Tutor Style

GSAS students as mentors, teachers, and friends in the Harvard Houses
2 China Now and Then
Curating an important new show at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts, GSAS PhD candidate Hao Sheng offers a striking reinterpretation of China’s artistic tradition.

6 The Art of Science
MacArthur winner Susan Mango sees the beauty in cellular biology.

8 Colloquy with Adam Bradley and Andrew DuBois
The authors of The Anthology of Rap make the case for rap as a poetic art form.

10 Making the House a Home
GSAS students play a key role in the life of Harvard College as resident tutors in the undergraduate Houses.

14 Alumni Books
God, sex, and politics dominate this issue’s collection of notable books by GSAS authors.

On the cover: Chunbai Zhang, MPH ’09, and his wife, Jade D’Alpoim Guedes, a PhD candidate in anthropology, in the courtyard at Adams House, where they live as resident tutors.
from the dean

Enhancing the Graduate Experience

One of my priorities as dean has been to connect more strongly with the remarkable faculty members who serve as directors of graduate study in the 57 degree-granting programs that comprise the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

I’ve instituted a regular schedule of retreats and meetings for our DGSSs, and in these venues we exchange views on key issues and common problems. We’ve explored various strategies for building a more robust advising structure, for example, and talked through ideas on how to best prepare international students to lead sections in an American classroom.

With a hand in everything from recruiting to advising to requirements and overall student progress, DGSSs are helping to foster a very different graduate experience than the one many of us will recall.

It has been wonderful to see this community grow and to push collectively against the sorts of boundaries that might once have been insuperable. Overhearing the DGSS from history talking to his counterpart from chemistry about dissertation defense practices—to cite one example of this new interaction—has renewed my conviction that we must not fail to make use of the resources that Harvard University, across its many disciplines, offers to us. These gatherings underscore for me the common mission that engages all of us — the mission to build and share new knowledge.

Our DGSSs are there to help students manage that pressure, assess their own progress, and to endorse the broader aims of our program here, in a political and economic climate where those aims may often be subject to questions about cost and value.

It is appropriate that DGSSs take such care. The world—and the world of graduate education—is far more complex these days than it was a generation or two ago. In a restricted and highly competitive academic job market, and in an overall economy that remains frustratingly sluggish, the pressure to succeed in graduate school can feel overwhelming. Our DGSSs are there to help students manage that pressure, assess their own progress, and to have the “difficult conversations” that may come out of those assessments, as our DGSS in Classics, Emma Dench, has put it.

This year, I will begin a series of discipline-based meetings of our directors of graduate study, which I think will be crucial to our programs as they define particular challenges that are arising within their own professional spheres. These smaller conversations will be especially critical in the humanities, as we reassert the significance of those fields in a 21st century liberal arts education.

When I’m with our directors of graduate study, I get an on-the-ground understanding of what’s really going on in our programs, of the successes and challenges of graduate education today. This vantage point is crucial, since my task—as our shared task—is to articulate and affirm the value of our enterprise, never more critical at Harvard and in the larger society around us.
In an important new show at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts, a GSAS curator asks contemporary Chinese artists to respond to masterworks of the past, illuminating China’s shifting identity.
For many Americans, the popular image of China is grounded in two opposing visions: China as an ancient kingdom of romance and legend, or China as a mass producer of cheap commodities, an economic engine competing with the United States on the world stage. The truth, of course, encompasses both poles, and contemporary Chinese life is woven from strands of both kinds of identifiers.

Hao Sheng, a PhD candidate in Chinese art history at the Graduate School and the Wu Tung Curator of Chinese Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has attempted to penetrate the complexities of contemporary China by offering 10 of its leading artists a chance to respond to the cultural treasures of the past. In the process, he’s giving museum goers access to an experience that he, as a curator, cherishes — the chance to witness the dynamic interplay between artists and their inspiration.

Sheng is the curator of Fresh Ink: Ten Takes on Chinese Tradition, which runs through February at the MFA. The show, the first in the museum’s new Ann and Graham Gund Gallery, is not simply an exploration of one nation’s long artistic tradition. It’s also about “new ways of understanding contemporary China, and contemporary Chinese people,” Sheng says. As a native of China (he was born in Shanghai) and a longtime resident of the United States, Sheng is neatly positioned to articulate the rewards of that process of discovery to audiences in Boston.

He began to plan the exhibition five years ago, when he hatched the idea to invite Chinese artists to come to the MFA, view its permanent collection, and create new works that responded directly to a selected work in the collection. The show will juxtapose those new creations and the masterpieces that inspired them, letting the audience “eavesdrop on a dialogue between old and new,” Sheng says.

The idea arose in part from his own daily pleasure at watching visiting artists interact with the MFA’s permanent collection of Chinese art, one of the world’s most important. “Artists are always working on a problem that they are struggling with in their own work,” Sheng says, “and when they look at anything — a street, a market, a painting — they pose those questions to it and find their individual answers.” When they look at a masterwork from the past, artists are essentially “interrogating the ancient and bringing it back to being a contemporary that can speak to them. We always talk about works of art being timeless, but this is what it means — that in front of a work of art, you can have a conversation that creates this time-space continuum. That experience opened my eyes to work I thought I knew very well. I wanted to bring that experience to the general audience.”

There was another, more personal motivation. After he graduated from the College of Wooster, in Ohio, Sheng went to Japan and spent three years apprenticing with a master potter in a rural village. “It was really what you imagine when you think of a romanticized apprenticeship — you get up
at six in the morning, you sweep the floor, you get hot water for your teacher, you wedge the clay. Over two years, I made only one shape, a teacup, thousands of times. He said, ‘If you can do this, you can do anything.’"

The immersion made him suspect that the art world emphasized originality perhaps more than it should. “Creativity and originality seem to be equated,” Sheng says. “But in fact in ceramics, in Asian art, and I think in art in general, artists are always looking to their predecessors for inspiration. That’s a process that has been fully acknowledged in the Chinese tradition, which posits that you can’t make sense of yourself unless you can put yourself in the context of the tradition.”

Defining exactly what that tradition consists in, and how it relates to China’s sense of itself today, is tricky, according to East Asian art historian Yukio Lippit ’93, Harris K. Weston Associate Professor of the Humanities. China is one of many non-European countries that “formulated master narratives about their artistic traditions during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the art institutions of early modern Europe, such as the Beaux-Arts academies and public salon exhibitions, were exported to other contexts,” he says. “These narratives were an important component of nation-building.”

In China, Lippit continues, “there had already emerged a fairly well-defined canon of calligraphy and painting, developed over many centuries, that provided a readymade foundation for the essentially modern notion of a tradition of Chinese art.” The last several decades have seen “a second moment of nationwide artistic self-fashioning” — this time having “more to do with the shift towards a market economy in China and the globalization of the art market than with nation-building,” he says.

The 10 artists included in the MFA’s exhibition, ranging in age from their late 30s to early 60s, are Arnold Chang, Li Huayi, Li Jin, Liu Dan, Liu Xiaodong, Qin Feng, Qiu Ting, Xu Bing, Yu Hong, and Zeng Xiaojun. All have a profound engagement with China’s ink-painting tradition, Sheng says, “but their responses are so varied, from very referential to parody.” Their styles and biographies vary, too; there are installation artists and conceptual artists here, in addition to ink and oil painters. One was born in America; another, born into a nomadic shepherding community in Xinjiang Province, now lives in Chelsea, just outside of Boston; others had never left China before receiving Sheng’s invitation.

In working with the artists as they responded to their chosen works, Sheng was careful not to let his own perspective as an art historian shade their interpretations. “If you think about the work that Qin Feng chose to respond to” — a bronze vessel from the 11th century BC, whose inscriptions are some of the earliest instances of written Chinese — “we actually know very little about the culture and the moment of 11th century BC. Archaeologists can tell us that these are ritual vessels. Who used them, what was their faith — that’s murky to us. But Qin Feng [the Chelsea-by-way-of Xinjiang artist] can ignore that lack of information and can have a personal response,” Sheng continues. “He sees this bronze as a transplant from China to Boston, just like he was, and his emotional response to this displacement comes into his artwork,” a dynamic installation of 10 human-sized folding books and 7 hanging scrolls.

Qin Feng created a dynamic installation in response to the oldest object in the exhibition, a monumental bronze vessel from the 11th century B.C. Having grown up in a multilingual crossroads in Western China, he was inspired by the inscriptions on the vessel, and he produced 10 large-scale folding books and 7 hanging scrolls, covered in words that are both ancient and invented. Above, Civilization Landscape Series (book 009 detail). Center, Ceremonial wine vessel (fang yi) with inscription, detail; Chinese, from the early Western Zhou period, late 11th to early 10th century B.C.; bronze. Right, the artist in his Beijing studio, amid a mockup of his installation, Civilization Landscape Series Books 005–019 and Hanging Scrolls 1–13; books: ink, coffee, and tea on paper, with covers wrapped in lambskin; scrolls: ink and earth on paper.
Yu Hong, the only woman in the exhibition, created a strikingly modern reinterpretation of the 12th-century masterpiece *Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk*. Showing all the various roles that women occupy in contemporary China, the new work is expressive and specific — an immediate antidote to China’s massiveness, and mass identity. The work, titled *Spring Romance*, will hang from the gallery ceiling as eight bolts of cascading golden silk.

Arnold Chang, born in New York City, chose to respond to Jackson Pollock’s *Number 10*, seeing an opportunity to trace comparisons between traditional Chinese brush strokes and Pollack’s drips and fluidity. The work Chang created, titled *Secluded Valley in the Cold Mountains*, is a handscroll of a delicate landscape, whose strokes mirror Pollack’s motions. He decided to lay the Pollack painting flat during the exhibition, requiring viewers to face it as if it were a Chinese scroll.

For Sheng, this integration of old and new — “like two mirrors facing each other,” he says — illustrates the idea that the classical China we celebrate in museums and the contemporary China we encounter in headlines are continuous. “I think this show can help people understand this continuation — how China’s own tradition forges how Chinese people think of themselves today. And of course, how Chinese people think of themselves today is important for all of us.”

**FRESH INK: TEN TAKES ON CHINESE TRADITION**

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Through February 2011
Curated by Hao Sheng, GSAS PhD candidate

- The exhibition features 10 pairings of classic and contemporary works, among approximately 40 pieces overall, including preparatory sketches and woodblocks by the artists.

- The masterpieces from the MFA’s collection vary in age, medium, and culture. They span 3,000 years, from an 11th century BC bronze vessel, to paintings on silk from the Song Dynasties period (AD 960–1268), to a Jackson Pollock canvas from 1949.

- The new works also range widely in format, from traditional handscrolls, hanging scrolls, and carved wooden screens to silk banners and monumental folding books.
After earning a biochemistry degree from Harvard College in 1983, Susan Mango was on the path to becoming a scientist. She loved thinking about puzzles, the beauty of scientific questions, and the elegance of experimental design. Graduate school in biological science was the clear next step. Then Mango spent a postgraduate year doing something completely different: She took a job at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., working on conservation of artworks.

“Taking that time, not having set a rigid trajectory from undergraduate science student to full professor, was liberating,” Mango says. “I think it helped keep science fun.”

Mango, who rejoined Harvard last year as professor of molecular and cellular biology (in an office next to her freshman biology professor, Richard Losick), says her interest in art naturally complements her interest in science. “Art and biology just aren’t that different,” she insists. “I realized sometime in graduate school that I think about biology differently from some scientists. For me it’s very grounded in visual and spatial representation.”

“Biology is all about puzzles and imagining processes,” she adds. “I like puzzles. They’re fun.”

Mango’s unorthodox approach to experimental research has led to the kind of creative, elegant studies that push the limits of biology. Her work on pharynx (a cavity area behind the mouth) development in nematode worms has provided biologists with one of their most robust models of organ formation.

In 2008 her ingenuity was rewarded when the MacArthur Foundation gave her one of its “genius grants,” which carries with it $500,000 in no-strings-attached funding.

Mango grew up in New York, London, and Washington, the daughter of a peripatetic professor of Byzantine history. She in effect “rebelled” against her humanist parents by cultivating an interest in science, she says. Her own career has taken her all over the country. From Harvard, she went to Princeton for her PhD work, moved on to a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Wisconsin, and eventually landed on the faculty of the University of Utah’s School of Medicine and Huntsman Cancer Institute.

Mango developed a reputation for forward-thinking research, and her ground-breaking work on organogenesis has been regularly published in high-impact journals. After decades in the lab, biological experimentation continues to intrigue her, she says, because “you think the answer is going to be black or white, but it’s always some shade of gray.”
Cellular detective Susan Mango wants to understand more about how organs are formed. In studying the pharynx of the nematode worm and tracking cells as they form the organ, she's found a robust model.

Tracking Cells as They Meet Their Fate

"The notion that you can track individual cells in worms is just phenomenal," says Susan Mango, whose lab at Harvard is drawing key inferences about human organ development from studying the process in C. elegans, a tiny, transparent worm that she affectionately describes as "absolutely beautiful."

In its embryonic state, C. elegans undergoes a developmental process known as stereotypical cleavage, a pattern of cell division whose timing and orientation can be tracked easily in a research laboratory. "So you can say, 'Okay, we know this cell will eventually be part of the gut,' which is what we study," Mango explains. She and her team can then ask questions — such as, how does the cell transform from a pluripotent state, in which it can become any cell type, to its final cellular fate, as a gut cell?

"With C. elegans, the whole process is very fast, and you can watch it as it happens," says Mango, a self-described "impatient" researcher who likes "to be able to do an experiment, get a result, think about it, and set up the next experiment right away. With other experimental organisms, like the mouse, you can't do that."

Lately Mango and her team — including GSAS students Youngeon (Kaitlyn) Choi and Jacqueline Rosains — have been watching the nuclei of embryonic worm cells. The cells are tiny structures, about half a micrometer deep (a micrometer is 1/1000 of a millimeter), containing the worm's DNA and clues about the process of plasticity — how cells commit to a defined type.

"Isn't that amazing, how drastically its nucleus changes?" Mango asks, pointing at an image comparing two developmental stages of an embryonic worm. "Over time, the nucleus gets much more organized, and then it partitions. Certain regions are kind of stuffed away into something called heterochromatin," Mango explains. The reorganization of the genetic material inside a cell's nucleus may control the potential of the cell to be "plastic," she says.

Broadly, her work is about better understanding "how an animal organizes itself," she continues. "If you can take a single gene, delete it, and in that way cause a clean removal of all the cells in your kidney, to me it's pretty convincing that the gene is essential to make the kidney," she says.

And that's just what Mango found when she started looking at throat development in worms and happened upon a mutant worm that lacked a pharynx. She and her team eventually discovered that a single gene, which they later called pha-4, usually associated with the pharynx, was missing.

"So we thought, there is one gene, this single gene pha-4, that when mutated, prevents a whole organ from forming," Mango recounts. "It was so beautiful, such a simple, clear phenotype, and it suggested that this gene, pha-4, has a critical role in making the pharynx, and not just one of its cells but all the pharyngeal cells."

The gene showed no effect on cells not destined to become part of the pharynx. Its effect was so specific that Mango and colleagues called it the "organ identity gene, or selector gene."

Since that discovery, researchers have found genes with similar functions in the eye and the pancreas. The gene pha-4's existence has been confirmed in creatures both simple and complex, including in humans.

Is there a gene associated with the formation of each organ in the body? "It's possible, but we haven't found these 'organ identity genes' for all organs," Mango says.

For now there are more questions than answers: How do early things happen early in an organ's development? How do later things happen later? And how does an organ respond to changing environmental conditions throughout the life of an animal?

Seeking answers to those questions, Mango knows that first steps are key. "If you're going to build an organ, just like building a house, you need to start at the beginning and then progress," she says. "You wouldn't put in the plumbing after you've put up the walls, right?" ☎

Adapted from "How Does a Worm Build a Throat?" by Iris Mónica Vargas for HarvardScience.

alumni notes

Applied Science
Bob Naka, SD '51, has received an honorary degree from UCLA. In 1942, Naka was one of many Japanese-American students who were forced to withdraw from the institution as part of the incarceration of Japanese-Americans during World War II. He went on to complete his degree at the University of Missouri and began his career at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Project Lincoln, working with other engineers to invent an automatic radar signal detection device to locate invading Russian bomber planes. Naka served as deputy director of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) in Washington, D.C., and spent three years as the chief scientist of the U.S. Air Force, before retiring in 1988.

East Asian Languages and Civilizations
Margaret B. Wan, PhD '00, has been awarded an ACLS Fellowship for her latest book project, "Drum Ballads as Local Literature in Nineteenth Century China." An associate professor of Chinese literature at the University of Utah, she is the author of "Green Peony" and the Rise of the Chinese Martial Arts Novel (State University of New York Press) and co-editor of The Interplay of the Oral and the Written in Chinese Popular Literature, (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press).

Don J. Wyatt, AM '78, regional studies—East Asia, PhD '84, has been appointed John M. McCardell, Jr. Distinguished Professor at Middlebury College. This endowed professorship has been established in recognition of the presidency of John M. McCardell, Jr., 15th president of Middlebury, on the occasion of his retirement. Wyatt is the first to hold the professorship.

Economics
Richard Grossman, PhD '88, has written Unsettled Account: The Evolution of Banking in the Industrialized World since 1800, which was released this summer by Princeton University Press. The book provides a comparative history of banking in Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Japan, and Australia, focusing on four types of events that have been central to the lifecycle of banking systems: crises, bailouts, mergers, and regulatory reform.

Walter Labys, AM '65, has recently been awarded a Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Montpellier in France. The honor recognizes his extensive research and collaboration with faculty and graduate students of the economics faculty between the years 1990 and 2008; the collaboration involved the econometrics of time series analysis and applications in the commodity markets and international finance. Labys was a doctoral student of Clive W.J. Granger (Nobel Laureate in economics, continued on page 9
col·lo·quy: a conversation, a dialogue

...with Adam Bradley and Andrew DuBois

Uncovering the Lyric
Poetry of Rap

P rofane, funny, boisterous, bleak, gritty, joyful — rap is all of those, a cultural form that reaches back to encompass a venerable black oral tradition while remaining utterly contemporary in its subjects and sound. It has been celebrated, reviled, legislated, and theorized, but only now it is being anthologized, in a new collection edited by Adam Bradley (PhD '03, English) and Andrew DuBois (PhD '03, English). *The Anthology of Rap* (Yale University Press) is the first attempt to collect and analyze lyrics from the beginning of rap’s recorded history, in the 1970s, to the present. With a foreword by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and afterwords by rappers Common and Chuck D, the book makes the case for the validity of rap as a poetic art form. Bradley, an associate professor of English at the University of Colorado at Boulder, has written previously about rap’s lyricism (*Book of Rhymes: The Poetics of Hip-Hop*), as well as about Ralph Ellison; DuBois, an associate professor of English at the University of Toronto at Scarborough, is the author of *Ashbery’s Forms of Attention* and editor of *Close Reading: The Reader*.

Did you learn something new about rap after collecting all of these lyrics? What can others learn?

Andrew DuBois: The rhythmic energy and robust diction of rap drew me to the music at a young age, but the work of selecting and transcribing so many lyrics forced me to see these elements with a new kind of clarity. The range of storytelling strategies in rap is amazing, especially in the context of a four-minute song; reading the lyrics helped me to see this in a way that listening alone had not. But listening is most crucial, and I think that listeners are going to learn in a new way how much variety and skill make up the art of rap. Seeing a range of lyrics laid out chronologically and framed by their historical context is going to enlarge the reader’s sense of rap’s cultural impact and aesthetic contributions.

Have you encountered skepticism about rap’s lyric worth?

Adam Bradley: When *Book of Rhymes* came out, it came out on a trade press, because the couple of academic presses I had pursued had misgivings about the subject matter or about my particular fusion of hip-hop with the classical poetic tradition, thinking that we couldn’t use some of the same tools of poetic analysis on rap. I’d like to believe that the book, and now this anthology, conclusively demonstrates otherwise.

Still, in this anthology, we go to great lengths to articulate that rap is a tradition that stands up on its own. Yes, it has a relationship to the Western poetic heritage, and yes, it has a relationship to the African-American oral tradition as it stretches back through the Toasts, and the Dozens, and signifying. Nonetheless, it’s a tradition that is complete unto itself.

That’s an important thing to note, because often what we’ve seen in the past have been attempts to offer rap up as the subject of serious intellectual discourse only through the cosigning of more canonical literature. So you’d have things like hip-hop and Shakespeare. There’s a value in that, but our purpose was to say that without combining the hip-hop tradition with any other tradition, without asking for admittance within the halls of higher learning, rap deserves, and indeed has already, a place in this discourse.

What about rap’s explicit (or offensive) content?

Bradley: Rap is a form that’s in your face, that doesn’t mince words, and that often does so at the expense of certain people’s sensibilities. What we wanted to do in presenting this anthology was not to argue one way or the other about rap’s explicit content, but to present the lyrics on their own, let them speak for themselves, and let people do the work that they want to do with it.
That said, one of the headlines that comes out of this book for me, and one of the ways it pushes against assumptions about hip-hop content, is that you can pretty much read the first half of it without encountering much explicit language at all.

So what is lyrical, poetic, or just aesthetically pleasing about rap? What can a reader find in this book?

Bradley: Depending upon your particular interests, tastes, and aesthetic sensibilities, you can open up this book and find satisfaction. For me it begins in the ear, it begins with rhyme and rhythm. One of the things that we learn from all great poets and poetic traditions is that there is a music to language itself.

But this is a book not just of rhymes but of stories, of wisdom. It’s a book of life. These lyricists don’t just talk about money, and cars, and clothes; they talk about life and death in all its forms. You can see the last 30 or so years of our country’s history written from the perspective of these young men and women, many of whom are black, most of whom are minorities, many of whom began on the fringes of the socioeconomic structure of our society and then went on to rise to positions of fame and wealth. That’s part of the story of this tradition, part of the story the book tells. In the process it gives us a shifting view of this country — of issues of race relations, of course, but also about the shifting terms of our culture, of the whole great American contract of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

What is your favorite selection in this anthology?

DuBois: Hard to choose! Here are three favorites:

“Millie Pulled a Pistol on Santa” (De La Soul). A serious song that doesn’t fall into the trap of didacticism. Posdnous and Dove trade verses about a classmate who is being sexually abused by her father, who is also their high school guidance counselor. Their complicity in the tragic conclusion is implied, given their nonchalant response to their friend’s situation. Formally virtuosic, with a stanzaic variation at the end that sonically parallels the story itself, and brave in its characterization.

“Web” (The Roots). The Roots are rightly considered to be about the most versatile and sophisticated group in hip-hop, but what I love about “Web” is how lead rapper Black Thought returns to the battle-rap essence. No hook, no guests, no wasted motion, just 84 unbroken bars of smart invective and shameless self-aggrandizement.

“The M.G.M.” (Ghostface and Raekwon). These Wu-Tang Clan emcees take the back-and-forth delivery associated with groups like the Cold Crush Brothers and Run-DMC to another level on this one. A two-way stream-of-consciousness hip-hop reality show about fight night with rap stars.

How did you come to hip-hop, and how did hip-hop become a scholarly direction?

Bradley: When I was 7, I was pulled out of school by my mother. My teacher had told her, Adam is the sweetest boy in the class, but he’s just not bright. We moved in with my grandparents, and my grandmother, who’d been a teacher, quit her job and dedicated herself to teaching me at home, which she did for the next 8 or 9 years. The way she got me into reading and writing was through poetry. She would read me Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Robert Frost — and before long I was reading their poetry back to her.

I first heard rap in the mid-1980s — this was in Salt Lake City, Utah, and rap took longer to get there. I started listening to Run-DMC and De La Soul, and even as a kid I could sense a deep connection between the music I listened to and the poetry I was reading. It took coming to Harvard to find the critical vocabulary to be able to articulate that connection.

What was your path to this project? How does it fit within your larger body of interests?

DuBois: At a professional level, I’m primarily a poetry critic, with an emphasis on American lyric poetry; a personal obsession of mine is popular music, and I’ve been a rap fan and record collector ever since I first had a little spending money. To me, rap is the best popular poetry of my lifetime, as well as the kind of lyric poetry that I first tried to write (with little success, alas!), so it made sense to bring together these interests in a book.

The American Revolution: A Grand Mistake (Prometheus Books, 2010), an iconoclastic assessment of America’s revolutionary period. Stauber, retired as associate professor of political science at Southern Illinois University — Carbondale, presents a fundamental reinterpretation of the founding saga of America, arguing that our independence from Britain was premature and that the experience of Canada has in many ways been preferable. He cites the unfinished business of slavery, for example, and America’s often cumbersome system of education and government.

Leland Stauber, PhD ’64, has published a new book entitled The American Revolution: A Grand Mistake (Prometheus Books, 2010), an iconoclastic assessment of America’s revolutionary period. Stauber, retired as associate professor of political science at Southern Illinois University — Carbondale, presents a fundamental reinterpretation of the founding saga of America, arguing that our independence from Britain was premature and that the experience of Canada has in many ways been preferable. He cites the unfinished business of slavery, for example, and America’s often cumbersome system of education and government.

2003) at Nottingham University and has published frequently on the modeling of world commodity markets and related price behavior, as well as the impact of the instability in these markets on developing countries. He is professor emeritus in natural resource economics at West Virginia University, a University Benedum Scholar, and a Gunnar Myrdal Scholar at the United Nations in Geneva.

English

David Shaw, PhD ’63, a professor emeritus of English at Victoria College, University of Toronto, has recently published Secrets of the Oracle: A History of Wisdom from Zeno to Yeats (University of Toronto Press, 2009). A study of oracles and aphorisms, the book includes a chapter on the wit and wisdom of Shaw’s former colleague, Northrop Frye.

Judson D. (Jay) Watson III, PhD ’89, has been named Howry Professor of Faulkner Studies at the University of Mississippi, where he teaches in the Department of English. Watson is the author of Forensic Fictions: The Lawyer Figure in Faulkner (University of Georgia Press, 1993) and editor of a forthcoming collection of essays, Faulkner and Whiteness (University Press of Mississippi, 2011). He is currently completing a monograph, Reading (For) the Body in Southern Narrative, for the University of Georgia Press.

Government

Franklyn Johnson, PhD ’52 reports that his book, One More Hill, has been released in its fourth edition by the Cantigny First Division Foundation. The book recounts his experience as a replacement officer and then platoon leader of an anti-tank platoon with the 18th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division in World War II. His story depicts the experiences and feelings of soldiers in that and every war: the training, camaraderie, apprehension, fighting, boredom, and then more fighting. He initially saw action with the Big Red One in Tunisia in North Africa. He made two amphibious assault landings: one at Gela, Sicily, in 1943, the other on Omaha Beach at Normandy in 1944.

Leland Stauber, PhD ’64, has published a new book entitled The American Revolution: A Grand Mistake (Prometheus Books, 2010), an iconoclastic assessment of America’s revolutionary period. Stauber, retired as associate professor of political science at Southern Illinois University — Carbondale, presents a fundamental reinterpretation of the founding saga of America, arguing that our independence from Britain was premature and that the experience of Canada has in many ways been preferable. He cites the unfinished business of slavery, for example, and America’s often cumbersome system of education and government.

continued from page 7
Making the House a Home

Photographs by Jessica Scranton
Rich Johnston, a PhD candidate in English, is in his fourth year as resident tutor at Cabot House. A big part of his job is helping College students make the choices they know they want to make, but may not be able to articulate or justify in the face of external pressures, he says.

As resident tutors in Harvard’s undergraduate Houses, GSAS students are mentors, friends, and role models, forming a tight-knit community of learners

By Bari Walsh

Rich Johnston’s apartment is almost exactly the one you’d want if you dreamed of living in Cambridge as an academically inclined 20- or 30-something. There is the cozy-chic and appropriately studious-looking living room, warmed by the books and records lining the walls and by the oriental rugs — a harmonious blend of authentic and IKEA — on the floor. There is the wall of whisky from Scottish distilleries you wish you could visit. There is the garden, and there are your vegetables. The apartment is in a historic building just outside Harvard Square, with a dramatic expanse of green grass that beckons a Frisbee toss when friends come over.

One thing, though: The place comes with a whole lot of undergraduates attached. Johnston is a resident tutor at Cabot House, one of Harvard’s 12 residential Houses, and part of his job is to open his doors to the College students who live there — to be a friend, advisor, and even exemplar (on a good day) of a happy, balanced, and wise adult.

Johnston, a sixth-year PhD student in English, is one of 246 resident tutors at Harvard. Most are GSAS students; some are graduate students from the professional schools or practitioners with a continuing Harvard affiliation. All are motivated by the desire to join a tight-knit community and guide students in their personal and intellectual development.

Tutors receive room and board, but this is not a gig to take for cheap rent alone. House life is at the center of Harvard’s undergraduate experience, and tutors play a significant role in defining the unique character of each House and providing resources — academic, recreational, and emotional — for the undergraduates residents. What tutors get in return, Johnston says, is a real home — an idea as much as a place, and one that can feel increasingly appealing, and increasingly remote, as the rigors of a typical PhD program intensify. “Research is a very isolating thing,” says Johnston. “I genuinely enjoy being around the people here, given the solitariness of what graduate school is. There’s a really positive vibe, and the kinds of conversations you have with students can be provoking and fun. I’ve gotten a chance to work with students who do amazing things — not only are going to do amazing things, but have done them. It’s humbling.”

In 1929, Harvard President A. Lawrence Lowell championed the ideal of a Harvard House system that was “a social device for a moral purpose,” as Harvard College Dean Evelyn Hammonds recalled in a recent report on the Houses. Lowell believed that the College’s mission was to develop the mind, body, and character of its students, and that by integrating students of various ages with affiliated tutors and faculty, Houses could break down barriers — of class and back-
The tutor’s role is about helping students find the right answers, not telling them what to do. “We encourage them to do what they love to do, explore whatever they can. The path to success can be a long and winding one,” says Jade D’Alpoim Guedes, tutor at Adams House.

Lowell was ahead of his time in understanding the benefits of what are now known as living-learning communities, says Harvard College Dean of Student Life Suzy Nelson, whose office oversees the residential system and helps train tutors. “We’ve learned over the years that the more students can connect in a meaningful way, not only academically, but also socially and emotionally, the more likely they are to graduate and to thrive,” she says. Harvard’s residential college system, which epitomizes the living-learning model, realizes Lowell’s vision of bringing together a community of peers, who learn from one another, and a community of tutors, who mentor and inspire.

In most collegiate living communities, these more-senior scholars are “resident advisors” or “resident assistants.” At Harvard, they have always been called tutors, Nelson says, reflecting the significant pedagogical role they play. “When the House masters recruit a staff of tutors,” she says, “they’re first and foremost looking for graduate students who have a zest for learning, who have a desire to talk about their scholarly work and to share that enthusiasm with students. The tutor has a special role — he or she is really supposed to model the life of a scholar.”

“Not everyone can handle all these roles at the same time,” he continues, “but those who can thrive on the amazing academic and social community that we all take as our goal to build here — not just for our undergraduates, but our ourselves, our tutors, and our staff. Just as many, if not most, of the students who graduate from Harvard feel that House life is a centrally important feature of their college experience, we and our tutors feel that as well.”

“In most collegiate living communities, these more-senior scholars are ‘residents’ or ‘resident assistants.’ At Harvard, they have always been called tutors, Nelson says, reflecting the significant pedagogical role they play. ‘When the House masters recruit a staff of tutors,’ she says, ‘they’re first and foremost looking for graduate students who have a zest for learning, who have a desire to talk about their scholarly work and to share that enthusiasm with students. The tutor has a special role — he or she is really supposed to model the life of a scholar.’

Tutors do that and more, says Sean Palfrey, a longtime master at Adams House with his wife, Judith Palfrey, the T. Berry Brazelton Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. ‘Their job is to serve as respected role models, teachers, responsible authority figures, and friends, and in the process they have to field questions of all sorts, from pre-professional and specialty-specific academic issues, to personal, lifestyle, and philosophical ones,’ says Palfrey, a professor of pediatrics and public health at Boston University/Boston Medical Center. ‘They come in as wonderful examples of rising scholars in their fields, and they gain immense maturity and experience as teachers, supervisors, and leaders.’

“We wear any number of hats, alternately or simultaneously,” says Johnston, who is in his fourth year as House tutor, and who this fall served as interim resident dean at Cabot. Tutors do intensive sophomore advising with students who are selecting their major concentrations; they advise students in their own disciplines or in specially assigned roles, such as race relations, gender issues, or fellowships; they host study breaks and other community-builders; and perhaps most important, they bring their own interests to the House, enriching it in diverse and unique ways. Johnston has led bird-watching excursions and tours of Mt. Auburn cemetery, as well as outings to see art, film, and music. He calls himself “aggressively domestic”; he bakes his own bread and brews his own beer, right in the little galley kitchen at Cabot.

The role requires openness and flexibility, he and other tutors say. “You have to be a good listener, and a good question-asker. A lot of the time, you’re helping the students to decide to do what they already know they want to do,” Johnston says.

Jade D’Alpoim Guedes, who with her husband, Chunbai Zhang, resident tutors at Adams House
husband, Chunbai Zhang, is a tutor at Adams House, agrees. The role is about “letting students come up with the answers — guiding them to finding the right answers for themselves, instead of telling them what to do,” says D’Alpoim Guedes, a fifth-year PhD student in anthropology who helps oversee the Pool (a theater space in Adams that was once an actual swimming pool, one of the House’s many historical quirks). She also runs a culinary club in Adams and bakes homemade treats to lure students in for a break and a chat.

She strives to encourage the undergraduates in her entryway, to whom she feels especially close, “to do what they love to do, to explore whatever they can. Harvard undergraduates can be scared of failure. We try to open their minds, to show them that the path to success can be a long and winding one.”

Zhang, who holds an MD from Dartmouth and an MPH from Harvard, is a clinical fellow in sleep medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and one of four pre-med tutors in Adams. He counsels students through the process of applying to medical school and coordinates the letters of recommendation they need from the resident dean. “In medicine, we don’t usually have the opportunity to interact with undergraduates on a daily basis. I’ve felt tremendous satisfaction in this role,” he says.

To do it well, D’Alpoim Guedes says, “it takes compassion. You have to be someone who wants to learn and wants to know about other people. You have to be genuinely interested in seeing things from other people’s points of view. This has definitely ended up making me a better teacher,” she adds.

Like other tutors, D’Alpoim Guedes says that balancing competing responsibilities and creating boundaries and emotional space can be a challenge. But resolving those challenges productively is part of what they’re modeling for students, she says.

It’s a point echoed by Nedra Massenburg, who with her husband, Sorell, is a new tutor this year in Eliot House. “We try to model balance, because balance is a big issue around here. And we try to be the voice of reason, outside of the Harvard undergraduates’ bubble,” she says — assuring a worried student, for example, that it’s OK to take “only” four classes this term.

The Massenburgs are natural community builders, so the transition to residential life has been smooth. “Eliot is an open space, warm and welcoming, with lots of energy and a lot going on,” says Nedra, a math teacher at an innovative charter high school in Boston. “People really want to get to know you. I already feel very connected, and for me that’s important.”

Sorell Massenburg is a fourth year PhD student in applied physics who talks about “modeling the need to be connected. You can’t live in a vacuum. You have to care about those around you.”

He smiles broadly as he mentions the guitar group he’s convened at Eliot. It’s open to anyone who wants to learn, and unlike most everything else at Harvard, there are no high expectations. “We can just come together and share what we know, even if that isn’t a lot, without a lot of stress. The thing is, I’m learning from them, too.”
A History of Islam in America (Cambridge University, 2010) is vital reading. It tells a vast and complex story — from the first Muslims in America (who accompanied seventeenth-century Spanish explorers or were part of the African slave trade) to today’s vibrant Islamic community, the most ethnically diverse in the world. Author Kambiz GhaneaBassiri (PhD ’03, religion) discusses the assimilation of Muslims but also their enduring cultural and religious distinctiveness. Above all, GhaneaBassiri excels in relating his story to wider currents in U.S. history and politics, including the Masons’ role in bringing Islamic symbols into American culture, the rise of immigration exclusion, Marcus Garvey’s United Negro Improvement Association, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam, and the social and political minefield that is post-9/11 America.

It’s an eye-catching title — and God and Sex (Twelve, 2010) makes good on its promise. In it, Michael Coogan (PhD ’71, Near Eastern languages and civilizations) offers a lively exploration of two subjects at the crosshairs of our contemporary “culture wars.” Coogan finds little biblical support for “one man-one woman” views of marriage — yet also little for those gay rights activists who would read a homosexual relationship into the story of David and Jonathan. In analyzing passages in Leviticus commonly seen as prohibiting incest, Coogan concludes that they had less to do with instilling respect for boundaries of blood relationship than with keeping men from poaching one another’s female “property.”

For the Rock Record: Geologists on Intelligent Design (University of California, 2009) argues that geologists no less than biologists must respond to the challenge of “intelligent design.” This purported alternative to current scientific theory contends that the extreme complexity of the earth offers proof of the existence of an “intelligent designer” [undefined, but implicitly God]. The essays in this volume, edited by Jill S. Schneiderman and Warren D. Allmon (PhD ’87, geology), discuss the material processes that explain the complexities of geology and review recent fossil discoveries that buttress evolutionary theory. The authors critique intelligent design for calling the scientific method into question and note that proponents of intelligent design consistently ignore recent scientific discoveries that would undermine their case.

Historians view the Constitutional Convention — and its embrace of federalism — as the catalyst that reconciled national and state authority and allowed for a workable American government. But in The Ideological Origins of American Federalism (Harvard University, 2010), author Alison L. LaCroix (PhD ’07, history) draws attention to the underlying currents that shaped federalism itself — both before and after the Convention, a subject that’s received far less attention. Grounding her argument in a careful analysis of speeches, pamphlets, laws, and legal decisions, LaCroix focuses on political ideas rather than institutional schematics. She thus restores this “new conception of layered governmental authority” to life as a dynamic political concept that took shape gradually between the Stamp Act Crisis of the mid-1760s and the early nineteenth century.

Interpretations of American politics emphasize the centrality of the people’s voice in decision-making, but The Eyes of the People (Oxford University, 2010) argues that today, most people experience politics as a thing to be watched, a spectator sport. To bring political theory more into line with
reality, Jeffrey Edward Green (PhD ’07, government) proposes a recasting of its dominant metaphors so as to stress the people’s eyes—what we see of the political sphere—rather than the people’s voice. He advocates a plebiscitarian vision of democracy, but more practically argues for greater transparency in political life—i.e., through communication that is minimally scripted or orchestrated by political leaders (for example, live presidential press conferences rather than the artifice of “town hall meetings” or heartwarming campaign videos).

The Two Faces of American Freedom (Harvard University, 2010) is a sweeping analysis of America’s changing political culture. Aziz Rana (PhD ’07, government) explains that his intent is not historical understanding but rather “social criticism, in which history is presented in the service of today’s problems.” Principal among these is the projection of American power in the world, which he sees as “unmoored from clear democratic ideals.” Rana argues that the New Deal represented a significant shift of authority from individuals and communities to the central government. But he locates an important alternative vision in what he terms “settler” democracy—particularly in political movements of outsiders (Shays’ Rebellion, Populism, the Civil Rights Movement) that promote ideals quite unlike those of the current imperial America.

Scholars have studied the literature of the Civil War and World War I but have largely overlooked the intervening years. Cynthia Wachtell (PhD ’98, history of American civilization) fills that gap with War No More: The Antiwar Impulse in American Literature, 1861–1914 (Louisiana State University, 2010). Focusing on writings that embrace antiwar views or challenge romantic images of warfare, she marshals well-known authors (such as Ambrose Bierce, Herman Melville, Mark Twain, and Stephen Crane) and obscure ones (Union officers Allen Fahnestock of Peoria, Ill., and John William De Forest of New Haven, Conn., and the teenaged poet Mollie Moore of Tyler, Texas). Wachtell concludes that well before the First World War, antiwar themes that had once been peripheral were increasingly prominent in American literature.

In a slim but vividly observed volume, Michael Kammen (PhD ’64, history) recounts the reburials of various prominent figures, including Daniel Boone, Jesse James, and Frank Lloyd Wright. Digging Up the Dead: A History of Notable American Reburials (University of Chicago, 2010) reveals that such reburials can evoke sharp controversy or elaborate public celebrations. They may be byproducts of larger political struggles, as in the case of the early nineteenth-century reburials of Revolutionary War dead that coincided with rising tensions with Great Britain. Or they can reflect changes in an individual’s perceived stature. Thus, at the height of Southern nostalgia for the “lost cause,” one-time Confederate President Jefferson Davis was moved—with great pomp—from New Orleans to Richmond, Va., the former Confederate capital.

Reviews by James Clyde Sellman, PhD ’93, history

Alumni authors: Would you like your book (general interest, published within the past year) considered for inclusion? Send it to Colloquy, Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Holyoke Center 350, 1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138. Question? E-mail gsaa@fas.harvard.edu.
LINDQUIST AWARDED NATIONAL MEDAL OF SCIENCE

President Barack Obama has named Susan Lindquist, PhD ’76, cellular and developmental biology, as a recipient of the National Medal of Science, the country’s highest scientific honor.

Established in 1959, the annual presidential award honors 10 individuals “deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding contributions to knowledge in the physical, biological, mathematical, or engineering sciences.” Lindquist, a 2008 winner of the GSAS Centennial Medal, was honored “for her studies of protein folding, demonstrating that alternative protein conformations and aggregations can have profound and unexpected biological influences, facilitating insights in fields as wide-ranging as human disease, evolution, and biomaterials.”

Lindquist is a member of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research and a professor of biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. “When I started out in science, I thought having a bench in the corner of someone’s lab would be about the best I could hope for;” she says. “It never occurred to me that I could have my own lab, let alone achieve an honor like this.”

HIGH MARKS FOR PHD PROGRAMS

In core disciplines and across the spectrum, GSAS PhD programs received high marks in the National Research Council’s long-awaited Assessment of Research-Doctoral Programs, released in September.

The report, containing both a rating and a ranking of 4,838 programs in 62 fields at 212 institutions, shows that in the fundamental disciplines, “Harvard’s PhD programs are remarkably strong, vibrant, and successful,” says Dean Allan Brandt. Especially impressive, though, is the breadth of excellence revealed by the evaluation, Brandt says. Ninety percent of Harvard programs are in the highest tier of the National Research Council (NRC) rankings, and more than half are the very highest ranked in the country.

The NRC, an arm of the National Academies, aims to conduct a comprehensive survey of doctoral programs every 10 years or so; the last was in 1995. Unlike many other national rankings, “the NRC report is the result of a considered and serious process that engaged our faculty in the work of assessing their own strengths and ambitions, as well as evaluating peer programs,” Brandt says.

This report, like all rankings, is not without marked limitations, Brandt adds. Its data may be out of date in some cases, and its methodology was complex. “But no matter how you slice this data, our results were exceptionally good,” he says.

To learn more, search NRC on the GSAS website, www.gsas.harvard.edu. }

Give Wisely. Gift Planning.

SUPPORT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL AND INCREASE YOUR INCOME WITH A HARVARD GIFT ANNUITY.

YOU WILL RECEIVE:

- Secure, fixed income for life
- Tax-advantaged income
- A charitable tax deduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>ANNUITY RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTACT SARAH CAROTHERS
OFFICE OF GIFT PLANNING
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
124 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138-3793
617-495-5040 OR 1-800-VERITAS
OGP@HARVARD.EDU
ALUMNI.HARVARD.EDU/PGO

Susan Lindquist
I CHOOSE HARVARD...

“...because how I see the world is very much shaped by how I was trained,” says John Moon, who spent eight years at Harvard, including four as a resident tutor in Leverett House. He now serves as a co-chair of the Graduate School Fund.

“Harvard played a formative role in who I am today,” says Moon, who recently gave an immediate-use, flexible gift and has also endowed a graduate financial aid fund. “It’s my way of making an impact at a higher level.”

His commitment is inspired by the roles graduate students play across Harvard. As an undergraduate economics concentrator, he turned to them for guidance. “Working with graduate teaching fellows was a great way to get help in a relaxed, less intimidating setting,” he says.

Later, as a PhD student in business economics at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Moon had a chance to provide the same kind of support to others. “Mentoring Harvard undergraduates was a chance to meet, quite literally, some of the brightest and most interesting people in the world,” he says.

Those experiences remain with him to this day as a managing director of private equity at Morgan Stanley and adjunct professor of finance at Columbia Business School. Whether on Wall Street or in his travels, Moon makes a point of staying connected with those he mentored. “Many of them have become lifelong friends,” he says.

Choose Harvard today with a gift to the Graduate School Fund. Visit alumni.harvard.edu/gsasgift.

Support the

Graduate School Fund
ALUMNI EVENTS AND NOTICES
Questions? Contact the GSAS Office of Alumni Relations at www.gsas.harvard.edu/alumni, gsaa@fas.harvard.edu, or 617-495-5591.

GLOBAL GSAS: HONG KONG
GSAS will be in Hong Kong in March, as Dean Allan Brandt hosts an evening talk by a distinguished Harvard faculty member and a daytime event for the local GSAS community. Alums in the region, stay tuned for more information!

ALUMNI WEEKEND | APRIL 1–2, 2011
...featuring a keynote address by Harvard economist Kenneth Rogoff, faculty symposia across the disciplines, and an Economics reunion!

We hope you’ll plan to attend the Graduate School’s lively and stimulating Alumni Day celebration on Saturday, April 2. Stay tuned for your invitation.

A special note to alumni of Harvard’s economics and business economics programs: renew your connections at a reunion on Friday, April 1. Hear from some of the world’s leading economists — who also happen to be your former professors — on the topics that are commanding the headlines every day. And stick around to attend Alumni Day and the keynote by Professor Rogoff!

ARE YOU A FORMER DUDLEY FELLOW?
FELLOWS REUNION | APRIL 2, 2011

In honor of the 20th anniversary of the dedication of Dudley House as the Graduate Student Center, House Masters Jim and Doreen Hogle invite all former fellows to a festive reunion on Saturday, April 2, following Alumni Day. You’ll receive an invitation soon — save the date.

STAY CONNECTED!
GSAS is on Twitter and Facebook! Follow HarvardGSAS for updates from Cambridge about research, people, and networking opportunities. 