Cultural Shape-Shifter

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Fall 2007

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House Moving, Part I

BEFORE YOU get too self-congratulatory per the "Night Move" depicted on Macalester Today's back cover (Summer 2007), let me offer a different perspective. As a Mac grad and longtime homeowner on Warwick Street, I am appalled at the entire house moving operation. The house moved to Warwick Street is too big for the lot; two months later it still has no permanent foundation, is uninhabited, non-landscaped and an eyesore. Worst of all, city crews hacked off mature tree limbs in the way, as the house made its slow progress to its new location. Our streetscape, just recovering from Dutch Elm disease, is now destroyed as a result. I call it ill-conceived, poorly planned, and devastating to this neighborhood.

Margaret C. "Peg" Flanagan ’78
St. Paul, Minnesota

ACCORDING TO the National Association of Home Builders, it takes approximately 16,000 board feet of lumber to build a 2,000 square-foot house. Purdue University's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources tells us that it would take, on average, 65 mature trees to produce the 16,000 board feet of lumber. The three-house recycling project conducted by Macalester Facilities Management Department and Lehman Construction this past spring saved close to 200 mature trees — and a whole lot of landfill space. The house placed on Warwick Street is no taller or wider than the houses immediately adjacent and is not the largest house on the block. As of July 2007, the house had a new foundation. Landscaping was completed in August and the house will be on the market this fall. Many other Warwick Street neighbors thanked the college for prompting the overdue tree trimming. Macalester does value trees. Indeed, it was Macalester College, through its High Winds Fund, that planted hundreds of trees throughout the neighborhood after the Dutch Elm epidemic, when the City of Saint Paul could not afford to replant the boulevards.

Tom Weina ’86
Director, The High Winds Fund

House Moving, Part II

I AM A GRADUATE of Macalester and lived with my family during my college years at 223 Macalester Street. In the 1960s, my parents, Charles and Eunice Dunnavan, sold their home to Macalester College. My sister and I have many fond memories of growing up there and attending Mac. On a recent trip to the Twin Cities, I was shocked to see that my old family home was no longer there. Upon my return home, I read in Macalester Today that some campus-area homes had been moved. The photo on the back cover looks like my old family home. Where did you move it?

Rev. Roger Dunnavan ’59
Carneys Point, New Jersey

YOUR HOUSE was moved to 338 South Snelling Avenue. As you may know, three houses remained after the 1994 field expansion project and the creation of the campus drive heading north from St. Clair. With the construction of the new athletic and recreation building it was necessary to relocate the softball field. The college decided to move the three houses to create space for the softball and baseball fields, and, working with the contractor, was able to find lots for the three houses and get them relocated. I can only imagine your surprise to see the house gone. Please know that it was moved with care and is being lovingly prepared for a new owner.

Mark Dickinson ’76
Director of Facilities Management

This house, formerly at 223 Macalester Street, was moved along with two neighboring houses to make room for Macalester sports fields.

Correction

THE PHOTOS of The Jeremiah Program residents that appeared on the inside back cover of the summer issue were taken by Lance Vicknair.

Letters policy

WE INVITE LETTERS of 300 words or fewer. Letters may be edited for clarity, style and space and will be published based on their relevance to issues discussed in Macalester Today. You can send letters by e-mail to: mactoday@macalester.edu. Or: Letters to the Editor, Macalester Today, College Relations, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105-1899.
The Great Ratings Debate

Should Macalester join the boycott of U.S. News & World Report?

By Brian Rosenberg

ABSENT A PERSONAL SCANDAL or similar disaster, small-college presidents rarely make big-time news. This past summer was different, however, as presidents representing institutions in the Annapolis Group—an informal organization of 125 of the leading U.S. liberal arts colleges—took up arms against the annual U.S. News & World Report rankings of American colleges and universities.

Although it took no formal action, the group announced that "the majority of the Annapolis Group presidents attending the annual meeting in Annapolis, Maryland, expressed their intent not to participate in the annual U.S. News & World Report ranking exercise." (Macalester is a member of the group, but I was unable to attend this year’s meeting.)

The meaning of this statement is less than wholly clear for two reasons: first, because to date fewer than half of the Annapolis Group colleges have taken a public stance on U.S. News rankings, and second, because the impact of a decision “not to participate” is difficult to gauge. Most of the data used to construct U.S. News rankings are publicly available, allowing the magazine to get much of the information it wants without institutional cooperation. When the information is not available, U.S. News simply estimates.

Reed College in Oregon, for example, has refused for years to participate in the U.S. News exercise, yet it is ranked alongside the rest of the private colleges.

Probably what most rebellious presidents intend is that they will no longer participate in the reputational survey that determines about a quarter of each school’s score. In this survey—sent to the president, chief academic officer, and chief admissions officer of participating institutions—we are asked to rate the academic quality of a long list of our peer schools.

It is a silly exercise—what do I know about the true quality of what happens at most other colleges?—yet it plays a critical role in the rankings. It also pretty much guarantees that those rankings will turn out as the public expects them to and that there will be little change from year to year: the best-known colleges with the strongest national reputations will naturally score best on a reputational survey. Of course, this is in the interest of U.S. News: how much credibility would the rankings retain if Harvard and Williams suddenly slipped to the middle of the pack?

As I ponder the right decision for Macalester with regard to U.S. News, I am caught between competing impulses. On the one hand, I believe the rankings are unreliable and misleading, constructed as they are from a combination of highly suspect reputational perceptions, financial indicators, and inputs such as SAT scores and selectivity. They speak not at all to the actual quality of the education or to the actual value-added at any college. They have led too many college applicants to care more about a college’s ranking than about whether it is the right institution for them and, unhappily, too many colleges to manage toward a higher ranking. And they misleadingly apply a zero-sum-game business model to higher education. Whereas it is probably true that if Toyota improves, Ford suffers, it is not equally true that if Macalester improves, Grinnell suffers. Yet the rankings suggest that if one college rises, another must fall.

ON THE OTHER HAND, I recognize that U.S. News will continue to publish its college rankings issue as long as it continues to be profitable, regardless of the criticism of college presidents. Indeed, such criticism may actually increase the magazine’s impact, since controversy tends to spark interest (as those who have attempted to ban books have never quite learned).

If college presidents refuse to fill out the reputational survey, U.S. News will likely begin to survey high school counselors, corporate CEOs, or some other group whose knowledge is equally or more anecdotal.

In the end, I am inclined to think that more information is better than less and that consumers should determine which forms are most useful and reliable. Attempts to suppress even the most baseless and scurrilous publications have rarely succeeded. Rather, it is incumbent upon those of us who dislike the efforts and influence of U.S. News to come up with alternative information sources for college applicants that will prove more helpful (a project upon which the Annapolis Group has now embarked). Bad practice is defeated not by broadsides and boycotts but by better practice. Our goal should be not to suppress the flawed rankings of U.S. News, but to make them irrelevant.

Brian Rosenberg, the president of Macalester, writes a regular column for Macalester Today. He can be reached at rosenbergb@macalester.edu.
Right on Lake Street

Regina "Regi" Santiago '07 knows what it is to become invested in a new community. When she first arrived at Macalester from her home in Indonesia, her off-campus forays took her only as far as the video store, but by her senior year she was helping curate an exhibit about Minneapolis's Lake Street.

That exhibit—called "Right on Lake Street"—is an extraordinary collaboration among Macalester, the Minnesota Historical Society, and Heart of the Beast Theatre, with support from the Lake Street Council and Metro Transit. Minneapolis's famed six-mile corridor is home to some of the metro area's oldest businesses and to 14 vibrant, diverse neighborhoods.

From working with Civic Engagement Center Associate Director Paul Schadewald on the first PowerPoint proposal to the exhibit's September 18 opening, Santiago has been part of this collaboration, which celebrates a unique meeting place of cultures, ethnicities, classes, and religions.

As part of a public history class taught by Schadewald, she did research on a venerable establishment called the Town Talk Diner. Says Santiago, "There was a group of regulars at the Town Talk who saw each other at the diner every day, and have such good memories of their time there."

The Lake Street Project began three years ago, when representatives of the Urban Studies Department, the Civic Engagement Center, and the Minnesota Historical Society met to discuss a collaboration. Their goal was to figure out how Macalester students could develop one-semester projects from purchasing radishes and kettle corn at the St. Paul Farmers' Market to operating an old shelling machine on a historic farm.

Because I come from a small town in southwestern Colorado, at first I found these experiences both daunting and invigorating. I had never before navigated public transportation or been exposed to the complexities of city life. My first-year course eased the transition to college by showing me the metropolitan area I would be living in for the next four years.

On the field trips, we used the city as a historical document and read through the "pages" on buses and the light rail. We built strong friendships through discovery and our common interest in our class.

Arriving at the bus stop, laughing with my friends as we waited for the bus, I thought about how far from home I was. But in exchange for mountains, I had gained the city, and in exchange for family, I had gained residential floor friends. I'd say the trade-off was good.

—Emilie Schur '10

Editor's note: This year, two sections of "The Global in the Local" will be offered—one of more than a dozen first-year courses in which classmates live together on the same dorm floor.
El-Kati Lectureship Established

For more than 30 years, Mahmoud El-Kati taught history courses such as “The Black Experience Since World War II” and “Sports and the African American Community,” served as a mentor to students, and advocated for greater diversity within the Macalester community and curriculum.

El-Kati retired in 2003, but two of his former students, Stanley M. Berry ’75 and Bertram M. Days ’74, have established an endowed fund that will continue his work. The Mahmoud El-Kati Distinguished Lectureship in American Studies will bring a scholar to campus for an extended engagement to include a public presentation, classroom appearances, and conversations with students, faculty, and the local community.

Berry, a physician in Royal Oak, Michigan, and Days, an executive with Hunter Industries of North Carolina, credit El-Kati with moving them toward successful and fulfilling careers. The lectureship they initiated was announced at a dinner last spring at which U.S. Congressional Representative Keith Ellison of Minneapolis was the featured speaker.

Berry and Days are encouraging others who studied with El-Kati to expand the endowed fund. For information contact the Macalester College Advancement Office at 651-696-6039 or koller@macalester.edu.

PHOTO BY GREG HELGESON

A Sampling of First-Year Courses, 2007–08

- 3-D Design
- Biodiversity and Evolution
- CSI Macalester
- German Cinema Studies—Art/Horror
- From Cervantes to Garcia Márquez
- An Introduction to Computer Science Through Multimedia and Robotics
- Discovering World Music
- “Things Don’t Like Me:” The Material World and Why It Matters

U.S. Congressional Representative Keith Ellison (right) was the keynote speaker at a May dinner announcing The Mahmoud El-Kati Distinguished Lectureship in American Studies. El-Kati is shown at left.
Retiring Faculty

Fabiola Franco,
Hispanic and Latin American Studies

In the 26 years since she came to Macalester, Fabiola Franco co-founded, and for several years co-directed, Macalester's Latin American Studies Program, while also serving as chair of the Spanish Department. Franco is well known for her contributions to linguistics and literary scholarship, as well as for her teaching. "Dr. Franco has been a passionate, caring, and inspiring professor of Hispanic languages, literatures, and cultures," says Hispanic and Latin American Studies Chair Galo Gonzalez. "As one of her students said, 'Fabiola teaches with todo corazon.'"

Joan Hutchinson,
Mathematics and Computer Science

After 38 years, Joan Hutchinson is retiring from teaching, but not from mathematics. She will continue her research in graph theory, as well as her work with the Association for Women in Mathematics. Hutchinson came to Macalester in 1990, and during her 17 years here was twice honored by the Mathematical Association of America for excellence in teaching. "Joan Hutchinson is that rare scholar who is both a brilliant researcher and a highly respected teacher who truly enjoys sharing with young people," says Michael Schneider, recently chair of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department.

Kathleen Kutzke Parson '67,
Chemistry and Biology

Kathy Parson, who joined the Macalester faculty in 1975, has long been a leader in connecting scientific disciplines. She holds full professorships in the Biology and Chemistry Departments and has promoted many interdisciplinary ventures from bioinformatics to neuroscience. From 1988 to 1995, Parson served as founding director of the Pew Midstates Science and Mathematics Consortium, which sponsors undergraduate research symposia and faculty development activities. As academic dean from 1995 to 1999, she helped win grants from the Keck, Mellon, Ford, and Bush Foundations. Says biology professor Lin Aanonsen, "Kathy Parson has had a distinguished career as a teacher and scientist, and has played a leadership role in science education nationally."

Norm Rosenberg, History

From 1975, when they joined the Macalester faculty, until 2006, Norm Rosenberg — legal and cultural historian — and his wife, Emily Rosenberg, shared one position in the History Department. The two also share the high regard of their students and peers, receiving the Burlington Northern Award for Outstanding Teaching in 1993 and an Outstanding Faculty Award at the Alumni of Color Reunion in 1999. Starting in 1993, they were jointly honored as DeWitt Wallace Professors of History. Fellow history Professor Paul Solon wrote: "None of us can claim to be indispensable, ...
but Norm — inspirational teacher, creative scholar, generous colleague — can take pride in being irreplaceable."

G. Michael Schneider, 
Math and Computer Science

When he came to Macalester in 1982, Michael Schneider’s charge was to develop a strong computer science program. “Mike has had a huge impact on computer science curriculum nationally and internationally,” says Mathematics and Computer Science Chair Karen Saxe. In 1998 he helped design and publish a standard computer science curriculum for the liberal arts that is used by hundreds of schools, and in 2001, he helped write an international standard curriculum. Department chair from 2001 to 2007, Schneider is also the author of seven textbooks.

Paul Solon, History

Since joining the faculty in 1970, Paul Solon has taught a wide variety of courses at the college, not all in the History Department. Although primarily concerned with pre-Industrial Revolution Europe, he has taught world history with an anthropologist and a course about Paris with French and Art Department colleagues. Macalester saluted his teaching with the 2002 Excellence in Teaching Award. Fellow history Professor Norm Rosenberg wrote, “Paul Solon’s range of interests and knowledge, along with his curiosity about virtually any subject, made him the perfect colleague. Few faculty members could begin to match Paul’s record of service to the college and his commitment to constant innovation.”

Learning about Borderlands

By Jan Shaw-Flamm

When her advisor, political science Professor Paul Dosh told her, “You could do something so much cooler with your life,” Sara Langhinrichs ’08 (Shaker Heights, Ohio) leapt out of her comfort zone, abandoning plans for a more conventional off-campus study program in favor of a semester in the border towns of El Paso, Texas, and Juarez, Mexico.

“I knew nothing about the border and spoke little Spanish,” says Langhinrichs. “But I wanted to do something that would move me toward my future political career, and nothing seemed more pertinent than issues of borders and immigration.”

Langhinrichs—a political science and economics major—took classes on both sides of the border and worked with the Border Network for Human Rights, educating others about rights related to the border patrol and deportation, and familiarizing herself with differing perspectives on immigration issues.

“In Juarez, I lived with an amazing 65-year-old Mexican woman who is very conservative and supported [now-President Felipe] Calderon. We were on opposite ends of the political spectrum, but we got along great. We went for walks every night talking politics and she was so patient—my Spanish was horrible. She would sit me down with the newspaper, and I would read it over and over until my pronunciation improved.”

When she returned to Macalester, Langhinrichs continued her involvement with immigration issues as a Chuck Green Fellow. The fellowship—named for the esteemed emeritus professor of political science—brings together students in a semester-long class in which they develop a plan for working with a community partner, and then provides a stipend for that work during the following summer. Langhinrichs worked with the Resource Center for the Americas in South Minneapolis to ascertain areas of advocacy interest and coordinate phone banks. She also worked with several other activist groups to organize a summer event on immigration.

Why is she so passionate about immigration issues? Says Langhinrichs, “When there is a permanent underclass in our society—either undocumented workers who are paid sub-minimum wages and denied basic rights, or a racial minority group that does not receive adequate education—our society as a whole is hurt.”

After graduation, Langhinrichs hopes to study law with an emphasis on human rights law.
Go Figure

4,967 Number of students who applied to Macalester

983 Number of international applicants

23 Percent of U.S. first-years who are students of color

+2,654 Increase in number of applicants since 1997

40.6 Acceptance rate percentage

487 Number of students expected in first-year class

84 Percentage of students who applied online

67 Percent of class that ranked in the top tenth of their high school class

(Figures as of August 2007)

Performing the unglamorous but valuable task of sorting Macalester's garbage from its recyclables and compostables was among the charges put to Sarah Stephens '07 (Oak Park, Illinois). Stephens, an environmental studies major, was a waste reduction intern at the nonprofit Eureka Recycling last year. Eureka Recycling helped with the Macalester College Baseline Study, which will in turn help the college move toward its goal of reducing campus waste. Dianna Kennedy '95, Eureka's director of communications, was pleased to have Stephens onboard.
Reaching for the Stars

Anne Sweet’s love of astronomy takes her around the world.

Many preteens are avid readers of celebrity magazines, but the young Anne Sweet ’07 (Mercer Island, Washington) was a different kind of starstruck. “I got my first telescope when I was 12,” says Sweet, “and ever since then I’ve been fascinated with how things in the universe work.” In March, that fascination will take Sweet—a physics major with an astronomy emphasis—to the University of São Paulo, Brazil, where a Fulbright grant will support her research into the mysteries of the universe.

This isn’t the first off-campus venture for Sweet, who has enhanced her classroom study with hands-on research in some of astronomy’s most exciting locations. After her sophomore year, she spent 10 weeks on campus conducting research on spectral analysis of dwarf galaxies to investigate how large galaxies are formed.

Hooked on research, she applied for a National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program in Chile at the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatories, where, during the spring of her junior year, she gained important hands-on experience. “I will never forget the sight of the Milky Way and the Magellanic Clouds seen in such a remote location,” says Sweet. “It was an amazing semester that fueled my interest in astronomy.”

A third research experience, again through REU, took Sweet to the Institute for Astronomy in Hawaii in the summer of 2006. There, her minor in geology came to the fore as she analyzed the mineral content of meteorites and visited the Keck and Gemini North telescopes atop the Mauna Kea Volcano.

Before returning to South America, Sweet told a reporter, “The Fulbright is an extraordinary opportunity to work with astronomers in São Paulo. This will allow me to explore an interesting and important question about galaxy evolution while experiencing Brazilian culture and language.”

Five Mac Grads Receive Fulbrights

Our members of the class of 2007 in addition to Anne Sweet have been awarded Fulbright grants to conduct independent research outside the United States. This is the third time in nine years that four or more Macalester seniors were selected. The Fulbright Program, established in 1946, aims to foster “leadership, learning and empathy between cultures.”

Annie Berge
Edina, Minnesota
German Studies
Germany: Researching why Persian women have immigrated to Germany and teaching English

Emily Hedin
Hopkins, Minnesota
Political Science, International Studies
Senegal: How microfinance impacts the growth of democratic efficacy and gender equality

Megan Mulcahy
Cedarburg, Wisconsin
International Studies
Morocco: a government-sponsored program employing Islamic women as guides and its effectiveness at promoting moderate Islam

Matthew Rosenbaum
Richmond, California
Biology, Japanese
Japan: Okinawan culture, diet, and nutrition as related to health and longevity

For information on REU:
www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/

On Fulbright Program:
http://us.fulbrightonline.org/home.html
Dispatches from the Congo

Isabelle Chan '06 was profiled in the Fall 2006 issue of Macalester Today as a notable graduate. That month she flew to the Democratic Republic of Congo to begin a year's work with the International Rescue Committee. Chan is Cambodian, was born in France, and lived there for 14 years before moving with her family to Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Following are excerpts from emails she sent during her first Congo year. She has since begun a second year of service there.

October 2006

Jambo Jambo...

I am now in Bukavu, a small city in the South Kivu province, near Rwanda. Bukavu is a beautiful, green city with an amazing lake. Last week I visited some of our community social development and health field projects. It was great to see the community effort that made the projects possible, especially given the lack of infrastructure in these remote areas. But it was hard to see the level of poverty and the conflict-affected areas where potable water is largely unavailable.

I am adjusting to the climate, the life, and the workload. It’s crazy how much work there is to do and the overtime that expat staff put in (at least 60 hours a week). However, the fieldwork keeps me motivated to deal with the more tedious part of my work—reviewing reports and checking translations. There is not much privacy, since I’m living in a big house with ten co-workers. It feels like another college dorm. The expat community is small and everyone seems to know everything that goes on in the life of everyone else.

November 2006

Last week I was invited to the wedding of a friend, another teacher in the elementary school I volunteer at. I went to La Date, in which the groom comes to the bride’s house and offers her goats, beer, and sodas as a form of dowry. The bride stays in the house, while the guests and the family dance outside and receive the groom and his family and friends. The bride was beautiful in her pagne. I wore pants—I don’t know how the Congolese women wear heels when there is so much mud everywhere. The wedding food was pretty much the same stuff I’ve been eating for two months: fries, chicken, bananas, and rice. I also tried this food the Congolese love called mashanza. Since I dislike dairy products, I had to force it down. Unfortunately, that gave them the impression that I loved it, and they gave me more the next night.

December 2006

The Congolese aren’t at all shy about telling you that you’ve gained weight—even when it’s just a little bit. They do that to encourage it. It’s not an insult but a compliment. I also learned that when women get married they are no longer considered to be part of their families of origin. A woman’s parents are now considered her godparents, and the husband makes decisions for the wife, such as whether she can visit her family. My Congolese women friends are very independent, yet agree to abide by these rules.

February 2007

Last week I went to one of our health zones. Every time I visit there, the poverty and malnutrition shock me. I see 12-year-olds who look like they’re 5. Malnutrition is chronic. At the local health facility we saw several women, extremely poor, with sick babies. I wish I could’ve photographed the maternity ward. It’s so cramped; I wanted to scream at such conditions. When a pregnant woman faces complications, her husband decides whether to take her to the clinic. The community men carry her on a stretcher they build themselves. They have to walk an hour to get to the hospital, and by then it may be too late.

The government still relies on NGOs to do the work. I wonder whether they understand that the responsibility should eventually fall on them, rather than on the NGOs, to pay the teachers, build the roads, and rehabilitate the facilities. Is our work here truly helpful, or are we creating a dependency situation in which the government no longer feels responsible for its people? •
Digging Dinos

Left: Carly Schmitt '03, a Seattle artist, is shown here painting Macasaurus, one of dozens of 80-pound dinosaur sculptures created to celebrate the Science Museum of Minnesota's 10th anniversary.

Below: The completed Macasaurus temporarily came to rest on the campus lawn overlooking Grand Avenue.

PHOTO BY BARBARA LASKIN

PHOTO BY GREG HELGESON

PHOTO BY MARK DICKINSON

Macalester Athletic and Recreation Center, August 31, 2007
Guantanamo's Grip

Farouq Ali Ahmed appears to be neither a terrorist nor an enemy. But he has spent the past several years behind bars, and no end to his captivity is in sight.

By Corine Hegland '98

Excerpted with permission from the National Journal (Feb. 4, 2006) © National Journal Group Inc.

You may have seen an image of Detainee 032. He came to Guantanamo Bay early on, a slender 18-year-old Yemeni among the anonymous men who knelt, dressed in orange, for the photographs viewed around the world. He was there on January 27, 2002, when Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld took four senators to see the “most dangerous, best-trained, vicious killers on the face of the earth.” He was there two days later, when President Bush proudly declared in his State of the Union address that the “terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy cells at Guantanamo Bay,” and he was there one week later when Bush firmly and finally ruled out prisoner-of-war status for any of the men held at Guantanamo.

Like many of the men who came handcuffed to Cuba, Detainee 032 has never been accused of fighting against America. He fell into U.S. custody far away from any battlefield. But today, after years of interrogations and investigations, he is still an “enemy combatant,” even though he was never an enemy or a combatant. He is something else: something that might or might not be dangerous. But he’s securely in our custody, and

Corine Hegland '98 is a writer for the National Journal. This article is excerpted from a series of stories about Guantanamo prisoners, which together have won an Aronson Award for Social Justice Reporting, a Society of Professional Journalists award, and an honorable mention for the White House Correspondents' Association Edgar A. Poe Award, as well as the Atlantic Media Chairman's Award.
raise your hand if you want to be responsible for releasing the man who next flies an airplane into a skyscraper.

In some other world, one where the earth still turned west to east instead of inside out as it did on September 11, 2001, Detainee 032 would be finishing college this year, like his brother, father, and uncle before him. In this world, he's beginning another year in prison, with neither charges nor freedom in sight.

Detainee 032

Back before the world came unhinged,
Detainee 032 was a boy of 16 living in Yemen with his mother, his father, his four sisters, and his five brothers. His name was Farouq Ali Ahmed, and he studied Islamic law in high school.

One day, the boy made a solemn vow: If it was God's will that Farouq commit the Koran to memory, more than 6,000 verses in all, he would spend a year, before he went off to college, teaching the holy texts, in Afghanistan. A man who did this thing, he'd been told, would be rewarded by God.

Any number of young men in those years set off for Afghanistan with their heads full of God. The Arabs in Afghanistan, according to Barnett Rubin of New York University, who has studied the country since the 1980s when the United States funded the mujahedeen fighting the Soviets, weren't all jihadist fighters, any more than all Westerners in Afghanistan at the time were CIA operatives—although there were many in both groups. "Arabs went there for a lot of reasons," Rubin said. "There were humanitarian organizations, religious missions, and adventure-seekers."

And some Arab men went to Afghanistan to teach the Koran in an Islamic land where few could read the word of God.

In the spring of 2001, Farouq, then 17, set off for Afghanistan. He took a little room in a big house in Kabul and began teaching 7- and 8-year-olds, gathering four or five of them together and reciting Allah's words until the children had them memorized. It wasn't easy work. The Koran is always taught in Farouq's native language, Arabic, which the Afghan children didn't understand, and Farouq didn't speak their language. But he had made an oath to Allah. After a few months, he moved to the city of Khost, where he continued to teach out of a mosque until the Taliban fell and the cities were no longer safe for Arabs. One day, his host told him that if he stayed any longer, his life would be in danger. He had left his passport in Kabul for safekeeping, but he was told there was no time to get it back. He was taken to Pakistan, where Afghans have long sought haven from their never-ending wars.

Once he was across the border, Farouq encountered the Pakistani military. Farouq spent time in two Pakistani prisons before the government handed him over to American forces in Afghanistan. As a foreigner without a passport, he met the U.S. criteria for Guantanamo, and he was quickly whisked onto a plane headed for the sunny Caribbean jail that most military people refer to simply as "the Bay." In the chaos of post-9/11 Afghanistan, military leaders say, there wasn't time for much consideration of anomalies like Farouq. The United States was pulling Arabs, Afghans, Pakistanis, and Chinese into detention centers, some tens of thousands in all. U.S. intelligence agents weren't able to debrief every prisoner; just keeping them secure was difficult, as Afghans gathered outside temporary holding facilities and clamored for blood. They had never much liked the foreigners, whose idea of Islamic law was sometimes harsher than even the Taliban's.

Intelligence officers were asked mainly

Cuba wasn't much less chaotic. Interpreters were scarce; facilities were rudimentary, with buckets for drinking and urinating. Background information about anything—detainees, Islam, Al Qaeda—was hard to come by. The American military officers had been ordered to set up a prison at Guantanamo practically overnight. Intelligence agents there were asked mainly to certify, in short order, that the president "had reason to believe" that each shackled man was involved in terrorism.

So the interrogators started asking routine questions of all the prisoners; many of the sessions were documented in FBI memos released to the American Civil Liberties Union under a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit in 2005: Where are you from? Why were you in Afghanistan? What do you think of jihad, of Osama
bin Laden? When did you hear about 9/11? What do the detainees talk about? What do you know of attacks planned on the United States? Have you heard whispers about attacking the Guantanamo guards? Do you know any of the other detainees? More than 24,000 interrogations have now taken place among the 800 men who have been held at The Bay.

The prisoners were shown photographs, too, large books containing mug shots of all the men held at Guantanamo: Do you recognize any of these men? Can you tell me about them?

If a man talked, if he cooperated, he received rewards: tobacco, a game of chess, a milk shake, free time in a room with movies and books, the chance to have a countryman put into the neighboring cell to ease the loneliness, a promise of a return home. Simply attending a Qaeda training camp before 9/11, an FBI interrogator told a detainee, "did not constitute a crime." Just talk to us, was the interrogators' refrain.

The Americans came up with inducements for those who wouldn't talk: A prisoner could be chained in a strobe-lit room with Metallica or Britney Spears playing at full volume; interrogated for 16 hours straight; awakened every few hours for a move to a new cell; questioned while shivering in air-conditioning; stroked by a woman who whispered that his situation was hopeless. In July 2005, the Defense Department released a report on allegations of abuse at Guantanamo Bay: all of these tactics were used, according to the report, FBI memos, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

You've been told that the truth will set you free, but while interrogators come and go, you don't know anyone from your home country who has been released. Say one thing, and you might have a cigarette and a night's sleep. Say nothing, and you might spend the night shackled to the floor with Metallica ringing in your ears. Stay neutral, and it's more endless days of monotony, washing on command, exercising on command, eating on command, losing your mattress and blanket if you argue with the men in command.

What would you do?

Farouq's Review

On September 27, 2004, Detainee 032, Farouq Ali Ahmed, presented his case to Combatant Status Review Tribunal Number 8. He went alone except for a U.S. military officer, his designated "personal representative." Rules forbid detainees from having attorneys at the tribunal proceedings, although a practicing lawyer of the Judge Advocate General's Corps,
the military's legal service, generally presents the government's case.

Farouq stood accused of being associated with the Taliban and of having been a member of Al Qaeda. The government's case cited the following:

- Detainee admitted to giving his passport to a person known by him to be a member of the Taliban.
- Detainee admitted to lodging at an official Taliban residence in Kabul, with a Taliban representative he met in Quetta, Pakistan.
- Detainee was observed carrying an AK-47 and wearing fatigues at Osama bin Laden's private airport in Kandahar, Afghanistan.
- Detainee was captured by Pakistani forces as part of an organized group of 30 mujahedeen after the fall of Tora Bora.

The first two assertions, pointing toward Farouq's association with the Taliban, came from his own interrogations, when he said he wasn't sure, but, yes, the man who took him to Kabul and the men in the house where he stayed were probably members of the Taliban. The last two charges, suggesting that he was associated with Al Qaeda, Farouq flatly denied. He insisted that he was never at an airport, that he never carried a gun, and that he was captured alone. It was hard for him to disprove the charges, however; the details of the accusations were classified. He wasn't allowed to see them, and he wasn't told where they had come from.

The vote by the three-member tribunal was unanimous. Detainee 032 was properly designated an enemy combatant because "he supported both Al Qaeda and Taliban forces engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners."

How could the officers on the tribunal vote otherwise? Soldiers are soldiers, not judges. As soldiers, their lives are on the line, they make hard battlefield decisions, and they are trained to follow orders.

Many of the foreigners in Afghanistan said they came to teach the Koran, the general continued, a claim he could debunk by asking more questions, as any good commander mindful of his men's lives would do. "I would ask immediately, do you speak the language? No? How do you communicate? Where was your supply of Korans? Where did you learn to teach? There was no purpose, nothing that could be verified, there was no backup on it."

But Muslims believe that the Koran is the direct word of God, as uttered in Arabic by Muhammad, according to Akbar Ahmed, chair of Islamic studies at American University. Islam, unlike Christianity, is not based on accounts written by disciples years after

Somebody said that they had heard

the name FAROUQ over a walkie-talkie....

That may have happened. In fact, it probably did happen.

The name is as common in the Arab world as GEORGE is in America.

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Five years later, Farouq is still in Guantanamo. That’s what happens when a man is presumed guilty until he’s proven innocent. The prophet died. Muslims believe that every word in the Koran came from Allah’s lips to Muhammad’s ears. That’s why every Muslim prays five times a day in the same haunting Arabic syllables. That’s why Taliban textbooks, such as they were, were written in Dari and Pashto—except for the Koranic texts, which were in Arabic. That’s why the Koran is taught through recitation. And that’s why Muslims who don’t understand another word of Arabic memorize, in their entirety, the sounds of God in Arabic.

And that’s why Farouq Ali Ahmed went to Afghanistan in the spring of 2001, according to two individuals who reviewed his entire file, including the classified sources and details of the evidence against him.

Farouq’s personal representative, an Army officer, was disgusted with the tribunal’s verdict. He took the unusual step of submitting a written protest, a redacted version of which was filed with Farouq’s habeas proceedings.

The government’s sole evidence that Farouq had been at bin Laden’s airport in Kandahar was the statement or another detainee. The Army officer, a lieutenant colonel, had given the tribunal an FBI memo indicating that the other detainee had lied, not only about Farouq, but about other Yemeni detainees as well. The other detainee claimed he had seen the Yemenis at times and in places where they simply could not have been.

What Have We Done?

Farouq’s habeas attorneys are Washington lawyers David Remes and Marc Falkoff of Covington and Burling. “Farouq is not now and never has been associated with Al Qaeda,” the letter from his attorneys read. “The only evidence of such an association comes from a proven liar and from another detainee who was abused and coerced into making statements inculpating other men.”

The Covington and Burling lawyers flew to Yemen to meet with Farouq’s family, a step the Defense Department had not taken. Farouq’s account of how he came to Afghanistan, they wrote to the board, was the truth.

Falkoff and Remes, who looked into all of their clients’ stories in Yemen, maintain that Farouq, like all of their clients, never fought against America or thought to fight against America. The men’s families, in contact with their loved ones only through Red Cross letters passed through U.S. military censors, had independently given the lawyers accounts of how the men came to be in Afghanistan that matched the stories later revealed in U.S. government files. All the tales checked out, the two lawyers say.

Five years later, Farouq is still in Guantanamo. That’s what happens when a man is presumed guilty until he’s proven innocent; when associating with people who associate with bad people is sufficient grounds for guilt; when hearsay statements, whether they are offered from truth, coercion, or boredom, are taken as genuine until they’re proven otherwise; when being on the wrong side of a local war when America enters the picture is proof of fighting against America; when U.S. military commanders charged with keeping us safe from harm are asked to sit in judgment.

On October 21, 2005, Farouq went before the Administrative Review Board, whose officers are charged with assessing whether an enemy combatant still presents a threat to America. As it happened, Farouq’s attorneys were in Guantanamo that day, but his request that they be allowed to accompany him was denied.

The board told Farouq that a new piece of evidence against him had turned up, he later told his lawyers. Somebody had said, at some point in the past four years, that they had heard the name Farouq over a walkie-talkie during the battle of Tora Bora. That may have happened. In fact, it probably did happen. The name is as common in the Arab world as George is in America.

The Defense Department, following orders and procedures, still considers Farouq Ali Ahmed, Detainee 032, a threat to America. Two months after his review board hearing, on December 18, 2005, Farouq turned 22, passing his fourth birthday behind bars in Guantanamo.
Cultural Shape-Shifter

English Professor Wang Ping writes in English about China, her native land.

By Elizabeth Larsen

English professor Wang Ping's office in Old Main could be seen as a symbol of her life. Framed photographs of Chinese peasants and landscapes—snapped by Wang on her yearly trips to the country of her birth—transform an entire wall into an art gallery of a faraway land. Directly across the room from the images of sand dunes and suspension bridges, American and English classics compete for shelf space with her young sons' hockey portraits.

The ways that East and West infuse each other drive Wang's writing. The author of two books of poetry, two short story collections, a novel, and a cultural study of the traditional Chinese practice of footbinding, Wang hopes her work serves as a bridge between China and America. "Everything China does is so linked to everyone here," she says. Wang has been writing for most of the day and is kneeling on the floor to give her body a break while she drinks tea. "There is a cultural and economic and even military exchange that has been going on for centuries." The Last Communist Virgin, her most recent short story collection, navigates a 20-year span of those exchanges, from the tumultuous days of the Chinese Cultural Revolution to the hardscrabble life of Chinese immigrants in 1980s America, to the recent construction of the controversial Three Gorges Dam spanning the Yangtze River.

At a time when American eyes are focused on China's potential to be the next economic superpower, Wang's loosely connected stories peek beneath the spreadsheets of globalization to confide the longings, not only of lovers for one another, but also of Chinese immigrants for their culture. "There are a lot of misconceptions and stereotypes about the Chinese and China," says Wang. "The images now are all about counterfeit drugs and piracy and traditional, exotic.

Elizabeth Larsen has written for Utne Reader, Child, Mother Jones, and other national magazines. She lives in Minneapolis.
Wang Ping finds refuge in her St. Paul garden.
This fall Wang is teaching an advanced writing workshop and a poetry writing course.

Wang was born in Shanghai and grew up on an island in the East China Sea. Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution, launched to purge China of its liberal bourgeoisie, stormed into her city when she was in second grade, shutting down the schools and ending her formal education. The government banned all books except those written by Mao. "Day-to-day survival occupied most of our time," she says. "There were a lot of chores and everything was done by hand. We had no refrigerator. We had to walk three or four miles to the market every day and stand in lines for food because everything was rationed."

Here and there, Wang seized upon rare spare moments to lose herself in the few books that were passed around illegally. She taught herself English from the radio her family acquired when she was 15. "That was how I learned," she says. "I have an insatiable appetite for knowledge that I think came from that vacuum."

After three years of farming in a mountain village, Wang talked her way into Beijing University to study English literature. She emigrated to the United States in 1985 with $26 in her pocket to pursue a master's degree at New York's Long Island University. "I wanted writing in English, says Wang, has freed her to tell the stories that have long roiled inside her because she doesn't censor herself as she would were she writing in Chinese."

something I couldn't get in China," she says, "which I guess was freedom. Not the Western version of freedom, which has become so vulgarized—especially through the Iraqi war. But I came here because I knew that my personality wouldn't fit in well in China because you have to follow rules—at least on the surface. I'm a free spirit. I can't obey rules. I'm very blunt."

Wang's fate as a writer was sealed when she mistakenly walked into a creative writing course, a blunder that she now sees as a karmic twist of fate. "It wasn't an accident," she says. "I always knew that I wanted to write poetry and be a writer. Only I didn't dare because it was so intimidating." Her first three years in America were mostly about survival, she says. Eventually she earned a Ph.D. in comparative litera-

Like the writer Vladimir Nabokov, Wang draws from memories that hit the page in English rather than the language in which they were created. Writing in English, says Wang, has freed her to tell the stories that have long roiled inside her because she doesn't censor herself as she would were she writing in Chinese. "Mother tongue is the tightest filter ever," she says. "It tells us where to look, what to look at, and how to think." Still, in the stories Wang returns to detail the lives she knows intimately: those of Chinese citizens and Chinese immigrants in the United States. "Maybe I can write only when I'm out of the whirl of everyday life and I can see things more clearly," she says. "Writing these stories is my nostalgia. I'm living here [in St. Paul] but at the same time living in China."

While opportunity was the force that brought Wang to New York City, her journey to Minnesota was propelled by love. Her partner needed to return to the Twin Cities to take over his family business. Wang was finishing her dissertation and thought it was a good time to leave New York. So they threw their son a first birthday party and packed up the car. Another son soon followed. So did the honors and accolades: she was awarded both the Bush Foundation Artist Fellowship and the Loft Career Initiative Grant. She has been teaching creative writing at Macalester since 1999.

For someone who had to fight so tenaciously for her own education, Wang seems remarkably free of resentment for her far more privileged students. "I see the passion in every student here," she says, after acknowledging that her demanding expectations scare away some students. "Those who stay thank me for the progress they make. They always rise to a challenge, which I think is part of the Macalester tradition." Wang especially likes teaching students with no writing background. For those students, learning to use words creatively is like learning a second language, she says.

Because it can be hard for college writing students to veer away from the still-fresh intensity of a first love or a high school trauma, Wang structures many of her courses around a single theme that forces her students to combine research with their writing. Last year, she taught environmental writing and encouraged her students to take a multimedia approach to their work, much as Wang herself has done with her photography exhibit, Beyond the Gate: China in Flux After the Three Gorges Dam, which opened at Macalester last March and detailed human and environmental changes wrought by construction of the dam.

"Maverick," the final story in The Last Communist Virgin, articulates her belief that all living things are connected. "We have been living as though we are the masters," she says. "But the consequences are severe. I think we have to live with a heightened awareness that we are just one member of an interdependent ecosystem."

Wang photographed the Three Gorges Dam area during several of her annual trips to China. Though her sons are still in elementary school, they accompany her on these journeys and may soon travel with her to Tibet. "They have three cultures," she says, adding that they are equally at ease at Hebrew school, in Chinese classes, and in the mainstream American boy culture embodied in those hockey photos.

Still, for all her family's cultural shape-shifting, Wang's profoundest desire is to spend an entire year in her homeland and to start writing in Chinese.

"I bet that if I am writing in Chinese," she says, "I will write about America."
The Ball is in Her Court

Winning isn’t everything. But for head volleyball coach Steph Schleuder, who’s closing in on her 700th career victory, it’s been a remarkably common occurrence.
By Erin Peterson

After more than four decades as a player and coach, Steph Schleuder knows as much about volleyball as anyone in the game today. Still, when she arrived at Macalester in 1998, she admits that her new athletes threw her for a bit of a loop. Shortly before the season began, over box lunches after a scrimmage at St. Thomas, several team members were in deep discussion—but it wasn't about digs, kills, or serves, the standard shop talk for players. "They were talking about the upcoming election issues—AIDS, immigration, health care," she says. "They were incredibly bright, passionate, and articulate."

Schleuder, who had spent her career coaching Division I volleyball teams before joining Macalester, says it was a refreshing change to work with students whose lives extended so broadly beyond the sports they played. For Macalester, Schleuder's arrival heralded an equally important change. "When we hired Steph, it made a statement to the conference that Macalester takes athletics seriously," says Vice President and Dean of Students Laurie Hamre. "She was the first coach that we brought in who had had national exposure, and showed that athletics was another area where we could be excellent."

Schleuder lived up to her reputation in the very first season, coaching the team to a 19–11 record, good for a third-place finish in the MIAC and Mac's best winning percentage since 1982. Since then, Macalester has continued to field competitive teams, and Schleuder enters her 10th season at the college this fall on track to tally her 700th career victory. Her current total of 692 victories ranks her fourth among all active Division III volleyball coaches. Schleuder shrugs off the milestone. "Mainly, it means you've been around a long time," she jokes.

Even if she doesn't put much stock in numbers, her performance has garnered respect from her colleagues. In addition to serving as president of the American Volleyball Coaches Association—the only Division III coach to do so—she's also received the Karen Johnson Human Relations Award and George Fisher Leader in Volleyball Award from USA Volleyball for her work on behalf of the sport.

Her years as a coach have netted her more than just numbers and accolades, however. Of all of her accomplishments, she's proudest of the relationships she's sustained with her players. "I get Christmas cards from players who now have children of their own playing collegiately," she says. "I really value that."

She's earned the admiration of her players by using a collaborative, rather than an authoritative, approach. "My job as a coach is to help players be successful and to problem-solve with them," she says. She encourages players to focus not just on acquiring physical strength, speed, and power, but on addressing the mental aspects—from strategy to visualization—to improve their game.

Kari Tanaka '08 (Bloomington, Minn.), a setter and team captain, says that Schleuder's guidance has helped her prepare well and make good decisions under pressure—skills that apply off the court as well. "She makes sure we have the best opportunity for success," she says.

Schleuder knows that some might view her move from Division I to Division III coaching as a step down—a move precipitated, in part, by a protracted pay equity dispute with the University of Minnesota. Still, she's philosophical about the change. Division I might offer more publicity, but coaching at a Division III school like Macalester offers significant rewards as well.

"Students here are exceptionally bright, and have been successful in virtually everything they've done academically," she says. "Sports present a new challenge because they're not always going to succeed. They learn about failure and teamwork. They learn a lot about themselves."

Schleuder knows she helps young women athletes with more than just volleyball skills: she helps them develop confidence, discipline, and leadership. And whether they're hitting the books or hitting the ball, those are attributes that will benefit them for a lifetime.

Erin Peterson is a Minneapolis freelance writer.
Dancing Through Asia: A Watson Fellowship opened up the world for this Mac graduate.

Photos and text by Rick Lechowick '04
Women Washing Clothes Near Temple of the Sun, Jaipur

The Lonely Planet guidebook says that there are two pools on the way to the Temple of the Sun: one for humans and one for monkeys. That's not quite true. One is for men, who use it for pleasure; the other is for women, who use it to wash laundry. The monkeys use the women's pool because they're not bothered as much by laundry as they are by people.

Red Karen Baby Taking in the View, Northern Thailand

While hiking through the mountains of northern Thailand near Myanmar, I stayed overnight with a hill tribe that was not ethnically Thai. Hill tribes like the Red Karen are called Fourth World peoples because they don't have their own countries and roam freely across borders. In this way, they're similar to the Hmong or the Bedouins. The word Red refers to the predominant color of their clothes, rather than to their skin or political persuasion. There also exist White Karen.
nearest to Ayodhya, the supposed birthplace of Ram, the epic’s main character.

I planned my trip so that I could attend every Ramayana-related religious festival in the region. I watched dozens of dances and performances and even learned to play a traditional Thai instrument called the rannat, which is similar to the marimba. Although it’s obvious how my religious studies major contributed to my year, another Macalester activity also informed my work. While taking abnormal psychology, I had taught swing-dance lessons to adults with mental disabilities. Thus I blended my academic and extracurricular interests into the Watson Fellowship year.

I traveled from the northern edge of India bordering Tibet to the southern tip in Kerala. I wound my way from the western Punjab border with Pakistan across India and into Bangkok. In Cambodia I visited the ruined temples of the ancient kingdom of the Khmer and in Laos I stayed in French colonial homes. I rode camels across India’s deserts and elephants through Thailand’s jungles. All the while, I visited cities and towns holding festivals so I could watch and learn the dances of the Ramayana.

My year, while life changing, was not always easy. I suffered two heat strokes, was hospitalized once, and was even locked up in a military holding cell one night because of a misunderstanding in a religiously disputed area of India.

Because the Watson Foundation discourages working, traveling with others, or taking classes, I occasionally had spare time between festivals. This allowed me to have spur-of-the-moment adventures, such as playing rugby for the Vientiane Buffalos Rugby Club during the Indochina Rugby Cup of 2005. Our matches, which we usually lost—just like when I played for Macalester—took place in the Lao National Stadium against teams from Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Phnom Penh.

Three years after my Watson year I’m studying in Washington, D.C., getting itchy to travel again. Fortunately, as part of my master’s degree at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, I will soon be traveling to the Middle East to develop my Arabic and diplomatic skills.

Would I have chosen this career path had I not pursued the Watson? Would I have pursued the Watson without the inspiration and support of my teachers and peers? I can’t imagine that I would have. The Watson Fellowship opened up the world to me.

Other Recent Watson Winners from Macalester

Owen Kohl (2002–03)
“A Post-Colonial Hip Hop Testimonial”
France, Senegal, Croatia, Mongolia, Russia

Christopher Fletcher (2005–06)
“Investigating Cultural Survival: A Photographic Documentary of the Tibetan Diaspora”
Canada, Switzerland, New Zealand, Japan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet

Chloe Poynton (2006–07)
“Uprooted Lives: Aid Workers and Their Dedication to Refugee Relief”
Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Australia, Serbia, South Africa, Cambodia, Sierra Leone

Sneh Rao (2006–07)
“Democratizing Sex Work, Rights, and Space”
Argentina, South Africa, Ecuador, Spain

Fishing with a Ranger,
Khao Yai National Park, Thailand
I spent several nights with the national park rangers. Fishing consisted of finding the only puddle left in the vicinity during the dry season and throwing a net into it. Then we’d jump on the net and try to grab fish with our hands through the net. The small fish, wise to us, fought us off with their spikes.
Campus Counseling Conundrum

As mental health issues mount among undergraduates, Macalester and other colleges expand their efforts to keep up.

By Laura Billings

Shelly Lear came to Macalester to study psychology in a department with a strong reputation. One thing she didn't learn during her four years as a psych major was whether mental health services were available on campus for students like her. "I'm embarrassed to say that I didn't even know that we had a counseling center," says Lear '80. "I just don't remember anyone talking about it."

How times have changed. These days, the mental health needs of college students are discussed almost everywhere—from freshman orientation every fall to the floor of the U.S. Senate last spring, in the wake of the Virginia Tech shooting. Lear herself is now the associate director of counseling services at Colgate University in Hamilton, N.Y., where she sees firsthand what college parents, alumni, and the public may have learned only in the wake of that tragedy—that the mental health needs of students are on the rise.

[Editor's note: A Virginia state panel found in late August that Virginia Tech University officials misunderstood federal privacy laws as forbidding any exchange of a student's mental health information, thus causing them to miss numerous indications of the gunman's mental health problems.]

According to Active Minds on Campus, a national effort to support student-run mental health awareness on 68 U.S. campuses, young adults ages 18 to 24 actually have the highest prevalence of diagnosable forms of mental illness, at 27 percent. Researchers estimate that as many as 30 percent of college-age women may display bulimic behavior, the kind of disordered eating patterns that are often linked to depression, substance abuse, and anxiety disorders. And last
year, an estimated 44 percent of college students reported feeling so depressed that they found it difficult to function.

The good news: Today's college students are also more likely to seek counseling help when they need it than any previous college cohort. "I often joke that these are the children of the generation that made psychology the number one major, so their parents have a high level of sophistication about what the field can do, and what can be done for their children," says Linda Schmid, staff psychologist at Macalester.

But she doesn't joke about the variety of issues that will compel an estimated one-third of all Macalester students to come through the counseling services at Winton Health Services before graduation day. One recent nationwide survey of college students found that more than 90 percent admit to feeling overwhelmed by all they have to do, and 9 percent have seriously contemplated suicide. Between those extremes lie a host of mental health issues—everything from homesickness to more serious problems such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, psychiatric illnesses with symptoms that often don't emerge until late adolescence.

It may be no surprise that in a 2005 national survey of the directors of college counseling centers, 95 percent reported an increase in the number of students already taking medication for psychiatric problems before they came in for help. New medications for things like ADHD and bipolar disorder now make it possible for students who might not have entered college 20 years ago to succeed there today. "Our semesters are only 15 weeks long, so you've got to keep up, and these medications have made it possible for them to do that, which is a positive thing," says Schmid. "At the same time, these students may need more support while they're here."

Like many campuses across the country, Macalester has increased its counseling offerings in recent years, nearly doubling its staff to three full-time and one half-time counselor, an advanced doctoral student, and a consulting psychiatrist, who can also offer referrals to students who need more specialized care. "We have a lot invested in the students who come here, and we want to take their issues seriously and provide as much support to them as we can," says Schmid.

While many Macalester alumni and parents may look back on their own college years as a time of fun and freedom, counselors would remind them that they may be remembering only half the story. In fact, the years between orientation and commencement are often a tug of war between adolescence and the new demands of adulthood: You don't live on campus, but you don't live at home either. You're making your own decisions, but your parents may still be paying the bills. You may fall in love for the first time and find a vocation, but you may also have to survive your first breakup (with your girlfriend still living down the hall) or come up with a new major. You're under pressure to find yourself and try new things, but you're also cautioned about how it all might reflect someday on your permanent record. You want to change the world, but at the same time, you'll have to pay back those student loans.

"The main anxiety is that you're never doing enough—that there's always something more you should be doing," says Sven, a recent Mac graduate (who, like other students interviewed for this story, asked for a pseudonym). Sven describes the pressure he felt to make the most of his college time, while the demands of his coursework and academic competition made him feel "unconnected" to other students.

When he began to have trouble sleeping, Sven investigated the Winton Health Services web site and made an appointment with a counselor. "It wasn't like there was a sign that said, 'Need help?' but I figured they could point me in the right direction," he says.

In fact, Macalester directs most of the information about its counseling services not to students, but to their parents during a one-hour session that explores the challenges likely to be encountered by first-year students and their families. "There's always a parent who will say, 'This is great—now what have you told students?' And we'll tell them, 'The students aren't ready to hear this now,'" says Schmid.

"They're so overwhelmed with new information, and adjusting to campus, and making 15 trips to Target to set up their rooms that they can't imagine the possibility that they may have a hard time."

Although parents are told where to refer a troubled student, they are also reminded that federal privacy laws forbid health care providers to pass on to parents and others information shared by a student who is 18 or older. Antidiscrimination laws further restrict how a college can deal with students with mental health problems. These laws create a kind of catch-22 for colleges, which can't inform authorities unless students pose an imminent and lethal risk to themselves or others, but also can't prevent a troubled student from staying on campus. For instance, the parents of Elizabeth Shin, a student at MIT who

Laura Billings, a freelance writer who lives just three blocks from the Macalester campus, is a former St. Paul Pioneer Press columnist.
"MAC STUDENTS often come with a well-defined sense of what the world needs. There aren’t many schools where students who are still teenagers are worrying about how they’re going to SAVE THE WORLD."

killed herself in 2000, sued the university for not informing them of their daughter’s deterioration. (The case was settled for an undisclosed amount.) Last year, the City University of New York agreed to pay $65,000 to a student who had been prevented from returning to her dormitory room after being hospitalized for a suicide attempt.

"It’s a balancing act that is going on at all universities, where we are trying to strike a balance between the freedom of the individual student and the responsibility of the college to protect the learning environment," says Ted Rueff, associate director of counseling services at Macalester.

The tragedy at Virginia Tech last spring, after student Cho Seung-Hui rebuffed the repeated efforts of faculty and roommates who reached out to him, has prompted a whole new level of soul-searching about what colleges can do to get help for their most troubled students. "These are the cases that keep us up at night," says Barbara Blazick ’72, a psychologist in Carnegie Mellon University’s counseling department. "Every mental health provider struggles with that."

In the wake of the Elizabeth Shin case, Laurie Hamre, Macalester’s vice president for student affairs, conceived of a plan to make sure that troubled students know where to get help. Known as “case management,” it calls together staff members from residential life and health services, as well as international student advisers and dean of students office staff, who meet regularly to identify students who might need help. For instance, a professor might notice that a particular student hasn’t come to class in a week, while a member of the residential life team may be aware that the student has recently lost a family member.

"It calls to staff attention a student who may be having academic problems or difficult personal or family issues," says Hamre. "It’s still up to the student to use the services and take advantage of all that a college like this has to offer."

The program is "a little delicate," Hamre says, "because we don’t want students to think we’re talking about them all the time." But she also notes that there were no complaints from students when the program was mentioned in a local newspaper article. In fact, several students interviewed for this story were pleased to find out that the program exists.

"It’s good to know that the adults on campus are looking out for us," says Katya, a junior. "I think people come to a place like Macalester because they want to be part of a community where people have a sense of responsibility toward each other."

How Are They Feeling?

AN ANNUAL SURVEY of 100,000 college students across the country asked which depressive feelings they had experienced in the past year:

- Feeling overwhelmed by all they had to do: 93.4%
- Feeling exhausted (not from physical activity): 91.5%
- Feeling very sad: 79.4%
- Feeling things were hopeless: 62.2%
- Feeling so depressed it was difficult to function: 43.8%
- Seriously considering attempting suicide: 9.3%
- Attempting suicide: 1.3%

Source: American College Health Association’s 2006 National College Health Assessment survey
This willingness to receive help, and to seek it out, seems to be part of a trend among the latest crop of college students, referred to by demographers as “millennials.” “They’re used to reaching out for services, having their parents assist them—sometimes a little too much—so their coping skills are not as well-defined as those of other groups who have come through campus,” says Hamre.

In fact, Rueff notes that last year was the first time that Macalester first-years sought more help in counseling offices than the members of any other class. Of those who came for help, 57 percent had received counseling before they came to campus.

Some of their issues are common to all college campuses—sleep disorders, drug and alcohol problems, learning self-motivation, coping with stress, getting along with roommates. Other concerns seem more typical of Macalester students and the mix of values and expectations they bring to campus. “Social anxiety is an issue here,” says Sven, who got help for anxiety at Winton. “The students here are intelligent and awkward—and that doesn’t lend itself to feeling really comfortable all the time.”

With Mac students there is also this pressure of feeling privileged,” says Rueff, “and feeling the responsibility that comes with that, to make the most of their college experience, and that can lead to overcommitment.” Hamre echoes this observation: “These students often come with a well-defined sense of what the world needs. There aren’t many schools where students who are still teenagers are worrying about how they’re going to save the world.”

This was among the questions that weighed heavily on Sarah, a recent Mac graduate who wondered if she had come to the right school when she “expected a kind of transformative experience I just wasn’t having.” She talked to a counselor at Winton, but simply her experience at Macalester—making connections with professors, finding a path that excited her, volunteering with a nonprofit in St. Paul—brought her struggles into perspective. “I’ve had the privilege of being friends with a lot of older people and seeing their journeys,” says Sarah. “That’s taught me that things are not linear, and you don’t get everything figured out by the time you’re 25.”

Insights like Sarah’s make working with Macalester students rewarding, Rueff says. They’re at once so confident and so vulnerable, and more capable than they often realize of solving their own problems. “They are all on their own path toward wisdom,” he says, “and every once in awhile you get to be a part of that glimmer of discovery.”

A Year-by-Year Guide to College Crises

If you remember college as “the best time of your life,” you’ve probably already forgotten the central fact of the college experience: “It’s four years packed with nothing but transitions,” says Shelly Lear ’80, associate director of counseling services at New York’s Colgate University. While chronic mental health issues such as eating disorders or depression may trouble students in any academic year, campus counselors say each year on campus comes with its own set of challenges:

1. The initial year is full of firsts—living away from home and with a roommate, making choices about everything from alcohol to course selection. “You always see roommate problems, because it’s about learning to negotiate with other people who may not share your background,” says Peg Olson, Macalester’s associate director for Residential Life. Millennial students—who grew up with “play dates” and structured sports—may also have trouble managing unstructured time and learning to motivate themselves without parental prodding.

2. They call it “sophomore slump” for a reason. That new campus smell is starting to wear off, friendships may begin to falter, while the pace of schoolwork and the pressure to find a major pick up. Macalester counselors note that many drop-in counseling sessions are attended by students seeking advice for a friend. Says Linda Schmid, staff psychologist, “Mac has a small-town atmosphere, and students look out for each other.”

3. Many Macalester students spend part of their junior year abroad, a life-changing experience that can present challenges when they return to campus. “Their lives have been profoundly changed in many cases, and yet they come home to a situation that’s fairly static,” says Ted Rueff, associate director of counseling services. To help them adjust, Winton now offers a single workshop for study-abroad students to help them negotiate the reverse culture shock of coming home.

4. Answering the question “What should I do with my life?” is a consuming question for most adults, but is even more challenging for 22-year-olds also trying to complete a senior thesis, hone a resume, find a first job, and spend time with friends before graduation day. “It’s easy to lose perspective when you’re 20 and you don’t have a lot of life experiences that remind you that life is about ups and downs,” adds Lear. Without that perspective, every rejection letter “can seem amplified.”
Renowned mathematician David Bressoud left the Big Ten for a saner life at Macalester.

By Kermit Pattison

A dream brought David Bressoud to Macalester. It came to him one night on a religious retreat. At the time, Bressoud was a professor at Penn State University with all the trappings of a successful career, including tenure and a budding international reputation as a mathematician.

Yet something was missing. In his dream he saw a stationary bicycle on a pedestal in the middle of a large research university. One by one, professors would climb up and spin the wheels. Then came his turn. "I got up there and I couldn't make them spin," he recalls. "I was just so frustrated. I woke up and realized what the dream was saying."

The message: the life of a professor who focuses purely on research at the expense of teaching wasn't for him. A few years later, Bressoud decamped for Macalester and now there's no doubt that he's pedaling somewhere. He is one of the college's best-respected and most challenging teachers, a prolific author and researcher and a nationally known advocate for teaching math to college students with varied majors. Last spring, he was elected president of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA).

"I've spent 40 years at Macalester and done virtually everything you could think of," says Professor Emeritus Wayne Roberts, former mathematics department chair. "The most significant thing I ever did for Macalester was bringing David Bressoud to our campus."

Bressoud describes his professional life as two different careers. After earning a Ph.D. at Temple University, he was offered a prestigious job at Penn State and distinguished himself as a researcher in number theory, combinatorics, and special functions. He became a full professor with tenure. After 10 years, however, he was dissatisfied with the constant pressure to win grants, pump out new papers, and deemphasize teaching.

Meanwhile, a spiritual reawakening made him reexamine his professional life. In 1983, fresh from a painful divorce, he visited a religious retreat center in France and had an experience that changed his life. Back in the United States, he went on silent retreats at a Jesuit center, where he dreamed about the stationary bicycle.

"It was the ability to be quiet for an extended period, to step back and re-experience the strength of my own inner connection to the spirit, that gave me the insight to see the many possibilities around me and the courage to break out of what I thought others expected of me," says Bressoud. "It also gave me the confidence to take..."
Bressoud, now the DeWitt Wallace Professor of Mathematics, earned a reputation as a rigorous and popular teacher. In 2005 he won the Thomas Jefferson Award, one of the college’s highest teaching honors. “Students talk about being sure they have a ‘Bressoud course’—it has a certain meaning,” says Professor Thomas Halverson, a colleague in the Mathematics and Computer Science Department. “It’s a badge of honor to have taken one of his courses and have done well in it.”

His students wrestle with difficult problems, often in their original historical context, rather than just skipping ahead to the neat solution. For example, they spend weeks trying to master four-page sections of Newton’s *Principia*, an unfamiliar paradigm. Bressoud learned the value of intellectual struggle through personal experience: after graduating from Swarthmore, he served in the Peace Corps in Antigua, where he plowed through difficult texts on his own. “The whole point is to give students confidence in their ability to take something that looks totally opaque and figure out what’s going on,” says Bressoud. “If I’ve taught students to do that, I’ve succeeded.

“For me, teaching is not about students acquiring information—it’s about them understanding how to learn for themselves,” he says. “I love Macalester students because they’re so receptive to being challenged. It’s their ability to think about a subject, their ability to tackle difficult stuff, that’s really important.”

Math should be part of the bedrock of the liberal arts, Bressoud says. He leads Macalester’s quantitative literacy program, and in his “Quantitative Reasoning for Public Policy” course teaches methods for analyzing issues such as immigration. “We live in a world that is awash in data,” he says. “Quantitative literacy is the ability to live constructively in this world. The cynical attitude that anyone can prove anything with data leaves unused a powerful tool that we can wield to clarify goals and identify realistic paths to achieving them.”

Bressoud has continued making a mark with his research and writing. He has published more than 50 scholarly articles and written or edited seven books. His book *Proofs and Confirmations* won the MAA’s Beckenbach Book Award. His current projects include a DVD lecture series on the history of math to be published by The Teaching Company—another example of his conviction that math is too important to be left exclusively to mathematicians (see adjacent article).

“It’s about promoting an appreciation for the culture of mathematics, an incredible human accomplishment that is less about rules and procedures than most people think,” he says. “Mathematics is really about the deep underlying patterns of nature, exploring them, and discovering means of successfully extrapolating from the patterns we observe.”

Bressoud’s active role with the Mathematical Association of America has impacted teaching far beyond the Macalester campus. He has chaired committees on teaching math in high school and college. In 2002 the MAA selected him as one of its Polya Lecturers, distinguished scholars who make presentations at MAA regional meetings around the country.

In addition to the routine executive duties of being MAA president—which, along with travel, will force him to temporarily cut back on teaching—Bressoud plans to push for reinvigorating undergraduate and K–12 math education. “This is, in Teddy Roosevelt’s words, a bully pulpit,” he says. “It’s a great opportunity to get out there and share my enthusiasm and passion for teaching.”

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**Learn Math with Dave**

**THIS FALL**

**David Bressoud** is teaching a history of mathematics class for Macalester alumni—a trial run for a course he is developing for The Teaching Company.

**Topics will include**

- Babylonian and Egyptian mathematics
- Greek mathematics and astronomy
- Early Chinese mathematics
- The creation of calculus and more

Bressoud promises that "no mathematical expertise is required—only an inquiring mind."

The course will be held at 7:20 a.m. Wednesdays from September 12 to November 28 in 241 Olin-Rice. For more information, go to www.macalester.edu/alumni.

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{}*Kermit Pattison is a regular contributor to Macalester Today.*
2007 Alumni Awards

Macalester and the Alumni Association honored nine outstanding alumni at Commencement and Reunion.

Honorary Degree

The Rev. Donald Beisswenger ’52 earned his divinity degree from Yale University. In 1962 he and his wife Joyce moved to Chicago, where he worked on assembly lines and developed a business-industrial ministry. He also traveled to the South to register African American voters. In 1968, Beisswenger joined the Vanderbilt Divinity School, where he became a professor and director of field education; he guided students to connect religious faith with personal and social existence. His work brought national recognition to the divinity school for the excellence of its field studies program. In 1983 the Beisswegens founded the Penuel Ridge Contemplative Retreat Center in Tennessee. Since his retirement from Vanderbilt in 1996, he has continued to work on behalf of the poor and homeless in Nashville and to study the oppressed poor in Latin America.

Alumni Service Award

Judy L. Vicars ’68 is one of the people who make the world run, but she prefers to work behind the scenes. She always cheerfully answers the call to work on behalf of Macalester. Judy has been an active member of every one of her Reunion Committees, including this year’s 1967-1968-1969 cluster committee. She has served on the Alumni Board and always attends at least one football game each year. An accomplished graphic designer, Vicars has spent hundreds of hours crafting beautiful certificates to honor Macalester’s retiring board members, trustees, and alumni award recipients. After graduating from Macalester, she got a job as a computer programmer, ultimately becoming a computer graphic designer, and she has been part of the in-house design group at West Publishing for 23 years.

Young Alumni Award

Amalia Anderson ’96 was born in Guatemala, of Mayan heritage, grew up in Minnesota, and enjoys an understanding of global identity for which she credits Macalester. She was active in Twin Cities Latino organizations and spent a semester studying in Central America through the Center for Global Education. Anderson earned her law degree at Hamline University, where she was active in the Chicano-Latino and the Inter-American Indigenous Law Student Associations, and then co-founded Fourth World Rising, a project to mentor young indigenous peoples and connect local struggles with the International Indigenous movement. She now co-directs Raices (Roots), a four-year rural Latino leadership and capacity-building project in Minnesota, Iowa, Idaho, and Oregon. The Minnesota Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in 2005 named her one of “25 on the Rise.”

Catharine Lealtad ’15 Service to Society Award

Melvin Collins ’75 has for 30 years helped young people of color move into successful business careers. He also has been instrumental in helping Macalester forge stronger relationships with alumni of color, while volunteering in programs for current Macalester students. A campus leader, Collins became president of the Black Liberation Affairs Committee and helped lead the 1974 occupation of the college’s business office to protest budget cuts in programs for students of color. Following a successful corporate career with Minnesota Mutual Cos., Inc, he is now an executive with the Twin Cities office of INROADS, an International organization that places talented minority youths in business and industry, preparing them for corporate and community leadership. Collins co-chaired the steering committee for the college’s first Alumni of Color Reunion in 1999. He worked with students on the Dismantling Racism initiative in the early 1990s and was an influential adviser as the college developed the current structure of a Department of Multicultural Life and a Dean for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.
Distinguished Citizens

Carol Leino Carey ’82 has pioneered preservation-based community economic development work in St. Paul for the past 20 years. In 1992, she received an Individual Leadership in Neighborhoods grant to explore historic preservation as a community development tool. During her term as executive director of the Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association, she worked with others to rehabilitate the Stutzman Building, turning it into office space, affordable rental housing, a café, and a community garden. Carey now serves as executive director of the Historic Saint Paul Corporation, a citywide preservation organization that strengthens St. Paul neighborhoods by celebrating their history and helping property owners preserve neighborhood assets. Among her accomplishments: Turning a former St. Paul rail yard into the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.

Genell L. Knatterud ’52 has for almost 40 years been one of the country’s leading practitioners of and advocates for clinical trials. She has served as an investigator for 10 long-term, multi-center trials supported by the National Institutes of Health and for eight trials supported by drug company sponsors. Knatterud led the statistical centers for several groundbreaking trials, including the University Group Diabetes Program and the Post-Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Study. She has frequently served on advisory boards for significant trials, including those of the Women’s Health Initiative of the National Institutes of Health. Knatterud has helped educate the next generation of biostatisticians, serving as professor and acting director of clinical investigation at the University of Maryland.

Gerald A. Meigs ’57 has been a leader in business, in Rotary International, and in service projects. As a high school senior he met Macalester President Charles Turck at a St. Paul Rotary Club event, and Turck in turn interested him in Macalester. His business professor, Forrest Young, recommended Meigs to Trustee E. E. Engelbert, who hired him to work at St. Paul Book and Stationery. There he rose to senior vice president in charge of three divisions, later working with former Minnesota Governor Elmer L. Andersen at ECM Publishers. In Rotary International Meigs served as a director on the international board and as chair of the executive committee, and has received several of its highest honors. He has been involved in service projects around the world, including Rotary’s PolioPlus program. Meigs chaired the Class of 1957’s 50th Reunion Committee, co-founded an independent living community for seniors, helped establish the Falcon Heights United Church of Christ foundation, twice served as president of the James J. Hill Reference Library, and works for an environmental stewardship organization near Tofte, Minnesota.

Tim O’Brien ’68 graduated with honors in political science from Macalester, where he was also student government president. Although opposed to the Vietnam War, he served as a foot soldier from 1969 to 1970 after being drafted. He came home with a Purple Heart, a Combat Infantry Badge, and experiences that he has transformed into literature. His critically acclaimed books include the memoir If I Die in a Combat Zone, Box Me Up and Send Me Home (1973); the novel Going After Cacciato (1978), which received the National Book Award; and the story collection The Things They Carried (1990), based on his war experiences. The latter was chosen by the New York Times as one of the most important works of fiction published in the last 25 years, and was also the common reading for the 2007 Macalester Reunion. Mike Murr ’69, a high school teacher writing on behalf of the 1967-69 Reunion Committee, said, “O’Brien’s works speak not only to my generation but also to the high school students I teach. His work continues to have an impact on thousands of students around the world.” O’Brien teaches in the creative writing program at Texas State University–San Marcos.

Roger W. Strand ’57 spent 30 years working as a hand surgery specialist and a respected expert witness, and served as Minnesota Chapter president of the American College of Surgeons. He worked with the U.S. Public Health Service on Montana’s Fort Belknap reservation and volunteered at a mission hospital in India. When he was ready to settle into a practice in 1970, Strand chose Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, where he’d spent many childhood summers. A committed conservationist, he co-founded the Prairie Pothole Chapter of the Minnesota Waterfowl Association, with the goal of restoring wetlands. Strand teaches at the Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center, where both he and his wife, Kay, serve on the board of trustees. Strand has been named Minnesota Conservationist of the Year and honored by the Izaak Walton League and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
Reunion 2007, held June 1–3, was a recordbreaker, and not only for the inches of rain that fell. It felt just like old times for the Class of 2002 when a record 44 percent of the class showed up to rollick and reminisce. The Class of 1957 broke another record with their reunion gift of more than $5 million, reflecting their long-held values of giving back and investing in the future. Tim O'Brien '69 talked about his book, The Things They Carried, and alumni ran to the river, listened to faculty lectures, tasted wine, and enjoyed a puppet show with their children.
Sarah Louise Galbraith '03 recently spent a year photographing hippos at 100 zoos in 33 countries. This strange assignment came about through classmate Adam Cohen, whose father—art collector and hippo aficionado Richard Baron Cohen—hired Galbraith to photograph the models for a 144-piece porcelain dinner service he'd commissioned from Royal Copenhagen. The dishes, which are unlikely ever to hold a steak dinner, will appear in a Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibit next year.

Galbraith is now working as a producer for National Geographic.

Hippos photographed (far right) at Zoologique D'Amnéville, Amnéville, France, and (below) at Zoologischer Garten Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
You came to Macalester to be more than just a number.

You sought small classes with professors who knew you by name. You wanted to stroll through campus and see familiar faces. You searched for opportunities to get involved. You hoped to become the kind of leader that makes a true impact on the world. At Macalester, you have always been more than just a number.

But just for today, we ask that you become a number.

If you didn't give last year—or if you've never given—your gift to the Annual Fund this year will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to $100.

Every year, more than 8,000 Macalester alumni make gifts to the college. These gifts of all sizes make genuine student-faculty connections possible by helping us attract and retain top caliber professors. These gifts also support the programs that create a rich campus life at Macalester, as well as the impressive financial aid offerings that enable Macalester to attract and support a talented and diverse student body.

Thanks to the generosity of several committed donors, this year new gifts from alumni to the Annual Fund will be matched dollar-for-dollar, up to $100. Your gift of $25 becomes $50. Your gift of $150 becomes $250.

Be a number. Be one of the 2,000 new alumni donors needed to guarantee the full $150,000 matching gift and help us create an even brighter future at Macalester.

1,870 current Macalester students. 174 faculty members. One mission.

Support Macalester.
Macalester Athletic and Recreation Center, August 2007