspersed with these history poems are elegies to her father, also a poet, “slicing the sky” as he casts his line on a long-ago fishing trip and “shadow-boxing the dark” in late life. Trethewey shows us repeatedly how “one enters the world through language,” and how the past, always personal, “holds us captive, its beautiful ruin etched on the mind’s eye.”

After the openhearted and high-spirited novel of the Ivy League *On Beauty* (Penguin Press, 2005), Zadie Smith’s latest work of fiction, named for the postal code of the district in which it is set, represents a return to the post-empire London of her first novel, *White Teeth*, but without the comedy. Told in four sections, written in sharply different narrative styles.
representing the points of view of its principal characters, all of whom grew up in the fictional Caldwell housing project, NW paints a bleak group portrait that inspires as it agitates.

Race, ethnicity, and immigrant status are the superficial markers of identity: white Leah Hanwell (Irish-English) is married to Algerian-Guadeloupien Michel; her best friend, Keisha, is black (first-generation Caribbean). But poverty unites NW's otherwise fragmented perspectives, and even Keisha—who changes her name to Natalie, works her way into a high-status profession (law), and marries a well-off Italian-Trinidadian—cannot escape the downward pull of its forces. Smith's realism spares no one, least of all the reader, from scenes that shake our faith in the redemptive value of hard work and good intentions; we understand why Leah cannot summon the hope her husband expects of her—to buy a house, to start a family. An urban feminism smolders in the ashes of these burned-out lives.

J unot Díaz's much-awaited new book is a collection of stories, many of which feature the street-smart, foulmouthed, womanizing Yunior, beloved by readers of Díaz's early stories and acclaimed novel The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (Riverhead Books, 2007). While these tales on the surface seem merely to chronicle Yunior's or other protagonists' promiscuous loves—"At least you were honest, which is more than I can say for me," the narrator admits to a girlfriend in "Flaca"—Díaz fills in a background of grim circumstance and childhood neglect that gradually shifts the focus from the too-many women in Yunior's life to the men: his priapic older brother dying of cancer; a posse of hard-luck friends; his Dominican father, mostly absent but psychologically brutal when present.

One trait all the heroes of This Is How You Lose Her share—with one another and with their author—is the capacity to "imagine." Most of all evident in an exuberantly inventive style, Díaz's imaginative powers also lend his characters a knack for self-invention and reinvention: the ever-hopeful serial philanderer's con. Although it may be the men in Yunior's life who set him on the wrong path, and whose influence works to keep him there, we are also willing to believe that when it comes to women, "Deep down, where my boys don't know me, I'm an optimist."

J anna Malamud Smith's An Absorbing Errand should swiftly gain a wide and devoted readership, for there is much to be learned in these pages by anyone contemplating a creative endeavor and plenty of wisdom to inspire and console the working artist or artisan. It is the rare manual of value to both novice and veteran.

After an opening essay that is Emersonian in its assured tone and deft insights—"Our chosen practices form our perspectives," she writes, and "When we think about imaginative acts, we often only partially attend to their central, obvious power: the way they dissipate clock time, a breeze shooing off a fog, and thus the way they amend mortal loss"—Smith, a working psychotherapist as well as an author, offers chapters on such topics as "fears," "recognition," and "shame" that combine analysis of books, movies, and other works of art with practical advice. If, like me, you thought you'd never want to read another retelling of the Oedipus myth, let Smith persuade you otherwise. Her Absorbing Errand is every bit as engaging as the creative work she urges readers to undertake: "Mastering form so that it can capture energy, feeling gratified by the mastery, we find a way to bear our desire."

It is the rare collection of essays republished in book form—even ones that appeared originally in the New Yorker, as many of Lepore's have—that do not read as if they've passed their expiration date. Book reviews lose interest once the books themselves have vanished from bookstore shelves; opinion pieces triggered by current events lack the spark of timeliness.

But each of Lepore's thoroughly researched and engagingly written essays in The Story of America offers a history lesson that only gains in significance when unmoored from the circumstances of composition. Many combine literature with history: biographical essays on Poe, Longfellow, and Dickens take center stage in this volume, with the lives of the latter two intersecting in 1842 on reciprocal transatlantic voyages.

There is pretty much no period in American history that Lepore's essays can't illuminate, from her opening takedown of Nathaniel Philbrick's Mayflower pilgrims, through "The Age of Paine" (Tom, that is), to stories of Asian and African American migration, "Chan, the Man" and "The Uprooted."

You might not be able to keep a copy of The Story of America in your pocket, but you would do well to keep one on your bedside table or stored for easy reference in your Kindle.
TELLING LIFE STORIES
New York City

Three Radcliffe Institute fellows—a novelist, a historian, and a biographer—gave alumnae/i and friends in New York City a taste of the cross-disciplinary discussions that occur at the Institute. The fellows spoke in early December about telling life stories from their differing perspectives.

JANE RHODES RI ’13, the Joy Foundation Fellow and a professor of American studies at Macalester College, described her work writing a biography of Marie Battle Singer, a social worker and black American expatriate who left the United States after World War II. Singer eventually settled in London, where she studied psychoanalysis with Anna Freud and became a renowned psychoanalyst.

Rhodes showed pictures of Singer—who was her mother’s sister—as she drew the broad outlines of her life. Born in 1910 in rural Mississippi to parents who were highly educated, she and her siblings were taught in a school that their parents founded. After a white man killed a black teacher on the grounds of the school in 1925, the family joined the Great Migration, with Marie and her sisters moving to Boston. Marie earned an undergraduate degree from Boston University and a master's in social work at Smith College. In 1948 she joined the International Refugee Organization and boarded a ship to Germany. She was soon promoted to assistant to the head of the IRO’s child-care program, a position that thrilled her. “It’s deeply ironic,” Rhodes said, that “getting ahead was available to her in occupied Germany.” Compared with what she was used to, Germany was luxurious, even in the wake of the war’s devastation.

RENÉE POZNANSKI RI ’13, a historian and the Lisa Goldberg Fellow at the Institute, holds the Yaakov and Poria Avnon Professorship of Holocaust Studies at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. She discussed telling the stories of more than one individual, studying letters, diaries, and reports for her book about the Jewish Resistance during World War II. She described reading accounts by internees at the Drancy camp, near Paris, where Jews were held.
Nancy F. Cott, the Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation Director of the Schlesinger Library, spoke about library matters at a luncheon in Washington, DC, in October.

Radcliff e on the Road events this spring will feature Radcliff e fellows and faculty members in Washington, DC (March 5), Seattle (May 9), and London (June 9). For more information about these events, contact Jessica Viklund at Jessica_Viklund@radcliffe.harvard.edu.

The Dean’s Advisory Council met in September before Lizabeth Cohen’s inaugural lecture.

Christine Dakin RI ’08, a well-known dancer and teacher, talks with Dean Lizabeth Cohen after the panel discussion.

Rajesh Parameswaran RI ’13, a fiction writer and the Beatrice Shepherd Blane Fellow at Radcliff e, said he likes to invent life stories. He’s currently writing a novel set on Barren Island, near New York City, where the city once dumped its garbage. His Radcliff e research partner is conducting historical research about the island that Parameswaran plans to use as a jumping-off point in imagining the novel. He engaged the audience by reading one of his short stories, “The Strange Career of Dr. Raju Gopalarajan,” a disturbing story about a man who poses as a physician after he loses his job at Comp USA.

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According to reports written by internees, conditions were at first deplorable, and people were starving. But soon the food improved, the Red Cross was permitted to visit, and the guards were not so vicious. “Hence, the conclusion drawn by the Jewish leaders,” Poznanski said. “If conditions were improving, it meant that killing Jews was not on the agenda.”

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EVENTS ONLINE

Catch Up on Institute Happenings

My Country, My Hopes
Lecture by Anson Chan, former chief secretary for administration of the Hong Kong special administrative region

February 21, 4 PM, Radcliffe Gymnasium

A Universe from Nothing
Lecture by Lawrence M. Krauss, the Foundation Professor in the School of Earth and Space Exploration and Physics Department and inaugural director of the Origins Initiative at Arizona State University

April 18, 4 PM, Radcliffe Gymnasium

All Things Considered Considered
Lecture by Melissa Block, host of All Things Considered

March 11, 4 PM, Radcliffe Gymnasium

City Building in Postwar America
In her inaugural lecture as dean of the Radcliffe Institute, Lizabeth Cohen RI ’02 addressed a topic central to her work as a scholar of 20th century urban history.

Honor Roll

Dean Elizabeth Cohen AM ’97, RI ’02 was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in October. Since its founding, by John Adams, James Bowdoin, John Hancock, and other scholar-patriots, the academy has elected leading “thinkers and doers” from each generation. The current membership includes more than 300 Nobel laureates, some 100 Pulitzer Prize winners, and many of the world’s most celebrated artists and performers.

Honored for her transcendent poetry, Marie Howe RI ’90 is the latest winner of the New York State Poet Award. She is a member of the writing faculty at Sarah Lawrence College, and her poems have appeared in the Atlantic, the Harvard Review, the New Yorker, Poetry, and Ploughshares. Her honors include National Endowment for the Arts and Guggenheim fellowships.

Justin Torres RI ’13 was one of the National Book Foundation’s “5 Under 35” honorees in the fiction category. He is the author of the short-story collection We the Animals (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).

Tiffani Williams RI ’05, an associate professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at Texas A&M University, has been selected as a PopTech Science Fellow: Class of 2012. Each year, PopTech selects 10 to 12 fellows drawn from different research fields.

The Beautiful and the Damned: A Portrait of the New India (Faber and Faber, 2011) earned Siddhartha Deb RI ’10 a 2012 PEN Award. He completed the book during his time at the Institute.

Adelaide Anderson Cummings ’34 was named poet laureate of Falmouth, Massachusetts, in recognition of her six books of verse.

When Johnny and Jane Come Marching Home: How All of Us Can Help Veterans (MIT Press, 2011), by Paula Caplan ’69, was named the Independent Publisher Indie Groundbreaking Book the month it was published. The book also won the 2011 American Publishers Award for Professional and Scholarly Excellence (PROSE Award) in
psychology and the silver medal in the psychology/mental health category at the 2012 Independent Publisher Book Awards.

**Magda Teter ri ’08** won fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. These will support her research and writing of a new book, *The Popes’ Dilemma: Politics and Power of Blood Libel in Italy and Poland*, under contract with Harvard University Press. In addition, Teter has been editing the *AJS Review*, a flagship journal for the Association for Jewish Studies, since July 2012, and she has published *Sinners on Trial: Jews and Sacrilege after the Reformation* (Harvard University Press, 2012), which she calls “the fruit of my year at Radcliffe.”

**INKINGS**

In the December 30 issue of the *New York Times Magazine*, *The Lives They Lived*, Cheryl Strayed published an eloquent tribute to **Adrienne Rich ’51**, which reviewed the experiences that shaped the poet’s work, including those of her undergraduate years at Radcliffe. In her memoir *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* (Knopf, 2012), Strayed talks about her admiration for Rich’s *The Dream of a Common Language: Poems, 1974–1977* (Norton, 1978). She writes, “It was true that *The Pacific Crest Trail, Volume 1: California* was now my bible, but *The Dream of a Common Language* was my religion.”

An essay by **Zadie Smith ri ’03**, “Joy,” appeared in the January 10 issue of the *New York Review of Books*. In it, she eloquently differentiated between “pleasure” and “joy” as she has experienced them. It should be noted that Smith earned a spot on the *New York Times* list “The 10 Best Books of 2012” with her recently published novel *NW* (Penguin Press, 2012), and also that James Wood singled out the book in the *New Yorker* blog Page-Turner. (See a review of *NW* on page 31.) Speaking of the *New Yorker*, Smith contributed an article to the December 17 issue, “Some Notes on Attunement,” in which she reflects on how she learned to like Joni Mitchell.

Also published in the December 17 issue of the *New Yorker* was “Creatures,” a short story by **Marisa Silver ’82** about parents who are called to their son’s school to talk about his controversial behavior.

**Junot Díaz ri ’04** was named a 2012 MacArthur Fellow. He was also among the five fiction finalists for the National Book Awards, for *This Is How You Lose Her*. The short-story collection appeared on the *New York Times* “100 Notable Books of 2012” list. (See a review on page 31.) In September, Díaz stopped by the NPR studios to guest DJ on the music show *Alt.Latino*.

In a *New York Times* Opinionator blog post from November 12, “An Ode to the King of Writerly Tools,” **Lois Levene ’90** wrote a tribute to her dog-eared thesaurus. Levene is among seven poets whose work is being installed at the new Kaiser Permanente Westside Medical Center in Hillsboro, Oregon.

The winter 2012 issue of the *Georgia Review* contains an essay, “Metamorphosis: From Light Verse to the Poetry of Witness,” by **Maxine Kumin ’46, AM ’48, ’81 ’63**.

**Alma Guillermoprieto ri ’07** exposed how her fellow journalists risk their lives every day in her home country in “Mexico: Risking Life for Truth,” which appeared in the *New York Review of Books* on November 22.

**Sylvia Earle ’68** isn’t just a renowned scientist, conservationist, and explorer—she’s also a record-setting deep-sea diver. She was profiled in the *New York Times Sunday Review* on October 20.

**Linda Greenhouse ’68** explored the connection between the Massachusetts compounding pharmacy scandal and the Supreme Court in “The Sound of Silence,” which appeared in the *New York Times* Opinionator blog on October 31.

Is the appeal of literary orphans born of something other than their tragedies? **Margot Livesey ri ’13** worked it out in “From Jane Eyre to Harry Potter: Why Readers Love Orphans” on WBUR’s *Cognoscenti* blog on October 15. (See page 15 for more on Livesey.)

**Annette Gordon-Reed JD ’84, ri ’13**—a law professor and an expert on Thomas Jefferson—reviewed the latest biography of him in an article titled “Thomas Jefferson Was Not a Monster: Debunking a Major New Biography of Our Third President.” It appeared in *Slate* on October 19. (See page 22 for more on this.)

On October 10, the *Boston Globe*’s...
Chowder blog talked to JOANNE CHANG ’91 about her big plans for Flour 4 and Myers + Chang.

In a “most-e-mailed” New York Times opinion piece from October 13, “The Self-Destruction of the 1 Percent,” CHRISTIA FREELAND ’90 advised America’s very rich not to confuse their own interests with the common good. (See page 30 for a review of Freeland’s new book.)

ANDREA CAMPBELL ’88, RI ’13, a political scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is the coauthor of a new study that’s explored in “Health and America’s Very Rich Not to Confuse Good,” published in the New York Times on October 1.

NANCY HOPKINS ’64, PHD ’71 contributed to the article “Bias Persists for Women of Science, a Study Finds,” which appeared in the New York Times on September 24. An MIT professor, Hopkins has long been concerned with the issue of gender parity in the sciences.

On October 1, the Boston Globe featured an analysis by MEIRA LEVINSON RI ’03, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, of Boston’s proposed school zoning plans. In “Study Finds Inequities in Schools’ Zone Plans,” Levinson suggested that the proposed plans are less fair than the current system.

DAVID REDMON RI ’11 and his filmmaking partner, ASHLEY SABIN, contributed an “op-doc”—a video opinion piece—to the New York Times on September 12. Published during New York Fashion Week, “Scouted” explored one source of the industry’s young models.

On August 25, ELLEN GOODMAN ’63 published her “Equal Rites Awards” in the Boston Globe. In the article, she called out those doing the most to slow down women’s progress.

“Peering Into the Exquisite Life of Rare Books,” which appeared in the New York Times on July 24, reported on the Rare Book School, of which MICHAEL SUAREZ RI ’06 is the director. It’s not your average summer school.

SHELF LIFE

The prizewinning poet CYNTHIA ZARIN ’81 makes her prose debut with An Enlarged Heart: A Personal History (Knopf, 2013). The collection of essays is an exploration of her life, her loves, and the passage of time.

Agewise: Fighting the New Ageism in America (University of Chicago Press, 2011), by MARGARET MORGANROTH GULLETTE ’82, PHD ’75, BI ’87, won the 2012 Eric Hoffer Award in the health category. The book has garnered praise from the likes of KATHA POLLITT ’71, who said, “Eloquent and infuriating, packed with facts and bristling with ideas. Agewise is essential reading for anyone who is ‘aging’—which is to say, everyone.”

HAUWA IBRAHIM RI ’09 has published Practicing Shariah Law: Seven Strategies for Achieving Justice in Shariah Courts (American Bar Association, 2012), a book she conceived during her fellowship year. Ibrahim is currently a visiting lecturer at the Harvard Divinity School and a research associate at the Women’s Studies in Religion Program.

The Refrain (Dos Madres Press, 2012) is the latest collection of poems by ANNE WHITEHOUSE ’76. “Heartfelt, profound, and deeply insightful, her poems matter,” said Boston Literary Magazine. “A lot.”


A new collection of essays by KATIE ROIPHE ’90, In Praise of Messy Lives (Dial Press, 2012), was lauded by Dwight Garner in the New York Times. He called the book “devastatingly good” and her essays “lean and literate, not unlike Orwell’s, with a frightening ratio of velocity to torque.”

The latest from KIANA DAVENPORT BI ’93 is The Spy Lover (Thomas & Mercer, 2012), an epic novel set during the Civil War and based on her own family history.


EVE M. TROUTT POWELL ’83, AM ’88, PHD ’95, RI ’06 has published Tell This in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Empire (Stanford University Press, 2012). In the book, she reconsiders slavery in the modern Middle East, where the practice crossed racial and ethnic lines.

A memoir from MARINA VON NEUMANN WHITMAN ’56, The Martian’s Daughter (University of Michigan Press, 2012), provides a fresh, personal glimpse into the life of her father, the renowned mathematician and inventor of game theory John von Neumann, and recounts her experiences serving on the President’s Council of Economic Advisers in the early 1970s and as GM’s vice president and chief economist in the 1980s. Whitman, a highly respected economist, is currently a professor of business administration and public policy at the University of Michigan.

THEDA SKOCPOL AM ’72, PHD ’75, the Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology at Harvard, published Obama and America’s Political Future (Harvard University Press, 2012) shortly before the election. Publishers Weekly said, “Anyone who is passionately concerned about politics and prefers thoughtful discussion to polemic will find this book invaluable.”

Our Andromeda (Copper Canyon Press, 2012) is the third poetry collection from BRENDA SCHAUGHNESSY RI ’01. The New Yorker’s Hilton Als called it a monumental work that “makes hash of those tired superlatives that will no
doubt crop up in subsequent reviews.”

AUDRY LYNCH ‘55 has been quite productive these past few years. She recently published Garth Jeffers Recalls His Father, Robinson Jeffers: Recollections of a Poet’s Son (Edwin Mellen Press, 2012), right on the heels of the Development of Roy Simmonds as a Steinbeck Scholar as Evidenced through His Letters: The Life and Achievement of an Independent Academic (Edwin Mellen Press, 2010) and The Rebel Figure in American Literature and Film: The Interconnectedness of John Steinbeck and James Dean (Edwin Mellen Press, 2009).

In The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust (Columbia University Press, 2012), MARIANNE HIRSCH ’85 fleshes out the concept of postmemory: that memories of traumatic events live on to mark the lives of those who were not there to experience them.


A new novella and iPad app by ALEXANDRA CHASIN B1 ’97, Brief (Jaded Ibis Productions, 2012), is written, designed, and programmed specifically to be read as an interactive book. Brief randomly pulls images to illustrate the text of the novel, providing a different visual experience for every reader. Chasin teaches in the literary studies department at Eugene Lang College The New School for Liberal Arts.

JOAN ALESHIRE ’60 published a fifth book of poems, Happily (Four Way Books, 2012). Aleshire has been a visiting writer in the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College since 1983.

MARGARET W. ROSSITER ’66 has published the third volume of her landmark survey Women Scientists in America: Forging a New World since 1972 (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012). She is the Marie Underhill Noll Professor of History of Science at Cornell University, served as the editor of Isis from 1994 to 2003, and was named a 1989 MacArthur Fellow.

BODE OMOJOLA ’05, a Five College Associate Professor of Music at Mount Holyoke College, published a new book, Yorùbá Music in the Twentieth Century: Identity, Agency, and Performance Practice (University of Rochester Press, 2012). Omojola draws on extensive field research conducted over the course of two decades to examine both traditional and contemporary Yorùbà genres.

Just out, Raving Violet (Black Opal Books, 2013) is a memoir in the form of short stories by VALERIE GILBERT ’85. Gilbert, a native New Yorker and natural storyteller, started putting her stories on stage in solo shows, stand-up comedy, storytelling gigs, and competitions. She has just started committing them to the written page, and her second book, Memories, Dreams, and Deflections, will be published by Black Opal in late 2013.

In her book The American Red Cross from Clara Barton to the New Deal (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), MARIAN MOSER JONES ’91 is a history of the charitable organization from its inception in 1881 through the 1930s. Jones is an assistant professor of family science at the University of Maryland School of Public Health.

SUSAN HODARA ’75 is among the four writers who share surprising and moving memories of their mothers in Still Here Thinking of You: A Second Chance with Our Mothers (Big Table Publishing, 2013). Hodara is a journalist, memoirist, and teacher who has been teaching memoir writing since 2003. Her short memoirs have appeared in a variety of literary journals and anthologies—one was nominated for a Pushcart Prize—and her articles are published in Communication Arts, the New York Times, and elsewhere.

Watch for a new book from SHERYL SANDBERG ’91, MBA ’95, COO of the social-networking site Facebook, to come out in March. Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead (Knopf, 2013) grew out of a TED talk she gave about women and the workplace.

Also out in March, Tiger Writing: Art, Culture, and the Interdependent Self (Harvard University Press, 2013) is the written version of the 2012 William E. Massey Sr. Lectures in the History of American Civilizations, which GISH JEN ’77, BI ’71, RI ’02 delivered at Harvard from April 30 to May 2 of last year. In it, she offers a multi-layered view into art, narrative, and the profound differences that exist between East and West. Jen dedicates the book to Werner Sollors, the Henry B. and Anne M. Cabot Professor of English Literature and a professor of African and African American studies at Harvard. (Read more about Sollors on page 20.)

ART AWARE

ROMUALD KARMAKAR RI ’13 and SARAH SZE RI ’06 will both present their work at the Venice Biennale. Karmakar will represent Germany, alongside the Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei; Sze, the United States. The 55th International Art Exhibition will take place from June 1 to November 24 of this year.

Photographs and video works by SHARON LOCKHART RI ’08, about the textile work and choreography of the Israeli artist Noa Eshkol, are on view at the Jewish Museum in New York City. The show, appropriately named Sharon Lockhart | Noa Eshkol, is up through March 24. Lockhart also appeared at the Harvard Film Archive on September 17 to screen her film Double Tide (2009), a portrait of a Maine clam digger during a rare day with two low tides.

JESSECA FERGUSON ’71 most recently showed her artwork—images, photo objects, and collages—in the show Sampler—The USM Teaching Collection, which ran from September 27 to December 9 at the University of Southern Maine. Prior to that, she was in the group show Off the Books: Three Photographers in Brattleboro, Vermont, and held a solo exhibition, Jesseca Ferguson: Museum of Memory, at the University of Louisville’s Hite Art Institute.

JENNIFER AMADEO-HOLL ’81 showed her artwork in an exhibit, The Possibles, at the Howard Yezerski Gallery in Boston, from September 7 to October 2. Her paintings explore the potential for simple shapes to trigger memories and emotions, along with the familiarity and strangeness inherent in abstraction.

ROXANE ZANO ’75, a director at Sotheby’s, is now blogging about art from new markets: India, the Middle East and North Africa, and Turkey. Her blog, titled “Cultural Crossroads,” can be found under the Inside Sotheby’s tab on its website.
ON STAGE AND SCREEN

Leviathan—a film by Lucien Casta- ing-Taylor '10, AM '11 and Vérèna Paravel R1 '13—was nominated for the Stella Artois Truer Than Fiction Award of the 2013 Independent Spirit Awards. The film, which had its US debut at the New York Film Festival, also generated a bit of buzz at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival. The New York Times featured their work in “The Merger of Academia and Art House: Harvard Filmmakers’ Messy World,” which appeared on August 31.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, HBO has signed the playwright Lydia R. Diamond ‘12 to adapt her work Stick Fly into a two-hourlong drama. Diamond’s play rose from the Huntington Theatre and then transferred to Broadway, where it was coproduced by Alicia Keys.

Diamond, Caridad Svich '03, and Anna Deavere Smith '92 were invited to contribute to the project MyAmerica by Centerstage, the state theater of Maryland. In celebration of its 50th anniversary, fifty playwrights contributed a short monologue that answers the question “What is my America?” These are available at http://myamerica.centerstage.org/.

A new play by Svich, Spark, received readings at the University of Iowa on December 4 and at the University of California, Davis, on December 7. Her plays Love in the Time of Cholera and In the Time of the Butterflies ran through December at Repertorio Español in New York City. Other plays that were produced this past fall include 12 Ophelias (a play with songs) and Fugitive Pieces. Recently in print are Svich’s Blasted Heavens: Five Contemporary Plays Inspired by the Greeks (Eyecorner Press, 2012) and Iphigenia Crash Land Falls on the Neon Shell That Was Once Her Heart (a rave fable) (Broadway Play Publishing, 2012). Finally, Svich’s Guap—a play that played at Borderlands Theater in Tucson, Arizona, in October—received a 2012 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award, and Magnificent Waste was a finalist for the 2012 PEN Center USA Literary Award in Drama.

Queen of Versailles, the well-received film by photographer Lauren Greenfield '87—it won her the US Directing Award: Documentary after screening on the opening night of the 2012 Sundance Film Festival—came out on DVD in November. Queen of Versailles, which follows the time-share mogul David Siegel and his wife, Jackie, as they experience a reversal of fortune, was one of last year’s most-watched documentaries.

A performance piece by David Levine AM '05, R1 '13—which showed at Essex Street Market in New York City from September 21 to September 30—appealed to fans of conceptual, site-specific theater . . . and voyeurs. The New York Times called Habit a “genre-bending art-theater project.”

The Color of Conscience: Human Rights in Idaho, a documentary produced by Marcia Franklin '84, was the winner in the television category of a 2012 Silver Gavel Award for Media and the Arts, awarded by the American Bar Association. The hourlong program chronicles the efforts by Idaho human rights advocates over more than 20 years to counter the Aryan Nations, a white supremacist group that had a compound in the northern part of the state, and examines current human rights concerns in the state. Franklin has been a producer and host at Idaho Public Television since 1990. In 2000, her documentary, Hearts and Minds: Teens and Mental Illness, won a George Foster Peabody Award.

GRACE NOTES

The world premiere recording Laura Elise Schwendinger: 3 Works for Solo Instruments and Orchestra (Albany Records, 2012) became available in December. The audio CD, produced by the Grammy Award winner Judith Sherman, features the compositions of Laura Schwendinger R1 '03 and performances by Matt Haimovitz, Christina Jennings, and Curtis Macomber.

The musical Once—workshopped at the A.R.T. by John Tiffany R1 '11 during his fellowship year—continues to take the showbiz world by storm. On December 5, Once, which won the 2012 Best Musical Tony Award, picked up a Grammy nomination for Best Musical Theater Album. It will compete for the prize with Follies, The Gershwins’ Porgy & Bess, Newsies, and Nice Work If You Can Get It. The Institute will be rooting for Tiffany on February 10, when the Grammy Awards take place. Tiffany announced in December that he was stepping down as the associate director of the National Theatre of Scotland to focus on freelance projects.

PUBLIC LIFE

Two recent moon missions, led by Maria Zuber R1 '03, revealed “features not previously resolved, including tectonic structures, volcanic landforms, basin rings, crater central peaks, and numerous simple craters.” The findings were announced at the meeting of the American Geophysical Union, and “Gravity Field of the Moon from the Gravity Recovery and Interior Laboratory (GRAIL) Mission” was published online by Science Express. “We have known that the moon’s crust and other planetary crusts have been bombarded by impacts, but none of us could have predicted just how cracked the lunar crust is,” said Zuber, who is the E. A. Griswold Professor of Geophysics at MIT.

Joan V. Ruderman AM ’89, R1 ’11 has been named the first woman president and director of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, the nearly 125-year-old nonprofit research center for biology, biomedicine, and environmental science. She served as a senior advisor to the Institute’s science program through the end of 2012.

Maria Tatar BI ’78, AM ’79, R1 ’07 appeared on WBUR’s On Point with Tom Ashbrook on October 17 discussing fairy tales. She’s the editor and translator of The Annotated Brothers Grimm (W. W. Norton, 2012)—an uncensored volume containing translations that preserve the spirit of the originals. Tatar was also profiled in the Boston Globe on October 27.

Tatar and many other Radcliffe affiliates participated in the Boston Book Festival on October 27. Junot Díaz RI ’03, Tsitsi Jaji R1 ’13, Tayari Jones R1 ’12, Claire Messud RI ’05, Edith Pearlman ’57, Leah Price ’91, RI ’07, and Justin Torres RI ’13.

Meenakshi Narain RI ’07 is part of the CERN team responsible for the discovery of the Higgs boson, or “God particle.” CERN confirmed in September that the new particle had been observed at the Large Hadron Collider and upheld by peer review.

HAVE YOU DONE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY?

SHARE IT: e-mail us at magazine@radcliffe.harvard.edu.
Paul Steinhardt

The theoretical physicist Paul Steinhardt RI ’13 is certainly busy at the Radcliffe Institute, where he is the 2012–2013 Lillian Gollay Knafel Fellow. In addition to pursuing a radical alternative to the big bang theory and studying a new class of synthetically designed materials, he is drafting a popular book that details the search for a new form of matter known as a quasicrystal—appropriate pursuits for someone who holds the title of Albert Einstein Professor in Science at Princeton University.

Geometry and Permafrost

Who are your heroes?
I enjoy having heroes, so I have many, ranging from personal to scientific. If I have to limit myself to one, it would be Richard Feynman, who was a profound influence since I first met him as an undergraduate at Caltech.

What inspires you?
Being told something is impossible.

What is your fantasy career?
I feel fortunate to be living it.

What is the most challenging aspect of being a Radcliffe fellow?
Time management—so many interesting people, so many activities, and too few hours in a day.

You liken crystal geometry to tiling. If you could retile your shower in any pattern, what would it look like?
I might choose a quasicrystal pattern that no one has ever seen before.)

These quasicrystals have a geometry that was previously thought impossible. Can you briefly explain this?
For thousands of years, all known minerals and pure materials were crystals, in which the atoms stack together like building blocks or bricks in a regularly repeating pattern in three dimensions. Regular patterns only allow certain symmetries; for example, you can put squares, rectangles, hexagons, triangles, and parallelograms together to make regular tesselation of your shower floor, but try doing it with pentagons, heptagons, or any shapes with higher symmetry—it is hopeless.

Similarly, in three dimensions, crystals cannot have any fivefold, sevenfold, or higher-fold symmetry axes, as was first proved in the 19th century. Since then, scientists have thought these symmetries were impossible for solids. However, in the 1980s, my student and I showed this is incorrect, with new structures we called “quasicrystals.”

The first naturally formed quasicrystal that we discovered, in a remote region of far-eastern Russia.

You collected that quasicrystal by traveling with an international team to a restricted area of Russia, Chukotka, where you panned for meteorite fragments for 10 days. How would you describe that region?
In a word, otherworldly. There is virtually no one to be seen once you leave the one major town. Nature is in control. Almost everywhere is permafrost. Winter is never far away. The sky never gets truly dark at night. Beautiful strange clouds and unusual rainbows appear almost daily. Russian bears and billions of mosquitoes are constants. In short: peaceful, beautiful, strange, and dangerous.

We noticed a cat in the expedition photos. How did a cat end up on the scientific team?
Bucks the cat was brought by our driver, Victor Komelkov, and his wife, Olga Komelkova, who was both camp cook and lawyer for the team. Bucks was a fearless traveler who sat atop Olga in the truck most of the way to and fro.

What’s the best way to kill time on the permafrost?
Sitting alongside Victor, I was transfixed by watching every twist, turn, and dive he made with the vehicle. There were no roads, so he had to make moment-by-moment decisions on which way to turn. I tried to see if I could get to the point where I could guess which turn to make, but I never succeeded, even after more than seven days in the field. There were other things to watch—the wildlife and flowers, for example—and in one area there were giant porcini mushrooms that we collected and later consumed.

Where to next?
Wherever the science leads us. It’s too early to say.
When Mary Anschuetz Vogt '68 entered Radcliffe College, in 1964, she never could have anticipated the depth of her future connection with the place. She met her husband, Terry Vogt '68, and made many lifelong friends in and around the Radcliffe Quad. Their daughter, Lisa Vogt '01, also attended Harvard-Radcliffe.

“I feel intimately linked to Radcliffe,” says Mary. “And I think the Radcliffe Institute embodies Radcliffe College’s adventurous spirit.”

So it’s no surprise that Mary, an editor and researcher, and Terry, a managing director of an international carbon-market investment firm, choose to support what they call “the inimitable Radcliffe Institute” through regular gifts to the Annual Fund.

The Vogts, like all donors, receive full Harvard College Fund class credit for their contributions, and their gifts help the Institute keep its programs and resources—whether fellows' talks, the Schlesinger Library, or yearly conferences—open to the public.
CROSSING BORDERS
IMMIGRATION AND GENDER IN THE AMERICAS

April 25–26, 2013

The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study will bring together academics, practitioners, and artists to examine how gender, race, and social class shape the experience of immigrants and their children in the Americas.

The event is free and open to the public. Registration is required. For more information, please visit www.radcliffe.harvard.edu.