

# CCT

Winter 2020–21

Columbia  
College  
Today 

# THE GURU OF GOTHAM

Mike Wallace '64 is the “radical historian”  
behind the Pulitzer Prize-winning chronicles  
of New York City





## CORE TO COMMENCEMENT

COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Columbia College's distinctive academic experience is best achieved with a student body that is diverse in every way. Thanks to Columbia's need-based, no-loan financial aid commitment, we can ensure that classes comprise students of all backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. In fact, more than **50 percent of Columbia College students** receive financial assistance.

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Learn more and join the effort: [college.columbia.edu/campaign](https://college.columbia.edu/campaign).

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*Cover: Photograph by Jörg Meyer*

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>> [bit.ly/3mVWFS0](https://bit.ly/3mVWFS0)



### Teaching Debate — and Confidence — to the Incarcerated

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>> [bit.ly/3g7IOqI](https://bit.ly/3g7IOqI)



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How can art sustain us in difficult times? Two alumni experts offer lessons from plagues past.  
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## Message from the Dean

# Considering Our College Connectedness

The turnover of a year often inspires reflection on the year that's just passed and on the possibilities of the year ahead. There can be a tendency to think about oneself — how we want to improve, what goals we'll set or how we might change our daily routines. These aspirations often become magnified when viewed through the lens of 12 months, 52 weeks, 365 days. At 2020's end, you might have found yourself thinking less about yourself and more about others, our interconnectedness having become more pronounced through the events of the year: a global pandemic, a surging protest movement in support of Black citizens, and a turbulent and divisive presidential election that revealed a fracture in our country and, therefore, in our collective future.

We have all been reminded that our individual fates are inextricably connected to those of our family members and loved ones, our neighbors and colleagues, and even strangers. The distinction of a Columbia College education is its ambition to teach students about the interconnectedness of human life and the common experiences we share. The Core Curriculum has long sought to investigate the enduring struggles, joys and concerns of humankind, and, more recently, the Global Columbia Collaboratory has brought together students and faculty from around the world to discuss and develop solutions for pressing global problems, from hunger to clean water.

The isolation that has defined our days since last March has had the disconcerting effect of separating us from one another in physical space, while reminding us of the value of human contact. I know I'm not alone in my longing to see students milling around College Walk; or to hear colleagues' voices drifting down the hallway in Hamilton. The most difficult challenge I faced as dean this past year was having to implement policies and procedures that changed the very nature of how we — students, faculty, administrators, alumni and families — interact and relate. While some have adjusted well to the changes, others have found them difficult, and understandably so.

Many students have told us that their academic experience has been better than expected — we have our tremendously commit-

ted faculty to thank for that — but I also know that, because of the kinetic nature of learning and socialization, nothing can fully replace the in-person experience. As the frenzied first stages of the pandemic subside, the days of seeing one another again are slowly coming into focus, even though they are still many months away. With that picture in mind, I have begun to think about the lessons we're learning from Covid-19 and how we'll apply them so that we may reap some benefit from the struggles of this time.

- Though the pandemic descended upon us quickly and was unrelenting in its havoc, the College was more agile in its response than I thought possible. This exciting discovery informs future possibilities of what we can achieve when not under the duress of a pandemic.
- The Core Curriculum is the bedrock of the College's identity and academic experience, and we must strengthen its purpose, inclusivity and impact in this time of turmoil and isolation. We've begun important work with a diverse, multi-generational committee of students and alumni who are charged with thinking about how the Core will evolve and continue to respond to the timeless challenges of human existence.
- While the richness of the College experience is most evident in face-to-face encounters, it's become clear that technology can and should have a larger role in our academic experience. Finding ways to sustain technology's unique benefits post-pandemic is an important opportunity for us.

The greatest lesson I've learned from the pandemic thus far has been the staggering commitment of our community. Faculty and staff have worked relentlessly to field the innumerable curveballs thrown our way during the rapid transition to remote life, learning and work. Students have shared with us the ways they have expanded their mindsets and resourcefulness to adapt as best they can to the demands of this time. These new and honed skills will benefit them for decades to come.

These months have not been without frustrations, though. This has been a trying time in all of our lives. But the resilience and fortitude shown by so many reminds me of something I often say: Columbia is defined by its people, and those people are its most important asset. There is imperfection in our humanity, but we share a commitment that is unlike any other I've experienced.

I wish you and your loved ones good health and much warmth in 2021.

James J. Valentini  
Dean



TIFFANY THOMAS





# Abandonment Issues

Steven Boss '71, SW'76, BUS'78 is a New York-based photographer whose specialties include shooting locations in various states of abandonment. "This is the top, top level of a double-decker movie palace in New Jersey, just outside the projection room," Boss says. "I love the half-moon windows

and the Dali-esque folded window, the rust and dust on the radiators, the hanging metal, the flotsam on the floor and the view way out yonder. This area was relatively spic and span; the path up was another story — dark, dangerous, circuitous — a virtual minefield. It can be a challenge shooting under adverse conditions, but it's such a pleasure to create images of grace, beauty and serenity out of the chaos."

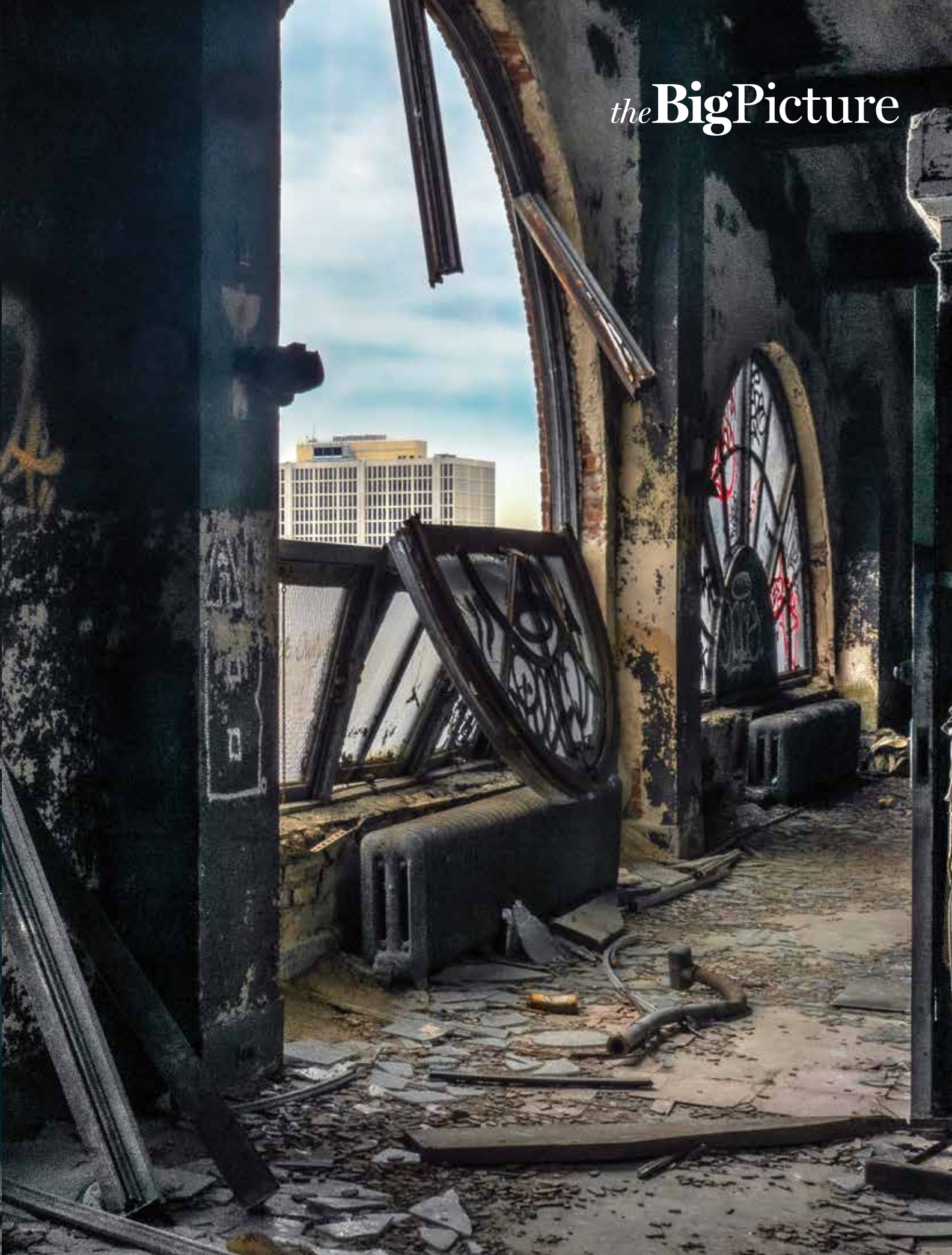
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## CCT Online Extra

More of Boss's favorite abandoned places are at [college.columbia.edu/cct](http://college.columbia.edu/cct).



*the* **BigPicture**







6

I still have *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West, Vol. I* (1946), which contains this and other writings that were central to my experience with the Core Curriculum. Thank you for bringing back so many memories, along with my appreciation for Columbia College.

I suggest that you consider an 11th, the Lions victory at Rutgers, 35-28 on Thanksgiving Day, November 30, 1963.

 **Contact Us**



and fell behind 28–24. Archie and captain Ed Malmstrom '65 mustered the very tired Lions, and we went ahead to stay on an end-zone, sideline pass with minutes left. The Rutgers fans were stunned. I savored the post-game Thanksgiving dinner all the more at my aunt's home in Flatbush.

A couple of notes: President Kennedy had attended the Lions game at Harvard on October 16, 1963, and the Harvard band played "Hail to the Chief." The 1963 season was the last where many players were required to play offense, defense and special teams, so Archie, Ed and most of the team played a full 60 minutes [on game days]. Our team ultimately went 4–4–1 that year.

**Bob Donohue '65**  
*Los Gatos, Calif.*

### Pop Quiz

As Columbia football's official scorer for 30-plus years, I could easily identify another dozen truly exciting games for the article

"10 Great Moments in Lions Football" — most recently the kickoff return during Columbia's last home game in 2018 that led to a victory with no time remaining.

Also, the entry on the November 24, 1956, game did not include details, including the key play that won the game for Lou Little. Hint: Claude Benham '57 threw the go-ahead touchdown in the last minute of play. Guess who was the receiver?

**Ronald Szczypkowski '58**  
*Rye Brook, N.Y.*

### A Singular Touchdown

Thank you for "10 Great Moments in Lions Football" (Fall 2020). I was a year too late to experience that win over undefeated Army, but reading about it jolted a memory of one of my most elating moments of watching football; this is a personal memory of a singular event in a close friend's football career.

Don McLean '51 played center for four years in high school and three years at

Columbia. In Don's senior year, Lou Little switched him to tight end. Although he had a good season as a receiver, he never scored a touchdown.

It was the last game of the season, November 25, 1950, and Don's final game, played at Brown. With a comfortable lead for the Lions — and apparently with Don's never having scored in mind — the last series of plays was three passes to Don. All went incomplete. On fourth and long, with the game clock almost done, Don caught a pass on the 15-yard line and was immediately hit. Listing at a 45-degree angle, his legs continued to pump from sheer determination, and he managed to fall over the goal line for his first, last and only touchdown in eight years of football. His team and the few Columbia spectators gave him a standing ovation.

Nearly 70 years later I can recall the vicarious thrill of seeing a friend end his football career with a memorable goal.

**Irvin Herman '52**  
*Oakland, Calif.*



# INTERVIEW COLLEGE APPLICANTS

All interviews will be conducted virtually this year, so you can meet applicants from all over the world. Represent Columbia and play a meaningful role in the admissions process. Join ARC today!



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## Superlative Scholars

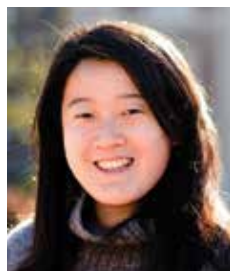
A pair of prestigious scholarships went to two alumni late last term.

**Santiago Tobar Potes '20** made national headlines in November when he became the first Latino DACA recipient to be awarded a Rhodes Scholarship. As a member of the 2021 cohort, he'll head to the University of Oxford in the



fall to pursue an M.St. (master of studies) in global and imperial history. Potes, who hails from Miami, graduated with degrees in East Asian studies and Medieval and Renaissance studies.

**Miranda Li '17** was named a member of the Schwarzman Scholars Class of 2022. Scholarship recipients pursue a one-year master's at Tsinghua University in Beijing, focusing on public policy, economics and business, or international



studies; they also attend lectures, travel and develop a better understanding of China through cultural immersion.

## Giving Day

Columbians worldwide came together on October 28 for Columbia Giving Day — a 24-hour online fundraising event — making 19,173 gifts for a total of nearly \$24.2 million to support University schools, programs and initiatives.

The Columbia College community contributed 5,356 gifts and roughly \$6.46 million to the University as a whole. Among all the causes at the University, the College raised \$3.9 million from more than 2,300 contributions. This gener-



JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

**HIGH HONOR FOR HARTMAN:** English and comparative literature professor Saidiya Hartman has been appointed a University Professor, the highest rank that Columbia bestows on faculty. Hartman, a scholar of African-American and American literature and cultural history, and a 2019 MacArthur fellow, has taught at the University since 2007. Her "immersive and unflinching portraits of Black life have forever altered the ways in which we think and speak about enslavement and its invidious legacy in this country," President Lee C. Bollinger said. "She brings a painstaking and unrelenting focus to retrieving and telling the lost stories of the dispossessed."

ous support will ensure the College has a steady source of funding to fulfill its commitment to full-need financial aid and need-blind admissions, essential programming such as career and academic advising, and community-building events.

The College also won several giving challenges throughout the day, including the Alumni Participation Challenge for having the highest alumni participation percentage of all the schools, and the Overall Dollar Challenge for raising the most dollars.

## Leadership News

**Mary C. Boyce** will become the next University provost, effective July 1, President Lee C. Bollinger announced in December. Boyce has been dean of Columbia Engineering for seven years. "We are, indeed, fortunate to have someone with Dean Boyce's combination of administrative capacity, academic accomplishment and deep knowledge of Columbia to assume this role, which is always so critical to the University's future but is especially so at this remarkable moment," Bollinger said.

Meanwhile, the University president's own tenure has been extended; his term will now last until the close of the 2023 academic year. The Board of Trustees also has a new member: Shirley Wang BUS'93, founder and CEO of fiberglass door company Plastpro.

## Sherwin Award

The Gerald E. Sherwin Young Alumni Service Award, which honors individuals who have demonstrated exceptional service to the College's young alumni community, was presented to **Kevin Zhang '14** in a virtual celebration on December 17. Zhang's volunteerism includes serving on the Young Leaders Council, a leadership giving society under the umbrella of the Columbia College Fund that also stages events for its members; being a founding member of the YLC Bay Area chapter; and serving as a Columbia College Alumni Association Board of Directors member. Additionally, Zhang spearheads the Columbia in Tech group, which builds relationships among alumni working in technology.

# The Gamester Who Went All In

By Thomas Vinciguerra '85, JRN'86, GSAS'90

Oswald Jacoby CC 1922 won his first poker game at 8. Drawing three kings to a pair of sevens, to complete a full house, he walked away with 60 cents. Nearly 70 years later, he crowed about his childhood coup: “That started me off on my career,” he said.

And what a career it was! When he died in 1984, Jacoby was among the best-known gamesters in the world — poker, backgammon, canasta, whist, chess, pinochle, craps, gin rummy, you name it. With fiendish computational ability, a phenomenal memory and seemingly limitless energy, he could belly up to a green baize table and take you to the cleaners. “There have always been people better than me at *some* game,” Jacoby told *Sports Illustrated* in 1978. “But I am still the best player of *all*

games in the world today. There’s no one around who can beat me.”

Jacoby’s specialty was bridge, and his myriad approaches and successes made him a legend. He won 27 North American championships and published more than 10,000 syndicated bridge columns over 34 years. They were required reading for a generation of postwar suburbanites looking to make friends with their new neighbors — veterans and homemakers who barely knew a trump from a dummy.

His statistics speak for themselves. In only four years (1958–62) Jacoby overtook Charles Goren as the bridge world’s leader in master points, as awarded by the American Contract Bridge League. In 1963 he became the first player in history to win more than 1,000 master points in a single game. Four years later he won his

10,000th master point, something never before achieved.

The Brooklyn-born Jacoby was always in a hustling hurry. At 2, he corrected his aunt’s wording of nursery rhymes. During WWI military training (he joined at 15 by lying about his age), he played poker with his fellow grunts. By the time he arrived on campus in 1918, he had won \$2,000 — enough to pay many of his College expenses. While still an undergraduate, he triumphed in a chess match against U.S. champion Frank Marshall. At 21, he became the youngest licensed actuary in New York State history, and at 28, he turned full-time gamer.

Jacoby reckoned that his talent for chance and numbers (he could multiply 647,992 by 435,638 in his head) could yield him fame and fortune. He once quoted Horatius Cocles, who heroically defended Rome in 509 B.C.: “How can man die better than facing fearful odds?” Jacoby tartly responded, “It may be a good way to die, but I can’t think of a worse way to gamble.”

Soon enough, Jacoby set his focus on bridge. His timing was perfect. In 1925, Harold Stirling Vanderbilt, of the wealthy Vanderbilt family, devised contract bridge, a variation on the original auction variety. With his new bidding and scoring system, as well as other features, Vanderbilt made an already popular pastime even more compelling and challenging. Contract soon became the bridge standard, and Jacoby seized on the opening. He emerged victorious in many tournaments, making his rep in the 1931–32 Culbertson-Lenz competition, still known as the “Bridge Battle of the Century.” By 1933, *Vanity Fair* was calling him “one of America’s most brilliant players.”

Jacoby was not merely a superb player; he was also an innovator. He is immortalized with the “Jacoby Transfer,” whereby a lead bidder could strengthen his partner’s weak hand. “He thought up bids for hands that had not been used,” Ronald Haack

Games king Oswald Jacoby CC 1922 playing canasta in 1949.



MARTHA HOLMES / THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION VIA GETTY IMAGES



'65, a computer programmer turned bridge teacher, told *CCT*. "He thought up arrays for better suits." Haack added, "He was famous for being able to tell what was in people's hands. And the only explanation for that is that he was psychic."

A lightning-fast competitor, Jacoby was lightning-fast all around. He married Mary Zita McHale a week after meeting her. While he was playing in the National Open Pairs bridge championship in Richmond, Va., on December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Jacoby found

a substitute, quit the game and enlisted in Naval intelligence to help crack Axis codes. In 1950, when communist troops invaded South Korea, he got a call from Washington, D.C. "We need a computer in the Far East," the voice on the other end said.

"Buy one," Jacoby replied.

"We can't buy one. You're the one," said the voice. A week later, Jacoby was a counterintelligence agent in Japan.

In his prime, Jacoby was a cottage industry. His one-dollar book *How to Win at Canasta* was the fifth best-selling volume of

1949, and he lent his name to a brand of mechanical pencil that was used to record points in that game. His name also adorned a mass-market version of backgammon produced by Pressman Toys. He even lectured at MIT on probability theory. His many admirers spoke of "The Wizardry of Ozzie."

Indeed, the wizard was also a philosopher — in his case, of the never-ending wagering that is life. "There is no such thing as playing any game for mere joy," Jacoby said. "If you don't have something to lose, you tend not to care. It spoils the game."

## Student Spotlight

# Blessing Utomi '22

*This academic year, students are studying remotely from locations around the world. To keep our community connected, the College launched "Columbia College Chronicles"; the online series gives students the opportunity to share what they're learning not only in their classes, but also about themselves during the pandemic. Utomi is a theater and education double major from Houston; the below is adapted from the original interview posted on the College website. To read more Chronicles, go to [college.columbia.edu/news](http://college.columbia.edu/news).*

### What do you like to do outside of class?

I'm an intern with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, helping a lot with its virtual programming for prospective students. That's been really fun — we just started virtual tours. I also help run our YouTube Q&A chats, which is two students talking about their College experiences — that's really popular. So I still get to meet lots of prospective students and families and also stay in contact with my Columbia friends and my friends in the Admissions Office.

Outside of Columbia, I love to run; I started in high school. I think everyone has tapped into at-home workouts during this time! I also love ballet — I take classes through Barnard, and that's been a nice way to stay active.

### What is something you've learned about yourself during the pandemic?

I've learned that I like structure a lot. Even being virtual I like to have processing time and ordering my tasks in chunks. So during my day I set goals and to-do lists for myself, to have some sort of productivity during the day. Of course, some days are still for Netflix from bed!

### What's the first thing you'll do when you're back on the Morningside Heights campus?

I want to check on Brownie's, the café underneath Avery Library; it's my favorite place to go for breakfast. They're just really nice people! They knew my order as soon as I got there and were really sweet. I also miss College Walk and sitting on Low Steps, just taking in the sun and everything.

### What's been your favorite class at the College, and why?

This term I'm taking quite a few interesting classes, but my favorite so far is "Shakespeare in America," taught by Professor James Shapiro '77. It's really cool because it's more about the performance history of Shakespeare's plays, how they've been interpreted in America and how they've been applied to topics like the Civil War, gender, race, conspiracies



COURTESY BLESSING UTOMI '22

and politics. The class is always interesting because you can see how Shakespeare has had a huge impact on American culture, and you can see the intricate connections between the texts we read.

### What keeps you close to Columbia while remote?

I think my job has been the biggest thing, because a lot of our work is training tour guides and giving info sessions. That's been really nice for meeting new Columbians and staying in contact with work friends. We text each other about funny things that happen and have meetings to still see each other's faces. It's nice to have those small moments together.

# Christopher P. Wolfe SOA'18

## Artist-in-Residence, Eric H. Holder Jr. Initiative for Civil and Political Rights



Your background is incredibly varied! Tell me about your journey to becoming a writer.

The first time I wrote creatively was when I was deployed with the Army to Iraq, in 2003. I had reached what felt like a breaking point from the pressure of being in a combat environment. Fortunately, a group of my fellow soldiers noticed the decline in my mental health and started inviting me to join them when they got together to play their guitars during downtime. Our time together was so inspiring and uplifting that I gave a local Iraqi contractor money to buy me a guitar on his next trip to Baghdad, so I could learn how to play. I started to write my own music, and I soon began to write lyrics. And with this experience of bringing something into the world of my own making, I felt like I had suddenly accessed a pressure release valve, a salve that led to healing.

I eventually left the Army, went to business school at Duke, and began working on Wall Street at Merrill Lynch in September 2008. Being there during the

financial crisis proved to be very challenging; to get through it, I returned to what had healed me while I was in Iraq: writing, creating, expressing myself on the page. A lot of that writing focused on the inequities and disparities I saw and the role I played in creating them.

I wrote poems and short stories, and began working on a novel. I joined veterans' writing groups and did all that I could to immerse myself in the creative process with the little spare time I had. I read many books; one that I fell in love with was *Slapboxing with Jesus* by SOA professor Victor LaValle [SOA'98]. After having spent years in leadership positions, surrounded by very few people who looked like me, Victor's voice and stories made me feel seen and heard. I sought him out, and I found him one evening doing a reading in my Brooklyn neighborhood. I introduced myself, and we spoke for at least two hours that night. Victor helped me to see the different ways I could nurture my voice, including pursuing an M.F.A. So after a lot of discussions with my wife, I decided to pursue writing full time.

How did you become involved with the Holder Initiative? What inspired you to combine your creative work with a social justice project such as this?

If you go to the "About" page on the Holder Initiative's website, you'll find a quote from the former attorney general: "We do ourselves and our great nation a grave disservice ... when we trade the noisy discord of honest, tough and vigorous debate for the quiet prejudice of inaction and cold silence of consent."

This quote speaks directly to one of my primary goals as an artist and teacher: to encourage people of diverse backgrounds and conflicting views to see and hear each other better, and to develop a deeper capac-

ity for empathy. This ideal can sometimes be uncomfortable and contentious, but it is important that we create time and space for Columbia's students to have these interactions. On the other side of their college experience, they will be the ones occupying spaces of power and influence to create positive change. I'm incredibly proud and humbled to be the Holder Initiative's inaugural artist-in-residence, and grateful for the opportunity to bring more awareness to the challenges faced by many brothers and sisters affected by mass incarceration.

What's the role of artist-in-residence? Do you have a typical day?

Honestly, since the pandemic hit, I have been looking for a typical day, but I haven't found it. There has been a lot of volatility in my "routine," so I try to adapt and stay flexible. I have three kids whose schools open and close depending upon the changes and risk factors related to Covid-19. I have a dog that doesn't wear a watch. Having said that, as the artist-in-residence, I dedicate the first part of my day to creating art. I can usually find a focused, quiet time to write around 4:30 a.m., before my kids are up.

Once they are settled in, I am engaged with the class that I teach on campus and at Rikers Island, "Incarcerated Yet Inspired." It is a cross-genre writing seminar offered through the Undergraduate Creative Writing Department, that focuses on literary works that explore the experiences and perspectives of individuals who have been ostracized, incarcerated and isolated from their communities. When I am teaching at Rikers, I spend part of my day planning and coordinating with an enthusiastic group of Columbia students who volunteer as tutors for the class. I also spend my days engaged with the rest of the Holder Initiative



PHOTOS COURTESY CHRISTOPHER P. WOLFE SOA'18

Wolfe in Iraq, December 2003.



team, to develop events that address civil rights and social justice issues. A couple of examples are the fireside chats I've facilitated — one last summer with Tony Award-winning director Kenny Leon, and another in December with formerly incarcerated writer and current Teachers College student Robert Wright.

### What's the best part of your job?

I have the opportunity to create spaces for our students to show up as their full selves, spaces where they can embrace and express parts of their identity that they often suppress due to a variety of factors and societal pressures. I've had conversations with students about their career choices, their classes, their writing, their parents. And in each of those interactions, I try to be present and share whatever I can from my life experiences that might be relevant. A very special moment was when one of my Columbia students came up to me at the end of the semester, thanked me and told me that I was the first Black male professor that he'd had and that it really meant something special to have me teaching his class. I think it takes a certain level of vulnerability to express oneself in such a way; I genuinely find pleasure in creating spaces where that can happen.

### What about your Rikers Island teaching experience has been most meaningful for you?

I was raised in Fayetteville, N.C., in the '80s and '90s. During my adolescent

years, I wasn't aware of the terms "mass incarceration" and "public school to prison pipeline." However, I was aware of the horrendous machinations ushering many of the kids of color I went to school with into the criminal legal system. And I usually felt the system's presence when these kids would suddenly disappear from my classrooms and surrounding neighborhoods and never be seen again.

I share this because when I was presented with the opportunity to teach inside Rikers Island, my first thought was: I've spent most of my life trying to ensure I never got caught up in the system, and now I am being asked to walk in willingly? I sought counsel from my family and mentors, mostly people of color, and what I consistently heard from them was: Our people, trapped inside those jails and prison, *need* to see *you*. Based on the feedback I have received from the men and women I've taught at Rikers, this sentiment is true. However, what has been most surprising to me is realizing how much I needed to see them. There are so many brilliant, beautiful minds and resilient, warm souls locked up in our country's jails and prisons because, for generations, structural racism starved their communities of the necessary resources for them to have a chance to live up to their fullest potential at the outset. Going into Rikers has enabled me to see beyond statistics and intellectual exercises that ponder the fate of our brothers' and sisters' existence. I was



Wolfe at a July 4th concert in Vail, Colo., in 2005.

afforded an opportunity to get down to the work of reclaiming our collective humanity and imagining and building a liberated community. I have learned with and from all of my students on the inside.

### What's one thing about you that would surprise readers?

Well, I skipped over a few things earlier when I was recounting my journey as a writer. When I came back from Iraq, I didn't exactly go straight to business school. I still had three years of military service left and during that time, those three guys who taught me to play guitar and I formed a band. We cut an EP, gigged all over Colorado and donated the money we raised to nonprofits that support soldiers coming back with injuries from Iraq and Afghanistan, such as the Wounded Warrior Project. I guess I share this because as I look back on my life, I see clear evidence of all the good that can happen when we show up for each other in a positive way.

## John Jay Associates Founded

A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION has been established to help Columbia College expand her role in American liberal education.

The new society, The John Jay Associates of Columbia College, is named for the distinguished alumnus of the Class of 1794 who was the nation's first Chief Justice. The Associates are alumni and friends of the College who seek to assist it through stable financial aid.

"This one of distinguished alumni and friends of the College," Dean John G. Palfrey noted, "has been established at a time when national circumstances have produced a critical turning point for Columbia as for other great private institutions of higher learning. To a large extent," the dean said, "Columbia College's continued growth as a pioneer and a leader among American colleges will depend on its ability to convey to its alumni and friends a sense that it deserves their support and that it urgently needs their support. Particularly," he added, "there must be cre-

ated an awareness of the College's need for substantial assistance on a regular and continuing basis."

Jerome A. Newman '17, is chairman of the Committee of Sponsors of the Associates. Other members of the Committee are: Frank W. Demuth '14, Benjamin J. Butterweiser '19, Shepard L. Alexander '21, Shepard S. Silberblatt '22, Richard Rodgers '23, John T. Cahill '24, Theodore C. Garfield '24, Ralph T. Heymsfield '27, Harold F. McGuire '27, and Gavin K. MacDuff '32. Oscar Hammerstein 2nd '36, who died on August 23, 1960, was

also a member of the Committee. The headquarters of the Associates are located in the Columbia University Club, 4 West 43rd Street, N.Y.C.

The present membership numbers 191 alumni and friends of the College.

"For the successful launching of the Associates," Dean Palfrey said, "a great deal of credit and thanks should go to the directors of the Fund, and particularly to the chairman and his fellow members of the Committee of Sponsors of the Associates, for the fact that this organization is now a going enterprise."



JEROME A. NEWMAN '17, chairman of the Committee of Sponsors of the John Jay Associates, receives, from Columbia University President Grayson Kirk, a plaque denoting his membership in the Associates. Dr. Kirk presented similar plaques to (l. to r.): Benjamin J. Butterweiser '19, John T. Cahill '24, and Horace E. Davenport '29 who also serve as life members of the Associates.

Columbia College Today

## DidYouKnow?

# The Columbia College Fund's Oldest Giving Society Turns 60

Did you know that the John Jay Associates — the College's oldest leadership giving society — turned 60 in 2020? Members are distinguished by making annual gifts of \$1,500 or more, providing dedicated support to students and faculty. The December 1960 issue of *CCT* announced the group's founding; then-Dean John G. Palfrey noted that the John Jay Associates would be vital to the "College's continued growth as a pioneer and a leader among American colleges." In its first year, there were 103 John Jay Associates members; now, there are approximately 3,000. Find the story online: [bit.ly/36k6C4k](http://bit.ly/36k6C4k).



# THE GURU OF GOTHAM

Mike Wallace '64 is the “radical historian”  
behind the Pulitzer Prize-winning chronicles  
of New York City





**B**e careful what you say to a historian. Early in my conversation with Mike Wallace '64, GSAS'73 — as we discuss the logistical hurdles of conducting a lengthy interview through a Zoom screen — I shrug and say, “It’s a whole new world now.”

Wallace’s reply is almost automatic: “Except that it’s not.”

I should have known better. If there’s anyone who can take the long view in these incredibly turbulent times, it’s Mike Wallace, who has devoted his life and career to unpacking the essential lessons from centuries of American history. There is no succinct way to summarize Wallace’s accomplishments, but let’s try anyway. He is a Distinguished Professor of History at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the CUNY Graduate Center. He is

a stroke of timing that coincided with the 100th anniversary of New York’s consolidation into five boroughs. And if that subtitle sounds almost comically ambitious, it has nothing on the book itself. *Gotham* is the rare work that is helpfully described in both page count (1,408) and pounds (4.73).

*Gotham*’s sheer comprehensiveness is both overwhelming and dazzling. If you’re curious about the evolution of New York’s fur trade, or the historic cost of renting a brothel, or the ever-shifting meaning of the epithet “Yankee Doodle,” or honestly pretty much anything else, you can flip to the index of *Gotham* and find a meticulously researched anecdote about it. By striving to include anything and everything about the early years of New York City, Wallace and Burrows were essentially practicing the historical equivalent of pointillism, with countless individual micro-narratives adding up to a singular, definitive picture of the city. Against the odds, and arguably reason itself, they succeeded.

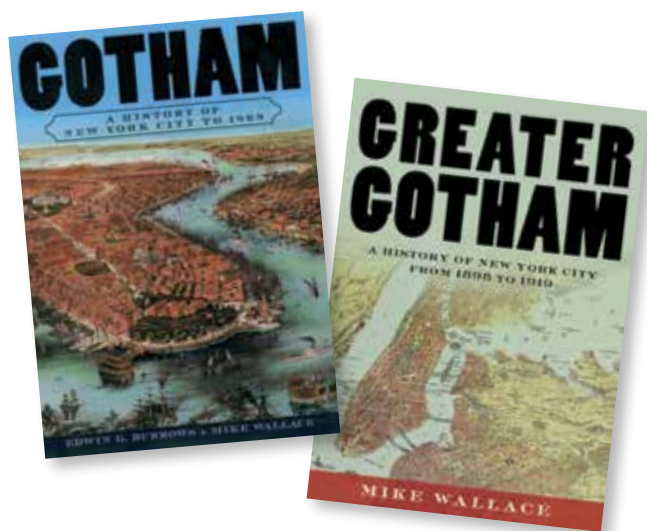
The book’s publication was met with universal acclaim, and in 1999, *Gotham* won the Pulitzer in history. Nineteen years after its publication came a sequel, *Greater Gotham: A History of New York City from 1898 to 1919*, which Wallace wrote solo. This second volume, which clocked in at a

**“If you don’t enjoy it, you’re not going to remember it. You’re not going to *believe* it.”**

mere 1,196 pages, garnered similar rave reviews from publications like *The New York Times*, *The New York Review of Books* and *The New Yorker*.

But now, reflecting on *Gotham* and its sequel, Wallace doesn’t mention the starred reviews or the Pulitzer. His measure of the project’s success is a simpler one: The sheer number of readers who told him they’d enjoyed reading a history book. “That’s the indispensable criteria,” Wallace says. “If you don’t enjoy it, you’re not going to remember it. You’re not going to finish it. You’re not going to *believe* it.”

It’s a pragmatic philosophy that happens to be squarely in line with what attracted Wallace to the subject of history in the first place. Entering Columbia College in 1960, at 18, Wallace was at just the right time, and in just the right city, to fall in love with the subject — though that wasn’t the original plan. “I was going to be a doctor. My mother was very clear on that,” he says, laughing.



the founder or cofounder of a series of influential historical projects, including the Radical History Forum, the New York Public History Project and the Gotham Center for New York City History. He is the recipient of a long, long list of honors and prizes, beginning with a Columbia University Presidents Fellowship in 1961 and ending with the first Federal Hall Medal for History in 2017.

And, yes, there’s the Pulitzer Prize-winning book that is widely regarded as the greatest and most authoritative history of New York City to date.

Wallace authored *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* alongside fellow historian Edwin G. Burrows in 1998,





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After nearly failing organic chemistry — and realizing he much preferred the history electives he was taking for fun — Wallace switched majors. When he'd finished his undergraduate studies, Wallace stayed at Columbia for his graduate degrees. He found a mentor in famed historian Richard Hofstadter GSAS'42, who had just won his second Pulitzer for the prescient *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. Wallace was Hofstadter's research assistant, and eventually collaborated with him on the book *American Violence: A Documentary History*.

In addition to his personal and professional relationship with Hofstadter, Wallace's young career was defined by another key event: his participation in the student strike of 1968, which famously resulted in the occupation of campus buildings and their subsequent storming by the NYPD. Wallace was elected to the Strike Coordinating Committee — in “the more moderate faction,” he says — though Hofstadter opposed the protests. “The remarkable thing is that we remained friends and colleagues despite the tempestuous '68 moment,” says Wallace.

Splitting his time and his influences between a respected

(but relatively orthodox) historian and an exciting (but relatively unstable) political movement put Wallace in a unique position to bring both intellectual rigor and revolutionary spirit to the field of history. Wallace's dissertation, which was on the nature of American political parties, began with a straightforward premise supported by Hofstadter: Political parties are, broadly, a net good for the United States. But Wallace's experience on the strike committee, and his interactions with other young historians who were eager to challenge accepted norms, pushed his research toward those who often went ignored in historical discussions: “People who were excluded by the two-party system — and were *meant* to be excluded.”

By the early 1970s, Wallace had emerged as one of the world's premier practitioners and proponents of “radical history,” which sought to understand historical events through previously overlooked lenses like gender, race, sexuality and class. “You began to have Black activists [looking at published histories] and saying, ‘What the f--- is this?’ So Blacks get added into the picture. Then come the women. ‘Oops, you left out half of the population.’ But by adding individuals or groups into the picture, you're also left with the necessity of confronting the white reaction to this. You're confronted with the necessity of analyzing and understanding racism. So it wasn't just addition. It was transformation.”

The concept of “radical history,” which has become central to the approach of many modern-day historians, was revolutionary at the time, and Wallace devoted much of his career to practicing and spreading it. In 1971, he took

ABOVE:  
A bird's-eye  
view of  
the City of  
New York,  
ca. 1884.

BOTTOM  
LEFT:  
Wallace's  
mentor,  
Richard  
Hofstadter  
GSAS'42,  
in 1968.



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY RARE BOOK & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

a job at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to teach police officers the history of American justice. In 1973, he became a co-founder and director of the Radical History Forum, and was the editorial coordinator of the *Radical History Review* through the mid-80s. He published a series of essays, eventually collected into a volume called *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory*, that explored how and why American history is (often misleadingly) packaged for the general public. And in 2000, he established the Gotham Center for New York City History, which aims to “increase scholarly and public understanding of New York City’s rich and living past.”

Wallace’s inclusive, pragmatic, forward-thinking approach to history, and to New York City in particular, proved uniquely timely when — just a year after the Gotham Center was founded — the World Trade Center was attacked on September 11, 2001. In his book *A New Deal for New York*, which was published just a year after 9-11, Wallace made the provocative case that the rebuilding necessitated by the attack on the World Trade Center was also an opportunity to rethink the future of New York City, with a government-funded program that would tackle looming crises like breakdowns in mass transit and unaffordable housing.

Today, it’s impossible to read *A New Deal for New York* without drawing parallels to the Covid-19 pandemic. The virus has been a disruptive and devastating force across

the world, but few American cities have been affected as dramatically as New York, where the population density and public transit systems pose unique challenges for the virus’s potential spread. As countless small businesses close their doors and a not-insignificant portion of residents vacate the city entirely, it’s easy to wonder: Is there really a way that a post-pandemic New York City can thrive? Can it even *recover*?

In times that can sometimes feel exceptional in their darkness, it is comforting to spend an afternoon with someone who reminds you they are not. When asked about Covid, Wallace rattles off the pandemics that have devastated New York over the centuries like he’s reciting the alphabet: yellow fever, cholera, typhoid, influenza. “Repeatedly, we’ve been in situations where people said, ‘Oh my God, this is the end of New York,’” Wallace says. “History doesn’t guarantee anything, so the fact that we have pulled out of this crisis or that crisis — and gone on to bigger and better — doesn’t *guarantee* it will happen again. But my default position is that New York will bounce back, more or less. My feeling is that it’ll be messy, but it’ll be recoverable. It’s one of the appealing things — although appalling for historians — the degree to which tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow is our temporal focus. It’s an American characteristic, to some degree. The past is the dustbin of history. It might be a source of amusing movies or interesting museum exhibits. But the action is in the future. Followed closely by the present.”

For someone with such a depth of knowledge about New York City’s past, Wallace is clearly, rigorously invested in the city’s present and future. This is both the danger and the joy of asking Mike Wallace about New York City: You can ask a simple question, but there are no simple answers. If you ask what it was like to grow up in New York City, he’ll patiently explain that it was a time when there was very real debate about whether Queens even *counted* as New York City. And if you ask what neighborhood he lives in *now*, you’ll get an elegant mini-treatise on the fluctuating boundaries of Park Slope that weaves in fluid social dynamics and the history of the railroad depot.

For all his knowledge and love of the city, Wallace is currently only a part-time New Yorker. Wallace’s wife (and sometimes collaborator), celebrated Mexican writer Carmen Boullosa, is a distinguished lecturer at CUNY’s

**“History doesn’t guarantee anything. But my default position is that New York will bounce back.”**



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OPPOSITE  
PAGE AND  
ABOVE:  
NYC views,  
past and  
present.

Macaulay Honors College, but the couple split their time between New York and Mexico City. “At a time when bi-nationalism is not seen as *desideratum*, we are, I guess, an example of possibilities,” he says. Wallace has taken to his second home city, though he admits his Spanish is rusty enough that he eventually bows out of the frequent salons with Mexican writers, artists and intellectuals he and Boullosa host at their home. “They’re very welcoming to me at the dinner table until the third glass of wine — at which point English is out the door, and so am I.”

Fortunately, there’s no shortage of work to occupy him. There’s a third volume of *Gotham* on the way, which will pick up where *Greater Gotham* left off in 1919 and stretch to the end of WWII. “Fortunately, the logic [of the historical narrative] is pretty clear: ’20s boom, ’30s bust, ’40s war,” Wallace says. Each *Gotham* book is a titanic undertaking, and “nothing about this project happens quickly,” he says. The book won’t write itself, so Wallace has focused all of his energy on it, retreating almost completely from the crowded roster of events that defined him as a busy public intellectual in the early 2000s.

To the immense relief of anyone fearing another lengthy gap between books, he confirms that a not-insignificant chunk has already been written. Still: *Gotham* was published in 1998, when Wallace was 56; *Greater Gotham* was

published in 2017, when Wallace was 75. If the third volume required the same amount of time, it would be published in 2036, when Wallace would be 94.

There is no delicate way to ask the obvious question that hovers around the third book, so I’m a little surprised when Wallace himself brings it up with a matter-of-fact shrug. “On this one, I’m under the time pressure of death,” he says. “But I’ve always felt that.”

And so, barring that final and unwelcome stopping point, the work continues. In New York or Mexico City, Wallace wakes up, sits down at his desk, and diligently goes back to assembling his surpassingly comprehensive history of the greatest city in the world. In fact, this very conversation is an unusual break from his routine. “You’re the only person that I’ve done an interview with. My rule is: I don’t deviate from the historical work for anything,” he says, pausing thoughtfully. “But this *is* the historical work.”

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**Scott Meslow** is a writer, editor and critic for publications including *GQ*, *Vulture*, *POLITICO Magazine*, *The Atlantic* and *The Week*. His first book, *From Hollywood With Love — an oral and visual history of Hollywood romantic comedies in the ’80s and ’90s, and the genre’s resurgence in the streaming era* — will be published in early 2022. He lives in Los Angeles.





The background of the entire page is a photograph of a museum exhibit. It shows a large, white, cylindrical telescope structure. In the foreground, there is a dark metal railing. Above the railing, a horizontal display panel is mounted, featuring several small, rectangular images of celestial objects, including what appears to be a red and white planet, a blue and white planet, and a white and black planet. Above the display panel, two large, spherical objects are suspended by thin wires: a blue one with a white spot and a red one with a white spot. The overall lighting is dim, with the exhibit area being the primary source of light.

# STAR SEARCH

Astrophysicist  
Rebecca Oppenheimer '94  
studies some of the  
oddest objects  
in the universe

By Matthew Hutson

**R**ebeca Oppenheimer '94 is a degenerate. She will happily tell you this. Despite her position as the astrophysics curator at the American Museum of Natural History, a staid institution inhabiting New York City for a century and a half, she peppers her speech with profanity, plays pranks on research collaborators, resists the call of “big science” in order to work on more intimate projects that often involve hand-building new instruments, and has gilded at least one astronomy lecture with slides of kindred spirits Charles Bukowski and Hunter S. Thompson.

She also studies some of the oddest objects in the universe — celestial bodies governed by what is known, incidentally, as degeneracy pressure. These include brown dwarfs — bigger than planets but smaller than stars — which she and her collaborators were the first to discover, just months after she graduated from Columbia. “I’ve worked on degenerates for most of my life,” she said at the Bukowski lecture. “It’s nice to be able to work on something you love.”



The 200-inch Hale Telescope dome, at Palomar Observatory.

Oppenheimer’s focus for the past four years has been PARVI (PALomar Radial Velocity Instrument), an instrument used with Palomar Observatory’s 200-inch Hale Telescope, in the mountains above San Diego. PARVI is a spectrograph, which measures the frequencies of light emitted by a star. Slight changes in these frequencies can mean the star is wobbling, creating a Doppler effect, the way a siren sounds different depending on whether an ambulance is approaching or receding. Such a wobble might indicate the periodic pull of an orbiting planet. What’s more, if starlight filters through the atmosphere of a passing planet, that leaves further fingerprints on the signal, possibly allowing astronomers to analyze the composition of the planet’s atmosphere.

While many instruments are the size of a bus, PARVI is only a couple of feet across, connected to the telescope by a long fiber optic cable. “It’s a bunch of new technologies tested out in this tiny little machine to see if they’ll all work,” says Oppenheimer’s current graduate student, Rose Gibson GSAS’22. “If we can show that this really compact structure can measure these insanely tiny signals, that would mean a lot for new instrument design.”

It could also mean the ability to detect one of astronomy’s holy grails: an Earthlike planet around a Sunlike star. In other words, a potential home to life outside our solar system.

**OPPENHEIMER GREW UP** on the Upper West Side, less than a mile from Columbia. She was interested in how things worked and read books about science, including one by astronomer Patrick Moore that told the folklore behind various stars. By 12, she’d saved enough to buy her own telescope and would camp out near her grandfather’s house on eastern Long Island to observe the night sky. In high school she worked at the Goddard Institute of Space Studies and modeled river flow with computers.

She attended the College partially out of a reluctance to leave the city she loved, though told her parents to pretend she was much farther away, and they happily obliged. (Classmates may remember her as Ben; she came out as transgender in 2014, though she’d always known who she was.) Oppenheimer loved her time at Columbia. “The professors that I got tied into were just wonderful,” she says. “The one who helped me the most is David Helfand, my undergrad advisor.” Helfand, a giant in the field, is also a past president of the American Astronomical Society and was longtime chairman of Columbia’s Department of Astronomy. Together they examined satellite data, identifying clusters of galaxies. They also spent a week at an observatory in Arizona identifying sources of X-ray radiation. The two still meet up regularly for beers, Helfand says, to talk shop or gossip about “astropolitics.”

Oppenheimer spent summers working at Goddard or visiting large telescopes in New Mexico and Puerto Rico. Outside her physics major, she took classes in architecture and theater, having designed sets in high school. She admits astronomy and theater are not the most practical of pursuits. “What I do is not very useful,” she reckons, “but I think some of the most useless things that people do are some of the most important, actually.”

**WHEN YOU THINK OF** a large celestial body, you likely imagine a star, like the Sun, or a planet, like Earth (or a galaxy, like the Milky Way, comprising billions of stars and planets). But there’s also a middle ground: brown dwarfs. These gas giants are 13–75 times the mass of Jupiter, but not big enough for gravitational pressure to initiate nuclear fusion and render them a star. What keeps them from collapsing further is degeneracy pressure, a result of quantum mechanics that prevents electrons with the same energy state from occupying the same region of space. Brown dwarfs had been theorized but, like exoplanets — planets





**ABOVE:** The Hale Telescope dome sits open to the sky before a night of observing.

**LOWER LEFT:** Oppenheimer and her team first saw a brown dwarf in the glare of a brighter star (image at left), then confirmed it via a second photo taken a year later.

outside our solar system — for years they made their presence known only on chalkboards and in science fiction. Some doubted their existence.

After college, Oppenheimer went to the California Institute of Technology for a Ph.D. in astrophysics, working with astronomer Shrinivas Kulkarni, whom she'd met when he gave a lecture at Columbia. Kulkarni's lab was working with a new instrument, developed at Johns Hopkins, called the Adaptive Optics Coronagraph. The AOC had recently been installed on a 60-inch telescope at Palomar. Kulkarni hoped to use it to spot dim objects orbiting nearby stars. When he met Oppenheimer, he recalls, "I said there's always a hope we'll find a brown dwarf. But there's no guarantee." She joined the team in September 1994, and one night the very next month at the observatory, she and a postdoc, David Golimowski, noticed a faint smudge next to the star Gliese 229, about 19 light years away. They saw it again the next night.

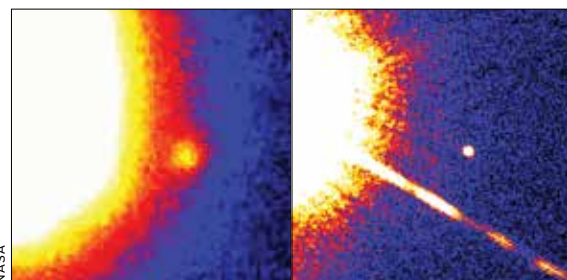
"We were like, 'Holy shit, this is really amazing,'" Oppenheimer says. The object was very red, similar to

what one would expect for a brown dwarf. (Brown dwarfs were named before their color was known, brown being sort of a non-color.) She excitedly wrote calculations in an absent collaborator's tidy notebook, amended with "Sorry for this mess, Tadashi. — Ben." Oppenheimer wanted to publish, but Kulkarni enforced temperance. It could have been merely another star behind the first star, so they waited a year to look again and see if it moved across the sky along with Gliese 229.

It did. And this time they used Palomar's 200-inch telescope, which had an infrared camera. "It was just so dramatically unlike a star, there was no question that this was some kind of new beast," Oppenheimer says. It was glowing — heat from compressed gas — with frequencies suggesting its atmosphere contained methane, which stars are too hot to contain. The team published papers in *Science* and *Nature* a couple months later and made the front page of *The New York Times*.

Oppenheimer has continued to study brown dwarfs, which have the interesting property of remaining about the same size no matter their mass, and white dwarfs, dense stars that are actually smaller the more massive they are. "I like to try to find the wacky stuff," she says. "That's my passion. And so that's partly why I work on instrumentation. It's only with new capabilities that you're going to find something that nobody has ever seen before."

**OVER ZOOM,** Oppenheimer led me on a tour of her optics lab, next to the Hayden Planetarium at the AMNH. She pointed out work tables scattered with lasers and lenses and mirrors and tools, and racks of computers and



NASA

hard drives. Nothing is being built at the moment, but normally she'd have to don a white bodysuit to keep everything pristine. She's written that the precision required in her work is equivalent to photographing the entire Empire State Building and pointing, in the photo, to a bump on the pavement and saying it's exactly 4.43 millionths of a meter tall. "She's really innovative when it comes to working on instrument design," her graduate student, Gibson, says, "and seeing what kinds of weird things you can put together to create some totally bizarre instrument nobody else would have thought of." (Oppenheimer also builds things for fun. In her office is a model of an F-14 fighter jet — the kind from *Top Gun* — and she's working on a customized model of the *HMS Beagle*, the survey vessel known for carrying Darwin to the Galápagos and, she says, "the first thoroughly scientific ship ever built.")

"I like the kind of science I do," Oppenheimer says. "I see it as more of a classical science in the sense that you go from an idea or a question, and then you have to figure out, 'Well, how do I make this measurement?' So I build an instrument that can do it. That takes quite a long time, then I take it out into the field and use it." Astronomy is headed toward larger and larger telescopes and collaborations, but Oppenheimer remains a holdout.

"I kind of prefer the smaller projects," she says. "It's the small ones where you can make your own decisions. You don't have to go through a huge committee and write reams of reports in order to change one screw from metric to English, you know? My style, you just drill a hole and put the screw in. Even if in the middle of the night at the observatory there's a problem, you just go downstairs to the machine shop and fix it."

Unfortunately, Oppenheimer's hands are currently left with little to do. After only six nights of use, PARVI

had to lie dormant. Palomar is shut down due to social distancing restrictions in the face of the pandemic. "It's heartbreaking," Oppenheimer says. "This is a big part of my student's thesis. And we've got about 10, 15 people involved in this project. We just have to sit and wait."

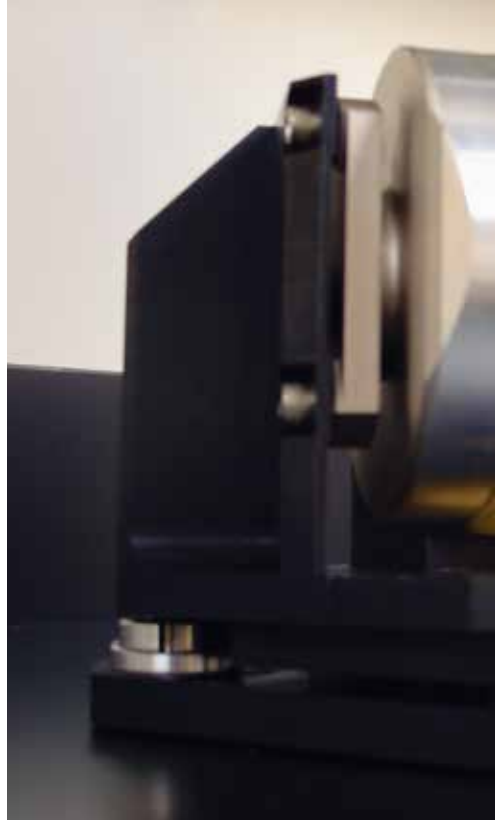
**JUST AS OPPENHEIMER** prefers deep involvement in small projects, she also prefers to advise only one graduate student at a time. "She's been very successful mentoring the students she's had from our department" — such as Gibson — Helfand says. "What makes people suc-

cessful as a mentor is sufficient sensitivity, which not all scientists have, to be able to recognize another human being there who's not the same as you. But also just the genuine love and enthusiasm for what you're doing."

Working with Oppenheimer is "a lot of fun," Gibson says. They spend a lot of time together outside of lab, driving to mountain observatories or collecting data, "so it really matters that our personalities get along," Gibson says. "And she's said multiple times there's no point in doing science if you're not having fun with it." Oppenheimer also loves the unique teaching opportunities offered by the museum. She curates exhibitions, like one on exoplanets called *Searching for New Worlds*, and creates space shows for the planetarium, like *Journey to the Stars*. "Part of what I love about this place is it's totally anti-elitist," she says. "We get five million people a year. And they're paying money to come and see

**RIGHT:** Gold-coated optics that were part of an imaging spectrograph.

**FAR RIGHT:** A look inside the PARVI spectrograph's vacuum chamber.

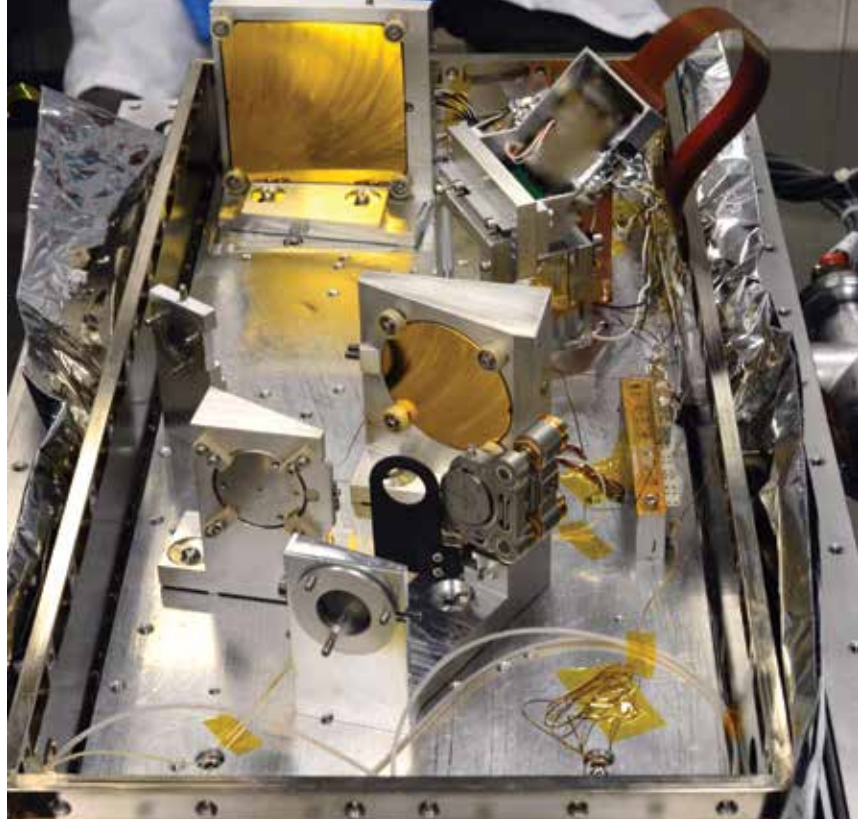
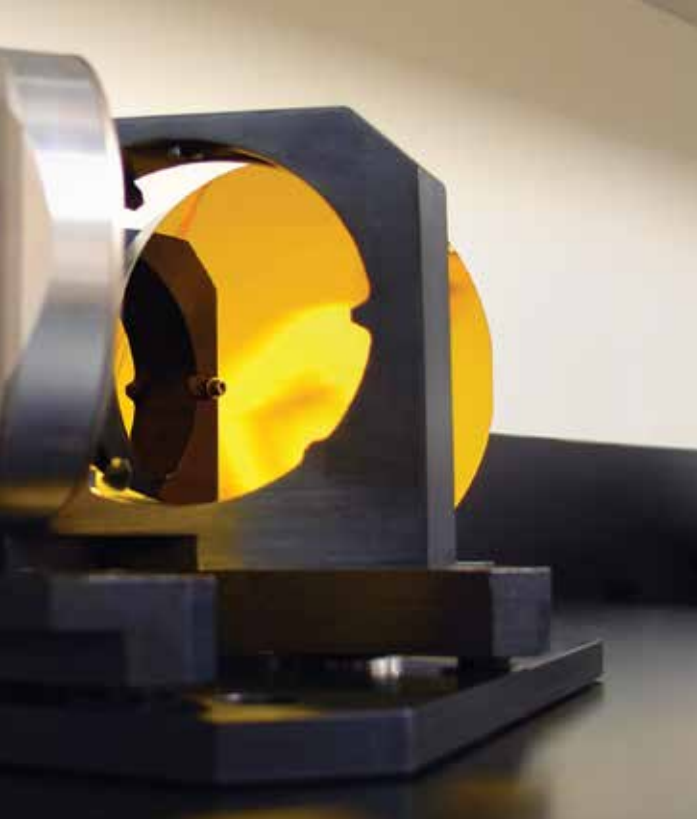


Oppenheimer with her teammates, the Palomar Mountain staff and project spokesdog Paco.



PHOTOS BY REBECCA OPPENHEIMER '94





all the science and stuff that we do. I think that's really fucking cool."

Gibson can vouch for Oppenheimer's inclusivity. "She's the kind of person who knows the names of all the security guards and custodians at AMNH and will stop and chat with them," Gibson says. "And I love that, because science can feel so isolating sometimes. She makes it an environment where it feels like everybody is a part of it."

"Her academic energy and productivity are a model for graduate students, postdocs and visiting scholars," says Neil deGrasse Tyson GSAS'92, the popular astrophysicist and director of the Hayden Planetarium. "I remember her as an undergraduate at Columbia, while I was there as a graduate student. Years later I was delighted to see her career launch, and have her return to NYC when we hired her."

Oppenheimer's coming out as transgender may also have made astrophysics more welcoming to some people. "I think that makes a lot of people feel more comfortable being themselves in the field," she says. She calls the decision "terrifying," but she couldn't keep up the act anymore. Most, but not all, colleagues have been supportive.

**EVERY YEAR**, Oppenheimer spends a month on a writing retreat, typically in the tropics because she loves hurricanes. This past October she had to settle for New Jersey, where she worked on a book that touches on the topic of labels. Without revealing much, she teases that it's a science book arguing that "planets don't exist," spiked with some "ridiculous anecdotes." Oppenheimer has written previously that classifications, whether of natural objects (planet) or people (Jew), can constrain our thinking about them. Soon after coming out as transgender, she defined the best practices of a scientist in *The New York Times*: "question who, where and what you are." The book may tackle some of that self-questioning on a

**"Her energy and productivity are a model for graduate students, postdocs and visiting scholars," says astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson.**

species level, engaging directly with philosophy: Where did the universe come from? What would it mean if life is widespread in the cosmos?

Helfand has long appreciated that expansive thinking in Oppenheimer. "Her research is very focused on highly sophisticated engineering solutions to problems of how you look at very faint things around very bright things," he says. "That kind of person, in our field at least, is often pretty blinkered. And she's just the opposite."

Eventually the pandemic will pass, and Oppenheimer will return to looking at the stars, and whatever else remains unknown and unlabeled. "The regions around stars are still so poorly understood," she says. "And it's so diverse, with different types of planets, brown dwarfs, comets, dust, whatever. These little points of light up in the sky are actually some of the most complex things that people ever look at. There's so much going on, not only inside each star, but also right around them. And I think that's really a fun thing to do. And to devote a large fraction of my life to. I certainly won't do this forever. But for now, it really is my passion."

**Matthew Hutson** is a freelance science writer in New York City who writes for *The New Yorker*, *Scientific American*, *Nature* and other publications. He's the author of *The 7 Laws of Magical Thinking*.

### The Truth Is Out There

Oppenheimer discusses "alien" life in this video short: [college.columbia.edu/cct](https://college.columbia.edu/cct).

How the experience of the  
Core will evolve for today's —  
and tomorrow's — students

# THE CORE CURRICULUM'S SECOND CENTURY

By Jill C. Shomer

**T**he Core Curriculum, the hallmark of a Columbia College education, entered its 101st year against a backdrop of acute, historic crises. 2020 saw striking echoes of the challenges that compelled the Core's founders to create the curriculum in the first place — as a means to impart to students an awareness of their place in the world, and to equip them with knowledge and habits of mind that are essential to responding to the complexities of their present moment.

But even as the Core's framework endures, it must evolve. How the curriculum could best respond to the moment was a vital question at the outset of this academic year, and its continued evolution will be an area of focus going forward. The Committee for the Second Century of the Core, made up of a diverse, multi-generational group of College leaders, alumni and students, was recently established; the group will convene regularly throughout the year to reflect on and reevaluate the Core's purpose and the experience it offers to each student, particularly for students of color, who may face systemic injustices in their everyday experiences. The ongoing dialogue is an effort to improve the College's articulation of the Core — helping students to better understand why they take it and how to approach it — and to determine how the curriculum can have the most meaningful impact on current and future Columbians.

Changes are already underway. Larry Jackson, the associate dean of Academic Affairs, Core Curriculum and Undergraduate Programs, spoke with *Columbia College Today* about the importance of the Core in difficult times, the collective effort he and Core faculty members have made to reframe the curriculum, and the goals of presenting a wider range of experiences and perspectives to the Core community.

**Columbia College Today: It's been a challenging year. Do you think the Core can be a force for recovery?**

**Larry Jackson:** When the Core was founded in 1919, the intention was to help students prepare to grapple with what the creators called “the insistent problems of the present.” At the time, this included the destructive fallout from WWI, sweeping political changes, a deadly flu pandemic, police and vigilante violence against African Americans, and an anti-immigrant sentiment that led to the arrest and deportation of thousands. The idea of the Core as a way of responding to the problems of the present is something that we continue to think is important; the curriculum has evolved over time in order to meet that original goal.

**CCT: And we're not only dealing with a pandemic and hate. How can we repair the breakdown of civil conversation in society?**

**Jackson:** One of the problems that we have today is we have lost the personal element that we once had in democratic life. As there's been a shift to social media and cable news, it's become a lot easier to vilify people who disagree with us. We don't talk





Inside the Core Curriculum library.



to them face to face; we deal with cartoon versions of them. So I think that one of the things we try to emphasize in the Core is that we're creating a personal space in which people face to face can grapple with ideas that they disagree with, ideas that might even offend them deeply.

I think the other side of that is recognizing the limits of civil conversation and trying to foster the empathy and the perspective that will help students understand those limits and what might drive people to those limits. Yes, we want to encourage civil conversation, but we also want to take seriously instances where people feel that they are past that. Something has happened, they have experienced violation, they have experienced something that has made their entry into civil conversation impossible. We want to encourage the empathy, the imagination, the perspective that will allow us to understand what drove people to that point.

**CCT: Is there a Core work or author you turn to during difficult times?**

**Jackson:** I go back quite a bit to Hannah Arendt; I find a lot of comfort and perspective in her work. I first read *On Revolution* five or six times over the course of a year. It's a strange work that combines history, politics and philosophy, and I just found it so amazing and inspiring. It was what made me want to study philosophy and get my Ph.D. I think Arendt's study of totalitarianism — which is on the CC syllabus now — is really penetrating if you want to understand the dangers of totalitarianism in any time or place; she provides a lot of insight. Arendt really was one of the most original thinkers of the 20th century. She makes my heart flutter.

**CCT: Why do you think it was important to adapt the Core Curriculum this year?**

**Jackson:** We are grappling with the problems of Covid-19, and we're seeing a nationwide reckoning with a long history

of anti-Black racism — problems that are similar to what students were facing in 1919 — so we continue to look to the Core as a way to be responsive. In particular, we looked at the syllabi for all five courses and tried to build bridges between the works already on the syllabus and some of our present-day issues. We are also introducing new works that we think will be especially effective.

**CCT: What new works or conversations are students engaging with?**

**Jackson:** I'm pleased to say that all five of the Core courses have added something. When Joanna Stalnaker, the chair of Literature Humanities, and I talked about what students should read during the summer, she suggested Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric* — it just seemed like it was absolutely the exact right text for the moment. [See “*Citizen Gets a Close Read*.”] The use of first- and second-person in Rankine's text very compellingly

## CITIZEN GETS A CLOSE READ

**LAST SUMMER**, after protests decrying anti-Black police violence rose up in all 50 states, first-year Lit Hum students got a new reading assignment: Claudia Rankine SOA'93's *Citizen: An American Lyric*.

*Citizen*, published in 2014, chronicles the experience of racial micro-aggressions in essay, image and poetry; Rankine's use of second person, the narrative of *you*, is an especially powerful reckoning. “*Citizen* confronts the incessant lived reality of anti-Black violence from a perspective that is both intimate and collective,” says Joanna Stalnaker, the Paul Brooke Program Chair for Literature Humanities. “It is a vital work for our time, and a vital work for Lit Hum.”

Rankine is the Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry at Yale, and the author of six poetry collections and three plays; she is also a video collaborator and anthology editor, and has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors. Rankine told *CCT* she created *Citizen* in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the abandonment of Black communities in New Orleans. “People kept saying to me, ‘How could this happen in the United States?’ And I thought, white people believe these moments are not possible and Black people see them as inevitable. So I decided to begin a project where I would connect the micro-aggressions to the macro-aggressions.

“With this book, [my concern] was how to make something that is so consistently present, and yet fleeting and invisible, concrete,” she says. “It was a question of creating through prose a transparency that held moments that would be recognized by all, either as the aggressor or the receiver of the aggression.”

*Citizen's* prose poems recount both verbal slights and intentional offenses. One longer essay considers the treatment of tennis superstar Serena Williams. A photograph of banal sunny suburbia grows teeth when you see the street sign reads “Jim Crow Road.” Most strikingly, there is a spread memorializing African Americans who have been killed by police, which gets added to with each printing. The 2020 edition read by fall term students includes the names of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, lending a bracing awareness of *Citizen* as a present, living document.

Rankine says she is honored to be included in the Core Curriculum, and that it's not something she anticipated. But she does assume, in the act of writing, that her work will need a close reading. “That to me is pedagogy,” she says. “And that it should end up in an institution where close reading is valued, perhaps does make sense.”

She continues: “Of course I also teach, and I believe in the beauty of language and the importance of literature to the lives of all of us, or else we wouldn't be in these institutions. I wouldn't have spent almost my entire life with a book in my hand. I have the greatest regard for literature and for the culture — I do think the culture is what makes us.”

— J.C.S.



Claudia Rankine SOA'93

The full Q&A with Claudia Rankine SOA'93 and her virtual AlumniTALK with Lit Hum students, faculty and alumni can be found at [college.columbia.edu/cct](http://college.columbia.edu/cct).



addresses the experience of African Americans. It's an extraordinary work.

For Contemporary Civilization, chair Emmanuelle Saada and I wanted to introduce a unit on race and justice; with the support of the CC faculty we added texts by David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King Jr., Angela Davis and James Baldwin.

In Music Humanities, there's already a unit on jazz, but chair Elaine Sisman and her colleagues have extended that to look at the ways in which African-American jazz musicians have been responsive to the question of anti-Black racism. They've included Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" and Charles Mingus's *Fables of Faubus*, works that were composed specifically in response to the racism in the Black Freedom movement.

Art Humanities was already undergoing a major overhaul of the syllabus — the first since the course was created in 1947. Chair Noam Elcott '00 and other faculty have introduced artists of color like Romare Bearden and Jean-Michel Basquiat, as well as introducing race as a subject, looking at the ways that people of color were being depicted in art. That was already happening but now they're trying to emphasize and elevate that a bit more in the teaching.

And finally, Frontiers of Science. Frontiers has four units that are constantly rotating and always include the most cutting-edge, relevant research. There were already faculty who were talking about the South Bronx having a higher rate of asthma than the rest of New York City, one of the highest in the country. So that was a good example for a conversation about environmental racism. Now they're elevating those kinds of topics; for example, when they talk about the ethics of scientific studies, they're going to look at the Tuskegee Experiment. They're going to incorporate anti-Black racism into their discussion of science.

**CCT: You mention that this is the first change for Art Hum since it was conceived — did the Core's founders expect the curriculum to evolve? How has change happened over the Core's history?**

**Jackson:** I always love to point out that the first nine years the Core existed — when it was just one course, Contemporary Civilization, from 1919 to 1928 — there were seven different syllabi. It went through seven revisions in one decade. These kinds of changes



Larry Jackson, associate dean of Academic Affairs, Core Curriculum and Undergraduate Programs.

have been ongoing throughout the Core. For a number of years now, Lit Hum and CC have undergone a review every three years. Some significant changes occurred after women were accepted to the College in the early 1980s: Jane Austen was added to the Lit Hum syllabus, then Virginia Woolf and Toni Morrison. In 1995, CC added the Quran, and Islamic philosophers were also added to the syllabus. The triennial review was not taking place in Art Hum — there have been some revisions since 1947, but this is the first major overhaul. Music Humanities is now also being revised every three years; that's a fairly new development. And again, Frontiers of Science rotates its units every year to teach the most relevant research possible.

Those are the bigger changes, but within those frameworks there's been flexibility for instructors to add texts and to make decisions on their own about what they're including. The changes we've made this year are very much consistent with that, where we saw openings in the syllabi where we could introduce new texts. Lit Hum and CC will undergo their syllabi review this year, and we'll see what comes out of that. The reviews will take place in the spring term, and the faculty chairs are already working to make the process as inclusive, coordinated and transparent as

possible. There is also great interest in the perspectives that the Committee for the Second Century of the Core will provide.

**CCT: What kind of outcomes do you hope to see regarding the changes to the Core?**

**Jackson:** First and foremost, we want the Core community to be inclusive and diverse. It's incredibly important that the Core present a range of experiences and identities — nobody should go into a Core classroom and feel like this is an experience they can't have access to.

We can never represent all the diversity and richness of the human experience on a single syllabus, but we want to present as broad a range of experiences and perspectives as we can. We think that's the best way for students to be able to find themselves in these works, it's the best way for students to be able to grow and it's the best way for students to prepare for the world they're going to be going into when they graduate. We're updating and adding to the Core partly because we want students to feel like they're part of this community — we don't want anyone to feel shut out, we don't want anyone to feel like they don't belong — but also because these are really important texts that are going to prepare students for an uncertain world.

A photograph of a dark green door with a silver mail slot and a red wooden bench against a white wall. The door is on the left, and the bench is on the right. The wall is white and textured. The floor is concrete.

# THE KITCHEN MAGICIAN

Greg Rales '12 is mixing up  
“**big, maximalist**” flavors  
at Red Gate Bakery





**RED GATE**  
BAKERY

**RED GATE BAKERY**

RED GATE BAKERY  
NO WASH, NO SERVICE  
EAT & TIME PLEASE

DAY	CLOSED
MON	CLOSED
TUES	11-6
WED	11-6
THU	11-6
FRI	11-6
SAT	11-6

JUSTICE  
FOR  
BREONNA  
1 WEEK  
LEFT  
VOTE

Stepping down into the narrow entryway of the East Village's Red Gate Bakery on a rainy, late October day, I'm immediately hit by the scents of warm sugar, toasted spices and melted chocolate. The tiny space is inviting, cozy — the perfect panacea to the grey drizzle outside. I'm greeted by owner and baker Greg Rales '12 (with his 12-year-old Goldendoodle, Stella, by his side), his plaid button-down's sleeves rolled up to reveal the Red Gate logo tattooed on his arm. The self-taught baker took a circuitous path to opening his own store, and despite being a new business owner operating during a tumultuous year no one could have predicted, he is savoring his luck that he gets to do what he loves every day.

Rales has a lifelong love of crafting crazy concoctions. "I was kind of obsessed with magic as a kid," he says, "and I found my own form of magic in our spice cabinet at home. I loved mixing and creating new things — and bless my mother's palate, she would taste them!"

He taught himself how to bake by watching culinary shows on PBS and The Food Network and learning family recipes, and discovered that the kitchen was a place where he could keep magic in his everyday life: "I realized I could take all these disparate ingredients, like flour, sugar, butter — things that taste pretty gross on their own — and create something entirely new and different," he says. "It sounds trite, but it's the aspect of magic in my job that always astounds me."

**RALES AND HIS FOUNDING** business partner, Patricia Howard '13, opened Red Gate in December 2019, and it immediately garnered attention and rave reviews. New York City media like Gothamist and Grub Street fawned over its creative takes on cookies, cakes and other baked goods. "We're all about American classics

with the volume turned up," Rales says. "The things you baked with your grandma when you were a kid, desserts that are very accessible and familiar, but with one or two things that are turned on their head."

Rales and Howard met at Reid Hall in Paris, where they connected over their love of food (Howard jokes they "bonded over eating too many macarons"), and kept up that friendship once back on campus; both majored in creative writing.

After graduation, Rales began a master's at the School of the Arts, but jumped ship soon after he started the program when he received a job offer with the AMC network, in a new department focused on international co-production of television shows. At AMC, his penchant for bringing in homemade treats earned him a reputation as the office baker and, after three years, he realized he was more interested in baking than producing television. ("Little did my coworkers know I was testing recipes on them!" he laughs.) Rales started a catering company, then took jobs at local bakeries to learn the daily grind of a professional baker. He says that his approach was "start from the bottom, baby!" using his experience as "essentially a line cook" to prepare himself for the reality of someday running his own shop.

Meanwhile, Howard was moving up in the NYC foodie world, working as an executive assistant and later operations associate for the hip West Village restaurant The Beatrice Inn. In late 2018, Rales and Howard realized they were both in the right place to launch a business together. They originally planned to cook off-site and stage a series of pop-ups around the city, but in a touch of kismet, Rales walked by the current Red Gate location at 68 1st St. and noticed a "For Lease" sign; the pop-up idea quickly morphed into a brick-and-mortar reality. "I got the keys on my birthday, September 10, which was a lovely 30th birthday present," he says.







**RALES AND HOWARD** built Red Gate with inspiration from Scandinavian, Japanese and New England design aesthetics. Sitting in the space (the former home of Tuck Shop, an Australian meat pie restaurant) with Rales, it's easy to feel the homey vibe the duo created; wooden pegboards line the crisp white walls, with antique canisters displayed on shelves and baking tools hanging on hooks. "One thing that sets Greg apart is how he sticks to his guns," Howard says. "He knew he wanted a light, airy room, and he transformed this little meat pie shop into the bakery of his dreams."

Rales tells me he named Red Gate after a defunct Nantucket potato farm that his parents bought in the '90s, where he spent childhood summers. "It's where I have my fondest childhood memories, where I have all those feelings of safety, warmth and nostalgia that I wanted to create inside in this bakery," he says. In front of the farm is, unsurprisingly, a big, uniquely shaped red gate. Rales used it as a motif throughout the bakery, in its logo, in the striking red bench that sits outside and in a framed photograph of the farm's gate in the kitchen, gifted to Rales by his sister during the bakery's opening week. He says he turns to the

photo when he's stressed — it "serves as a nice escape when I'm having a tougher moment."

More than a few of those tough moments came sooner than anticipated; Red Gate was only a few months old when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. As the virus swept through the city, Rales closed the doors for a month while he planned how to reopen safely. Fortunately, the space had always been designed for

**"We're all about American classics with the volume TURNED UP."**

take-away — the ordering area is only 9 ft. by 9 ft. and there's no interior seating — so it didn't take Rales long to implement scheduled pickups and socially distanced lines. "We have an incredible customer base that came out to support us in full force the moment we were back, which I'm infinitely grateful for," he says. "We were able to churn out cookies and make people happy during a time when there wasn't a lot of stability."



And what about those cookies? The creatively named treats call out to customers from a giant glass case. The Cannibal features house-made Oreos that are crushed and mixed into a plush brown-sugar cookie; the Choco-Toffee is a fresh take on chocolate-chip, made with brown butter and toffee bits, topped with flaky sea salt; the Kitchen Sinker features oats, chocolate, coconut and, for a salty twist, potato chips. “I like to mess around with big, maximalist flavors,” Rales tells me. “Sometimes they gel, and sometimes they don’t!” He uses his toasted coconut banana bacon cake as an example: “It’s a Frankenstein cake, a mishmash of my grandmother’s carrot cake and my mother’s banana bread and me making brunch one time and using bacon cream cheese frosting — it’s all these crazy things put together to create something delicious.”

After getting Red Gate off the ground, Howard left the bakery last spring to open her own restaurant, Dame, for which Rales was a pop-up contributing chef. Asked why she enjoys working with him, Howard says, “He’s not about the Instagram bait or the trends that are happening in the sugar world. He’s always prioritizing what’s going to taste the best and make you want to have seconds.”

A photographer had been shadowing us for the afternoon, and as we waited for him to pack his equipment, Rales decided to demonstrate his “baking as magic” ethos. He grabbed some Choco-Toffee dough and popped it in the oven; the room soon filled with the delicious smell of warm chocolate. He pulled them out as we were leaving, and the photographer and I walked out with irresistibly fresh treats in our hands. I’d planned to eat half and bring the rest home, but by the time I walked the 300 ft. across Houston Street, the whole cookie had disappeared — just like magic.

## One Smart Cookie

Rales gives us a taste of the Red Gate life in this video short: [college.columbia.edu/cct/latest/feature-extra/redgate](https://college.columbia.edu/cct/latest/feature-extra/redgate).



## Portrait of a Nation

Master essayist Phillip Lopate '64 cast a wide editorial net to tell America's stories

**P**hillip Lopate '64 is an undisputed master of the personal essay. Recent Nobel Prize winner Louise Glück calls him “one of the most brilliant and original essayists now working.” But Lopate’s successes as an editor are just as notable — his definitive anthology, *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present* (1994), sold a quarter of a million copies and was adopted in English composition

and literature courses “pretty much everywhere,” Lopate tells *CCT*.

Now he’s back with another ambitious collection, *The Glorious American Essay: One Hundred Essays from Colonial Times to the Present* (Pantheon, \$40), a spectacular showcase for his favorite form of prose.

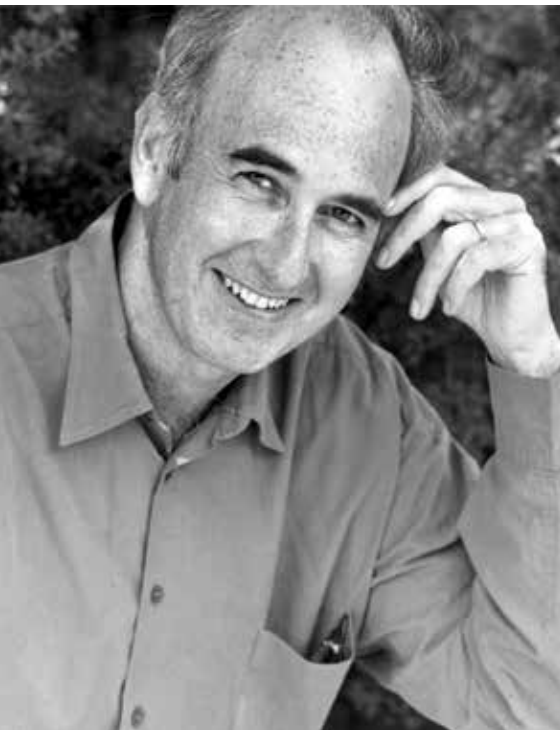
A survey of Lopate’s relationship with essays dates to 1977. He was writing fiction and poetry when a book by the Romantic William Hazlitt caught his eye from the shelf of a summer house. What he found in its pages genuinely thrilled him: “I fell in love with the essay form,” he says. At that time, essays were seen as uncommercial (Lopate points out that, historically, their value has waxed and waned), but as he started to write them himself he experienced a new sense of control and power. “I could take that ‘Phillip Lopate’ character and make him do anything.”

Lopate reflected on this creative discovery in his moving 2010 essay, “The Poetry Years”: “I found in the personal essay a wonderful plasticity, which combined the storytelling aspects of fiction with the lyrical, associative qualities of poetry.” As he found his authorial voice, he began to publish a series of appealingly

original collections, among them the acclaimed *Bachelorhood: Tales of the Metropolis* (1981) and *Against Joie de Vivre: Personal Essays* (1989). Lopate’s wry and subtle vignettes from city life alternate urbane intellectualism with an earthy, gloves-off Brooklyn honesty.

In addition to publishing books in all genres and teaching everywhere from Hofstra to the University of Houston (he is currently a professor of nonfiction writing at Columbia’s School of the Arts), Lopate edited well-received anthologies. In 2015, after compiling two Library of America collections on New York and movie criticism, he got the idea to do “a big book” featuring essays on the history and character of America.

He envisioned *The Glorious American Essay* as a “big tent” book, perhaps to mirror the inclusive character of the nation it was meant to define. Lopate cast a wide editorial net, including speeches (George Washington, Martin Luther King Jr. and others), letters (Frederick Douglass), sermons (Jonathan Edwards) and papers (Jane Addams), as well as more conventional essays (Elizabeth Hardwick and Vivian Gornick). He also ventured beyond the realm of literature. “Every discipline



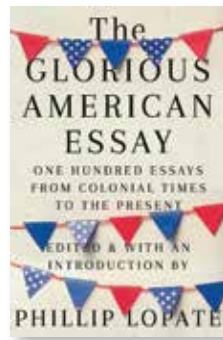
LAURE-ANNE BOSSELAAR

has exceptionally gifted writers,” Lopate proclaims in the introduction, excerpted here, explaining his inclusion of texts by scientist Lewis Thomas, theologian Paul Tillich and philosopher John Dewey. “I wanted to shake up the idea of what an essay was,” he says.

What unifies Lopate’s diverse selections is his unwavering focus on his theme. As the 100 essays travel forward in time, from Puritan preacher Cotton Mather to British novelist Zadie Smith, they provide glimpses of a nation in transition, always struggling to achieve or redefine the ideal society envisioned by its founders. In “The Twilight of Self-Reliance,” writer Wallace Stegner calls this ongoing labor “the greatest opportunity since the Creation — the chance to remake men and their society into something cleansed of past mistakes;” novelist Jamaica Kincaid, in “In History,” calls the New World a land with “the blankness of paradise.” Eloquent texts from different American eras “converse” with each other, Lopate points out, sounding and resounding the same themes with different emphases, rhyming without repeating as history is said to do.

His mosaic portrait of the nation was published the same month as the tumultuous 2020 presidential election, which Lopate thinks makes the essays “stunningly relevant.” “One thing [the book] clarifies is the notion of the American experiment, with its ideals of democracy, equality and a more perfect union,” he says. “The fact that these ideals have not yet been fully achieved, have even been betrayed at times, means we all have much work to do.”

— Rose Kernochan BC’82



## Introduction

The essay is a literary form dating back to ancient times, with a long and glorious history. As the record *par excellence* of a mind tracking its thoughts, it can be considered the intellectual bellwether of any modern society. The great promise of essays is the freedom they offer to explore, digress, acknowledge uncertainty; to evade dogmatism and embrace ambivalence and contradiction; to engage in intimate conversation with one’s readers and literary forebears; and to uncover some unexpected truth, preferably via a sparkling literary style. Flexible, shape-shifting, experimental, as befits its name derived from the French (*essai* = “attempt”), it is nothing if not versatile.

In the United States, the essay has had a particularly illustrious if underexamined career. In fact, it is possible to see the dual histories of the country and the literary form as running on parallel tracks, the essay mulling current issues and thereby reflecting the story of the United States in each succeeding period. And just as American democracy has been an ongoing experiment, with no guarantees of perfection, so has the essay been, as William Dean Howells argued, an innately democratic form inviting all comers to say their piece, however imperfectly.

The Puritans, some of our earliest settlers, chose the essay over fiction and poetry as their preferred mode of expression. In both sermons and texts explicitly labeled “essays,” men like Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards articulated their religious and ethical values. Many later American commentators would take them to task for being sexually prudish, intolerant, and repressive. H. L. Mencken, in a scathing extended essay entitled “Puritanism as a Literary Force,” blamed that heritage for holding back American literature by overstressing behavioral proprieties while understressing aesthetics. Edmund Wilson wittily noted that Mencken himself was something of a Puritan. The bohemian wing of American literature, from Walt Whitman to the present, has engaged in protracted guerrilla warfare with Puritanism and offered itself as an alternative. On the other hand, Marilynne Robinson defends the Puritans from what she regards as a caricature of their positions. Say what you will about their rigid morality: these Puritan thinkers were highly learned, with sophisticated prose styles, and we are fortunate in having them set so high an intellectual standard for later American essayists to follow.

Skip ahead to the Founding Fathers, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Paine, all of whom seem to have been superb writers. In their treatises, pamphlets, speeches, letters, and broadsides, they tested their tentative views on politics and governance, hoping to move from conviction to certainty. Theirs was a self-conscious rhetoric influenced by the French Enlightenment authors and the orators of ancient Greece and Rome, as well as the polished eighteenth-century nonfiction prose writers of their opponent, Great Britain.

In the decades following independence, United States authors labored to free themselves from subservience to English parental literary influence and to establish a national culture that would sound somehow unmistakably American. Washington Irving, perhaps the first freelance American author to support himself by his pen, was ridiculed by British critics such as William Hazlitt for imitating the English periodical essayists. He, in turn, wrote an essay entitled “English Writers in America,” which began: “It is with feelings of deep regret that I observe the literary



animosity daily growing up between England and America.” He went on to analyze the condescending travel accounts of English authors in America, which were then all the rage in Great Britain: “That such men should give prejudiced accounts of America is not a matter of surprise. The themes it offers for contemplation are too vast and elevated for their capacities. The national character is yet in a state of fermentation: it may have its frothings and sediment, but its ingredients are sound and wholesome; it has already given proofs of powerful and generous qualities, and the whole promises to settle down into something substantially excellent.” Edgar Allan Poe bristled at the canard that Americans were too materialistic and engineering-minded to produce literature: “Our necessities have been mistaken for our propensities. Having been forced to make railroads, it has been deemed impossible that we should make verse .... But this is the purest insanity. The principles of the poetic sentiment lie deep within the immortal nature of man, and have little necessary reference to the worldly circumstances which surround him ... nor can any social, or political, or moral, or physical conditions do more than momentarily repress the impulses which glow in our own bosoms as fervently as in those of our progenitors.”

But it was Ralph Waldo Emerson, our greatest nineteenth-century essayist, who sounded the alarm most famously in his speech “The American Scholar.” Acknowledging that up to then the Americans were “a people too busy to give to letters more,” he nevertheless prophesied that the time was coming “when the sluggish intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids, and fill the postponed expectations of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions, that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests.” He concluded by saying: “We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe .... We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak with our own minds.” It’s worthwhile remembering that this author who called for independence from foreign culture was probably the best-read person of his time and had imbibed not only most of British, French, and German literature but Eastern religious classics as well.

Emerson developed a kind of essay that was quirky, densely complex, speculative, digressive, and epigrammatic. He was part of that extraordinary flowering of literary culture in the mid-nineteenth century, the so-called American Renaissance, which included Nathaniel Hawthorne, Poe, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Whitman, Margaret Fuller, and Emily Dickinson. By the time it had run its course, there was no longer any doubt that America had itself a national culture. But there was more at stake than just the development of literary talent. The nation was facing enormous political and moral challenges from the twin oppressions of blacks and women. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which called for runaway slaves to be captured by northerners and returned as property to their southern slave owners, converted many of these writers to the abolitionist cause. Some of the most eloquent essays attacking slavery were penned by African Americans, such as Frederick Douglass and Martin R. Delany. They engendered an essayistic discourse on race that would be taken up by a distinguished lineage of black authors, including W. E. B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, Alain Locke, Ralph Ellison, and James Baldwin, continuing into our present day.

Meanwhile, women of the nineteenth century, still denied the vote and other rights, were barred from many professions, patronized, physically abused, and oppressed. It is remarkable how far back in America feminist voices were heard, from Judith Sargent Murray’s 1790 “On the Equality of the Sexes” to Margaret Fuller to Sarah Moore Grimké and Fanny Fern, reaching a high point in the suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s great essay, “The Solitude of Self,” and sweeping forward to the twentieth century. The essay, once considered a male province, has been nourished by the mental toughness and emotional honesty of so many bold, brilliant women in the last hundred years: think of Mary McCarthy, Hannah Arendt, Elizabeth Hardwick, Susan Sontag, Adrienne Rich, Joan Didion, Cynthia Ozick, Zadie Smith ....

Many of the essays chosen for this anthology address themselves specifically — sometimes lovingly, sometimes critically — to American values. (See, for instance, the pieces by George Santayana, Mary McCarthy, and Wallace Stegner, each taking America’s temperature.) But even those that do not do so have a secondary, if inadvertent, subtext about being American. E. B. White was an influential example of an essayist who conveyed, in a down-to-earth American tone, the average citizen’s preoccupations at home, while remaining aware of the larger challenges facing society.

In a United States where various groups have felt marginalized because of their ethnicity, national origin, gender, geographical location, or disability, members of these groups have increasingly turned to the essay as a means of asserting identity (or complicating it). Gerald Early, in his anthology *Speech and Power*, wrote: “Since black writing came of age in this country in the 1920s, the essay seems to be the informing genre behind it .... It is not surprising that many black writers have been attracted to the essay as a literary form since the essay is the most exploitable mode of the confession and the polemic, the two variants of the essay that black writers have mostly used.” The same could be said for other minority groups in American society, who have benefited the essay form immeasurably by adapting it to their purposes, enriching the American language with their dialect-flavored speech. They have contributed to the “cultural unity within diversity” ideal that Ralph Ellison envisioned for this country. At the same time, the American essay has taken a turn toward greater autobiographical frankness, thanks in part to their efforts.

Another skein of essay writing, of unarguable importance now that the planet finds itself endangered by climate change, is nature writing. In America, that tradition goes back at least as far as J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and extends to John James Audubon, Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Mary Austin, John Burroughs, Edward Abbey, Rachel Carson, and Annie Dillard, among others. We see in it an attempt to balance the factual and descriptive elements of flora and fauna with a fresh emotional access to wonder and awe. However alarmed these essayists may sound in their warnings of the threats to nature, there is still looming underneath an appeal to the original myth of America as the New World, a second Garden of Eden where humankind could finally get it right.

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# Calling all writers!

CCT is holding its first-ever personal essay contest!

The theme is **METAMORPHOSIS**.

Enter for your chance to win a \$500 prize and publication  
in our Spring/Summer 2021 issue.

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## JUDGES

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**Robert Kolker '91**,  
author of *Hidden Valley Road: Inside the Mind of an American Family*, a New York Times bestseller



**Helena Andrews-Dyer '02**, a  
*Washington Post* reporter and author of *Reclaiming Her Time: The Power of Maxine Waters*



**Miya Matsumoto Lee '18**, editor of Modern Love Projects at *The New York Times*

Submission deadline is **Monday, March 8, 2021**;  
for topic guidelines and other info,  
go to [college.columbia.edu/cct/essaycontest](https://college.columbia.edu/cct/essaycontest).





JILL SHOMER

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Take your best shot at captioning this cartoon  
by Dr. Benjamin Schwartz '03, PS'08.

## A SOCIALLY DISTANCED SEASON

Students, faculty and neighborhood residents enjoyed the fall while maintaining a safe separation, as the Columbia community continued to adjust to the changes brought on by Covid-19. For the few on campus, the elevated walkway and greenspace above Amsterdam Avenue became a socially distanced study spot.

# “Here Is New York” — and We Will Prevail

By Ted Schweitzer '91, LAW'94

Although the election is behind us, we still battle a virus and a troubled economy, in the context of a nation that's divided in more ways than one. On occasion, I turn to comedy — specifically the Saturday morning cartoon variety of my youth — to put a spring back into my step. Bugs Bunny had the uncanny ability to prevail despite any obstacle. I think of his animated brilliance: As a plank beneath him is severed, he stands suspended in midair and declares, “I know this defies the law of gravity but, you see, I never studied law!”

When I'm not being nostalgic about 1970s cartoons, I turn to my community for support; I enjoy keeping up with friends and fellow alumni in our now socially distant world. I am in awe of Columbia College alumni — bright, articulate, passionate and accomplished people who strive to make a difference in the world. Their leadership spans every conceivable field: sports, science, law, literature, theater, technology, medicine, media, business, religion, academia, the arts and many others.

As many of us seek new ways to connect, I encourage you to engage further with the College. Attend an online AlumniTALK about equity, humanity and social justice. Join the Odyssey Mentoring Program. Interview applicants through the Alumni Representative Committee. Wherever you live, Morningside Heights has never been as accessible as it is now in the virtual world.

Many of you know one of Dean James J. Valentini's favorite refrains — that we are “the greatest college in the greatest university in the greatest city in the world.” I want to spend a moment

reflecting on New York City. And make no mistake; since 1754, Columbia (and by extension its alumni) has been inextricably tied to this great metropolis. The global matrix has been hard hit by the pandemic and recession. Numerous articles highlight ways in which life in the city has become more difficult. Many of its traditional strengths, like density and reliance on public transit, have morphed into vulnerabilities.

To put my mind at ease, I look back to history. New York City has experienced a sustained and inexorable upward trajectory, albeit not on a straight line. The qualities that brought NYC success — grit, hard work, creativity and ambition — will certainly help it again to withstand the current challenges. The metropolis still attracts the best and brightest from all over the globe. Just like Columbia, NYC has one of the most diverse populations in the country. I believe it will confront its problems, reinvent where necessary and undergo a renaissance that will lift it to even greater heights. Some would say this process has already begun.

The College reflects the indomitable spirit of the city, as exemplified by many of its professors. I can't forget Jim Shenton '49, GSAS'54's passion for history. And what about Ken Jackson? He still squires undergrads around NYC at night (although his famous bike tour is now by bus)! Andrew Dolkart has written definitive historical accounts of architecture throughout NYC, and regularly shares his knowledge outside the classroom on walking tours. We lived and studied in the masterpiece of McKim, Mead & White. As students, some of us had the same commute that Walt Whitman had for so many years, between Brooklyn and Manhattan.

Of course, our connection is not limited to architecture, urban planning and history. We have myriad other connections — to writers and thinkers, for example, not to mention the worlds of arts and finance — all of which thrive in NYC.

New Yorkers are hardy folk, and in these tough times we dig deep to take care of ourselves and one another. The same can be said of the College's remarkable alumni, even if their tenure in the city was limited to four years — or a few more, if they, like I, stayed on for graduate school. The great essayist E.B. White was also a quintessential New Yorker, though we must forgive the fact that he attended college in Ithaca. As he noted in his famous 1949 love letter to New York, “the city makes up for its hazards and deficiencies by supplying its citizens with massive doses of a supplementary vitamin: the sense of belonging to something unique, cosmopolitan, mighty and unparalleled.” Perhaps that is why, no matter how far you travel from the city post-college, you may still find yourself boasting that you are a New Yorker.



EILEEN BARROSO





ANGELA DAVIS DREW

## Making (Air)waves at Minnesota Public Radio

By Kim Martineau JRN'97, SPS'18

Starting a new job is never easy, but in his first month as president of Minnesota Public Radio, **Duchesne Drew '89** had to navigate a global pandemic, the economic downturn that ensued and the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers, all over back-to-back Zoom meetings from his home.

Floyd's death was a local story for MPR, and the newsroom covered it aggressively as mass protests over police violence and racial injustice spread from Minneapolis to the rest of the world. At the same time, MPR journalists were grappling with uncertainty over a recent round of buyouts, and the looming threat of layoffs. "I was really proud of our staff," says Drew, speaking from his home in St. Paul, not far from the bodega where Floyd was killed. "Two and a half months into Covid-19, everyone's on edge, with friends and colleagues leaving. They did a tremendous job."

Drew (his first name is pronounced "Du-shawn") took the top job at MPR in May, becoming the first person of color to lead American Public Media Group's crown jewel, MPR News, and its sister stations, The Current and Classical MPR. Combined, the three stations reach one million listeners a week on a \$34 million

annual budget. Before joining MPR, Drew led community engagement at the Bush Foundation, following a 20-year career in newspapers, most of it at the *Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune*, where he rose from intern to managing editor for operations.

MPR's diversified funding model has helped insulate it from the economic pressures facing many newspapers and commercial media. Its relatively large share of listener support — 40 percent — has helped blunt the pandemic-driven drop in ad and philanthropic underwriting revenue. Still, Drew had to let 17 employees go through buyouts and layoffs.

He admits that the job has been more challenging than anticipated, but says he draws strength from his past achievements. "I'm a Head Start kid who went to Columbia and Northwestern," he says. "I've been with my wife for 25 years. I've had a great run, and I'm not done."

Drew majored in history at the College, and planned to become a lawyer until an internship with the Bronx DA his sophomore year changed his mind. By the time someone appears before a judge, he thought, it already seemed too late. The following semester he began mentoring, and later tutoring, college-bound kids from the community at the Double Discovery Center. Led by people who

looked like him, he says, DDC felt like a refuge, and the affirmation and support he received there energized him.

Drew spent two years as a development officer at DDC after graduation, but kept thinking back to his days writing and editing at *Spectator*. He earned a master's at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism in 1994 and was hired by the *Star Tribune* when his summer internship there ended. Even then, his leadership potential was clear to the reporters and editors who elected him as their union rep, and to his bosses, who began grooming him for executive roles. "I saw the first Black editor of the *Star Tribune*," says then-executive editor Tim McGuire, now retired and living in Arizona.

Born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, Drew felt out of place in the Twin Cities, which seemed to lack the vibrant Black middle class of his childhood. When he met another Black journalist from the East Coast, Angela Davis, they bonded over a shared passion for journalism and social justice. Neither made enough money to go out much to restaurants, so they stayed in and talked books. Eventually, the friendship grew into more; they married in 1996 and have two teenagers.

Drew's arrival at MPR last spring was greeted enthusiastically; in the newsroom, where his wife is a host, and in upper manage-

ment, where his old *Spec* pal, Dave Kansas '90, is executive VP of American Public Media Group.

Drew is widely known for his direct, tell-it-like-it-is leadership style, his compassion and his gift for spotting and nurturing talent, especially among those who have been historically marginalized.

His plans for MPR include growing its membership base by using digital tools to tell stories in new and innovative ways. Drew also wants to draw in more people of color, who are driving the Twin Cities's population boom, and now represent a fifth of all Minnesota residents. His vision overall is to make MPR more diverse and inclusive.

Journalism especially needs a multitude of voices, says Drew. "Our job is to show people to one another," he says. "Without a diverse newsroom, you're going to miss things or misinterpret things. You'll have a less authentic take on the world." He argues that inclusive workplaces are also happier: "If you create an inclusive environment, everyone benefits."

**Kim Martineau JRN'97, SPS'18** is director of communications for the MIT Quest for Intelligence.

## Anna Winger '93 Creates "Unorthodox" Television

By Rebecca Prime '96

**A**nn Winger '93 is fond of an aphorism attributed to Mark Twain: *History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes*. As the writer and co-creator (with her husband, Jörg Winger) of the Cold War drama trilogy composed of *Deutschland '83*, '86 and '89, Winger has plumbed the story of divided Germany in the waning days of Communism in ways that resonate with the current decade's crisis in late capitalism. Yet the phrase seems equally relevant to her career trajectory, which while circuitous, feels propelled by an oblique logic.

As the first German-language series on American television, *Deutschland '83* was in the vanguard of the transnational linguistic revolution ushered in by streaming services (it was released on the Sundance network in 2015). "Television was always produced for a national audience; everything was defined by language," Winger says. "*Deutschland* was a huge deal because a subtitled TV show had never been on TV in America, let alone in German. But in the course of time that we've been making the *Deutschland* trilogy, I feel like it's become normal to watch shows in their original language." *Deutschland '89*, the final installment, began streaming on Hulu in October.

For Winger, this new freedom to roam across countries, cultures and languages is a game changer. "As a writer, it opens up the possibilities of what stories can be told," she says. Her most recent project, the hit Netflix limited series *Unorthodox* — adapted from Deborah Feldman's eponymous memoir about leaving her strict Hasidic community in Brooklyn — was filmed in New York and Berlin in English, German and Yiddish. "The idea with *Unorthodox* from the very beginning was to tell it in Yiddish, because we had never seen anything in Yiddish [targeted to mainstream audiences]. Netflix went for it, and I think the show's success supports doing things true to language." Confirming

Winger's approach are the Primetime and International Emmy awards garnered by *Unorthodox* and *Deutschland '83*, respectively.

The daughter of anthropologists, Winger spent much of her childhood in Mexico and arrived at the College intending to make use of her fluent Spanish as a comparative literature major. Ironically, a gap year spent traveling in South America had the unintended effect of turning her attention toward film instead, and Winger spent her remaining two years at Columbia taking film classes in Dodge Hall. The education she received prepared the ground for her professional future in ways that she couldn't have anticipated, she says. "The Berlin Wall had just come down, so [director and film professor] Miloš Forman had hired all these guys from Central and Eastern Europe. I had an Eastern European film education," Winger notes wryly from her home in Berlin.

That said, Winger graduated with no plans to become a filmmaker. "The distance to be traveled between being the artistic driver of the material and working as a PA on a set seemed really, really far," she says.

Instead, she became a photographer, which she describes as "epic training" for her current work as a showrunner. "There's a production aspect to being a photographer and a showrunner that's very similar," she notes. Her creative pursuits also included writing a novel, *This Must Be the Place* (2008), and producing the NPR series *Berlin Stories*.



JÖRG WINGER



Winger's mid-life pivot to screenwriting was prompted by her own binge watching of the Danish dramas *Borgen* and *The Legacy*. "They reminded me of novels, in that they were so tightly structured and character driven. My husband and I watched them together and decided we could do something similar. That's how I ended up writing the pilot for *Deutschland* on spec," she says.

The locus of her artistic formation, New York, continues to be an important reference point for Winger, both in the projects she selects and the people she works with. "When we were making *Unorthodox*, having an understanding of New York culture was vital," she says. Accompanied by the show's director, production designer and costume designer, Winger spent weeks in Williamsburg "to look and touch and feel and experience that space." Adding to the sense of continuity between her New York past and Berlin present, a significant number of Winger's employees at her

production company are Columbia alumni: "It's not by design, but they find their way to me," she says.

Named Studio Airlift for its original location in Berlin's Tempelhof Airport — the site of the 1948 Berlin Airlift that circumvented the Soviet blockade choking West Berlin by airlifting in supplies — Winger's production company is likewise intended as a creative intervention. "A lot of what's going on at Airlift has to do with training writers to also be producers; that's just not the way things have traditionally been done in Germany," she says. "We have a chance to make the road by walking, because that path isn't laid out so clearly here."

**Rebecca Prime '96** is the associate editor of *Film Quarterly* and the author of several books, including *Hollywood Exiles in Europe: The Blacklist and Cold War Film Culture*.

## Robert Wray '06 Joins the Space Force

By Eric Butterman

**R**obert Wray '06 grew up like many children, spellbound by space missions and all their wonder. Year after year, shuttles ascended brightly into the cosmos, reminding us of John F. Kennedy's vision — that maybe, in time, our limits in space could be pushed through. But as years passed and NASA funding was cut, frequent American countdowns became memories from another era.

Now, Wray and others like him have a chance to embark on a new mission.

Wray has joined the U.S. Space Force, a branch of the armed forces created in late 2019 — the first new branch since the Air Force was formed in 1947. "In essence, the Space Force is like the Navy, but for space," Wray says. "It trains people on how to operate in and defend U.S. interests in space."

The goal is to expand Space Force to 16,000 members in the next few years. "I hope I can help shape space policy and the U.S. actions in space going forward," he says. "Space is a key enabler of our economy and our general way of life."

Wray, who double majored in history and political science, was in the Air Force before his move to the Space Force (his career field in the Air Force was space operations). He also works at the U.S. State Department, in the Office of Emerging Security Challenges, in a role that integrates diplomatic initiatives for military de-escalation in space. Examples, he says, are "organizing space security dialogues between the State Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with allies and partners, to advocate for international support for U.S. policies" and "validating treaty compliance, especially for treaties that have a provision limiting military activity."

Wray considered a future in the military early on, applying for a ROTC scholarship on September 10, 2001. The world literally changed the next day. Being in New York City post-9-11, aware of the terror threats and seeing Ground Zero, further confirmed for him the path he had chosen. "It cemented my desire to contribute and give to something bigger," he says.



U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT

But Wray isn't just thinking about what's up there. He's learned during his career that protecting space, and the technology it assists, allows everyday earthbound tasks to move forward, from paying at the pump to making investments on the New York Stock Exchange.

Commissioned by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on October 22, Wray took the next step in his space journey as a major in the Space Force. It's certainly a long way from growing up in Rhode Island, enjoying *Star Trek*.

But this isn't the final frontier. For Wray, it's a new beginning.

**Eric Butterman** has written for many publications, including *Glamour* and *Men's Journal*. You can reach him at [ericbutterman@yahoo.com](mailto:ericbutterman@yahoo.com).

## Be Your Own Bartender

By Jill C. Shomer

After the year we just had, who *doesn't* have cocktails on the brain? There simply couldn't be a better time for the clever compendium *Drink What You Want: The Subjective Guide to Making Objectively Delicious Cocktails* by John deBary '05 (Clarkson Potter, \$25).

deBary honed his philosophy of cocktail making during a decade behind the bar at some of the hottest spots in the world, and as the bar director of the Momofuku restaurant group. His egalitarian teaching approach focuses less on arcane details like drink history or science, and more on helping people better understand what they like in a beverage. "I want people with no experience to be able to make drinks," he says. "I want to bring more people in."

*Drink What You Want* outlines the basics of ingredients, equipment and technique, then delivers the recipes in choose-your-own-adventure-style, arranged by scenarios such as Feeling Classic, Feeling Fancy and Feeling Festive. Charming illustrations and legit-funny footnotes ("like David Foster Wallace in drag," mixologist Jim Meehan says in the intro) help readers parse deBary's logic and add delightfully campy presence.

For deBary, attending the College was something of an inevitability. His grandfather was Wm. Theodore de Bary '41, GSAS'53, who all but single-handedly

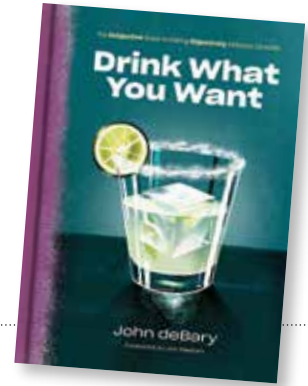
established the field of East Asian Studies in the West; his father is Paul de Bary '68, BUS'71, LAW'71, and his aunts and cousins are Columbia and Barnard grads. He grew up watching football at Baker Field with his grandfather, who never missed a game, and fondly remembers strolling College Walk as a child, fantasizing about being a student.

He never expected his time at the College to lead to a bartending career. But a Thursday night class at the Columbia Bartending Agency introduced him to drink making; later, his Wallach roommate Don Lee '03 got him into nerdy food culture. After graduation, deBary went to Japan for a few months; when he returned and was looking for work, he reached out to Lee, who had become a figure in New York's craft cocktail revival scene and had recently opened the speak-easy PDT (Please Don't Tell). Lee let him train behind the bar and deBary promptly fell in love. "Bartending is immediate," he says. "It happens right in front of you; you're taking care of someone and making them happy." deBary had thought he would go to law school, but he ditched that plan and dove into cocktail books instead. "I was reading about famous bartenders from the 1860s, their recipes and philosophies, all this nerdy academic stuff that was very suited to my disposition."

Both PDT and deBary soon gained notoriety; in 2009 he started splitting his time between PDT and restaurateur David Chang's Momofuku group. He went full-time at Momofuku in 2013 and eventually became the company's first bar director,

a position he held for five years. Chang's playful and imaginative approach to cuisine challenged deBary to be innovative. "When we were opening Nishi — R.I.P. — David wanted all the drinks to be Italian without using anything from Italy," he laughs. "Having those restrictions only led to more creativity."

In his director role, deBary wrote dozens of training manuals; he also worked on *Food & Wine's* annual cocktail issue for four years, sourcing and testing recipes from all over the country. "It was great practice in developing recipes and taking notes, so that people who weren't me could understand it," he says. In 2018,



### CCT Online Extra

Get the recipe for deBary's favorite cocktail (and more!) at [college.columbia.edu/cct](http://college.columbia.edu/cct).



he was approached to create his own book; right away he had ideas about how to make *Drink What You Want* special.

He chose illustrations over photography because he didn't want the cocktail images to be proscriptive. "I wanted something to show the idea, but it was OK if what readers made didn't exactly look that way," he says. And he wanted to appear throughout the book as a character. deBary loves both Japan and lipstick; his cartoon self is a fiercely glam *anime* star.

Teetotalers won't miss out on the fun. deBary says he sees the non-alcoholic space as a welcome challenge; there's a *Drink What You Want* chapter called Feeling Sober, and in the midst of writing, he launched Proteau, a line of zero-proof botanical drinks.

deBary is also an advocate for bar and restaurant workers. In 2015, with help from former Momofuku colleagues and his husband, Michael, a philanthropic advisor, deBary co-founded the Restaurant Workers' Community Foundation (RWCF). The nonprofit raises money, provides grants and addresses quality of life issues in the restaurant industry.

"I wanted to do something because I was aware of my own privilege. I had been given a lot of opportunities and trust right off the bat, and that isn't true for a lot of people," deBary says. "It's sort of endemic, the racial divide between front of house and back of house. It's changing for the better now, but it wasn't much of a conversation five years ago."

When the industry went into freefall almost immediately after the Covid-19 pandemic hit, RWCF set up a fund to support restaurant workers and lend stability to restaurants on their way to reopening. The Covid fund has raised more than \$7 million since March.

A true-blue Columbian, when deBary considers his place in the cocktail world, he touches on the Core. "There's this joke I would always hear in Core classes, 'You're not going to need this information when you're a doctor or a lawyer, but you'll be really good at cocktail parties.' And it's like: 'Haha, now that's my job.'"

Illustration reprinted with permission from *Drink What You Want: The Subjective Guide to Making Objectively Delicious Cocktails* by John deBary, copyright © 2020. Published by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, an imprint of Penguin Random House.



**Scam Artists of the Galaxy** by Thomas Wm. Hamilton '60. In his fourth work of science fiction, retired astronomer Hamilton spins a tale about creative comen who travel from planet to planet in the year 2470 (Strategic Book Publishing & Rights Agency, \$10.95).

**A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Stockholm: The Adrenaline-Fueled Adventures of an Accidental Scientist** by Robert Lefkowitz '62. A memoir from the Nobel Prize-winning cardiologist-turned-scientist who was described by the Swedish press corps as "the happiest Laureate" (Pegasus Books, \$27.50).

**When the World Laughs: Film Comedy East and West** by William V. Costanzo '67. Costanzo, a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of English and film, describes the intersection of humor, history and culture (Oxford University Press, \$35).

**Syllabus: The Remarkable, Unremarkable Document That Changes Everything** by William Germano '72 and Kit Nichols. Taking a fresh look at the syllabus, the authors suggest new ways to engage students and create more collaborative learning (Princeton University Press, \$24.95).

**Some Assembly Required: Decoding Four Billion Years of Life, from Ancient Fossils to DNA** by Neil Shubin '82. Shubin, a professor of organismal biology and anatomy at the University of Chicago, recounts the

evolution of human and animal life in a lively and accessible manner (Pantheon, \$26.95).

**Romance in Marseille** by Claude McKay; edited by William J. Maxwell '84 and Gary E. Holcomb. An early, overtly queer work of Black modernist fiction is published for the first time after being buried in an archive for almost 90 years (Penguin Classics, \$16).

**The Look of the Book: Jackets, Covers and Art at the Edges of Literature** by Peter Mendelsund '90 and David J. Alworth. This artful investigation into book cover design was named one of the "Best Books of 2020" by *The New York Times* (Ten Speed Press, \$50).

**The Mall: A Novel** by Megan McCafferty '95. The latest from bestselling YA author McCafferty is a coming-of-age story set in a New Jersey mall in 1991 (Wednesday Books, \$18.99).

**Amnesty: A Novel** by Aravind Ariga '97. Ariga won the 2008 Man Booker Prize for his novel *The White Tiger*; in his newest work, a young illegal immigrant must decide whether to report a murder (Scribner, \$26).

**A Glorious Liberty: Frederick Douglass and the Fight for an Antislavery Constitution** by Damon Root '99. How Douglass's fight for inalienable rights for all helped to shape American history in the 19th century and beyond (Potomac Books, \$26.95).

**Reclaiming Her Time: The Power of Maxine Waters** by Helena Andrews-Dyer '02 and R. Eric Thomas. A celebration of the life, wisdom and wit of the iconic California congresswoman (Dey Street Books, \$26.99).

**The Rocket Years: How Your 20s Launch the Rest of Your Life** by Elizabeth Segran '05. Through data and storytelling, Segran unpacks the reasons why the choices you make in your 20s may have the greatest impact (Harper, \$26.99).

— Jill C. Shomer

## SUBMIT YOUR BOOK TO CCT

Alums! Have you written a book in the last year? Tell us about it!

[college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\\_bookshelf](https://college.columbia.edu/cct/submit_bookshelf)

# classnotes



JAIME DANIES SEAS'20

A timeless  
Columbia tradition  
brightens winter  
nights on  
College Walk.

## 1940s

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

Dr. **Melvin Hershkowitz '42** (97) shared, “Dr. **Gerald Klingon '42**, a retired neurologist, celebrated his 100th birthday on September 22 in his apartment in Manhattan. He remains lucid, is sometimes forgetful and maintains his interests in Columbia affairs, including our athletics teams, especially football and baseball. His daughter Karen supervises his care and financial affairs.”

**Dick Hyman '48** writes from Venice, Fla.: “I still practice the piano, compose and occasionally play concerts in public or on Zoom. As the Florida Jazz Masters, we performed on December 6 in Sarasota.

“I have been based in Venice for about 35 years, but I no longer travel. My wife, Julia, and I met

while I was at Columbia. We’ve been married 72 years and have three kids and three grandchildren, one of them recently married.”

We welcome news from all 1940s alumni. Please send an email to [cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu). Wishing you a healthy and safe New Year!

## 1950

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

**Hubert “Buddy” Brandt** writes: “Since my last entry my wife and I have had three great-grandchildren, with another on the way! We have sold our house on Long Island and moved into an apartment near Columbia. I still harass assessors through my law practice — I have to pay the monthly maintenance on the apartment! I often wonder how many of our class still are around. I would

enjoy hearing from any. Call me: 212-563-2201. Stay safe/wear a mask.”

Classmates would enjoy hearing from you, too! Send your news to [cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu). Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year.

## 1951

### REUNION 2021

**MAY 24–JUNE 3** (virtual)

**JUNE 4–5** (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
[ccreunion@columbia.edu](mailto:ccreunion@columbia.edu)

Development Contact  
[ccfund@columbia.edu](mailto:ccfund@columbia.edu)

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

No notes to share from classmates this time, but please consider joining in the Columbia Reunion



2021 events this spring! As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.

Classmates would enjoy hearing how you are. Please send news to [cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu). Wishing you a safe, healthy New Year.

## 1952

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

**Robert J. Muscat** JRN'53, GSAS'64, of Sarasota, Fla., writes: "Two memories worth sharing. When the Class of '52 first assembled for a welcoming address by the University's new president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, he told us, in effect, that books were OK, but he really wanted us to get out there on the playing fields. More consequential is my memory of the inspiring classes of Professor Moses Hadas in the histories, literature and ideas of the ancient Greeks. He had lifelong influence on my thinking, values and worldview. Look him up on Wikipedia. And read his book *Humanism: The Greek Ideal and Its Survival*, before it's too late.

"As for me, after a year with the J-School and getting an economics Ph.D. from Columbia, I had a career as a development economist — USAID, the World Bank and so forth, including many years living abroad. Life in the 'deep state' can be professionally very satisfying. I married a CCNY grad and have three children and three grandchildren."

Classmates would enjoy hearing from you, too! Send your news to [cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu). Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year.

Class Notes are submitted by alumni and edited by volunteer class correspondents and the staff of CCT prior to publication. Opinions expressed are those of individual alumni and do not reflect the opinions of CCT, its class correspondents, the College or the University. By submitting to Class Notes, you acknowledge that the text is eligible to appear in print as well as on CCT Online and in archives.

## 1953

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

**Anthony Robinson** GSAS'60 of New Paltz, N.Y., writes, "As for some highlights of my life or career, I was a Lt. (jg) on the *U.S.S. Owen* for three years after Columbia, serving in the Pacific as the Korean War was ending. That experience was the basis for my first novel, *A Departure from the Rules* (1960). I have, in all, published eight novels. My last, *Father of The Man* (2018), is a semi-autobiographical novel about my early life in the Maverick Art Colony in Woodstock, N.Y., growing up with my father, Henry Morton Robinson CC 1923, as he was writing *The Cardinal* (1950). I earned an M.A. from Columbia in 1960 and taught American literature and creative writing at SUNY New Paltz for 36 years. I grew up in Woodstock and have spent the last 40 years in New Paltz. I have two children, Jennifer and Henry. I am finishing a novel, working title *Half of Paradise*."

Dr. **Donald A. Taylor**, of Holiston, Mass., graduated from Weill-Cornell Medical School in 1957. He writes, "I'm a retired radiologist. I have five children and five grandchildren. My radiology practice was in Chestnut Hill, Mass., from 1977 to 2010, with a subspecialty in mammography."

Dr. **Allan E. Jackman** PS'57 (aka "DR AJAX," as on his personalized license plate) lives in Mill Valley, Calif., and writes: "I was sports editor of *Spectator* and have remained a big sports fan ever since. You might not believe this, but in 1932, Columbia had the best football team in the entire Ivy League, beating rival Stanford 7–0 in the Rose Bowl in sunny California on New Year's Day in 1934. This would be equivalent now to our Super Bowl. And this is how I came to meet Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower. As the famed general returned to New York City rather than to his hometown of Abilene, Kan., I just happened to meet him at a Homecoming Game at Baker Field. I later found out that Ike, who was a big, solid fellow, as most Kansas football players are, played in a guard position at West Point. During halftime of the Homecoming game against Harvard (which the Lions won,

### COLUMBIA SCHOOL DESIGNATIONS

BC	Barnard College
BUS	Columbia Business School
CP	Pharmaceutical Sciences
DM	College of Dental Medicine
GS	School of General Studies
GSAPP	Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
GSAS	Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
HN	Institute of Human Nutrition
JRN	Graduate School of Journalism
JTS	Jewish Theological Seminary
LAW	Columbia Law School
LS	Library Service
NRS	School of Nursing
PH	Mailman School of Public Health
PS	College of Physicians and Surgeons
SEAS	The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science
SIPA	School of International and Public Affairs
SOA	School of the Arts
SPS	School of Professional Studies
SW	School of Social Work
TC	Teachers College
UTS	Union Theological Seminary

14–0, I was standing with my friend **Louie Soloway** when he suddenly asked me to turn around. As I did, I found myself right next to Ike, and Louie snapped a picture of Ike and me!

"I just read the Fall 2020 issue of *CCT*, which arrived about a month before my 88th birthday, October 31. I celebrated the occasion with several friends at a restaurant, socially distanced and with masks (except while we were eating), due to the horrific Covid-19 pandemic. Marin County, located just north of San Francisco via the beautiful Golden Gate Bridge, is an isolated, suburban place, with a population of just 250,000. We have experienced only 13 deaths due to this virus and so far, none of them were friends or acquaintances of mine.

"I am very happy that at 88, I am long retired from medicine. The doctors still on duty at our only county hospital, Marin Health Medical Center, which has 300 beds, have been working their gluteus maximus muscles off, caring for the very sick and often dying patients, filling the ER with ICU beds.

"I am delighted to report that I am in very good general health, although I am on a blood thinner, Eliquis, for a chronic atrial fibrillation problem that began when I was

42. At the time, I had to undergo a 'balloon angioplasty,' which was indeed a painful procedure that I had to endure for eight minutes. Now I know what an acute heart attack feels like, and I hope that mine, which will probably come within the next decade, arrives in the middle of the night while I am sound asleep and that I just don't wake up the next morning.

"I have led a very good life so far. I have visited every continent and most countries except Ireland. I was married for 40 years to a lovely woman, Vivian, who blessed me with two sons. Owen is a junior high school teacher in Sacramento, and Russell, a workers compensation consultant, lives in Novato, Calif. For the past 21 years I have been living in Mill Valley with my lovely girlfriend, Evelyn Topper. I will be quite happy in electing our 46th President next week and [hope] a member of the Democratic Party will once again inhabit the White House.

"My closing thoughts are these: If you have managed to continue reading this long note thus far, I have led a very good life with one exception being a malpractice case about a breast cancer diagnosis that I missed in my 40s and for which I settled for \$250,000, the limits of my insurance policy. I later learned from one of

the 12 jurors at my trial that I was, indeed, innocent, but the jury felt sad for the woman dying of breast cancer, who would be leaving behind a young child, because I had not ordered a newly developed radiographic technique of mammography. But as my loving father once said — and he was a very wise man and a practicing civil attorney — ‘In life you win a few and lose a few good cases.’ That was wise advice!

“And so I end this note with the recognition that I have survived 88 good and also bad years and that I may live long enough to see Joe Biden inaugurated as our next POTUS, in January 2021!”

**Jay B. Kane**, of Darien, Conn., writes: “Here’s a story from my first year at Columbia about events that influenced my life.

“Some 70 years ago I rowed on Columbia’s freshman lightweight crew. This was a life-changing experience because only a year earlier I was a sickly kid in Brooklyn recovering from many months of rheumatic fever that left me weighing 140 lbs. and with a heart murmur. Remarkably, some friends I met through my roommate **Mitch Price** when I arrived at Columbia talked me into trying out for lightweight crew that September. With my medical history this made no sense at all, but did lead me to work out frequently on rowing machines at the gym to improve my health and help me make the crew the next spring.

“In 1950 our freshman crew was quite successful in that we won nearly every race against Ivy League schools, losing only to Yale on the Housatonic River and then again in the Head of the Charles Regatta on the Charles River in Boston, where we came in second of six or seven boats. Yale was positioned at the other end of the line and a valid claim was that we lost because we couldn’t see the Yale boat slightly ahead due to the spray from the oars near the finish line.

“After one of the races, in the locker room at Baker Field, I met Raymond C. Knox, the retired University chaplain and a lifelong oarsman who rowed for Columbia many decades earlier. He and his wife happened to live in Old Greenwich, close to where my parents had moved. He had access to a few sculls and recruited me as coach in an attempt to start a crew at Greenwich

H.S. He also entered me in the New England sculling championship on the Charles River, where I had rowed just a few months earlier. After managing second place in that race too, I quit rowing because of my parents’ concerns about the heart murmur. But I was hooked on the water for recreation and to relax from the pressures of trust banking for institutions, so that most of my life I kept a cruising sailboat at the Riverside Yacht Club in Greenwich, in addition to maintaining a membership in the New York Yacht Club.

“When I turned 82 my son suggested that I build a home next to his place in Darien on the Fivemile River, close to Long Island Sound. Now each summer I enjoy viewing his sailboat, which he named after my late wife, Mimi, moored a short distance from my back porch.

“Note: Most members of the class knew of **Mitch Price** because he was quarterback. Mitch was frequently the topic of newspaper reports, along with Lou Little, Columbia’s famous football coach, prior to the days of professional football.”

Classmates would be interested in your stories, too! Share current news and stories from days past with *CCT* using the email at the top of the column. Wishing you a healthy, happy and safe New Year.

## 1954

**Bernd Brecher**  
brecherservices@aol.com

This quarter I’m just thinking out loud. Where are we as a class, as alumni, as a College, as a university, as a nation? Or as individuals, as people, or persons? This column went to bed within a week of yet-to-come Election Day. We have hopes, thoughts, and assumptions, but no insider true or false information. Whoever is in the White House, or controls the Congress, for the next four years — or 40 — his/her life ain’t going to be easy for them or for us.

Soooo, think ahead with me, to *Tikkun Olam* (“Help Cure the World”) and give me your thoughts for our Spring/Summer column.

Meanwhile, here is some winter news: **Samuel Barondes** PS’58 writes, “Thanks, Bernd, it’s been a long time!” in response to my good wishes and request for news to share

with ’54 classmates. “I’m happy to report that my wife, Louann, and I are making the most of sheltering in place in our home in Sausalito on the San Francisco Bay. We are very grateful to be able to enjoy these privileged golden years despite the challenging times.”

Sam is pleased to share that “after more than 50 years on the faculty of the University of California, first as a founding professor of psychiatry at the UC San Diego School of Medicine in 1969 and, since 1986, in many roles at UC San Francisco, the university has established The Samuel Barondes Endowed Chair in Neuro-

architectural firm in San Francisco; and Adrian has established a reputation as a ceramicist who developed a method of firing large hollow-core ceramic figures.”

I was pleased to get a call from **Harvey Rubin** SEAS’58, who despite being at our reunion in 2019 did not have a chance to do more than “chew the fat.” We had a rewarding catch-up conversation, but were not able to meet the copy deadline for this issue. Harvey is well, back in Larchmont, N.Y., with a grandson who’s a sophomore at Columbia, but his *geschichte* will have to wait for Spring/Summer.

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*A gift from Milton Edelin ’54, GSAPP’57 is the largest ever made to the Architecture School by a Black alumnus; its impact will be felt for generations.*

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biology and Psychiatry at UCSF. It will be occupied by Dr. Anna Victoria Molofsky Ph.D., a brilliant young neurobiologist and psychiatrist.”

Congratulations, Sam! We are proud of you.

Members of our Class of Destiny, if I had not asked, Sam would not have told — please, all, share your good news NOW. Do not wait to be personally asked, much as I love “getting in touch.”

Another correspondent, **Joseph Arleo** GSAS’56, writes: “My wife, Lillian, and I decamped across the road from our daughter Elizabeth’s house in Sharon, Conn., in mid-March to escape the coronavirus and, to paraphrase Hermione Gingold, ‘We’re still here.’ The bad news, of course, remains the Trump presidency but I hope by the time this sees print he’ll be gone (I think part of the ‘Destiny’ of our class was to survive his tenure).”

Joe says he’s still seeing patients, “or rather having phone sessions with them — and looking forward to getting back to my office in the Village when this pandemic dissipates. And now a brief CV of our children: Elizabeth was recently promoted to full professor of radiology at Weill Cornell Medical Center and is the mother of three sweet girls; Michael recently retired as chief, quality control, of Rolls-Royce Engines; Ted partners with his wife as head of their

The Architecture School recently announced a gift from **Milton Edelin** GSAPP’57 that will have a long-lasting impact on incoming students. From the announcement: “The funding that established the Milton and Yvonne Edelin Scholarship represents the largest gift to GSAPP ever from a Black alumnus. Its impact will be felt for generations, helping and attracting and retaining a greater diversity of students. ‘I know how hard it was for me as a young person to balance working and attending graduate school, and it costs so much more to attend now,’ Edelin says. ‘I believe if you can just get to school, you can do good things.’”

Milton shares with the class, “In addition, for many, many years, I donated at the John Jay Associates member level to the Columbia College Scholarship Fund for Black Students. And further, another family member, Dr. Kenneth Edelin ’61, my late brother and first Black chief resident at Boston University Medical Center Hospital, established a medical scholarship at the Boston University School of Medicine for disadvantaged and Black students and has a square named for him at Boston University. So, lots of family gifting and outreach to help disadvantaged and minority students by a couple of Columbia College Black graduates.”

Thanks, Milt, for sharing this personal and important news with us.



"I finally retired as director of allergy at NewYork-Presbyterian Queens Hospital, where I had been since 1976," writes **Stanley Fine** PS'57. "At 87 it was time. I'm enjoying full retirement. My significant other and I flew to Auckland in mid-February (just in time) and boarded a ship for 18 days, winding up in French Polynesia. Bora Bora must be as close to Eden as we have on Earth."

They got home a week before everything closed down, says Stan, and he thanks "God for computer bridge."

Looks like you two have found the true meaning of retirement, i.e., full. Blessings on both your heads. (We're all just jealous!)

We heard sad news from **Walter A. Bossert Jr.**'s daughter Ellen '86, who shared his obituary: "Walter A. Bossert Jr. was born in Manhattan on October 5, 1932. He joined the law firm of Gould & Wilkie, serving for 34 years, 19 as senior partner. During his tenure, he was general counsel to well-known corporations, including Lord & Taylor and Tiffany & Co."

"In 1980, Walter, along with his partner, Davison Grant, and renowned lawyer, Telford Taylor, chief prosecutor of the Nuremberg Trials, successfully argued before the Supreme Court of the United States, case (447 U.S. 557) — *Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation v. Public Service Commission of New York*. This landmark case is still studied in law schools in regard to First Amendment rights."

"He was a graduate of the College and University of Virginia Law School and served in the Air Force 1954–57 as a lieutenant commander and a top-secret security officer during the Korean War — most notably at Rushmore Air Force Station during the Suez Crisis of 1956."

Walter is survived by his wife, Mariel; son, William; and daughters, Ellen '86 and Laura. Our sincerest condolences to the Bossert family.

[Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

**Ronald Sugarman**, an active member of our 65th Reunion Committee, shared his life under Covid-19: "My wife, Hisako, and I have been following the protocols, and so far, so good," he writes. "Some habits have changed because of Covid, but we're managing to cope with assists from Instacart, Amazon and Zoom and by adhering to the cautions regarding masking, distancing and proper hygiene."

He says he's catching up on his reading while his wife "spends a lot of time practicing the Argentine tango and 'going to' Met Operas on her mobile phone. And then there's Zoom. Prior to Covid-19, I had twice-weekly lunches with a group of guys who've been my friends for more than 80 years. Now we do twice-weekly two-hour lunchtime meetings on Zoom, which offer a different kind of nourishment."

Thanks Ron, for your overview and coping guide, and your personal comment about RBG: "A sad note is the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg LAW'59. Ruth (aka Kiki) and I were classmates at James Madison H.S. Not ever close but always friendly. Over the years she'd attend significant reunions and a couple of smallish dinners to which I feel fortunate to have been invited."

A song that I, Bernd, wrote for one of my non-lockdown summer-time shows while in college, had the following opening verses: "I know where I'm going and I know where I've been / the only thing that bothers me is the current mess I'm in." The show was not based on reality, neither "then" nor now, but give me *your* takes as we look ahead to our Class of Destiny's 70th anniversary.

As a point of departure: Columbia's self-managed Marching Band has dissolved itself after 116 years; give me your thoughts, especially if you are a band alumnus. As always, call, write, email, carrier pigeon, whatever — just stay in touch.

Alas, the first cinema James Bond (for me, the only one) recently passed; let me know *you're* still here. Be well, stay well. With love, Bernd.

Excelsior!

## 1955

**Gerald Sherwin**  
gs481@juno.com

Not much new since the Fall 2020 issue. Masks are seen on campus, which is still mostly on lockdown and continues to have remote learning for almost all students. No winter sports, and no football and basketball practices. No alumni events last fall or this winter.

Thinking of **Jack Freeman**, **Dick Kuhn**, **Berish Strauch**, **Allen Hyman**, **Howard Sussman**, **Mar-**

**vin Winell**, **Sheldon Wolf**, **Elliot Gross** and **John Crocker**.

We'll get back to normal soon. In the meantime, think ahead to Columbia Reunion 2021. As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning virtual events for Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.

Love to all! Everywhere!

## 1956

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
ccreunion@columbia.edu

Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Robert Sirotky**  
rrs76@columbia.edu

Congratulations to **Ralph Kaslick** DM'62, recipient of a 2020 Columbia Alumni Association Columbia Alumni Medal. Originally intended to be awarded at Commencement in 2020, it will instead be awarded at Commencement this year. It is a well-earned and well-deserved recognition of his contribution to academic life at Columbia.

**Jim Mooney** writes from Milford, Pa., that he is retired and in good health, and that he and his wife, Doris, are celebrating their 63-year partnership.

I heard from **Ron Kapon**, **Ed Botwinick**, **Joost Oppenheim**, **Harold Sturtz** and **Alan Broadwin** with varying responses re: a possible Zoom reunion. Ed offers large acreage in Virginia if we all bring sleeping bags or tents. He reports that he hasn't had a haircut since mid-February, and that his family is calling him "Maestro."

**Leo Laporte** GSAS'60 earned a Ph.D. in geology at GSAS, then taught at Brown before moving to the new UC Santa Cruz campus. He is the author of a 2000 book, and many articles regarding paleontology, from the Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences at UCSC. He resides in Redwood City, Calif.

**Philip Liebson** and his wife, Carole, have moved to a co-op

in Willmette, Ill., right at Lake Michigan. He works once a week in the Preventive Cardiology Clinic at Rush University Medical Center, doing many visits by telemetry. Philip has submitted 23 essays to the Chicago Literary Club, and continues to play the piano.

**Dave Goler** writes from Florida that he is no longer seeing patients and is riding out this pandemic.

**Murray Watnick** retired from the practice of radiology and is working with the WHO to bring basic radiology services to underserved areas of South Africa. He has consulted with **Frank Thomas**. Murray writes that "a major ongoing project is progressing in Guatemala." To learn more about the project, go online to Radiology for the People: A Basic Radiological System for Health Care in Developing Nations (link: [bit.ly/2UjklJs](http://bit.ly/2UjklJs)).

On a sad note, I must report the deaths of Dr. **Harold Markowitz** on January 19, 2020, and **Socrates Nicholas** on October 19, 2020. Socrates was a member of The 1754 Society, and sat for five years on the University's Board of Trustees. Additionally, he sat on the advisory board of the Metropolitan Opera. [Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

Regarding reunion, I suggest that you respond to the virtual class book with stories and pictures. It looks good, and is only for us. There are no ties to any fundraising or other solicitations.

[Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

Stay safe and stay well.

## 1957

**Herman Levy**  
hdlleditor@aol.com

**Peter Caroline**: "One of my fondest memories of my junior and senior years was my job working in the stacks at the library. I got paid \$20 for 20 hours' work. This paid for my meals, cigarettes, booze and walking-around money for a week. At lunchtime, I'd walk into a nearby restaurant on Amsterdam Avenue and the proprietor would call out, 'Pair rare and a side of French!' Best burgers ever!"

**Michael A. Ferragamo:** “Having practiced urology for close to 35 years, I am now retired from active practice for more than 20 years. I live with my wife of 60 years, Maria, in Garden City, N.Y., and am a coding consultant for urology-related practices, such as private practices, hospitals and academic institutions such as Lahey Hospital & Medical Center, Indiana Urology, Duke Urology and many others. Would love to hear from classmates, especially others who became urologists and also were members of the 150-lb. football team that played in those years ... Call me at 516-721-8149.”

**Mac Gimse:** “When I was growing up, I was told that the purpose of education was to take *learning into life*. When I arrived at Columbia, a National Merit Scholar and a lonely lad from Minot, N.D., I discovered that the purpose of the liberal arts education was to take a *love of learning into life*. The Core Curriculum gave me a passion for learning all over the world in vastly different cultures that are not lesser versions of my own. I became excited to learn new languages. I was unafraid to follow religious practices wherever I found I them.

“The Core led me to be a college professor in the liberal arts, teaching hundreds of students on dozens of programs abroad. My basic course was ‘Monuments to Power and Faith’ and my class format was lecture and discussion, based on our experiences as we moved through the world for up to five months each time. Our studies embraced politics, religion and the fine arts, each of which had a

‘visual culture’ attached. I also taught ‘The History of World Architecture’ and ‘The Visual Cultures of Asia,’ as well as ‘Great Conversations,’ a five-semester study of Western civilization. None of this is boasting when I see my source of inspiration and teaching techniques that I learned in my CC and Hum courses at Columbia. Outside of classes there were the discussions and debates in the Quad (i.e., everywhere on campus). The laboratory for my Art Hum and Music Hum was New York City. Columbia gave me solid intellectual ground where I could live and teach the rest of my life.”

**Erich Gruen:** “The era of Covid-19 has, of course, brought some severe restrictions. There are no more travels of any distance, and no (live) visits with children and grandchildren. Being at home 24/7 with my wife, Ann, is a true test of a marriage. But we have passed that test most successfully and continue to enjoy each other’s company. Zoom has been a most welcome support for our social life. We Zoom almost every day with one or more members of the family or with friends. And during the last couple of months we have been so bold as to invite friends for drinks on the patio in our back garden, two at a time and properly distanced, usually once or twice a week. So, we have not succumbed to isolation. I managed to participate in an international conference via Zoom and even led a seminar through Zoom as a guest at Harvard. And the extra time on my hands has allowed me to complete my book *Ethnicity in the Ancient World — Did it Matter?*, which was published in September.

“The days, weeks and months pass all too quickly. More than a dozen of my former graduate students are now retired (!), a stern reminder of the number of years I have been in this academic business. But we remain in good health and hope very much to resume contact with some of our Columbia classmates.”

**Julie Schachter:** “After 60 years of research on chlamydia at UC San Francisco, I closed my lab last summer. I hadn’t planned to do research on STDs, but serendipity always plays a role, and living in SF through the Summer(s) of Love provided plenty of opportunity. Chlamydial infections were relatively new, and this gave us chances to make real

contributions to public health.

And we did that, including first description of chlamydia pneumonia in infants, showing that screening pregnant women for chlamydiae and treating the infected women prevented infection of newborns (this quickly became standard of care in the United States and in many other countries) and proof of concept study showing that community-wide treatment of trachoma (the world’s leading infectious cause of blindness) with azithromycin was effective. This is now the linchpin of a WHO-sponsored effort at eliminating blinding trachoma as a public health issue.

“I’ve kept my UC appointment and hope to spend the next few years analyzing data and writing up the last few studies. Looking back, I recall the usual academic frustrations, getting funding and so on, but all in all, it has been a blast.”

**Jacques Ullman:** “At a time when we are so preoccupied with the outcome of the election, it is a bit strange to be writing a Class Note that will be published after the results are in. Let’s hope that, in this final phase of our lives, we don’t have to witness our democracy continue to be destroyed.

“During this confinement, my wife, Muriel, and I are lucky to be living in Sausalito, Calif., where we can look out at the beautiful bay and walk in the hills. I have plenty of carpentry tools and finally have the time to finish out details on our old house, which through the years we have totally gutted and opened up. We have an urban garden with flowers and vegetables, and Muriel paints a beautiful watercolor of it every day. Since retiring from my architectural practice three years ago I have been active in helping Sausalito improve its public spaces. Covid-19 robbed us of our customary two summer months at our converted barn in rural southwest France. We had a nice visit with **Roy Wolff** there a few years ago.”

**Gene Wagner and Ed Weinstein:** “Gene and Ed have become fast friends after renewing a friendship begun during Freshman Orientation in September 1953. They were roommates in a three-person suite in John Jay Hall. Gene never forgave Ed for taking the only single bed, leaving the others to share a double bunk bed. (He still enjoys ragging Ed about this episode.)

“Their friendship was discontinued when Gene went to NYU Dental School in 1956. Gene then served as an officer in the Air Force for two years, after which he set up a dental office in New York while living in Chappaqua, N.Y. Ed went to the Wharton School for an M.B.A. and then entered practice, joining a large national firm in 1958, becoming a C.P.A. in 1961 and a partner in the firm in 1968. Gene and Ed reconnected at a CC’57 reunion.

“By this time Gene had relocated to Pacific Palisades, Calif., but continued to own an apartment on New York City’s Upper East Side. Gene gradually left practicing dentistry, becoming an inventor of dental care products. He started a company that sold his products throughout the USA in leading retail stores. Gene had begun to come back to NYC, as it was conveniently near many pharmaceutical companies interested in licensing his products. He eventually sold his company but continued inventing and licensing his technology to leading health and pharmaceutical companies.

“Meanwhile, Ed had migrated south to run his firm’s Philadelphia office in the early ’80s, and then returned to its NYC practice later in the decade. Having moved his residence from South Orange, N.J., to Philadelphia, he and his wife, Sandra, decided to take up residence in Manhattan, on East 56th Street. Ed retired from his firm after 40 years and became a forensic C.P.A., a second career that lasted 20 years.

“Once Gene began returning to NYC, it wasn’t long before he and Ed took up their interrupted friendship. They began having lunch in NYC when Gene was in town on business. Later, as Gene’s wife, Judy, began to come to NYC with him, the twosome became a foursome. Thus, a long-ago friendship was revitalized over subjects including politics, history, museums and other NYC distractions, and Columbia events (both of Ed’s children followed him to the College and two of his granddaughters are College sophomores). Gene also resumed a friendship with **Herb Sturman** (Ed’s fraternity brother and long-time friend) and recently presented Herb with a Maltese companion dog, which Herb named Harvey.

“The pandemic interrupted Ed and Gene’s contacts until Gene



Let us know if you have a new postal or email address, a new phone number or even a new name:  
[college.columbia.edu/alumni/connect](http://college.columbia.edu/alumni/connect).



felt comfortable flying to NYC again. He and Ed then had lunch at Morso, near Ed's home, in mid-September, and were scheduled for a repeat at Beach, near Gene's alternate residence, in mid-October.

"Their friendship has existed for 67 years and continues, having survived a 25-year hiatus and now a pandemic. They never tire of each other, stimulating subjects to talk about or their zest for life. Gene recently gave up his creative dental inventor second career, and Ed continues as a forensic C.P.A. until he completes an expert testimony engagement, which seems to never end."

## 1958

**Peter Cohn**  
petercohn1939@gmail.com

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are still very much with us as this column was submitted in mid-October. New York City is carefully reopening some indoor spaces (restaurants, museums) that have not been available since mid-March. Meanwhile, Columbia's fall term was virtual and all fall sports were canceled. Alas, no visits to the Baker Athletics Complex to (briefly, of course) regain one's long-lost youth. Oh, well .... Whether this situation will continue into the spring is unclear, especially as fears of a "second wave" are widespread.

When it comes to class news, **Steve Jonas** has provided an update on his recent activities: "I hope everyone is doing as well as can be expected in this horrible time in our nation. It is a time that could have been prevented, I may say with some certainty as a career public health physician, if the President had undertaken the same measures that were followed in almost every other developed country in the world (with the notable exception of the United Kingdom). As it happens, my major occupation at this time, coming up on the seventh anniversary of my retirement from the Department of Family, Population & Preventive Medicine at Stony Brook Medicine, is writing political columns that are regularly published on OpEdNews.com, BuzzFlash.com and Writing for Godot on Reader-SupportedNews.org."

"On the personal side, as some of you know, my dear wife, Chezna

Newman, passed away on October 18, 2018. Since then, I have found happiness with Lee Gruzen, widow of well-known New York architect Jordan Gruzen. My children, Jacob Jonas, Lillian Jonas and Mark Newman, are all well, as are my four grandchildren."

**Bert Hirschhorn** PS'62 also contributed to this issue: "I've returned to the United States after two decades abroad working in public health, the story told in my memoir (bertzpoet.com/memoir). I've also published six collections of poetry (bertzpoet.com/poetry-3). We live on the banks of the Mississippi River, in Minneapolis, one old man looking over another Old Man."

As a medical scientist, Bert has become world renowned for his anti-cholera achievements. He demonstrated the validity of using oral rehydration therapies to save untold numbers of lives, especially in third-world countries where intravenous hydration is not always readily available.

Not all news is good news. Eleanor Siegel writes of the death of her husband, **Arthur Siegel** BUS'60: "Art was hired by Price Waterhouse in 1960 after earning an A.B. and an M.B.A. from Columbia. He worked in PW's New York City, Long Island, Boston and national offices. He was an engagement partner in Boston and then became national director of accounting services and later vice-chair of audit. Art was also a member of the U.S. and World Firm's Management Committees. As an undergraduate, he was president of the Pre-Engineering Society until he changed his major to economics, and he was advertising manager of *Spectator*. Art was a member of Phi Sigma Delta, where he made lifelong friendships with Fred Knauer '59, SEAS'60 and Ira Jolles '59. He graduated second in his class at the Business School, where he was a Newington Scholar and treasurer of the *Graduate Business News*. We were married in 1960 and have three children, Joan, Linda and Mark '89, and six grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be sent to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society."

Our condolences to the family.

Unfortunately, there will always be deaths to report now that we are in our 80s, but please keep sending news items, as well. As of this writing no word yet when the class luncheons will resume.

## 1959

**Norman Gelfand**  
nmgc59@hotmail.com

Starting with pleasant news, **Ben Haimowitz** reports: "After writing press releases for 40 years, I've regressed and have lately published two books of fiction: a novel, *Baby Steps, Giant Steps*, and a collection of short stories, *To the Parade: Tales Low and High of the City*."

**Bill Frye** writes, "Still at it, and thought I would bring everyone up to date to a certain extent. I finally retired from my law practice and my firm, Trenam Law, which I helped found more than 50 years ago. It was a great run, and I would love to do it again, even accepting some jury verdicts I was not happy with."

"These days I have been maintaining with the help of my wonderful wife (we have been married more than 59 years) and our caregivers. It seems I have a neurological condition that at best can be maintained and, in combination with the coronavirus, we are pretty much confined to the house. I read a lot, argue with the TV and generally try to figure out how in the world our government and politics have reached such a sorry state. In any event, I hope we get through it, along with our government."

"As I neared my retirement, I thought I would be looking at days on the golf course, fishing and travel. Unfortunately, it has not worked out that way, but serves as another reminder that we never know what is around the corner. So, if anyone is looking for advice, here it is: Get it done now and don't wait until tomorrow. My best wishes to all."

From **Bruce Schlein** we hear, "It has been a while since I communicated, and I am fixing that. My wife, Alice, and I are well and still able to do our 'things.' Alice is producing wonderful weavings, teaching weaving at various local venues, actively blogging (weaverly.typepad.com), designing weavings and producing weaving monographs, not to mention keeping me in line."

"I am pursuing my photography and have gotten into a few juried shows at the SE Center for Photography, which has an international reach. I regularly blog my photographs (cameralucidity.wordpress.com) and teach photography at our

local Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Furman University.

"We have moved to a continuing care community and fortunately have not yet required the care part of the game and live independently in a modest house, which, as you might guess, Alice has filled with looms and I have filled with stereo stuff."

"Our boys, Willy and Erik, are doing well. Willy is here in Greenville, S.C., with two almost-grown-up children, Karl at Clemson and Catalina in high school. Willy is a practicing architect and leads a group of healthcare architects in the company for which he works. Erik is attending the CUNY School of Law and enjoying it."

"I do miss my practice of pathology, including the folks I worked with and the helping to solve problems of figuring out what sick people have and helping their clinicians fix them."

**Ira Friedman** writes, "The [Fall 2020 Class Notes] that you sent are among the saddest I have ever read, but I am grateful that you sent them. They remind me that I should try harder to see things as they are, not only as I wish them to be. As a Semite since birth, I get pissed off by anti-Semitism. To find it less checked at my college makes me wonder what is going on. Professor William Casey taught me that it is a mistake to see things as 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 when they are actually 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. At least, I think that was what he was teaching."

"I knew **David Horowitz** at school well enough to say hello to him. I think he went to high school with my then-girlfriend. But I have not been able to recognize him for a long time from his writings. Even though I wholly disagree with what he has to say, I will defend to the death his right to say it. (Where is the *Trib* when you really need it?)"

"I thought that as we got older we would get wiser. I live in a nice house in New Hope, Pa., with my wife of 30 years. We are comfortable. We stay in the house much of the time during this pandemic, as we would even without the pandemic. I bike the neighborhood, go to grocery stores, listen to music and so on. I am living almost the same life as I did before the pandemic, but now, because I have to rather than because I choose to."

"Columbia didn't prepare me to get all the answers all the time. But,

COURTESY FRANK WILSON '59



In summer 1958, the *U.S.S. Ranger* departed Norfolk, Va., with 200 Naval Reserve officers onboard for a two-month cruise that took it around Cape Horn. Shown here enjoying some R&R while ashore in Lima, Peru, are (left to right) William Jackson, Shelby Brewer '59, Sam Tindall '59, Frank Wilson '59 and Thomas James '59.

still, it was of my best experiences. Roar, Lion, Roar."

**Herb Stern** sent the following to his SAM fraternity brothers in 2019 for our 60th reunion: "Looking back on the last 60 years, I'm delighted to report that I think I have, in a small way, made a 'difference.' And, I've enjoyed a very full life so far. I have been lucky in business, in love, in life and in family. My life trajectory, quite different from most of my classmates, has been the right one for me.

"A few personal highlights. My most important contributions to the world are my three wonderful daughters. My oldest is a cantor (providing spiritual comfort) in the Boston area, my second is a Ph.D. civil engineer whose climate model informed The Paris Agreement and the youngest, a teacher, is still at home raising the two youngest (4 and 6) of my seven grandchildren.

"Life has an unpredictable shape to it. I lost two beloved wives to cancer, but am now blessed with a life partner, with whom I laugh all day long. I didn't finish my Columbia studies until 1960. I left school in my senior year for the six-month active duty Army program. After a stint at the Boston University School of Law, and a dalliance with investment banking, I went to work for a red-blooded manufacturer and found the kind of challenge and reward that engaged me for decades. I discovered that I am a 'doer'! I built businesses and manage people. I ascended from the shop floor to chief operating officer of an 11-plant, 3,200-person organization,

ultimately selling the business at an inflection point. That experience propelled me to other entrepreneurial ventures, including launching an insurance agency that I eventually sold to Citigroup; a web-based provider of bookkeeping services that is still flourishing; and an energy storage company that recently landed a \$75 million contract to build renewable (wind and solar) energy storage pilots that represent the future of our electrical grid.

"What gets me up in the morning these days? I partnered with my son-in-law, head of gastroenterology at Dartmouth, and a talented team to co-found the pharmaceutical drug development company ColonyConcepts, which is tackling colorectal cancer screening with a bold innovation: a meal kit that transforms the prep from a nightmare into a fairly tasty and accessible process. We've completed successful Phase 2 clinical trials and are on the path to secure FDA approval; we're also launching Phase 2 trials for a chronic idiopathic constipation bar.

"I have always been grateful for what life offered me and committed myself to pay back over the last 50 years. I have served on countless civic and philanthropic boards and held impactful positions such as president of my synagogue and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Rhode Island. My single greatest satisfaction in this arena was building the Rhode Island Holocaust Memorial, a public memorial on the waterfront in downtown Providence.

"I'm a licensed pilot (I own a twin-engine Cessna), play golf and enjoy travel, reading and opera, and have the palpable pleasure of watching and experiencing my grandchildren growing up.

"In sum, it has been an exhilarating adventure. I really believe that much of my success derived from my Columbia education. If the saying 'knowledge is power' has real meaning, Columbia gave us that 'power'!

"I would add one statement: The Core Curriculum so honed our minds, giving us such a deep breadth of knowledge and the wisdom to listen to, evaluate and challenge ideas, that I always considered myself advantaged in almost every aspect of life. Columbia wasn't always fun (we worked hard at learning), but it still informs me as to who I am!"

It is my sad duty to report the death of **J. Michael Stern** GSAS'61 on August 2, 2020, at Sibley Hospital in Washington D.C. Michael (81) peacefully left this world following a sudden illness. His beloved wife of 60 years, Joyce (née Duran), was at his side. I have extracted some words from an obituary prepared by his wife for *The Washington Post*: "Michael held a B.A. and M.A. from Columbia University. Commencing with positions in the budget and legislative branches of the former Health Education and Welfare Department, he developed a distinguished career in government that included serving many years as staff director of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee under Sen. Russell Long of Louisiana. He later worked as a legislative analyst for the Investment Company Institute. For over 50 years, Michael was a prominent member of his synagogue, Adas Israel Congregation, where he and Joyce were among the founding families of the lay-led prayer service called the Adas Israel Havurah."

May his memory be a blessing.

## 1960

**Robert A. Machleder**  
rmachleder@aol.com

As our Fall 2020 column reached the word limit, it ended on an all-too-brief note that **Tom Raup** LAW'66 died on August 30, 2016.

Tom earned distinction as the youngest member of the bar (35) to be appointed to a judgeship in

Pennsylvania. He served on the bench by appointment for a 10-year term, then sought and won election to another 10-year term, and thereafter served as a senior judge while also teaching legal studies at Lycoming College. Upon his retirement from the bench Tom returned to private practice, focusing on mediation and arbitration.

Tom's legal experience started before he entered the Law School. Upon graduation he was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy and assigned to attend the Naval Justice School, then proceed to the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Saratoga* where, in the course of his tour of duty, he became the chief legal officer.

**Neil Markee** knew Tom well and offers his recollections: "Tom was a classmate, roommate, fraternity brother, fellow lightweight varsity oarsman, fellow naval officer and friend during my time at Columbia and thereafter. A quite extraordinary individual. I think I knew him as well as most. I never had a class with Tom other than naval science. On the lightweight crew, seeing how he was respected and performed, I knew from the start he would one day be captain if he could afford to stay with the program. Self-supporting, I was broke and left crew after one year to work at Teachers College. He found a better way to manage his finances that allowed him to continue to row. Junior year, Tom, his brother **Bill Raup** and I lived in a run-down residence hotel on Broadway a few blocks south of 116th Street. My younger brother came to visit and remarked, 'I didn't know you lived in a slum,' but it was cheap."

Neil had an opportunity to meet with Tom when both were naval officers. "I was the communications officer aboard a lowly landing ship, tank (aka LST) moored to a sea wall in Naples when the impressive *U.S.S. Saratoga* entered port and anchored," Neil continues. "Tom had orders to that ship when he left Columbia. I wasn't sure he was still aboard, and I knew there had been a serious fire on the *Saratoga*. Finding a legitimate communications reason to visit the carrier, I took our ship's landing craft out to the huge ship, tended to the official reason for my visit and inquired about junior officer Raup. When I found him, I learned he had been near the fire but had not been singed



or otherwise injured. On June 22, 1963, at the end of his Navy tour, Tom married Barbara Jean Libby of Malibu, Calif., whom he met while his ship was visiting Athens, Greece. I was glad to receive an invitation to join his wedding party when I got back to the States. His brother Bill, **Claudio Marzollo** and I made up the male half of his wedding party. Unfortunately, after three years of sea duty, finding a job, becoming established and getting married, I lost contact with Tom and too many other classmates. Years later, during a business trip to Penn State, I learned that Tom had become a judge. Even if his address had been available, 'dropping in' that day wasn't an option, a missed opportunity I now regret."

**Lee Rosner** writes of his challenge in dealing with the pandemic, and extends his best wishes to all classmates. "On March 5, my co-op board asked me to head a task force on the coronavirus as it affects our 430-apartment complex. I was able to put together a good team of scientists and non-scientists and together we began to figure out how to deal with the problem. The challenge for us is that we have many common areas, including spacious lobbies, a gym, a library and a market, plus an aging population and a staff of 50. The residents are a very sociable group of people and interact in many different ways, making the demands for social distancing and wearing masks very difficult on them. Fortunately, we have been successful in keeping our residents safe, but it is a daily struggle. This is the most important job of my life.

"My immediate family and closest friends are doing well. Unfortunately, some more distant acquaintances have been sick and one friend in London almost died. So, I ask all classmates to please be totally cautious."

The passing of **Terrence McNally** drew this reflection from **Larry Lefkowitz**: "I remember Terry from Professor George Nobbe's English poetry class. I remember thinking, several times back then, that Terry McNally was understanding things that I hadn't processed."

Larry recounts his career as an orthopedic surgeon: medical school, a surgical internship, two years of service as an Army surgeon and an orthopedic surgery residency at

Columbia University Medical Center-NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, then a four-year practice in North Miami Beach, Fla. He and his wife, Sandy, whom he has known since high school, moved to Westport, Conn., where they raised their two daughters and son, and where they have lived for 44 years. Larry notes, "I have been an orthopedic surgeon in solo practice in Norwalk, Conn. For several years I was chief of orthopedic surgery at Norwalk Hospital. I stopped operating six or seven years ago but I have continued to see patients in my office. I have enjoyed doing that and think that what I do is worthwhile. I am on staff at Norwalk Hospital. In March, with the need to shelter at home, I began teleconferences with my patients."

Regarding other activities that he and Sandy have enjoyed, Larry mentions, "working in children's summer camps where I ran water-front programs. Later we would volunteer and spend vacation weeks there, where I was camp doctor. In past years we were involved in Jewish community activities locally and also with partners in Israel. Sandy has taught in a Brooklyn junior high school and at Norwalk Community College. She continues to be involved with a Bridgeport, Conn., charter school. Through the years we have chartered sailboats, sometimes just the two of us, sometimes with friends, often with family, vacationing in many beautiful places. We look forward to doing that again. I have a small outboard motor boat and a canoe. Sandy kayaks."

**Victor Chang** BUS'62 and his wife, Lily, residents of California, spend several months in New York to visit family. Victor regularly attended class luncheons. This past year, their departure for home was aborted when the pandemic and "shelter-in-place" order arrived. Victor shares, "Lily and I are in lockdown in our apartment overlooking the Hudson River. We are doing well despite learning of the passing of our classmates and several close friends. The tragedy of Covid-19 is heartbreaking, yet the blessing of family and friends keeps us going. I take a little time each day to write a narrative of how this pandemic impacts our economy and our history in the future. Columbia gave us an appreciation for the study of the 'humanities and public policies,' and my foundation in economics

at the Business School, along with post-graduate studies in long-wave cycles, have possibly given me some insights that I can pass on to my children and grandchild.

"After the nation survived the Great Recession, I was relieved, but concerned that the economic reforms were insufficient in addressing inequality and racism in the nation. I never imagined that we would be led by an unorthodox administration. Covid confirmed my fears that unforeseen hardships would change our world and challenge our ability to correct the mistakes of past generations. Globalization increased world growth and raised hundreds of millions of people around the world out of poverty, but it also enriched an 'elite class,' leaving the majority of people behind. The path ahead will be jagged as the world attempts to adjust to the shock of losing \$35-plus trillion of GDP growth worldwide; the GDP growth gap. The Fed is providing liquidity and unprecedented amounts of money and credit. On the fiscal side, Congress has provided more than \$3 trillion in funds to keep the economy afloat. More must be done. In the process, federal fiscal deficits will double or triple in the next decade, surpassing the deficits accumulated during WWII. Concerned about the economic outlook, I am even more concerned that the lack of positive leadership around the world and the deterioration of valued institutions — cultural, judicial, press, government, partisan think tanks and so on — will hamper our attempts to reform the future. In long-wave economic theory, it may take a generation to correct the wrongs of the past."

New York Supreme Court, Civil Branch, while continuing to read books that interest him. His wife, Phyllis Gelman, continues working at her women's rights and civil rights practice. Their son, Nathaniel, recently completed his fourth year as the supervisor of an Appalachian Mountain Club facility in western Massachusetts. Their daughter, Anna Gelman, is the administrative assistant to the head of information technology at a hedge fund in New York. Last spring, they participated in a Zoom Seder with **Joe Rosenstein** and his family. Sam wishes our classmates well in these trying times.

**Gene Milone** has been attending every virtual conference in sight. He says it's great to participate in meetings without having to face the hazards of travel. He is also using robotic telescopes and far contacts to get data, and using his own cameras and telescopes to observe such phenomena as comets and meteor showers.

Last August, Gene's paper on an eclipsing binary star in a galactic star cluster was published in *The Astrophysical Journal*. This is noteworthy in that the modeling of this system took six years to complete, a project he says he could not possibly have undertaken if he had to face annual reports to the university and to granting agencies. Being emeritus has its liberating aspects.

Gene has been able to remain socially distanced and is staying healthy, and hopes all classmates are doing the same.

**Bob Salzman** LAW'64 campaigned hard for the Biden/Harris ticket and for the reelection of Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) and Congressman Frank Pallone Jr. (D-N.J.). On October 21, Bob presented his election predictions to the approximately 30 classmates who attended our class's monthly Zoom meeting.

**Barry McCallion** continues to work in the studio making "artist's books." His dealer, Priscilla Juvelis, displayed his works in a new fall/winter catalog. Last February, Barry was interviewed by Francesca Rheannon for "Writer's Voice" and, recently, Joan Baum (*Baum on Books*) reviewed his treatment of "Beowulf" for NPR. Barry's wife, Joanne, has been doing virtual activities such as choral singing.

Barry and Joanne recently had their 1932 fireplace repaired, after stalling for years. The mason who came to repair it was a local. He

## 1961

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
ccreunion@columbia.edu

Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Michael Hausig**  
mhausig@yahoo.com

**Sam Cherniak** LAW'80 continues to draft judicial decisions as a member of the Law Department,



Dr. Jennifer Ashton '91 (left) and her son, Alex Ashton '20, at Alex's "faux graduation" on May 14 with her parents, Dorothy Garfein TC'66 and Dr. Oscar Garfein '61.

walked into the living room, took one look at the fireplace and said, "I was here as a kid. I remember the heart-shaped stone over the mantel. My father, Sebastian Arnold, built this fireplace."

The son is a second-generation mason, and 11th- or 12th-generation East Hamptoner. The memory and the tie-in causes each fire to burn a little brighter.

Barry and Joanne hope to resume traveling once the pandemic is resolved. First on their list is to see Istanbul again.

**Oscar Garfein PS'65, BUS'97** writes this has been a trying year but a triumphant one as well. His family is in good health, although his son Evan (a misguided soul who attended Princeton) developed Covid-19 in April. A wonderful story about Evan can be found on [goprincetontigers.com](http://goprincetontigers.com). Thankfully Evan recovered completely and went back to work as chief of plastic and reconstructive surgery at the Bronx's Montefiore Medical Center.

Oscar's daughter Jennifer Ashton '91, PS'00, HN'16 had an incredibly busy six months as ABC's chief medical correspondent, on air with *Good Morning America* and now GMA3, most days, as well as extra duty during an incredibly busy last two weeks in late September/early October.

Jennifer is also a practicing ob-gyn.

Alex '20, Oscar's grandson, majored in math/computer science and is now gainfully employed as a software development engineer at

Amazon. Oscar's granddaughter, Chloe, who was supposed to start her sophomore year at Harvard, where she plays ice hockey, has taken the year off and is working for a nonprofit and a law firm.

In Oscar's immediate family, there are eight Columbia degrees. Oscar continues his small private practice in cardiology, still enjoying the privilege of caring for people and being tremendously upset at what the corporatization of medical care has done to the tradition of patient care. Dr. Francis W. Peabody in the early part of the 20th century famously said that "the secret of the care of the patient is caring for the patient." That imperative has gone the way of the Dodo and replaced by attention to a corporate bottom line. But, aside from some transient orthopedic problems, Oscar is doing pretty well.

Oscar saw **Tony Adler** in West Palm Beach, Fla., last spring, talks with **Arnie Intrater** occasionally and, before the shutdown, enjoyed our monthly class get-togethers with classmates in NYC, organized by Tony. Oscar says he is tremendously grateful for the education we received at Columbia, and mourns the changes wrought by the ill-founded demands of "progressive," so-called "liberal" thought on what he views as the major gift we got from alma mater in our day: the power to think. Locke's essay on Liberty has never been as important to remember as nowadays. One has to know both sides of the question to really understand the

problem. That imperative sadly is missing from our public discourse.

Monthly class luncheons have been replaced temporarily by Zoom meetings because of the Covid-19 situation. **Tony Adler** has been setting up the meetings. You can expect an email from Tony about time and subject and, if you are interested, respond to Tony to receive a link to the meeting.

Sadly, John Istvan '62 passed away on September 28, 2020, after a brave and courageous struggle with esophageal cancer. John fought valiantly and passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family. He valued his friendship with his classmates over the years and will be missed greatly. John is survived by his wife, Fran, and other members of his family. Church services were pending at the time I was notified. [Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

[Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

## 1962

**John Freidin**  
jff@bicyclevt.com

Thirty-seven years ago, **Dave Nachamie** was recruited as the first urologist in Lincolnton, N.C. He retired in 2017. His late wife was a political activist whose calls for religious and racial tolerance angered many in their community. They had twins: Deidre, a lawyer in Lincolnton, and Eric, an administrator for Charlotte, N.C. Dave is delighted "how often my cross country and track teammates appear in Class Notes and what good and kind contributions they have made. I still race up to 10K and train with my twins. In 1995 Deidre and I ran the New York City Marathon. This spring I was surprised to read an article in our local newspaper by **Larry Wittner GSAS'67** about his efforts to clean up abuse by the NYC police."

**Bob Lefkowitz PS'66** reports, "After graduating from P&S and doing postgraduate training at Columbia University Medical Center–NewYork–Presbyterian Hospital, the NIH and Mass General, I moved

to Duke University in 1973. I've spent my entire career there and am now the James B. Duke Professor of Medicine and Biochemistry and an investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. My work focuses on receptors for drugs and hormones. My lab's research has garnered several awards, including the 2012 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and I received a 2014 John Jay Award for distinguished professional achievement.

"Alas, I have kept up only with classmates who attended P&S with me and also graduated in 1966: **Bart Nisonson, Dave Tucker, Larry William** and **Bernie Patten**. Recently I co-authored a light-hearted memoir, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Stockholm*. Classmates might enjoy this book; it includes three chapters on Columbia.

"Upon graduation I became engaged to my high school girlfriend, Arna Zuboff. We married a year later and had three sons and two daughters. I've seen all grow up, get married and lead fascinating lives, and had the pleasure of knowing my six grandchildren. Arna and I divorced, and in 1991 I married Lynn Tilley, a Southern Belle — born and raised in Durham, N.C. — whereas I'm from the Bronx."

**Alan Barnes** writes: "As we approach a momentous election, I feel hopeful, but anxious. I practice psychiatry half time and briefly retired, but didn't care for it — just got lazy. My daughter, Alejandra, is a physician, certified in internal medicine and pediatrics."

**Mike Charney** practices medicine full time (infectious disease) and lives in San Jose, Calif. For most of 2020, he treated Covid-19 patients at a hospital that serves a largely Hispanic neighborhood. Their incidence of infection is much higher than the state's average, and their clinical presentations more serious.

**Larry William** purchased a new camera and has begun some nude photography. "But," he complains, "my wife has cramped my style, insisting I wear at least a jock strap so I don't scare the models."

Some resolutions from **Anthony Valerio**: "Support my wife's university teaching, i.e., put myself aside. Accept my need for five edits 'stead of three. Think three times before speaking. Embrace my mates."

**John Golembé's** wife, Evelyn, passed away in July 2019 after a



three-year battle with cancer. They were married 54 years ago at St. Paul's Chapel. Since their family and friends are so scattered and spring was Evelyn's favorite season, John scheduled the celebration of her life for last April. When Covid-19 threatened Pittsburgh, they canceled. "There is so much uncertainty in the world," John writes. "We don't know when to hold the service, but we surely will."

**Steve Stein** recounts a remarkable story: "I don't know how many classmates have had Covid-19, but here's a survivors' tale. My wife, Linda, and I live in Westport, Conn., and have recovered from the coronavirus. We got it in March, when we knew only that it was in China, under control and would disappear with the warm weather.

"We started with nasty colds — sneezing, congested heads, runny noses. Then Linda lost taste and smell, and suffered burning discomfort in her chest and abdomen. I felt tired and lousy — chilled to the bone, shivering, but no fever. Neither of us had a cough or shortness of breath. When Linda began running fevers of 100.5, she qualified for viral testing. I didn't, because I had neither fever nor chest symptoms!

"We had heard 'Anyone who wants a test can get one.' But it wasn't true! Even today, access to testing depends on where you live, whether you play professional ball or reside in a White House, or how bad the outbreak is in your area. After Linda tested positive, I ran temperatures of 103–104.5 for 48 hours despite taking Tylenol.

"In retrospect, we consider ourselves lucky. We had no respiratory distress and didn't need oxygen, ventilators or hospitalization. But recovering was no picnic. Whenever we thought we were healing, fever, fatigue and muscle aches returned. After four weeks we started to feel like normal 80-year-olds. So what have we learned? This not the flu! It's a nasty, miserable contagion. Do everything possible not to get it! And old people can survive it!"

**Richard Toder's** story is different: "Luckily my wife, Joan, and I were able to spend the summer in the Berkshires, and then a month in New York. Now we're happily ensconced in Naples, Fla., where the virus is weaker than on Florida's east coast. Between golf, bridge, reading, vicious games of

Super Big Boggle and competitions completing the *Times's* Mini Crossword, we are pleasantly occupied. But we do worry — and get angry — about the state of the political affairs in our country. We hope the election will improve things."

In Red Hook, N.Y., **Frank Stoppenbach** enjoyed the beauty of autumn and bumper crops of persimmons and paw paws, although the deer got most of the persimmons. But he is not enjoying — and has many questions about — the lockdown, not merely because he can't visit his grandchildren in Australia: "Was the severity of the pandemic greatly exaggerated through a math error, as suggested in a Cambridge scientific journal? Could the consequences of lockdown be worse than the pandemic? Is the Swedish approach better — no lockdown, allowing broad immunity to develop — as the decline in cases and deaths there suggests? Why lock down for this coronavirus, when it seems less deadly than past ones?" Frank believes there wasn't sufficient inquiry into consequences and options, as we'd learned to do at Columbia. But he's grateful for the medical care that made his wife, Kathy, healthy after different challenges.

**Dan Stone** reports that Manitoba is doing reasonably well with Covid-19, although the July days of nearly no infections have passed. "We're back to restrictions, community spread and widespread concern. The first snowfall put an end to lunches in the park, and my Mark Morris Dance Group has returned to Zoom. My research would go better if the archives were open. But I'm watching wonderful international discussions on Holocaust historiography."

**Pete Stevenson** writes: "Never mind the inflammatory charges, the whining and the discord — our nation's turmoil boils down to 'It's the economy, stupid!' In a few days we'll choose either a financially responsible entrepreneur with a rough persona who will build a strong economy or a corrupt 'nice guy' whose tax and economic policies will prolong the corona financial disaster for decades. So, how do I feel? Worried. Happily, I'm nearly 81 so I won't be here to endure a bad decision. But my four children and nine grandchildren will.

"Nevertheless, I am doing well. Despite having broken a number

of my parts by being headstrong, careless and perhaps foolish, I am active and work full time as a marine surveyor. Sometimes I enjoy as many as three boat rides in a week. I'm also an officer in the local Knights of Columbus and local United States Power Squadrons."

**Andy Jampoler** spent most of 2020 obsessing about the state of the Union and the Covid-19-shadowed presidential campaign. "During breaks from that enervating pastime, I've been working on a memoir/history of the past eight decades, *The Road to Here*. The story begins, as I did, in German-occupied eastern Poland in January 1942 and will proceed by decades until the present. I'm 65,000 words in, with more to come. When, if ever, done, it'll be my ninth book."

**John Kater** failed retirement and returned to Hong Kong in February to teach at HKSKH Ming Hua Theological College, where he's spent a semester a year for more than a decade. "By the time I arrived, the virus had overwhelmed months of violent demonstrations. I expected to return to the United States in June, but by then the virus was raging across the U.S. so I stayed for another semester. Although sometimes classes had to be online or hibernation was required, the situation has improved enough to allow in-person meetings and eating out. I am not sorry to be 7,000 miles away from the chaos of the virus and presidential campaign. My Hong Kong friends view America with sadness and disbelief. Many will never visit during the current climate of hate. I expected to return to the U.S. in December, and don't know when I'll be able to come back. It will be harder to leave than usual."

Due to CCT's word limit, I am unable to include notes from **Larry Gaston, Dan Fife, John Garman, Russ Abbott and Bob Meyer** in this issue. Their notes will appear in the Spring/Summer 2020 issue.

## 1963

**Paul Neshamkin**  
pauln@helpauthors.com

Every Thursday at 12:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, about 20 of your classmates gather for another Class

of '63 Virtual Lunch on Zoom. More than 35 different classmates have joined in during the last few months. I mentioned this in the Fall 2020 issue's Class Notes, and the tradition continues. Who ever imagined that more than 57 years after graduation, we would have a chance to spend an hour and a half with classmates each week? We hope you will join us — the conversations are terrific. Simply email me, and I will invite you to the next one.

**Bernie Kabak** sent me the following last April, and I neglected to add it in our Summer 2020 or Fall 2020 Class Notes. Sorry, Bernie!

"Henry Graff GSAS'49, a former chair of Columbia's history department and a recipient of the Society of Columbia Graduates's Great Teacher Award, died on April 7. His obituary in *The New York Times* mentions that he 'rhapsodized about teaching at Columbia.' I can attest to his ardor for alma mater's endowments. Professor Graff was my faculty advisor. When I sounded him out about my interest in spending my junior year at Hebrew University, he told me to go if I chose, but not to study history there for credit. As estimable as the university in Jerusalem was, he just saw Columbia's history department as being superior.

"Given that advice, I stayed put at Columbia. (I later spent two years in Israel, initially as a kibbutz volunteer during the Yom Kippur War.) But that was hardly Professor Graff's only influence on me. When he saw the boys in his class taking notes with ballpoints, he exhorted us to use what he called a 'grownup' pen: a fountain pen. Having received such a pen (a Sheaffer Snorkel) as a high school graduation gift, I was equipped for a college career of writing — in means of execution if not in literary style — like a grownup.

"Among the lions of the history department whom Professor Graff so esteemed was Walter Metzger GSAS'46. Professor Metzger's knowledge was vast, yet his standard demanded that each student's paper demonstrate that the writer knew more about the topic than he did. Yikes! I bring his name up here because Professor Metzger's lectures were so dense with information and sweeping in concepts that taking notes with a fountain pen proved to be a challenge; my pen would

sometimes run out of ink before I could get it all down.

"My writing like a grownup did not end with my Columbia years; it became a lifetime praxis. During my career, I worked in offices close to the World Trade Center. Happily, nearby was a shop — an uncommon enterprise not many cities could sustain but which you'd sort of expect to find in New York — the Fountain Pen Hospital. The shop not only did repairs but also sold fountain pens, displayed in vitrines like jewels. As I write, the Fountain Pen Hospital is closed, a victim of the coronavirus. Will it reopen? Well, it lived through 9-11, rode out the onslaught of word processing and emails, and survived the menace of social media. There is reason to hope."

[Editor's note: See Graff's obituary online in the Summer 2020 issue "Around the Quads": [bit.ly/3lb1Njz](https://bit.ly/3lb1Njz).]

If any of you realize that I failed to publish your note, please let me know!

**Robert Shlaer** writes, "You said in the Fall 2020 issue that you wanted to hear what people have been up to during the Covid-19 incarceration, so here is my contribution:

"I have for the last few years been piping a welcome for the Santa Fe Traditional Music Festival, which is always the last weekend in August at Camp Stoney, along the Santa Fe Trail in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and just a 20-minute drive from my house. Last year the gathering was impossible, so the festival board decided to create a virtual one, and all the participants submitted their own videos for incorporation. My playing is in

two parts, first at the beginning, and then near the end. If this is to your taste, the whole thing is available for free online: [bit.ly/2KCzIF8](https://bit.ly/2KCzIF8)."

**Nick Zill** asks, "How do politicians get away with telling lies about their accomplishments or blatantly exaggerating the effectiveness of government programs? Answer: They do so because many members of the public, young and old, are not very knowledgeable about national issues. Please read my latest blog post for the Institute for Family Studies, 'Political Awareness Begins At Home': [bit.ly/2UV7Rlk](https://bit.ly/2UV7Rlk). As well as documenting the general lack of awareness, it shows how political knowledge relates to the frequency of parent-child conversations about national issues; the frequency of reading newspapers, but not to watching news on television; and the type of schools to which students go and the courses they take."

**Paul Lehrer** sent in a great, long Class Note through the CCT website ([college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\\_class\\_note](https://college.columbia.edu/cct/submit_class_note)). Rather than edit it, I will include part now and the rest in the Spring/Summer issue.

"It is hard to imagine, but my wife, Phyllis, and I have been living in New Jersey for 50 years as of last September. After earning a bachelor's in sociology and psychology and then a doctoral degree in clinical psychology, from Harvard, and after working for a few years in Boston, I came to Rutgers University as a fledgling assistant professor in the psychology department in 1970. After two years I moved to the psychiatry department of what was then called Rutgers Medical School, now Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, where I became professor and taught for the next 48 of my 50 years at Rutgers. Phyllis and I have lived in the same small bedroom community halfway between Princeton and New Brunswick all this time, so I could easily commute to Rutgers and Phyllis to Princeton, where she was a professor of piano at Westminster Choir College, now Westminster College of the Arts at Rider University. Both of us retired from our academic positions last June.

"Along the way we had two beautiful children, Jeffrey SIPA'94, who now serves as a foreign service officer for USAID, and Suzanne, who has followed in her mother's

footsteps, earning a master's in piano performance and becoming a prominent piano teacher in the Princeton area, and now also studying community organization at the Rutgers School of Social Work. Jeff married a lovely Russian woman who started out studying physics in Moscow, then earned an M.B.A. here, and since then has been holding responsible State Department positions as they travel around the world. Mostly because of Jeff, we have traveled to the far corners of the world, to places far off the tourist circuit: Georgia, Tajikistan, El Salvador, Guatemala and the Philippines.

"All of them are places well worth knowing, despite the bad press some of them have had in recent years, with interesting histories and friendly, interesting people. In my retirement I am hoping to read more on the histories of these places. Suzanne married a fabulous guy who now is associate registrar at Princeton University, after also working for a while at Columbia and earning a master's there. We have five beautiful grandchildren between the ages of 10 and 17.

"My academic career was influenced in a major way by the Psychology 101 course I took at Columbia with the great Professor Fred Keller. Those who took the course will remember that it was entirely about operant conditioning, where each of us were encouraged to teach our rats to do something special. I never particularly liked rats, but I got interested in applying this knowledge to helping people with emotional problems, so I became one of the early practitioners and researchers in the discipline now called cognitive behavior therapy."

Late last summer I learned of the deaths of **Paul Reale** and **Jeff Thompson**. Paul was recently mentioned in our Class Notes. He had been going through a productive musical period in the past year, even as his health declined. Jeff was a fraternity brother and good friend, and had been a semi-regular at our lunch meetings. I had no idea that he was in declining health and I am shocked and saddened by his death. Rest in peace.

[Editor's note: See Fall 2020 "Obituaries."]

**David Alpern** forwarded more sad news: "Just got the Fall 2020 CCT and see **Richard Tuerk's**

reference to **Steve Shirk**, also my high school classmate, whose recent passing I am sad to report.

"For decades a teacher at the American School of Paris, subsequently retired and living in a small town nearby — when he wasn't on one of his regular global jaunts — Steve was an endless source of good jokes, political cartoons and song parodies, but informed his many email contacts last August that he was hospitalized with a 'dominant right hand not working ... probably of neurological origin.'

"Turned out to be a brain tumor, which he said was responding to radiation and chemo, and he was quite optimistic. But, still under treatment, he died suddenly in his sleep, according to a nephew, Ben Wildavsky, to whom one can send condolences and get more information ([ben.wildavsky@gmail.com](mailto:ben.wildavsky@gmail.com)), and who will be arranging a Zoom memorial."

Rest in peace, Steve.

[Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

Once the pandemic is over and you're back in NYC, you can reconnect with classmates at our regular second Thursday class lunches at the Columbia Club (we will still gather at the Princeton Club). I'm a pessimist but hoping we might be able to meet again by February 11, and then on March 11 and April 8. In any case, we will continue to meet virtually on Zoom every Thursday at 12:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Just email me for an invitation.

In the meantime, please let us know what you are up to, how you're doing and what's next. Stay safe!

## 1964

**Norman Olch**  
[norman@nolch.com](mailto:norman@nolch.com)

I am writing this note on the last weekend before Election Day. New coronavirus infections across the country are almost 100,000 per day, and epidemiologists are forecasting that the worst is still ahead of us. In my last two columns I expressed the hope that when they are published society's lot will have improved. While that has not come to be, I hope that when this column is published the situation will be better.

**Ivan Weissman**, in New York City, writes what I imagine many of us have been thinking: "What my



## Contact CCT

Update your address, email or phone; submit a Class Note, new book, photo, obituary or Letter to the Editor; or send us an email. Click "Contact Us" at [college.columbia.edu/cct](https://college.columbia.edu/cct).



kids are experiencing now reminds me every day of how great our Columbia experience was and how lucky we were. Can you imagine how sad it would have been to be deprived of those in-person scintillating lectures by inspiring instructors like Walter Metzger GSAS'46; James Shenton '49, GSAS'54; Joseph Rothschild; Zbigniew Brzezinski; Henry Graff GSAS'49; and so many others? We all know the thrill of learning would not have been anywhere near the same through a computer screen.

"That's what my wife Jane's and my kids are experiencing now. Julia is in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., for her junior year at Skidmore College, but her classes are all online. And Jesse's final year of classes at NYU Law School are also remote. Sad to see young people deprived of such a wonderful aspect of school."

**Bernard Catalinotto** checks in from California: "Greetings to the Class of '64 from the left coast. Since the highs and lows of my four years at Columbia with you, I've had an adventurous life, two or three careers, a wonderful family, two children — one of whom is a Columbia grad and the other of whom is in med school — and most excitingly, a new grandchild, Hannah, who lives with her parents in San Rafael, Calif., a few miles north of our house in Mill Valley. Of course, with Covid-19 raging around us, I only get to babysit while social distancing — with mask, gloves and shield while she sleeps in the stroller, but we feel very lucky to live close by.

"The adventure continues: In 2019, my wife, Roberta, and I visited the birthplaces of my grandparents and great-grandparents in western Sicily, and old friends in Rome. Since last year it's all Zoom, all the time. Every Monday I lead a French chat session for an hour; Thursday it's Italian. Let me know if you'd like to join.

"Every Wednesday I meet with my three colleagues on the leadership team of our local grassroots organization, Mill Valley Community Action Network, which we've grown from scratch to 1,500 members all working — and donating — to keep our democracy a democracy.

"In my spare time I'm trying to monetize my patent. It's related to mapping, and you can get a taste of it by downloading the Mill Valley Community Map Book Bundle

from Avenza Maps on your iPhone. It's free to Columbia grads (and everyone else, too).

"I'm looking forward to our next reunion, in 2024; meanwhile I'm hoping **Norman Olch** will move the monthly luncheon from restaurant to Zoom so I can catch up with some of you in real time."

**Steve Case** writes from the nation's capital: "Late last February, just ahead of the pandemic, my wife, Margaret, and I cruised for two weeks in Australia and New Zealand. Various on-board speakers were, surprisingly to me, very low on Winston Churchill, accusing him of having drawn military away from homes there to fight Gen. Erwin Rommel in North Africa. Churchill, they said, had promised the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps all the protection they would ever need from Hong Kong and Singapore, which of course evaporated quickly in December 1941. They said their only salvation was the U.S. military forces sent there early in 1942, i.e., the units that almost immediately went into action on Guadalcanal and so on.

"Owing to Covid-19, I, like everyone else, have been laying low here in the Washington, D.C., area. I enjoy working with my co-director, **Gene Meyer**, on the board of the *Washington Independent Review of Books*. Check out this outfit on the internet for great stuff on books! Also, the book group in D.C. with, among others, **Dave Levine**, **Jack Ventura**, **Barry Shapiro**, Marty Blank '65, Neil Silver '65 and Elliot Singer is always good. Our leader (via Zoom) is Professor Pat Grieve from the Columbia humanities faculty. Last summer she led us through all 900 pages of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (great read!). In the fall we finished fascinating selections from Herodotus. We move next to revisit that old war horse, *Hamlet*."

**Peter Thall** reports from Connecticut on his children and his efforts to help the families of those who wrote the pop music of the '50s: "My youngest child, Sophie, recently married, virtual-style. She is in charge of product development at Laura Mercier, a cosmetics division of Shiseido, having spent some years at NARS, another division, and [makeup artist] Pat McGrath's start-up.

"My oldest, Emily, a lawyer, is head of marketing, PR and business

development at a 350-lawyer firm in New York City; her foray into pro bono immigration work with asylum-seekers from Central America has given her a new and different perspective on what lawyers can do for others, and my stepson Vincent, a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer (while with *The New York Times*), recently began to work for Apple after consulting with Apple for years regarding its cameras and photo systems. Thankfully all love their work; sadly only Vincent (via his prize) has a connection with Columbia, except for an occasional football game where you might have seen my grandchildren cheering on the Lions — always to a win (don't tell them that they don't always win).

"I work full time for recording artists and songwriters and have developed a niche practice in which I assist creators or their heirs to recapture U.S. copyrights that the creators might have sold decades ago. A fairly obscure provision of the U.S. copyright law allows this to the surprise and financial rescue for these creators and, more often than not, their widow(er)s and surviving children. My article *Re-capturing the Family's Literary Jewels: Termination of Copyrights* was published in October in *Delaware Lawyer*. I lecture and write as much as I can to educate trusts and estates lawyers and others on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to convert a trickle of royalties into a huge annuity for them and their heirs. Among the copyrights that have been the subject of these terminations are the soundtrack of our age group's lifetimes: 'What Now My Love,' 'Let It Be Me,' 'Hang On Sloopy,' 'Come a Little Bit Closer,' a slew of 'Philadelphia Sound' songs including 'I'll Be Around (I'll Be There)' and 'Somebody Loves You (Baby),' and even the 1960s songs made famous by The Hollies (remember 'Carrie Anne?'), all co-written by Graham Nash. I, too, have recently expanded my understanding of what lawyers can do for others.

"The most difficult news of the past months, other than dealing with Covid-19, is that my brother-in-law Seymour Hendel '53 passed away in October. But for him, I would not have attended Columbia, been such a rooter for its value to the world or probably even become a lawyer."

[Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

**Ira Jaffe** SOA'67, professor emeritus at the University of New Mexico, where he founded the Department of Cinematic Arts & Media Arts, has written many books and scholarly articles on film. His essay about Romanian filmmaker Cristian Mungui appeared in a special cinema issue of *The Romanian Journal of European Studies* in December. Since 2007, Mungui has been awarded the Palme d'Or, Best Director and Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival. The *Journal* is distributed in the United States by Columbia University Press.

Finally, I continue to do my legal work at home, with only a rare trip to the office. I had my first remote oral argument on Microsoft Teams before a panel of appellate judges. I enjoy being in the courtroom but I think I caught a glimpse of the future. I take breaks with walks in Central Park — masked and socially distant.

Stay in touch. Your classmates want to hear from you. This note will appear around mid-January. I wish all of you and your loved ones a Happy New Year and Good Health, Peace, Joy and Prosperity.

## 1965

**Leonard B. Pack**  
leonard@packlaw.us

**Joel Berger** (joelberger1955@yahoo.com) recently published a law review article, "Reforming the NYPD and Its Enablers Who Thwart Reform." The citation will be: *55 New England Law Review* 1. Read it online: [bit.ly/3eQLW82](https://bit.ly/3eQLW82).

According to Joel, "This is pretty much my swan song. After nearly 30 years of monitoring the NYPD, first as an executive at the NYC Corporation Counsel's office with access to secret documents not generally made available to the public, and then after learning additional NYPD secrets while litigating federal civil rights cases against the agency, I wanted to tell the public everything I know about the NYPD and the many city agencies that assist the NYPD in covering up the misdeeds of its officers. Much of the article describes events and policies that are not generally known even to experts in the field but need to be known at this critical time when so many activists are demanding

changes. At 76, I am semi-retired with a small caseload, and my goal is certainly not to achieve any renown in academia. I simply want the public to know what I know and use it to press for the most necessary and comprehensive reforms.”

I noticed that Joel had a Letter to the Editor published in the September 14, 2020, issue of *The New Yorker* responding to an article on police unions. Read it online: [bit.ly/3pgv7YW](http://bit.ly/3pgv7YW).

**Michael Cook** ([michael.cook@srz.com](mailto:michael.cook@srz.com)), an omnivorous reader, notified me, “You should know that **Niles Eldredge** GSAS’69 got positive notice in the recent book *A Dominant Character: The Radical Science and Restless Politics of J. B. S. Haldane*, by Samantha Subramanian, the compelling biography of Haldane, a famous British geneticist. According to the book, Niles and Stephen Jay Gould had confirmed one of Haldane’s early theories. I had the privilege of working with Niles as kitchen help at what was then known as Johnson Hall almost 60 years ago.”

I add that Niles had a great set of reminiscences in CCT Online’s “Take Five”: [bit.ly/38xWzeV](http://bit.ly/38xWzeV).

Space limitations forced me to defer the concluding portion of **David Sard’s** submission in the Fall 2020 issue. Here it is: “The Covid-19 crisis has spared me for the most part. My relatives are OK. I work from home using Zoom. My son and I leave the house to shop for groceries and to walk around our neighborhood in West Orange, N.J. The state of American politics is terrifying. I feel as though I am living

in a burning house. Democracy is in grave danger. We have a madman in the White House, an emperor with no clothes who has either bought off or terrorized the entire Republican party. Maybe the dilemmas of modern life are just too complicated for people to understand. How could anybody vote for a man who puts babies in cages and ships children away from their families to countries where they have no families? The Trump phenomenon has shown us how a Mussolini or a Hitler could win an election. American democracy — Lincoln’s ‘last best hope of Earth’ — was painfully won at the cost of tremendous suffering and lives lost: Black, white, Native American, Asian et al. Now Trump and his lackeys are dismantling it, brick by brick.

“I hate to end on such a gloomy note. The good news is that I have become a playwright. *The Ballad of Eddie and Jo*, a modern reimagining of Sophocles’s *Oedipus Rex*, had a three-week Actors’ Equity Association Showcase in NYC in 2010. Turns out some old Greek beat me to it. He was very talented guy, I have to admit. *The Private Life of Jesus Christ* had a one-week run in Vancouver a few years ago. It is another reimagining: This time we see Jesus as an adolescent arguing with his parents — Mr. and Mrs. God — because he wants to go off on his own and try his hand at saving a planet in distress. His parents think he’s too young. After a lot of talk about good and evil and other heavy stuff, they let him go. I also have a bunch of sketches, mostly comic. My favorite is about a ghost who comes for psychotherapy.

“I would love to hear from Columbia friends. I apologize for having neglected you: Niles, Lenny, TZ, Richard, Ken, Ralph, Chris, Greg, Neal and Steve. I did have some great teachers, whom I think about frequently. I was moved to see that Howard McP. Davis was honored [with a professorship; read about it online: [bit.ly/32DkYfr](http://bit.ly/32DkYfr)]. ‘Gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.’”

I asked Dave what effect our reading of *Oedipus Rex* in first-year Humanities had on him and his play. He answered, “I’m sure *Oedipus Rex* was resonating in many ways in my unconscious when I wrote *The Ballad of Eddie and Jo*. The funny thing is I was under the delusion that I was making some fundamental changes

in the story. I made him into a foster child who ran away from his foster parents and is looking for his real parents. I also had ‘Eddie’ and his mother having a real relationship, which is developed in the play. I avoided looking at Sophocles until I had finished. Then I was amazed to see how much my version resembled the original. So, it was there all the time. It really grew out of my experiences as a psychologist working with poor kids in Harlem and the South Bronx, Bed-Stuy and the Lower East Side.”

**Derek Wittner** had another letter published in *The New York Times*, this one responding to an op-ed on reopening colleges safely during the pandemic. Read it online: [nyti.ms/3eQXY16](https://nyti.ms/3eQXY16).

## 1966

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

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**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

**Michael Garrett** writes: “We have a large and growing Reunion Committee to plan virtual, in-person and mixed-format events for our 55th reunion, depending on conditions in the late spring. Staying healthy, sane, relevant, busy and safe in our mid-70s is a vastly different undertaking than it was in our 40s, and we aspire to convene a fair portion of the class to compare notes on our impressive abilities to do so in these politically disastrous, Covid-19-ridden, socially unstable times. We will also look back, through light blue-colored glasses, at our time at Columbia, and then forward through its extraordinary current transformation.

“To join the Reunion Committee, email me at [michaelgarrett@earthlink.net](mailto:michaelgarrett@earthlink.net).”

**Calvin H. Johnson** writes, “I drafted a survey for the class, with many hands also lifting it up. It is based on a Yale reunion survey that provoked good conversations. You should have received it. Do fill it out, so we can all evaluate life

since 1966. **Neill Brownstein** has taken over the organization of the Reunion Committee, with help from the Alumni Office, and he is an organizational miracle.

“Like many, I am on house arrest until the vaccine comes in. But what a wonderfully stimulating time. I have three book discussion groups that are becoming pretty darn erudite. Talk and walks are the greatest institution in America, and I have put together eight of them per week. Lovely Zoom meetings with people I love. Plus, the University of Texas law school, where I continue to teach, has quite fine presentations. I exist to the world in general only digitally.”

**Phil Goldstein** shares, “I wish to remember my friend **Paul Nyden**, who passed away a number of years ago. He became a college professor and then a newspaper reporter active in support of coal miners.”

**Neill Brownstein** writes: “Paul J. Cronin is an honorary member of the Columbia Classes of 1965–1966–1967–1968–1969–1970 via his extraordinary 10-episode documentary, *A Time to Stir*, which captures the emotions, actions and events at Columbia 50-plus years ago. A must-view! Paul shared the link: [atimetostir.com](http://atimetostir.com); the password for all chapters is ‘atime tostir’ (one word; no quote marks).”

**Neal H. Hurwitz** writes: “I am very pleased to be a member of the Class of ’66 55th Reunion Committee with **Neill Brownstein**, **Tom Brunner** et al., and to pledge for the John Jay Associates.

“I am happy to see classmates making donations to the College.

“I have benefited greatly by my connections to Columbia, including Project Double Discovery; Friends of SNCC; the lightweight football squad (I’ll always remember and hold in high regard the leadership there of QB **Tom Harrold**!); and all the fine professors. My experiences and learning on the Ad Hoc Faculty Negotiating Committee (as the youngest there) in ’68 are reflected in the book *A Time to Stir: Columbia ’68* (2018), edited by Paul J. Cronin.

“I worked with Alan F. Westin at his Center for American Liberties, and helped Dr. Bob Liebert (Mark Rudd ’69’s ‘shrink’) with *Radical and Militant Youth: A Psychoanalytical Inquiry* (1971). Same with *Spec* editor Jerry Avorn ’69 et al., on *Up Against the Ivy Wall: A History of the Columbia Crisis*.

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"My greatest regret is the death in summer '62 of C. Wright Mills, with whom I was set to learn from and work. That sad event changed the course of my life, as I switched from my first love, history, to public law and government, but with the fine cast of Julian Franklin GSAS'60; Herbert Deane '42, GSAS'53; Alan Westin; and Mark Kesselman; and at GSAS, with **Ira Katznelson** and Roger Hilsman, who appointed me his TA.

"I miss those faculty friends now gone: Deane; Westin; Hilsman; Walter Metzger GSAS'46; Terry Hopkins; Manny Wallerstein '51, GSAS'59; and Marshall Shulman SIPA'48, GSAS'59.

"Recently I have had the pleasure of reconnecting with great Columbia QB and famed cardiologist Dr. Archie Roberts '65. His Living Heart Foundation also works with the NFL.

"We are living in very strange times. Please find me on Facebook at Neal Hugh Hurwitz, and on LinkedIn at Neal H. Hurwitz."

**Joseph Albeck** shares: "My memories of the Class of '66 remain vivid and warm. A few years have indeed passed since we last met, but the pictures in the 1966 *Columbia* I

sion is erasing the emails that tell me someone else has looked at an academic paper I published years ago about conflict resolution. My 1989 book of poems has stopped selling on Amazon, so I am working on a memoir that puts those poems and a bunch of newer ones in the context of my family's Holocaust background and my personal struggles as I lived my life. **Alex Auerbach**, who has been a reliable friend these many years, has kindly offered to edit my ungrammatical prose and translate it into comprehensible English.

"I have kept in intermittent touch with friends from my Citizenship Council days, including **Alex, Steve Weinberg, Dan Friedlander** and **Jim Rosenberg**. Reunions for the Double Discovery Center renewed my friendships with Roger Lehecka '67 and Helen Stambler Neuberger BC'66. **Mike Leibowitz, Mark Berger, Neal Hurwitz** and Frank Guerra still answer my emails, but I have essentially lost contact with childhood friends, including **Phil Cohen** and **Alex Nacht** GS'74. I miss contacts with those classmates I understand are no longer among the living.

look. To celebrate his life as I knew it I wrote an illustrated memoir, posted on my blog: [wp.me/a8pbTM-vy](http://wp.me/a8pbTM-vy).

"It was the third memoir of a dear departed friend I assigned myself to write in the past two years, and the last, I hope, for a good while. These I wrote because I grieved, but most of what I write is different. I'm approaching a sort of closure on my second novel, which is tightly interwoven with the plot and characters of my 2018 thriller, *Turkey Shoot: He Might Not Be the Terrorist You Expected*. Authoring keeps me from sinking into total despair watching my country and planet stumble into disorder and pestilence. It also keeps me sane in isolation, though I've not had to change much of my housebound lifestyle to avoid the pandemic. My spouse of 24 years, Aygül, works half-remotely at MIT, and daughter Deniz the same at the University of Vermont in Burlington.

"Three days from now we'll have an election. The best I can hope for is for it to do no new harm and generate momentum for healing what's been fractured.

"Find what I've been up to at [perfidy.press](http://perfidy.press), and my general take on things at [progressivepilgrim.review](http://progressivepilgrim.review). Please say hey on a contact form or drop a line to [geoff@perfidy.press](mailto:geoff@perfidy.press), and stay very well and totally sane."

**Cliff Rosenthal** GSAS'69 writes: "I'm now in the late stages of my third or fourth career. I stayed on campus after graduation to complete an M.A. in Russian history and pass my orals. Instead of a dissertation, with a colleague I discovered, edited and translated Russian revolutionary memoirs from the Populist movement. I supported myself as a freelance Russian translator while I became a food co-op organizer for American Indian and later migrant farmworker organizations, until I found my enduring passion: credit unions. For 30-plus years I ran a national association for anti-poverty minority credit unions-financial cooperatives.

"At the ripe old age of 67, I set off for Washington, D.C., to establish the Office of Financial Empowerment in Elizabeth Warren's brainchild, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

"Back in Brooklyn, I've spent the last half-dozen years resisting retirement as a consultant and writer, producing *Democratizing Finance: Origins of the Community*

*Development Financial Institutions Movement*, the definitive history of a movement I helped create. These days, living with my editor/author wife, Elayne Archer, I'm contemplating a second edition of my book and longing for an end to the pandemic so I can help babysit our one and only granddaughter. Thankfully, I'm still in touch with lifelong friends **Phil Myers, Frank Mirer, Dan Gover, Gene Fierman** and **Ken Fox**, among others."

## 1967

**Albert Zonana**  
[az164@caa.columbia.edu](mailto:az164@caa.columbia.edu)

**Joseph Solodow** writes: "Seven years into retirement from Southern Connecticut State University, I'm still working, though part-time. I teach one advanced Latin course at Yale every semester. Focused chiefly on teaching, and still devoting some time to research and writing, I'm enjoying an unbeatable professional life. My partner, Laura Harris, and I shuttle, or rather, used to shuttle, between Connecticut and New York. For us, who are exceptionally fortunate, the epidemic has been little more than a mild inconvenience. I hope you can all say the same."

**George Farkas** is the Distinguished Professor of Sociology at UC Irvine. In 2020 he was awarded the Willard Waller Award from the American Sociological Association for career achievement. His research focuses on reducing educational inequality. He and his wife, Judy Kaufman, recently celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary. "As a kid from Queens, I feel lucky to be living in SoCal," George says.

**Arnold Eggers** PS'71 retired as a professor of neurology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in 2018 so he could write a book on the neuroscience of stress, which came out last year. His daughter lives in England and is a teacher. His son is at home doing Columbia College online.

**David Galinsky** recently stepped down as the medical director of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, "which was my first retirement gig after a career as a geriatrician." He says he has almost finished reading all the Lit Hum books that he never got around to during freshman year and still can't believe that he graduated.

*Joseph Albeck '66 is working on a memoir that will include new poetry about his family's Holocaust experiences; Alex Auerbach '66 will be his editor.*

review periodically are still the same. I have known a couple of you since elementary school in Manhattan, but have not been as good at keeping in touch as I should.

"My current update includes having retired from the practice of psychiatry in Boston two years ago; I spend much of my time playing doubles tennis and babysitting my four grandchildren and two step-great-grandchildren. Our three children and their progeny live nearby. My wife, Isabelle, who retired from teaching a few years before me, does the same. The tennis outdoor season is over, and respect for Covid-19 will keep us away from indoor venues. It also kept us from visiting our former home in France last summer.

"Other than taking courses for seniors at Brandeis, my only diver-

"If **Gary Kopf, George DiGiacinto, Paul Ehrlich, Alan Gilmore, Fred Hyman** and **Glenn Sandberg**, or any other classmates, care to renew contact, my email is [jhalbeck@me.com](mailto:jhalbeck@me.com). Best regards to all."

**Geoffrey Dutton** shared news of a passing: "Many fellow alums don't know we lost **Steve Lesser** to degenerative disease in mid-2019. Steve was a well-regarded architect in East Hampton, whom at Columbia, and then at Harvard, was a roommate. We were best men at each other's first weddings. Steve leaves his lovely wife, Celia Jacobsen, and their talented offspring: Allie, a musician; Emma, an artist; and Jon '17, SIPA'20, a math major. I'll always remember Steve for his broad welcoming smile, human-centered approach to design and humane out-

**Don Morris** lives with his wife, Carole Lee, in Cheyenne, Wyo. He retired from part-time radio work last spring and spent last summer and early fall biking, gardening and umpiring baseball while wearing a mask. Two of their three children have purchased homes a few blocks away.

**Marty Andrucki** is in his final year of teaching at Bates College, where after 46 years he is now the senior member of the faculty and the Charles A. Dana Professor of Theater. Until the pandemic, Marty was set to direct his 55th, and final, production at Bates, *Antigone*, in November. He is now teaching dramatic literature, including *Antigone*, remotely. For the past 20 years, Marty has taken students to Budapest to study the politics of Central European theater and film. Three of his plays have been produced in Maine. With his wife, Judy; son, Max '99; occasionally with **Mark Minton** and **Bill Simon**; and regularly with **Rey Buono**, Marty enjoys their island getaway in Penobscot Bay.

**Sin Ming Shaw:** "Hong Kong effectively ceased to be an autonomous polity effective July 1, 2020, when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) imposed a National Security Law that covers a wide range of punishable crimes for any Hong Kong resident. The NSL is draconian. It covers ill-defined concepts as acts of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign or external forces. A writer such as myself writing articles critical of the CCP could easily fall under one or more of these categories. Beijing has now stationed its own security personnel in Hong Kong to monitor any 'anti-China' acts or 'agents of foreign influence.' I have stopped writing for publication and am living in an Orwellian society. We are reminded the CCP is always watching for 'subversive' activities. Other than that, life in Hong Kong seems 'normal.'"

**Gordon Klein** retired from the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Texas Medical Branch in 2009 and spent time traveling and lecturing around the world. He continued his work on bone and muscle loss following burn injury and identified the mechanism by which bone loss induces muscle loss. In 2017 he was made an Overseas Fellow of the Royal Society of

Medicine (London) and the following year was chosen as an Inaugural Fellow of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research. "During Covid-19 lockdown, I have remained active collaborating with a lab at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. I also do a lot of writing and reviewing. Personally, I use my time carting my grandchildren to school, karate lessons and electric guitar lessons," Gordon writes.

**Manuel Reyes-Otálora** retired in 2013 as managing partner of an architectural firm in Miami. He now enjoys being an artist and living in Carpinteria, Calif.

**David Rubin** retired in 2016 as dean emeritus and professor at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. He and his wife, Tina, built a house in Summerville, S.C., near Charleston. He spends time reading, playing the piano, walking his Shetland Sheepdog, Archie, and exercising, and is an active member of the Democratic Party.

**Jeff Kluger:** "My wife, Virginia, and I have been married for 40 years and have a beautiful grandson, who lives locally. Our family owns Hartford Baking Co., and when I am not delivering bread, I work as a physician educator and electrophysiologist in Hartford, Conn., where I direct the Cardiology Fellowship Program at UConn Hartford Hospital. I will be forever grateful for my education at Columbia on a Pulitzer Scholarship, which helped me achieve my current success."

**Justin Malewezi** has had a celebrated career in Malawi, including as a teacher of biology, a headmaster, the chief education officer for Malawi, head of several ministries as principal secretary in the Government Civil Service, VP of Malawi for 10 years and finally an Independent Member of Parliament for five years. He retired in 2009 and lives near Lilongwe, with his wife, Felicity.

**Josh Leinsdorf** writes, "I've been translating *Regarde-toi qui meurs, une femme dans la guerre* (Look at you who die, a woman in war), by Brigitte Friang."

**Jonathan Kranz** lives in Astoria, Queens, and works for a small real estate company specializing in buying, selling and managing fitness clubs. He also teaches political science part time at CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

**Tom Blinn** earned a doctorate in college teaching of statistics from Teachers College and worked in computer systems at Digital Equipment, Compaq and Hewlett-Packard. After taking early retirement in 2005 he survived a double coronary artery bypass. He lives in Amherst, N.H., with his wife, Susan, and cat, Chloe.

**Arthur Guffanti** GSAS'75 works remotely for the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, screening applicants to determine if they should receive an interview. He tends to his vegetable garden and is still eating produce from it.

**Richard Strassberg** teaches math at FIT, now virtually from the Lower East Side.

**David Schiff** GSAS'74 retired in 2019 from teaching music at Reed College and reports, "Reed presented three concerts of my music in spring 2019, and recent commis-

successful and happy adults now, bringing me contentment and joy every day, and thrice on Sundays, I can't complain, and I don't."

**Daniel Raybin** is a practicing physician, specializing in pulmonary/critical care and occupational lung disease, and has lived in San Francisco since 1982. He works at a teaching community hospital and also teaches at UCSF and Stanford. His wife, Sue, is a retired pediatrician and now artist and amateur archaeologist. Daniel takes archaeological trips, and reads Japanese novels, Latin-American literature and recreational mathematics.

**Marshall Clough** retired from the history department of the University of Northern Colorado in 2010, after 35 years. He has been working on a memoir of his mother, a Foreign Service wife and volunteer with the YWCA, who passed away

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*Justin Malewezi '67 has had a celebrated career in Malawi, East Africa, including being an Independent Member of Parliament.*

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sions for a symphony and a violin concerto keep me fully occupied in my studio. My wife, Judy, and I look forward to seeing our children and grandchildren in a non-virtual mode once that is again possible."

**Brant Fries** retired in 2018 as emeritus professor of public health and geriatrics at the University of Michigan. He continues to develop better ways to assess vulnerable individuals, including those aging with mental or intellectual disabilities, and to use the information gathered to improve quality of care and set governmental policy.

**Steve Zimmerman** is a retired attorney. He and his wife teach about Alzheimer's as volunteers, play chess online, read for pleasure and watch Netflix.

**Marty Goldstein** reports, "Three good kids, four cool grandkids and some career success as a writer, winning the Writers Guild Award for my role in the 1986 television movie *Unnatural Causes*." Along with many years in the film business, Marty has been teaching at Santa Monica College for 21 years and plans to continue. "With my children all

in Shanghai in March 1950, at the end of the Chinese Civil War, just before the family was going to leave the new Communist China.

**Joel Klaperman** retired several years ago from Shearman & Sterling, after more than 30 years of practicing corporate law, and now lives with his wife, Renee, in Bucks County, Pa.

**Paul Czarzasty** practices family dentistry in Waterbury, Conn.

**Bob Costa** and his wife, Joan, enjoy retirement in Naples, Fla., and Rhinebeck, N.Y. They say they miss Columbia sports and events, and traveling, especially to visit daughter Carolyn '12 in Los Angeles.

**John Gregor:** "Like those in the rest of the country, maybe the world, we in Hawaii are pretty much treading water waiting for this pandemic to pass and hoping to be among the survivors. Then we shall see what sort of a world we are living in."

**Jenik Radon:** "I presented at William & Mary Law School: *Colmar, the Surprising Answer to U.S. Foreign Policy for a Democratic World*. I explained why 'united we stand, divided we fall,' embodying the age-



old wisdom of the New Testament, John Dickinson, Patrick Henry, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill, needs to be the core of a rejuvenated U.S. foreign policy and why the journey starts in Colmar, birthplace of Frederic Bartholdi, the designer of the *Statue of Liberty*.”

Due to CCT’s word limit, I’m not able to share detailed news from **Jeremy Siegel, Steve Salant, Anthony Moscato and Bennett Flax** this time. Look for their news in the Spring/Summer issue.

## 1968

**Arthur Spector**  
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Greetings from Miami Beach. I did a stint in Upstate New York last summer; the weather was wonderful.

I am hoping when you read this the vaccines are out, and most importantly, that you are well and feeling relieved. I have found this a time to read a little more, play piano and use Google Hangouts. I enjoy talking to many, including **Art Kaufman, Seth Weinstein and Robert Brandt**, my college roommate, who continues to charm me with his intellect and great sense of humor. I spoke to **Joe DiBenedetto** not long ago; he was cheerful and on top of his game. He has been at his place on the Cape and is going back to Providence. I heard from **Hollis Petersen**, who was in Newport and on his way back to Key West, and **Neil Anderson**, on his way soon from New Jersey to his place in Naples, Fla. I also speak to Bob Costa ’67 at his home in Naples. **Paul de Bary** and I have been going to football games for years. I wonder if we will have a spring season. Paul keeps busy with his work.

So here is a bit of news from our renowned astronomer, astrophysicist and cruise ship expert **Bruce Margon** (when he can travel again I hope he comes to Miami for a cruise adventure): “By a stroke of luck, we managed ‘expedition’ cruises to both the Arctic and Antarctic Circles, finishing just before the pandemic began. Now we’re doing fine, bored and stir-crazy like everyone else. I started out being surprisingly, scientifically productive working at home, but as time has dragged on, my ratio of research to Netflix steadily deteriorates.

“The combination of Covid-19 plus the horrendous wildfires this season have been a one-two punch that has been particularly difficult for Californians. Each of these disasters has managed to touch our household, albeit it peripherally. My Ph.D. thesis advisor sadly passed away due to Covid, and some of our dearest friends lost everything — their house and all their possessions — in just a few hours in a wildfire. This year is bound to be better!”

Yes, 2021 will be a better year. Amen indeed.

**Barry Wick** writes from Colorado Springs: “Although I’m a retired computer engineer (Boeing, Digital Equipment Corporation, Raytheon), I’ve been doing substitute teaching for the past three years. I’m now at a local middle school (actually, the same one that my kids attended in 1990 — full circle!). I’m teaching eighth grade PE, if you can imagine! For now, half the kids are in class and half are at home. Interesting times for all of us.

“I’m also a masters swimmer. I live ‘life in the slow lane.’ My times used to be twice the world record. I thought that was pretty good. Now, my times are three times the world record!

“My four grandchildren all had virtual birthday parties last year — one in SF, three in Denver. I hope I’ll be able to celebrate with them this year.”

Stay well. Go Lions! Especially the Marching Band! By the way, **Neil Gozan** is a serious swimmer, too, as is **Art Kaufman**. Neil has been swimming for charity. Salute to him!

I heard from **Tom Sanford**.

Tom, every time I see the crews on the intercoastal, I think of classmates who rowed at Columbia; we have had some national rowing champs in modern times,

Tom writes, “For my wife, Candy, and me, 2020 started around March 15, when one of our sons and his boyfriend left Manhattan, terminated their lease on Amsterdam and 75th, and moved into the apartment above our new garage in Rhode Island. Two months later, son Tom ’98, his wife, two children and au pair left their townhouse on Hamilton Place (near CCNY) and took over the Rhode Island house for the summer. Then on several occasions, including Candy’s and my 50th wedding anniversary, our

daughter Evelyn ’00 and her family, from Patterson, N.Y., joined the crowd. So, with little room left in Rhode Island, we spent all but a few nights in Stonington, Conn., 12 miles away. I am sure this same or similar scenario played out with many classmates.

“A few summer highlights included lots of rowing on the Mystic River in single shells, which guarantees social distancing; kayaking down the Pawcatuck River, 38 miles, some of which forms the border between Connecticut and Rhode Island; photographing my daughter’s 10-year-old-son catching his first saltwater fish; and finally, when we thought it was reasonably safe, Candy and I spent several days at Mohonk Lake, near New Paltz, N.Y., in the Catskills.

“Occasionally I speak with **Art Kaufman** and **Gordon Harriss**. David Silver, our dedicated 50th reunion Columbia College Fund development officer, and I have certainly enjoyed reading some of the email chains that you and some of our other politically savvy classmates have circulated.”

**Bill Henrich** writes from Texas: “I work full time (no retirement plans now) and lead an academic medical center at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. As you can imagine, the pandemic has totally changed the way we teach and deliver care, so every week and every month there are, inevitably, many changes. The good news is that the students have been flexible and are making good progress. The change to a higher number of video visits is something patients appreciate and will likely last beyond the pandemic’s end. The first peak of the pandemic here was in July, but we are bracing for another wave. My wife, Mary, and I have been hunkered down as far as travel, restaurants and concerts like everyone else. The toughest adjustment for us is not being able to visit our grandchildren, so, also like many others, we FaceTime with them almost daily.

“We also read a lot, and I have a book to recommend: *The News of the World*, a story of a bond that forms between two unlikely people on a trip in 1870s Texas. It is now a movie that was to be released in December, starring Tom Hanks. Just a relaxing, good read. Another good

book is *The Splendid and the Vile*, a terrific account of Churchill’s leadership during the Blitz. Really enjoyed the accounting of how he coped with bad news daily, something we have a fair amount of these days.”

Thanks, Bill. Your talk at our 50th reunion was inspiring, and we are ready for the next one.

From **Al McCoy**: “Many thanks for sending along the article about the end of lightweight rowing at Dartmouth. To prevent that from happening at Columbia and spur donations from rowing alumni, the crew coaches sent out a strong appeal for high participation on Columbia Giving Day, which got a strong response.

“Speaking of donations, my children have both rowed for the local crew here in Madison, Wis. They put out a call for donations to purchase single shells to allow for social distancing during the pandemic, so I donated one. The club treasurer, who is a CC’91, had read my story in CCT about rowing around Manhattan to honor **John T. Norton Jr.** (see it online: college.columbia.edu/cct/issue/fall18/article/last-word) and suggested the club name it after him. So this spring, local high school rowers will have the privilege of competing on the lakes around Madison in a nice racing single, with the name ‘John T. Norton’ in Columbia blue on the bow.

“I still row several times a week. A few months ago, my son was rowing with the club in a dual meet against Quad Cities in Moline, Ill. At the ‘family row,’ at the end of the day, I hopped into a double with my 17-year-old son and we raced 3,000m down the Mississippi River, navigating around the sandbars and snags that Mark Twain wrote about, and coming in one second behind a pair of teenagers. Not bad for our first time rowing together.”

It was fantastic to hear from **Fred Smith**: “I now live in Cascais, Portugal, a middle-sized city 15 miles west of Lisbon on the Atlantic Ocean. I moved here this past fall, after an almost yearlong effort to get my visa. The influx of Covid-19 extended the process, but because I had started about this time last year, I was one of the early ones to submit my paperwork, once Portugal opened up processing in early August. The last week before leaving, I finished packing up the household

goods I was shipping, had a 22-ft. U-Haul loaded with my stuff and drove from Virginia Beach to my shipper's warehouse in Newark, N.J. The next evening, I flew out of Newark and arrived in Lisbon at dawn.

"I love it here. A lot of people speak English, so despite difficulties with Portuguese signage and online instructions, I have been able to deal with whatever task I undertake. The people in Portugal are kind and welcoming. If you even look like you might need help, they readily reach out to you.

"I am very happy with my decision to move here. I look forward to being really settled, so I can continue the research and writing of my novel. I've made some progress, but a lot of the work lies before me."

So, to the wondrous Class of 1968: Be well, send a note and visit Miami when you can.

## 1969

**Nathaniel Wander**  
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What **Mark Saul** carried away from Barnard cannot be topped. "Barnard has shaped my life. Sophomore year, I walked into Russian class in Hamilton Hall. The teacher was Galina Stilman. I had wanted to learn Russian since I was 12, but the school system made me learn French, so I was thrilled to be there. Seven men, four of them my good friends, and a woman. Woman? What was she doing there? Must be the teacher's assistant. (Chauvinist.) Never mind. I moved my seat from my old (male) friend to sit one discreet chair away from her. Strained to read her name on her notebook. Got it wrong. No matter. We walked out together and became friends. Reader, I married her. It's now 52 years, three kids and three grandchildren later. Carried away, indeed."

**Bob Rabinoff** responded with the complete lyrics to "Be Prepared," noting that mathematician and songwriter Tom Lehrer remains alive at 92.

I add that, at 90, Lehrer received a laudatory writeup in *Nature*, the world's longest published science journal. See it online: [nature.com/articles/d41586-018-03922-x](https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-03922-x).

**Henry Jackson** remembers a timed game played in Hartley Hall,

"Green Beret." "Contestants jumped down from one of the second-floor balconies, jumped from sofa to sofa and chair to chair in the lobby, being sure to land on each one, and then clambered up the other side to that second-floor balcony. The contestant with the best time was declared the winner. As I recall, **Andy Bronin** devised the game. It certainly sounds like something he would have done."

Andy indeed devised the game, and I'd be truly surprised if anyone ever beat him at it.

"As for your Barnard question, I took a course from Professor Kenneth Cooper as a senior, and I used to see him on Broadway in the late '70s, when my first wife (now deceased) was a Library School student."

**Martin Kafka** writes: "I retired from clinical psychiatry four years ago and have been thoroughly enjoying my post-work life by traveling internationally with my wife, Karen (prior to the pandemic), and taking classes through Brandeis University's program for persons in retirement. Through Brandeis, I've been studying American history, digital photography and memoir writing (the right age for that!). I have continued to play jazz piano on a daily basis and have lived in Newton, Mass., for close to 33 years. My grown 'kids' are dispersed, with Julie (30) living outside Boulder and working toward a Ph.D. in public health and Adam (26) living in San Francisco and a software engineer. Sending safe hugs to my classmates."

**Renee Chinquapin** also reflected on Barnard alumnae. "Barnard graduates back then faced unimaginable obstacles living out their wonderful education's potential."

**Michael Jacoby Brown** found meeting Barnard students unnecessarily complicated. "What I carried away from our relations with Barnard was that it was a pretty stupid idea to have only males at Columbia, and I am glad the College wised up, although too late for me. In our sophomore year my best friend, **Daniel Grutzendler** (who tragically died by suicide in the middle of that year), and I tried to meet some Barnard students by signing up for Latin because it was only given at Barnard. The other main thing I remember about Barnard were the complex sign-out rules the 'girls' had to put up with: not a great way to prepare any adult for real life."

I suspect many of us had unhappy brushes with *in loco parentis*.

**Nathaniel Wander** divided his undergraduate time fairly evenly between the Barnard and Columbia anthropology departments. In the Fall 2020 issue, he remarked on his connection to Barnard anthropologist Abraham Rosman (who died last spring and was memorialized by his department in July), but he was as strongly connected to Rosman's wife, Professor Paula Rubel GSAS'63, who died and was memorialized two years earlier. He has two potent memories of her.

"Paula taught 'Urban Societies,' which provided one of my first serious opportunities to conduct anthropological fieldwork. We obtained the research protocols from David M. Schneider's *American Kinship: A Cultural Account* and tested them in a variety of ethnic communities. I chose a mélange of Northern European Protestants — French, Dutch, English — centered on a Methodist church on Staten Island. Spending Sunday after Sunday immersed in the pietism and lamb's blood of the Wesleyan hymnal was real culture shock for this Jewish kid from Brooklyn.

"Professor Rubel also set us a final exam of near-graduate level exaction and was clearly disappointed by our essays. Before returning our exams she 'apologized.' 'I should have been clearer in my instructions and asked you to write your responses in English, or whatever your native language.' I got an A- for the course; presumably I was a bit less of a disappointment than some.

"In spring 2008, I had just completed six years as a research anthropologist at UC San Francisco and was entrain to taking up a similar position at the University of Edinburgh. Along with Jessica Wiederhorn GSAS'77 — a former graduate student of the Rosmans and my 'first student' when I became a graduate teaching assistant in 1973 — I was invited to their apartment for brunch as I passed through New York. Having lived away from the city for more than 25 years by then, the platters of Zabar's lox and whitefish and fresh bagels was exactly what I'd been missing. Paula would have been about 75 then, scarcely older than I am now, but when you've not quite reached

60, 75 still seems old. The only difference I noticed in her from when we'd met 40 years earlier was that her curly red hair had gone iron grey. If the Energizer Bunny had reincarnated as a human, it would have been Paula Rubel."

Question: What music have you carried away from Columbia? What music carries you back to your Class of '69 experience?

## 1970

**Leo Kailas**  
lkailas@reitlerlaw.com

First, I send my sincere wishes that all classmates are staying well during the Covid-19 epidemic. I have been working from my home office in Great Barrington, Mass., since March 16, and have adjusted quite well to life in a semi-rural community with my wife and youngest daughter. My wife and I recently did a 14-hour drive to Milwaukee to visit our oldest daughter (who is pregnant) and our granddaughter, Cassie (3) — a future Columbia College applicant for sure.

On to the real news: My high school classmate Professor **Robert Launay** reports: "I have recently adopted a new hobby — translating medieval French poetry (especially song) into English verse. If you think of this as a puzzle, like a crossword puzzle or Sudoku, it seems less weird. What is more, you get to keep the answer and even share it. **David Lehman** has very kindly encouraged me, and has recently published one of my translations on his blog, *Best American Poetry*, which I enthusiastically recommend to anyone interested in contemporary poetry: [bit.ly/3pncu5y](https://bit.ly/3pncu5y)."

The aforementioned **David Lehman** sent two of his articles, which I read, and then we had a follow-up exchange. First Professor Lehman sent the following: "You might enjoy these two new publications, one a piece of fiction, the other a post about a little-known but excellent movie from the late 1940s; online at [bit.ly/3nedGq1](https://bit.ly/3nedGq1) and at [bit.ly/32BCbWj](https://bit.ly/32BCbWj)." After telling David how much I was impacted by the first, a Teyve piece, he followed up with a touching note about his family and his recent hospitalization: "My father and mother were



refugees from Germany and Austria, respectively, but my mother's parents were not so lucky; they were deported and were killed in Riga. I guess we first-generation sons of Holocaust survivors didn't like talking about it all that much back when you were a senior at Bronx Science and I was the same at Stuyvesant. When I was hospitalized for a week at Sloan Kettering another patient on my floor was a famous rabbi who had been flown in from Israel with funds raised by Lubavitcher organizations. He invited me to pray with him and inspired me to do the reading that led up to 'Tale Told To Tevye,' which I dedicated to him."

David is an amazing scholar and an amazing human being.

Speaking of professors, Professor **John D'Emilio** GSAS'72 sent the following: "My latest book was published by in October. *Queer Legacies: Stories from Chicago's LGBTQ Archives* offers an episodic account of activist lives and events from the 1960s through the early 21st century. The book is based entirely on research in collections at the Gerber/Hart Library & Archives in Chicago, where I am president of its Board of Directors."

Part of the joy of doing this column is that I get to correspond with such interesting classmates such as **Robert Launay**, **David Lehman** and **John D'Emilio**. Another professor, **Michael Aeschliman** GSAS'91, has become a regular contributor who sends me thought-provoking articles. His latest notes: "It was very kind of you to publish that rather extensive Class Note from me in the Fall 2020 CCT."

"It may be deep superstition but I cannot get it out of my mind that there is something indestructible about persons, personalities and souls, especially such ones as **Hollie Hendrix** and **Ted Tayler**, an idea that has grown on me over the years (and of course, orthodox Xtian doctrine). In that spirit I thought [this] essay might interest you. It is probably my farewell essay on [Malcolm] Muggeridge, on whom I have published half a dozen things since the mid-1970s and a new edition of one of whose novels, *Winter in Moscow* (1934), I edited in 1987."

One of Michael's disciples is English satirist Ian Hislop, editor of the satirical magazine *Private Eye* (Muggeridge had been editor of *Punch*). At

the end of an appreciative interview with Hislop in the London *Times* not too long ago, the otherwise admiring interviewer asked him incredulously if it was true that he regularly attended a Christian church. Hislop answered: "Yes, it's true. You see, I've tried atheism, but I kept having doubts."

The link Professor Aeschliman refers to is Malcolm Muggeridge, *Marked by Mobility and a Search for Morality*: [bit.ly/3pjNegx](http://bit.ly/3pjNegx).

## 1971

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

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**Lewis Preschel**  
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I was recently in touch with **Richard Berenholtz** SEAS'71, GSAPP'74, my roommate freshman and junior year in Carman Hall. (I buried myself in a solo in Livingston sophomore year for the dreaded pre-med organic chemistry ordeal.) Richard earned an M.Arch. from GSAPP. He worked in that field for 10 years, including four years with I.M. Pei & Partners. During that time, he had three one-man shows of his black-and-white works at galleries in NYC. However, his love of New York and its structures, plus the magnificent profile NYC presents to the world, captured his interest.

For the last 36 years, Richard has photographed New York and produced seven books filled with incredible pictures. Do not take my word for it; his works speak for themselves, and are on his website ([photographynewyork.com](http://photographynewyork.com)). Richard has posted some of his works on Facebook, as well. I can say that inspiring beauty aptly applies to his works. For the last three and a half years his focus has been on the photographic series 'Beauty of Decay.' The famous Rizzoli Bookstore in NYC publicized the April release of his book *Skylines of New York*.

And now to a controversy that I guess I started by saying we lived on the 14th floor of Carman

Hall. **Steve Boss** SW'76, BUS'78 informs me that I lived on the 13th floor of Carman Hall. This is not news to me, as we all knew when we lived on what should have been called the 13th floor. However, the elevator button said 14. That our floor was one floor higher than the 12th even on the elevator buttons was blatant. The room numbers started with 14, if I remember right. I guess they thought that Ivy League freshmen were not smart enough to count past 10 or that we would not notice. So please help me here. Was the 13th floor of Carman Hall called the 14th floor in the late 1960s, or am I having a senior moment and confabulating? Inquiring minds do not really care, but to assess my sanity, let me know.

**Steve Boss**, who raised this question in my mind — you can always count on an engineer to get the math right — retired four years ago as deputy executive director/chief financial officer of World Education Services, an international education organization. Since then he has been doing a lot of photography. "I go out with **Richard Berenholtz** SEAS'71, GSAPP'74, an accomplished and much-published location photographer (his seventh book is *Skylines of New York*; see earlier in the column) During the past three years, we've been to 40 abandoned locations — power plants, prisons, theaters and so on, letting ourselves in and shooting what is left to shoot. You can view some of my shots at [stevenboss.com](http://stevenboss.com), where I also have some travel photographs and NYC photos. Since March, I haven't socialized with anyone but my wife, except for two escape escapades with Richard to an abandoned cement factory upstate. I wore an N95 mask for eight straight hours, except when I scarfed down a peanut butter sandwich."

[Editor's note: See "The Big Picture" for one of Boss's photos.]

That meal is the **Steve Boss** I remember. Steve and his wife, Caren Bergenfield Steinlight BC'71, have a new grandson in Cambridge, Mass., and the southern extension of his family lives in Philadelphia with an older grandson. Steve is looking forward to the possibility of an in-person 50th reunion if the world allows us.

[Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and

in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

And to finish with a sweet group reminiscence, Steve is vegetarian and notes his last bite as a carnivore was one bite of a meatball hero from Ta-Kome. He says, "It could make a vegetarian out of anybody."

Can't agree more.

**Ron Rosenberg** thanked me for letting us stay connected. We all enjoy knowing what friends are doing and how the ventures in their lives have proceeded. Ron is the Chancellor Professor of Law and associate dean for graduate programs at William & Mary Law School, although at the end of this year he will formally retire. He resides in Williamsburg, Va., but his wife and he plan to relocate to Charlottesville within a year. He notes, "I was thinking about my first year at Columbia and what a shock it was to my complete being both personally and intellectually. The four years there really were important time for the country and I felt that I was an observer of social and political history during those years."

Ron said he would love to get in touch with some of the guys who played freshman basketball with him.

**Tom Barson** wrote that he had no idea that **Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton**, whose books he has read for many years, was a classmate. Tom has been a concert promoter, a Methodist minister, a hospital manager and, for more than 25 years, an IT consultant and IT service manager. He retired in October 2019 and repurposed himself with the distraction of editing an economics textbook during the Covid-19 lockdown. He and his wife, Nancy Norris, live in East Lansing, Mich.

Tom would love to recontact and resume communications with some of his old college friends.

As would we all.

**Robert Gailus** has the sad task of reporting that **Tim DeBaets** passed early in the morning of September 27, 2020. About 10 days prior Tim fell in a parking lot where construction was in process. He suffered injuries that required hospitalization and during his treatment developed sepsis and died. At this time, I have only been told he is survived by his wife, Kathy. May she be able to lean on the support of her good friends. [Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

We are coming up on our 50th reunion. We are bonded by the experience of an era, and our college environment. Let's keep the friendships ongoing and maybe start new ones. Let your classmates know how you are doing and what adventures you are launched on. We are the Class of 1971, a brotherhood forged in a time not dissimilar to now. The way to join together is to keep your classmates informed. Please send me an update as to how your boat is sailing on the sea of life.

## 1972

Paul Appelbaum  
pappelf1@aol.com

Times are odd around campus these days. Only about 20 percent of undergrads were allowed to return for the fall term, and all College classes are online. For those who are here, Broadway is a much sparser experience, though many local restaurants have taken over sidewalks or curbs for outdoor seating, lending the streets a more populated feel. I write this just before the election, as Covid-19 cases are spiking around the country. New York, which has seen blessedly few cases since the horrors of the spring, seems to be on the uptick as well. We await the coming days with some degree of trepidation. The students who are going through this will have very different memories of their College years than we do.

**Mike Gerrard**, who since January 2009 has been at the Law School as a full-time professor of environmental and energy law, and as founding director of the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, provides a sense of life around here: "Last March, with just a few days' notice, we switched entirely to online instruction. After some emergency Zoom training, my colleagues and I managed to complete the term that way. With no end to the pandemic in sight, I'm teaching remotely the entire 2020–21 academic year. I've been in Manhattan only once since March — a quick trip in July to retrieve some notes and books from my Columbia office. I think my classes (both lectures and seminars) have gone surprisingly well; Zoom allows breakout rooms and other ways to foster interaction. I hold video office hours with students. I'm also

heavily involved with Columbia's Earth Institute (soon to morph into the new Climate School). We have a full agenda of items to work on as the global climate crisis escalates. I badly miss informal interactions and chance encounters with students, colleagues and others, but I speak by phone or video with many people every day and don't feel especially isolated."

Mike was quoted in *The New York Times* not long ago on the possibility of injecting particles into the atmosphere to reflect sunlight and combat the warming of the earth. He continues, "My wife, Barbara, and I have been pretty much self-quarantining at our home in Chappaqua, N.Y., a leafy suburb that is conducive to social distancing and long dog walks. Our son David '03, his wife, Grace, and our granddaughter Amelia (2.5) live in a condo a mile from us, which is perfect. Our other son, William '05, and his wife, Anya, blessed us with a grandson, Neri, a few months ago, but they live in Los Angeles and we've seen Neri only on Zoom. We're yearning to meet him in person when we feel comfortable flying again."

Some people have found comfort and distraction during the pandemic in their hobbies. **Steve Bellovin**, a professor in the computer science department at Columbia, for example, says, "For whatever reason, in the last few years I've become an avid bird photographer. It's amazing what can be found in the parks around Columbia — hawks, falcons, bald eagles, herons, egrets, owls and more — and it's even more amazing that I can regularly walk through these parks with an expensive-looking camera and not feel terrified."

You can follow Steve's bird shots on his Twitter feed, @UrbanDinosaurs, like I do.

Another of our academics is **William Germano**, who has a new book, *Syllabus: The Remarkable, Unremarkable Document That Changes Everything*, co-written with Kit Nicholls. William notes, "Though we wrote it just before the pandemic, we think it speaks to the present moment. Quick take for teachers: 'It's not about what you do, it's about what they do.' I'm told it's inspiring and makes a great gift. Here's a link: [bit.ly/3m2UcEB](https://bit.ly/3m2UcEB)."

William also notes, "I'm still teaching, though my Cooper Union classes are all on Zoom, alas. Covid-19 only thickens the patina of



Left to right, Rich Troiano '73, Jim Winskowicz '73 and Gerry Mason '73 met up in Scottsdale, Ariz., in January 2019.

nostalgia that coats my memory of Humanities classes in Hamilton, but we were really there, immature and underslept, not merely on-screen spectators. The freshmen I now teach must daily invent their classes, not merely log in to them. My heart goes out to students everywhere right now. Teachers, too." But he adds some good news: "Last June, our son Chris married the excellent Kassi Nelson, who completed her doctorate in occupational therapy a month earlier. Like many young people this year, they've moved the big blowout to 2021."

**Arnold Horowitz** reports, "My family is doing fine, since the pandemic bears down hardest on the weakest in society, unfortunately. My wife works full time from home, producing international broadcasts for Voice of America, so some rooms resemble a video studio with green screens and Klieg lights. One son works full time for an IT firm that has been 90 percent virtual for several years anyway. Another son takes college courses from home. I go to work in the office, but cautiously. My longtime habit of bicycling is now much more in fashion than ever before. We visited a fellow Columbia alumnus recently, but on his porch and at 12-ft. separation. We wonder what is going to happen next, because this experience will permanently transform society, I think. And Manhattan and Morningside seem, from a distance, threatened by long-term damage as never before. That worries me."

## 1973

Barry Etra  
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Our world continues to be ... whorled. May the lag between this writing and your reading bring relief.

**Gerry Mason** sent a photo of three '73 guys who met up in Scottsdale in January (January *two years ago* — sometimes a correspondent is lame). Gerry co-founded his own investment banking firm, Granite Partners, lives in Boston and is writing a book about the evolution of gut bacteria in humans. **Rich Troiano** had been a principal at Cisco Systems and has started a clean coal company with worldwide operations; he is still in Pittsburgh. **Jim Winskowicz** was a senior exec at Guaranty Fund Management Services. He now plays golf in Phoenix and reminisces about his Baker Field pitching career. The group's life motto: "Hard Work and Clean Living."

Sorry for the delay!

**Joel Glucksman** and his wife, Freddie, welcomed their sixth grandchild. Joel reinforces our notions that "being a grandpa is way more fun than parenting." His only issue: Four of those grandchildren are in Los Angeles, while Joel and Freddie remain in Maplewood, N.J., in the house where they raised their boys. The remaining two, luckily, are but 20 minutes away in Jersey City.

**Greg Gall** GSAPP'79 practices architecture and lives in Tarrytown,



N.Y. He is the head fencing coach at The Hackley School, as well. His wife, Kim Waddell, was a former director at IBM, now retired; their daughter Christine married James Sherrard last September in Shelburne, Vt.

Thanks to those who wrote in, and pleas to those who didn't. Hasta, and be well.

## 1974

**Fred Bremer**  
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With the newspaper headlines filled this past fall with articles on Covid-19, the election and the new Supreme Court justice, a milestone passed unrecognized: It was the 50th anniversary of the final episode of the 1960s TV comedy *Get Smart*. The original air date was September 11, 1970; it occurred just as we were packing our bags to go to Columbia College to ... get smart! None of us had cell phones at the time (even ones in our shoes), but I bet many of us had dreams of finding our own Agent 99! And by coincidence, the show was broadcast on CBS — the *Columbia* Broadcasting System.

We heard from Dr. **Stephen DeCherney** PH'98, who has spent 16 years as a professor of endocrinology at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill and is a former adjunct professor at the UNC Kenan-Flagler School of Medicine. He tells us he consults on patients in the hospital, teaches and "does a little research on Covid-19." Steve laments, "I tried to retire about 10 years ago, and utterly failed at it. I lasted about three months." So back he went to rejoin the faculty, and now seems busier than ever. Steve is a board member or executive advisor to six bioscience corporations, and is on the board of Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights and the University of Delaware Research Foundation, and is a trustee of the William Harvey Research Foundation at Queen Mary University of London.

Now that is a failed retirement!

Steve says he is the "proud grandfather" of five, all under the age of 4. He adds that they are spread across the country and comments, "Thank heavens for FaceTime and Zoom!"

A thin envelope arrived recently that contained a likeness of what you

received in a thick envelope some 50 years ago. **Mark Carrabes** sent a copy of his College acceptance letter, dated April 17, 1970, signed by John Wellington '57 (director of admissions at the time). It is amazing that Mark knew how to find this important document! He didn't include any information on what he's up to these days, but the Christchurch APO postmark suggests he might still be a supply officer at the U.S. Navy facility in New Zealand.

Anyone in contact with Mark?

A short note came in from Dr. **David Turkewitz** (York, Pa.) saying simply that he enjoyed reading the updates in *CCT* on classmates. Curious about what else he was up to, I did a Google search and found out a lot more. David is chair of pediatrics at the WellSpan York Hospital and in 2014 was named "Pediatrician of the Year" by the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Through the years he has been committed to researching child abuse and neglect and is one of the senior members of the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Medical/Legal Advisory Board on Child Abuse. He was quoted, "We need to move past the social norm that it is OK to hit children under the guise of discipline."

After a career in the healthcare industry, **Patrick Dowd** retired around 2006 and moved with his wife, Dawn, to Vida, Ore. (a small town on the McKenzie River), expecting a bucolic setting to enjoy fishing and boating, when he wasn't traveling around the world. Then Patrick got an urgent midnight notice they had to evacuate due to the approaching wall of flames last October. He says his house was saved because it was originally a firehouse and had a brick core. Last word is that they had temporarily relocated to Bend, Ore.

I will try to get details on Patrick's situation.

After 24 years of building the Mount Sinai Department of Dermatology into one of the largest in the nation, Dr. **Mark Lebwohl** (Manhattan) has been promoted to dean for clinical therapeutics at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. While he will continue to see patients and do clinical work, Mark is now tasked with generating clinical research programs throughout the Mount Sinai Health System in New York City.

There you have it. More classmates appear to be getting promoted and working harder rather than retiring. Whether you are still working or you've made the big leap to "the life of leisure," pass on the news!

## 1975

**Randy Nichols**  
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**Steve Miller** retired from a 30-year career as a lawyer in 2015, spending the time since in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, at the headquarters of one of the Dutch industrial conglomerates. Since then, he has pursued an old love and found a new one. First, he coaches swimmers at the high school and club level — for the past 18 months with the Greenwich YMCA Marlins, primarily with the Junior Team, ages 8–13. He says it's very rewarding and fulfilling to pass on his knowledge and enthusiasm for a sport that has meant so much to him. Steve's new love is mosaics. He learned from two world-class artists, both Russian emigres, who, pre-Covid-19, had a studio near FIT. Of course, Steve specializes in Grateful Dead and other iconic images. One of his pieces hangs at The Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, N.Y. (a Jerry Garcia album cover, *Cats Under the Stars*). Another, a mandala, was selected to be in the Art to the Avenue event in Greenwich, Conn. (near the CBD store, of all places), but alas the event was canceled. Steve was also commissioned to do a small piece as an award for a Columbia University Medical Center-New York Presbyterian Hospital nurse who is at the forefront of the Covid battle.

Steve says, "I am forever grateful that Assistant Dean Roberta Spagnola TC'69, and others, overlooked some of my finer moments and that I received my A.B." Steve also gives a shoutout to **Albert Mroziak**, his lab partner in organic chemistry.

**Bob Sclafani** enjoyed reading about **Jose "Cheo" Diaz** and his short autobiography, *From the Streets of New York City*, in a previous column. Bob writes, "Jose and I were roommates in Carman Hall freshman year along with **Henry Woo** and **Edwin Vega**, who is mentioned in the autobiography. (See more from Edwin later in this

column.) Jose's mother was a great cook and he frequently shared food with us. We had great food in our suite between Jose and Edwin's Puerto Rican, Henry's Chinese and my Italian dishes. The other guys in Carman were always jealous of us. Of note, we were frequently visited by floormates **Manuel Bu** and **Victor Fiorenza**. I visited Jose at WKCR, as I was already a big Tito Puente fan. The dancing was amazing. On a trip to Puerto Rico years ago, everybody was impressed with my moves. My one faux pas after eating a great Mofongo was asking about *Rabo Guisado*, to which I was told, "That's Dominican, man." Jose's bio was a great way to find out what happened to him after Columbia."

A couple of weeks before writing this I saw an announcement of the availability of **Joel Stern's** pop-up book *In a Spooky Haunted House*. What a fun thing to have! I asked Joel to share a little about his experience creating and producing these gems. He shared: "Several years ago at an origami convention (there really are such things!), I met with a book packager with whom I began to work on an idea for a pop-up book that could be produced relatively inexpensively — each page was to be made from a single sheet, with no glue points. We tossed around a few ideas, and came up with a haunted house book. I wrote some verses that lead a child through different rooms of the house, which the book packager liked.

"I produced a proof-of-concept pop-up to show to different publishers. Happily, Simon & Schuster loved the idea and found a wonderful illustrator, Christopher Lee, who produced the whimsical pictures to accompany my verses.

"Working from a rough draft of the illustrations, I began to design the six pop-ups. When designing these kinds of pop-ups, your role is like that of a director. How many elements of the illustration will pop? Which figures will be closest to the viewer? Which the farthest? Can any of them be combined? Then there are the constraints: When closed, does any paper extend beyond the edges? For any cut-out element, does the resulting hole disfigure other important elements, or distract from the overall effect? There was some back-and-forth, as both illustrations and pop-ups needed to be adjusted for maximum effect."

**Edwin Vega** earned an M.B.A. in 1977 in finance from NYU. He moved to Los Angeles in 1982. Edwin says he has enjoyed his business career, working for several companies in different financial positions before finally settling in with his passion of working with small businesses as a commercial loan officer. With the financial crisis in 2008, he had to reinvent himself, and he became a high school math teacher. Edwin now teaches online at a charter school to socially/economically disadvantaged high school students. He admits it is tough but rewarding. Edwin has been married for 41 years to Ida Maldonado Vega. They have a daughter, Isette Marie Hammer, who married last year. Edwin's favorite hobbies are martial arts and salsa dancing. He and his wife love traveling, seeing Europe and the National Parks. They see lots of movies. He is in frequent contact with **Fernando Castro**, an architect and poet, who lives about 25 miles from him.

## 1976

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**Ken Howitt**  
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Music is on in Hoboken with our hometown favorite Frank Sinatra singing “Ring-A-Ding Ding,” which begins with a great lyric to describe the 2020 pandemic/isolation situation: “Life is dull / It's nothing but one big lull ...” But for me, all the people who reach out give me plenty to write about for this issue.

I lead off with news from the Dennis-rosa in Syracuse. Mika, their human-like canine, is demanding when I visit, so any news from **Dennis Goodrich** gets the lead-off spot, especially when it is about his daughter Katy Goodrich, who visited me in Hoboken a year ago. Katy works in London for Adobe, where she is a customer success director. The website uk.finance.yahoo named her as one of “The HERoes top 100 female future

leaders 2020,” specifically mentioning her “leadership of social impact teams involves creating internal programs and community partnerships to promote causes top of mind for Adobe employees, such as championing gender diversity in tech.”

I have exchanged a few emails and a phone call with **Gordon Kit**. Due to the pandemic he is sorely missing his travel adventures, which he normally goes on every three to four months. Still, each week Gordon drives to the Maryland or Virginia countryside, where he cycles about 30 miles mid-week and 50–60 miles on the weekend. Now he's using his newly leased hybrid SUV, replacing the 2014 model he owned outright. As he noted, “With advances in car technology occurring so rapidly now, it seemed to make more sense to lease than to buy.” Gordon is still trying “to figure out what all of the buttons do and how to access all of the new safety features ... and importantly, how to preset the radio stations: “This isn't a Model T, after all!” he says.

More importantly, assuming the Columbia Covid-19 policy permits, Gordon is still hoping for an in-person third annual Dr. Saul and Dorothy Kit Film Noir Festival at the Lenfest Center for the Arts, which at the time of this column's writing is tentatively scheduled to run Wednesday, April 7–Sunday, April, 11, after Passover. Alternatively, Gordon noted, “We're exploring the possibility of running a virtual film festival this spring.” The theme: “Film Noir & the Jewish Experience: From WWII to the Blacklist,” was planned for March 2020 but canceled due to Covid.

As a result of the pandemic, the festival is stalled in year three of a 10-year commitment. Check out the Kit Noir website (arts.columbia.edu/noir) early this year for an announcement as to the final form of the 2021 festival.

Since the festival is named in honor of Gordon's parents and the love of film noir they passed down to him, Gordon is committed to not missing another year. Having attended the first two years of the festival, I can't wait to attend in person or virtually this year.

**John Mason** sent the following: “In January 2020, I went to my 40th M. Arch. reunion and saw UCLA classmate and Columbia housemate

Al Borgo '77. Al lives in splendor with his wife, Yvonne, and family in a lovely house overlooking Catalina Island. In February, with Olivia Rowan, my wife of 30 years (we met while working at Robert A.M. Stern '60's office 33 years ago), we went to Montpellier, in the South of France. We were visiting our younger son in his junior term and we returned to Provence, where we honeymooned 30 years ago. Of course, he had to be evacuated to finish his French year in his room in Brooklyn a couple of weeks later. Our eldest has relocated to Albuquerque, where he remotely edits video for Condé Nast, Seeding Sovereignty and Abolish ICE!

“Olivia and I have surrogated our travels to biking the Erie Canalway Trail in segments. Lovely trail with lots of history, and sparsely populated. We started in Troy and have left off the last time in Chittenango. We have many more miles to get to Buffalo.”

From **Barry LaBoda**: “I retired in August after serving for 13 years as an administrative law judge with the Social Security Administration and 25 years as a practicing lawyer in Orlando. For now, my wife and I are pursuing local interests, including gardening, photography and genealogy. We walk daily along oak-lined streets near home in Winter Park, Fla. Our Columbia experience created pathways for us to mentally explore the world. I hope we'll all be able to continue physically exploring the world once the pandemic has ended.”

My WKCR mate and fellow 45th Reunion Committee member, **Joe Graif** BUS'78, continues to reinvent himself. Joe is a great musician, who at one reunion played the organ at St. Paul's on Sunday morning. It never ceases to amaze me how committed the '76ers are to just continuing to live life to the fullest, no matter the obstacles. If you use TurboTax this coming filing season, you just might cross video “paths” with Joe, as what he describes as “a live ‘Tax Expert.’” Joe has also decided to prepare for and take the exams to become an enrolled agent with the IRS. He is a C.P.A., licensed to practice in three states and the District of Columbia. Joe envisions the new credential leading to synergies that will greatly enhance his public practice.

As your columnist, I reworded his contribution with his permission but decided to leave the word “expert”

alone, which upholds a long-standing '76er tradition of cynicism!

**Bob Wolleben** is becoming my role model with this report: “I'm happily retired in Delaware after 42 years working in hospital management. Our last child will be married by the time this is published; then I can really kick back and relax.”

**Tony Anemone** has a great plan similar to Bob's: “After 36 years teaching Russian language, literature and cinema at Colby College, The College of William & Mary and The New School, I will retire from full-time teaching at the end of the 2020–21 academic year. In addition to continuing researching and writing about Russian cinema, I'm looking forward to more time for my hobbies: travel, sea-kayaking and film photography.”

The best part of this column is enjoying the youthful enthusiasm from classmates. Your updates just have so much info in so few words. **John Healy** exemplifies that spirit with this simple and enjoyable news flash: “I got married on October 3! All our children and grandchildren were in the wedding party. Very cool. Guest list was a lot smaller than originally intended, but it was a great time.”

“My oldest grandson is a first-year at Columbia College. But not ours, the one in Chicago. That has made for some interesting and funny family conversations — your Columbia or my Columbia.

“Did interviews of potential students for the Alumni Representative Committee and will do it again. Very positive experience. I recommend more '76ers get involved. We have a lot to offer these young people.”

So, the album *Sinatra Sings the Songs of Van Heusen and Cahn* just got to “Swinging on a Star,” which starts off with, “Would you like to swing on a star / Carry moonbeams home in a jar / And be better off than you are / Or would you rather be a mule?” For me, this song sums up a lifetime of looking for moonbeams, like a lot of classmates. However, as the years advance, the idea of being a mule does seem to kick in more often than I like. Especially, 2020 made that an ongoing temptation.

Instead, I keep up with all of you and bask in the celebrations of life that you contribute. I also hear from other friends due to this column. In October, a Six Hartley floormate,



Bruce Levine '77, reached out, and we had a lovely afternoon chatting at his home in Rockland County, N.Y. Bruce has spent a career in politics, law and public service. Renewing old and treasured friendships is definitely one of those moonbeams.

Another moonbeam is the pending 45th reunion. The committee is hard at work with Alumni Office staff, trying to plan for unknown circumstances. Contingency planning seems an understatement, but you can be sure you will get emails from the Reunion Committee about virtual or in-person events when those plans are finalized. The perpetual reunion chair, Mr. Moonbeam himself, **Steve Davis**, now has help from me and another co-chair, **John Connell**. We have a lot of great classmates on the committee, but welcome others' participation.

Finally, these times bring my parents to mind quite often. If they were here to read this column, I know they would have one comment. "Why did we spend all that money on Columbia and that great Core Curriculum, if almost 50 years later he is quoting Sinatra songs?" My answer to them would be simple: Columbia's undergraduate education gave me the ability to define my own classics!

## 1977

**David Gorman**  
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There was not enough news at this time for a column. It may be that everyone was distracted, as I was, at the end of a difficult year. Anyway, expect news and notes in the Spring/Summer issue. Meanwhile, I hope that everyone has been staying safe, healthy and reasonably sane. Do not hesitate to let classmates know how you are feeling and how you have been coping. With best wishes for a better — way better! — 2021.

## 1978

**Matthew Nemerson**  
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Good news is that by deploying the techniques of the political fundraising emails (which I was getting 20 times a day in October) I tripled the responses for the column. Bad news

is *CCT* is so successful these days that its word limit means half who wrote won't get in until the Spring/Summer issue.

"Despite what you reported in *CCT* in the Fall 2020 issue," says **Bruce Fraser**, "I am not studying, nor have I ever studied, organic chemistry. I marvel at all of you that did. Instead, I am a real estate finance attorney at the Los Angeles office of Sidley Austin."

"My son Holden is studying law at Chicago, and daughter Grace is a law student at American."

"Columbia taught me to expect the unexpected and to make the best of the situation with wonder and humor. I do think there was more free speech at Columbia when we were there and don't remember efforts to cancel opposing views. Those times sparked debate and intellectual endeavors, and I would hate to experience today's anti-intellectual environment that I read about."

"I am reading biographies, which provides encouragement that this will pass and that perhaps some great men or women will rise and help this nation to move past this partisan divide. I wish we could ban political parties, as so many put them above everything else."

Bruce, we are still trying to figure out who sent in the wrong information!

**Don Guttenplan** remarks, "It's been a difficult, scary and worrisome time. But one of the things that has gotten me through it — and even overcoming the sense of Zoom overdose I'm sure many of us feel — has been the weekly Carman 8 Zoom convened by Sid Holt '79, from a ways up the Hudson, and regularly attended by **Jeff Klein**, from Buffalo; **Larry Friedman**, from Saint Louis; my old Memphis friend **Don Share**; and me, mostly from London but now from across the East River, with frequent guest appearances by **Rick MacArthur**; **Joel Charap**, from Thailand (!); **Duncan Moore**, another Columbian in spirit and former Carman resident; and the 'Barbara Stanwyck' to all of us nutty professors, the original Barnard Ball of Fire, Jami Bernard BC'78."

"Our topics run the gamut from the politics of poetry to the art of writing great headlines to tales of old New York."

"Looking ahead, we must take care of all the people who live here,

native-born and immigrants, with a healthcare system appropriate to the wealthiest country in the history of the world. But I'd settle for seeing the Trump family behind bars."

Fellow Connecticut resident **John Flores** LAW'81 says, "I have only been going into the office three days per week. Really strange in that most of the day I sit in my office with the door closed and talk to people on the phone. In other words, I could do it at home, but the state wants the senior team in the office. I welcomed a fifth grandchild in November, and will try to figure out the logistics to get to Virginia!"

"I'm not sure anything we learned at College prepared us for this pandemic, but I'm so glad my daughters finished school, because I would be pissed if I had to pay full tuition for remote learning!"

**Marc Bogatin** reports, "After 40 years of law practice as a litigator, I plan to retire this March. No more clients or judges!"

"Contrary to the Fall 2020 column, we did have a Freshman Orientation. I remember we had a choice of lectures, and I heard James Shenton '49, GSAS'54 speak on 'The Ethnic Factor in New York Politics.' He began with the joke that he thought he had been asked to lecture on 'The Ethical Factor' and did not know how he could say anything about that subject. Also, we had to fulfill that strange requirement of a College degree, the swim test. I am sure I'm not the only one who remembers the sight of 500 naked men lined up to complete a lap!"

**Dr. Marcel Favetta** proves you never have to stop learning. "I recently earned an M.B.A. in health care. Early last year I traveled to São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, as part of a global health curriculum to present a paper on putting AI technologies in the hands of community health workers in remote rural areas of Brazil."

"My Columbia education's take-away on the pandemic is that if the USA were attempting the siege of Troy, we would have given up after six months and just left."

"I have been a practicing internist since 1986, currently in Western Michigan," notes **Harry Kousourou**. "My son Gabe is a rheumatology fellow at Indiana University in Indianapolis."

"Looking back, I cultivated a great respect for scientific principles at Columbia and the historical

context in which they can be applied such as looking at public health measures used during the 1918 pandemic in places such as NYC."

"Looking ahead, I'm hoping Americans can get past their differences and unite in recovering from these times of adversity, much as they did in the wake of 9-11."

**Robert Anthony** is another of the outstanding journalists from our class. "I still write tech and business features for various publications, but I also work with Digimentors, a company that takes events and conferences virtual. It was started by Columbia's former chief digital officer, Sree Sreenivasan."

"I have more than one million followers on Pinterest (paperpcpicks.com) and I'm on social media platforms as @newyorkbob. Working at *Spectator* taught me that it's better to be plugged into the world than to be a grub quietly working alone in a silo."

"I'm convinced that common sense is right most of the time, like when to wear a mask and stay socially distant."

"The spirit of free speech was here in the '70s, including the day I sat on a window ledge of Low Library holding a corner of a 'Divest from South Africa' banner!"

"The pandemic has given me more time to read books such as *Inside the Empire: The True Power Behind the New York Yankees*, by Bob Klapisch '79, who followed me as sports editor at *Spectator*."

**Dr. Michael Schulder** PS'82 notes, "After P&S I trained in neurosurgery at the Einstein/Montefiore program. Then I was faculty at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School for 19 years, most of which was under the leadership of my medical school mentor, Dr. Peter Carmel. In 2007 I moved to Northwell Health in neurosurgery, and became director of the Northwell Health Brain Tumor Center of the Neuroscience Institute and the residency program director. It's been a great 13 years, with more to come."

"My wife, Lu Steinberg, is a clinical psychologist in private practice and has a strong involvement in academic psychology. Our two daughters are following in her footsteps."

"I'm happy to say that I'm still friends with my Carman suitemate **Tim Burnett**, and we had dinner together in 2019 when he was in from California."

"I'm hoping in the future we can be more tolerant of differences and empathize, cooperate and help each other out.

"My recollection of College is that we could say whatever we wanted, voice any political opinion."

"Last October was the seventh anniversary of my retirement from the State Department," writes **Christopher Dell**. "I haven't regretted leaving, as the last four years would have been unconscionable, to say the least. I'm into my third semi-career, working on project finance in the African power and infrastructure space and sitting on the board of an Australian renewables startup.

"My wife and I have used this strange time to explore Washington, D.C., walking every day to different neighborhoods and lesser-known historic sites. So Covid-19 hasn't been a total loss.

"We are grateful every day for being — so far — in good health. I spent an hour every day last summer writing 1,500 get-out-the-vote letters, so I did my bit to help our country begin to recover. We must quickly restore the trust of our friends and allies, and regain the respect of other nations for our commitment to democracy and human rights while becoming a leader on climate issues, especially embracing renewable energy.

"I've tried to use this time to further my reading in the history of the Portuguese discoveries and to write more of the popular history I'm trying to pull together."

Dr. **Alec Bodkin** tells a tale: "I have long worked as a shrink to advance the medical remediation of depressive disorders. Unfortunately, the FDA blocked my second and final effort on behalf of patients suffering from depressive illness based on what would appear to have been political reservations. This was a huge loss to patients suffering from the most painful of maladies for whom standard fare did no good. I have also worked on unraveling the complex heritability of psychotic disorders. I must say that the damage to social relations from Covid-19 is a tragedy for those who are no longer young.

"From studying the past at Columbia we can see there is nothing new here. Newton and Shakespeare made good use of their time in isolation, as we all must do. One thing I do worry about is that

political correctness can at times be as harmful as the need to face up to the delusions of the religious right."

Thanks, everyone, for writing in, and apologies to anyone whose news won't get printed until the Spring/Summer issue.

## 1979

**Robert C. Klapper**  
robertklappermd@aol.com

Last May, **Clarence Waldron JRN'80** was the recipient of the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Chicago Headline Club, the nation's largest chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. Each year it administers the Peter Lisagor Awards, which recognize excellence in journalism.

Clarence has enjoyed a distinguished career in journalism for more than 35 years, including a 29-year tenure as a senior writer and senior editor of *Jet Magazine*. He has been an adjunct professor at Northwestern University Medill School of Journalism since 1998. His courses include "Reporting & Writing," "Magazine Writing" and "Covering Popular Music," a music journalism course that he created for graduate students. Clarence has also taught at Columbia College Chicago and Loyola University. In 2010, the National Association of Black Journalists presented him with The Legacy Award and named him the "dean of arts and entertainment journalists."

Congratulations, Clarence, on your award and accolades from colleagues and notable celebrities!

News of career changes from **Eric Swenson LAW'82**, who writes, "After 35-plus years as an energy lawyer at big law firms, I elected to focus on pro bono work. To that end, I stepped down in March as a partner at the last (Orrick, Herrington, Sutcliffe) of the four great law firms that I had the pleasure to have worked for to join the Pro Bono Institute as director, Law Firm Pro Bono Project. The change has been rewarding and quite a different experience, partly due to the different scale and partly due to Covid-19 ... At PBI, I collaborate with lawyers and legal services professionals at law firms, corporate legal departments and legal service organizations across the country and around

the world. I hope my new job will result in more chance encounters with CC alums, especially the Class of 1979."

Life's full of new chapters. Best of luck, Eric!

**Robert C. Klapper:** This Columbia thought comes from the world of surfing. My sophomore year in Hartley Hall, junior year in John Jay Hall and senior year in Furnald Hall had one thing in common: what was hanging in my room. It was a gigantic black-and-white poster of a tiny surfer riding the massive wall of water that is on the north shore of Oahu and is known as Waimea Bay. The surfer is likely to be Greg Noll, whom I have had the pleasure of taking care of over the years.

I sometimes ask myself, "Now that I surf on a regular basis, both here in Ventura, Calif., and in Hawaii, why did I feel drawn to this sport for years before I ultimately took it on?"

Was it the Zen experience that I could recognize ahead of my time? Surfing is filled with Zen philosophers searching for its deep metaphor of life. My favorite surfer is Gerry Lopez, who is known for saying, "If you can buy it with money, it is cheap." Or, is it the philosopher Sam George, who told me, "All things in life — light, sound, our EKG electrodes over our hearts — come in waves." All of these waves of life, however, are invisible. It's only the surfer in our society who gets to see for a few seconds what a wave actually looks like in real life. As if that's not deep enough of a concept, it was Gerry who explained to me, "and remember, Dr. Klapper, we as surfers ride the energy that is flowing through the water ... the water is actually not even moving."

But I have to say, when I think back on what led me to hang a picture of a giant wave on my wall in those concrete jungle rooms we lived in, it must have been the tiny size of the surfer standing on his board that really touched and inspired me, because 45 years later, I finally learned what I must have sensed, seeing that figure on his board. It's because in that poster I saw the ultimate metaphor for life in the eyes of a college student — the nose of the board is the surfer's future and the tail of the board is the surfer's past, but he alone stands in the middle and learns to live in the moment.

This is the life lesson that I must have gravitated to that made my journey those four years so special.

What was hanging on your dorm room wall? Was it Farrah Fawcett or John Travolta? Roar, lion, roar!

## 1980

**Michael C. Brown**  
mcbcu80@yahoo.com

*"Truckin', got my chips cashed in  
"Keep truckin', like the do-dab man  
"Together, more or less in line  
"Just keep truckin' on"*

— Grateful Dead

Last year certainly was unique for all of us, in more ways than one. I, for one, just keep truckin' here in the Big Apple! Sure, fewer people to see, no restaurants to enjoy and clearly no entertainment or music scene. Local sports relegated to television, and no Ivy League sports have really curtailed my enthusiasm. But, more time for family and friends!

Thank you to **Scott Ahern, Eric Blattman, Joe Ciulla, Pat De Souza, Shawn FitzGerald, John Hall and Bruce Paulsen** for their calls and Zoom-ing on a regular basis. It is wonderful to have so many people who care, and the stories keep getting better the more we tell them!

Let's make sure we keep a positive outlook in 2021. I look forward to hearing from you. Drop me a line.

## 1981

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
ccreunion@columbia.edu

Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Kevin Fay**  
kfay0516@gmail.com

Like many of you, I am getting Covid-19 fatigue and am pretty much "over it," except the disease is not over with us so we need to take normal precautions as we go about our daily lives. Last year began so promisingly, but for most has unrav-



eled to the point where we were eager to say goodbye to 2020.

Except, perhaps, for **Jack O'Loughlin**, who recently shared great news about his family. Jack's son, John '12, married Paige Cuscovitch '14 in Boston on October 3 with immediate family and close friends in attendance. [Editor's note: See "Just Married!"] Younger son Brendan '15 introduced them in NYC after they graduated and was best man. At Columbia, John ran indoor and outdoor track and Paige was captain of the lacrosse team (hmm, if they have children will they be Columbia athletes?). John and Paige moved to Boston in 2019, where Paige is a physician's assistant in the ER at Massachusetts General Hospital and John is a relationship manager for Wells Fargo Commercial Real Estate, covering the northeast. Jack also has a daughter, Caroline ('11 Dartmouth), who was married in 2017.

Jack mentioned his deep sadness to learn of the death of **Harlan Simon**, whom everyone knew due to his frantic, kinetic energy as conductor for the Marching Band, in the Fall 2020 issue. Quick wit, ready smile ... these are Jack's memories of Harlan, which I'm sure are common among classmates.

You don't have to be a math major to figure out 2021 means we have been out of college for 40 years, so there must be a reunion. At this time it's difficult to predict if a reunion will happen in NYC, but if it does I encourage all to attend. [Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

Finally, I would like to pass the baton on being the *CCT* class correspondent for CC'81, as I feel a fresh face in this position might stimulate additional responses from classmates. So many of our class went to graduate school on Morningside Heights, or have children who graduated from the College or live in NYC and thus are able to access events on campus (if and when they resume) ... these classmates are in a better position than I to handle this task. Please reach out to me if you have an interest in being the next class correspondent.

## 1982

**Andrew Weisman**  
columbiacollege82@gmail.com

Greetings, gentlemen. As I pen the latest set of Class Notes, we're now approximately nine months into the global pandemic. Such a sad and disconcerting time. Please take this danger seriously; stay safe and responsible.

On the upside, I've used this challenge to my health (see my Summer 2020 note) as inspiration. I have been training heavily and recently completed both the Maroon Bells Loop, which consisted of three days and 34 miles of Rocky Mountain hiking, ranging in altitude from 9,000 ft. to 12,500 ft. four times, and a one-day crossing of the Grand Canyon featuring 24 miles of hiking and 11,000 total feet of vertical.

Given my current preoccupation with all things Covid-19-related, I was very pleased to have the good doctor **Charles Markowitz** check in: "Most recently, I started a hospital-based outpatient rehabilitation and wellness program for Covid survivors here in central New Jersey. Many of those who recover are unfortunately prone to long-lasting residual health problems.

"My medical practice is situated in Lakewood, one of our region's frequent 'hot spots' for Covid. I was interviewed by *Hamodia*, Lakewood's weekly news periodical; read it online: [bit.ly/33c4jzS](http://bit.ly/33c4jzS).

"My son, Bryan '19, attends business school at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He is exploring international startups and the promotion of new agricultural technology for the developing world."

Charles, thanks for taking the time to write in, and for all that you're doing to help people! The article is quite interesting and well worth a read.

Continuing with our "Positive Tales of the Pandemic" theme, **Ken Gruber** wrote from sunny Florida, even though he hails from Toronto. He managed to get "stuck" there riding out the pandemic while keeping company with his 88-year-old (fun-to-hang-out-with) mom. Ken notes, "After being a suit-and-tie hospital-ity marketing guy for 25-plus years, I (when not stuck in Florida) have been enjoying self/semi(un)employ-

ment, doing everything from selling vintage collectibles to leading bicycle tours in my hometown of Toronto."

Thanks for checking in, Ken!

Sadly, I have to report on the passing of **Rajan Sekaran**, whose son Doran '23 let us know of his father's passing. *The New York Times* wrote extensively about Rajan. Read the obituary online: [legcy.co/3nOpY8Q](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/us/rajan-sekaran-obituary.html).

Rajan will be greatly missed.

Finally, if you've got some time on your hands, and I suspect you do, take a few minutes and send along any sort of update you'd care to.

## 1983

**Roy Pomerantz**  
bkroy@msn.com

I received an unprecedented number of emails and calls from classmates the last few months. During these challenging times, the updates are especially appreciated. I will need to spread them out over several issues. Many who write express how much they appreciate reading our Class Notes. If you haven't done so recently, please share your journey and recollection of your CC experience.

**David L. Burg:** "Live in Miami. Three kids. In financial services. Wondering if my Sam drawing is worth enough now to fund my retirement! Fondest memory ... watching *The Three Stooges* with my floormates in Carman on a weekend night (sad). Feels like yesterday! Only 50 lbs. heavier than my college weight."

**Michael Hickins:** "My ebook, *I Lived in France and So Can You*, was published last year. I'm in touch with a fair number of people from CC, including my best friend, **Michael Granville**, whom I met on the first day of Orientation! I'll never forget my sense of awe at being surrounded by so many incredibly smart people — all of them smarter than I — from so many different places. I'm glad to say that I never lost my sense of wonder at being in such a beautiful and privileged space. I hope to have news to share later this year, but in the meantime count me among the many alumni grateful for your contribution to our community."

**Kevin Berkowitz** (fka **Kevin Berk**): "I live in Thessaloniki, Greece, and am a high school teacher of English and social studies. I remember some guy who used to

sing opera on the B'way sidewalk every day. He was lousy, but he had determination. Did he ever make it to Carnegie Hall?"

**Rich Garden:** "I am a practicing urologist in Bergen County, N.J., where I live with my wife, Dr. Esther Diamant BC'83. We have three grown children: Hayley, who has a master's in computer animation and works for Hellosaurus, an interactive learning platform for children; Evan, who completed his third year of medical school at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai; and Sam, who is an investment banker for Macquarie. I keep in touch with Dr. Harry Fried '82, Dr. Alan Garten '82, Irwin Studen SEAS'82, Stephen Irolla '82, Rabbi Josh Finkelstein '82 and **Brad Gluck**. My fondest memories of CC revolve around meeting my wife, playing full-court basketball with future President, then-student **Barack Obama**, and enjoying the ability of Professors James Shenton '49, GSAS'54 and Eric Foner '63, GSAS'69 to make U.S. history come alive and be relevant for me."

**Steve Holtje:** "After 35 years in Brooklyn, I returned to the UWS in February, specifically West End Avenue and 77th Street. Living in the Valley of Zabar's/Citarella/Fairway/Trader Joe's has been convenient. There was an interview with me in the September issue of *JazzTimes* magazine about the record label I run, ESP-Disk. In mid-September we released the second Matthew Shipp Trio album I've produced, *The Unidentifiable*. I'm also the pianist in free-improvisation band Caterpillar Quartet, which released its first album last summer, *Threads*, on the Greene Avenue label."

**Bill Schultz:** "Throughout Covid-19, we have been in Atlanta. But fortunately, our kids (including our youngest, Daniel '16) and our 1-year-old grandson, Benjamin (prospective CC 2042), have been here for much of the time, a definite silver lining. After moving 16 times (including to Delhi, London, Manila, Berlin and Toronto), this is our longest stretch in one place since ... Columbia!"

**Daniel Schechter** GSAS'87, PS'91: "After spending nearly a decade at the University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center in child and adolescent psychiatry, I jumped back over the pond to take an endowed associate professorship at NYU

while commuting to Geneva and maintaining my research in maternal-child trauma there. My family and I decided, given all the information and experience at hand, that we would in the long run be happiest in Switzerland. Miraculously, I received a stellar offer at Lausanne University Hospital (CHUV) and started there in July 2019 while remaining adjunct at NYU and Geneva University. I direct the Perinatal and Early Childhood Ambulatory Care and Research Programs in Lausanne, living in Geneva with my wife, Christine, and our teenage sons, Jan and Filip, playing some cello and piano and enjoying life. I'm in touch with Daniel Heuberger '85, Simo Hoite '89, SEAS '90, SEAS '91 and Adam Van Doren '84."

**Paul Hauptman:** "Roy, I can only imagine how your business was impacted by Covid-19 in NYC."

Paul, actually we were exempted from the closure because we sell essential baby items like wipes and baby bottles and emergency medical items like thermometers.

**Michael Calabrese:** "I am a professor of English at California State University, Los Angeles, in my 27th year, and I'm happy to now be celebrating the publication of my latest book, a translation of the middle English poem 'Piers Plowman' by William Langland. I first studied that in 1981 in Professor R.W. Hanning '58, GSAS '64's English class. I remain ever grateful to mother Columbia and the faculty."

"Here in Los Angeles, I am in constant contact with **Simon Black**, **Charlie Hess** and **P.J. Pesce**.

Wishing the best to all classmates, with memories of the Marlin Cafe and other spots from back in the day. And a perpetual note of affection for the other members of our group of friends who are all in contact and bound together: **Darius Sollohub**, **Gideon Besson**, Lou Tilmont and David Rosenberg Korish. Thanks for keeping the spirit of our class alive."

**Mark Darlington SEAS '84:** "I recently moved from Redding, Conn., to Aiken, S.C., because Aiken is heaven for horses, and my wife owns three. I've been running an IT consulting firm from home for 19 years, so it doesn't really matter where I work. We live about three minutes from 12 beautiful Har-Tru tennis courts, and I can play year-round here. I've also been practicing

Bikram yoga for six years, and it's done wonders for my strength and flexibility. Due to Covid-19, my sons have decided to take a year off from college, and now work at a North Haven, Conn., Amazon warehouse. We were looking forward to their visiting South Carolina for Thanksgiving. I've recently been in touch with **Bob Gamiel**, **Bruce Robertson**, **Rob Kahn**, **Paul Saputo**, **Marty Avallone**, **Simon Hall**, **Joe Harary** and **Mike Melkonian '84.**"

**Ramon Parsons:** "I've been in touch with many from the class via Zoom: **Dan Jaffe**, **David Hershey-Webb**, **Liz Rich BC '83**, **Ted Kessler**, **Marty Shore**, **Chris Wood**, **Maddy Schwartzman BC '83** and **Roger Miller**. All doing well. Connie Vasilas BC '83 and I have been married for 33 years and have three adult children. I'm an Icahn Scholar and the Ward-Coleman Chair in Cancer Research at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, where I also am director of the Tisch Cancer Institute, an NCI-designated cancer center, and chair of the Department of Oncological Sciences. I have also had the pleasure to run a research laboratory for more than 25 years focused on cancer genetics and molecular biology."

I am sad to report the passing of **George Poon**. **Ken Chin** shared his obituary; you can read it online: [bit.ly/3lqWMUL](https://bit.ly/3lqWMUL).

We should all be proud of Columbia's recent number 3 ranking in *U.S. News & World Report*, ahead of Yale.

Stay safe and carpe diem!

## 1984

**Dennis Klainberg**  
[dennis@berklay.com](mailto:dennis@berklay.com)

Strange times, indeed, but very happy to have heard from a number of classmates, with nothing but good health to report — thankfully! Coincidentally, some of those closest to me at Columbia — literally, by proximity during those days, and by friendship since — all checked in right away. Always great hearing from Carman suitemate **Ronald Thompson**, two-year Hamilton next door neighbor **Adam Belanoff** and Fernald floormate **Peter Schmidt**. But then, quite out of the blue, as if emerging from the pool where we all had to take the swim

test, breast stroke champion **Brian Clew** did a deep dive into my previous column and sent a shoutout to **Jim Weinstein**.

Which leads me to a new feature in our column, starting now: "Classmate Spotlight!"

We all know **Brian Clew** as one of our class's stellar athletes, described in a March 23, 1983, *Spec* article as "a school record holder in the 100-yard and 200-yard breast stroke events ... United States Championships qualifier, an Eastern Seaboard finalist, and a 'quiet team leader' according to Lions swimming coach Don Galluzzi."

Side note: Yours truly masochistically chose to take a lap swimming gym class with the great Galluzzi: never worked out harder in my life!

Not only was Brian co-captain and a member of the swim team that won its first league title in 1984, but he also was, and is, the member of a very special club, one that I'll call "True Blue."

One of a handful of CC '84 grads who were legacies, Brian's family's dedication to Columbia is remarkable. Starting with grandfather Louis V. Clew, a Teachers College grad; followed by uncle Richard L. Clew '53; father, Robert D. Clew '56; brother Richard C. Clew '87; and including wife, Alison Clew (née Levy) SEAS '83.

These days, Brian spends a little less time in the pool, and more in the sun, as an executive with MetroWest Solar in Framingham, Mass.

Roar, Brian, Roar!

It was Senior Week, and this great talent entertained us, sitting under a tree, just across from St. Paul's Chapel, on — if memory serves — the Friday before Class Day, at around noon. It was a warm, sunny May day, and, as this musician reminded me, he was joined by two other amazing jazz artists: Billy Higgins on drums and Charlie Haden on bass. Who was it? None other than jazz guitar great Pat Metheny.

Anyone else remember Senior Week events? Please advise and I will revisit them in our next column.

In other news, **Mark Binder** was on a book and storytelling tour in Vienna, London and Copenhagen for *The Misadventures of Rabbi Kibitz* and *Mrs. Chaipul* when the pandemic sent everyone home. He spent last summer producing SUMMER 2020, the world's first "live concert

audiobook" (on Audible), and last fall released his debut novel, *The Groston Rules*. Recently, his stepson had Covid-19; he's fully recovered, and Mark wants you to know that it is possible to have an infected person be in a house without spreading it to everyone else.

Good to hear, but stay vigilant!

Hoping to hear a lot more from you soon.

## 1985

**Jonathan White**  
[jw@whitecoffee.com](mailto:jw@whitecoffee.com)

Hope everyone continues to stay well and safe during these challenging times. Please keep your updates coming, as it can help to provide some constancy and perspective for everyone.

**Greg Jarrin** has moved to Whiteriver, Ariz., on the White Mountain Apache Nation. "I am the first full-time general surgeon to work at the Whiteriver Indian Hospital. My wife was here as a nurse practitioner in the ER for a bit before I arrived. I delayed my move from the Winslow Indian Healthcare Center, as our youngest daughter was in her senior year at Winslow Township H.S. We are proud to say she was co-valedictorian. I have worked nationally in the Indian Health Service as the chief clinical consultant for surgery for five years. I have coordinated the planning for our national IHS surgeons conference every year for the past 18 years. Unfortunately, our conference in Anchorage was canceled last year due to the pandemic. We hope to have it this year, June 4–6.

"Two of our four children have graduated from college. Our oldest, Julian, finished Arizona State University last May with a B.A. in theater light design. He was working for the Maricopa County Elections Department until November and next will start a job in theater in a school district in Phoenix. Luke graduated from Humboldt State University in Arcata, Calif., in May 2019 with a B.A. in wildlife conservation. He has worked for the Arizona Conservation Corps on trail maintenance in state and federal parks, in Alaska on a salmon boat for six weeks and most recently in St. Louis with AmeriCorps. Our



two daughters are still in college. Felicia is a senior at Santa Clara University, and Chloe is a first-year at Saint Mary's College of California in Moraga. Felicia is pursuing political science and English as a dual major. Chloe plans to major in biochemistry with hopes of going to medical school.

"My wife, Vanessa, and I are thankful for our opportunities in life, the health and achievements of our children, and our continuing ability to work in the Indian Health Service.

"The best to classmates. Go Lions! Go Class of 1985! Sad to see the Marching Band dissolve. Long live the Columbia University Marching Band!"

**Louis Kanganis's** daughter, Alisa, was set to join the Williams College Class of 2024, but opted to defer due to Covid-19. She'll also be a member of its track team, which is competitive at the NCAA Division III level. Earlier this year Louis joined Miyoko's Kitchen, one of the leading producers of vegan cheese and dairy products, as its president.

Thanks to **Heather Paxton** for responding to some of the questions posed by my email and our Zoom reunion call last year. She says she loved her time at Columbia, but ... "Big regret: I considered getting a master's in library science from Columbia, but I decided against it. My recollection is that it would have required only an extra year of study. At the time, I wanted a paycheck and the advantages of more 'real-world' experience. I also was aware that computers were changing everything. I didn't want to get the degree, and then find that the systems I learned would be obsolete in a few years. What Heather of 2020 would tell Heather of 1985: 'Get the degree. Then you'll have two degrees from Columbia, and you'll have the credentials to work as a professional librarian. As for the computer systems, you'll still be learning new ones in your 50s, as unimaginable as that may seem.'"

Hope you are able to engage with Columbia online. I viewed several webinars, which were very thoughtful. Also, the Alumni Representative Committee will be doing all admissions interviewing remotely for the Class of 2025, so if you ever wanted to interview, but didn't have the wherewithal to get to an appropriate interview place, it has never been

easier ... and it just becomes another Zoom meeting.

Finally, on a personal note, please see the photo in the "Just Married!" section featuring none other than my son Isaac '14, who married his longtime sweetheart, Kara Krakower BC'14, on the Low Steps on September 12, the 10th anniversary of the day that they met at Columbia. Covid-19 forced them to postpone their original plans, but in reality, the perfect setting combined with perfect weather led to a perfect day. Solomon Hoffman '14 officiated (his first marriage ceremony; he is studying to be a rabbi, and will be a great one). We used the Kiddush cup given to Isaac at his bris by Eddy Friedfeld '83 and Leon Friedfeld '88. Numerous Columbia and Barnard alums joined us on Zoom, including my brother, sister-in-law, niece, nephew, Michael Ackerman '84 and Sally Freud BC'86. Feeling very blessed.

[Editor's note: CCT misattributed a note to **Jeffrey Lautin** in the Fall 2020 issue; we apologize for the error.]

## 1986

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
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Development Contact  
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**Everett Weinberger**  
everett6@gmail.com

Greetings from Miami Beach! I decamped to my Miami apartment last July to take advantage of remote working. If you're in the Miami area, drop me a line and we'll meet for outdoor beers!

We are in need of an uplifting story, and **Chris Herbst** provided one. "After 34 years, I'm breaking my silence and finally sending in my first contribution for Class Notes. I am so very proud to report that **Denis Fitzgibbons**, my Columbia roommate and my brother-in-law of 33 years, was recently elected president of the State Bar of Arizona! I attached a great article about Denis and his family that shows his passionate commitment to serve others. It also

touches on his time at Columbia in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and quotes our good friend and my other roommate Mike Schmidberger '82, LAW'85." Mike chairs Sidley Austin's Executive Committee.

I thought I'd summarize the *Arizona Attorney* magazine article from July/August 2020. Denis grew up in Estherville, Iowa (pop. 7,500) as the youngest of four boys. Three became lawyers and one a doctor. By the way, the doctor-brother has 10 children, nine of whom are doctors! Their father, David Fitzgibbons Sr., moved the family from Iowa to Arizona because of his rheumatoid arthritis. They moved to Casa Grande, a diverse community halfway between Phoenix and Tucson, and surrounded by Indian tribes.

After graduating from the ASU College of Law, Denis worked at Snell & Wilmer in Phoenix. One of his colleagues there said, "Once you're a friend of his, you're a friend for life." Denis joined his father's practice, which became Fitzgibbons Law Offices. Denis works with his brothers, David and Kevin, and his brother-in-law Dan Harrington. Their sister is an attorney, too, at another firm. Denis enjoys his three-minute commute — five if he hits the red light. He and his wife, Lisa Navarro Fitzgibbons, who is a member of the Casa Grande City Council, have three daughters: Ashley, Molly and Grace. Ashley recently graduated from the ASU Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, Molly is a labor and delivery nurse at St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix and Grace recently graduated from Loyola University with a major in psychology and a minor in women and gender studies.

Denis is the kind of guy who is still friends with the Little Brothers he mentored when he was at Columbia. His firm's motto is "Trust and integrity ... a tradition." Denis is Irish Catholic but he sounds like a mensch in the truest sense.

Congratulations, Denis, on this well-deserved honor!

**Andy Ahn** sent a nice update: "In an apparent effort to wander ever closer back to my hometown and alma mater, I have moved from Indianapolis to the Philadelphia region with my wife, Christina, and daughters, Isabela (13) and Abigail (11). After a time in academia as a neuroscientist and neurologist, I

have found meaningful service to my patients through the discovery and development of medicines for neurological disorders. While at Eli Lilly and Company I had various roles, but had the opportunity to help develop a medicine for an uncommon but severe condition called cluster headache, the first such medicine approved for this condition. I now work at Teva Pharmaceuticals in the Philly area, where I continue to work on developing medicines for other headache disorders. It is an interesting time to be working in pharma, being at once the immediate scapegoat for the escalating cost of healthcare (still only 10 percent of the overall cost of healthcare in this country) but still expecting that innovation for severe and urgent unmet medical needs can proceed at warp speed. (Does anyone else sense the irony of the reference to science fiction?)"

[Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

## 1987

**Sarah A. Kass**  
sarahann29uk@gmail.com

**Judy Kim** has become a Florida resident! She lives in Palm Beach and invites alums traveling in the area to drop by and say hi. She also said that she had brunch with **Dora Kim Baer**. "It was so fun to talk about mutual friends and Art and Music Hum!" Judy said.

**Suze Kim-Villano** sent the following update: "Covid-19 aerosol spread has been tough on choirs. I had been regularly singing in four before the pandemic. Notre Dame returned to in-person this fall and I was singing in person, but in smaller choirs, distanced, outside in the football stadium, in a mask. With the cold weather, we moved indoors to connected rooms where we can sing together (which is impossible on Zoom) while we are in separate spaces!"

"Two of the Notre Dame Children's Choirs are meeting in person, again, in small groups, distanced, in masks, at the stadium gate. They have been great, and I meet by

Zoom with those singers who are quarantining or have high-risk family members. The rest of our choirs are meeting via Zoom, and the directors have learned to use Google Classroom, Flipgrid, Virtual Interactive Classrooms and Flat to teach songs and musical skills, provide social and emotional support, and build community online.

"We break frequently to allow aerosol dispersment (outside) and increased air exchanges (inside), and are doing what we can with what we have. Trying to stay safe and sing."

For more on Notre Dame's music, check out [bit.ly/3pY7TY1](http://bit.ly/3pY7TY1) online.

## 1988

**Eric Fusfield**  
[eric@fusfield.com](mailto:eric@fusfield.com)

Recently I have had reason to think back on my junior abroad at Oxford, when I decided as a young man that I didn't trust English barbers and consequently went a full year without cutting my hair. As a middle-aged man during a viral pandemic, I feel a different sort of distrust, in which I fear contracting the coronavirus in a barber shop, and have therefore grown my hair long again. It is now rangy on the sides and in the back, but sparser on top, a reminder that none of us are 20 anymore. It's also a stark reminder not to strive for an aging hipster look under normal conditions.

As the pandemic continues to consume our attention and constrict our activities, the medical doctors and specialists in our class continue

to make us hopeful and proud. Dr. **Pam Perry** is an emergency medicine specialist in West Palm Beach, Fla. "I'm happily married to an incredible graphic designer, Lonnie MacPeck, and I am on year 23 of an amazing emergency medicine career," Pam reports. "I thank my lucky stars every day that I went to Columbia College! Crazy times in the world right now. Everyone pray, and above all else, stay safe!"

Dr. **Eve Makoff GSAS'89** wrote from Torrance, Calif.: "I am an internal medicine and palliative care physician, and medical director of palliative care at MedZed, a telehealth company that provides longitudinal care. For fun I publish personal essays and narrative medicine reflections. I am married and have three kids, ages 15, 18 and 19."

**Laura Prendergast**, founder and chief technical officer of VectorGen, is pushing barriers in platform technology that can be used to prevent and cure HIV/AIDS and other viral infections. "The Street Card, a project to use IT to streamline the provision of benefits to homeless persons, is progressing nicely," she says. "We have two student teams working on the web-based application; the first tier of services (for basic needs providers) is nearly complete, and the second tier (connecting homeless clients with their medical records) is well underway."

"I am also working with a team of students from the University of Albany on a police reform project," Laura continues. "We have partnered with Jeffrey Deskovic, a prominent advocate for criminal justice reform. Additionally, I recently accepted a position as science advisor to Air Cycle Systems, a group of entrepreneurs developing a better air-purifying respirator."

"Finally, I am saddened to report the demise of my uncle, Dr. Robert A. Prendergast '53, who left a lasting legacy for the Columbia crew by painting the 'C' on the Spuyten Duyvil cliff." [Editor's note: See "Obituaries."]

Also involved in the fight against HIV is **David Putelo**, who checked in from the Syracuse area, where he is national account director for ViiV Healthcare, a pharmaceutical company specializing in the development of therapies for HIV infection. David pledged to "reach out in the near future as the world returns to a better reality."

This is unfortunately the second column in a row in which I have had to note the death of a classmate. **Refoel Pride** reports, "Brian Keizer passed away on March 17, 2020, which I believe was just before his 54th birthday. Cause of death was complications arising from diabetes. He should rest in peace."

Refoel recalled, "He was a great guy and a brilliant mind, one of the most brilliant minds I've ever known. He worked for many years as a freelance writer, and also for New York's SummerStage."

"Probably the most notable episode from Brian's Columbia College career came when he was the host of a weekly blues show on WKCR and Keith Richards called in to the studio," Refoel wrote. Brian hung up on him a few times because he assumed it was a prank — anyone acquainted with Brian knew he was a huge fan of the Stones. Somehow Richards finally managed to get through to Brian and persuade him it really was him; he was a faithful listener of the show each week from his home. (Maybe on Long Island? I can't remember.) Brian set a time to go interview him for the show, which he did. That was a special moment. If you had told me then that Keith Richards would outlive Brian, I never would have believed you."

Stay in touch and stay safe, everyone.

## 1989

**Emily Miles Terry**  
[emilymilesterry@me.com](mailto:emilymilesterry@me.com)

As we all know, CC'89 has more than our fair share of classmates who are dedicated and involved alumni. But I wanted to acknowledge the work of **Michael Behringer** and his tremendous leadership as former president of the Columbia College Alumni Association. Mike's tenure (he began as president in 2017) wrapped up last July, and while I'm sure he's happy to have some time back, the CCAA will certainly miss his strong leadership and ambitious alumni-oriented endeavors. Michael and his family reside in Connecticut, where he is executive in residence at Ridgmont Equity Partners.

Thank you, Michael!

**Maiken Baird** is an independent documentary filmmaker who spe-

cializes in international and political affairs. Most recently she produced *Totally Under Control*, a documentary that chronicles Donald Trump and the White House's response to the coronavirus pandemic, now available on Hulu. Maiken also co-directed the documentary film *Venus and Serena* and produced *Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer*. Her list of films and documentaries is extensive and also includes *No Stone Unturned*, the story of the 1994 Loughinisland massacre in Northern Ireland; *Elián*, which focuses on Elián Gonzales as an adult and the story that followed his removal from the United States to Cuba, as well as the documentary *City of Ghosts*, which tells the story of ISIS fighters in the city of Raqqa during the fall of the attempted caliphate. In 2018 Maiken was an executive producer for the documentary *Divide and Conquer: The Story of Roger Ailes*, and in 2019 she was an executive producer for the documentary *Mystify: Michael Hutchence*. Maiken lives in New York City with her family.

**Patrick Nolan** sent me a tip that **Claudio Saunt**, a professor of history at the University of Georgia, authored a highly acclaimed book, *Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory*, earlier this year. *Unworthy Republic* is a "masterful" and "unsettling history" of the forced migration of Native Americans across the Mississippi River in the 1830s and the state-sponsored theft of their lands. Claudio's fourth book, it is a finalist for the 2020 National Book Award for Nonfiction, was Shortlisted for the 2020 Cundill History Prize and was on the *Publishers Weekly* "Top 10" Best Books of 2020 list.

Dr. **Tony Vinals** writes: "Enjoyed some tennis in the fall. Despite all the social distancing, tennis is a great sport that I am enjoying with my daughters Matilde and Theresa, both born at the Columbia University Medical Center-NewYork Presbyterian Hospital, and who both had the joy of studying at Columbia last summer in a joint Sotheby's/art history department program."

Tony added that his "wife received also her medical training at Columbia, so the Columbia tradition runs deep in our family."

Tony attended the Yale School of Medicine and trained in ophthal-



Let us know if you have a new postal or email address, a new phone number or even a new name:  
[college.columbia.edu/alumni/connect](http://college.columbia.edu/alumni/connect).



mology at Harvard. Fourteen years ago, after working for several years in Manhattan, he and his family moved to Germany. “We are located outside of Frankfurt in a lovely wine-growing area near the Rhine River,” Tony writes. “My wife and I are both eye surgeons, and partners in one of the most established practices in our state. We also had the good fortune of opening our eye clinic in January 2020.”

And lastly, a bit of good news: This column is going to be written by CC’89 guest columnists this year. Please let me know if you’re interested. You don’t have to be obligated to do the column for the rest of your life, but please reach out to me if you’d like to write one. You will have several months’ lead time, and it’s a great excuse to reach out to classmates and share what you’ve been up to.

## 1990

**Rachel Cowan Jacobs**  
youngache@hotmail.com

When I submitted my Fall 2020 column, (most of) the United States for four months into the stay-at-home/shutdown stage of Covid-19. As I write today, we’re more than seven months in and when you read this, it’ll be the heart of winter. Who knows what our country will look like when this column is published? I just hope it’s a whole lot healthier, and not just in a coronavirus context. Here’s some news from our classmates.

**Beth Kissileff** has co-edited an anthology about the Pittsburgh Tree of Life synagogue shooting, which was published in October. Her daughter followed in her footsteps to Penn for a graduate degree. Beth reports she has no Columbians ... yet.

**Michael Kinstlick** is pandemic-ing-in-place in Berkeley while whiskey company Coppersea is still going strong (I bet it is!) in New York. His son is enjoying his junior year at the University of Chicago.

**Bob Giannasca, Liz Libow Poston, Claudine Wolas Shiva, Lucia Bozzola, Margaret Flynn Robison and Melissa Steinman** (née Landau) got together to wish **Laura Schiele Robinson** a happy birthday via Zoom in October. It took an extra week or two past her birthday to actually schedule the call, and it

wasn’t really the reunion they would’ve liked, but they said it was nice to see everybody’s faces and catch up!

You’re never too old to be a Fulbright Scholar. **Aili Bresnahan** (née Webber) was awarded a Fulbright and heads to London this winter for seven months. An associate professor of philosophy of philosophy at the University of Dayton in Ohio, Aili’s primary areas of research are the philosophy of dance, performance, aesthetics, culture and law. Read about her on the Fulbright Commission’s U.K. website: [bit.ly/3pmVgW9](https://bit.ly/3pmVgW9).

**Marian Wright** reports, “My family recently acquired a 170-acre high country ranch near Kremmling, Colo., where we have an off-grid cabin and plan to sustainably raise crops and beef for the local market. We will continue to live in Rye, N.Y., while our younger children (Rhodes, 14, and Wyatt, 16) finish high school. Our oldest, Cole (19) is a sophomore at Colgate. For a few years now, I have been on the junior board at Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture in Pocantico Hills, N.Y. Stone Barns, with its associate restaurants, both called Blue Hill, is committed to the development and promulgation of sustainable food production. Its nonprofit farm and educational center are adjacent to the Rockefeller State Park Preserve.”

**Jonathan Earle, Erika Schroter Olinger** and their families have been spending time together during the pandemic in New Orleans, either by the pool at Jonathan’s pied-à-terre in the lower French Quarter or at Erika’s lovely home Uptown. They met up again — by chance! — at a party after an art opening at Erika’s hip Magazine Street Cole Pratt Gallery, where her husband, Jude, “introduced” them. Both Erika and Jonathan joined Phi Epsilon Pi, a coeducational local fraternity, during their freshman year at Columbia.

Finally, **Robin Zornberg Wald SEAS’90** invited **Laura Shaw Frank, Judy Shampianer** and me to join her team for a Zoom trivia game that SEAS organized during Homecoming festivities in October. The good news is that we did not come in last. The better news is that we knew stuff! The disappointing news is that we were the only people playing from 1990. Oh, well. I hope the rest of you participated in some other Homecoming events, seeing

as how Zoom makes it easy to get places nowadays.

Best wishes and good health to all, and please stay in touch.

## 1991

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**Heather E.G. Brownlie**  
[heatherhj@yahoo.com](mailto:heatherhj@yahoo.com)

Hi everyone! I am **Heather E.G. Brownlie**, your new class correspondent, having taken over from my Carman 8 floormate **Margie Kim**, who did such an amazing job all these years — thank you, Margie! I look forward to keeping up with everyone’s activities and being the conduit for your updates and news to make it into these pages. So please, send me your information, and let’s keep this column vibrant and active!

As I write this, plans are underway for our 30th reunion celebration, scheduled to take place virtually in late May and possibly in person in early June, conditions permitting. Already, I have very much enjoyed working with the CC’91 Reunion Committee, catching up with old friends and making new ones! Cheers to 30 years!

**Eugenia Gonzalez Centeno and Miguel Centeno** write, “We are doing well in Queens with our 3-year-old, Mateo.”

After almost 18 years at Boies Schiller & Flexner, **Bob Cooper** joined King & Spalding as a partner in Washington, D.C., last July. Bob focuses his practice on antitrust litigation, governmental investigations and counseling global companies on competition-related issues.

**Jacqueline Harounian** practices family law as a partner in the Great Neck, N.Y., firm of Wisselman, Harounian & Associates. She was recently named a *New York Law Journal* “Top Woman in Law 2020,” and her firm was named a *U.S. News & World Report* Top Tier Firm 2020.

**Darow Han** is a senior consultant and architect for IBM Security specializing in network and cloud

security. He lives in Los Angeles and has recorded several albums with his band DMZ//38.

**Jack Hiday** has been at Alphabet (parent company of Google) for five years and is leading a group focused on the nexus of Physics & AI technologies. His book, *Quantum Computing: An Applied Approach*, was published in October 2019 and is in its fourth printing. “I often think of our days in small seminars in the Core and have drawn on that experience for the many classes I teach,” Jack says.

**Nancy López Ph.D.** is a professor of sociology at the University of New Mexico. Nancy co-founded and still directs the Institute for Study of “Race” & Social Justice, and she is the founding coordinator of the New Mexico Statewide Race, Gender, Class Data Policy Consortium ([race.unm.edu](http://race.unm.edu)). Nancy also is associate VP for the Division for Equity and Inclusion and co-chairs the Education Committee of the New Mexico governor’s Council for Racial Justice. Her scholarship and teaching are guided by the insights of intersectionality — the simultaneity of tribal status/settler colonialism race/structural racism, gender/heteropatriarchy, class/capitalism, ethnicity/nativism and sexuality/heterosexism as systems of oppression/resistance across a variety of social outcomes (education, health, employment, wealth and housing)



Miguel Centeno ’91 and Eugenia Gonzalez Centeno ’91 are doing well in Queens, N.Y., with their son, Mateo (3).

and the importance of developing contextualized solutions that advance justice. Her books include *Hopeful Girls, Troubled Boys: Race and Gender Disparity in Urban Education* (2002) and *Mapping "Race": Critical Approaches to Health Disparities Research* (2013). She co-edited a special issue of the *Race, Ethnicity and Education Journal* on Quantitative Methods and Critical Race Theory.

Nancy is also known for developing the concept of "street race." She has been recognized for her contributions to engaged scholarship through the American Sociological Association's Section on for Sociological Practice and Public Sociology's William Foote Whyte Distinguished Career Award. Her current research includes a mixed method study in three research practice partnerships that examines the role of ethnic studies curriculum and culturally relevant pedagogy in reducing complex intersectional inequalities in high school. Nancy has served on more than 70 Ph.D./M.A. committees and has given more than 130 seminars at national conferences, invited lectures and community gatherings.

**Connie McVey** writes: "**Michael Socolow** and I live in beautiful Maine with our boys, Simon (17) and Geo (15). I've been practicing psychotherapy for 25 years now, specializing in trauma. Work has never been busier ... I am president of the Maine chapter of CISV International, which focuses on youth development, global friendship and peace education. Prior to Covid-19, I played on an ice hockey team and was an avid Friday night tango dancer (I miss dancing terribly!); though during Covid, I've been doing a lot of community veggie gardening, standup paddleboarding, hiking, biking and open water swimming, while managing two teen boys.

"Mike is director of the University of Maine's Clement and Lucy McGillicuddy Humanities Center and writes on topics like fake news, politics and more. He was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to research at the News and Media Research Centre at the University of Canberra in Australia in 2019, so we lived there for six months and enrolled our boys in Australian schools. We had amazing experiences, with side trips to the Great Barrier Reef, Daintree Rainforest, New Zealand, Japan and Korea, where Mike's sister, Elisabeth

Socolow '89, was working for the State Department. Luckily, we left Australia prior to the devastating fires.

"I wish I could see you all at our next reunion. I've loved attending previous ones, with my ol' teammates **Julie Black, Iris Kurman, Ani Mekhjian, Tara Kreidman** and more, but who knows if that will be possible due to Covid-19. Stay healthy and safe, everyone!

**Susannah "Susie" Wood** joined the State Department as a Foreign Service officer in 2012. Since then, she has been posted to U.S. embassies in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; and Ankara, Turkey; and is currently living in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Susie plans to move back to Washington, D.C., this summer for a domestic tour. She is married to Alexander Gavashelishvili and has two daughters, Sophia (15) and Laura (11).

## 1992

**Olivier Knox**  
olivier.knox@gmail.com

Hello, classmates and friends! Send me your life updates — new job, new family and so on. I guarantee someone will be delighted to hear from you via the column.

## 1993

**Betsy Gomperz**  
betsy.gomperz@gmail.com

No news to share this time! Please reach out to me at the email above or via the *CCT* Class Notes webform, college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note. Classmates would love to hear from and about you. Share current news, and/or stories from days past, and I will publish it in a future issue. Wishing you a healthy, happy and safe New Year.

## 1994

**Leyla Kokmen**  
leylakokmencct@gmail.com

Hello, Class of 1994! Hope you are all hanging in there! Happy to report some updates sent in by **Shawn Landres**, who notes, "Like so many others, we are navigating these multiple crises as best we can

and looking for the good where we can find it."

Shawn reports that 36 years after he and **Michael Jeon** started seventh grade together, they now are parents of seventh-graders in the same Class of 2026, "even though the girls, who share one government course (as I think Mike and I did), haven't yet met in person."

Last spring, Shawn designed and piloted a public-sector innovation course, and Caralyn Spector BC'94 was among the experienced mid-career professionals from across the country who participated. As a Los Angeles County and Santa Monica city commissioner — and now chair of the Santa Monica Planning Commission — Shawn has also been hard at work to plan and coordinate an array of local government efforts related to procurement and land-use streamlining, local hiring and philanthropic partnerships, each through an equity lens.

He adds, "Lastly, a shameless plug (thanks to **Mason Kirby** for his leadership on this) for The Columbia College Class of 1994 Scholarship Fund. Support for the fund counts toward annual recogni-

## 1996

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**Ana Salper**  
ana.salper@nyumc.org

Dear classmates, thanks to many of my fellow 25th Reunion Committee members, I have a nice amount of news to report this time around. As I write this, we are on the cusp of the presidential election (only five days away). It will be old news by the time of publication of this issue, but I would be remiss if I did not mention how much I am fervently hoping that 2021 ushers in a new era of positivity, unity and peace in this country.

Our 25th reunion is upon us (See what I did there? Two mentions before I even get to the notes.), and

*Shawn Landres '94 and Michael Jeon '94 started seventh grade together, and now they are both parents of seventh-graders (Class of 2026?).*

tions, and because it's a financial aid endowment, it's a gift that literally keeps on giving." Go to givenow.columbia.edu, and search using the fund's name.

Thanks to Shawn for sending the updates! Looking forward to hearing from more of you soon! Take care, and be well.

## 1995

**Janet Lorin**  
janet.lorin@gmail.com

Please reach out with your news via the email above or the *CCT* Class Notes webform, college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note. Classmates would love to hear from and about you! Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year.

although it will be different this year because of Covid-19 restrictions, I encourage all of you to participate in the scheduled events and reunite with CC'96 classmates. Can you believe it has been 25 years since we graduated? It truly feels like a lifetime ago, which is why reconnecting now is so important.

Now on to the notes. **Rose Kob** is a lawyer at a nonprofit and lives in Brooklyn with her husband, Joe, and their two teenagers. She writes that she is delighted to live around the corner from her Carman 11 floor-mate **Noa Heyman**. Rose often sees Noa out for her morning run when she picks up her newspaper from the stoop. Rose is also co-chair of the board of Community Impact at Columbia, which had its first virtual gala this past October. Rose's fellow CI board member **Moha Desai** was



there, as well as other CC'96ers, including **Pete Freeman** and **Elizabeth Yuan** (who also works with us on the Reunion Committee). Check out the CI website to learn more: [communityimpact.columbia.edu](http://communityimpact.columbia.edu).

**Stefanie Lally-Ardrey** SIPA'01 writes that she is in her 17th year as underwriting counsel with an international title insurance company. She and her husband have two high schoolers in Connecticut and, in a fit of quarantine-induced enthusiasm, recently added a Cocker Spaniel to their brood. Stefanie got together with **Nina Russakoff** in NYC just before the pandemic hit when they took their respective goddaughters to see a Broadway musical and for afternoon tea in celebration of a milestone birthday. Stefanie keeps in touch virtually with **Janet Kilian** (my Carman 5 roommate!), an economist for the Department of Defense's United States Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii, and enjoys debating world politics and the relative cuteness of their babies: Janet's toddler and Stefanie's puppy. Stefanie hopes that all classmates are staying safe and well during these strange times.

**Carter Burwell** is counselor to the secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the U.S. Department of Treasury.

**Michael Lee** is a corporate lawyer at Ropes & Gray in Boston. He lives in Newton, Mass. (just outside Boston), with his wife, Brigitte, daughter, Noelle (12), and kitten, beta fish and frog. Michael looks forward to connecting with other alums in the area and reconnecting with our class at our 25th reunion.

**Mila Tuttle** (née Atmosudirdjo) SIPA'05 started a podcast on civic engagement, Future Hindsight. She writes: "It's been an eye-opening journey that feels like I'm back in school, reading so much nonfiction, and learning what's possible for our democracy. Tune in! Still living in Manhattan, I have become super involved with Columbia and I'm really enjoying it."

Mila, who was the coxswain on crew, is in touch with fellow crew members **Eileen Barish** (rower), **Catherine Reibman Williams** '95 (rower), **Kathryn Hudacek Harlow** '94 (rower) and of course former Democratic presidential candidate **Beto O'Rourke** '95 (also a rower!). Mila has two sons, ages 16 (11th grade) and 13 (eighth grade).

**Lisa Courtney** LAW'99 lives with her husband, Eduardo, and their two children in Morningside Heights. She is statewide coordinator of alternative dispute resolution for the New York State Unified Court System, working to promote the growth of mediation throughout NYS. Lisa oversees settlement skills and training programs for judges and non-judicial court staff, and leads the Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee of the New York Women's Bar Association. Lisa returns to campus each year to speak to students at the Law School about mediation and to coach law students during their intensive mediation training, along with Professor Alexandra Carter LAW'03. In addition to mediation, Lisa enjoys meditation, meeting neighborhood friends at The Hungarian Pastry Shop, and walking around the Columbia neighborhood with family and friends. Her 12-year-old daughter is a cellist who dreams of going to Columbia, and her 10-year-old son is an avid chess player eager to again ride NYC trains just for fun. Lisa loved hearing **Jodi Kantor**'s interview of Professor Ken Jackson in the fall and felt encouraged by his faith in the future of NYC.

**Whitney Chiate** (née Berkholtz) lives in Tiburon (Marin County), Calif., with her husband and two children, and is working on getting a master's in psychology from Harvard. I have really enjoyed spending time serving on the 25th Reunion Committee with Whitney, as well as with **Adam Beshara**, **Uchenna Acholonu**, **Britta Jacobson** (my former East Campus suitemate) and others, several of whom are featured in this column. Hope to see you all at a reunion event!

In honor of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg LAW'59 (may she rest in power), I leave you with this:

"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

— RBG

## 1997

**Kerensa Harrell**  
[kvh1@columbia.edu](mailto:kvh1@columbia.edu)

Dear classmates, I hope that you had a pleasant autumn and that you

have been staying in good health throughout this frightening coronavirus pandemic, which continues to ravage our planet. It is my pleasure to present the following updates from our classmates.

**Sarah Bunin Benor** recently published a book with Jonathan Krasner and Sharon Avni, *Hebrew Infusion: Language and Community at American Jewish Summer Camps*.

**Melinda Powers** recently published an edited collection, *Reclaiming Greek Drama for Diverse Audiences: An Anthology of Adaptations and Interviews*.

**Doraine Burrell** (née Hemchand) writes: "I have joined the board of HealthRight International. We are celebrating our 30-year anniversary. We build sustainable healthcare systems for and with marginalized communities here and abroad."

**Nickolay Todorov** writes: "I'm executive-producing *Swamp People* for the History channel. During the last year I executive-produced two seasons of the hit show *Swamp People: Serpent Invasion* for History, one more season of *Swamp People* and the show *The Last Cowboy* for Paramount, a documentary companion to Yellowstone. Before that I produced the last two seasons of *American Chopper* in Orange County, N.Y."

**John Dean Alfone** participated in Cannes Online 2020 ([marchedu.com](http://marchedu.com)) and was accredited for the San Sebastian International Film Festival ([sansebastianfestival.com](http://sansebastianfestival.com)) last September in Spain and the Marché International du Film Classique ([mifc.fr](http://mifc.fr)) last October in France.

As for me, **Kerensa Harrell**, I am wrapping up this column in early October and I am thanking my lucky stars that I remain in a position where I can continue being a stay-at-home mom for my almost 4-year-old-daughter. With the pandemic continuing, I am doing my utmost to keep the two of us at home as much as possible, in an attempt to limit our exposure through social distancing. Rather than shopping at stores, I order all of our necessities to be delivered to our home, even the groceries. When on rare occasions we must go out, we are careful to wear our cloth face masks (which are matching mommy-daughter masks in pretty colors!). I am really looking forward to a vaccine, so that we can resume our social life.

On a positive note, last summer I regained my freedom and moved with my daughter to the lovely and picturesque town of Celebration, Fla. Celebration feels like a whimsical version of some towns in Connecticut, like Greenwich and Darien, but done up in a palette of Florida pastels. Living here feels like it's Easter year-round! Our home, which is right in the downtown area, is a short walking distance to the local elementary (K-8) school and also walking distance to restaurants, shops, a clubhouse, a lake, hiking trails, bicycle trails and so forth. Living in this new town is a much-needed breath of fresh air after the two-year war that I have just finished, and the three years of misery that preceded that. And now if only the pandemic would go away, life could be just peachy.

The other day I put on some traditional nursery songs for my daughter's listening enjoyment. Her immediate response was, "No, thanks. I prefer Bon Jovi." Her favorite Bon Jovi song is "Wanted Dead or Alive," which she sings at the top of her lungs. I'll end now with a few lyrics from her second-favorite Bon Jovi song, "It's My Life":

"My heart is like an open highway  
"Like Frankie said  
"I did it my way  
"I just want to live while I'm alive  
"It's my life!"

Blessings to all for the new year, please stay safe during the pandemic and do send us your updates. *In lumine Tuo videbimus lumen.*

## 1998

**Sandie Angulo Chen**  
[sandie.chen@gmail.com](mailto:sandie.chen@gmail.com)

Hello, classmates!

Shoutout to **Alejandra Montenegro Almonte**, who lives on the other side of the DMV (Dela-ware, Maryland, Virginia) area in Northern Virginia and continues to impress with her family's themed annual Halloween costumes. Despite the quarantine, the Almontes — Alejandra; her husband, Jorge; and their children, Javier (13) and Lucia (12) — dressed as commercial insurance agents. Alejandra is a member and vice-chair in the International

Department of the Washington, D.C., law firm Miller & Chevalier.

Send me your news at the email above or via the CCT Class Notes webform, college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note!

## 1999

**Columbia College Today**  
cct@columbia.edu

Greetings for 2021, CC'99! If you are interested in writing this column as the class correspondent, please send a note to cct@columbia.edu — it's a great way to keep in touch with classmates! In the meantime, share your news and updates by sending us an email or by using the CCT Class Notes webform, college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note.

## 2000

**Prisca Bae**  
pb134@columbia.edu

Please share your news with the class via the email above or the CCT Class Notes webform, college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note. Classmates would love to hear from and about you! Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year.

## 2001

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person,  
conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
ccreunion@columbia.edu

Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Jonathan Gordin**  
jrg53@columbia.edu

Hi all, hope everyone is doing well — this winter certainly feels different than others. I miss seeing many of you in person like I normally do, though texting still works remarkably well when I'm basically housebound. I also miss visits to NYC and campus ... Columbia in the fall and winter is a special place indeed!

I might have mentioned that my former Furnald roommate

and Columbia Outdoor Biking Orientation Program pal **Adam Sokol** recently moved down the street from me in Los Angeles. Last summer, Adam and his wife, Bingyi, invited us to their home for a social-distanced outdoor meal. It was so lovely to see our kids playing together and to enjoy a delicious meal outdoors!

It was a delight to hear from **Mark Jackson**: "I live in Brooklyn near the Prospect Park Zoo with my wife and two daughters. We have gotten to know every square inch of Prospect Park since last spring, and now have our sights on the recently reopened Brooklyn Botanic Garden and Brooklyn Museum. When I'm not homeschooling or tidying, I am general counsel for the mixed-use development project Industry City."

Great hearing from you, Mark.

Stay well, stay healthy and keep in touch, all!

[Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

## 2002

**Sonia Hiradarami**  
soniahird@gmail.com

Hi, classmates. Hope you and your loved ones are safe in these unprecedented and uncertain times.

**Nihal Godiwala** is a pediatric critical care attending physician at Children's Hospital New Orleans and assistant professor of medicine at LSU Health Sciences Center. Last spring and summer were busy for Nihal, as he was involved in national, multi-center collaborative efforts to create diagnostic and treatment algorithms for the Covid-MISC disease that affected children. Like many of us, he was looking forward to 2020 being over and, also, for his beloved Saints to win the Super Bowl.

**Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins** received tenure status as an associate professor of journalism at Santa Monica College in California. Last April she gave birth to her second daughter, Sage.

**Mike Mellia** is creating paintings and videos while under quarantine

from his home in Southampton, N.Y. Inspired by the light and color of nature, he combines elements of painting with video compositing in a style that feels optimistic, playful and satisfying, he says. His art was recently featured at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Dr. **Lachlan McG. Smith** and his wife welcomed their third daughter, Beatrix, last September, and soon the family of five will move back from Kentucky (Lachlan's home state) to Stony Brook, N.Y., his wife's hometown, where he accepted a job as faculty in the Department of Radiology at SUNY Stony Brook, where he went to med school.

**Ishwara Glassman Chrein** SIPA'03; her husband, Jason; kids, Chloe (11) and Matthew (9); and their Golden Retriever, Henry, have been quarantining in Southampton, N.Y. The kids are getting a degree in tennis, swimming and TikTok. Ishwara has been busy negotiating major sports deals as the head of sports partnerships and business development at Yahoo! Sports / Verizon Media. She has also read 40 books since quarantine started. Ishwara went back to campus a few times in 2019 to speak to students about working in sports. During normal times, the family lives live on the Upper West Side.

**Joyce Anderson** (née Chang) writes, "Hi, Columbia friends! I've been living in Evanston, Ill., for 10 years with my husband, Chris, three sons and pup. After retiring from the practice of law, I started working in education and youth sports. In 2019, I launched a sports tech start-up, Honest Game. We are a public benefit corporation with a mission to bring equal access to college athletics and beyond for all high school students. We build automated academic roadmaps to guide students, counselors, parents and coaches through the National Collegiate Athletic Association/ National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics eligibility process. In March 2020, Honest Game won the first Chicago Bulls Venture Competition. Looking forward to hearing from more classmates!"

Jill Santopolo '03's newest novel, *Everything After*, will be released on March 9. It follows Emily Gold, who is (mostly) happily married, lives in New York City and is a psychologist at NYU. But when a

tragic event in Emily's present too closely echoes her past, and parts of her story that she'd hoped never to share come to light, her perfect life is suddenly upturned. She's left wondering what her future holds, and if the passion for music she had in college should once again be a driving force in her life.

Jill and her husband, Andrew Claster, are currently living in Washington, D.C.

Thank you all for sharing these exciting updates, and please keep them coming! Updates, as well as pics, are welcome at soniahird@gmail.com.

## 2003

**Michael J. Novielli**  
mjn29@columbia.edu

Well, it certainly has been an intense few months politically with the recent elections, and our classmates continue to make their impact on the political landscape.

**Jonathan Manes** writes, "Last January we moved to Chicago, where I am an attorney at the Roderick and Solange MacArthur Justice Center at Northwestern's Pritzker School of Law. I did voting rights litigation in Wisconsin and Florida through the election, and am continuing prior work on police transparency and accountability. We're looking forward to getting to know our new city and spending time on the beaches here in a future, post-pandemic summer."

**Julia Rose Kraut**'s first book, *Threat of Dissent: A History of Ideological Exclusion and Deportation in the United States*, was published last summer and was featured in *The New York Times*.

**Sam Lee** is producing a documentary podcast, *The Edge*, about the Houston Astros sign-stealing scandal.

**Katori Hall** is embarking on season 2 of her TV show *P-Valley*, on STARZ, and celebrating 12 Tony nominations for *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical* both as a co-producer and book writer.

**Fiona Sze-Lorrain**'s new, fourth book of poetry, *Rain in Plural*, is featured in *Library Journal* as one of the "nine major collections by writers veteran and new." Fiona's translations of contemporary Chinese poets Yin Lichuan's *Karma* (2020) and Ye Lijun's *My Mountain*



*Country* (2019) also are out. Her work was shortlisted for the 2020 Derek Walcott Prize for Poetry.

**Amelia Moore** is an associate professor of marine affairs at the University of Rhode Island.

**Don Lee** was awarded Best American Bar Mentor 2020 by the Tales Spirited Awards.

## 2004

Jaydip Mahida  
jmahida@gmail.com

Hello, Class of '04. At the time of writing this column, the march through 2020 continues and we are a week away from the presidential election.

I recently had the opportunity to catch up with my wrestling teammate **Daniel Green**, and we reminisced about some of the more colorful moments of seasons past. Daniel is doing well in Oklahoma and encourages folks to reach out.

**Sophie Beal** recently published the book *The Art of Brasilia: 2000–2019: New Directions in Latino American Cultures* and moved to beautiful Bryn Mawr, in Minneapolis, with her husband, Francis Shen, and children, Gabriel (8) and Simone (6).

**Danielle Evans's** book, *The Office of Historical Corrections*, came out in November. Danielle is back on the East Coast now, in Baltimore, where a few years ago she joined the faculty at The Johns Hopkins University.

**Alex Young** is in his fourth year on the faculty at Barrett, The Honors College at Arizona State.

He and his wife, Katie, welcomed their first child, Zella Genevieve, in December 2019.

**Shira Schoenberg** JRN'06 is a reporter with CommonWealth magazine, an online publication that covers Massachusetts government and politics.

**Jessica Lee Schenk** married Keith Rudofsky on October 19 in Fort Lauderdale.

Just prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, **Andrew Lorber** and his wife, Josephine, welcomed their son, Ander Jerome, to the world. His middle name is in honor of Andrew's grandfather Jerome Lorber '38, LAW'48. Andrew writes, "Despite the challenges of quarantine, we have been fortunate to spend so much time with him. I have returned to the commercial real estate world as a principal at Arcan Capital, where we acquire and manage multifamily properties throughout the Southeast. If any CC alums are in Atlanta, I'd love to connect!"

That's all for this issue. Please continue to send updates, as we want to hear from as many folks as possible. Career and family updates are always fun, but please reach out to share about trips you might take, events you look forward to, or even interesting books or shows you have come across. You can send updates either via the email at the top of the column or via the CCT Class Notes webform: college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note.

## 2005

*Columbia College Today*  
cct@columbia.edu

Happy New Year, Class of 2005! On September 15, **Shelley Diaz Vale** began her new role at *School Library Journal* as reviews editor.

Great job, Shelly!

**Ifeolu Babatunde Sered** and her husband, Barak, welcomed their first child, Solomon Abiola, on January 24, 2020. Ifeolu works at LinkedIn and lives in Brooklyn with her family.

Congrats, Ifeolu!

Big news from **John deBary**, who writes: "I was so saddened to see no updates in the Fall 2020 issue that I was inspired to share an update for the first time. Which is just as well, because 2020 has prob-

ably been for me one of the most eventful years yet.

"After working in NYC bars and restaurants for more than 10 years, my first book was published, the cocktail book *Drink What You Want: The Subjective Guide to Making Objectively Delicious Cocktails*.

"Also, I developed Proteau, a line of ready-to-drink, zero-proof (aka non-alcoholic) botanical drinks, which launched last year.

"And finally, the nonprofit I co-founded in 2018, Restaurant Workers' Community Foundation, started a Covid-19 Relief Fund and was able to raise (to date) more than \$7 million for direct financial assistance to restaurant workers in crisis, grants to relief organizations and a zero-interest loan program to support small businesses."

Fantastic news, John! [Editor's note: See "Bookshelf" for more on deBary and his book.]

Classmates would love to hear from you, too. Send a note to the email at the top of the column or via the CCT Class Notes webform: college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note.

## 2006

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person, conditions permitting)

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ccreunion@columbia.edu

Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Andrew Stinger**  
andrew.stinger@gmail.com

**Grace Parra Janney** married Niall Janney in a small, socially distant civil ceremony in Los Angeles at the beginning of October. Grace is a writer and co-producer on Hulu's *Solar Opposites*, and co-host of the Crooked Media podcast *Hysteria*. [Editor's note: See "Just Married!"]

**Daniel L. Harlow**, an assistant professor of physics at MIT, has been awarded a Packard Fellowship in Science and Engineering, given to early-career scientists and engineers as they pursue their research.

**Victoria Baranetsky** JRN'07 is general counsel at Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting,

where she represents newsroom journalists and sues the government under the Freedom of Information Act (among other things). While surviving the wildfires nearby, Victoria shares a haiku with us from Oakland, Calif.:

"Pandemic rages.  
"Country awry. Persevere;  
"We now adults, here!"

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## 2007

**David D. Chait**  
david.donner.chait@gmail.com

I continue to wish everyone in the Class of 2007 good health and all my best during this challenging time. Amidst everything, I hope these updates from our classmates are uplifting.

**Marc Tracy** and his wife, Amanda Hess, had their first child, a son named Elliott Stone Tracy, on September 25.

**Christin Alvarez** (née Mone) and **Giovanni Alvarez** welcomed their daughter, Graciela Delfina, into the world on September 30. "Big brother Benicio is excited to have someone to rumble and roar with him every day," they share.

**James Mahon** shares, "Jennifer Joyce and I became engaged last July 27 after I proposed on the deck of a private sailboat in New York Harbor. I work at Deloitte in New York City and Jennifer works at Columbia. We look forward to more joyful memories in the city together!"

**Eric Bondarsky** writes, "To celebrate Earth's 35th revolution around the sun since **Jeffrey Feder SEAS'07**, SEAS'08's birth, **Daniel Simhae**, **Evan Schutzman**, **Bryan Lipsky** GS'05 and I enjoyed some hallowed fried chicken in Central Park."

**Dustin Byington** shares, "I am a 3x Fintech Entrepreneur, and my passion lies at the intersection of finance and startups. To that end I co-founded and am the CEO of the startup TWO12 ('two twelve').



## Contact CCT

Update your address, email or phone; submit a Class Note, new book, photo, obituary or Letter to the Editor; or send us an email. Click "Contact Us" at college.columbia.edu/cct.

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## 2008

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

Greetings for 2021, Class of 2008! Wishing you all the best in the New Year. Thanks to those who wrote in!

**Liz Grefrath** hunkered down in her two-bedroom Crown Heights co-op with her kids, Ernie (7) and Warren (2), and her writer husband, Josh, during the spring of our discontent 2020. She decamped for a month to Black Mountain, N.C., to escape New York for a breather, and took a leave of absence from her longtime position at the National ACLU to participate in Weil, Gotshal & Manges's summer associate program. Liz plans to join the law firm this fall, after her long-awaited graduation from Brooklyn Law School, where she has been studying part time since the election of our autocrat. She writes, "If you are still

hanging around Brooklyn when you read this, seriously, hit me up for a socially distanced walk, coffee, lunch, whatever. I am working from home until at least April and would love to catch up with other nearby CCers. I'm on the Facebook and Twitter, but only so I can doomscroll."

**Rachel Belt** works at Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance in Geneva that has been responding to the Covid-19 crisis across eligible countries to ensure that immunization services are maintained. Gavi is also coordinating the COVAX Facility, a global risk-sharing mechanism that aims to accelerate the development and manufacture of Covid vaccines, and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country.

Exciting news from **Scott Hughes**: "My wife and I recently welcomed our second child, Sophia, in early September. She joins brother Sam (2.5) and has the distinction of being born in the middle of a pandemic, which presumably will make for a cool story one day. We live in Washington, D.C., and despite our generation's propensity for career switching, I recently finished my 10th year at The Carlyle Group, investing in industrial and transportation companies."

**Max Bulinski** has been reimagining cooperative storytelling and role-playing from the ground up, embracing the digital age. His startup is in the development of its first product, Saga Experience — a virtual cooperative storytelling environment. Feel free to reach out, or to check it out at [epic-epoch.com](http://epic-epoch.com).

Classmates would love to hear from you, too. Send a note to the email at the top of the column or via the CCT Class Notes webform: [college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\\_class\\_note](mailto:college.columbia.edu/cct/submit_class_note).

## 2009

**Columbia College Today**  
[cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)

[Editor's note: CCT thanks **Chantee Dempsey** for her almost two years of service as class correspondent. The following is her last column. If you are interested in being the next CC'09 class correspondent, please send a note to [cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu). And keep sending updates, to that same email address!]

On August 15, **Madeleine Boucher** and Lane Sell GS'09 welcomed their first child, Harry Boucher Sell. The family is happily settling into their new-normal quiet life in Brooklyn. Shoestring Press, the print shop and art space they run, is chugging along through the lockdown, smaller but mighty and still serving a growing community of artists.

**Valentina Castillo Hall** and her husband, Frederick Hall, welcomed their daughter, Clara Valentina Hall, on September 23 in Washington, D.C. They are learning a lot about babies and loving her.

**Stephanie Chou** has continued composing music, which you can read about in CCT Online's "Talking Points": [college.columbia.edu/cct/latest/talking-points](http://college.columbia.edu/cct/latest/talking-points). She also started collaborations, including composing and recording a song

of the three-day celebration, and on August 16, they were legally wed. In June, they welcomed their first child, daughter Indrina Khanna. Read all about their exciting 2020 in *The New York Times*: [nyti.ms/33gOms9](https://nyti.ms/33gOms9).

## 2010

**Julia Feldberg Klein**  
[juliafeldberg@gmail.com](mailto:juliafeldberg@gmail.com)

**Morgan Parker's** *Magical Negro* won the 2019 National Book Critics Circle Award in Poetry. Out of seven categories, Morgan is one of four Black women winners this year, including Saidiya Hartman, who recently became Columbia's first Black professor to hold the title of University Professor. (Just a dope tidbit.) *Magical Negro* also won the

*Rachel Belt '08 works at Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance in Geneva that has been responding to the Covid-19 crisis to ensure that immunization services are maintained.*

with lyricist collaborator/mathematician David Keyes (adjunct professor and former Fu Foundation Chair Professor in Applied Physics and Applied Mathematics; currently director of the Extreme Computing Center at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology), which is dedicated to the legacy of Ruth Bader Ginsburg LAW'59. The song, "Millennial Woman" ([millennial-woman.com](http://millennial-woman.com)), is a call to unify women and men around gender-blind equality of opportunity. It celebrates the emergence of women in positions of visibility and influence, despite the deterrents to be overcome, and inspires others to follow. Stephanie took a senior research seminar with David in 2008–09. Columbia connection closing full circle!

**Shira Burton** and her husband, Jonas Spektor, welcomed their son, Ira William Spektor, on June 17. They can't wait to introduce him to her far-flung Columbia friends when traveling feels safer!

Dr. **Chloe Ciccariello** married Dr. Krishn Khanna SEAS'10. On February 16, 2020, they took part in a celebration ceremony, one day

2019 California Book Awards Gold Metal for Poetry. Morgan's novel, *Who Put This Song On?*, received a nomination in the Young Adult category. She's working on the novel's film adaptation. Morgan's next book, in progress, is a work of nonfiction. She says, "It was so great to see familiar faces and catch up with some of you along my book tours! Thanks for all your generous support and love."

**Chris Yim** shares, "I have formed a pod here in California with my bestie/BFF Varun Gulati SEAS'10, who has asked that people pronounce his name correctly. After 12 years of calling my friend the way that a first-grade teacher told him to because she said it would be easier for white people to pronounce, I'm working on it. Also in the pod is Varun's wife, Abi, and Melanie Habwe'08. I find joy in outdoor fitness classes with Melanie as my workout buddy, walks around Oakland looking at the abundance of wildlife, my morning coffee ritual, journaling and nurturing friendships.

"I have been asking myself how I feel. Turns out that when I can be honest, I can better communicate what's going on inside of me. This

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is helpful for those around me and an important key to developing intimacy with others. Brené Brown, Ezra Klein, Michelle Obama, my relationships, therapy and the work that I am doing cultivating my craft as an actor have served as great sources of inspiration during this challenging time. I read headlines about the disarray of the world, and I get discouraged about humanity. I often feel isolated, wondering how I can shift the paradigms inside of me that have been planted there over thousands of years of inequity, and I get down on myself. I realized that I have been holding on to narratives about who I am that aren't serving me, and it's taken me a while to see that so much of the way that I engage with the world, and myself, is informed by these stilted stories.

"I started an indie film house this year, meaning, I posted on social media that this is something on which I am working. I decided to create this production company because I see storytelling as a form of healing and transformation. I have come to see that the stories I tell myself about who I am, my relationship with others, and society inform and dictate how I relate to these entities.

"The focus is to amplify and tell BIPOC stories and uplift BIPOC artists. As an artist, I am also investing in the stories that I want to collaborate on creating.

"It's also important to highlight America's most abundant legacy. How did Breonna Taylor's murderers get away with their actions after

worry that most people lack the self-love to hold themselves accountable. Heck, I really struggle with it. Most of the time, I feel guilty and cycle in my own self-shame. I project some of this onto some of the white folks in my life, whom I have been avoiding because I feel they make it easier for me to ignore that there is so much wrong in our society.

"I have been reading the work of Aliko Carter '11, and I have been moved by his thoughts on the collapse of the American empire. Support him on Patreon by googling 'post American dreamer Koji Tare,' and pay him for his work. He writes about us seeing the collapse of the American Empire, which is necessary at this point."

## 2011

### REUNION 2021

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Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Nuriel Moghavem and Sean Udell**  
nurielm@gmail.com  
sean.udell@gmail.com

Howdy, 2011, and may you stay uninfected. Sean and I really appreciated getting all of your updates — it felt like a bit of normalcy in a

moved to Cambridge, Mass., last June after more than a dozen years in Manhattan, as her husband, Ron Gejman '10, matched to medical residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital. Blackstone Publishing is based out of Ashland, Ore., and has an office in NYC. Shira will be based in the Boston area and commuting frequently to NYC for work once it's safe.

**Meredith Mead Lester** and her husband, Kevin Lester '12, had twin boys, Tank and Thorn, on May 3. They spent their parental leaves on an 8,000-mile road trip, visiting 16 states and 15 national parks. Their favorite national park was Yosemite, and incredibly they ended up in Death Valley on the hottest day in history (130 degrees Fahrenheit!). Meredith and Kevin live in Chicago full time but have been living in their Park City, Utah, ski house since July.

**Louise Beck** and **Sam Beck** continued the twinning trend, welcoming daughters Emilia Rhianon (Emmy) and Tzipporah Adalia (Tess) in May.

We look forward to them meeting Tank and Thorn.

**Stephanie Wilhem**, a first lieutenant in the Delaware Army National Guard, recently graduated second in her class from The Judge Advocate General's Legal School and Center 211th Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course and was awarded The Judge Advocate General's School Award for Professionalism Merit. Stephanie successfully completed day and night land navigation courses, qualified on a rifle, successfully passed the Army Combat Fitness Test, completed a 6-mile foot march with a full combat load, studied military law (including military criminal law, government contract and fiscal law, legal assistance, claims, administrative law, and international and operational law) and participated in military exercises (including mock commander's briefs, strike cells and a court-martial). She says she is thankful that she has the opportunity in the midst of a successful legal career to serve our country.

**Joshua Peagler**, who has been a producer at *CBS This Morning* for six years, was recently promoted to executive producer at CBS News. It brought him back to New York City; he was previously based in Los Angeles.

**Angela Radulescu** finished a Ph.D. in psychology and neuroscience at Princeton last spring (featuring a Zoom defense because, well, 2020). She has since moved back to the city to start a two-year research fellowship at the NYU Center for Data Science. She lives in Brooklyn with her partner and adopted cat and is grateful for year-round farmers markets and Prospect Park.

**Vesal Yazdi** and his wife, Nicole Cerutti Yazdi BC'12, now have their hands full with Cyrus John, born on September 1 at a very heavy 6 lbs., 1 oz. Vesal reports that his world has been upside down and shaken vigorously since then! Cyrus's favorite pastimes include only sleeping when held, only peeing when his diaper is being changed and politely listening to his father play the piano for him. He's also a big fan of breast milk, to the relief of his mother.

**Warren McGee** married Kathryn Brill BC'13 on August 15 in a lovely, live-streamed ceremony with their families. They are looking forward to having many adventures together!

**Adam Sieff** has been moved to see so many classmates organizing for equal justice and democracy in their communities this year. Adam joined the Biden for President legal team last summer as voting rights and election integrity counsel. He shares that it is a privilege to do this work to protect our democracy, especially at this juncture in our nation's history. He says that Columbia, and in particular Professor Jean Cohen's courses, are where he learned to appreciate the fragility of self-government and the efforts ordinary citizens must be willing to expend to secure, preserve and expand the reaches of liberty. He is hopeful that our collective efforts will lead to happier days. Adam hopes to see many of us at our 10th reunion in June. [Editor's note: As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

Inshallah, Adam. Inshallah.

Lastly, **Nuriel Moghavem** has two big updates to share. First, I proposed to my longtime best friend and partner Stephanie Muscat in September and am looking forward to spending the rest of my life

*Meredith Mead Lester '12 and Kevin Lester '12 had twin boys, then spent their parental leaves on an 8,000-mile road trip.*

months of nationwide and global protests? What message are we sending to Black women about the value of their lives? The journey of examining my own racist behavior and internalized racism has both been discouraging and encouraging. It's linked to what I was saying before about transformation and asking myself what it takes to shift. I also don't give others enough credit in their ability to shift because I

time when everything else seems so different. Of course, world events have not stood much in the way of all your accomplishments, and we are proud to see our colleagues succeeding on so many levels.

**Shira Schindel** recently switched jobs, leaving Audible, where she was senior manager of strategic content partnerships, to become head of content acquisitions with Blackstone Publishing. She also

# Just Married!

CCT welcomes wedding photos where at least one member of the couple is a College alum. Please submit your high-resolution photo, and caption information, on our photo webform: [college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\\_class\\_note\\_photo](https://college.columbia.edu/cct/submit_class_note_photo). Congratulations!



CHAD WINSTEAD



STELLA IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY

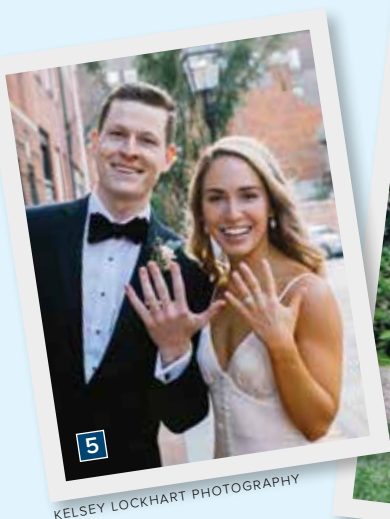


LEISE JONES



MASHA VESSET

DANNY WEISS



KELSEY LOCKHART PHOTOGRAPHY



ALISSA NOELLE



7



1. James Glynn '15 and Lisa Harshman '15 were married in New Bern, N.C., on September 26.

2. Tehreem Rehman '13 and Rayham Momin '12 celebrated their December 29, 2018, wedding at the Signature Grand in Davie, Fla., with many friends. Left to right: Lauren Haynes SEAS'13, Kapil Wattamwar SEAS'13, Abhaya Aravind SEAS'13, Ansh Johri SEAS'13, Sameea Butt '13, Daniel Schwartz '12, Andrea Roberts BC'13, Santosh Balachandar SEAS'12, Rubab Rehman '15, Dylan Kotliar '12, the bride, Peter Wallerson SEAS'12, the groom, Rich Nwaobasi SEAS'12, Jeanette Rodriguez '13, Gabriel Ho '12, Hien Truong '13, Julia Monk '13, Will Zhuang SEAS'12, Maryam Aziz '13, Carrie Montgomery '13 and Gerlin Serrano '13.

3. George Matthews and Natasha Matthews '12 (née Terhorst) were married on June 27 at Commonwealth Cambridge (Mass.).

4. Channah Leah Klapper and Jori Grossman '18 were married on August 10 in Sharon, Mass.

5. John O'Loughlin '12 married Paige O'Loughlin '14 (née Cuscovitch) on October 3 in Boston.

6. Grace Parra Janney '06 and Niall Janney at their October 4 wedding in Los Angeles.

7. Isaac White '14 and Kara Krakower BC'14 were married on September 12, the same date they met 10 years ago on campus. Here, they recreate a Sundial photo taken by Isaac's parents (at right), Allison White BC'86 and Jon White '85, nearly 40 years ago.

8. Yaira Kobrin '21 and Solomon Wiener '19 were married at Temple Emanu-El in Closter, N.J., on August 30.



ABBIE SOPHIA

watching *Seinfeld* reruns and exploring the world with her; we will be getting married in March in a small ceremony. She is not a Columbia or Barnard alumna, but I assure you that she is nevertheless pretty great. Second, I'll be moving back home to Los Angeles in July to continue my medical training with the University of Southern California Multiple Sclerosis Comprehensive Care Center Postdoctoral Physician Fellowship in M.S. and Neuroimmunology, seeing patients at both the Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center and Keck Medicine of USC.

## 2012

**Sarah Chai**  
sarahbchai@gmail.com

**Akiva Nelson** (né **Todd Nelson**) started rabbinical school last fall at Hebrew College in Boston. He writes, "I'd love to say hi to Columbia folks in Boston, even if from afar. Hang in there, everyone."

I echo the sentiment and am sending best wishes for the continued health, safety and well-being of our classmates and loved ones. I hope to hear from others soon.

## 2013

**Tala Akhavan**  
talaakhavan@gmail.com

**Tehreem Rehman** is an emergency physician on the South Side of Chicago and intends to transition into an executive leadership role to deliver equitable and value-based care at a systemwide level. She earned an M.D. from the Yale School of Medicine and an M.P.H. from The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Tehreem's health justice journey began at the College, where she majored in women's and gender studies and also met her life partner, Rayhan Momin '12. Her sister, Rubab Rehman '15, is thriving as a software engineer in NYC. Tehreem is grateful for not only the opportunities but also the relationships she still cherishes from her time at Columbia. [Editor's note: See "Just Married!"]

**Devyn Tyler**, a film and TV actress, was recently featured in Season 6, Episode 3 ("Alaska") of

*Fear the Walking Dead*. She has since escaped the zombie apocalypse and is now prosecuting serial killers in Toronto (masquerading as Washington, D.C.) as one of the main characters in the upcoming series *Clarice*, based on the famous *The Silence of the Lambs* story. *Clarice* is set to air on CBS sometime this year. Be sure to tune in!

**Isabel Losada** married Pablo Justel GSAS'19, a Ph.D. candidate in comp lit, in July. In attendance were **Miguel Rodríguez SEAS'13** and **Jane Lee**. After a brief honeymoon in Maine, the couple returned to settle in the Bronx and are both working from home. Isabel is the manager for membership at The Frick Collection, which is in the process of moving to The Breuer Building while a renovation project is underway at its original location. Pablo is a Spanish teacher at The Birch Wathen Lenox School on the Upper East Side. They live on Arthur Avenue and can tell you where to find the best ravioli and cannoli in town!

**Fiona Georgakis** began graduate school at the University of Chicago, working toward a master's in threat and response management. She has been attending classes virtually from Los Angeles.

## 2014

**Rebecca Fattell**  
rsf2121@columbia.edu

**Kate Eberstadt** is releasing music with her sister Izzi Eberstadt BC'16 under the name Delune. Their debut album is due this year. Delune has been covered on PopSugar, and in *Glamour* and *ELLE*. Follow them for updates @deluneofficial!

**Chaya Crowder** earned a Ph.D. in political science from Princeton last July. She is an assistant tenure track professor of political science at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

After nearly five years working in Shanghai, **Chris Zombik** moved home to Massachusetts in November 2019. He is taking advantage of quarantine to work on a book, with plans to finish sometime this year.

**Naomi Senbet** is excited to share that she graduated from the dual degree program between The Wharton School (M.B.A.) and the

Harvard Kennedy School (M.P.A.) last May. Additionally, she joined Guidehouse in August as a managing consultant in the state and local government advisory practice. She says she's excited to leverage her experiences in the private sector as an investment banker and impact investor in her current role, solving challenging problems and building trust in society. Moreover, after nearly a decade away, Naomi moved back to her hometown of Washington, D.C. If the paradigm shift called the Covid-19 pandemic reinforced anything for her, she says, it's the ardent belief in the critical role well-functioning governing bodies and institutions play in enabling long-term prosperity for all. In that vein, she says, we're approaching an inflection point in the long march toward D.C. statehood. Support the campaign for representation! #51stState

On July 18, **Andrew Wood** and his wife, **Tala Akhavan '13**, welcomed their first child, daughter **Mila Jade**, into their quarantine. Everyone is well, combating cabin fever together and adjusting to a new definition of work-from-home/ life balance.

A reminder, as noted in the Summer 2020 issue, that **Emily Dreibelbis** started Fremont Soap Company, named after her neighborhood in Seattle, to keep

busy during quarantine. She uses all-natural, vegan ingredients that are produced in the USA (California and North Dakota) that clean well and leave your skin feeling soft and smooth instead of dried out. She has five scents, including Spring Orchid, which has a beautiful, Columbia blue label! She hopes you'll check out [fremontsoapcompany.com](http://fremontsoapcompany.com), give the soap a try, and spread the word to friends and family!

**Paige O'Loughlin** (née Cusovitch) and **John O'Loughlin '12** were married in Boston on October 3. [Editor's note: See "Just Married!"]

**Emily Kate** founded a nonprofit, Global Art Access, to promote the public's access to and engagement with art and history. In 2019, she began a collaboration with the Frick Art Reference Library to bring unprecedented access to its Photoarchive in honor of its upcoming centennial celebration. Global Art Access is working to digitize privately held artwork catalogued through the Photoarchive. To date, the only image records of these works are black and white photographs taken by Helen Clay Frick in the 1920s. The digitizations have been made available online and mark the first time the works can be seen by the public in color. The project will continue through 2022 and aims to digitize 100 works by the time of The Frick's centennial celebration.

Independent of the Frick Centennial, Global Art Access works to digitize artwork in private collections across America to provide scholarly access to the works while maintaining the privacy of the collectors. Participating collectors receive a high-resolution image of each work for their catalog records and can be credited upon the surfacing of their digitized works on scholarly and public access platforms.

Anyone interested in having their collections considered for this treatment should visit [globalartaccess.org](http://globalartaccess.org).

## 2015

**Kareem Carryl**  
[kareem.carryl@columbia.edu](mailto:kareem.carryl@columbia.edu)

Hello, Class of 2015!

I hope that you all have been staying safe and healthy these past few months. During these times, it is amazing to see all the updates from



Enjoying fall and friendship on October 25 were (left to right) Nurit Lewis '15 and her daughter, Dahlia Lerer, and Raquel Wildes '15 and her daughter, Evelyn Genet.

members in our Columbia community. Here are a few from classmates.

**Raquel Wildes JRN'16** and **Nurit Lewis** got together to celebrate fall and friendship. Joining them were Raquel's daughter, Evelyn Genet (3 months), and Nurit's daughter, Dahlia Lerer (1).

**Lisa Harshman** and **James Glynn** were married on September 26 in her hometown of New Bern, N.C. There were 16 Columbia College and Columbia Engineering alumni in attendance, including James's best man, Max Lindemann '20. [Editor's note: See "Just Married!"]

As always, classmates want to hear from you! Please submit updates by writing me at the address at the top of the column or via the CCT Class Notes webform, college. [columbia.edu/cct/submit\\_class\\_note](http://columbia.edu/cct/submit_class_note).

## 2016

**REUNION 2021**  
**MAY 24–JUNE 3** (virtual)  
**JUNE 4–5** (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
[ccreunion@columbia.edu](mailto:ccreunion@columbia.edu)  
Development Contact  
[ccfund@columbia.edu](mailto:ccfund@columbia.edu)

**Lily Liu-Krason**  
[lliukrason@gmail.com](mailto:lliukrason@gmail.com)

Hey 2016. I recently attended a 2016 happy hour to kick off our fifth-year reunion, and after the shock that it has been five years wore off (jk, I'm still in shock), I had

a really great time. Would love to see more of you as reunion approaches, so please keep an eye on your inbox or reach out if you want more info or to get involved!

With that, I have three updates from four of your incredible classmates. Please continue nominating each other!

From **Julie Anne Hoffman**: "After graduating, I really found myself getting into writing. It started as a casual hobby where I'd write in coffee shops on the weekends. Fast forward four years and it somehow led me to two self-published books! My first was *Proud of You*, a collection of essays on my journey through grief. And most recently I self-published my first poetry book, *The Daylight Plays Tricks on Us*. I have also been sharing my work on my Instagram account — @julieannepoetry — for anyone interested in following along on my writing journey!"

From **Brian Chung** and **Katherine Nevitt**: "Brian and Katherine have managed to maintain their sanity living in a studio apartment together through quarantine. They had to delay their wedding a year, but that's OK because their work and TV watching habits have kept them busy (for example, six seasons of *The Sopranos* in a single month).

"Brian, co-president of Columbia College Young Alumni, has been organizing all those great alumni events you get emails about while also working for Citigroup's commercial real estate finance team for the last two years. Katherine is a research associate producer at the show *Last Week Tonight with John*



**Andrew Wood '14** and **Tala Akhavan '13** with their daughter, **Mila Jade Wood**, in Los Angeles on October 1.

ARIEL CANNON



*Oliver*, where she's been for three years. She also saw *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* in IMAX in 2018, which she thinks is a pretty important accomplishment.

"Brian and Katherine are proud of the impressive things their classmates have been up to and wish health and happiness to Columbia alumni everywhere during this pandemic. Wear your masks!"

From **Piyali Mukherjee SEAS'16**: "Not gonna lie, it's awkward greeting you all again. Apparently, I have to thank a lot more of you for enduring my most embarrassing years than I thought. **Lily Liu-Krason** and **Alex Randall** are independently holding me accountable to this. Thus, the formative effect of your indulgence has resulted in the following updates.

"Friends, Romans, and Casual Acquaintances™, you'll be pleased to know that since I've graduated, I've been doing exactly the job my degree qualified me for. In Linked In-fluent, I 'worked on clustering models at IBM Watson Health and now manage enterprise-scale cloud solutions at Google.' In English, I push buttons on a keyboard and hope that the things the computers learn about you (consensually) helps you get better healthcare.

"Unfortunately, I must also inform you that I've culminated my

awkwardness into three years of performing, writing and improvising comedy at @improvboston. Last year was a harsh punishment for my stage-time gluttony, so I've transitioned to writing. This has resulted in a relatively new blog (letterdrop.co/@peelspls) hosted on a platform built by **Parthi Loganathan SEAS'16**. He saw my absurdly prolific Instagram (@peelspls) and asked, 'Can you be a nuisance on my platform instead?' I accepted the challenge.

"To correct for my significant moral deviations, I help high school students write college apps through Cambridge School Volunteers. Sometimes, I also help them design and build CS projects that help them win a Science Olympiad National Tournament or, at least, get better recommendations.

"My DMs remain open for questions, concerns or compliments."

## 2017

**Carl Yin**  
carl.yin@columbia.edu

**Laney McGahey** is hunkering down in San Francisco and is in her second year of studying clinical research at UCSF. She lives with **Auriane Stone** and is lucky to get to see other Lions in the Bay from time to time, most recently Hannah Juge '18 and Kim Chia SEAS'20. She hopes that everyone is doing well! Sending good thoughts your way.

**Bianca Guerrero** shares: "I spent last February–June doing rapid response research related to Covid-19, but quit my job at the NYC Mayor's Office in June to protest the administration's handling of the pandemic and police brutality. I started a part-time role on Jamaal Bowman's congressional campaign in February and went full-time in June. Bowman, a grassroots progressive candidate, beat a 16-term incumbent and tripled turnout in the June Democratic primary. As I write this I am field director for the campaign, and spend my spare time watching documentaries and looking for jobs for after November 3!"

**Sarah Ricklan** is an editor of a recently published book, *Monologues from the Makom: Intertwined Narratives of Sexuality, Gender, Body Image, and Jewish Identity*, an anthology featuring 32 first-person narratives

(including her own) that explore themes of Jewish feminism and sexuality, particularly in the observant world. The anthology aims to amplify women's voices and subvert community taboos.

**Max Fiest LAW'20** will work at Mayer Brown in its New York Litigation department.

## 2018

**Alexander Birkel** and **Maleeha Chida**  
ab4065@columbia.edu  
mnc2122@columbia.edu

**Trevor Menders** has returned to the United States after two years in Tokyo doing research and language acquisition. He was in a state of perpetual semi-quarantine in Boston while finishing the first semester of his doctorate in art history at Harvard.

**Abbey Li** writes, "When the pandemic first hit New York, I felt so helpless that there was nothing I could do to help people in need — from front-line medical workers, to struggling business owners, to families living below the poverty line. It was so inspiring to hear about the alumni that immediately mobilized

## 2019

**Tj Aspen Givens** and **Emily Gruber**  
tag@2149@columbia.edu  
eag2169@columbia.edu

Friends of the Class of 2019, we appreciate your submissions! We enjoy staying connected to the Columbia community during these unfamiliar times, and we hope you do too. Please send your updates for the next edition of Class Notes!

**Tj Aspen Givens** won The Gramercy Institute's Financial Content Marketing Award for her excellence in the strategy and execution of the business-to-business M&T Commercial Banking webinar and content series "Managing Through Challenging Times." Beyond her category-specific award, Tj won the prestigious "Best of" award across all winners in the single-country category. Review the series at [mtb.com/managing](http://mtb.com/managing) and learn more about the award at [gramercyinstitute.com](http://gramercyinstitute.com).

**Eric Li** moved to Europe for grad school but says he misses his friends in New York.

**Elif Memet** is a second-year investment banking analyst in the industrials M&A group at Goldman

*Abbey Li '18 joined a volunteer group, Send Chinatown Love, which helps small business owners in Chinatown and Flushing develop an online presence.*

to donate PPE to NYC hospitals, and really see Columbia making a difference when it matters. I joined a volunteer group, Send Chinatown Love, which helps small business owners in Chinatown and Flushing develop an online presence so they have a better chance at surviving the economic downturn.

"Hoping everyone stays safe and healthy as we gradually transition into the 'new normal.' Wishing the best to all of you!"

Please reach out with your news via either of the email addresses at the top of the column, or the CCT Class Notes webform: [college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\\_class\\_note](http://college.columbia.edu/cct/submit_class_note). Classmates would love to hear from and about you!

Sachs, where she worked on notable rescue financing for some of the largest transportation companies subsequent to Covid-19. Elif, who is from Romania, was recently on national television discussing macroeconomics in a post-Covid world with Iulian Fruntasu, former ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to the United Kingdom. She was also a speaker at a recent TEDx Romania event that focused on perspectives for Romania's future. Based on Elif's experience with the Core Curriculum, she provided a framework for critical thinking, identifying it as a key aspect of Romania's future.

**Brent Morden** was excited to enter his second year as program manager for children's choir non-



Brian Chung '16 and Katherine Nevitt '16, pre-Covid-19 but post-engagement.

profit Every Voice Choirs (NYC). He also began teaching musical theater and voice classes at From Stage to Screen Performing Arts Academy (Huntington, N.Y.) and was the audio designer last fall for the Transgressive Theatre-Opera (Chicago). Following in the footsteps of his work on *The Varsity Show*, Brent continues to compose and orchestrate for NYC-based musical theater productions. He's excited to see what opportunities this season will bring. Feel free to get in touch: brentmorden@gmail.com.

**Aunoy Poddar** started medical school at the UC San Francisco Medical Center.

**Kara Schechtman** sent an update: "I've started working full time for The Covid Tracking Project at *The Atlantic* for a few months, after spending last spring and summer in a volunteer role. We compile a dataset on coronavirus testing and outcomes in the United States and act as a watchdog on state Covid-19 data reporting practices. I've also moved back to the Upper West Side and love strolling up to campus to read on the lawns on weekends!"

Last summer, **Jordan Singer** started a role at Curology, a startup working to make prescription skincare accessible. As a member of the Product Lifecycle team, she helps design and build the systems

and campaigns through which Curology communicates with its patients. She says she leaned on many classmates for support in making this career transition and is always around to chat with others looking to do the same!

**Miguel Tapia Colin** shares: "I was promoted from a case analyst to a case administrator after working only one year and three months at Outten & Golden, a plaintiffs' employment and labor law firm."

**Solomon Wiener** and Yaira Kobrin '21 were married on August 30.

Congratulations! [Editor's note: See "Just Married!"]

**Kevin Wu** is a product manager at Coursedog, a Columbia-founded startup focused on building cloud-based software for universities.

**Maia Young** sends an update: "During the gap year and in the pre-Covid-19 days, I was a clinical assistant at private fertility clinics in both Manhattan and Atlanta, where I lived with my family until about the second month of medical school. I moved to Rochester, Minn., last August, where I am an M.D. candidate at Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. Columbia and the family I made there while studying medicine, and literature and society, are near and dear to my heart, and I can't wait to return when the pandemic subsides!"

## 2020

### REUNION 2021

MAY 24–JUNE 3 (virtual)

JUNE 4–5 (in-person, conditions permitting)

Events and Programs Contact  
ccreunion@columbia.edu

Development Contact  
ccfund@columbia.edu

**Santiago Tobar Potes** and **Stephen Cone**

stp2120@columbia.edu  
jsc2247@columbia.edu

**Kyra Ann Dawkins** has made her authorial debut! Her first novel, *We and the They*, was published last July. The story is inspired by oral tradition and rooted in collective identity.

In the midst of the chaotic months that followed our digital graduation, **Sean Taylor** decided to make the most of his downtime and write/direct a feature film. Luckily, he had a group of stellar Columbia folks helping him as the bulk of his cast and crew: **Ryan Eppolito**, **Mason Coburn-Weigand** '23, **Kyra Chen** '21, **Ethan Kim** '23, **Tim Kiely** '19, **Bryn Wright BC** '20, **Alejandra Parisi BC** '20 and Professor Rob King. Sean filmed in Montana last July with about a dozen crew

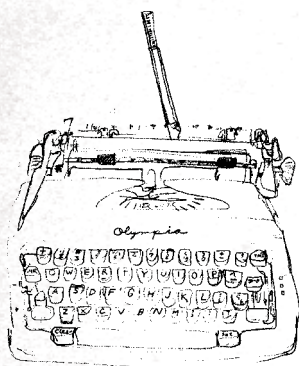
members across two weeks, creating a comedy about a small-town lowlife who finds unexpected fame in the world of internet memes. The project is titled *COWBOY.MOV*—be on the lookout for a 2022 release!

**Sarah Barth** and **Max Edeson** were married in her parents' backyard in Long Branch, N.J., on July 5. Sarah is a student at the NYU School of Law, Class of 2023. Max is applying to medical school and working in a doctor's office in Manhattan for his gap year.

**Sabrina Lautin** road-tripped to Wyoming with her husband, Philip, and pug, Crouton. She'll work in finance in Cheyenne for the foreseeable future until starting her M.B.A. at the Business School, and during her time off will enjoy the West's skiing, hiking, national parks and steak.

[Editor's note: CC'20, your class's first reunion is coming up in May! As of late October, the Alumni Office is planning Columbia Reunion 2021 as virtual events Monday, May 24–Thursday, June 3, and in-person events Friday, June 4–Saturday, June 5, conditions permitting. Watch your inbox for more.]

Please send us your news! Write to either of us at the addresses at the top of the column, or use CCT's Class Notes webform, college.columbia.edu/cct/submit\_class\_note.



Enter for your chance to win a \$500 prize and publication in our Spring/Summer 2021 issue.

**CCT** | Columbia College Today

## Calling all writers!

CCT is holding its first-ever personal essay contest! The theme is **METAMORPHOSIS**.

Submission deadline is **Monday, March 8, 2021**; for topic guidelines and other info, go to [college.columbia.edu/cct/essaycontest](https://college.columbia.edu/cct/essaycontest).



# obituaries

**Editor's note:** In recognition of the toll taken by the Covid-19 pandemic, CCT will continue to acknowledge those in our community who have died from complications of the virus in our online feature "Lions We've Lost" ([college.columbia.edu/cct](http://college.columbia.edu/cct)).

## 1952

**George E. Economakis**, businessman, Athens, Greece, on November 5, 2020. Born on August 2, 1930, in Suez, Egypt, Economakis majored in economics and earned a master's in banking and finance from the Business School, also in 1952. He was a varsity fencer and a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Economakis began his business career as a banker in Egypt and then moved to Greece, where he was a ship owner. He was a lover of horses, history, genealogy, classical music and opera. Economakis is survived by his sons, Evelpides GSAS'94 and his wife, Iulia, Richard and his



George E. Economakis '52

wife, Diane, and Andrew '87 and his wife, Lito; brother, Alexander, and his wife, Tara; five grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

## 1953

**Seymour L. Hendel**, attorney and judge, New London, Conn., on October 25, 2020. Hendel was a pil-

lar of the community who graduated from the Bulkeley School in New London. Following graduation from Harvard Law, he returned to New London to practice law and raise his family near his parents and in-laws. After several decades, Hendel was appointed to the Connecticut Superior Court, where he served as presiding judge on both the criminal and civil divisions and as administrative judge, finishing his career as a senior judge. Hendel believed in giving back to the community and did so in many ways. He actively supported Columbia College and cheered on the football team. He also supported the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, Temple Emanu-El, and many arts and cultural organizations. Hendel organized and was the first president of the Jewish Community Council of Greater New London and was president of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, among other leadership roles. He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Patricia; sons, Douglas and his

wife, Ellen Lautenberg, and Clifford and his wife, Catherine Armand; daughter, Caroline, and her husband, John Wysolmerski; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Memorial contributions may be made to the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, 289 State St., New London, CT 06320, or Temple Emanu-El, 29 Dayton Rd., Waterford, CT 06385.

**Robert A. Prendergast**, physician and marine researcher, Falmouth, Mass., on May 4, 2020. Prendergast was coxswain and crew captain during his senior year and left a lasting legacy to Columbia alongside the Harlem River, where he was one of the original painters of the blue and white C that adorns the Spuyten Duyvil cliff across from Baker Athletics Complex. After he graduated from Boston University School of Medicine, Prendergast became a captain in the U.S. Army Medical Corps stationed at Walter Reed AMC. He subsequently joined the Department of Ophthal-

## Arthur Ashkin '47, Nobel Prize-Winning Physicist

Identifying the tiny machinery of life is one thing. Creating a device that enables scientists to take hold of these microscopic objects for study and manipulation is another, and opens up a world of possibilities.

That was the challenge met by **Arthur Ashkin '47**, who won the Nobel Prize in Physics on October 2, 2018, for his groundbreaking research in laser physics over the course of more than 50 years. Specifically, Ashkin was recognized for figuring out how to harness the power of light to trap and study microscopic objects. Ashkin's invention of optical tweezers enabled scientists to grasp "particles, atoms, viruses and other living cells with their laser beam fingers," creating ways to observe and control the machinery of life, wrote the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

On September 21, 2020, Ashkin died at his home in Rumson, N.J.,

where he had worked on various projects until his passing. He held 47 patents and was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2013.

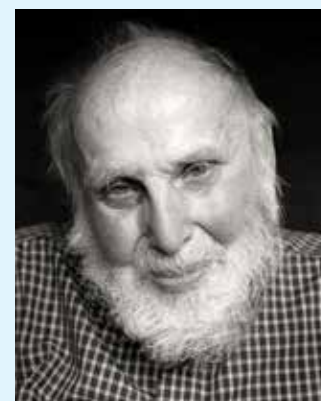
"I was interested in science since I was a kid," Ashkin said when his Nobel Prize was announced. "So I tell my wife that's the only thing that I'm really good at."

Ashkin was born on September 2, 1922, in Brooklyn, N.Y., one of four children; his older brother, Julius '40, GSAS'44, also became a physicist and played an important role in the Manhattan Project, the secret effort during WWII to develop the atomic bomb. After graduating from James Madison H.S., Ashkin followed Julius to the College and worked in the Columbia Radiation Laboratory on magnetrons, which produced microwaves and were a precursor to the laser. He joined Bell Labs after obtaining a Ph.D. from Cornell in

1952 and worked there until his retirement in 1992. He led the lab's laser science department 1963–87, and it was there that he developed his optical tweezers.

Ashkin, who had been interested in the subject of light pressure since childhood, created his optical tweezers by shining a laser through a tiny magnifying lens, which creates a focal point for the laser. Particles are drawn in and trapped there, unable to move. Trapping biological material proved to have groundbreaking practical applications in research and in understanding the behavior of the basic building blocks of life, like DNA. Today, optical tweezers are widely manufactured and sold to researchers.

Ashkin was awarded one-half of the 2018 physics prize, sharing it with Gérard Mourou of France and Donna Strickland of Canada. At 96, he was the oldest recipient of



JORG MEYER

a Nobel Prize at the time; the next year, John B. Goodenough received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry at 97.

Ashkin is survived by his wife, Aline, a former high school chemistry professor; sons, Daniel and Michael; daughter, Judith; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

—Alex Sachare '71

mology and Pathology at The Johns Hopkins University as a research and teaching professor. Later, he was an adjunct senior scientist at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Mass., where he worked with Dr. Jack Levin, also of Johns Hopkins and the MBL, in endotoxin research with horseshoe crabs. Prendergast was on the laboratory's marine resources committee 1978–82, was a member of the MBL's discovery campaign steering committee and was elected to its Board of Trustees in 2005. He is survived by his nieces, Laura '88 and Cathy. Memorial contributions may be made to Feeding America.

## 1954

**Walter A. Bossert Jr.**, attorney, Lincoln, Mass., on October 10, 2020. Born in New York City on October 5, 1932, Bossert majored in economics and served in the Air Force 1954–57 as a lieutenant commander and top-secret security officer during



Walter A. Bossert Jr. '54

the Korean War, most notably at Rushmore Air Force Station during the Suez Crisis of 1956. After graduation from the University of Virginia Law School in 1960, Bossert worked 34 years at the New York law firm of Gould & Wilkie, 19 as senior partner. He was general counsel to well-known corporations including Associated Dry Goods and its principal division, Lord & Taylor; Tiffany & Co.; and Central Hudson Gas &

Electric. In 1980, Bossert and his partner, Davison Grant, teamed with renowned attorney Telford Taylor, chief prosecutor of the Nuremberg Trials, to successfully argue the case *Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation v. Public Service Commission of New York* before the U.S. Supreme Court; the landmark First Amendment rights case is still studied in law schools. Bossert is survived by his wife, Mariel; son, William; and daughters, Ellen '86 and Laura. Memorial contributions may be made to Lyrica Boston, Inc., 53 South Great Rd., Lincoln, MA 01773.

## 1956

**Harold B. Markowitz**, orthopedic surgeon, Beverly Hills, on January 19, 2020. Born in Cleveland, Markowitz graduated from Case Western Reserve Medical School in 1960 and moved to Los Angeles in 1961 to complete his medical residency at Los Angeles County Medical Center.

He was a captain in the Air Force and was chief of orthopedic surgery at Plattsburgh (N.Y.) AFB. After military service, he entered private solo practice in the Los Angeles area and was on staff at many local hospitals, including Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, for more than 40 years. He was an attending physician of orthopedic surgery at UCLA, a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and of the American College of Sports Medicine, and a diplomate of the Arthroscopic Board of North America. Markowitz was devoted to his family and his Jewish faith, first as a member of Beth Jacob Congregation and later as a member of the Beverly Hills Synagogue. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Vera; sons, David and his wife, Sara, and Steven and his wife, Michelle; daughter, Susan, and her husband, Ira; and six grandchildren.

**Socrates Nicholas**, market researcher, New York City, on October 19, 2020. Born on July 11, 1934,

## William L. "Billy" Goldenberg '57, TV, Film and Stage Composer

You might not know his name, but it's likely you've heard his music.

**Billy Goldenberg '57** collaborated with Elvis Presley, Barbra Streisand and Diana Ross; wrote the themes for many TV series, including *Kojak* and *Rhoda*; composed the pilot scores for *Night Gallery* and *Columbo*; and won Emmys for the TV movie *Queen of the Stardust Ballroom* and the miniseries *The Lives of Benjamin Franklin*; *King*; and *Rage of Angels*.

With lyricists Marilyn Bergman and Alan Bergman, Goldenberg expanded his 1975 *Queen of the Stardust Ballroom* score into the score of the 1978 Broadway musical *Ballroom*, directed and choreographed by Michael Bennett, of *A Chorus Line* fame. It earned eight Tony nominations, including Best Musical.

Following that collaboration, Alan Bergman told *Variety*: "Billy was one of the rare composers who was also a dramatist. Lots of people can write melodies, but you could tell Billy the situation, what the characters were feeling, and his music would reflect that."

Goldenberg died on August 4, 2020, in New York City. He was 84.

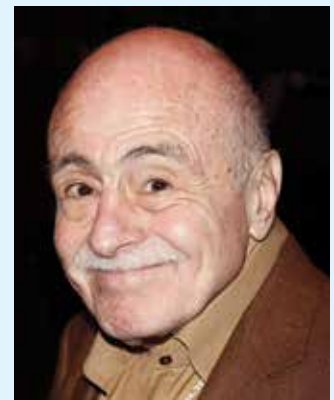
Born on February 10, 1936, in Brooklyn, N.Y., William L. Goldenberg grew up with music as the son of a violinist mother and percussionist father. He began playing piano at 5 and became a protegee of Broadway songwriter Frank Loesser (*Guys and Dolls*). Jobs as a rehearsal pianist led to dance arrangements, orchestrations for TV shows like *Hullabaloo* and music for acts including Mike Nichols and Elaine May.

Goldenberg moved to Hollywood in late 1968 and scored many of television's most important films, garnering 25 Emmy Award nominations. He was renowned for his versatility: dark, frightening music for Steven Spielberg's 1971 *Duel*; a combination of electronic and orchestral sounds for Rod Serling's 1969 *Night Gallery* pilot; grandly romantic music for 1971's "Ransom for a Dead Man," the second *Columbo* pilot, which sold the Peter Falk series; a banjo and guitar

theme for the western *Alias Smith and Jones*; dignified French horns for the George Peppard mystery series *Banacek*; synthesizer sounds for *Ghost Story*; and the children's chorus in *Rhoda*.

He was musical director for *Elvis '68*, the legendary special that reignited the pop star's career, and held similar posts for TV specials starring Ross, Petula Clark, Leslie Uggams and Ann-Margret. He scored series such as *Ironside*; *It Takes a Thief*; and *The Name of the Game*; and all of Spielberg's television work.

He also scored several feature films including Presley's *Change of Habit*; *The Grasshopper*; *Red Sky at Morning*; Woody Allen's *Play It Again, Sam*; Streisand's *Up the Sandbox*; *The Last of Sheila*; *Busting*; *The Domino Principle*; and *Reuben, Reuben*. But Goldenberg was best known as a television composer, earning additional Emmy nominations for the TV movies *The Marcus-Nelson Murders*; *The Migrants*; *Helter Skelter*; the remake of *Dark Victory*; *The*



*Gangster Chronicles*; *Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy*; *Bare Essence*; and *Nutcracker: Money, Madness and Murder*.

"A composer should be sensitive to what's happening on the screen," Goldenberg told the *Los Angeles Times*. "It's better to underplay and understate, even though it often becomes a personal struggle for me because I'm very emotional, always ready to pour my heart out."

— Alex Sachare '71



## Submit an Obituary

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in Brooklyn, N.Y., to Greek immigrants, Nicholas spent his childhood working after school in his parents' florist shop with his brother, Theodore, who predeceased him. He founded Nicholas Research Associates International, which pioneered qualitative market research and provided services for Fortune 500 companies for decades. Nicholas was on the Columbia University Board of Trustees for five years and was a member of The 1754 Society. He had a deep concern for social justice and education reform, and was a Life Trustee of Oliver Scholars, which prepares high-achieving Black and Latino students from underserved New York City communities for success at top independent schools and prestigious colleges. Nicholas was a passionate lover of theater and music, particularly the opera, and for 25 years was on the Advisory Board of the Metropolitan Opera. It was said his presence could fill a room — he was warm, witty, firm of opinion, and as generous as it was possible to be. He is survived by his spouse, Gerard Bell, with whom he spent 42 years traveling the world and entertaining friends in their New York and Connecticut homes.

## 1959

**J. Michael Stern**, government official and analyst, Washington, D.C., on August 2, 2020. Born on September 5, 1938, in Leipzig, Germany, Stern and his family emigrated to the United States and settled in Clarence, N.Y. He majored in French and earned an M.A. from GSAS in 1961. Commencing with positions in the budget and legislative branches of the former Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Stern developed a distinguished career in government that included serving as staff director of the Senate Finance Committee under Sen. Russell Long (D-La.). He later was a legislative analyst for the Investment Company Institute. For more than 50 years, Stern was a prominent member of his synagogue, Adas Israel Congregation, where he and his

wife of 60 years, Joyce (née Duran), were among the founding families of the lay-led prayer service. A gifted scholar and linguist, Stern mentored hundreds of congregants and was recognized by the synagogue in 2018 as a Master Teacher. He is survived by his wife; sister, Raya; son, Avidan, and his wife, Linda; daughter, Lise; and five grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to Adas Israel Congregation, 2850 Quebec St. N.W., Washington, DC 20008, or to Our Place of New Trier, 370 Chestnut St., Winnetka, IL 60093.

## 1963

**Steven J. Shirk**, teacher, Clamart, France, on September 5, 2020. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., on December 13, 1942, Shirk pursued graduate studies in psychology at Temple and spent most of his career at the American School of Paris as a psychologist, teacher and guidance counselor. In retirement, he lived outside Paris and volunteered as a listener at SOS Help. "He was a faithful friend who treasured his many connections with kindred spirits around the world," recalled his nephew, Ben Wildavsky. "From his quick wit to his lively intelligence — and his willingness to burst into song at the slightest pretext — Steve had many wonderful and memorable qualities." In addition to Wildavsky, Shirk is survived by a cousin and a great-nephew. Memorial contributions may be made to the Columbia College Fund ([college.columbia.edu/givenow](http://college.columbia.edu/givenow)), The Louis August Jonas Foundation or Doctors Without Borders.

## 1966

**Stephen A. Lesser**, architect, East Hampton, N.Y., on July 12, 2019. Born on July 15, 1944, in Bethesda, Md., Lesser studied under renowned modernist architect Charles Gwathmey, his undergraduate thesis advisor at Columbia. In 1971 Lesser earned a master's at Harvard and then worked at several Boston firms including Benjamin Thompson and Associates, where he was a project architect of Faneuil Hall Market-place. In 1975 he moved to New York and joined Richard Meier Associates, where he honed his Corbusian style in residential and

## OTHER DEATHS REPORTED

*Columbia College Today* also has learned of the following deaths. Complete obituaries will be published in an upcoming issue, pending receipt of information.

- 1954 **Michael I. Frischberg**, teacher, Aberdeen, N.J., on April 19, 2020.
- 1956 **Peter Andrews Poole**, foreign service officer, professor and writer, Sugar Hill, N.H., on October 4, 2020.
- 1957 **Anthony G. Lubowe**, engineer, San Marcos, Calif., on January 20, 2020.
- Edward A. Weiner**, pathologist, Bethesda, Md., on April 20, 2020.
- 1958 **Albert J. Sabatini**, psychiatrist, New York City, on October 29, 2020.
- 1960 **Gary A. Hershendorfer**, economist, Aventura, Fla., on October 28, 2020.
- 1962 **John A. Istvan**, petroleum engineer, Spring, Texas, on September 28, 2020.
- 1964 **Stephan H. Levitt**, author, professor of Oriental studies, Queens, N.Y., on October 14, 2020.
- 1971 **Richard S. Milich**, professor of clinical psychology, Lexington, Ky., on November 7, 2020.
- 1973 **John Keating Willcox**, radio executive and teacher, Manchester, Mass., on July 16, 2020.
- 1976 **Nicholas P. Sgammato**, musician and teacher, Ossining, N.Y., on October 19, 2020.
- 1978 **Thomas T. Soter**, journalist and improv producer and teacher, New York City, on August 14, 2020.
- 1979 **Manuel R. Garcia III**, oil and gas executive, San Antonio, Texas, on November 4, 2020.
- 1983 **George Poon**, financial officer, Brooklyn, N.Y., on September 23, 2020.
- 1988 **Brian A. Keizer**, journalist and producer, New York City, on March 17, 2020.
- 2016 **Yeabsira B. Tigistu**, marketer, Brooklyn, N.Y., on November 14, 2020.

## 1971

**Timothy J. DeBaets**, entertainment attorney, Manhattan Beach, Calif., on September 27, 2020. DeBaets was a partner of Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, first representing clients in the world of dance at its New York office and then extending that to film, theater and television when he relocated to its Los Angeles office. He is survived by his wife, Kathy Oh; and their twins, son, Joseph, and daughter, Juliet.

— Alex Sachare '71

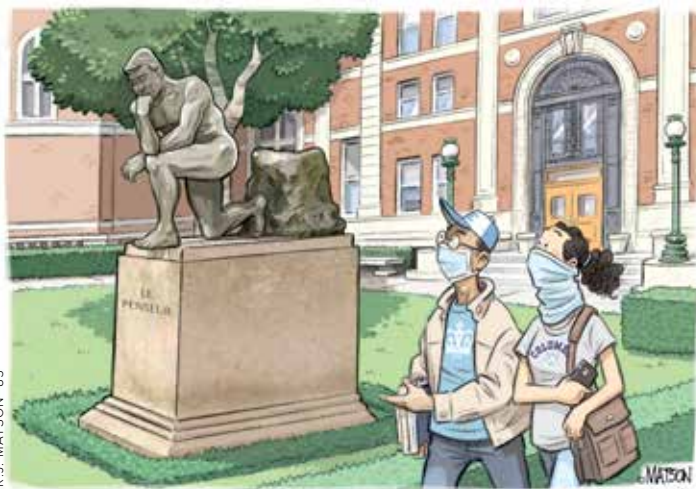
commercial buildings. After time as a director at Rivkin/Weisman, in 1986 Lesser formed Nagel and Lesser, Architects, in East Hampton, and since 1994 he had been a sole practitioner. His wife, Celia M. Josephson, said that he "strove for a clarity of line and a density of ideas to unify the elements within each building and project." Lesser's first marriage, to Ellen McClelland, ended in divorce. In addition to his second wife, he is survived by his son, Jonathan '17, SIPA'20; daughters, Alexandra and Emma; and sister, Katherine.

# captionthis!

## CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

This issue's installment is by  
[Dr. Benjamin Schwartz '03,](#)  
[PS'08](#), a regular cartoonist  
for *The New Yorker*.

Any College student or  
College alum may enter;  
no more than three entries  
per person. Submit your idea,  
along with your full name,  
CC class year and daytime  
phone, to [cct@columbia.edu](mailto:cct@columbia.edu)  
by Monday, May 3.



*“He’s been thinking a  
lot about race recently.”*

The winner of our Fall 2020 caption  
contest is **Jaysen Zhang '21!**  
Thank you for all your submissions.



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— Lilly Cao CC'22”



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