

WE DON'T GET TO CHOOSE
WHEN WE WERE BORN.
WE DON'T CHOOSE WHAT
NATURAL DISASTERS,
EPIDEMIOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES,
STOCK MARKET CRASHES,
TYRANNICAL REGIMES, OR
WARS OUR GENERATIONS
FACE. WE ONLY GET TO
CHOOSE HOW WE REACT.

PROFESSOR WENDY BETH HYMAN IN A MESSAGE
TO HER STUDENTS ON MARCH 11, 2020

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WRITTEN ON STONE

An anonymous love letter written in March as campus began to shut down as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PHOTO BY TANYA ROSEN-JONES '97

ON THE COVER

Words from Wendy Beth Hyman's final lecture before students were sent home to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. See page 20.

LETTERING BY RYAN SPROWL



CLASS OF
2020



What is Certain is Oberlin

TWO SENIORS CAME TO SEE ME IN MARCH, JUST AFTER I HAD ANNOUNCED THAT A ONCE-IN-A-century pandemic was forcing the college to close its campus and move classes online. Their tears and pleas for a less painful course reflected the reality of the hour: Our Oberlin community was being ripped apart. As I said to the students in those waning hours on campus, these events will define all of us in profound ways. They will realign your worldview, even reframe how you perceive your college experience.

It was not in-the-moment wisdom that I was imparting; rather, it was knowledge born out of having spoken to alumni throughout the ages about their time on campus during world-changing events. I knew from those conversations that from turbulence and pain emerges context and perspective. When matters feel their most chaotic, we invariably find purposefulness and clarity.

Throughout Oberlin’s 187 years, we have survived many periods of hardship when we questioned, wept, and pleaded. In these moments of greatest challenge, we have always remained anchored. Amidst times of uncertainty, what is certain is Oberlin.

During the flu pandemic of 1918, Oberlin followed the instructions of Ohio health officials and shut down all public assemblies for several weeks in the fall. According to the October 16, 1918, issue of the *Oberlin Review*, male students in the Student Army Training Corps were quarantined from female students and the town of Oberlin to prevent the spread of disease. (Apparently the women needed the extra protection of social distancing.) Ill men were transported to “an infirmary at Mrs. Lillian Martin Sherrill’s farm just outside town.” When cases spiked after winter break, leaders suspended large gatherings again.

We were in the midst of World War I—the war to end all wars. Oberlin faced the challenge of maintaining adequate enrollment as young men were drawn into service. The March 1918 installment of this magazine was a “Special Help-Win-the-War Issue.”

In the decades that followed, we continued to meet history as other challenges threatened the security and sanctity of Oberlin. World War II. The Civil Rights Movement. Vietnam. After the Kent State shootings, Oberlin canceled its classes for the rest of the year. September 11, 2001, brought its own unique difficulties.

Through it all, Oberlin has been resolute in its mission and remained a true, steadfast reminder of an evolving vision to improve the world. We have learned, adapted, and innovated.

The COVID-19 pandemic will be recorded as the next in a series of historic moments that have compelled us to lead. We will respond to this time with the same determination, purpose, and optimism with which we have met every other difficult period in our history.

A century ago, the 1920 college yearbook was devoted entirely to those who served, and dedicated to those lost, during World War I. It was introduced with these words: “We offer you not a mere account of the past year, but with profound humility and just pride we have attempted to honor every Oberlin man and woman who has given his and her best thought, strength, and life in service during these years of conflict.”

It seems important in this current historic moment to recall our history of perseverance. To seek the purposefulness and clarity that challenging events often obscure. To remember with humility and pride those who have given their best thoughts.

And to affirm once again in times of tumult and uncertainty—what is certain is Oberlin.

CARMEN TWILLIE AMBAR
President, Oberlin College

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CLASH, CLARIFIED

I was heartened to read about the students and professor researching how best to support the Rohingya people and the refugee community in Bangladesh through climate resilience work (“Oberlin Professor, Students Research Crisis in Rohingya,” Fall/Winter 2019). I wanted to note an important clarification in the framing of the crisis.

The writer noted that the Rohingya crisis escalated due to “clashes between a Rohingya rebel group and the Myanmar army.” In fact, the events of August 25, 2017—which have now been classified as part of a genocide by reputable observers—were the effects of a carefully executed attack by the Myanmar army. There is significant evidence to show that the Myanmar army was long preparing for these attacks and to carry out ethnic cleansing on a huge scale, and the small rebel action simply provided a welcome excuse.

I’m proud to have learned much at Oberlin that I am now able to use in my role at a human rights organization in Washington, D.C., and to support the Rohingya people through my work as a convener of the Jewish Rohingya Justice Network.

HANNAH WEILBACHER ’14
Washington, D.C.

NET VALUE

I’m puzzled by the college’s relationship with the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association (OSCA) and confused by the description of OSCA as inequitable and a “\$1.9 million annual negative impact” (“The Oberlin Way Forward,” Fall/Winter 2019). I suggest a reframing to recognize OSCA as a unique and valuable feature of the Oberlin experience. OSCA provides students the opportunity to

make social connections by working together, to learn about group behavior and decision-making, to live the school’s “learning and labor” motto, to learn practical skills like planning and cooking meals, and to gain a first-hand understanding of why hair nets, food labels, and doing the job you signed up for are important.

So why doesn’t Oberlin talk about OSCA as a program—similar to athletics—that serves many students, has great value, and also has a cost? My son came home from his first semester at Oberlin with new skills and knowledge, including the ability to cook pizza for 50. How cool is that?!

OSCA can better support Oberlin too. OSCA works because dining services provides backup when co-ops and equipment don’t all come together as planned. OSCA should pay fairly for that and for its buildings and equipment. Of course it’s cheaper to be in OSCA than the dining plan because the kids are managing their own dining service, working five hours a week and eating a lot of lentils and rice.

Please shift the dialogue about OSCA as a burden and instead hold it up as one of Oberlin’s many valuable offerings.

RUTHANN RUDEL ’86 P’24
Cambridge, Mass.

NOTE ON CAMP

For all Oberlin alums, there was someone or something special that attracted them to Oberlin. For me, that someone was Jean Daly Booker ’48 (Losses, Fall/Winter 2019). For three summers I was a camper at a camp in the New Hampshire hills where Jean was the camp director.

Jean exuded both energy and character. I had never met anyone quite like her, and I yearned for a chance to talk with her more personally. The opportunity finally arose when I was 14 and ready to enter high school. At that time, I had not really internalized that there were many kinds of leaders, so I asked her: “How could a shy, studious person like me ever be a leader?” She did see a leader in me, saw that I had organizational and quiet interpersonal skills that I could develop and use. I was inspired by her example to think that Oberlin must be the right school for me.

I saw Jean only once again after that, but I thought of her words when, as Oberlin

senior, I chaired the honor committee and became president of Russian House, and again later when I took on leadership roles in my university and my professional organization, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. The memorial notes Jean’s Booker’s luminous career in Dayton. But ripples from her life extend far beyond Ohio.

MARGERY CHALIFOUX COOMBS ’67
Amherst, Mass.

The writer is professor emerita of biology at the University of Massachusetts.

CLASSICAL MUSING

The article on W.S. Scarborough (“A Classical Educator,” Spring 2019) inspired me to read Michele Ronnick’s edition of his autobiography.

He truly loved Oberlin, because he was completely accepted and never experienced prejudice. He developed warm relationships that lasted his whole life. His peers include Mary Church Terrell; Charles Martin Hall; Peter Dudley Allen; Dr. Florence Baier, an educator and physician; an advisor to the King of Siam; and prominent lawyers, congressmen, and college presidents. At the class’s 50th reunion, his class boasted they “gave Oberlin six trustees.”

Scarborough fought racism as an esteemed scholar in classics who was respected by colleagues at Ivy League schools, by teaching students, as a college president, and through publishing articles. He also was in demand to give speeches and was regularly called to get out the African American vote. He knew presidents Harding and Taft, Ohio governors, members of Congress, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Langston Hughes, and Booker T. Washington, and he was friends with Frederick Douglass. Although he and Booker T. Washington differed on approaches, they respected each other.

Kudos to Ronnick for her hundreds of notes that clarified references unfamiliar today.

SARAH MOORHEAD ’63
Mesa, Ariz.

Send letters to *Oberlin Alumni Magazine*, 247 W. Lorain St., Suite C, Oberlin, OH 44074-1089; or send emails to alum.mag@oberlin.edu. The magazine reserves the right to determine the suitability of letters for publication and to edit them for accuracy and length.

Around Tappan Square





Oberlin Responds to COVID-19

IN THE SPACE OF LESS THAN A FORTNIGHT, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Oberlin College transformed itself from a bustling residential campus to a decentralized, virtual campus spread across the globe but centered mostly in people's homes. Along the way, faculty, staff, and students had to navigate a new learning landscape and even a new vocabulary, ranging from asynchronous classes to breakout rooms to Zoom video meetings. While teaching and learning remained the immediate emphasis, everything else the college does to support its core mission—advancement, communications, student support, career development, and, of course, student recruitment—also required new ways of thinking and doing.

Following an exit for spring recess that occurred more than a week earlier than planned, students began classes online immediately after break. The creativity at the heart of Oberlin's liberal arts approach allowed for a wide variety of instruction and evaluation modes, and the care and compassion of faculty and staff helped to soften the disruption of the transition for many (see this issue's cover story for messages faculty members delivered to students, along with a timeline of events).

In a cover letter accompanying the results of a student survey conducted by Student Senate, senator Cait Kelley writes that it is "truly impressive how 'nimble' (a word often mentioned both seriously and in jest in the faculty committee meetings I attend) Oberlin has been during this crisis. I'm sure, never in the history of Oberlin, have faculty and staff learned how to use new forms of technology and programs this quickly!"

New, second-module courses were added that directly addressed the COVID-19 pandemic, and many existing courses shifted to include the pandemic in their study. The college also created a groundbreaking initiative that brought Oberlin-level learning—and credits—directly to high school seniors accepted into the Class of 2024.

THE COVID-19 CURRICULUM

More than a dozen courses helped students examine the broad social impact and the personal ramifications of COVID-19. Many of these courses encouraged students to express the disorientation and strangeness of their own lived experience.

"The pandemic touches every aspect of our lives, and our faculty are responding to the challenge by offering a remarkable range of courses on COVID-19 and pandemics generally," said David Kamitsuka, dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, when the new offerings were launched. "From art to chemistry to politics, faculty are applying their disciplinary training to help our students understand and appreciate the impact and significance of the pandemic."

But Oberlin's faculty went beyond simply reframing their courses for online delivery, says Laura Baudot, associate dean of the College of the Arts & Sciences. "The faculty are drawing from their disciplinary training to shed light on this complex global phenomenon. In many cases, faculty are adding these modules to an already full-time teaching load."

Professor of Psychology Cindy Frantz explored humans' psychological need for belonging and connection, the importance of social contact, and the consequences of isolation in her class, *Staying Connected in an Age of Isolation*. "I actually feel called to teach this course," Frantz says. "This is a fascinating, teachable moment to watch happen in real time and to explore systematically through the lens of psychological science."

Professor of Mathematics Jeff Witmer approached the topics of infectious diseases, transmission, and herd immunity in his statistics course, *Intro to Epidemiology: Getting to Know the Effects of a Coronavirus*.

"The course draws upon my knowledge of statistics, which is one part of epidemiology, but there is a lot I didn't know three weeks ago that I've since taught myself," he says.

“Fortunately, statisticians around the country have been sharing ideas, including one of my former students, Christl Donnelly.”

A professor of statistical epidemiology at Imperial College London and one of the world’s leading experts in infectious disease epidemiology, Donnelly ’88 was lead author of the first scientific paper to investigate the SARS outbreak of 2002-03. Witmer says Donnelly was instrumental in directing him to important resources, and she agreed to do a live Q&A session with his class, despite the five-hour time difference between Oberlin and London.

Other COVID-19 course offerings included Continuity through Disruption, Arts Practice Beyond the Institution, team-taught by studio art faculty; Finding Well-being and Ways Forward Through Adversity (biology); Drug Development and the Coronavirus (chemistry); Disability and Queer Community Health in Times of Pandemic (comparative American studies); Choreographing Catastrophe (dance); the Politics of COVID-19 (politics); Covering Crisis: Storytelling Across Media (rhetoric and composition); and Emergency Preparedness for Performing Arts Organizations (theater).

The Career Development Center offered the 200 students participating in its Career Communities program the opportunity to design an independent project based on one of the COVID-19 second-module courses. The new plan replaces the workplace experiences that are normally part of the program.

“Members of the Career Communities program worked very hard this year to hone their skills and secure summer internships,” says Dana Hamdan, associate dean of student life and executive director of the Career Development Center. “While there is no substitute for the rich experience our students would receive as interns, especially with Oberlin alumni and parents, we believe the independent projects will give them an opportunity to engage productively with the challenges we are facing today.”

COLLEGE CLASS FOR ADMITTED STUDENTS

Throughout the month of April, high school students who would normally be visiting campus to learn more about academics and student life experienced their Oberlin visits virtually through live Q&A sessions, video

hangouts and class visits, and webinars on a range of topics hosted by faculty, student, and staff panelists. But in response to the global health pandemic, Oberlin offered admitted students even more: a college class for college credit.

Admitted members of the Class of 2024 had the opportunity to engage with faculty across multiple disciplines during a free, eight-week remote course designed specifically for them. Uncovering COVID-19: Critical Liberal Arts Perspectives offered a holistic approach to the complex global phenomenon. More than 500 admitted students participated in the class, prompting the college to offer a second session this summer, as well as another course unrelated to the crisis. All of these courses offer college credit.

Oberlin faculty members in biology, mathematics, politics, comparative American studies, cinema studies, economics, psychology, and rhetoric and composition provided a variety of perspectives on the pandemic, demonstrating the value of an interdisciplinary approach for fully comprehending the crisis. The course thus doubled as an introduction to the nature of liberal arts learning. Student leaders led small-group discussions following the faculty-led lectures, both to help students deepen their understanding of the topic in conversation with their peers and to share their knowledge of the student experience at Oberlin.

Oberlin’s student newspaper, the *Oberlin Review*, worked with the students to create a multimedia digital hub that represents the different ways students are grappling with the pandemic.

“In many ways, having the opportunity to work on the course for admitted students reminded me of the best parts of why I chose to come to Oberlin in the first place,” says fourth-year student Nathan Carpenter, editor-in-chief of the *Review*. “It means a lot to see the genuine investment from faculty in helping all of us to better understand what’s happening in our lives right now, from the perspectives of their different academic disciplines. It’s also been incredible to see the excitement on the part of admitted students—they want to engage with these big questions in a way that strikes me as very Oberlin.”



STITCH PERFECT

Oberlin Costume Shop Produces Face Masks

Heather Leigh Brown, manager of the theater department’s costume shop, made 130 masks that were sent to Cleveland Clinic, plus a small number for the



campus community. Brown says the masks are meant to replace general surgical masks, not the specialty filtered or wired ones, as they're made from 100 percent cotton fabric and elastic left over from past theater productions. "To me, as a theater artist, sewing is a means to an end," she says. "Live storytelling is that end. But it is a skill that I have that I could do something with. As much as anyone, I have friends and relatives for whom getting a cold would be hard, let alone

COVID-19. Mask-making seemed like the responsible choice."

Through efforts led by Lorain County Community College and its Fab Lab, staff at Oberlin have also partnered to 3D-print the headband component of face shields used by healthcare workers and others on the front lines of the pandemic. The headbands are then delivered to the Lorain County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security for distribution.



PANDEMIC ACADEMICS

Virtual Commencement, Real Achievements

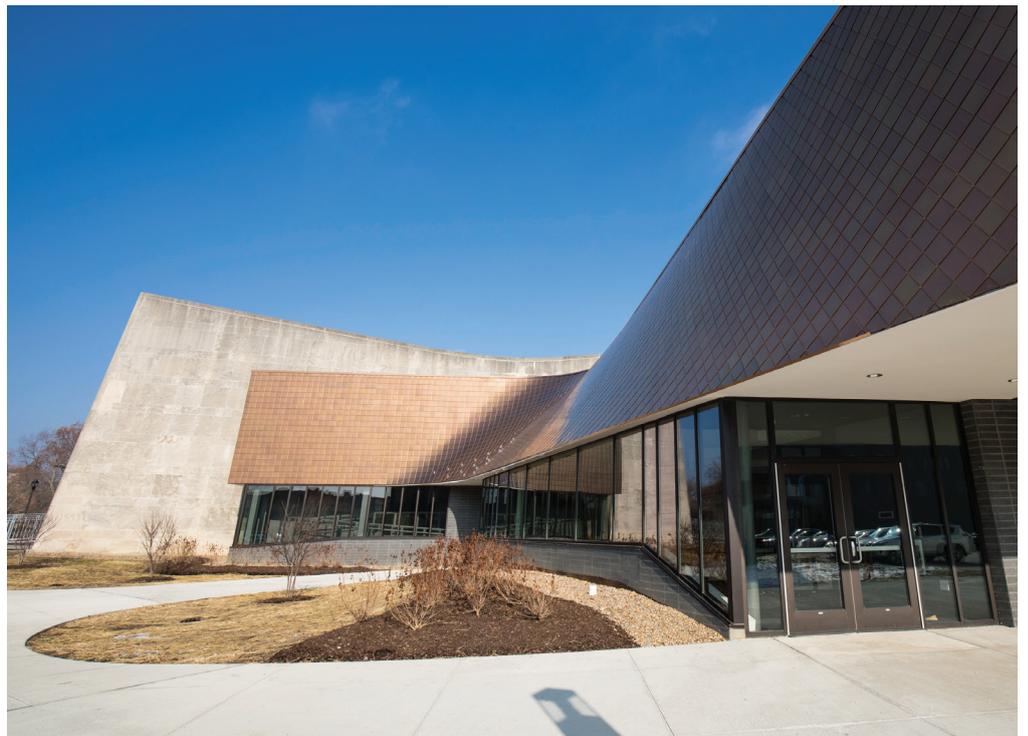
With Commencement/Reunion Weekend canceled this year, Oberlin invited its graduating seniors, their families, and alumni and friends to participate in virtual commencement week celebrations, an opportunity to commemorate the Class of 2020 in a public and uniquely Oberlin way. Highlights included the Crimson and Gold Convocation, during which President Ambar presented her annual state-of-the-college address; the Baccalaureate Ceremony, which featured student panelists of various faiths discussing the topic "On Parting Again: Saying Goodbye During the Coronavirus Pandemic"; commencement itself, with speakers President Ambar, Board of Trustees Chair T. Chris Canavan '84, and Naeisha McClain '20 (above); and various senior week activities. Plans are under way for the Class of 2020 to return next year for Commencement/Reunion Weekend. To view the recorded portions of the celebration and updates on rescheduling 2020 class reunions, visit oberlin.edu/commencement.



CINEMA STUDIES

Gotham's Masked Crusaders

Sabine Rogers '00 and Aviva Wishnow '00 really [heart] New York. It's what prompted them to gather an all-volunteer crew and, with zero budget, enter Governor Andrew Cuomo's "Wear a Mask" public service announcement contest held in May. It's also likely what propelled their ad to the final five out of 600 submissions, which were put to a public vote online. The ad, produced under the umbrella of Bunny Lake Films, cofounded by a group that includes Wishnow and Vanessa Roworth '00, played during one of Cuomo's daily coronavirus briefings and on MSNBC's *The Rachel Maddow Show*. "Instead of being pedantic or lecturing, we aimed to put a positive, energetic, very New York spin on it," says Rogers. "The message is clear: When we wear a mask while in public, we are slowing the spread of coronavirus and saving lives! Wearing a mask is an act of love for our community." The feeling was apparently mutual: Their ad won the contest.



HALL APOLOGIES In the article about an addition and improvements to Hall Auditorium in our most recent issue, we misstated the last name of one of the project's generous supporters. It is Philip L. Pritchett '65.



CONSERVATORY LIVE ONLINE

Stage Left Summer Sessions

A series of online programs featuring Oberlin Conservatory faculty, students, alumni, and other guests that was launched this spring in response to the campus-clearing COVID-19 pandemic will continue through the summer months.

"Fostering connections through the artistry of our Oberlin community is central to what we do—in good times and in challenging times too," says Dean of the Conservatory William Quillen.

"With this great wealth of creativity comes great opportunities to share it with those who can't experience it firsthand. Through Oberlin Stage Left, we are thrilled to offer exciting new points of connection, inspiration, and discovery for everyone who finds joy and comfort in the work of our creative community."

Stage Left events this spring featured Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology Kathryn Metz discussing the Beach Boys' Brian Wilson with rock music biographer Peter Carlin; Quillen interviewing harp professor Yolanda Kondonassis; Professors Bobby Ferrazza and La Tanya Hall talking with Grammy-winning jazz pianist Sullivan Fortner '08; Seth Rudetsky '88 sharing behind-the-scenes Broadway stories; and Gregory Ristow '01 talking with writer Helen Paxton '73 about her article in this magazine exploring Oberlin's response to the killings of protesters at Kent State on May 4, 1970. Events are streamed live and archived at oberlin.edu/conservatory/stage-left.



IN MEMORIAM

Marjorie "Midge" Brittingham, 1938-2019

MARJORIE "MIDGE" WOOD BRITTINGHAM '60, who served as executive director of the Oberlin Alumni Association for 28 years and continued her close relationship with campus for many years after her retirement in 2004, died December 31, 2019, at her home in Oberlin. Midge met her husband, Smith R. Brittingham III '60, at Oberlin, and they were married on Commencement Weekend. They left Oberlin together but returned for good in 1969 to raise their family and reconnect with campus.

Under Midge's watch, Oberlin created the Alumni Council, developed the Oberlin alumni tours program (leading tours to 65 countries during her tenure), and advanced mentorship programs that connected alumni with current students. At their home, she and Smith hosted weekly "Sunday dinners at the Brittinghams" for students from all over the world.

Scott Alberts '94, president of the Oberlin Alumni Association, recalls how Midge

influenced Obies across generations and regions. "Not only was Midge a living database of Obie information, but she also could say why each of us was special, and how each of us connected to the school and each other. When she asked how I was, she also asked about my roommates and friends, where they were, and how they were doing."

In 2005, Midge was awarded the Alumni Medal in recognition of her contributions to the college, the Alumni Association, and the community. In addition to her husband, she is survived by two sons, Smith R. Brittingham IV '84 and William Brittingham '87, and four grandchildren. The Marjorie Wood Brittingham '60 Alumni in Service to Oberlin College (ASOC) fund was established in 2003 by friends and colleagues to honor her years of service. Those who wish to make a gift of remembrance may direct it to that fund.

Thought Process



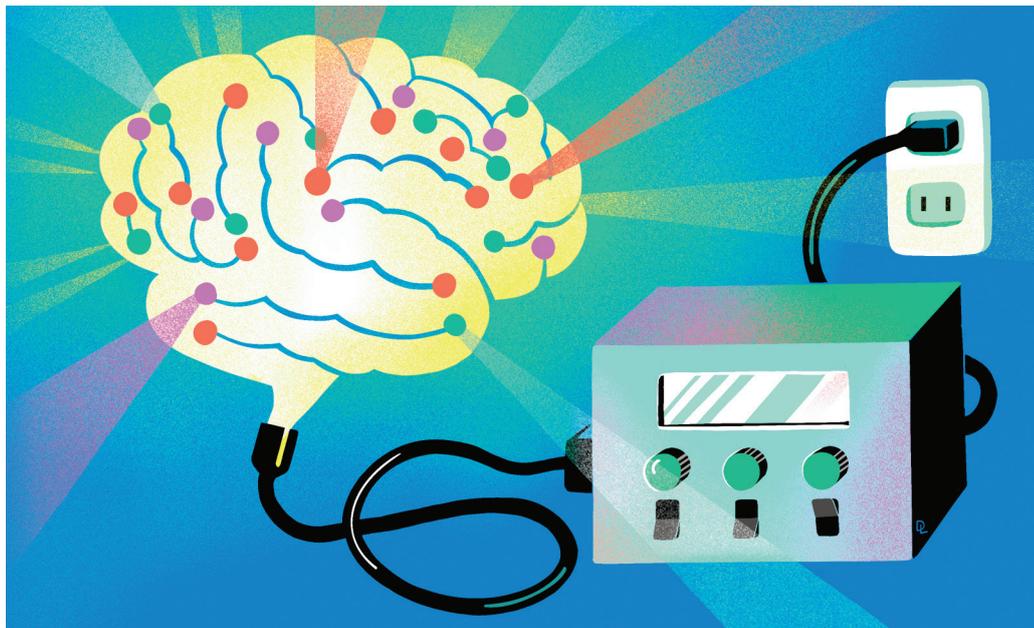
PERMANENT RECORD May 2020 graduate Brian Tom, winner of the 2020 Grand Award for Excellence in the Visual Arts from the Association of Independent

Colleges and Universities of Ohio, creates three-dimensional works that examine the way people try to “fix” a lifetime or time period into one captured moment—such

as a tombstone that exists beyond the life of a person or scenes of childhood that compress time and merge multiple memories into one.

“As I’ve aged, my own personal views and conversations around these subjects have changed and, as a result, my artwork has acted as my diary for each stage of my

FACING MORTALITY
Brian Tom's sculpture "Tadp(old)."



SCIENCE

Neural Delivery

BY DYANI SABIN '14

Sage Aronson '12 created an affordable mechanism for neuroscientists to study brain activity.

While a graduate student in neuroscience at the University of California, San Diego, Sage Aronson '12 was tasked with recording signals along a specific connection between two brain regions.

"To learn how information travels along a single strand, from one region to the next, is vital to understanding how the brain processes information," he says. "But it's not an easy task. The brain is more like a bowl of spaghetti than an organ with discrete regions."

Moreover, the technology to perform such recordings—known as fiber photometry—was not available commercially and had just recently been described in a journal article. So Aronson got to work. He bought parts, created and fine-tuned prototypes, and within six months had a functioning—albeit hodgepodge—photometry system up and running.

Soon, Aronson was hearing from other researchers who had likewise spent money and

time to get photometry spooled up in their own labs: "These were brilliant biologists who did not need to be spending valuable time reinventing the wheel." So Aronson got to work developing a plug-and-play photometry system that could be widely accessible. He kept the design open source and developed a way to use 3D printing to lower costs and increase the system's functionality.

To produce the system, he and another scientist (and now his wife), Kelsey Ladit Aronson, founded their own company, Neurophotometrics (NPM). Aronson earned his PhD in March 2019 and now works full time as CEO. To date, NPM has installed systems in more than 100 labs in 17-plus countries throughout the world. "We expected to sell two or three of these to supplement my graduate student stipend and be able to go out for sushi more frequently," he says. "We never expected it to grow so quickly." The business now has 10 full-time employees and has doubled its facility size every six months.

"We've worked really, really hard to make sure that labs are collecting data quickly, and that it's high-quality," Aronson adds. "It's been really humbling. The most exciting part for me has been going to conferences and seeing other people present data with our system."

As this issue of the Oberlin Alumni Magazine was nearing production, Neurophotometrics shifted its purpose to respond immediately to the COVID-19 crisis. "Our company pivoted to design, test, and manufacture nasal pharyngeal swabs to help flatten the curve," says Aronson. Clinical data results indicate the company's swabs are outperforming the commercial swab by a large margin, according to Aronson. The company registered with the FDA and has partners to ramp up production to create 1 million swabs per week. For more information, visit neurophotometrics.com.

life," he says. "In a way, these sculptures—a physical reminder of my past thoughts and actions—are my attempt to create permanence to document the ephemeral."

DELPHINE LEE



Q&A

Hard Pressed: How Journalist Tom Rosenstiel '78 Turned to Fiction to Reveal Truth

BY ALICE MIRANDA OLLSTEIN '10

During his four-plus decades as a politics reporter, media critic, and researcher focused on the sustainability of journalism, Tom Rosenstiel '78 began to doubt that reporters—even the best ones—could adequately capture the precarious moment we live in. A few years ago he started writing political thrillers filled with characters and trends he had observed during his years in Washington and on the campaign trail. In his latest book, *Oppo*, he explores an election season that will feel all-too-familiar to readers: frustrated voters bombarded with disinformation and feeling alienated by both political parties, and powerful monied interests pulling the strings behind the scenes.

Rosenstiel sat down with Alice Miranda Ollstein '10, a reporter for *POLITICO*, to talk about why he's both optimistic and pessimistic about the future of the press, and what makes a novelist better equipped to get at and communicate bigger truths.

Oberlin Alumni Magazine: What did you learn as a media critic and researcher that you wanted to include in your novels about the press?

Tom Rosenstiel: I didn't choose to become a press critic—that was an assignment. But with that assignment, I began to look at my own profession inside out. I was forced to look at its weaknesses and vulnerabilities. And by the time I was at *Newsweek* in the mid-'90s, I saw real structural challenges to journalism. Newspaper circulation had begun to really decline. A few years later, the audience was shifting to digital but the advertising wasn't. And journalists were getting further and further away—physically, geographically—from the stories they had to cover. Access became more and more restricted, and everything became doled out in press conferences.

I was aware of all these things, and I think it's partially why I didn't make journalists the heroes in my stories. I realized that really, we're

just touching an elephant in the dark. We have a good grip on our one part, but we don't know the whole animal. When I started to write fiction, I had to be in the hearts of all of the characters I created, and I realized I was doing this because I couldn't tell the whole story as a journalist. Why is Washington so broken? Why do people come here with such idealistic intentions only to get into a situation where nothing works? The only way to understand it is to be in all of their hearts. They're not bad people. They're not trying to make the system broken.

I gravitated toward this kind of writing because I realized that as a journalist or a researcher, I wasn't able to explain what I was seeing.

OAM: Did the constraints of journalism and the fear of being accused of bias prevent you from painting that bigger picture?

TR: Yes. You can only write what you can prove—not everything that you know to be true. That's a good discipline for a journalist but a bad one for a novelist. As a novelist, you can say everything you think.

Let's say you met [former Ohio Gov.] John Kasich and he told you all about himself, and you thought about his strengths and limitations. You could quote him, but you couldn't tell the reader what you really thought of him. And there are limits to what he'll say to a journalist. What is he really thinking in the little voice in the back of his mind?

It's also gotten worse over time. When I was covering the Gingrich Revolution, there were Republicans who would sit down and tell you what they really thought, including about Gingrich, even people on his leadership team. They knew that if they said it was off the record, we wouldn't publish it. That gradually evaporated.

OAM: So what are you now able to communicate that you couldn't under the constraints of journalism?

TR: I try to convey the degree to which both sides feel their party has failed them—certainly voters but also people who are in power. There are people on the hard right who think Republicans need to go further right and really blow things up because they've been too accommodating. And people on the left are demanding universal health care and the Green New Deal, and they think their party is weak because of wanting too much to compromise—they're coming belatedly to the same conclusions that the Republican base arrived at several years earlier. All of those are understandable motivations, but they pull us toward gridlock.

You could write that in a *New Yorker* piece, perhaps, but you'd still be inferring what people believe. It's not as persuasive. Fiction tells you not just what happened, but what it feels like and what people are thinking.

OAM: We've been talking about trends in politics and journalism that have been going on for decades, but what about this particular moment did you try to capture in your book?

TR: It's about an election, and how our elections can possibly be an expression of what voters want amid all the disinformation and the fear that the future will not be better than the past. All of our confidence about our democracy has withered away very quickly, and now our elections are driven by fear rather than hope.

We have an American population that doesn't fit neatly into either party. What if you're someone who believes in most of what the Democratic Party stands for, but you believe abortion is murder. What if you're a Republican who thinks climate change is the biggest threat facing the planet or that we should have universal health care? Where do you go? You just have to bite your tongue and keep it a secret.

Meanwhile, our information ecosystem is controlled by these platform companies [like Twitter and Facebook] that do not understand the implications of their own technology. They're led by millennial sociopaths who have seen enough of life to know that the hopes they had in their 20s were naive. But they're so powerful, and we're all suffering from it.

OAM: After the 2016 election, there was a lot of journalist hand-wringing and soul-searching and asking, 'How did we miss the rise of Trump?' Did that also shape your views on journalism versus fiction?

TR: Yes. It's almost too big a story [for reporters to tell]. When my first novel came out in early 2017, people said, 'Wow, this is so timely! How was he able to anticipate all these forces?' It was flattering, but I wasn't anticipating anything. I was describing everything I had seen, things that had been going on for a long time. Trump is an expression of everything that has led up to this moment rather than the creator of it. What makes him both interesting and terrifying is what he reflects about us.

OAM: Why do you think most journalists were unable to make those connections?

TR: For one, most journalists are based in cities, and most cities are blue. You don't have many mainstream journalists who are from or know or understand the parts of America that elected Trump. Additionally, as the media fragmented over the past few decades, conservatives left traditional newsrooms. For example, when I wrote my first non-fiction book in the early 1990s, Brit Hume was the White House correspondent for ABC News and was regarded as one of the best on the beat. Then he went to Fox and became this angry ideologue. That was happening across the media, and it left mainstream newsrooms

unable to understand large parts of America. They weren't intentionally biased, they were just unable to see how biases they were even aware of were tilting the coverage. The fact that many people saw the 2016 election as inexplicable is, to me, a failure of journalism.

OAM: Given that you seem very pessimistic about the press, how do you feel about Oberlin launching a journalism concentration?

TR: I'm not entirely pessimistic about the press! In many ways, Trump's attacks on the press have made the press much more transparent, which is really healthy. Journalism is getting better even as it's under siege, perhaps because it's under siege. And because the advertising model has blown up, journalism is now forced to win subscribers by creating content of real value. Look at the *New York Times*—it's a better newspaper than it's ever been. They're writing fewer stupid stories that nobody wants to read, because it no longer serves their economic model.

In terms of the new journalism program, since they're starting from scratch, there's a great opportunity to Oberlin-ize the curriculum. Don't teach it the way it's always been taught. We need to understand the way people receive information. We need to bring in psychology and sociology and ethnography and anthropology and other disciplines in order to learn how to build stories in ways that aren't based on a 19th-century model. How do people process visual data differently than writing? What new story forms could work? How do you know that what you're observing is accurate? How can you listen with an open mind? These are things that other journalism schools never include. Will Oberlin do that? I hope so. This is a great opportunity to bring a liberal arts approach to what has historically been viewed as a craft.

New Journalism Concentration Launches in 2020

Oberlin has long produced outstanding journalists, defined broadly as individuals who communicate about current matters in nonfiction genres, including newspaper, magazine, and online reporting; writing and editing creative nonfiction and nonfiction books; radio production and podcasting; and documentary filmmaking.

Journalism has undergone rapid and disruptive change in recent years, creating a need for an innovative approach to prepare students for a career that remains extremely popular.

When it launches in fall 2020, Oberlin's integrative concentration in journalism will differ from the programs found at traditional journalism schools. The concentration's design will allow students to combine it with any of Oberlin's more than 50 majors—whether in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, arts, or music—and merge coursework with cocurricular and extracurricular work, including internships and other forms of applied learning.

The new concentration will serve the career goals of students interested in many forms of journalism, such as news and political reporting; investigative, music, and science journalism; literary criticism; and related communications careers.

For more information on the new concentration, visit oberlin.edu/journalism.



Carson Li '20
Politics Major, Rhetoric and Composition Minor

When Carson Li '20 thinks about Oberlin, he thinks about how his experiences shaped him. From serving as a head cook in his co-op to working as a writing tutor for the Writing Associate Program, Carson was challenged to reach his full potential.

Carson's experiences were made possible by alumni like you! Your generosity opens doors for Oberlin students. Now, more than ever, today's Obies need your help. As students finished the academic year remotely and face more uncertainties next year, please consider making a gift that will support tomorrow's Oberlin.

TO MAKE YOUR GIFT TO THE ANNUAL FUND, VISIT ADVANCE.OBERLIN.EDU/DONATE OR CALL (800) 693-3167 TO SPEAK WITH A MEMBER OF THE ANNUAL FUND STAFF.

ART & SCIENCE

Blood Sugar Text Magic

BY DYANI SABIN '14

Sara Krugman '08 helped build a device that puts data on blood sugar and insulin levels back into the hands of the people it belongs to.

When Sara Krugman '08 decided to switch from insulin injections to an insulin pump to manage her type 1 diabetes, she completed just one hour of technical training. "It completely ignored the personal part of it, the social part of it, the emotional part of it, the actual *experience* of it, and just focused on the technological part," Krugman says. "It was kind of appalling that this was the experience."

Krugman's personal frustrations with the tech side of healthcare sparked a desire to change how people could relate to their healthcare devices. She entered the field of user experience and interaction design and founded Healthmade Design, an Oakland, California, healthcare design company that works with early-stage startups, clinical research teams, and software and hardware companies. Krugman became part of a revolution in the diabetic community that over the last eight years propelled a massive change in diabetic technology.

"I wanted to engage with my own health more and my diabetes more and to have more control and less anxiety around managing it," Krugman says. She came across the Copenhagen Institute for Interaction Design Programme a few years after graduating from Oberlin. "It was equally focused on technology and the human experience, and that was pretty special," she says. User design is based upon what people know and expect and how they interact with

information. Imagine a folder on your desktop, Krugman says. The physical metaphor is how you know there are multiple pieces of paper inside—that's user design.

"Diabetes is filled with numbers, and you have to do math all the time," Krugman says. To control blood sugar, a person needs to measure their blood sugar, deliver insulin, and estimate food. "Up until four years ago, those streams of information were not connected," Krugman says. She'd have to look at each device, check her blood sugar number and basal insulin (slow release) level, estimate the sugar in her food, and use an equation provided by her doctor to calculate the insulin she needed.

"Every morning I'd have the same bowl of granola and have to give myself insulin for it. Sometimes it was too high and sometimes too low," she says. Since her insulin pump and continuous glucose monitor didn't talk to each other—or to her very well—it was impossible for her to learn and





change her behavior to adjust what was happening.

The companies who produced the pumps began being pressured by users to change things, but that change was slow to come. “All around the world people started hacking diabetes devices to get access to the data,” Krugman says. During that time, she was hired to create the user interface for a nonprofit called Tidepool. The goal was to build an open source platform for diabetes data so that people with different devices could put the data in one place and see it online or on their phones. At the same time, the #WeAreNotWaiting diabetic community collaborated and built a system of algorithms, hardware, and software to automatically adjust insulin based on values from a continuous glucose monitor. The integrated system was called the artificial pancreas but was essentially a smart system for insulin delivery.

“This system is connected. My sensor values go to my phone, and

all of my settings are in the app,” Krugman says. “Every five minutes it’s adjusting the amount of insulin to give me.”

Once the technology became available on the internet, the FDA started approving systems for the artificial pancreas. Tidepool is finishing the first year of the pilot process of getting FDA-approved as digital health software, which would let it be available on the app store.

“The system has changed my life,” Krugman says. “Just waking up with a good blood sugar level every morning makes a huge difference.”

Enabling people to build the things that they need continues to drive her. “For myself, I’m trying to tell this story to people who don’t have diabetes,” she says. “It’s about community and self-advocacy and getting people in the same room. And that’s applicable to all kinds of stuff.”

For more information, visit healthmadedesign.com.

POEM

Self-Defense Lessons

BY LULU RASOR '23

**I am learning to make a weapon
of myself. To kick out
against the future’s dark possibilities
to twist from its terrible
tight grasp, to drown it out
with the yell I have always been taught
to keep inside.**

**No one needs to teach me that if my body
is a temple, there are always those
who would raze it.**

**I would rather have the venom now,
grow the head of snakes before it’s too late,
turn men to stone with a calculated blink
before anything goes too far.**

**If *monster* is the title bestowed on women
who temper their rage into a blade
to carry alongside mace and car-key claws,
I’ll join the party.**

**Medusa is always howling
even in death.**

“Self-Defense Lessons” from *An Open Letter to Ophelia*, copyright 2019 The Telling Room (www.tellingroom.org). Rasor will enter her sophomore year at Oberlin this fall. This is her first published poetry collection.

AFTER OBERLIN

Spreading Light Through PRSM

BY JUSTINE GOODE '16

Alumni of Oberlin's Title IX training are shaping conversations about consent and violence prevention well beyond campus.

Life for an incoming freshman is, in a word, overwhelming—there's a laundry list of tasks to complete and a boatload of information to absorb even before setting foot on campus. Among the items to check off: federally mandated training about Title IX, the civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity that receives federal funding. Most colleges allow students to complete a basic training session online that they can easily do with their attention partially diverted. As is often the case, Oberlin does things a little differently.

All Oberlin first-year students are required to take a two-hour, peer-to-peer training workshop about consent and sexual harassment. “We think this helps drive the message home and helps our students take consent seriously,” says Suzanne Denneen, program coordinator. These workshops are facilitated by fellow students who are employed by PRSM, or Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct.

PRSM has evolved swiftly since its inception in 2014, notably converting in 2016 from a program of roughly 50 student volunteers to an organization that employs around 15 students selected through an application process. While the goal of PRSM is to raise awareness around issues of sexual assault and to prevent violence on Oberlin's campus, it has also led to some surprising career paths for former PRSM trainers who are taking what they've learned into the professional world.

Lilah Drafts-Johnson '18 was one of PRSM's first employees in 2016. She's now coordinator of player programs and labor relations for Major League Baseball, where she assists with league-wide education on topics of consent, healthy relationships, sexual assault, and child abuse—developing curriculum and facilitating training across the major and minor leagues.

The job fits Drafts-Johnson like a glove, synthesizing three of her biggest interests:

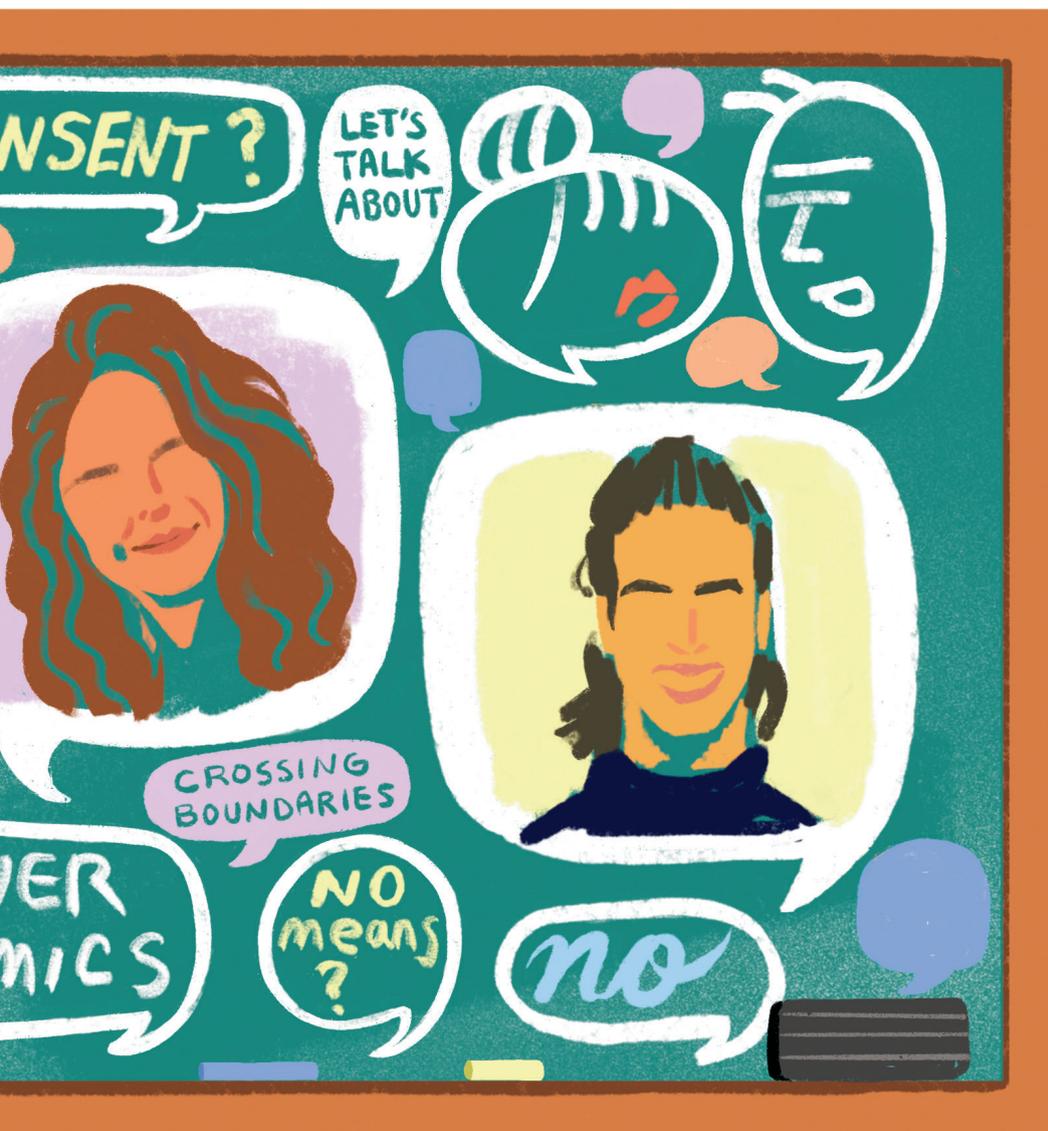
violence prevention work, to which she dedicated herself in high school and college; Spanish, which she studied in college and uses frequently when giving presentations to players in the Dominican Republic or translating her curriculum for Spanish-speaking players; and sports. As one of Oberlin's most celebrated track and field athletes, Drafts-Johnson was named Google Cloud Academic All-America in Division III Track four consecutive times. Then—and now—her work has allowed her to use sports as a tool for creating social change.

As a team captain at Oberlin, Drafts-Johnson was in the unique position to facilitate Title IX workshops for fellow athletes. Her role allowed her to reach some of them more easily, particularly men, who might otherwise have found the training alienating, even accusatory.

“I think a lot of cis male athletes felt like these trainings were specifically for them because we think they're the perpetrators,” she says. “But I emphasized that we felt they could be leaders—and stop violence from happening. That's a seminal part of the work I do with players now. I tell them that even if they are not someone that is committing violence or being harmed by violence, that we're all part of this world where violence happens. That's really what the point of this conversation is: stopping violence before it even starts.”

Despite these similarities in conversation, the shift from addressing college students to professional athletes required adjustment for Drafts-Johnson. “It's challenged me as an educator, because what works at Oberlin does not exactly translate to what works at a





professional sports organization,” she says. “I look back on my PRSM notes and workshops, and think, *What’s the best way to frame talking about consent?* I don’t have a lot of time to get to know the people I’m presenting to. It’s this really interesting challenge of figuring out what connects me to a group and how I can establish intimacy and community in a short amount of time.”

Eli Silverman-Lloyd ’19 became involved with PRSM during his junior year at Oberlin, partially because of his identity as a male student athlete. As a varsity basketball player, he was aware that male athletic teams were often seen as “problematic” when it came to issues of sexual assault, and he saw the underrepresentation of male athletes in PRSM as an opportunity.

“I was hoping to potentially reach out to more people,” he says. “I thought I might have some insight that other people might not have, since I was a part of that community.”

Today, Silverman-Lloyd is a clinical research assistant at Rhode Island Hospital, which is associated with Brown University. His lab focuses on adolescent risk-prevention and is developing an online-based program for middle school boys about sexual health and developing healthy relationships. The program is designed for the boys to complete with their parents.

“We start around middle school, because that’s when people start thinking about dating and relationships, but also when you can still influence behavior,” Silverman-Lloyd says. The goal of the program is to decrease dating

violence by teaching healthy behavior ahead of time. The lab works to make these interventions accessible and fun while also tracking effectiveness.

Silverman-Lloyd says PRSM gave him an expanded vocabulary to discuss sexual health and helped propel his honors research on sexual assault on college campuses. “I entered this field feeling pretty confident,” he says.

India Wood ’18 says Oberlin’s PRSM curriculum influenced her own pedagogy and curriculum-building as a sexuality and spirituality educator in the Boston area. After working at a health education nonprofit for a year, Wood decided to diversify her career options by working five different (albeit related) part-time jobs at once—a choice that allows her to flex different muscles as an educator.

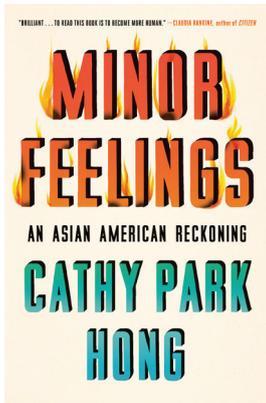
“PRSM caters specifically to the Oberlin experience, so students actually care about what they’re listening to and can apply the training to their own lives,” Wood says. “And that’s impacted the way that I develop my own curriculum now. I try to be really thoughtful about what it is that young people are thinking about. What do they care about? What am I teaching them that they couldn’t care less about? And how often am I asking them if what I’m saying is actually relevant to their lives? Because what’s the point of being an educator if you’re just spewing information that doesn’t really matter to them? That has dramatically changed how I provide curriculum.”

Currently, Wood leads weekly health classes at NuVu, a full-time innovation school for middle and high schoolers created by MIT grads, teaching students “how to take care of themselves and the people around them, how to apologize, how to have a hard conversation, in addition to what a fallopian tube is.” She also works as a partnerships intern at Peer Health Exchange, as an educator for Sex Discussed Here, and as a youth coordinator for two Unitarian Universalist churches, a role that allows her to engage with and give back to the spiritual community she grew up in.

“I think the thing that makes somebody a good educator is the exposure to being a facilitator in a classroom, and PRSM did that for me, over and over and over again,” says Wood. “I got to practice being the person that delivered the curriculum and presenting material in a way that could be absorbed. I credit so much of who I am today as an educator to the number of hours that I was in those classrooms.”

BOOKSHELF

Recent Releases



Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning
Cathy Park Hong '98

ONE WORLD

Early in her brilliant new collection of essays, Cathy Park Hong tells the story of a poetry reading that went poorly because she was suffering from a gripping depression. Readings are always difficult for her, she explains, because she doesn't look the part of The Poet. "Asians lack presence," she writes. "Asians take up apologetic space. We don't even have enough presence to be considered real minorities." *Minor Feelings* is simultaneously sprawling and narrow, geopolitical and generational, class conscious and cross-cultural beyond class, deeply moving and laugh-out-loud funny (like when her father opens a Cleveland phone book and calls a random Kim for a Korean restaurant recommendation, or her description of Oberlin's art department). A poet with three published collections, Hong brings powerful, compact language and keen-eyed observation to these essays, and though she didn't set out to write a textbook or a manifesto, there is much to learn in its pages, and much with which to reckon for any reader.



The Safety of Edges
Thomas Hitoshi Pruiksmas '98

MARROWSTONE PRESS

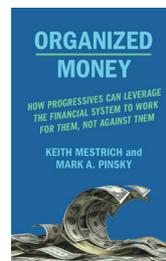
The narrator of one poem in this poetry collection delights in hearing a girl sing a made-up song in the quiet of a library, "singing that seeks no applause," though he knows she'll soon be hushed. In another, a young boy laments that his parents fail to see the magic of the music he creates upon learning the sloppy, knuckled version of *Chopsticks* from a babysitter. Many of the poems of Pruiksmas's first book-length collection concern themselves with sounds made but not heard or understood, or withheld for fear they wouldn't be.



What It Is: Race, Family, and One Thinking Black Man's Blues
Clifford Thompson '85

OTHER PRESS

Selected by *Time* magazine as "one of the most anticipated books" of the fall 2019 season, *What It Is* is Thompson's attempt to understand his country in the wake of Donald Trump's election. His exploration includes interviews with three Trump supporters he conducted as a way to pierce the bubble he had previously lived in—the one that prompts him to quip that he had once been "the only nonracist black person in America." The *Times Literary Supplement* wrote, "An engaging and important book, an earnest attempt to analyze our chaotic moment and to project a possible way out of it through dialogue and reflection."



Organized Money: How Progressives Can Leverage the Financial System to Work for Them, Not Against Them
Keith Mestrich and Mark A. Pinsky '79

THE NEW PRESS

Pinsky led the \$150 billion community development financial institution industry for more than a decade. Here, he and his cowriter argue that by creating financial institutions and products that align with their values, political progressives can achieve their goals—from racial equity and reversing climate change to voting and labor rights. Progressive finance, they assert, has a 250-year history that has been hidden in plain sight but is now surging.



A History of African American Poetry
Lauri Ramey '74

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Covering African American poetry from its origins in the transatlantic slave trade to present-day hip-hop, this book argues, among other things, for a reconsideration of the American literary canon. Ramey, who is the Xiaoxiang Distinguished Professor (and director of the British and American Poetry Research Center) at Hunan Normal University and a professor and director of the Center for Contemporary Poetry and Poetics at California State University, Los Angeles, made extensive use of reference material from the Oberlin College Libraries and Archives and credits faculty members such as Calvin Hernton for playing important roles in developing her interest in the subject.

RECIPE

A Social Mission That's Baked In

In 2009, when a San Francisco Bay-area nonprofit working to break the cycle of poverty was looking to unload its very unprofitable Rubicon Bakery operation, it sought advice from Andrew Stoloff '83, a former Wall Streeter who operated a nearby café. As an investment, the bakery looked unpromising. It was losing money and employed the kinds of workers most other places wouldn't hire: people with addictions, homelessness, or criminal records. The sale also had a catch: whoever bought the bakery had to maintain its social mission. Despite the long shot, Stoloff found buyers: Andrew Stoloff and his wife, Leslie Crary '83.

The couple gave the bakery a second chance at success, and the bakery continues to give its employees second chances. It also supports Rubicon Programs through royalty payments for the name. Rubicon Bakers, as it is now called, is a B Corporation—a new class of business entity legally required to consider the impact of decisions on workers, customers, suppliers, community, and the environment.

Seven years ago, Crary—who was Stoloff's next-door neighbor in their first-year dorm at Oberlin—left a law practice to join him full time in the rapidly growing business. Stoloff says their mission to help the recently incarcerated brought Crary, who began her career as a New York City public defender, full circle. (And along for occasional quality control tests at the bakery are children Rose '15 and Matthew '21. "Even our dog came from the Lorain County animal shelter," says Stoloff. "Pretty strong Oberlin connection!")

Rubicon's recent growth follows two tracks: It's expanding its zero-interest employee loan program and expanding its market by introducing more vegan products nationwide to stores like Whole Foods, Kroger, and Target. So you can bake these delicious-looking cupcakes—or you can run out to the store and tell people you did.

For more information, including a handy map of where to find Rubicon goods, visit rubiconbakers.com.

Vegan Chocolate Blackout Cupcakes

YIELD: 24 cupcakes

PREP TIME: 15-20 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 2 hours (including cooling)

CUPCAKE INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ⅓ cup canola oil
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp white vinegar

ICING INGREDIENTS

- 4 Tbsp vegan butter
- 1 Tbsp vanilla
- 3¾ cups powdered sugar
- 4-5 Tbsp non-dairy milk
- 4 Tbsp cocoa powder

CUPCAKE DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Paddle sugar, oil, and salt together. In a separate bowl, whisk together the dry ingredients—flour, cocoa, and baking soda. Add dry ingredients to the sugar, oil, and salt, and mix. Add the vinegar, vanilla, and water to the batter and mix until combined. Portion batter into cupcake liners and fill until $\frac{2}{3}$ full. Bake approximately 20 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean. Cool cupcakes completely before frosting.

ICING DIRECTIONS

Paddle cocoa powder and powdered sugar together, then add vegan butter and vanilla and mix until combined. Add non-dairy milk in small amounts, only using enough to make it spreadable. When cupcakes are completely cooled, top fill and frost.



CLARA RICE



HORJUS

DEAR STUDENTS: MESSAGES FROM FACULTY

The shift happened in the same way a Hemingway character describes how he went bankrupt: gradually, and then suddenly.

News of the coronavirus was well known by everyone at Oberlin for about two months before it became something to which all of Oberlin had to respond, but it hovered over the hand-washing and hand-wringing stage for several weeks. The term “social distancing” was beginning to creep into the lexicon, but the actual act of social distancing was lagging behind at Oberlin, as at most college campuses.

The college followed directives from Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, whose candid, direct, and early approach was credited for keeping Ohio’s cases relatively in check. On January 27, just one week after the first case was confirmed in Washington state, Oberlin President Carmen Twillie Ambar issued her first statement about COVID-19, stressing that the college was “closely monitoring developments in the outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus, known as 2019-nCoV.” Throughout the next weeks and months, Ambar regularly updated students, parents, and staff on new developments. Yet statements from state and college officials—even reassuring ones—always came with the caution that things could change at any moment. And that they did. >

A March 10 email to students announced that classes leading up to spring recess would end on March 18, two days earlier than scheduled, to allow students to pack up and prepare for the possibility of online classes after break. It “strongly encouraged” students to leave by March 21, but one day later the wording changed to “required.” By March 12, the directive had changed once more: The college announced that the last day of classes would be the next day, Friday, March 13. Classes would be suspended for the next week, and students were asked to leave campus, possibly through the end of the semester, by Monday, March 16. All learning would begin remotely on March 30, following spring break.

Faculty responded immediately and rigorously—rewriting syllabi, reorienting courses in new academic directions, and adapting communication technology to the specific needs of their courses. Professors whose classes met one last time were able to connect directly with their students; others did their best to connect electronically. Their messages to students included the basic logistics of plans moving forward, but many also took the opportunity to sympathize with, comfort, and even challenge their students. The mixture of the mundane and the deeply moving reflects a genuine concern and affection by professors for their students. Most acknowledged that the present circumstances were not normal, while at the same time offering a sense of the Oberlin normal: We carry on.

CINDY MCPHERSON FRANTZ, Norman D. Henderson Professor of Psychology, was, like most members of the Oberlin community, taken by surprise at the speed of the planned closure of campus. In an email to her Seminar in Social Conflict class, she also included a survey to help schedule coursework remotely, as did other faculty members in their messages.

Dear Conflict Scholars,

I will share with you that after attending faculty meetings and reading research, I have been transformed from a skeptic to someone who is convinced that finishing the semester remotely is the right call, for many reasons. I will miss you! You are a special group of students (and I've taught this class many times). Let's persevere and realize the amazing potential of this semester, despite the distance. I will be sending out a revised syllabus as soon as I can.

Meanwhile, I wanted to share some thoughts from a psychological perspective on some challenges I foresee that distance learning could bring up.

Stay engaged! Active learning is by far the best way to learn, and it will be harder to maintain long distance. You will be tempted to zone out and multitask during class time. Resist the temptation! Your brain needs to be fully present, even though your body is not.

Establish a new routine! It's hard to maintain habits that we know are good for us but don't necessarily find intrinsically rewarding. Structure and routine are key, and these have now been stripped away. I encourage you to mindfully create a new structure and a new routine.

Stay connected! We need each other to be healthy and happy. Fortunately, we have the technology to stay connected, and humans are incredibly resilient and skilled at connecting, even long distance. (Have you ever fallen in love over text? It happens all the time.)

Consider forming online study groups and check-ins. I am happy to schedule group Zoom meetings with groups as well.

Take care, and more soon.

TIMELINE OF A CRISIS

Concerns over the coronavirus changed on a sometimes daily basis, and Oberlin kept in close contact with public health agencies and peer schools to guide its response, which prioritized student and staff health and safety.

WENDY BETH HYMAN, associate professor of English and comparative literature, emphasized the importance of staying engaged, no matter how difficult the times, during her final classes before the campus closed.

We don't get to choose when we were born. We don't choose what natural disasters, epidemiological emergencies, stock market crashes, tyrannical regimes, or wars our generations face. We only get to choose how we react. We can use it as a way to pour our energy back into the world. If you care about history, keep a journal. Future historians will want to know what it was like to live through this time. If you are a political activist, document the lies. Journalists will need our informed attention. If you love literature, write. If you are an artist, make art. Make art filled with whatever you have, even if that art comes from anguish. This guy [she held up her Shakespeare book] wrote through the plague. What will you write?

JOHN PETERSEN '88, Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies and Biology, sent a note to his Environment and Society class after students headed home.

First, I hope you are all settled into a safe place where you are supported by friends and family through this challenging and uncertain moment in our history. Personally, I feel very, very fortunate to be weathering this with my family in our home just outside of Oberlin. My children, Luke (13) and Lily (16), and my partner, Nancy [London] '90, and I are mostly enjoying each other's company and doing well under the circumstances; we are cooking, playing music together, exercising, engaging in remote work and activism, staying in touch with family and friends electronically, and trying to be as normal as we can. My heart goes out to all of you who find yourself in particularly stressful living situations.

Obviously, the priority for all of us must be to get through this time in a way that preserves our physical and psychological health. Ideally, I hope you are finding ways to support (and be

supported by) the local and more distant communities you are part of. There are important lessons to learn about both priorities and what it means to be resilient at personal and community levels. In overcoming this great challenge, we have an opportunity to develop skills and tools that might allow us to address other existential challenges such as climate change and social inequity. When this is all over, we COULD choose to build a better world. I hope we will!

I recognize that this is an unprecedented situation that creates challenges for both you and me to focus on teaching and learning in classes. But I intend to do my best to resume teaching ENVS101 and to foster an environment in which we can still actively engage and learn from each other and engage with our community.

RIAN BROWN-ORSO, associate professor of cinema studies, had planned for filmmakers from around the world to visit her class at Oberlin. She transitioned those to online class meetings and was quick to reach out and reassure her students in several ways.

Dear, Dear Students,

I am so deeply, intensely sorry to not be able to have our last class in person together as you know how much you all mean to me. I know how confusing and crushing this all is. The world is very small right now, and this pandemic is very real. This moment will mark and change you, and so this is the time to stay alert. As makers, your voices and stories and vision will chronicle these times. We need to rely on each other and remain a group class despite the major changes. I don't have answers to all of the questions, but I do know a couple of things:

- 1. We will continue the class and it will meet each week on Mon/Wed at 1:30 pm online, and you will finish the course for full credit. WE WILL CONTINUE!*
- 2. It will be different. It will look different and feel different, but it will be interesting, and we*

are artists, so we invent new systems, new methods, and make art in the hardest of times (during war, famine, oppression, and plague). So we will make art and share it together in this new virtual space. That is a certainty.

3. I already have ideas of what we can do...but we need to get you all through this moment right now and get settled beforehand. I will be in touch in the next week or so with more details as they unfold.

I'm with you in heart and spirit. Be strong. Take seriously the hand-washing and self-distancing. Be safe and keep your head together and support each other.

ROBERT WALTERS, professor of oboe and English horn, retooled his conservatory syllabus to maintain "community and pedagogical ethos in this strange new distance-learning reality."

We will proceed with an admixture of prerecorded assignment submissions and real-time online performance. Each student will be assigned a weekly etude recording project that must be submitted 24 hours before their scheduled online lesson. Along with the recorded musical content, each student must submit a written analysis of the recorded performance's strengths and weaknesses.

Even the most basic recording device can be a galvanizing and revelatory tool. It is my pedagogical intent to use this distance-learning chapter in a focused way that will make each student learn to more accurately hear their own playing as it sounds to others. Great progress in personal acoustical awareness is guaranteed to all who seriously apply themselves to this quest.

ZEINAB ABUL-MAGD, associate professor of Middle Eastern history, closed her note to students in her Middle East and North Africa Studies class with assurance they would be back to normal soon, adding "God willing" in Arabic.

JANUARY 21, 2020
First case of coronavirus announced in Washington state.

JANUARY 23, 2020
Ohio Department of Health declares novel coronavirus a Class A reportable infectious disease.

JANUARY 27, 2020
Oberlin issues its first statement about COVID-19, saying it is "closely monitoring developments."

JANUARY 28, 2020
Ohio Department of Health: "Currently the risk to the general public is low."

JANUARY 30, 2020
The World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern.

JANUARY 31, 2020
U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary declares a public health emergency.

My Dear MENA Students,

Amidst such difficult times, I would like to assure you that I will always be available to speak with you online. I am only a Zoom call away to chat about job applications, grad school applications, or even interesting books to read while waiting out the crisis!

For those of you who have decided to stay on campus (especially international students), I am also available to meet in person any time after the dust settles down next week. I will be on campus until the end of the semester.

The future is bright. Just stay healthy and safe until we are back to normal life soon—*insha'allah!*

My best salamat,
Zeinab

ALLEGRA HYDE, visiting assistant professor of creative writing, turned toward the virus and its unique potential to inspire art for her class *Between Lyric & Narrative—Transition Prose Forms*.

Betweenness, interstitiality, ambiguity, the uncanny—these concepts have felt increasingly relevant as of late. What is happening in the world, as well as in our individual lives, often seems surreal, inexplicable, beyond definition. Walking around the empty Oberlin campus the other evening, I was struck by the eeriness of the vacated dorms and classrooms and lawns: the absence of our community made my heart ache. And yet, with the sun setting, and the daffodils coming up, and birds singing in the branches of blossoming trees, I was also filled with joy. For all its post-apocalyptic emptiness, Oberlin was still wildly beautiful, thrumming with history—and a springtime sense of possibility.

How do we make sense of these surreal experiences? Paradoxical emotions? The inexplicable, as well as the ineffable? One answer is to make art. I'm predisposed to literary pursuits, but all art forms have been used to make sense of challenging times. And we're in challenging times. Some of you may be facing financial issues; some of you may be facing health issues—of your own, or of loved

ones; some of you may be struggling with the effects of social isolation. As your professor, I am ready to do whatever I can to help you finish the journey we started this semester. To that end, the class has been redesigned to fit the parameters of online learning and to accommodate a variety of circumstances. The original goals of the course, though, remain the same. Transitional prose forms, in my mind, are uniquely suited to address what is certainly a transitional time. As we move through the second half of the semester, the skills you are honing can be used to pursue meaning, find clarity, build connection—now and in the future.

Warm regards,
Allegra

GREGGOR MATTSON, associate professor of sociology, connected students in his *Prostitution and Social Control* class with a source for a free textbook, offered extended office hours, and kept things moving along, hoping to maintain the momentum of his class as it moved online.

First announcement: [the textbook] Brokered Subjects is now free through Redshelf Responds.

This is a new initiative, post-pandemic, from academic publishers, and they've made all their titles free. You have to sign up using your .edu address, and they'll probably spam you later,

but it means that many, if not most, of the prostitution books you'd like to read are now free and searchable. I am very relieved.

2) I've added a zillion office hours for this week if you just want to chat about anything.

3) We need other people to be our best selves, so surround yourself with the virtual love and support you need to thrive in these new circumstances.

I hope you manage to take a break between now and when classes resume; I'm excited that we can continue to make something magical happen over Zoom and continue the great discussions we've been having.

Until then,
GM

SANDRA ZAGARELL, Emerita Donald R. Longman Professor of English and Visiting Professor of English, was not teaching during the spring semester but sent messages to students who took her *Intro to Book Studies* course in the fall.

Dear all,

I'm thinking about you (yes, all of you) in this unprecedented time we're in, hoping you are

“Betweenness, interstitiality, ambiguity, the uncanny—these concepts have felt increasingly relevant as of late.”

FEBRUARY 1, 2020

Oberlin stresses prevention measures, provides hand sanitizer stations, and increases cleaning services.

FEBRUARY 1, 2020

President Ambar relays that “The CDC continues to say that the risk for coronavirus in the U.S. is low.”

FEBRUARY 4, 2020

Ohio Department of Health says zero confirmed cases of coronavirus in the state and 11 in the U.S.

MARCH 3, 2020

Email to students: “The dynamics surrounding... COVID-19 are changing quickly.” Still no confirmed cases in Ohio.

MARCH 9, 2020

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine declares a state of emergency.

MARCH 9, 2020

Ohio Department of Health confirms three patients tested positive for COVID-19 statewide.

well in body and spirit and that your family and friends are as well.

All last semester I was impressed by how creative, inquiring, smart, and resilient you are. You'll weather this storm, though it's a great challenge for each of us. We're pretty much sheltering in place here. So far, so good. [Politics Professor] Eve [Sandberg] and I are taking walks, cooking, catching up on things we need to catch up on. Eve is getting ready for the spring module. I'll teach the Intro to Book Studies one more time in the fall and will begin thinking about it and doing some new reading soon.

I'm also thinking I may start re-reading Dickens' novels soon, but I'd love suggestions about what to read from you. You could also make suggestions to others who were in our class. If that appeals, email me and I'll compile a list and send it out.

Take good care of yourselves!

Warmly,
Sandy

Professor of Physics **STEPHEN FITZGERALD's** words to students in his Advanced Lab class on Thursday, March 12, weren't ones he was expecting to offer: He'd learned just 30 minutes earlier that the college would be shutting down the next day. His students, however—eight seniors and two juniors—hadn't yet heard the news.

FitzGerald set aside any plan of doing experiments at that point. "We'll only end up hurting someone," he remembers thinking, and instead used the time to talk about what was happening.

The reality slowly sank in: packing, travel plans, canceled games and performances, questions about what international students might do. And, of course, the bigger issues. "This was a physics class, we can—and did—do the math: one-third of the country infected, with a 1 percent fatality rate, that's a million deaths!" So they returned to more immediate questions, and that's when they realized there would be no graduation ceremony for the seniors.

"I've added a zillion office hours for this week if you just want to chat about anything."

"That hurt," he says. So the class banded together. The juniors wrote diplomas for the seniors, and everyone made paper graduation hats. We raided the department's supply of cookies, had a party, marched, read out names, got diplomas, and celebrated.

"Probably the most moving graduation I have attended," he says.

JAN MIYAKE '96, associate professor of music theory, offered practical advice, including what to do if family members won't turn off the television news.

First off, some of you are still traveling today, some are still deciding where to be, some are home with few worries (other than what we all pick up from the media), some are home with heavy worries, and some aren't described by any of these categories. Each of our abilities to be present and think deep thoughts is going to be fluid. I'm hopeful that I can structure the class as we move forward to meet the course objectives of Aural Skills 2 and still get a lot of learning done.

While it's important that your credits have integrity, that you get as much from this class as you can, and that Oberlin honors our own commitment to learning, it's also important to remember that sometimes "it's enough" is the smartest thing you can do for yourself. Seriously—that's a big adulting skill. It's not going to be the best semester ever. Be sure to take some time for self-care, whether that's zoning out in your favorite streamed series,

getting lost in a book, practicing old friends (I've found this to be particularly wonderful), picking up a new skill, doing breathing exercises, journaling, taking a run, etc. Try to stay off social media and news channels if possible. I know my parents live on them and I would be poking the bear to suggest they turn them off... maybe I would wear earphones if I were home?

We will work together to make it all as good as possible!

*Sending love to you all,
JM*

JENNIFER FRASER, associate professor of ethnomusicology and anthropology, redesigned the syllabus of Epics, Puppets, and Music: From India to Indonesia to deal with music and epidemics and the role that applied ethnomusicology plays in dealing with public health issues. The final project asked students to document the sounds of COVID-19, how shifts in our social lives have created shifts in the sounds, and what sounds can tell us about these times. Students worked to collectively design a play and performance in which the plot and characters were connected to COVID-19.

Our lives have changed radically over the last few weeks. I want to make our learning, our work, as responsive to the new realities and unfolding circumstances as possible. As students in an ethnomusicology class we are interested in

MARCH 10, 2020

Ohio governor: Colleges should be prepared to fulfill their core mission by educating students remotely.

MARCH 10, 2020

Ambar announces classes will end two days early for spring recess at the end of the following week.

MARCH 10, 2020

Students "strongly encouraged" to leave by March 21 and prepare for the possibility of remote online courses.

MARCH 11, 2020

The World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a pandemic.

MARCH 11, 2020

Language changes concerning student departure from "strongly encouraged" to leave by March 21 to "required."

MARCH 12, 2020

Spring break moved up, with classes to end the following day, March 13; students to depart by Monday, March 16.

the connections between art and music in socio-cultural context. Wayang (Shadow puppet drama), as a form, is responsive to changing times—there is already “wayang corona.” We will turn our hands-on, artistic, creative part of class to creating something that will serve as not only a document of our learning, but of our times.

We will go on with the show. But now, our plot, our characters, for our puppet performance can and should be about COVID-19. We will still work collaboratively to put on the show, but our collaboration will be virtual and rather than synchronous participation, it will be successive. My hope is that you, too, will find it a productive way to learn in our new reality.

JAKE COHEN, visiting assistant professor of musicology, in a note to his American Music class, laid out plans and shared assignment-related information, yet also suggested that students might find comfort in proceeding as normal, despite the times that were anything but.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that all of us will be impacted differently by Coronavirus, but we will all be impacted in some way. People we know and love are likely to contract the virus. Anxiety, stress, and depression are likely to affect all of us, far more so for those of us already working through or struggling with

these conditions. But I also recognize that sometimes what we need is to return to some sense of doing “normal” things...and in that respect, we can all complete the reading, listening, and assignments that would normally constitute going to school. I spent much of this weekend scanning scores for my other MHST class, and what I found was that it calmed me... it was a distraction from all the other noise and news coming at me. For some of us, this is the greatest test we have faced in our lives, and it's scary. For my part, I'm going to provide whatever solace and distraction I can through teaching this class.

I'll leave you with one of my favorite Grateful Dead lyrics: “If you get confused, listen to the music play.”

More soon,
Jake Cohen

THOMAS ISRAEL HOPKINS, visiting assistant professor of creative writing, was inspired by the words of those around him, including President Ambar, who told the community, “One of the things we can do for each other is extend each other grace.” After telling his seven senior capstone students to be “ready and alert for whichever direction their writing projects want to lead them,” he underscored his point in an email, advising students to

“take notes; stay strong. There will be many histories of this experience, but only you can record and document yours.”

Safe travels, if you're going to be traveling; take notes on your journeys as you go; and as we talked about a little bit this week, follow your instincts as a writer. No one would ever wish this kind of challenge on anyone, of course, but sometimes we are at our best as writers when our circumstances change: when we travel to a new place, when we return home after a transformative journey, when life as we know it is upended. Observe and document. Remember Nora Ephron's mother's advice, that “Everything is copy”

In addition to an encouraging message to students in her Poetry and Political Activism class, **SHEERA TALPAZ**, assistant professor of comparative literature and Jewish studies, included this in a postscript: “In case this helps, below is a picture of my daughter Ruby from yesterday. Please don't share or distribute this image tho she cute.”

Dear Poetry + Political Activism Students:

This isn't how any of us imagined midterms and spring break going. Last week saw your schedules and plans upended; you had to abruptly pack up all of your belongings and, if it was possible, travel home or somewhere safe. I know that you may be feeling disoriented, worried, and even sad. First and foremost, please know that I share in your grief, and I hope that you are safe and healthy.

Second, I am committed to making something out of what remains of our semester for the sake of your learning, as well as for the sake of all of our mental and emotional healths. This means that our course will necessarily look different and that each of us will benefit from being more flexible in our approaches to and expectations of learning. To that end, I am currently revising our syllabus and assignments to make them adaptable to online instruction, yet also more creative and reasonable.

Lastly, I'm here for you. I welcome your

“First and foremost, please know that I share in your grief, and I hope that you are safe and healthy.”

MARCH 12, 2020

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton issues order prohibiting mass gatherings.

MARCH 16, 2020

College makes plans for staff to work remotely, to begin the following day and increasing over the week.

MARCH 22, 2020

Acton issues stay-at-home order effective the following day through April 6, 2020.

MARCH 30, 2020

Spring recess ends, remote learning begins, including COVID-19-related courses.

APRIL 3, 2020

Stay-at-home order extended to May 1. Oberlin cancels Commencement/ Reunion Weekend.

APRIL 8, 2020

Conservatory launches Oberlin Stage Left, online program featuring faculty, students, and others.

emails and will happily share other contact details if you'd like to talk about the course or if I can help you with something. I'm not a mental health or medical professional, and I'm new to Oberlin this semester, but I will help you locate resources if you need something outside of my capacities. On the other hand, I don't want to intrude or bug you needlessly, so I plan to check in with you individually after break, and you can share as much or as little as you like.

Warmly,
Prof. Talpaz

CHRISTOPH A. MARX, assistant professor of mathematics, included a survey to help plan classes moving forward, but a message to his Calculus 101 class focused on their well-being and the strength of their bond.

Dear students,

I wanted to reach out to you, as it is now the second day after your departure from Oberlin. These last several days have been emotionally very stressful for all of us. I was, however, particularly concerned for you as you had to pack your belongings in such a short period of time and travel back to your homes in these uncertain circumstances.

I really hope that, by now, all of you, whether you were driving or flying, have safely reached your homes and are united with your families. I understand that you may be prioritizing time with your loved ones at home, but if you find the time to respond to this email and let me know briefly how you are, I would greatly appreciate it.

Please also remember that, in spite of our geographic separation, we are still united by our ties to Oberlin. I am strongly convinced that the bonds that we formed on campus, through our interactions in and outside of classes, have the potential to strengthen us and help navigate and understand the current developments.

Best wishes, Chris

APRIL 20, 2020
Oberlin announces cancellation of all summer programs.

MAY 5, 2020
Ambar announces college is "planning and working towards an on-campus, in-person fall opening."

TEACHING IN THE NEW NORMAL

For Oberlin faculty members, spring break was no break. Professors were busy at work, entirely reimagining their courses and the way they would teach them: retooling assignments and syllabi; learning new technologies; and adapting to a new normal of students spread across time zones, isolated from loved ones, and facing a range of family and financial circumstances.

In an online series called Teaching in the New Normal, Oberlin faculty members discuss what the experience has been like. Some have uncovered advantages to the new forms, such as students sharing film-watching assignments with family members.

Lynn Powell, director of the Oberlin Writers in the Schools program and visiting assistant professor of creative writing, says her class worked with the Allen Memorial Art Museum's Office of Academic Programs to remotely view Japanese woodblock prints as a companion activity to reading poems. A surprising benefit of examining artwork digitally, she says, is the much more close-up view the user has. The resulting class discussion was so meaningful that students wrote haiku inspired by the art.

Professor of Classics Drew Wilburn—when sensing that Oberlin's on-campus classes might need to end prematurely—gave students in his Magic and Mystery in the Ancient World class a nazar—a circular Turkish glass amulet with concentric rings of blue, white, light

blue, and black, intended to protect the bearer against the evil eye. Students were asked to keep the amulets with them at all times for a week (an assignment originally scheduled for May). "Amulets were (and are) important tokens—bits of string, stones with a natural hole, engraved gems, or strips of precious metal, to name a few—that individuals believe hold special power to protect, heal, or bring good luck," he writes.

"Little did I know that the small, inexpensive amulets, which I had imagined would move from dorm to the gym or the Feve, would now be scattered around the world, from California to the U.K. and India, and that they might take on new meaning in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, tokens of the shared Oberlin learning community that we had created in the class and a thread that links our acute experience of an unknown and poorly-understood biological threat to the lives of the ancients."

Holly Handman-Lopez, visiting assistant professor of dance, wrote about a collective screen dance project, inspired by Mitchell Rose's Exquisite Corps at Ohio State University, that featured 17 Oberlin dance students each beginning their contribution from where the previous dancer left off in space and form. "Learning how to keep going even when the ground beneath your feet is shifting—this is what artists do," she writes.

In mid-March, when students were scurrying to pack up and leave campus, Professor of Hispanic Studies Sebastiaan Faber had, coincidentally,

scheduled for his class a film screening of *The Exterminating Angel*, directed by Luis Buñuel, the father of surrealist cinema.

"An upper-class dinner party takes a dark turn when the guests suddenly seem unable to leave the sitting room," Faber writes about the film's premise. "There is no physical barrier blocking them; some other power is holding them back every time they approach the threshold. Over the following days of compulsive confinement, base instincts inevitably break through the razor-thin veneer of civilization as the guests try to make sense of a situation they don't understand, surviving like castaways on a desert island. Some fall victim to superstitious delusions and feverish hallucinations. Others turn into murderers or rapists. While a black bear and a couple of sheep roam the empty mansion—preemptively abandoned by the serving staff, who felt something eerie was afoot—life outside goes on. The authorities cordon off the entrance gate and mark it with the yellow flag indicating contagion."

Buñuel "couldn't have come up with a better way to mark the weird and unexpected transition from in-person classes to a second module in which we're teaching and learning in a state of forced confinement" Faber writes. "Two and a half weeks into this new world, I am happy to report that neither I nor my students have succumbed, as yet, to murder or delusion."

The series is available at oberlin.edu/news/campus-news.



**LAST SAVED COPY // NOVA SPIVACK '91 IS
BUILDING A BACKUP OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION
AROUND THE SOLAR SYSTEM INTENDED TO
LAST FOR MILLENNIA. // BY DANIEL OBERHAUS**

On a sunny February morning in 2018, the first extraterrestrial library departed for deep space atop the SpaceX Falcon Heavy, the world's most powerful rocket. The library was rather unusual by Earth's standards—it was housed in a cherry red sports car and contained just three books—but a library nonetheless. Its catalog was limited to Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy, which had been compressed to fit on a quartz disk the size of a postage stamp. This was stored in the convertible, where it will spend the next 30 million years orbiting the sun. >>



THE SOLAR LIBRARY was created by the Arch Mission Foundation, a tech nonprofit co-founded by Oberlin alumnus and serial entrepreneur Nova Spivack '91. Arch Mission aims to use advanced technologies to create an immutable record of all human knowledge and seed it across the Earth and throughout the solar system. Launching the *Foundation* trilogy was the first step in Spivack's grand plan. Since then, his foundation has sent the entirety of the English Wikipedia to the moon, learned how to store terabytes of data in synthetic DNA, and hatched a plan to preserve electronic devices for millennia.

Spivack traces the origin of his plan to a dream he had as a young child. In this dream, which he recounts in detail in an essay, Spivack is an adult helping to build a settlement in a future world devastated by an environmental catastrophe. "We had no libraries, no records—all computers, electronic data, stored media, and paper archives from the previous world had been lost," he wrote. "We had only the knowledge and memories in [the Elders'] brains." The new civilization decided to record the knowledge of those who knew of life on Earth before the event that changed everything. In the dream, Spivack was elected scribe and was given the title "Keeper of the Book."

After graduating from Oberlin with a degree in philosophy, he participated in the International Space University's inaugural space humanities master's program, where he sat side by side with future astronauts and leaders of national space agencies. He entered

SPIVACK TRACES THE ORIGIN
OF HIS PLAN TO A DREAM
HE HAD AS A CHILD.

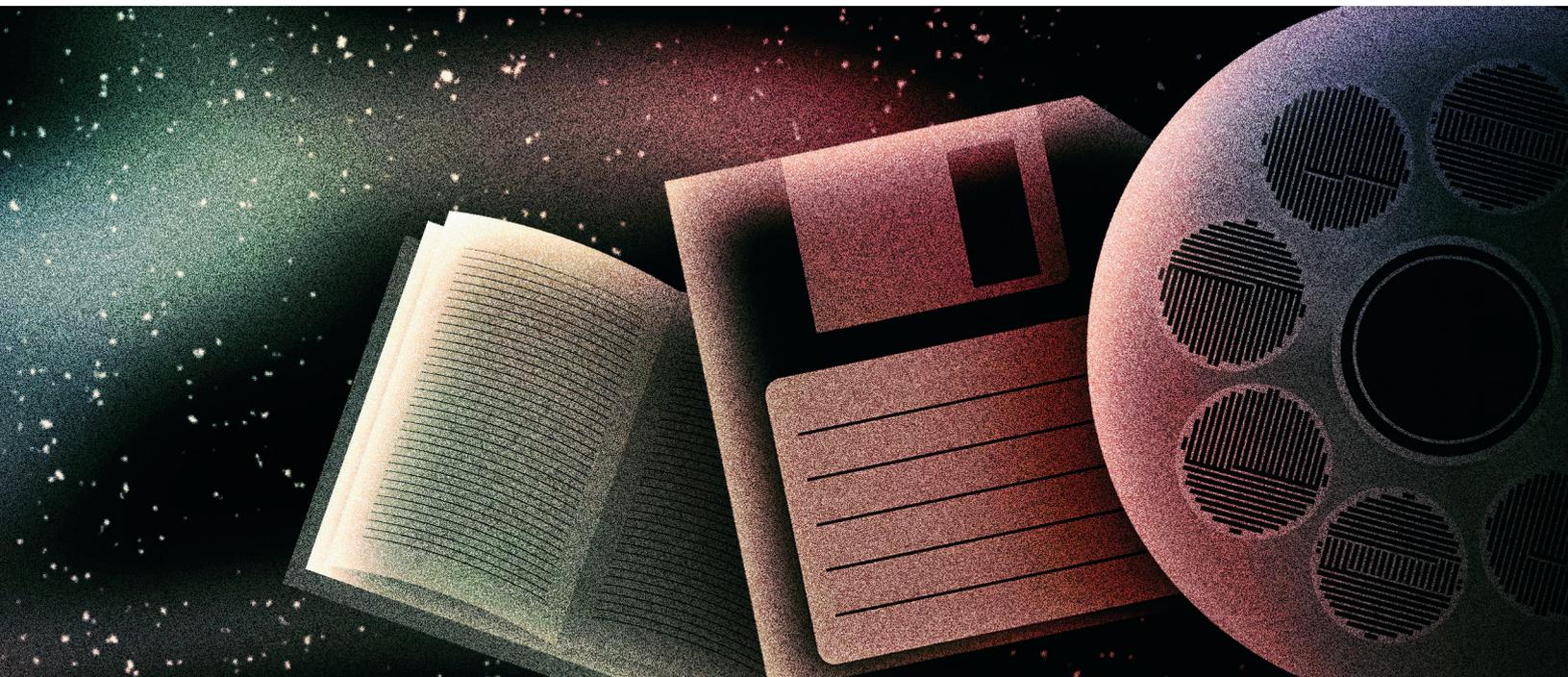
the business world and founded several successful companies, most of which focused on software and machine intelligence.

In 1998, Spivack rode to the edge of space in a Russian fighter jet and did zero gravity training with the Russian Air Force. The experience inspired him to become the angel investor for the Zero G Corporation, which allowed anyone to experience weightlessness during suborbital parabolic flights—if only for a few seconds at a time. Now fully immersed in the space industry, Spivack returned to his childhood dream of creating a backup of human civilization.

Sending books to space is a well-worn tradition in the astronautical community. Buzz Aldrin carried a pocket version of Robert Goddard's biography to the moon; later

Apollo crews took hundreds of microform bibles to the lunar surface; and the International Space Station has its own informal library created from books brought there by astronauts. But Spivack knew that sending even a small fraction of human knowledge to space would require an entirely new technology.

While we've grown accustomed to storing information digitally on CDs, DVDs, and hard drives, Spivack said these types of digital media are too ephemeral for his purposes, as they can't withstand the extreme temperatures and high levels of radiation found in space. Even if a hard drive could be protected from the elements, its electronic components would eventually oxidize and decay. But perhaps most importantly, the standards used to encode



digital information and the hardware it's stored on quickly go obsolete. If most of us would have a hard time retrieving video from a VHS tape today, how could we expect our ancestors to play a CD in a billion years?

"We think we're so advanced, but our civilization is actually more ephemeral than civilizations that came before us," Spivack says. "Most of our knowledge and information would be gone without a trace if the power went out for a decade."

To ensure that the Arch Mission libraries would still be readable in millions, if not billions of years, Spivack took a cue from the ancients and decided to make analog libraries etched in metal. This requires compressing images of tens of thousands of book pages into an area not much larger than a postage stamp. It sounds impossible, but Spivack and the Arch Mission Foundation made it a reality. In fact, such a library is currently on the surface of the moon.

After hearing about the *Foundation* trilogy that was launched into space on a convertible, scientist Bruce Ha reached out to Spivack. Ha pioneered picture CD technology for Kodak and is one of the few people in the world who knows how to etch nano-scale images. His patented process uses a laser to etch an image into glass followed by nano-scale engineering to grow nickel, atom by atom, to cover the etching. The result is effectively a high-resolution, nano-scale hologram of a book page that can be read with a common microscope capable of 1000x magnification—a technology that was readily available as early as

the 18th century. This means that any civilization that happens upon the etchings in the future will be able to view them as long as they are able to make a simple lens.

Ha's "nanofiche" technology was used to create the Arch Mission Foundation's first lunar library. The library consists of 25 wafer-thin layers of etched nickel. The first four layers contain 60,000 images of book pages that include keys to most of the world's major languages, images and diagrams to explain scientific concepts, some choice books, and a number of "vaults" containing donated material, including David Copperfield's magic secrets. Importantly, there's also a primer on how to extract the information in the other 21 layers, coded in binary and containing about 200 gigabytes of information. This equals about 30 million pages, which allowed Spivack to fulfill his goal of sending the entirety of the English Wikipedia to the moon.

Spivack's first lunar library hitched a ride on the ill-fated Israeli Beresheet lander, which crashed onto the lunar surface in April 2019. Although an Arch Mission study determined that the library likely survived the impact, Spivack and his collaborators plan to send a second library to the moon on the Astrobotic lander next year. But Spivack is quick to note that the Arch Mission Foundation isn't just about storing human knowledge in space. It's also creating libraries that will be stored in caves and other undisclosed locations around the Earth so that records of our civilization can be recovered by our far future descendants even if they're no longer space faring.

"Space is just a great offsite location, but not the point," Spivack says. "The goal is to create a backup of our civilization that can hopefully be understood and used in the distant future. This isn't a gimmick, we're taking this seriously."

In addition to the nanofiche libraries, Spivack and the Arch Mission Foundation are also exploring other storage media. Spivack is particularly excited by the promise of using synthetic DNA. Although technically a "digital" technology, DNA can store hundreds of gigabytes of information in a small vial of liquid; this information can be easily replicated to make thousands of copies. Although the technology is still being perfected, Spivack said information-bearing DNA will be included with the second lunar library that will be launched next year.

In an era when history has vanished in the eddies of the 24-hour news cycle, the idea of creating a repository of human knowledge that will last for eons seems laughable. But for Spivack, that makes the foundation's mission more urgent than ever.

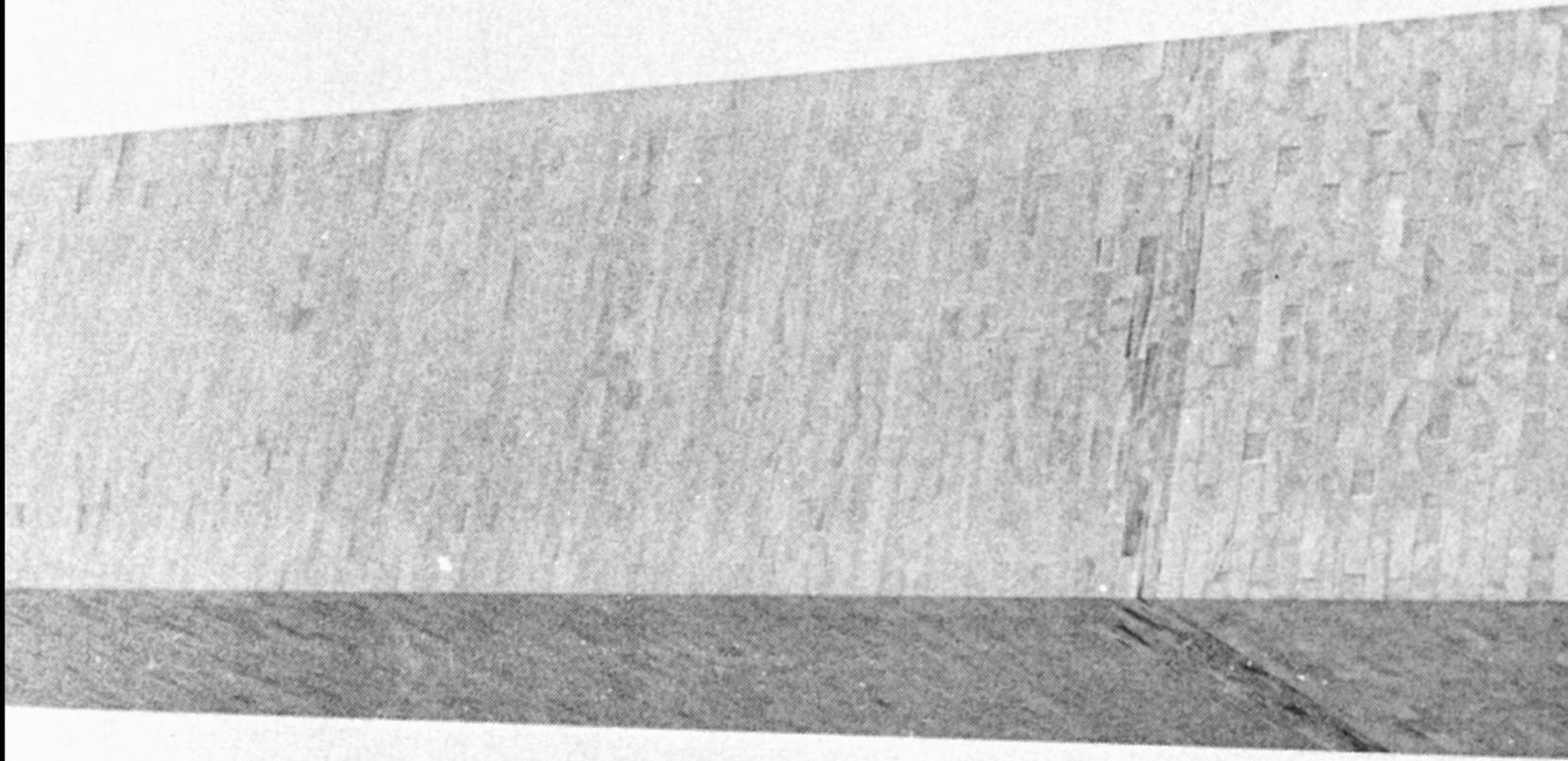
"People don't really think about time anymore, they're more in the present than they've ever lived," Spivack says. "That's a fundamentally different type of civilization than what we've had in the past. Do people care about history or the future? Somebody needs to and that's what the Arch Mission Foundation has been doing." ■

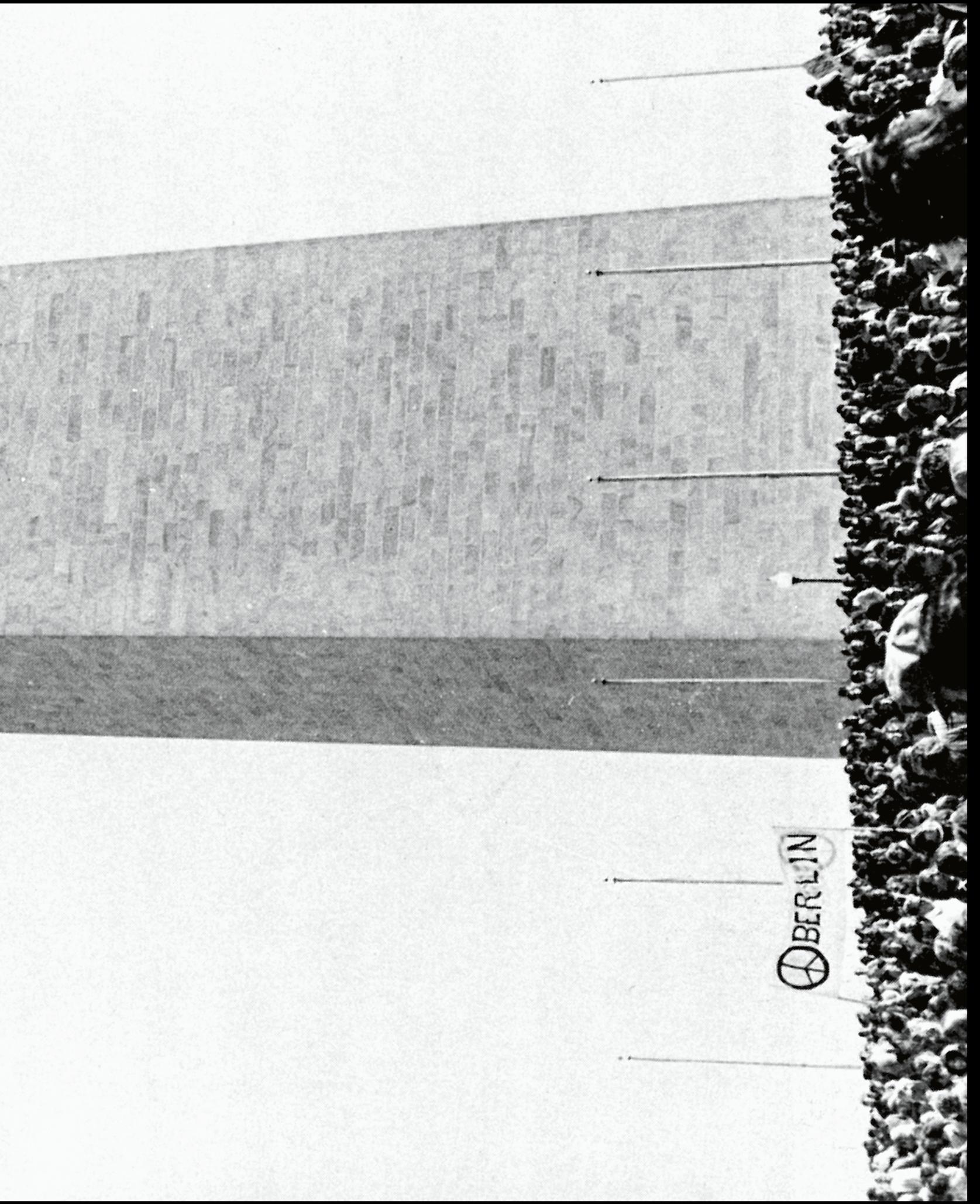
DANIEL OBERHAUS IS A SCIENCE JOURNALIST WHO HAS PUBLISHED IN THE *ATLANTIC*, *POPULAR MECHANICS*, AND *SLATE*, IN ADDITION TO AUTHORIZING A FORTHCOMING BOOK FOR MIT PRESS.

M E M O R Y
A N D
M E M O R I A L

A HALF-CENTURY
LATER, OBERLIN'S
MUSICAL RESPONSE
TO THE KILLING OF
FOUR PEOPLE AT
AN ANTI-WAR PROTEST
AT KENT STATE
UNIVERSITY STILL
STANDS AS A
MOVING TRIBUTE.

BY HELEN S. PAXTON '73





The protests had been going on for years—students wearing black armbands lining Tappan Square, silently voicing their stance against a war responsible for the death of thousands of young American soldiers and Vietnamese men, women, and children.

To be a student in those years was to be surrounded by news of the war, and for the men, a nagging fear of the draft and the draft lottery, instituted in 1969. Yet for young people in the academic bubble of a small college town, the war often seemed far away. As spring came into bloom in May 1970, there was even hope that the war was winding down; President Richard Nixon had recently announced the planned withdrawal of 150,000 troops.

“It was a beautiful sunny day on the quad and students were throwing frisbees,” says urban studies major Dennis Krumholz ’73, recalling the afternoon of Thursday, April 30, 1970. “But later that evening, we were all shocked as we heard the news.”

In just one day, it seemed, the country had moved from hope to horror, with no end in sight. Nixon had gone on national TV to announce an escalation of the war with an invasion into Cambodia. “To protect our men who are in Vietnam and to guarantee the continued success of our withdrawal and Vietnamization programs,” he announced, “I have concluded that the time has come for

action.” Reactions to the announcement were swift and dramatic at Oberlin and hundreds of college campuses nationwide.

In Oberlin that evening, 300 emotional students assembled at the intersection of Main and College streets. Angry voices protesting the new escalation were heard throughout town. Students “took over” the college administration building, though they stopped short of disrupting regular administrative activities. The week progressed into the weekend. The atmosphere was tense, despite the annual outdoor May Day festival and other activities.

But by Monday, everything had changed. One hour away, at Kent State University, tragic events unfolded, now forever seared in the memories of millions. As the late Oberlin professor of history Geoffrey Blodgett ’53 wrote, recalling 1960s-era protests, “Kent State was different. Psychologically it brought the possibility of official violence against war protesters to every campus in America.”

Ann Sursa Carney ’75, a double degree student in music history and religion, was reading the news at WOBC that Monday,

COURTESY OF OBERLIN COLLEGE ARCHIVES



4
IN KENT
10,000
VIETNAM

HOW
MANY
MORE
?

Students in the printmaking class of art professor Paul Arnold '40 silkscreened anti-war posters following the Kent State killings.



“KENT STATE WAS DIFFERENT. PSYCHOLOGICALLY IT BROUGHT THE POSSIBILITY OF OFFICIAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WAR PROTESTERS TO EVERY CAMPUS IN AMERICA.”

GEOFFREY BLODGETT '53, HISTORY PROFESSOR

May 4. It was early afternoon when the teletype machine punched out news that four Kent State student protesters had been killed by National Guardsmen who had been called in to manage the unrest brewing at Kent throughout the weekend.

"It was just stunning," Carney says, "and immediately everyone was very upset." As she and her fellow students pondered the news, questions and confusion compounded their sadness. "Everyone felt the need to do something...yet...not everyone wanted to go out and march and get shot at."

But in this tight Oberlin community of faculty, students, and administrators, it did not take long for plans to emerge. Almost everyone wanted to embrace political and community action, especially with the end of the semester approaching.

Krumholz remembers the somewhat raucous "packed-to-the rafters" meeting in Finney Chapel the afternoon of May 5. Oberlin's general faculty council announced that remaining classes would be canceled. Students were offered the option to accept grades as of May 4, and if they wished, to participate in activities relevant to the crisis. Oberlin, along with 448 other campuses, was now engaged in a student anti-war strike.

The action center then moved to Wilder Hall, where a steering committee of faculty, administrators, and students discussed how to proceed. Krumholz, who had been drafted onto the committee (much to his surprise, since he was a freshman), remembers the energy and the "high" as the committee discussed radical disruptions and civil disobedience, even though he was unsure of and mostly uncomfortable with that level of response.

As it turned out, radical response and civil disobedience did not prevail. "Oberlin's reaction to Kent and Cambodia turned out

to be more intellectual than emotional," reported the *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* the following summer. "After the first stunned reaction to the Kent killings, the response of many students and faculty was to ask, "How can we act positively to influence a change in a situation that we consider detrimental to the best interests of our country?"

That intellectual approach led to the formation of a "Liberation School" offering the courses History of the War in Vietnam, Political Decision-Making, and Western Religions and the War. A people-to-people campaign engaged students with townspeople and local issues. Oberlin also became home to "Kent in Exile," hosting 200 Kent students and faculty members who gathered to discuss their institution's future. All of this activity can be revisited in archived issues of the *Oberlin Review*, but also in a remarkable documentary film made by Oberlin communications major Richard Haass '73 entitled *5/70*.

Haass had never before used a movie camera, but as a part-time student photographer, he responded enthusiastically when asked by the *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* editor to document the local activity. Haass quickly took up the challenge, making tracks throughout campus and town and interviewing students, faculty, and community members. The camera accompanied him to Washington, D.C., the next weekend for what was to become the high point of Oberlin's response to the May 1970 events.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF RESPONSE

More accustomed to immersing themselves in practice rooms and rehearsals than in national politics, most conservatory students were not as quickly swept up in the protest mood. Violinist Robin Bushman '73 remembers feeling confused and somewhat scared during that time. "Being a real Connie—for

me—meant not wanting to risk getting involved in what was going on politically," she says. But in the days following Kent State, her thinking evolved. "As I was trying to practice, I began to wonder...why am I doing this?"

As soon as he heard the announcement that classes had been canceled, pianist Frank Weinstock '73 recalls thinking "Great... now I'll have more time to practice!" He also remembers feeling guilty about those thoughts. He was sympathetic to the protests, but like many of his musician friends, was not in the habit of getting involved.

The conservatory students' response to Kent State stands out, more than any other actions taken at the time, as a history-making event for Oberlin.

Two days after the Kent State tragedy, Warner Concert Hall was packed with students addressing the question of how to respond to the crisis. Voice professor Richard Miller, writing for the *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* the following summer, explained: "over 300 students, approximately three-fourths of the student body" were meeting in Warner Concert Hall, chaired by conservatory board president Stephen Couch '70. "Speaker after speaker rose to ask if there were not some way that a musician could use his craft as an expression of concern and dissent. Finally, Andrew Meltzer '70, sensing that the group was clearly of one mind, suggested that a major requiem work, utilizing chorus, orchestra, and soloists, be prepared and presented as an anti-war expression...and an electrifying assent passed over Warner Concert Hall."

The group selected Mozart's final work, his Requiem Mass of 1791, and all agreed to invite faculty members as soloists. When Dean of the Conservatory Robert Fountain was suggested as conductor, a chorus of unanimous approval rang through the hall.

"Fountain was at the pinnacle of the choral movement," said J. Scott Ferguson '79, a choral and voice professor at Illinois Wesleyan University, in a 1996 *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* article. "He lived and breathed music, and he constantly challenged us to listen and think"

During his 22 years at Oberlin, Fountain had established an exceptional reputation and the ability to profoundly move performers and audiences. He led Oberlin choirs on tours throughout the U.S. and Europe, as well as a tour of the Soviet Union in 1964. Following five years as conservatory dean, he

"BEING A REAL CONNIE—FOR ME—MEANT NOT WANTING TO RISK GETTING INVOLVED IN WHAT WAS GOING ON POLITICALLY. [BUT] AS I WAS TRYING TO PRACTICE, I BEGAN TO WONDER...WHY AM I DOING THIS?"

VIOLINIST ROBIN BUSHMAN '73

OBERLIN COLLEGE NEWS BUREAU
Oberlin, O. 774-1221 ext 2236

The following is the statement read by Acting Dean of Students Thomas F. Bechtel at a mass meeting of Oberlin College students Monday night, May 4, in Finney Chapel:

The president and the provost have just met with a group of faculty and staff and the president has declared tomorrow, May 5, as a day of mourning for those killed at Kent State University with the specific request that administrative offices be closed and that the faculty observe the day of mourning by suspending classes.

He requests a meeting tomorrow morning at 10:30 a.m. with a Student Senate delegation of six students, President Jan Ting of the Senior Class, and a group of faculty and staff to discuss any further response to the deep concerns ~~issues~~ we all share and the question of whether we can successfully operate as a college for the remaining two weeks or if we should close the college now.

###

5/5/70



Oberlin musicians at the National Cathedral.

left in 1971 for the University of Wisconsin, where he returned to teaching and conducting and established a graduate program in choral conducting. He retired in 1994.

On Wednesday, May 6, Fountain began rehearsals with the chorus, orchestra, and soloists for a performance of the Mozart piece that would be presented in town. What most participants didn't know, however, was that behind the scenes, planning was underway for the Oberlin group to perform at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., just days later. The concert would follow the national anti-war protest at the National Mall scheduled for Saturday, May 9. A new energy and even greater commitment took over the rehearsals once the concert was announced.

"He was an unbelievable conductor," Weinstock says, recalling lessons he learned from Fountain during that week, lessons he's since used in his own teaching and performing.

Haass, documenting all of this on film, had a unique opportunity to witness Fountain's own personal transformation. "What made this so powerful," Haass says, "was that here was a man in his 60s who told me that he was apolitical and had never connected politics with music before. Something remarkably human became apparent, where the world of politics and music merged for him. Usually those 'signature' experiences happen to young people, yet here was a mature man and musician with a big 'first' experience."

On Saturday May 9, 1,000 student protesters, musicians, and faculty members, almost all wearing black armbands, arrived in D.C. after a seven-hour trip from Oberlin. Most joined the peaceful afternoon protest on the mall, where 100,000 people gathered to hear brief speeches and calls to action from, among others, civil rights leader Coretta Scott King; members of the Chicago 7, including anti-war activist Rennie Davis '62; poet Allen Ginsberg; protest organizer Ron Young; Kent State student Mike Allen; and celebrated pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock. The protest ended in the late afternoon.

By 7 p.m. the mostly solemn musicians had gathered at the cathedral for an open dress rehearsal. The next day, after a night sleeping on the rectory floors, they assembled again on the stage, looking out at the pews packed with attendees. Stephen Couch intoned a prayer to the audience. A white-

"WHAT MADE THIS SO POWERFUL WAS THAT HERE WAS A MAN IN HIS 60s [CONSERVATORY DEAN ROBERT FOUNTAIN], WHO TOLD ME THAT HE WAS APOLITICAL AND HAD NEVER CONNECTED POLITICS WITH MUSIC BEFORE. SOMETHING REMARKABLY HUMAN BECAME APPARENT, WHERE THE WORLD OF POLITICS AND MUSIC MERGED FOR HIM."

RICHARD HAASS '73

armbanded Fountain then led the ensemble as Mozart's powerful music took over.

"It was not in the 'how' of the performance, which was superb," Paul Hume reported in the *Washington Post*. "It was in the 'why,' the emotion of the day, that the 250 singers and instrumentalists reached beyond Mozart's notes to sound their deepest meaning."

As the last measures of "Lux Aeterna" faded out, the cathedral fell silent. Then church bells rang out and the musicians left the stage, sensing they were experiencing a once-in-a-lifetime moment.

Weinstock notes that presentations of the Mozart Requiem he would go on to hear over the decades would "seem flippant to me" by comparison. He recalled Fountain's drawn-out tempo while conducting the piercing "Lacrimosa," contrasting it with the faster tempos typical of contemporary performance practice. "Most conductors wouldn't dare to do this music at such a slow tempo, as it would fall apart without the sense of line."

Fountain's mastery of the musical line and the inherent drama of this great music can be heard on the recording made of the performance, issued by Oberlin College later that year. The last few minutes of Haass' film are devoted to dramatic footage of the final moments ("cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es") of the performance.

"One of the least publicized events in the remarkable weekend of protest rallies in Washington took place on Sunday afternoon when a group of young musicians from the Oberlin Conservatory...came to the National Cathedral with their scores and instruments and performed the Mozart Requiem," wrote Alan Rich in *New York Magazine* the following week.

"[T]he cathedral was jammed, mostly with young people who were still hanging around after the rallies...many of them barefoot. After the speeches, the yelling, the chanting, and the outbursts of violence, the incredibly poignant music resounding against a background of architectural majesty and utter silence seemed, somehow, the ultimate summation of the feelings that were swirling around that place in these times, and Mozart's music of 179 years ago took on a relevance that was beyond any challenge."

Many years later, as a retiree living back in Oberlin, Robert Fountain received a letter from his friend Ellsworth Carlson, who had served as professor of Asian history, provost, and acting president of the college. "[W]e have just listened to the recording of the Mozart Requiem, performed by Oberlin students, conducted by one Robert Fountain, in the Washington Cathedral in 1970. The music was beautiful, inspiring, and altogether wonderful. The event was one of the great moments in Oberlin history." ■

An online version of this story, which includes multimedia elements such as the Requiem recording, is available at oberlin.edu/memory-and-memorial.

OBERLIN COLLEGE MUSIC MAJOR HELEN SIVE PAXTON '73 SANG ALTO IN THE MAY 1970 MOZART REQUIEM, PERFORMANCES THAT REMAIN VIVID TO HER 50 YEARS LATER. SHE THANKS '73 CLASSMATES ROBIN BUSHMAN, ANN SURSA CARNEY, RICHARD HAASS, DENNIS KRUMHOLZ, AND FRANK WEINSTOCK FOR THEIR TIME IN SHARING REMINISCENCES WITH HER.

THE OBERLIN ALUMNI MAGAZINE ALSO THANKS STEVE GOLDSTEIN '72 FOR PROVIDING PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE CONCERT AT THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL.

Class Notes

1950s

1951

Phyllis S. McCauley wrote *My Two Cents Worth*, a book of poetry subtitled *70 Years of Rhyme and Reason (sometimes not)*. Phyllis says the book is “evidence that it’s never too late for an Obie to use skills nurtured—even indirectly—at Oberlin.”

1953

Activist educator and administrator **Chuck Grose** published *Dealing with Differences*, part of the Vernon Press Series in Social Equality and Justice. “A lifelong commitment to transformed values and goals occurred for me at Oberlin,” Chuck writes.

1957

Jeanette Resnick completed her book *Voyage in Song and Story: Music, Poetry, and Plays for Teachers and Children Kindergarten through Sixth Grade* (Waldorf), which is intended to foster interdependence and connection in young people. “Though it is NOT anti-technology,” Jeanette says, “it stresses the establishing of direct experience of the natural world and human/self-confidence—before the virtual and commercial world takes over, which it will and must!” ■

Elsa Verdehr and her husband, Walter, were honored in October 2019 with the Eastman School of Music’s Luminary Award in recognition of their service to music and the arts. Elsa’s new music group, the Verdehr Trio, has performed in 60 countries and major concert halls around the world over a 43-year career, releasing 30 CDs and 10 DVDs.

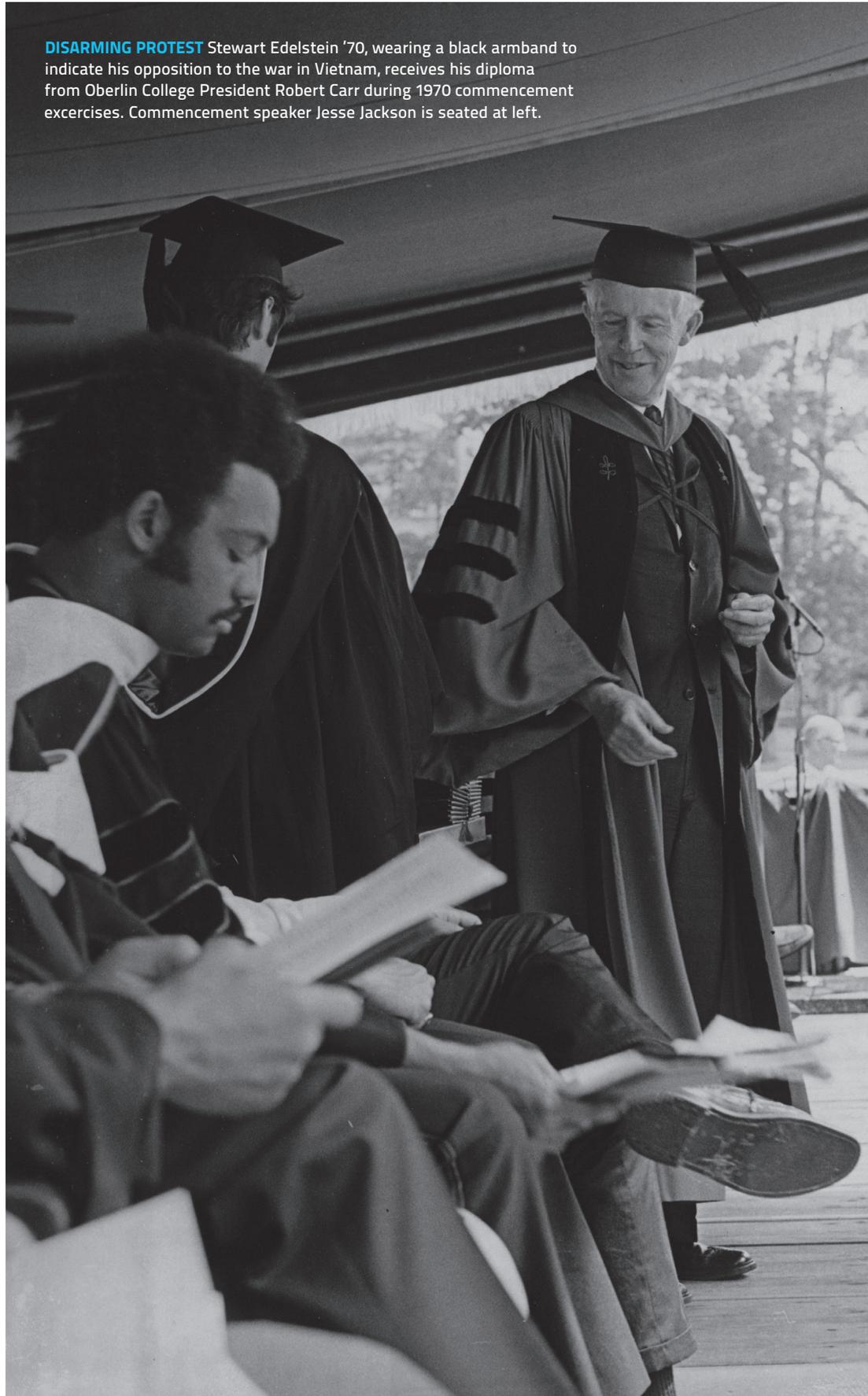
1958

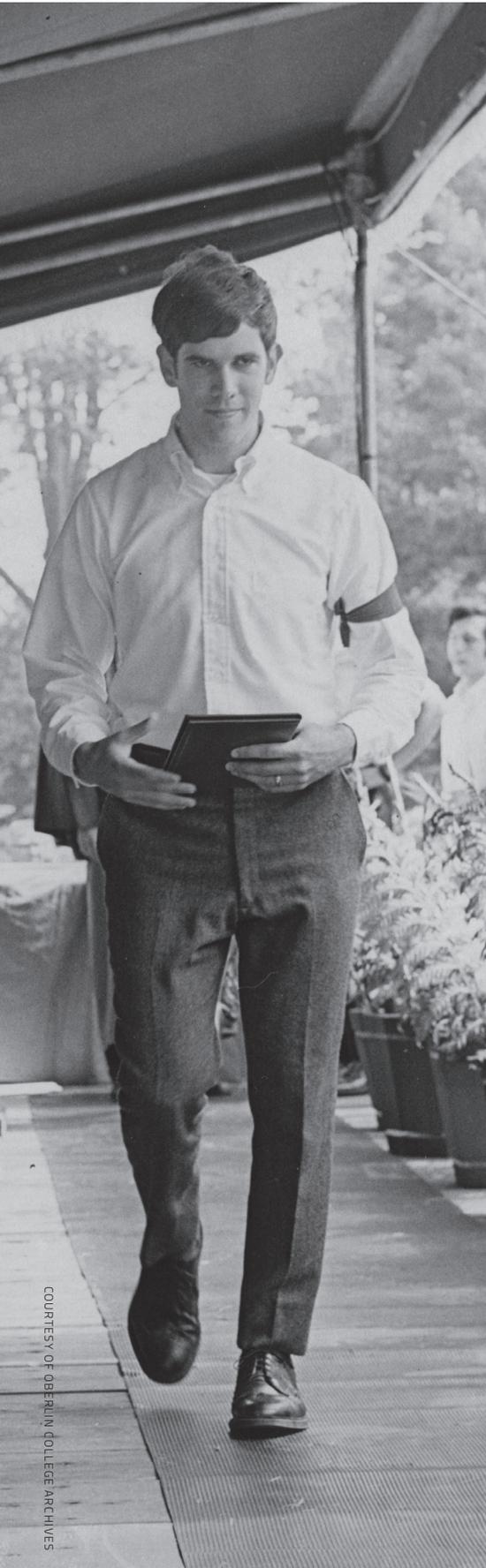


Patricia Ann Straat published *To Mars with Love*, the true story of her journey into space exploration sciences as coexperimenter of the Viking Labeled Release experiment, one of three life-detection experiments that

landed on Mars in 1976. Patricia’s story is intertwined with her experiences away from the project, in the beachside communities of Los Angeles and with the equestrian world of Maryland and California. She was also part of

DISARMING PROTEST Stewart Edelstein '70, wearing a black armband to indicate his opposition to the war in Vietnam, receives his diploma from Oberlin College President Robert Carr during 1970 commencement exercises. Commencement speaker Jesse Jackson is seated at left.





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the team that conducted infrared spectrometer experiments on board the Mariner 9 mission to Mars in 1971. [e] pstraat@comcast.net

1960s

1960

George D. Glenn completed an updated edition of his book *The Opera Houses of Iowa*, written with a former colleague at the University of Northern Iowa, where George is emeritus professor of theater history. Despite its rural setting, Iowa was home to more than 1,200 opera houses between 1865 and 1920; the book probes the cultural impact of those venues and explores their physical characteristics. [w] www.iowaoperahouses.com

1961

Ellen Kolba published the book *In Your Own Voice: Writing Successful College Application Essays*, which guides students through the writing process regardless of their proficiency or background. It draws upon the wisdom Ellen has imparted for years in her Writers' Room Program, which she cocreated for the Montclair (N.J.) public schools. Ellen operates a private practice and serves as a volunteer writing coach at IMANI College Advocacy Center, a program that supports students of color in earning admission to college. ■ **John E. Tropman** wrote the book *Supervision, Management, and Leadership: An Introduction to Building Community Benefit Organizations*. It makes the case for strong leadership in CBOs and synthesizes research on best practices.

1962

Dave Eberhardt attended the concert of his Strong House roommate, pianist-composer **Stanley Cowell**, and his quintet during Stanley's two night, four-show stand at Baltimore's Keystone Korner in October. Dave reports that "Stan (was) looking and playing like an athlete," and that Stanley's daughter, Sunny, sang beautifully. Stanley also performed a Juneteenth concert with his ensemble at An die Musik Live! in New York. Stanley is professor emeritus of jazz piano at Rutgers-Mason Gross School of the Arts. He has performed and recorded worldwide as a solo pianist and with diverse ensembles, and he has created hundreds of recordings, among them the CD *Juneteenth*, which was recorded in France.

1963



David Gitlitz wrote *Living in Silverado: Secret Jews in the Mining Towns of Colonial Mexico* (University of New Mexico Press, 2019). The book traces the lives and fortunes of three clusters of 16th-century Jews who secretly lived in Mexico's silver mining towns. [e] dgitlitz@gmail.com

1964

H. John Poole issued the next installment of his series of books about ways to improve U.S. military tactics, *Super-Squad*.

1966



Fry '66

Logan Fry's short film *Murder in a Robot Brothel* explores ethical and legal issues that arise as humans increasingly depend upon automated labor as well as automated recreation. It features actors who were

filmed on a green screen then composited into computer-generated 3D scenes. ■ **Sharon Davis Gratto** was honored with the first-ever Award for Faculty at the University of Dayton, where she is a professor of music and chair of the arts and language department. ■ **Muriel Minot** was joined by Oberlin friends for a birthday celebration in New York City. Pictured from left: Tim Jerome, Marianne Barcellona, Gaul Nelson '65, Muriel and husband Terrence Beasor, Rick Churchill, and Judy Rubin.



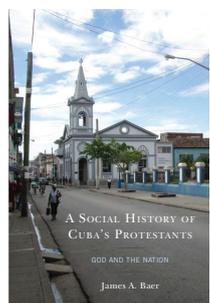
1967

Jay Caplan retired in 2016 from the French department at Amherst College, where he worked for 32 years and published several books on 18th-century French literature and culture. “I have been happily married to Marie-Hélène Huet for nearly four decades,” he says.

1968

Edna Chun coauthored the books *Conducting an Institutional Diversity Audit in Higher Education: A Practitioner’s Guide to Systematic Diversity Transformation* and *Rethinking Diversity Frameworks in Higher Education* (Routledge). She is chief learning officer at HigherEd Talent, a national diversity and human resources consulting firm. ■ **Daniel K. Miller** continues his worldwide adventures, volunteering for impoverished nations and relaying stories of their circumstances to Americans. Most recently he journeyed twice to Mali, a landlocked country in West Africa that faces challenges ranging from terrorism to poverty, all while showing glimmers of progress in areas such as health care, infrastructure, and farming. Daniel presented talks and prepared teaching plans that focused on stemming the spread of disease and identifying environmental and social factors. ■ **Cris Smith** attended the biannual gathering of his classmates, this time hosted by Jim Hilton in his Austin, Texas, home. Pictured seated, left to right: Chris Ilgen, Lee Hilton, Sue Richards, Carol Corwin; standing: Tom Ilgen, Jim, Cris, Sandy Mossbrook, Steve Mossbrook, Scott Richards, Rich Naidus, Jean Gengler, Jeff Alteri, Nick Alteri ’70, Mike Knowlton, Lunetta Knowlton ’69, and Dave Corwin.

1969



Baer '69

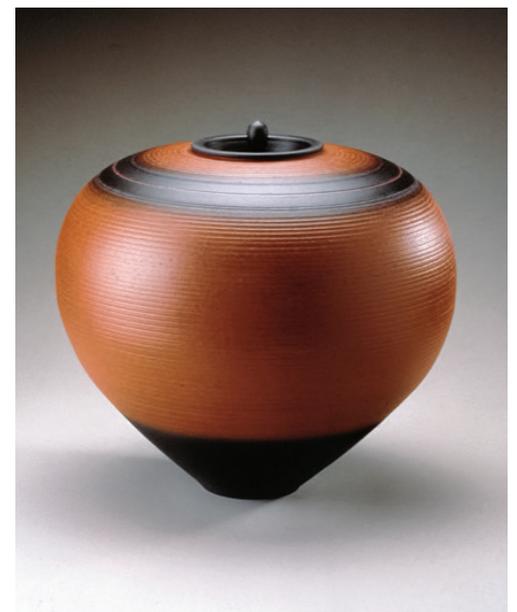
James Baer wrote *A Social History of Cuba's Protestants: God and the Nation* (Lexington, 2019), which traces Cuba's history since the 1890s through the prism of Cuban Protestants and U.S. missionaries. “The

book...opened up for me an appreciation for the resourcefulness and patriotism of Cubans from a perspective so different from head-

Clockwise from Right: Smith '68, Meritt '69, Lasater '69



lines in the press,” James says. ■ **Michael Lasater** and **Lois Taber Lasater** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on November 22, 2019. Lois recently retired after years as a freelance editor of medical and nursing textbooks and as a paralegal. Michael is a professor and founder and chair of Integrated New Media Studies at Indiana University South Bend. His work in video art has been exhibited in more than 100 venues, and six of his pieces were acquired in summer 2019 by the South Bend Museum of Art. His video *Ritornello: What Rothko Said About Red* was exhibited in a group show organized by the Metropolitan Art Gallery Association of New York at La Mama in July 2019. His poems “Documentary” and “West of Wichita” won



first place and honorable mention in the 2019 Joy Bale Boone Poetry Prize competition run by the *Heartland Review*, and his poem “Now” is included in *Kansas Time + Place: An Anthology of Heartland Poetry*. ■ **Greg Lewis** performed his “African American Pledge of Allegiance” to an enthusiastic response at Oberlin’s Class of ’69 50th Reunion Talent Show last spring. “I pledge allegiance to the flag/Of dignity, grace, and respect/Of justice and peace/That works to make honor circumspect,” the pledge begins. ■ **Stephen Merritt’s** clay work, which appears in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, was scheduled to be displayed at the Smithsonian Craft Show in April 2020.



1970s

1970



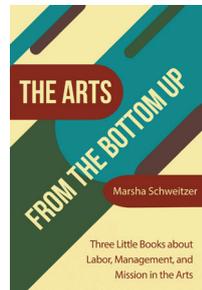
Small '70

Janet Fillion retired from Boston Latin Academy after 50 years of teaching Latin. As a young teacher, she introduced song into the classroom as a

memorization technique and continued to use it throughout her career. Asked by a reporter what she would be doing in retirement, Janet responded: "Trying to find a volunteer job where I can teach." ■ **Nick Jones**, a professor emeritus of English at Oberlin, joined Columbia (S.C.) Baroque as guest artist in a concert of music based on poetic texts translated by Nick in his recently published book, *A Poetry Precise and Free: Selected Madrigals of Guarini* (University of Michigan Press). The concert was planned and directed by Columbia Baroque's artistic director and recorder player, **Jean Hansen Hein '76**. Nick played recorder and gave pre-concert talks. **Sue Copeland Jones** played viola da gamba. ■ **Judith Small** credits her background as a French major at Oberlin for her book *Second Tongue* (Brighthorse), a sequence of poems that grew out of her work interpreting for French-speaking asylum seekers from North and West Africa. The poem "Second Tongue" won the 2017 Brighthorse Prize in Poetry, in addition to winning the

2016 Idaho Prize for Poetry and the 2015 Georgia Poetry Prize. [w] www.judithsmall.com

1971



Schweitzer '71

Philip Curtis retired in June 2019 after 37 years as the founding pastor of Exeter Chapel in Rhode Island. In retirement he serves as executive director of the Ministry Training Network of Southeastern New

England, a cooperative leadership training ministry of 17 churches. He and his wife, Karen, have three children and nine grandchildren. [e] philiphcurtis@gmail.com ■ **David Dickinson** is associate dean for research strategic planning and the Margaret Cowan Chair of Education at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College. He recently completed the book *Connecting Through Talk: Nurturing Children's Development with Language* (Brookes Publishing), which is intended for students in introductory classes in language, child development, and literacy. ■ **Gary M. Markoff** was named one of *The Best Lawyers in America* for 2020. Gary specializes in real estate law for Sherin & Lodgen. ■ Author **Marsha Schweitzer** built a 50-year career as a professional musician, arranger, arts administrator, and journalist. She chronicles her journey in *The Arts from the Bottom Up*:

Three Little Books About Labor, Management, and Mission in the Arts, a collection of articles, letters, essays, and notes Marsha wrote between 1978 and 2017.

1972

Suzanne Bernstein played Gran and the Sheep Who Lost Her Mind in an alumni-studded production of the family musical *JAMOT: Just a Matter of Time*, at the Bridge Street Theater in Catskill, N.Y. Pictured from left: Rabbi Peter Schaktman '82, Brian Dewan '85 (who played The Rhymester), Suzanne, Arianna Valocchi '15, and Suzanne's daughter, Miryam Coppersmith '15.

1973

Ken Kay is celebrating his retirement by redoubling his efforts as a self-styled "education provocateur." He is back at work on a new book about his efforts to make a 21st-century education available to all students. [e] ken@kenkay21.com

1974

Christa Rakich and Erica Johnson '99 recently performed a transcription of Mozart's Symphony No. 41 ("Jupiter") on two clavichords for the Boston Clavichord Society. She also joined forces with **Rhonda Rider '78** to premiere a chamber sonata for organ and cello by James Woodman at Methuen Memorial Music Hall, a performance that included a 2016 commission by Christa of a sonata composed by Margaretha Christina de Jong. Christa is a visiting professor of organ at Oberlin.



1975

Jonathan Bor joined Oberlin friends on Martha's Vineyard during Columbus Day 2019 weekend. The reunion brought together alumni from the classes of '75 and '76, many of whom were members of the Oberlin Farm Co-op at Johnson House. Pictured, front row, from left: Frank Shaw '76, Tom Hagamen, and Tilmer Engebretson '76. Back row, from left: Anders Ferguson, Jeffrey McAuliffe '76, Ruth Geyer Shaw '76, Nancy Edwards, Linda Schwartz '76, Ken Reisenfeld, Janet Penn '76, Ed Pace-Schott, Lydia Larrabee, and Jonathan. ■ **Keith Gardner** took part in a memorial for classmate Cathy Redd Woodbury and her husband, Byron Woodbury. "A sad occasion, but for people who knew them, it was a chance to cherish their memory and commiserate with loved ones," Keith writes. Obies in attendance included the couple's daughter, Elizabeth Woodbury '09; Cathy's sister, Nancy Redd Lewis '78; and many of Elizabeth's friends from the Class of 2009. ■ **Beth Jarmolow** visited classmate and former boyfriend Olaf Gatermann in Hamburg, Germany, in October 2019. Beth has been living on Whidbey Island (north of Seattle), where she retired early from her career as a psychotherapist and ceramic artist because of Lyme disease. Her daughter, Hanna Diggins '18, works in Seattle. Olaf returned to Germany in 1975 and is a retired teacher and father of two children, Johann and Harriet. Beth and Olaf enjoyed catching up on the last 32 years. ■ **Keith H. McCown** was named to *The Best Lawyers in America* for 2020. Keith works in



Orlowsky '75

employment law for Morgan, Brown & Joy, where he has been a partner since 1987. ■ **Dzvinya Orlowsky's** poetry collection *Bad Harvest* was named a 2019 Massachusetts

Book Award Must Read, and her poem sequence "The (Dis)enchanted Desna" was selected as the 2019 cowinner of the New England Poetry Club Samuel Washington Allen Prize. The eight-poem sequence is based on Alexander Dovzhenko's novella *The Enchanted Desna*, which Dzvinya translated from Ukrainian in 2006. It reimagines Dovzhenko's boundless Desna River Valley in a time of Putin.

1976

Lillie S. Ransom wrote the book *Pulling Back the Curtains...*, which questions the widely accepted belief that a traditional college education is the necessary path to success and financial independence. "I recommend this book for anyone considering what to do after primary education," Lillie writes. "It's a small price for what may save you hundreds of thousands of dollars." ■ Drummer, composer, and world music pioneer **Adam Rudolph** released the album *Ragmala: A Garden of Ragas*, with Go: Organic Orchestra and Brooklyn Raga Massive in December. The album features 40 world-class musicians representing cultures all over the world and ages ranging from teens to octogenarians.



Adam celebrated the album's release with a show in December at CUNY. Adam's Go: Organic Chamber Ensemble was scheduled to perform the world premiere of his composition *MuWi (natural action)* at Roulette in Brooklyn in March. This spring, Adam's Karuna Trio will release *Imaginary Archipelago*.



1977

After completing a seven-day silent Jewish meditation retreat with the Awakened Heart Project near Asheville, N.C., Karen Levine Arnold '79, Kevin Herschman '06, and **Amy Schuman** were amazed to discover they are all Obies!

1978



Sander '78

Jerry Sander just completed his novel *Convergence* (The Way It Works Press), which is set in the near future and focuses on invasive technologies in the aftermath of years of civil unrest and religious



COURTESY OF RICHARD KASPER

“I owe much of my success and personal happiness to Oberlin.”

—RICHARD KASPER '85

At Oberlin, Richard (Rich) Kasper '85 found that “differing viewpoints challenged my ideas in a meaningful way.” Through this experience, he discovered who he was and who he wanted to be.

Rich derives much personal happiness through service to his community. As president and CEO of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Phoenix, he uses his expertise in law, nonprofit governance, community building, and philanthropy to better the lives of others.

In keeping with his values, Rich had always planned to include a gift for Oberlin in his

estate. As he started to think about planning for retirement, he realized that a deferred charitable gift annuity was an ideal way to provide for his long-term security—as well as Oberlin’s.

“A deferred charitable gift annuity is a simple, convenient, and effective way to accomplish my goals,” he says.

By deferring the start date of his annuity payments, Rich significantly increased his future income stream. Most importantly, he has the satisfaction of knowing that his gift will benefit future generations of Oberlin students.

A deferred charitable gift annuity is an excellent choice if you want to significantly increase the size of your future income payments and obtain an income tax charitable deduction in the year of your contribution. If you are not sure when you would like payments to begin, you can consider a flexible deferred charitable gift annuity. And, if you are ready to receive payments now, an immediate gift annuity is always available.

For more information about gift annuities or other planned gifts, please contact us at (440) 775-8599 or gift.planning@oberlin.edu.



GET TO WORK, BUT PACE YOURSELF

THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE MY MELLOW FIRST COLUMN AS NEWLY INSTALLED president of the Oberlin Alumni Association. I was planning to say a quick hello, give a brief introduction, and then list what I was going to work on during my time in this position. It would have included the areas on which I was hoping to work together with President Ambar and the places where I thought we'd need to disagree, especially as the One Oberlin document moves from plan to reality. Needless to say, whatever I had been going to say is no longer interesting or relevant.

The world is in the midst of a pandemic, and the disruption to this column is the least of our worries. As I write this in mid-May, the country is deciding what's the best way to slowly come out of lockdown, wondering if it's too soon and too quick. By the time you read this, I am afraid that we will know too much about what the right answer should have been. Some Obies are on the front line, some of us are out of work, some of us are finding our work totally different than it was a few months ago, but none of us is experiencing "normal," whatever that means.

The world is not just in a crisis, but at a crossroads. We cannot go back to "normal" anytime soon, but should we really? Obies are always thinking about a better future and looking for chances to bring new ideas to fruition. While I can't say that Oberlin prepared me for this (what could have?), I can say that my time at Oberlin taught me what we need to bring to the future: thinking, working, building community, and speaking the truth as loudly as we can.

Amid this all, we Obies are finding ways to build community even as our very definitions of community have been torn apart. I have had video chats with folks I hadn't talked to in years, though it wasn't the same as actually being with them. We are supporting those who are working on the front lines, in health care, public service, and more. I thank you for doing what you can when you can, as hard as you can.

One of my Oberlin professors taught us, "The world is flawed because you..." (and here he pointed around the room) "...haven't fixed it yet. I'm old, so it's up to you. It's going to be an epic, protracted fight; get to work, but pace yourself." That's as true today as it was 30 years ago. Sure, as an old Oberlin slogan used to say, "Drones cannot be endured in this hive of industry," but we all need to rest. Sometimes that means we take to the streets, and sometimes we stay home and bake. Sometimes, we take to the streets by staying home to bake.

I just sent a letter to the graduating students welcoming them to the Alumni Association, since I couldn't do it at the live Commencement. I'm not quite ready to say, "I'm old, so it's up to you."

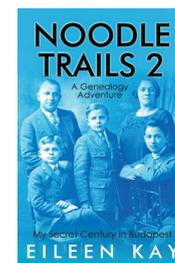
So please, do what you can, as hard as you can, as smartly as you can, and remember that this is going to be an epic, protracted fight.

Scott Alberts '94
President, Oberlin Alumni Association

conflicts. "The rise of government-controlled perceptions, living, and thought are suddenly upended and met with a revolution from young people who are seeking to restore their humanity," as Jerry puts it. A resident of the Hudson Valley for the past 34 years, he is a married father of four and a psychotherapist in New York City. [w] www.rusa-ie.com ■ **Bob Sandman** was elected assistant moderator of the 2021 General Synod in Kansas City, Mo. Bob also will join the United Church of Christ board of directors. Bob, pictured second from right, lives in Standish, Maine, and teaches economics at the University of Southern Maine.



1979



Kay '79

Lauren Berlant was the editor of *Reading Sedgwick*, a collection of essays about a leading voice in queer theory, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. Lauren is the George M. Pullman Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago. ■

Eileen Kardos Kay published her second book, a travel memoir called *Noodle Trails 2, a Genealogy Adventure: My Secret Century in Budapest*. "It all started junior year, winter term 1977," she writes, describing a trip to Budapest to search out her roots against the wishes of her father. She didn't manage to make any connections that year, but she returned for her 60th birthday—a trip that connected her with cousins she failed to find years earlier and which connected two sides of the family that hadn't spoken to each other in more than 100 years. [w] [facebook.com/Noodle-Trails-Eileen-Kay-1560532710838005](https://www.facebook.com/Noodle-Trails-Eileen-Kay-1560532710838005)

1980s

1980

Abstract painter **Michel Droge**'s solo exhibition, *Navigation*, was featured at Salon Gallery in Boston in summer 2019. The show's six large-scale oil paintings place the viewer in the midst of global climate change and environmental upheaval. Michel, whose work often appears in numerous New England galleries, lives in Portland, Maine.

[w] micheldroge.com ■ **Laura Kingsley Hong** was selected by her peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America* for 2020. Laura specializes in mass tort litigation and class actions.

1981

Herman Beavers returned to Oberlin in February to talk to students and others about his role in the 1980 Underground Railroad Reenactment Winter Term project, on the occasion of the journey's 40th anniversary. Herman is a professor of English and Africana studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

1982

Lucinda Ashby was named the fourth bishop of the Salinas, Calif.-based Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real in June 2019. Lucinda was ordained in 2004 in the Diocese of Northern California, where she served as assistant rector at St. Martin's in Davis and then rector at St. Matthew's in Sacramento. She lives in Boise, Idaho, with her husband, Bob, with whom she has three grown children. ■ **John R. Beck** and **Ruth Moskop '74** collaborated on a new music intervention for stem-cell transplant recipients using interactive group drumming. John and Ruth are publishing their research in music and medical journals to encourage others to use this gentle low-volume activity to improve the hospital experience for patients and caregivers. John is a drumming facilitator for HealthRHYTHMS, and Ruth is a therapeutic harpist.

1983

Kendra Colton attended the 2019 Marlboro Music Festival, where **Daniel McGrew** and **Rebecca Printz**, both Class of 2015, performed Benjamin Britten's *Canticle II: Abraham and Isaac*. ■ **Nina Dulabaum** is a specialist in the use of open educational resources and



presented on the topic at a recent American Psychological Association conference. Also an advocate for global sustainability, Nina participated in Climate Reality Leadership Corp. training with two of her daughters. She talked about it in an interview for Northern Public Radio. [w] www.northernpublicradio.org/post/perspective-we-must-we-can-we-will ■ **Fred Haas** was named artistic advisor to maestro Yannick Nezet-Seguin, music director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, for the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ Experience. This formalizes Fred's relationship with the orchestra as an advisor for all artistic matters relating to the pipe organ and orchestra repertoire. Fred also serves Oberlin as a member of the college's board of trustees. ■ **Peggy Orenstein**'s new book, *Boys & Sex: Young Men on Hookups, Love, Porn, Consent and Navigating the New Masculinity* (Harper), was excerpted for the cover story of the January-February 2020 issue of *The Atlantic*. It's a sequel to Peggy's 2016 *New York Times* bestseller *Girls & Sex*. Peggy lives in the Bay Area with her husband and daughter. ■ After completing his English degree, **Danny Rochman** joined a peace walk in Europe then went on to grad school at Indiana University for degrees in folklore and library science. He holds fond memories of his Oberlin adventures and would love to connect with fellow Obies. [e] dannyrochman@att.net

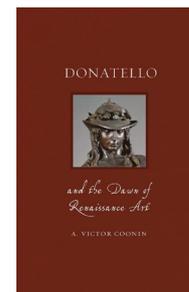
1984

Cedric Merlin Powell was named the University of Louisville's Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs Professor of Law. He has been a member of Louisville's Brandeis School of Law faculty since 1993.

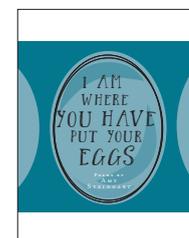
1985

Denyce Graves plans to appear as Maria in Washington National Opera's *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* in May 2020. ■ In July 2019, **Renee Monson** became the first woman promoted to full professor of sociology at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Jim Walsh, professor emeritus of sociology at Oberlin, traveled with his wife, Kate, to Geneva, N.Y., to join in the celebration. ■ **George E. Shambaugh** published *Oracles, Heroes or Villains: Economic Policymakers, National Politicians and the Power to Change Markets* (Cambridge University Press), which examines the ability of experts to compensate for political uncertainty. George is associate professor of international affairs and government at Georgetown University. ■ **Clifford Thompson** contributed an essay to the anthology *Apple Tree: Writers on Their Parents*, which probes the ways in which hidden character traits passed from parents to children reveal themselves over time.

1986



Coonin '86



Steingart '86

The National Institutes of Health posted on its site **Chloe Bird**'s talk on the influence of sex and gender on health and disease. The talk was the culmination of Chloe's year as a senior advisor in the Office for Research on Women's Health. "It is part of my commitment to catalyze breakthrough science in women's health and stimulate an evidence base for women's health and healthcare as strong as that already available for men's health and healthcare," she says.

[w] youtu.be/VV9RAOS_cDA ■ **A. Victor Coonin** published the book *Donatello and the Dawn of Renaissance Art*, which explores the Italian sculptor's profound influence. ■ Since

graduating, **Amy Steingart** has lived in Park Slope, Brooklyn, where she writes poetry and fiction and is newly retired from a career in IT, including a stint with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. “I was at the N.Y. Fed for the economic crash of 2008, through to getting out the other side,” she writes. “It was an incredibly exciting time to be there.” Her first poetry collection, *I Am Where You Have Put Your Eggs*, is available now. [e] aesteingart@gmail

1987



Vodrey '87

Sandy Holder is a freelance pianist in Eugene, Ore., where she performs with the Eugene Opera, the Oregon Bach Festival, Eugene Symphony, and other groups. She also teaches at Lane Community College and has a private piano studio. She is half of the Americana singer-songwriter duo Cypress Home, and lives with her partner, Percy, and 12-year-old daughter, Josie. Sandy



Holder '87

remains in touch with her former Oberlin roommate **Mary-Margaret Stockert**, and the two wonder if any of their friends from Baldwin Co-op or the big house or elsewhere would be interested in a mini-reunion on the Oregon coast. If so, contact Mary-Margaret through Facebook or Sandy at her Hotmail address (“modern-day Luddite, yes, and proud of it”). [e] sandyholder@hotmail.com ■ **Billy Jonas** is one-third of Abraham Jam, a Jewish-Muslim-Christian trio that recently released its second CD, *White Moon*, and



Levitt '87

completed a tour of Guatemala for performances and outreach with local communities. Billy's other project, the Billy Jonas Band, specializes in “funky folk” sounds with a family vibe. ■ Soprano **Karyn Levitt** performed the show *On Hollywood and Weimar*, a celebration of songs by European Jewish composers from the golden age of film, at New York's Triad Theater in August 2019. ■ **Rachel F. Seidman's** new book, *Speaking of Feminism: Today's Activists on the Past, Present and Future of the U.S. Women's*

OBERLIN
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Naeisha (Nae) McClain '20,
sociology major with honors

If you ask Naeisha McClain '20 about Oberlin, she'll say it was the first place where she felt seen in the classroom. A lifelong athlete, Naeisha says Oberlin encouraged her to excel academically and to achieve pedagogical goals that she never imagined were attainable.

Naeisha's successes were made possible by alumni like you! Without your generosity, Naeisha would not have been able to attend Oberlin. With students having finished the semester remotely and facing uncertain futures, a gift today can make a lasting impact on a student's tomorrow.

TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT STUDENTS LIKE NAEISHA, VISIT OBERLIN.EDU/DONATE OR CALL (800) 693-3167 TO SPEAK WITH A MEMBER OF THE ANNUAL FUND STAFF.

Movement (UNC Press), looks at feminist activism in the 21st century. Rachel is director of the Southern Oral History Program at the University of North Carolina. ■ **Julianne Stone** was named administrator for the Missouri Department of Conservation's St. Louis region. She manages public resources, private land, community conservation, and regional planning, among holding other responsibilities. ■ **William Vodrey** was one of seven laypeople appointed to Episcopal Church U.S.A.'s Court of Review, the last court of appeals for ecclesiastical trials of priests and deacons nationally. William has served as a magistrate of the Cleveland Municipal Court since 2001.

1989



Theodore '89

Cynthia Coburn earned an honorary doctorate from Université Catholique de Louvain for her research on how educational policy is implemented in urban school systems. “Our goal is to understand what helps and hinders how we use research in policymaking, and importantly, to create tools and resources so practitioners can use this evidence in their classrooms and schools,” says Cynthia, a professor of learning sciences and human development and social policy at Northwestern University. ■ **Elizabeth Freeman**, professor of English at the University of California, Davis, published her third book, *Beside You in Time: Sense Methods & Queer Sociabilities in the American 19th Century* (Duke University Press). ■ Indie-rock music pioneer **Liz Phair** published her memoir,



Coburn '89

Horror Stories, last year. ■ Musician **Victoria Theodore** spoke about gratitude for an episode of the podcast *EnTrance Theatre Talk* in July 2019. Victoria was music director and pianist for the La Jolla and Broadway productions of *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* in 2017 and 2018; she took part in Beyoncé's Formation world tour in March 2016, after having been in Stevie Wonder's touring band since August 2007; and she has performed all over the world for dignitaries such as Barack Obama and Queen Elizabeth and alongside such legends as Sting, Prince, B.B. King, and Tony Bennett.

1990s

1990

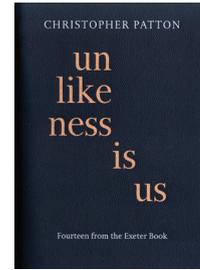
Jennifer Steil relocated from the U.K. to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, where she is a writer and her husband, Tim, is the British ambassador. Jennifer's third book, a novel called *Exile Music* (Viking, 2020), follows a family of Austrian Jewish musicians who seek refuge from the Nazis in Bolivia in 1938. In recent years, Jennifer taught creative writing at Bournemouth University, bartended in her local pub, wrote, and edited books. She is pursuing a PhD in creative writing at the University of Birmingham. “If any of you find yourselves in Central Asia, please come visit!” she writes. [e] jfsteil@gmail.com

1991

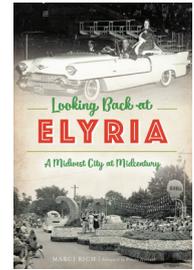


Ashford '91

Irvin Ashford Jr. was named chief community officer for Comerica Bank, a role in which he is responsible for community reinvestment nationally. Irvin previously served as national director of financial education and external affairs at Comerica, where he has worked since 2000. In 2019 he was inducted into the University of Dallas' Satish & Yasmin Gupta College of Business Hall of Fame. He is a Woodrow Wilson International Studies and Public Policy Fellow, an American Marshall Fellow, and British American Project Fellow. ■ **Johnny Carrera** is executive director and cofounder of the Frederick Book Arts Center in Frederick, Md. Among his first visiting artists was Anna Hepler '92, with whom Johnny cotaught a



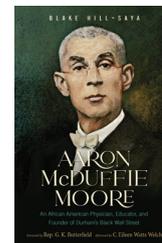
Patton '91



Rich '91

book arts class with Sam Walker at Oberlin in 1991. He looks forward to welcoming Oberlin students during winter terms and summer internships. “The experience of setting up the Book Arts Center is most reminiscent of when we moved the Bike Co-op from the Carriage House near Tank to Keep so many years ago!” he writes. ■ **Gregory Harris** studied desert and marine landscapes through ecological and social field methods in Baja during summer 2019. Gregory is an adjunct lecturer, instructor, and writing consultant at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. He lives in Cambridge, Mass., and is a graduate student in Miami University's Global Field Program. ■ **Christopher Patton** published *Unlikeness Is Us: Fourteen from the Exeter Book* (Gaspereau Press, 2018), a volume of translations from Old English. It earned a 2019 American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation. ■ **Marci Rich** published *Looking Back at Elyria: A Midwest City at Midcentury*, a nostalgic look at Oberlin's near-neighbor during that city's heyday.

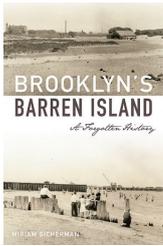
1992



Hill-Saya '92

Blake Hill-Saya wrote *Aaron McDuffie Moore* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020), an examination of the African American physician, educator, and cofounder of Black Wall Street in Durham, N.C. ■ **Mary Purdy** is an integrative—and “green”—dietitian and creator of the podcast *Mary's Nutrition Show*. She was the commencement speaker for Bastyr University in 2019, and she spoke at the ninth annual conference of Integrative Medicine for the Underserved. “Sustainable food systems is also a new focus in my life, which I'm very excited and passionate about,” she says.

1993



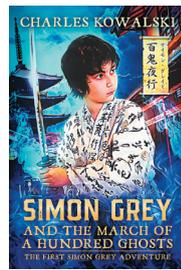
Sicherman '93



Wortman '93

Sarah A. Gordon is a curator at the New York Historical Society. She was instrumental in mounting an exhibition on six female photo-journalists who worked for *Life* magazine. ■ **Miriam Sicherman** published her first book, *Brooklyn's Barren Island: A Forgotten History* (Arcadia, 2019), about a little-known community of garbage workers who lived on an island in New York City's Jamaica Bay from the 1850s until they were driven out in 1936. The book grew out of Miriam's master's thesis at Brooklyn College. ■ **Jennifer Wortman** received a 2020 National Endowment for the Arts literature fellowship in creative writing. Her short story collection *This. This. This. Is. Love. Love. Love.* (Split/Lip Press) came out in 2019. She lives in Colorado with her two children and husband John Scarboro, whom she met through David "Daupo" Gassaway '92. [w] jenniferwortman.com

1995



Kowalski '95

After 20 years as a newspaper reporter and freelance editor, **Carrie Abels** is now a sheep farmer in the Hudson Valley of New York. She and her husband own and operate Willow Pond Sheep Farm, where they raise and sell grass-fed lamb. Plans are in the works to open a creamery to make sheep's milk yogurt and gelato. [e] hello@willowpondsheep.com ■ **Catherine Donnelly** (pictured third from right) was named Volunteer of the Year by the Women's Business Center of Northern Ohio in May 2019. The award recognizes Catherine's contributions to the Professional Advisory Network, through which she provides free legal assistance to women starting new businesses. Catherine is senior associate at the Cleveland law firm Yourkvitch & Dibo, which welcomes Oberlin students into its internship program. ■ **Charles Kowalski** authored *Simon Grey and the March of a Hundred Ghosts* (Excalibur Books, 2019), a historical fantasy based on Japanese mythology, written for middle grade and young-adult readers.

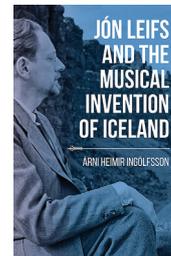
1996



Elizabeth Schambelan was presented with a 2019 Rona Jaffe Foundation Writer's Award, given annually to women writers who

demonstrate excellence and promise in the early stages of their careers. Elizabeth is working on a book of linked essays about masculinity, fraternity culture, and feminism. "I've been working on this project, an investigation of the violence committed in the name of male privilege, since 2014," says Elizabeth, a Brooklyn, N.Y.-based deputy editor of *Artforum*.

1997



Árni Ingólfsson's new book, *Jón Leifs and the Musical Invention of Iceland* (Indiana University Press, 2019), chronicles the dramatic career of Iceland's first full-time composer, whose work was

inspired by the landscape of his homeland.



Abels '95



Donnelly '95

1998

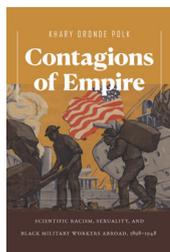
Andrew LaVallee is senior editor for news and features at the Books desk of the *New York Times*—a promotion earned after only three months on the job as a senior editor. He previously served as arts editor for the *Wall Street Journal* and got his start at *The Patriot Ledger* in Quincy, Mass.

1999

Elizabeth Barajas-Román joined 200 prominent actresses, including America Ferrera and Eva Longoria, and about 200 leading Latinx writers and artists in signing a public “letter of solidarity” to U.S. Latinos after the mass shooting in El Paso, Texas. The letter appeared in the *New York Times* and various Spanish-language newspapers. Elizabeth is CEO of the Solidago Foundation, which creates and cofunds efforts that test, scale, and replicate projects that build community power.

2000s

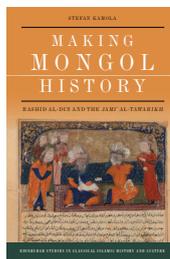
2000



Khary Polk’s new book, *Contagions of Empire: Scientific Racism, Sexuality, and Black Military Workers Abroad, 1898-1948* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020), studies U.S. reliance on

black labor in the first half of the 20th century even as racist policies and perceptions continued to influence their treatment.

2001



Kamola '01

Stefan Kamola’s first book, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jami’ al-Tawarikh* (Edinburgh University Press), is based on his dissertation and three additional years of research with Persian manu-

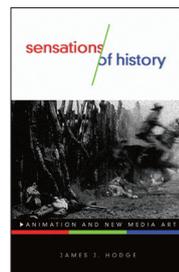
scripts. “It shows how the personal and professional relationships between one prominent statesman, his Mongol patrons, and his colleagues at court shaped our understanding of the period of Mongol rule



Dao '02

in Iran,” writes Stefan, an assistant professor of history at Eastern Connecticut State University. ■ **Domenica Ruta** edited the anthology *We Got This* (She Writes Press), which chronicles the journey of more than 75 solo moms, among them actor and comedian Amy Poehler.

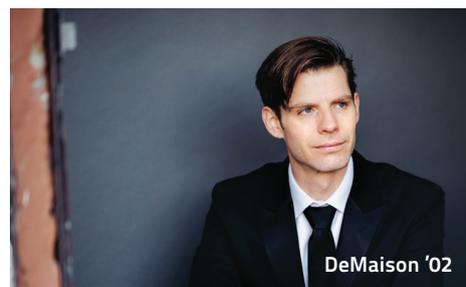
2002



Hodge '02

Will Dao portrayed Atung in the Bay Area premiere of Lloyd Suh’s play *The Chinese Lady*, which was presented in fall 2019 at San Francisco’s Magic Theatre. [w] www.willdao.com ■ **Nicholas DeMaison** was named

director of orchestral studies at the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University. He also directs the Wavefield Ensemble in New York City. ■ **James J. Hodge** received tenure in the department of English at Northwestern University in May 2019. His



DeMaison '02

book *Sensations of History: Animation and New Media Art* was published in late 2019 by the University of Minnesota Press.

2003



Jones '03

Leila Green, a trauma and acute-care surgeon in Houston, was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Surgeons in October 2019. She is board

certified in general surgery and surgical critical care. ■ **Alisha Lola Jones**’ article “You Are My Dwelling Place: Experiencing Black Male Worship as Aural Eroticism and Autoeroticism in Gospel Performance” was published in the journal *Women and Music* (October 2018). Her book *Flaming?: The Peculiar Theo-Politics of Fire and Desire in Black Gospel Performance* (Oxford University Press) was slated for release in May 2020. In



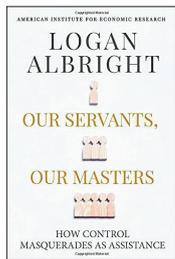
Green '03

April 2019, Alisha was a consultant on the research team that designed the opening concert series Soundtrack of America for The Shed in New York. She recently presented research at Oxford University and at the Chautauqua Institution in New York, and she preached at St. Paul's Cathedral in London and at Spelman College's 2019 baccalaureate. Alisha is an assistant professor of ethnomusicology in the department of folklore and ethnomusicology at Indiana University.

2004

Kate Lacour's first graphic novel, *Vivisectionary* (Fantagraphics), is based on the imagery of antique scientific and instructional charts. It reads like the journals of a demented doctor, with exquisitely drawn open sores and flayed skin. Kate credits Oberlin as a source of inspiration. "The book's themes of biology, anatomy, sexuality, and religion are all topics I formally studied as an undergraduate," she says, adding that Oberlin is also where she learned about comics. ■ **Ivy Newman** and **Chris Mees '09** were married at Park Avenue United Methodist Church in New York City on September 27, 2019. They were joined by fellow Oberlin alumni **Sullivan Fortner '08**—who was their best man—and **Jay Forman '07**. Ivy is president of the Viney Group, a marketing consulting firm, and Chris is the founder and president of B Natural Inc., a jazz and world music booking agency. They met at a 2016 Sullivan gig in New York.

2005



Albright '05



Effinger '05

Logan Albright's new book, *Our Servants, Our Masters: How Control Masquerades as Assistance* (American Institute of Economic Research), explores the dynamics of power structures—especially in politics—and the impact language has on our perceptions of power. Logan lives in Washington, D.C., where he serves as director of research at the



Free the People Foundation. He fondly recalls how his contrarian nature drove him into countless hours of heated debate over such topics at Oberlin. ■ **Matthew Carlson** earned a promotion and tenure at Wabash College, where he has been a member of the philosophy faculty since 2014. A double-degree student at Oberlin, Matthew completed his PhD at Indiana University in 2013. Among the courses he teaches is philosophy and video games. ■ Attorney **Freddie Effinger** joined the Neutral Solution, a mediation firm in Birmingham, Ala. Freddie previously worked with a plaintiff's firm, as a Jefferson County district attorney, and as an attorney for the Social Security Administration. Freddie is currently the coordinator of young-adult and small-group programs at a Church in Birmingham.

2006

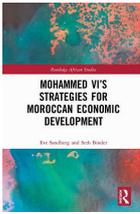


Huizinga '06

Claire Cheney's Curio Spice Co. has achieved Certified B Corp status, signifying its commitment to social and environmental transparency and accountability. Curio sources its

spices from small farms in the U.S. and worldwide. "Since 2015, we've been working to change the way spices are produced and traded while making unique spice blends that celebrate a sense of place," Claire writes. [w] www.curiospice.com ■ **Sean Gill's** short story "The Statement of [REDACTED], Revised" won *Pleiades Magazine's* 2019 Gail B. Crump Award for Experimental Fiction, presented by the University of Central Missouri. ■ **Edwin Huizinga** is artistic director of the Sweetwater Music Festival in Owen Sound and Meaford, Ontario. He will be guest directing and soloing with the Guelph Symphony this season. Other projects include a recent performance of string quartets at the Smithsonian Institution (played on the Smithsonian's priceless Stradivarius instruments), a forthcoming album with his folk and Baroque ensemble Fire & Grace, and a fall 2020 release by his other ensemble, ACRONYM. This summer, Edwin will direct a new academy for young musicians. ■ Fourteen years after taking a museum studies seminar together, **Adina Langer** and **Sarah Litvin '07** have brought an exhibition about U.S. immigration history to diverse audiences. As curator of the Museum of History and Holocaust Education at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, Adina created *Refuge or Refusal: Turning Points in U.S. Immigration History* at her museum in August 2018. The show opened in June 2019 at the Reher Center for Immigrant History and Culture in Kingston, N.Y., where Sarah is director. ■ **Scott Pritchard** became a partner in the Seattle office of the firm Soel Rives LLP in January 2020. Scott focuses on complex litigation in commercial, corporate, partnership, trust and estate, real property, construction, and health-care disputes. Previously he was an associate at the largest law firm in Delaware. ■ **Michael Sakir** conducted the West Coast premiere of Jerre Dye and Zachary Redler's *The Falling & the Rising* with the Seattle Opera in November 2019. Based on interviews with wounded veterans, the work is a cocommission between six American opera companies and the U.S. Department of Defense. Michael also led Opera Memphis in productions of *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi, Così fan tutte*, and *As One*. He was to helm the Intermountain Opera Bozeman for *Le Nozze de Figaro* this past spring.

2007



Binder '07



Dwyer '07

Seth Binder joined forces with Oberlin politics professor Eve Sandberg on *Mohammed VI's Strategies for Moroccan Economic Development* (Routledge Press, 2020). The book analyzes the economic development policies initiated by Morocco's king since he ascended to the throne in 1999. ■ Cellist **Paul Dwyer's** new album *ODDS* (Bear Machine Records) is unusual in its real-time approach to editing: Paul listened to each take immediately after recording it, moving on only once he had captured his intended impression. The result, he believes, is a stronger sense of continuity and spontaneity that's often lacking in classical recordings. Paul recorded with a rare Giovanni Battista Grancino cello that dates to around 1700—some three decades before Bach's creation of the suites that appear on the album. ■ **Emily Feingold** and **Steven Bergdall** welcomed daughter Iris Claudia on March 25, 2018. She was born at their home in Lawrence, Kan., where Emily practices psychotherapy and Steven teaches music. Iris already has been treated to a summer tour of Oberlin's campus.

2008

Danielle Lazarin's latest book, *Back Talk* (Penguin, 2018), is a collection of stories about women's unexpressed desires and needs. It was called "beautifully crafted" by the *New York Times Book Review*. ■ **Brian Pugh** was reelected as mayor of Croton-on-Hudson in Westchester County, N.Y. "We owe it to our local property taxpayers to be mindful of the property tax burden, while still investing in infrastructure, green energy goals, programs for senior citizens, and village recreation that thinks toward the future," he said. ■ Obies were plentiful at the wedding of **Christa Wagner** and Ed Aramay on September 28, 2019, in Baltimore. Pictured from left: Marilyn Rife '76, Shean Conlon '06, Anna Conlon, Nick Dent '01, Michael Kamarck '73, Leanne Wagner '76, Ed, Christa, Marie Barnett, Andrew Pike, Patty



Stubel '09, Tym Kajstura '07, and Xander Woolverton. Not pictured: Ryan Squire. ■ **Shea Winsett** earned a PhD in anthropology from the College of William & Mary in 2019 and works in urban development, racial identity, and public education in Washington, D.C. She's graduation party was attended by many Obies. Pictured from left: Jasmine Powell, Rhojonle Cromwell, Shea, Jonathan Mead, and Kevin Holt '09.

2009

Alexandra Gemma married Ian Crook on May 4, 2019, on the campus of Columbia University. Joining them were Deysi Villarreal '08, Anna Chernin Conlon '08, Shean Conlon '06, and Madeline Schultz Travis '10. ■ **Ben Klebanoff** married Melanie Adelson in Miami on February 2, 2019. Pictured Obies in attendance (from left) include Tanya Rosen-Jones '97, Ben Jones '96, Ben and Melanie, Ezra Spier, and

Louis Grube '08. Ben and Melanie live in New York City. ■ **Hannah Levinson** and Maya Bennardo '11 make up the New York City-based violin and viola duo andPlay. Their debut album, *playlist* (New Focus Recordings, 2019), includes four world-premiere recordings of works by David Bird '12, Ashkan Behzadi, and Clara Iannotta.

2010s

2010

Tatiana Chulochnikova recorded her second solo album at the Steppenwolf Studio in the Netherlands in November 2018. Released on the Steinway & Sons label, it features works for solo violin spanning five centuries. In January 2019, Tatiana founded the BaRock Band, an ensemble that focuses on music from the early Baroque to contemporary. She also appears regularly as concertmaster of the Washington Bach Consort in Washington, D.C.

2011

Andrew Flachs, assistant professor of anthropology at Purdue University, wrote *Cultivating Knowledge: Biotechnology, Sustainability, and the Human Cost of Cotton Capitalism in India* (University of Arizona Press), which explores the unintended consequences of new technology. ■ **Holland Hamilton** and Daniel Kessler '12 were married in March 2020. Their courtship began several years after they realized they both had been photographed in Oberlin's all-campus photo (without knowing one another at the time), and both of them also appeared on an Oberlin admissions bookmark made the same year. "Who would have



Chulochnikova '10



Sligh '13

thought?" Holland writes. "We had no idea until we started dating a couple years later!" Daniel is pictured in the red shirt, fist in the air; Holland is just below him in a black and pink dress, hands in the air.

2012

Suzanne Levin successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in early modern history at the Université Paris Nanterre in November 2019. ■ **Emma Rowan** shares the news that **Nora Cross** married Greg Collins on August 17, 2019. Emma (pictured right) attended, as did **Tori Neuman** (left).

2013



Cartee '13

Joshua Cartee joined the Columbus, Ohio, office of Dinsmore & Shohl LLP as an associate. His practice focuses on general commercial litigation. Joshua joins Dinsmore after four years in the public sector, which included service as a member of the Chillicothe City Council and as an attorney in the Ohio Attorney General's Office. ■ **Carter Sligh** and Dan Hegner '14 were married in Fairchild Chapel in July 2019, and their Root Room reception was attended by many Obies (including several members projected for the Classes of 2034-39).



Hamilton '11



Rowan '12



Hammer '14



Bromberg '14

Pictured (in photo by Tanya Rosen-Jones '97) from left are James Luttrell '14, Abbie Reed '14, Tom Pires '14, Nick LoVallo '14, Kira McGirr '06, Theo McGuire, Elliott McGuire, Lauren Muscott, Nona Brown, Sam Bergman, Josh Cartee, Jameson Ware '14, Rosie Hertzman '14, Marissa Cross '14, Jake Hochendoner '12, Lisa Yanofsky, Sasha Schechter '12, Katie Spurgin '14, Charles McGuire '92, Kellie Liston '12, Duncan Lewis

'12, Ann Sauter '14, Robert Schuster '09, Meryl Dominguez '14, Alexis Aimé '14, Ethan Dempsey-Whiting, Nikki Levesque '14, Bill Townsend '14, Suzanne Bernstein '72, Lily Manshel '14, Claire Coleman '17, Charlotte Beers Plank '11, and Charlie Plank.

2014
Chris Bromberg and Halle Davis married in San Marcos, Calif., on July 21, 2019. They

met their freshman year while living on the second floor of Dascomb. Pictured from left: Alicia Goshe '15, Sophia Grabandt, Jacob Chae, Chris, Halle, Elizabeth Castro Abrams '15, Danielle Wilson, and Bronwen Fox '08. ■ Violinist **Julia Connor** and pianist David Leach released their first album of original compositions as the duo Room to Spare. Matthew Gallagher '13 created the album artwork. [w] roomtosparemusic.com ■ **Phoebe Hammer** and Jackson Meredith '12 were married in Hood River, Ore., on September 21, 2019. Oberlin classmates in the wedding party included (from left) Simone Brodner, Nate Levinson '15, Sarah Orbuch, Phoebe and Jackson, officiant Madeleine O'Meara '13, Maxwell Sugarman '13, and Christina Perez-Tineo '13.

2018
Chloe Vassot was recently published in the nonfiction journal *Literary Hub*. Chloe is pursuing her MFA in nonfiction writing at Emerson College. [w] lithub.com/the-little-known-slow-fire-thats-destroying-all-our-books

CLASS NOTES are prepared from a variety of sources, including news media reports, press releases, and other material sent to us. Send your news—and high-resolution images—to alum.mag@oberlin.edu.

Losses

Faculty, staff, and friends

David S. Boe, a beloved professor of organ at Oberlin from 1962 to 2008 and dean of the conservatory from 1976 to 1990, died April 28, 2020, in Chicago from complications due to COVID-19. He was 84. Because this issue of *OAM* was nearing completion at the time, a Memorial Minute will run in the 2020 issue of the *Conservatory Magazine*. ■ **Marjorie**

"Midge" Wood Brittingham '60, executive director of the Oberlin Alumni Association for 28 years, died December 31, 2019. You can read her obituary on page 9 of this magazine.

1937

Betty Pollack was the proud mother of four children, three of whom attended Oberlin. She spoke glowingly of her college days and remained in touch with fellow Obies seven decades after graduating. Ms. Pollack died September 12, 2019, leaving her children, including Jed '72, Eli '73, and Daniel '75.

1939

Betty J. Criscuolo served as a nurse from New York to California during WWII, in addition to her role as a U.S. Army photographer. She earned a master's in nursing from Yale in 1942 and married Joseph Criscuolo. After the war, she served as an RN on a converted Liberty ship that returned displaced persons from Europe via a mine-laden English Channel. She concluded her nursing career in orthopedics and surgical units in San Diego before transitioning to a 25-year stint with the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau. Insistently active, she took up sailing and ran 10K races for many years, winning seven medals (six gold) in the Senior Olympics in a single weekend. She was the proud mother of a daughter and son.

1941

Grace V. Bentley was the last surviving member of a letter-writing group that consisted of herself and nine Oberlin classmates who traded letters for many years. She and her husband, F. Russell Bentley '39, operated a hardware store in Cortland, N.Y. She was a member of the choir and a pianist at her church and a cofounder of the American Association of University Women Cortland chapter. Ms. Bentley died October 23, 2019, leaving three children, including Allen Bentley '67; eight grandchildren, including Anne Bentley '97; and 13 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband. ■ **Jane Hayden Frelick** earned a master's in nursing at Yale and worked as a civilian nurse with U.S. occupation forces in Germany following WWII. She settled with her husband, Robert Frelick, in Wilmington, Del., where they operated a medical practice from their home for 30 years. She was active in numerous church and civic groups, performed with a local music theater company, and appeared in a locally produced movie at age 94. Ms. Frelick died September 4, 2019. She leaves five children, including son Bill Frelick '76; nine grandchildren, including Talya Frelick '04; and eight great-grandchildren.

1944

Shirley Thomas Garrison was a founder of the women's club at Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory, where her husband, John Garrison '41, was a physicist. After raising their children, she worked at the National Institutes of Health and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. Ms. Garrison lived independently for many years following the death of her husband, becoming an avid traveler and enjoying the company of friends. She died November 15, 2019, leaving three daughters. ■ **Marjie Horner Hawthorne McFarland** was an organist who taught music at Iowa State University and performed professionally for churches near Chicago and Minneapolis. With husband John Hawthorne, she raised four sons and a daughter. She earned a master's in liturgical music from United Theological Seminary and later transitioned into an 11-year career in computer programming for integrated data services. In retirement, Ms. McFarland enjoyed traveling the world, martial arts, and volunteering with schoolchildren and immigrants. She died June 6, 2017, leaving her children, 14 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her first husband and by her second husband, Carl McFarland.

1945

One of three Oberlin graduates to earn the Nobel Prize, **Dr. Stanley Cohen** was a professor of biochemistry for 40 years at Vanderbilt University, where his research on nerve growth factor and the discovery of epidermal growth factor fueled advancements in cancer

knowledge and the development of anti-cancer drugs. He shared the 1986 Nobel Prize with longtime collaborator Rita Levi-Montalcini, with whom he began research in the 1950s at Washington University in St. Louis. "Individually, we were good and competent," Dr. Cohen said at the time. "But together we were marvelous." As an undergrad, he studied chemistry and biology at Brooklyn College, then earned an MA in zoology at Oberlin. He completed a doctorate in biochemistry at the University of Michigan in 1948. Dr. Cohen was honored with the Albert Lasker Award, the Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize, the National Institutes of Health Research Career Development Award, the National Medal of Science, and induction into the Tennessee Health Care Hall of Fame. He died February 5, 2020, leaving his wife, Jan, and their children. ■ **Dorothy T. Youngman** was a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother who arranged music for handbell choirs, learned Braille transcription, and enjoyed playing bridge. She died April 1, 2019.

1947

Margaret Hill Coburn worked for DuPont and traveled throughout the country in the years after graduating. She married Edward Cluff in 1956 and remarried in 1982 to Edward Coburn, with whom she relocated to West Falmouth, Mass. Together they enjoyed traveling, sailing, golfing, and socializing. Ms. Coburn died April 20, 2019, leaving two sons and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. ■ **Rachel Ross Parmenter** was an activist for civil rights and a volunteer in countless community activities. She raised three children with her husband of 63 years, William K. Parmenter '47, who preceded her in death. Ms. Parmenter died December 2, 2019. ■ **Shirley Wells** worked with her husband, Jack F. Wells '48, in Presbyterian churches in Maryland, Delaware, Montana, Nebraska, and Idaho. She met the future Rev. Wells at Oberlin, and they married the year after her graduation. She was a devoted mother to their four daughters, and the family enjoyed outdoor adventures together. In retirement, Ms. Wells competed alongside her husband in Montana's Senior Olympics and enjoyed theater and travel. She died August 23, 2019, leaving her daughters, eight grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

1948

A member of a family with deep and wide connections to Oberlin College, **Wilson H. Bent** devoted his career to industrial advertising and eventually owned a firm of his own. A conscientious objector during WWII, he earned an MBA from the University of Chicago and married Ruth Farmer '47. He joined the faculty of Antioch College and served for more than 25 years on the Yellow Springs (Ohio) Village Council, including multiple terms as president. After retirement he continued his lifelong love of learning by taking virtually every literature class at Wright State University; he was also active with local music, education, and affordable housing projects, as well as Planned Parenthood. He was a regular runner and then cyclist well into his late eighties. Mr. Bent died December 17, 2019. He is survived by his wife; four children, including Nancy Bent '75 and Andrew Bent '83; and six grandchildren, including Jason Bent '13. His parents, sister, and brother all graduated from Oberlin. ■ **Rosalind Sawyer Springsteen** was a rare female on the professional staff at Ford Motor Company at the time of her hiring in 1950. She stepped away from her career to adopt two children, whom she raised for the next decade before returning to the workforce for another 40 years. She held a master's degree in economics from the University of Michigan. Ms. Springsteen died September 6, 2019, following the death of her husband 26 years earlier. She is survived by her son and daughter.

1949

Delbert A. Demmer ran the family hardware business that bore their name and served two terms as mayor of his hometown of Massillon, Ohio. He served as a combat engineer in Europe through the conclusion of WWII before meeting his future wife Julia, with whom he had five children. An avid musician, he played trombone in a Dixieland band called the Tired Tigers, named in honor of his high school mascot. Mr. Demmer died December 28, 2019, leaving two sons and two daughters, eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife and a daughter. ■ President of his graduating class at Oberlin, **Dr. James R. Hanson** earned a law degree from the University of Michigan and went on to a long

and varied legal career in Ohio, working for the Ohio Water Commission, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Ohio Legislative Service Commission before entering into private practice in 1973. His Oberlin studies were interrupted by service on a Merchant Marine transport ship charged with returning postwar German POWs from the U.S. to Germany. After a brief stint as a newspaper reporter, he was drafted for the Korean War and served as a corporal with the U.S. Army Signal Corps. There he developed a friendship with a citizen named Moon-Young Lee, whom he helped relocate to the U.S. to earn an education. Lee later returned to South Korea to become a law professor but was imprisoned and tortured by the Korean government for his democratic principles in the early 1960s. Dr. Hanson worked tirelessly for years to earn Lee's release; they eventually succeeded, and Lee was presented the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000—an honor he shared with his longtime friend. Dr. Hanson died September 7, 2019, leaving his wife of 68 years, Portia Peters Hanson '50; three daughters, including Julie Hanson Reiswig '82; two grandsons; and three great-grandchildren. ■ **Alice K. Weissman** was a case manager for the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and a member of the Ethical Culture Society and the League of Women Voters. She enjoyed swimming and walking, as well as playing the piano and recorder. Ms. Weissman died August 31, 2019. She was preceded in death by her husband, Sam, and leaves two children and a grandson.

1950

Marjorie S. Gillespie was director of adoption at the Family & Children's Center of Mishawaka, Ind. She married Louis Gillespie in 1970. Ms. Gillespie died July 19, 2019. She is survived by two daughters, a son, two grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, and seven step-great-grandchildren.

1951

By trade a picture framer who specialized in the intricate method known as French matting, **Alice Brown O'Connor** was also a gifted artist who enjoyed painting abstract works in watercolor. She married Kevney J. O'Connor '51, with whom she had two children, and she later settled in San Francisco after their divorce. She mingled with the artists and beat poets of North Beach

and, for the last 35 years of her life, served as the resident manager of a small apartment building on Nob Hill, where she was a beloved friend of her residents. She died April 24, 2019. ■ **James John Enrietto** was a beloved father, husband, and colleague who served in the U.S. Navy and continued his education with a degree from the University of Michigan. Mr. Enrietto died January 5, 2020, leaving a son and daughter and five grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Janet. ■ **Dr. Jean Hazeltine Shaudys** raised two children with her husband, Vince Shaudys, with whom she later settled in South Bend, Wash. She earned a PhD from Ohio State University, was a lifetime member of the United Methodist Church of South Bend, a longtime member of the Kiwanis, and served on her city council for 28 years. Dr. Shaudys died July 18, 2019, following the death of her husband and infant son. She leaves two children and a grandchild.

1952

Katherine Biddle Austin was a Chicago-based clinical psychologist whose career spanned work in the county mental health hospital and later in private practice. An avid musician, she complemented her career in psychology as a mezzo-soprano in the chorus of Lyric Opera of Chicago and other ensembles. She earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago in 1957 after marrying Robert Lynn Austin. Upon retiring, she turned her attention to archaeology, exploring sites across the Midwest and serving as a docent at the Field Museum of Natural History for more than two decades. She was married for 25 years to Seymour Bortz. Ms. Austin died August 26, 2019, leaving three daughters and numerous grandchildren, the children of her husband, and other loved ones. ■ **Christie Hawes Campbell** devoted many years to the Fort Worth, Texas, men's clothing stores operated by the family of her husband, Clyde Parks Campbell. When the stores were sold in 1969, the Campbells returned to school to study art history, traveled, and lived abroad. Ms. Campbell was active for many years in her local League of Women Voters. She died December 15, 2019, following the death of her husband nine years earlier. ■ **Barbara Blachly Carpenter** lived in the once-dilapidated Vermont farmhouse she bought at age 18. Her many talents included dairy farming, gardening, basketmaking, and art, and she

was a tireless volunteer for numerous causes around her hometown of Cabot. She married Charles H. Carpenter, to whom she was devoted until his death in 1981. Ms. Carpenter died November 16, 2019, leaving two daughters, three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. ■ **Molly Kathleen Keller Cline** was a volunteer for gubernatorial and senatorial campaigns while raising her family in Idaho, and she later served on the Idaho Commission for the Arts at the request of the governor. She married James Edward Cline, with whom she had four children. Ms. Cline died January 17, 2019. She leaves her children, three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband. ■ **Dr. Hans Gunther Graetzer** earned a PhD from Yale University and taught physics at South Dakota State University for 36 years. He arrived in the U.S. with his family as a German refugee in 1939 and later served a year in the U.S. Navy in the middle of his Oberlin education. Upon retiring from teaching, he relocated with his wife, Miriam, to Estes Park, Colo., where they operated the Quilt House Bed and Breakfast for more than 25 years. Dr. Graetzer died April 14, 2019, leaving his wife, four children, and eight grandchildren. ■ **Dr. Stuart Drummond McLean** served as campus minister at the University of Illinois and Stanford University, and was a professor at Santa Clara and Phillips Graduate Seminary. He received his master's degree from Yale University and a PhD in theology from the University of Chicago. He was passionate about politics and community service, and he enjoyed exploring the outdoors. Dr. McLean died June 13, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Mary McLean '52, and their three children, including Catherine McLean '88. ■ **William Benjamin Ray Sr.** was an operatic baritone whose voice launched him from the segregated South to the stages and television screens of Europe, where he cultivated a vibrant 25-year career before turning his focus to teaching at the Peabody Institute and Howard University. Mr. Ray's first tour of Germany came as a soldier in the U.S. Army, for which he earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Fluent in French, German, and Italian, he earned his master's degree in education from Heidelberg University while touring. In 1974 he opened Black Theater Productions in Stuttgart, Germany, dedicated to presenting sketches that addressed racial prejudice. In

1987 he was honored with the National Opera Association's Lift Every Voice Legacy Award, which celebrates the work of artists of color. He served on the board of the Annapolis Opera Company for 30 years and amassed numerous honors, among them membership in the Kentucky Human Rights Hall of Fame. Mr. Ray died July 3, 2019, following the death of his wife, Carrie, of 64 years. He leaves two sons and two granddaughters. ■ **Ted Rehl** was a professor of music and chair of the piano department at Lawrence University, where he taught for 34 years. As a piano student at Oberlin, he was assigned to accompany cello major Frances Clarke, which he eventually did as her husband for 63 years. Together they traveled the world in search of adventure, including regular snorkeling trips to escape Wisconsin winters. Mr. Rehl died January 11, 2020, leaving two children and four grandchildren. ■ **Harry Moul Ritchie** enjoyed a distinguished career as a drama professor, after which he retired to New Mexico in 1995. Mr. Ritchie died January 14, 2020, leaving his wife of 67 years, Margaret H. Elderfield; two sons; and two grandchildren.

1953

Dr. Roger Millikan served for 25 years on the chemistry faculty of the University of California, Santa Barbara, where his research included energy transfer in gases and discovery of the molecule BO_2 . He earned a PhD at Berkeley and devoted the next 10 years to the General Electric Research Lab, studying methods of improving lighting products. In retirement, he took up bird photography, and his images appeared in his local newspaper and in a pair of books he published, *Birds of Lake Cachuma* and *Birds of Lake Los Carneros*. Dr. Millikan died September 9, 2019, leaving five children, including Jane Millikan '82, and seven grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife, Mary Clark Stickell.

1954

George Ervin Bew was a classically trained pianist who worked for the Suncoast Opera Guild in Florida before retiring to Cartersville, Ga., where he founded the Cartersville Opera with his wife, Jonalyn Hill Bew. He earned a degree from Florida State University and was a longtime member of the Sam Jones Choir, for which he sang and

composed. Mr. Bew died August 14, 2019, leaving a daughter, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. ■ **Shirley Seaman Lake** earned a master's degree in social work from Case Western Reserve University and was a caseworker in Denver and Madison, Wis., until 1961. She later managed two successful campaigns for the Wisconsin state legislature, worked for the state assembly for 14 years, and served as president of two parent-teacher organizations. Raised in Oberlin, she was committed to political and social activism—traits she learned from her family, which dedicated some 41 years to working at the college. Ms. Lake died June 22, 2018, leaving her husband of 59 years, Jim, and her son, David '93.

1955

Dr. Frederic L. Pryor was an economist who taught at Swarthmore College for 22 years. As a doctoral student at Yale, he took up studies of communist foreign trade in West Berlin. In August 1961, while delivering a copy of his dissertation to a colleague in East Berlin, he was arrested for suspected espionage and imprisoned for six months; he was eventually released with a U.S. Air Force pilot in exchange for a convicted KGB agent, whose life was later dramatized in the Steven Spielberg film *Bridge of Spies*. Over the course of his career, Dr. Pryor authored 13 books and more than 120 scholarly articles. Apart from his research, he served for many years as a trustee for numerous historically black colleges, including Miles, Wilberforce, and Tougaloo. Dr. Pryor died September 2, 2019, following the death of his wife in 2008. He is survived by a son and three grandchildren. ■ A classically trained opera singer, **Dr. John T. Roberts** also loved ancient Asian language and culture. He earned an MA and PhD in historical linguistics at the University of Chicago, launching a 32-year career on the faculty of the University of Virginia's Asian languages division. He continued to sing in church choirs, as well as with the Charlottesville Light Opera Co. and the university's opera program. During a stint in the U.S. Army, he taught artillery surveying and trigonometry, and directed two choirs. Dr. Roberts died August 5, 2019, leaving his wife, Tonya Sue Roberts; three sons; two daughters; a stepdaughter; and three grandchildren. ■ **Paul A. Warner** was a pilot in the U.S. Air Force, followed by a career at

MEMORIAL MINUTE

Bill Skinner, 1930-2019

William R. "Bill" Skinner was born on New Year's Day 1930. Susan Skinner '52, his wife of 62 years, says the news didn't make the newspapers because he was the second baby born that day, not the first. This foreshadowed much of Bill's life; he rarely made the headlines, but he was an indefatigable worker for what he believed was right. As a geology faculty member from 1966 to 2002, Bill's top priority was teaching. Bill devised many clever hands-on exercises to make difficult concepts accessible to his students and read widely to stay abreast of new scientific developments. Many remember him reading in booths in the Campus Restaurant, then the Wilder snack bar, then in the Java Zone, then the Slow Train. In every course he taught, Bill's effort was unstinting. His upper-level mainstay was Igneous and Metamorphic Petrology, the science of solid rocks. At the intro level, Bill did yeoman's service, teaching multiple courses every year. He taught his favorite, Planets, Moons, and Meteorites, 25 times in 27 years to 90-plus students. From 1985 to 1995, when he was in full stride, Bill taught 250-plus students every year.

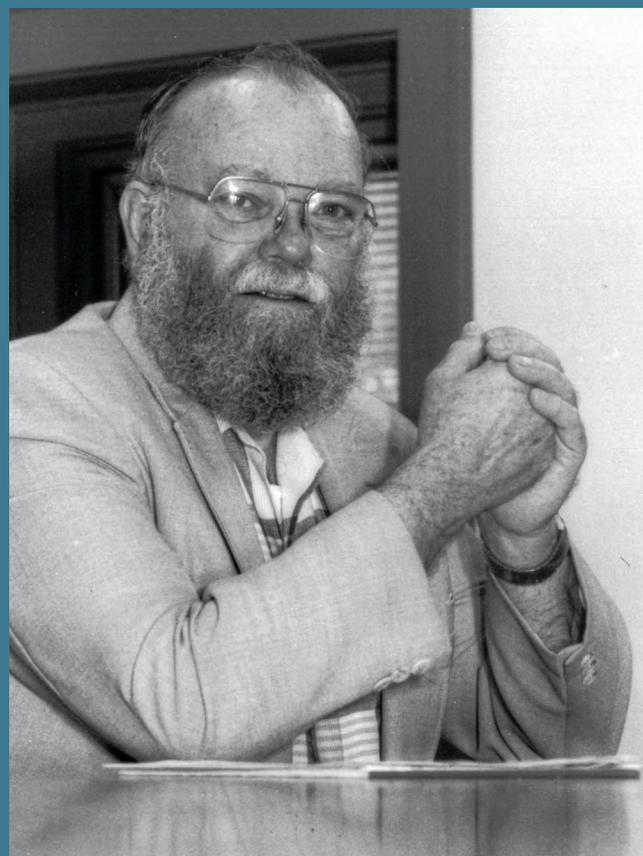
The geology department hit rough waters in the '70s, and Bill proved to be the steadfast captain who kept it afloat. He became acting chair of geology in 1969-70,

then chair for 14 years. Bill championed the department in many ways; his dogged pursuit of decent space was finally rewarded when the department relocated from Severance Lab to a renovated Carnegie Building in 1989.

One of Bill's core principles was to thoroughly understand one's chosen discipline. His deep understanding of petrology reflected his innate intellectual gifts and his time studying with one of the world's leading petrologists at Columbia University. By the time he left, he was a consummate professional at wringing geologic information out of rocks. Bill received his BS in geology from the University of Texas at Austin in 1953, served in the U.S. Army, and worked for the Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory in Florida before going to grad school. When he and Susan came to Oberlin in 1966, Bill was a family man; they raised four children, including Jonathan '87.

In the '80s and '90s, Bill decided to ramp up his side interest in meteorites. He studied with a preeminent planetary scientist at the University of Tennessee in 1988-89 and began publishing his meteorite work, which shed new light on the earliest days of our solar system.

This sketch of Bill would be incomplete if I didn't mention that his skills and interests ranged far beyond earth and



planetary sciences. For example, he had an abiding interest in music that he pursued informally throughout his years at Oberlin. He had an excellent ear and eclectic tastes, reflected in his personal collection of 10,000-plus records. He regularly invited voice majors to his home to listen to music on his excellent audio equipment. And I have yet to broach the subject of Bill's many service-related activities; he was "faculty shepherd" for the construction of the Science Center, and he and Susan

worked with the Hot Meals program for years. In typical Bill fashion, he did such things without any fanfare.

In summary, Bill Skinner was a supremely dedicated and gifted teacher, a first-rate scholar, a generous supporter of the arts, and a man of impeccable integrity. The current success of the geology department is due in no small part to his years of effort and struggle. He will be missed.

*Bruce M. Simonson,
Professor Emeritus of
Geology*

Eastman Kodak. He was an avid golfer, wildlife photographer, knife maker, and camellia gardener, and he enjoyed spending time at his cabin in northern Minnesota. Mr. Warner died July 6, 2019, leaving his wife of 63 years, Alma Warner; three children; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. ■ **Mary Carolyn Decrouez Weis** was born in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, and survived the bombing and surrender of Paris before relocating to the U.S. She worked for the World Affairs Council and Wheelock College. She married Robert Pomeroy Weis, with whom she lived in Massachusetts and later New Hampshire, where Ms. Weis enjoyed social activities and the company of friends, in addition to raising dogs, gardening, sewing, and music. She died January 26, 2020, leaving her four children, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

1956

Ruth Wickersham Papalia was a harpist who served the American Harp Society in a variety of capacities: as founder of its Central New York Chapter, cofounder and first treasurer of the AHS Foundation, and chair of the board, secretary, and treasurer on a national level. She performed for 40 years with the College Community Orchestra at the State University of New York at Cortland and with a harp trio called the Three of Harps. She was presented with AHS's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008. Ms. Papalia died October 8, 2019, leaving her husband of 63 years, Dr. Anthony Papalia '55; four daughters; and five granddaughters. ■ **Dr. George Webb** received a master's in teaching at Yale University and worked as a science teacher in Washington, D.C. before moving with his wife, Norma Beach Webb '56, to Denver, where he earned a PhD in physiology from the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Dr. Webb became an associate professor of physiology at the University of Vermont and began a long career in basic research, specializing in ion transport across the cell membrane. He coauthored scientific articles and *The K Factor: Reversing and Preventing High Blood Pressure without Drugs*. Dr. Webb was also an environmental activist. He died May 30, 2019, leaving his three children. ■ **Norma Beach Webb** was a lab technician at the National Institutes of Health and the University of Colorado Medical

School before becoming a stay-at-home mother to her three children. She later volunteered for American Field Service, fundraising and hosting international exchange students and teachers. She also developed healthy recipes for a book coauthored by her husband, Dr. George Webb, on controlling blood pressure without drugs. Ms. Webb died July 20, 2018, leaving her children.

1957

George Henry Crowl Jr. began his career with the U.S. Air Force, first as a navigator and later as a teacher and pilot of F-111s, eventually earning the rank of lieutenant colonel. In retirement, he developed training programs for Air Force crew members, earning the Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award. Mr. Crowl completed a master's degree at California State University, Sacramento, and a teaching certificate at Eastern New Mexico University. He was active for decades with the Kiwanis, Boy Scouts of America, and other groups. He died July 9, 2019, leaving his wife of 62 years, Dorothy, as well as four children and five grandchildren.

1958

Carol Throop Pollak was a longtime caseworker with many institutions, including the Illinois Department of Public Aid in Chicago. She earned an MSW at Rutgers and began her career with positions in Grinnell, Iowa, and Washington, DC. Upon retiring, she moved with her husband, Bill, to California and took up gardening and volunteering and social work. She died May 22, 2019, leaving her husband, two daughters, and two grandsons. ■ **Dr. Victor R. Swenson** was the founding executive director of the Vermont Humanities Council, through which he promoted thousands of events across the state each year. A specialist in Ottoman history, he earned an MA at Georgetown and a PhD at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. He taught world history for several years at Oberlin, the University of Massachusetts, and Johnson State College, before turning his focus to connecting citizens—especially children, illiterate adults, and prison populations—with the humanities. The annual Victor R. Swenson Humanities Educator Award, in recognition of

inspirational Vermont teachers, was created in his honor. Dr. Swenson died July 25, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Judith Yarnall; two daughters; and four grandchildren. ■ **Dr. Margaret Watts** was a teacher of English in locales worldwide, a passion she developed through a Shansi teaching fellowship at Oberlin, which took her to South India for two years. She completed a master's degree and postgraduate certificate in English education at the University of London, then set about teaching in Ghana and later Trinidad, where she devoted the majority of her career. Her research revolved around the study of writing processes, and she enjoyed writing poetry and editing collections of poetry. Dr. Watts died August 21, 2019. She was preceded in death by her husband, Roy Watts, and is survived by a son.

1959

Peter Jay Hedrick was a longtime teacher of oboe at Ithaca College. He earned a master's degree at Yale and began his teaching career at Michigan State. He enjoyed gardening and cooking, as well as studying theology and language. He and his wife traveled to Europe to study historic forms of their modern instruments. Following his retirement from Ithaca, the couple founded the New York State Early Music Association, the organization behind New York State Baroque, now in its 30th year. Mr. Hedrick died May 13, 2019, leaving his wife, Libby Hedrick '61, and two daughters. ■ **Dr. Bruce S. McEwen** was a neuroscientist at Rockefeller University whose groundbreaking research emphasized the effects of stress on overall health and revealed that the adult brain changes throughout life in part by circulating hormones that affect mood, decision making, memory, and other cognitive functions. His work played an integral role in the care of everything from normal aging to PTSD and depression. Dr. McEwen earned a graduate degree from Rockefeller in 1964 and returned two years later as faculty; he eventually became head of the Harold and Margaret Millikin Hatch Laboratory of Neuroendocrinology. His six-decade career intersected with neurobiology, endocrinology, and behavioral science, and he conducted much of his research with his wife, Karen Bulloch, a fellow faculty member at Rockefeller. He also had a long-standing professional collaboration with his brother

Craig McEwen '67, a sociology professor at Bowdoin College. He was the author of the 2002 book *The End of Stress as We Know It*. He was an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Medicine, and the American Society of Arts and Sciences. He died January 2, 2020, leaving his wife and ex-wife, Nancy McEwen '59, as well as two daughters, two stepchildren, and eight grandchildren. ■ **Dr. Tony Norman** was a longtime member of the biochemistry faculty at the University of California, Riverside, where he earned international acclaim for his study of vitamin D, including discoveries that led the increased recommended daily intake of the vitamin. He earned an MS and PhD from the University of Wisconsin. Throughout his career at Riverside, he served in leadership roles from academics to athletics, and was a member of numerous medical journal editorial boards. Dr. Norman died June 14, 2019. He was predeceased by his wife, Helen Henry, and is survived by two daughters, a son, and nine grandchildren.

1960

Paula Killion Shultes operated a daycare center and worked with schoolchildren with learning disabilities, in addition to serving for years as the caregiver for her parents. She died November 23, 2019, leaving her husband Monty, three sons, and nine grandchildren.

1961

Rev. Anthony Carter devoted his career to missionary work in Japan with his wife of 48 years, Aiko Yokoya '61. He earned a BA from Hiram College before completing a bachelor of divinity from Oberlin Theological Seminary. In 1963, he and his wife were appointed by the United Church Board of World Missions (now Global Ministries) to conduct pastoral work and other service in Japan, which they did for the next 35 years. He enjoyed photography and worked part time as a translator at Fuji Film for many years. Rev. Carter died May 27, 2018, following the death of his wife 12 years earlier. He is survived by his second wife, Karen Charbonnet Carter, two children, three stepchildren, and three grandchildren.

■ **Dr. Josef Cooper** was an attorney who successfully represented individuals, governmental groups, and corporations in class-action lawsuits against defendants such

as Microsoft, De Beers, LG, and Samsung. He earned a JD from the University of Chicago Law School in 1964 and became a specialist in multiple antitrust and consumer-protection cases. After several years in private practice in Chicago, Dr. Cooper moved to San Francisco in 1973 to form an antitrust and class-action practice, and later to open Cooper & Kirkham with his second wife, Tracy Kirkham. At Oberlin, he was involved in student activism and took a student trip to Cuba that led to a chance encounter—and lengthy discussion—with Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. On campus, he cofounded the Progressive Student League, which became Students for a Democratic Society. At Oberlin he met his first wife, Carol Donley '61, with whom he had two children. Dr. Cooper died November 25, 2018. He leaves his second wife, five children, and three grandchildren.

■ **Dr. Oliver H. Woshinsky** was a member of the University of Southern Maine political science faculty for 30 years. He completed a master's degree in international relations at Columbia and a PhD in political science at Yale—but memorably remarked that he had learned as much about politics during a two-year stint in the U.S. Army than he had in graduate school. His career included study of the psychological makeup of politicians and cultural factors that produce and sustain governments, and he was the author of four books. Dr. Woshinsky died May 26, 2019, leaving his wife, Patricia Garrett. He was previously married to Barbara Reisman, with whom he had a son.

1962

Carter Howards worked in the National Gallery and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and later became a weaver and photographer. She earned a degree from Hollins College in addition to a master's in art history from Oberlin. Ms. Howards died October 27, 2019. She leaves her husband of 54 years, Stuart Howards; their two children; and two granddaughters. ■ **Dr. Terence Kelso Thayer** devoted a career of nearly four decades to the German faculty of Indiana University. He met Diane Weiss '63 at Oberlin and they married in 1962 before moving to Germany, where Dr. Thayer was a Fulbright scholar. He later earned a PhD at Harvard University and began his career at Indiana soon after. An intrepid traveler, he visited all seven

continents and more than 50 countries. Dr. Thayer died May 2, 2019. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, a son and daughter, and a granddaughter.

1963

French hornist and pianist **Ruth Lighty Costa** was a longtime member of the New Sussex (N.J.) Symphony, accompanist for the Children's Chorus of Sussex County, and taught music for 25 years, primarily at Andover Regional School. She completed her junior year of Oberlin studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, where she married an Austrian musician and had four sons. A decade later, she returned to America, earning a bachelor's degree in music education from Montclair State College and a master's from Trenton State University, and married Gus Costa. She was active with the Reunion Gift Committee of the Class of 1963 and helped organize an exhibit of class memories of Salzburg for the 50th reunion. Ms. Costa died June 1, 2017, leaving four sons and two grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband. ■ **Allan Millikan** devoted his career to Eastman Kodak, where he was a senior research scientist in the emulsion research lab, with an emphasis on special photographic materials and techniques for recording astronomical objects and phenomena. One of his developments allowed for photos to be taken that doubled the size of the known universe at the time—an achievement for which he was honored by the American Chemical Society. He earned a master's degree from Purdue University and was an avid skier. Mr. Millikan died August 29, 2019; he was predeceased by his first wife, Nancy McCombs Millikan '63, and a son. He is survived by his second wife, Beth Hovey Millikan, as well as six children and 11 grandchildren, including Shannon Millikan '07. ■ **Eric Traphagen** began his career with several corporate positions, including as an ad executive at Polaroid. He eventually transitioned away from the office—first into a Buddhist monastery in California, and later into woodworking and carpentry, which became his passion. In 1996 he built a woodworking shop at his home on Sawyer's Island, Mass. He enjoyed boating and often took long sailing trips with his wife, Brigit Britton. Mr. Traphagen died July 30, 2019, leaving his wife and many other loved ones.

1964

Born to illiterate parents and raised by his grandmother, **Dr. James Charles Mills** barely completed high school but went on to earn degrees from Oberlin, Spartanburg Methodist College, Berea College, and the University of Kansas before embarking on a three-decade career as an art professor at East Tennessee State University. He died January 7, 2020, leaving a son, daughter, and granddaughter.

1966

Dr. Henry Frankel was a professor of philosophy at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, for 43 years. He authored 45 academic papers and book reviews, culminating in the four-volume book *The Continental Drift Controversy*, which is considered the definitive work on the subject. He earned a PhD from Ohio State University. Dr. Frankel died November 2, 2019, leaving wife Paula, two daughters, and two granddaughters. ■ Born in Budapest, **Balazs Szabo** escaped his then-troubled homeland alone in 1956 and eventually settled with a family in Massachusetts. He followed many passions throughout his life, from music and photography to cooking and writing, including a weekly column—“Habitat for Non-Humanity”—he wrote for his local newspaper. He traveled extensively, loved to garden, and was a voracious reader of nonfiction works. Mr. Szabo died May 24, 2019. ■ **Philip S. Yang** enjoyed a 25-year career in social service programs, first with the city of Ottawa Alberta, then as a federal civil servant. In retirement he assisted friends as a skilled handyman and volunteered at the Ottawa Tool Library and Woodpark Community Garden. Mr. Yang died September 6, 2019. He leaves his wife of 48 years, Janice Georgy, and a daughter.

1968

Edward W. Hildebrand III was a tenor in the Oberlin College Choir and enjoyed singing and playing piano. He was skilled in other ways as well, fashioning a telescope, keyboard instruments, and Shaker-style furniture by hand. For a time he was married to Nancy Rosen '71, with whom he sang in the choir. He was a longtime member of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Canton, New York, and was active in their music programs. He died January 20, 2020. ■ **Dr. Daniel Kurtz** was a

faculty member at the New England College of Optometry and later cofounded the College of Optometry at Western University of Health Sciences, serving as its first associate dean of academic affairs. He coauthored the widely used textbook *Clinical Procedures for Ocular Examination*, cofounded an optometry clinic for homeless veterans, and served as president of the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists. He completed a four-year stint in the Navy before earning his PhD at the University of Michigan, followed by a doctor of optometry at the New England College of Optometry. Dr. Kurtz died June 8, 2019. He was married first to Nancy Coffin Kurtz '69, then to Lynne A. Silvers. He is survived by his four children. ■ **Barbara Todd Simard** was principal flutist for the Symphony Orchestra of Quebec and a professor of flute at Laval University and the Music Conservatory of Quebec. She performed and recorded with the Chamber Ensemble of Quebec and was principal flutist at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont. After retiring, she traveled the world and volunteered in numerous capacities. Ms. Simard died September 28, 2019, and was preceded in death by her husband, Jacques Simard. She is survived by three stepchildren and nine grandchildren.

1969

Richard Paul Davis worked in finance for Edward Jones and dedicated his free time to directing community musicals, volunteering with the Boy Scouts, and coaching girls soccer. Mr. Davis died August 17, 2019. He leaves his wife June, their three children, and six grandchildren. ■ **Roger Alan Shipley** was a longtime teacher of English and wood shop at the North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka, Ill., where he also directed the stage crew for many years. He also served as technical director for several professional theater companies. In Bellingham, Wash., he was director of Western Washington University's performing arts facility and taught stagecraft classes. In the 1980s, he taught himself electronics and physics so he could build his own satellite tracking equipment, which he used to hear astronaut Owen Garriott aboard the space shuttle *Columbia* in 1983. Mr. Shipley died July 19, 2019. He leaves his wife of 50 years, Gayle Shipley, and a son and daughter.

1971

Dr. Christopher Rouse was a Pulitzer Prize-winning composer whose music has been performed by every major orchestra in America and by many prominent orchestras worldwide. After studying under Richard Hoffmann at Oberlin, he continued his education with a master's degree and doctorate from Cornell University, and was awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Dr. Rouse taught composition for more than 20 years at the Eastman School of Music, where he also created a course on the history of rock and roll. Other appointments included the Juilliard School and the University of Michigan. One of Dr. Rouse's first major works, *Symphony No. 1*, was commissioned by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 1988 and won the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award. Dr. Rouse penned five more symphonies, 12 concertos, and a requiem. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1993 for his *Trombone Concerto*, which was dedicated to Leonard Bernstein. He earned a Grammy Award in 2002 for Best Contemporary Classical Composition and was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Dr. Rouse died September 21, 2019. He leaves his wife, Natasha Miller Rouse; two children from a previous marriage; and three grandchildren.

1972

Pat Floerke was a licensed clinical social worker who relocated to Nicaragua in 1994 to work for the Center for Development in Central America. There she facilitated access to health care, methods of sustainable agriculture, economic development, and education. She was a longtime member of Charlotte Friends Meeting in North Carolina and a 31-year member of the Jubilee House Community, through which she lived and worked with the poor. She died December 17, 2018. ■ **Dr. Sandra Simons-Ailes** was an educator for nearly 40 years and worked in the Albuquerque public schools and the College of Santa Fe at Albuquerque. She fondly remembered her time at Oberlin, which inspired her work in early childhood education. Her life was celebrated with a memorial at Monte Vista Elementary School in Albuquerque in August 2019. She is survived by two daughters.

1973

Rodger Elliot Taylor died May 25, 2019, after a valiant battle with cancer. He is fondly remembered by many loved ones, including his wife, Debbie, with whom he shared his life for 36 years.

1975

Dr. Cathy Anne Redd was director of psychology at Magee Rehabilitation Hospital in Philadelphia, where she worked alongside her husband of 35 years, Byron Woodbury. To be nearer to their daughter, Dr. Redd transitioned from Magee into private practice, which she operated for the rest of her life. She was diagnosed with polio before her third birthday but overcame the illness with little more than a slight limp that hinted at the ordeal she faced in childhood. She earned a PhD in counseling psychology from the University of Minnesota. Dr. Redd died April 6, 2019, several months after the death of her husband. She is survived by their daughter.

1976

Betsy Parsons was a 30-year English teacher and a vocal advocate for LGBTQ equality in her hometown of Portland, Maine, and beyond. Ms. Parsons cofounded the southern Maine chapter of the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network, dedicated to ensuring a safe and affirming environment for LGBTQ youth. She was also instrumental in creating some 90 gay-straight alliance groups in high schools across Maine. After Oberlin, she took on graduate studies at Brown and Harvard universities. In 2014, she received the Gerda Haas Award for Excellence in Human Rights Education and Leadership from the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine. Ms. Parsons died September 5, 2019. She leaves many loved ones. ■ **Dr. Michael Pisani** taught at Vassar for more than 20 years. He earned a degree in conducting and music from Oberlin in 1977, and a master's in conducting in 1989. An accomplished pianist, he earned a PhD in musicology from the Eastman School of Music in 1996 and became an acclaimed author, writing books including *Imagining Native America in Music*, which received an ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award in 2006. Dr. Pisani died July 9, 2019.

1980

Kate Holmquist was a U.S.-born journalist and author who made her life in Dublin,

inspired in part by an Irish writer in residence she met at Oberlin. She first gained acclaim for *A Good Daughter*, her 1991 memoir about the experience of caring for her ill mother. She married fellow journalist Ferdia MacAnna in 1984 and wrote for the publication he edited, *In Dublin*. Her writing caught the attention of other publications and led to her 30-year career with *The Irish Times*. She eventually completed a novel, *The Glass Room*, and started a popular radio program. Ms. Holmquist died August 5, 2019, leaving her husband and their three children. ■ **Todd Portune** served for 27 years on the Cincinnati City Council and later the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners, becoming the first Democrat voted to the board in nearly four decades. He carried on with his work despite years of illness, including multiple bouts with cancer that resulted first in paralysis and later in the amputation of one leg. Mr. Portune was a three-sport athlete at Oberlin, excelling in track and field, cross country, and football. He set seven school records on the track and was an eight-time Ohio Athletic Conference honoree. He served for many years on the Heisman Club board, including as president from 1994 to 1996. He held a law degree from the University of Cincinnati. Mr. Portune died January 25, 2020, leaving his three children. Hamilton County's administration building and a nearby street will be renamed in his honor.

1986

Dr. Brian Denis Jones was the state of Connecticut's official archaeologist, a role he assumed after years in contract archaeology. He earned a PhD from the University of Connecticut in 1998 and enjoyed numerous pastimes, from home brewing to travel to martial arts. Dr. Jones died July 4, 2019. He leaves his wife of 22 years, Margaret O'Keefe, and their two children.

1987

Dr. Tom Henderson was a hydrogeologist with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality who coordinated complex cleanups of abandoned mines that polluted streams and communities statewide. He earned a doctorate in hydrogeology from the University of British Columbia and taught a class for the federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, which was attended by hydrogeologists from across the

country. He also loved music, playing bass in a 1990s band called God Rifle, and he enjoyed traveling with his family, including extensive backpacking trips across the U.S. and Europe. Dr. Henderson died October 18, 2018. He leaves his wife and colleague, Kate Fry, and their three children.

1991

Karen Elizabeth Pianka was an accomplished pianist, singer, and biologist. Though a biology major, Ms. Pianka took lessons in jazz piano and sang in the Oberlin College Choir. In 1998, she earned a second bachelor's degree in music at UT Austin, followed by dual master's degrees in marine biology and marine policy at the University of Maine. After earning a John A. Knauss Executive Marine Policy fellowship award, Karen took a job at ECS Federal where she worked with scientists at NOAA in Washington, DC. She loved nature, especially marine life, the ocean, beaches, and the skies. Her favorite composer was Chopin and she loved playing his etudes. She died January 23, 2020, leaving her spouse, Amy Guadagnoli.

1993

Loved ones celebrated the life of **Warnice Erika Nalls** in August 2019 at Antioch Baptist Church North in Atlanta. She leaves many family members and friends.

1998

Born in Bangladesh, **Dr. Numair Choudhury** was a writer who completed numerous short stories and devoted nearly half his life to writing a novel. He earned a PhD at the University of Texas at Dallas, after which he returned to his homeland to teach. Dr. Choudhury died September 9, 2018. His novel *Babu Bangladesh!* was published posthumously by Harper Collins in India and has earned comparisons to Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*.

2008

Titus Andrew Vettrus was a gifted pianist who performed as soloist with the Chippewa Valley Symphony and LaCrosse Symphony Orchestra in Wisconsin before studying under Robert Shannon at Oberlin. After graduating he relocated to New York City to embark on his career. He is remembered by loved ones for his kind heart, humility, and clever sense of humor. He died November 14, 2019.

“Just say she was a happy woman. She had a happy life, and she’s ready to leave it.”

Gertrude “Trudie” Nicholson ’42 in an article about her turning 100 in the (West Lebanon, N.H.) *Valley News*

“There’s never a moment when she’s not thinking about what she can do next to make things better. She has worked tirelessly to provide a platform for diverse voices in Ultimate. She’s been an incredible advocate for the trans community. She’s organized and run workshops and clinics and meetings and more, learning and teaching us about everything from how to optimize practice time to how to best support ourselves and each other. The Manti grew when Abby grew.”

Members of the Preying Manti, Oberlin’s women and trans Ultimate team, in their winning nomination of **Abby Cheng ’20** for the 2020 Donovan Award, which recognizes the best in athleticism, leadership, and maintaining the spirit of the game, among other character traits

“My freshman year, I had gender-neutral bathrooms, an acknowledgment of the nonbinary possibilities of thinking about gender. That was around 2002. It was a pretty amorphous place to develop your mind. I didn’t get many answers at Oberlin, but I learned how to ask a lot better questions.”

High Maintenance cocreator and star **Ben Sinclair ’06** in an April 10 article in the (northeast Ohio) *News-Herald*

“As is often said in black churches, there can be no testimony without a test. The coronavirus is our test. Whether we pass will not only determine our testimony, but also shape our legacy. May history judge us kindly.”

Michael J. Sorrell ’88, president of Paul Quinn College, in the *Atlantic*

“My fellow Obies and I will need to wait another year for our 50th class reunion, when we will fib that we all still look great, then retell old stories about the heady days of our youth. My guess is that, a half-century from now, the Class of 2020, at Oberlin or elsewhere, won’t be much different—except in one regard: Its members will be living in a more just world, a world more in harmony with nature, a better world that they helped bring into being.”

Pulitzer Prize-winning writer **Michael Dirda ’70** in the *Washington Post*

“Anyone who has preconceived notions about Oberlin—this is probably going to prove you right.”

Filmmaker **Emily Cohn ’17**, in reference to her feature debut, *CRSHD*, which was written and filmed at Oberlin

“Hearing is like a fingerprint. Everybody hears different.”

Gary Bartz, professor of jazz saxophone, on learning to listen

“Life is a journey.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson



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