

INNOVATION  
HUB

BANNER YEAR FOR  
PRINCETON NOBELS

ALUMNI REFLECT  
ON AFGHANISTAN

# PRINCETON ALUMNI WEEKLY

## A RITCHIE BOY

Victor  
Brombert's  
journey to  
Princeton

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NOVEMBER 2021  
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T H E P R I N C E T O N C A M P A I G N



# PRINCETON ALUMNI WEEKLY

An editorially independent  
magazine by alumni for alumni  
since 1900

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Colleagues toast chemistry professor David MacMillan, right, one of five Princetonians to win a Nobel Prize this year.

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Alumni who served in Afghanistan — as soldiers, diplomats, and analysts — reflect on what took place and what was won and lost.

By E.B. Boyd '89

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Before Victor Brombert became one of Princeton's best-loved professors, he escaped the Nazis and then returned to help defeat them.

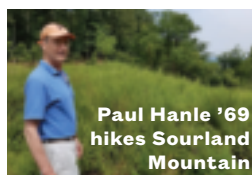
By Elyse Graham '07

## PAW.PRINCETON.EDU



### Second Chances

On the latest PAWcast, Jeffrey Korzenik '85 discusses his new book, *Untapped Talent*, which lays out a road map for businesses to hire people with criminal records.



Paul Hanle '69  
hikes Sourland  
Mountain

### Educating Judges

As more lawsuits are filed over climate change, Paul Hanle '69 is making sure judges understand the science.

### American Economics

On the heels of his new book, *Our Fair Share*, Brian C. Johnson '99 suggests three more books for understanding income inequality.

### Looking Forward

Gregg Lange '70 ponders the liberal arts.

## The Rankings Mishegoss

Princeton has again topped the *U.S. News & World Report's* rankings, and alumni are sending me congratulatory e-mails.

I reply with mixed feelings. I am proud of Princeton's teaching and research, and I am happy to see the University's quality acknowledged so visibly. I am convinced, however, that the rankings game is a bit of mishegoss—a slightly wacky obsession that does harm when taken too seriously.

Indeed, before Princetonians feel too good about the University's top spot, we should remember that there are plenty of rankings out there, and pecking orders vary. Indeed, *U.S. News* does not put us first in undergraduate teaching. Elon University gets that honor, and we come third after Georgia State University.

Nor does *U.S. News* deem Princeton the best value among research universities. The magazine reckons us fourth, behind Yale, MIT, and Harvard.

Or take Princeton out of the equation. *U.S. News* proclaims Columbia, Harvard, and MIT tied for second among research universities, with Yale next and Stanford following. Would you advise a prospective student to choose a school based on these distinctions? Do you believe they contain *any* useful information?

Beneath these peculiarities lies a fundamental problem with the whole idea of ranking colleges. Rankings have a clear meaning if we're talking about intercollegiate athletics: higher ranked teams are expected to beat lower-ranked teams.

But educational and research programs do not compete this way (imagine: "It's Princeton versus Harvard in undergraduate education. Tonight's event: freshman chemistry!"). There are lots of great places to get an education. Different schools may suit different students, and America's colleges and universities work collaboratively to educate those seeking degrees.

What is the alternative? *U.S. News & World Report* might treat colleges more like Consumer Reports treats cars. Consumer Reports does not aim to identify the single best sedan for all customers, and *U.S. News* should not suggest that one school is better than all others. Instead, it should inform prospective students and families about the factors that matter when choosing a college.

What should applicants care about? Graduation rates are crucial: a college that does not graduate its students is like a car with a bad maintenance record. It costs money without serving its purpose. And what matters is not simply the average graduation rate, but the rate for students with backgrounds like the applicant's own: for example, some places graduate their wealthy students but do less well for low-income students.

Applicants should also want to see some measure of post-graduation outcomes. The most frequently used one

is salaries after graduation, which has some value but also obvious flaws. I prefer alumni satisfaction ten years after graduation, though that data is harder to gather.

Here is a partial list of other factors that matter: net cost (again, for students like the applicant); faculty quality and student-faculty engagement; and a learning culture with high standards (you'll get a better education at a place where students study hard and add to one another's education).

Judged by these criteria, many schools—public and private, large and small—could be "Consumer Reports Best Buys." Applicants should be thrilled to get into any of them; they should pick the one that most appeals to them; and they should not waste time worrying about which one is *the* "best."

If you dig into the *U.S. News* analysis, you will find

information of the kind that would feature in a "Consumer Reports" approach. The rankings incorporate, for example, graduation rates for students in general and for lower-income students in particular.

Unfortunately, *U.S. News* and its increasingly numerous competitors often report even component data in the form of rankings, and they emphasize the overall rankings rather than the underlying facts. The result is to mash up criteria and exaggerate small differences in misleading ways: Princeton is #1! Meanwhile, Columbia moves into a tie for second!

All of this might be amusing if it did not do so much damage. Students choose colleges on the basis of

rankings. Many colleges and universities compete to move up. Some avoid doing difficult but valuable things—like admitting talented low-income students who thrive at college if given appropriate support—in favor of easier strategies more likely to add points in the *U.S. News* formula.

If there must be rankings, I suppose we should be happy to be at or near the top. We should temper our enthusiasm, though, given the problems with the enterprise. Even tiny tweaks to an arbitrary rating formula could jumble the ordering.

More fundamentally, we should keep in mind that Princeton's mission statement commits the University to "research and teaching of unsurpassed quality" that improves the world, not to being "the best."

We want to be as good as we can be. And if others equal us? That's a good thing, not a problem. There is a lot of talent in the world, and we are better off if America has many high-quality colleges and universities for aspiring students to attend.




OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS



# Inbox



## AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

*On Constitution Day, Sept. 17, PAW asked six constitutional scholars: How would you amend the U.S. Constitution? Readers also responded, sharing their views in comments posted with the online story. Read more at [paw.princeton.edu](http://paw.princeton.edu).*

What amendment would I make to the U.S. Constitution? Gee, that's easy: the Equal Rights Amendment.

We don't even need to do any work, since we already have the amendment and it has been ratified by the required 38 states already. We just need to resolve that pesky timing issue and get it done.

**Dennis Scheil '79**  
**Princeton, N.J.**

While there are many meritorious proposals to amend the Constitution, some which seem vital, like the ERA, the two most dangerous areas requiring fixing relate to election law, which is threatening a constitutional crisis that would make Jan. 6 look like a tea party:

1. The 12th Amendment (1804) is worse than obsolete. It is the legal

underpinning for President Donald Trump's request for Vice President Mike Pence to override the states' submitted electoral votes. In conjunction with the ambiguously worded Electoral Count Act of 1887, there is an increased likelihood that we'll have a presidential election that declares a winner who has neither the popular vote majority nor the electoral vote majority.

2. There needs to be an amendment that takes money (especially "dark money") out of politics, basically overturning the Citizens United decision, which is based on a far-too-strongly reinforced jurisprudence idea that corporations are the same as individuals. The capability for money to "buy" elections through media and other mass advertising outlets was not an aspect of 18th-century life the way it is today.

**Michael Otten '63**  
**Scarsdale, N.Y.**

Impose strict term limits of two six-year terms for senators and five two-year terms for representatives. These should be lifetime limits, not just a limit on consecutive terms.

**Jay Squiers '83**  
**Dallas, Texas**



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NOVEMBER  
2021  
19 • 8pm  
20 • 2 + 8pm  
21 • 2pm



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[arts.princeton.edu](http://arts.princeton.edu)



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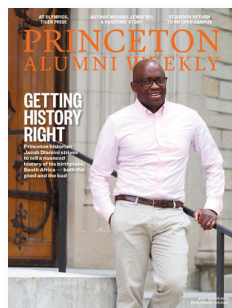
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## Inbox

### BLACK AND WHITE

I was puzzled why Carrie Compton, in her article on Professor Jacob Dlamini



("Revising the Revisionists," September issue) consistently wrote "white" in lowercase while consistently capitalizing "Black." I would have thought

rules of grammatical consistency and considerations of racial equality would have indicated treating the two terms the same and capitalizing either both or neither. Is there a grammatical rule at work here of which I was unaware?

**Bruce C. Johnson '74**

**Grand Rapids, Mich.**

*Editor's note: On matters of capitalization, PAW follows The Associated Press Stylebook, which uses the capitalized term "Black" because "the term reflects a shared identity and culture rather than a skin color alone." The stylebook directs that "white" should be in lowercase.*

### COLLEGE SEVEN

I see that the administration is struggling to find appropriate names for the two residential colleges scheduled for 2022 completion (On the Campus, September issue).

For this "new neighborhood," may I suggest an approach that's both appropriately new and distinctly unorthodox? What about making one of the two colleges' current arbitrary names, specifically number "Seven," permanent? Now that might strike crusty conservatives as unimaginative and parochial, but sometimes what seems merely convenient or even pedestrian can actually achieve the special, the singular.

This proposal offers two benefits: tradition and diplomacy. For one thing, the inaugural "lucky Seven" Class of 2026 will be only the first of successive generations of Princetonians who can lay claim to a lasting place (seventh) in the noble record of campus expansion. Even better, the policy would also avoid the

embarrassment (disturbingly frequent, it would seem) when a generous donor's liquidity proves, shall we say, irregular over time. Unlike Perelman College, College Seven would keep its name. Intact and forever.

**Jamie Spencer '66**

**St. Louis, Mo.**

### EINSTEIN STORIES

One day in my sophomore year I suddenly learned that Albert Einstein ("Einstein at Princeton," May issue) was soon to make an appearance at the Jewish Center, which then was a modest room in Murray Dodge. I rushed there to find the few remaining seats were placed in a semicircle behind the podium. Almost immediately after I sat down the great man appeared sitting next to me. His footwear: sandals without socks.

Soon the eminent professor was at the podium speaking on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal. Einstein eloquently described the horrible plight of Europe's remaining Jewish community and its dire need for financial support.

A question-and-answer period followed, during which Einstein was questioned about the then-front-page news that his former colleague, Klaus Fuchs, was just arrested for being a Russian spy. Einstein looked bewildered, having no idea who Fuchs was. Suddenly, as if struck by lightning, he bellowed the name using the German pronunciation, which sounded like the obscenity. Loud laughter erupted. I clearly observed that Einstein had no idea what was so funny.

I also recall Bill Scheide '36, Maecenas who, among his numerous gifts to Princeton were a Gutenberg Bible and several manuscript Bach scores, recounting how he heard what Bill believed was Einstein's first lecture in English. Unannounced, he stood before Bill's 9 a.m. class and proceeded to describe the Theory of Relativity. Einstein was a friend of the professor who taught the course and over the weekend, once he learned the subject of Monday's lecture, offered his services.

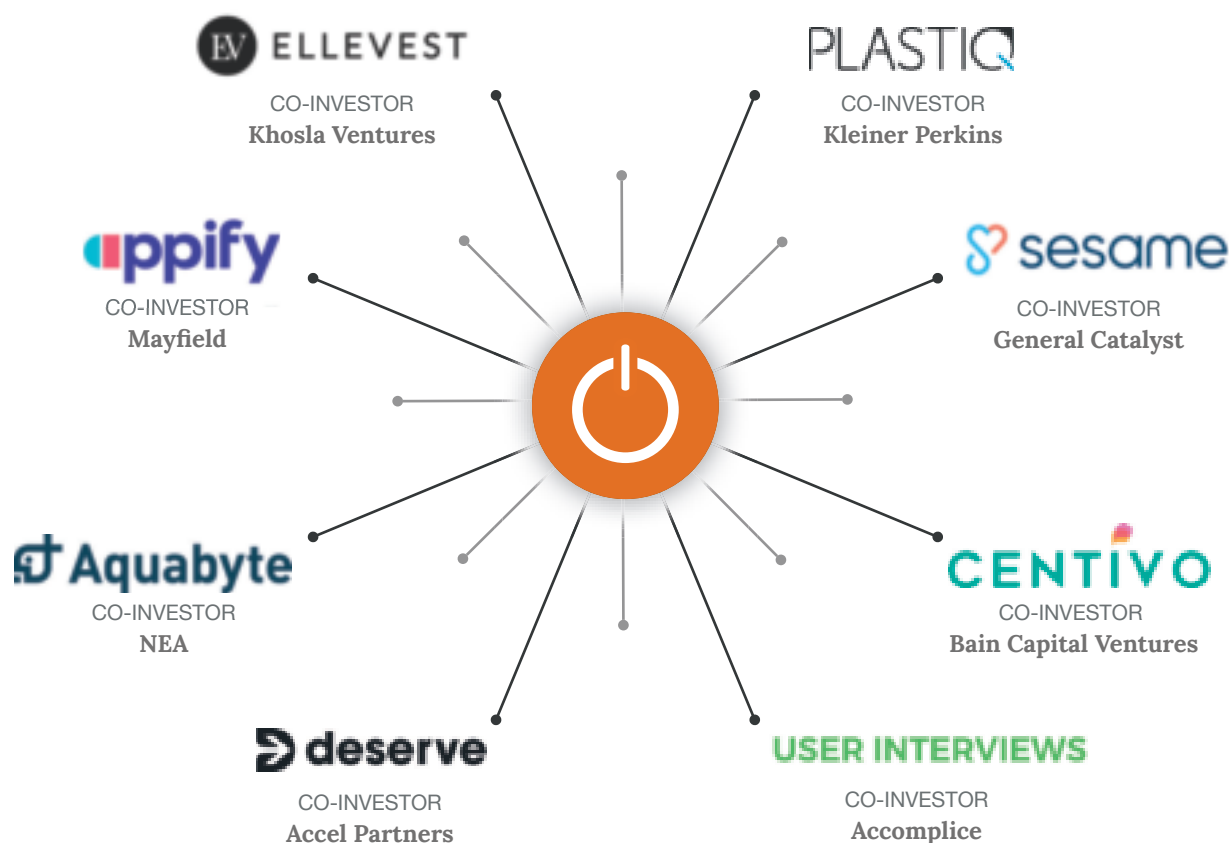
**Leonard L. Milberg '53**

**Rye, N.Y.**



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The Mack Family; (L-R) Alleda '99, Anaiah, Jacobi, Jabari, John  
Photo courtesy of Princeton Athletics

## ALUMINARY

# John Mack '00

*Ford Family Director of Athletics*

On Sept. 1, John Mack '00 began his first day at his "dream job," the Ford Family Director of Athletics at his alma mater. "This is the only job as an athletic director that I want — that I've ever wanted, really," he said.

A champion sprinter in college, Mack worked for the Big Ten and Northwestern University before becoming a practicing attorney as well as the pastor at the Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in New Haven, Michigan. "This job is the one thing that makes all the different things that I've done make sense," Mack said, "combining both my previous experience in intercollegiate athletics, my time as an attorney, my time serving as a pastor and in organizational leadership. This makes all of that make sense."

In a Q&A, Mack chatted about his love for Princeton and his hopes for the future.

*The student-athlete experience at Princeton is kind of unique. What did you learn during your four years that helped shape your future?*

My experience was learning that Princeton is a safe place to struggle. Most everyone here is used to being the best student, the best athlete, the best at everything they've ever done. And for me, this was the first place where I had to struggle, where I wasn't the best, where everything didn't come naturally. You are literally thrown in with the best and the brightest from around the world, both in terms of the students and the professors and faculty. But everywhere I turned, people were there to offer support, to offer help. It was always a place that made me feel like I belonged.

*You're the sixth consecutive Princeton athletic director to have been an alumnus, dating back to 1941. What does that streak say to you about the Princeton culture and Princeton athletics?*

I'm biased — this is the absolute best place to be a student-athlete in the entire country, bar none. We pursue excellence here on every front: as a student, as an athlete, if you're in the orchestra, if you're performing at McCarter Theatre — whatever it is. And I think the ability to come through that experience shapes you in a way where you just absorb the heartbeat of the place. When you talk about someone leading this athletics department, it helps to have someone who not just understands the University's missions and values, but who really takes them to heart to be able to continue the legacy of what Princeton is about.

*You're now in position to mold the next generation of Princeton coaches. Do you have a philosophy about what makes a great Princeton coach?*

When you hear some people talk about their profession — whether it's writing, whether it's photography — you just get a sense of how much it means to them, that it's not just a job, it's part of who they are. I want people who have that passion, that their sport and coaching is really a part of who they are.

I won't be looking for cookie-cutter coaches. You have to have coaches who understand how to evolve themselves and their philosophies in order to maintain success because what worked 30 years ago may not work now. But finding coaches who understand and believe in the University's core values is the starting point.

*Having the sports teams competing again really makes the campus come alive, and it's wonderful to see them back in action after COVID cancellations.*

I know our coaches and our student-athletes are so excited to get back on the field. Field hockey, volleyball and the soccer teams have started and the crowds have been tremendous. I think people have really been hungry to get back and support our teams. We've got Harvard and Yale at home for football, so I'm anticipating a tremendous response from our alumni for the football season and all of our teams throughout the year.



## THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED TO PRINCETON.

- **VISIT** [alumni.princeton.edu](https://alumni.princeton.edu), your best resource for stories about your fellow alumni. Catch up on the latest news, volunteer opportunities, ways to support the University, upcoming events, and the **VENTURE FORWARD** campaign.
- **LEARN** about upcoming alumni events and save the date for **Alumni Day**, a midwinter celebration, planned for **Feb. 19, 2022**.
- **READ Tiger News**, the monthly online newsletter with all you need-to-know about alumni and University news and events.
- **FOLLOW @PrincetonAlumni** on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter social media channels.





I rise as a Tiger because of the amazing Tiger connections made and moments had well after graduating, including just watching my two Princeton classmates here get married in San Diego! #TigersRising #Princeton275

From Michael Lin '13

Princeton's **Orange & Black Day**, held **October 22** to celebrate the University's **275th birthday** or Charter Day, invited the University community to post images of themselves wearing their best orange and black on **alumni.princeton.edu/orangeandblack** and on social media using **#Princeton275** and **#TigersRising**. Here are some images of alumni getting the party started!



Happy 275th Princeton! Will be spending Orange and Black Day celebrating all of the incredible friendships I made during my four years (and wishing I could celebrate with Olive's and Nomad Pizza!).

-Rebecca Shaughnessy '15

From Rebecca

# DEAR TIGERS,

I AM PROUD to be a Princetonian. I always have been, but in reflecting on the last two years, I am especially proud of how Tigers found innovative and new ways to gather, to connect, to serve, and to learn, reaching a broader audience than ever before. Quite simply, Tigers rose to the moment.



Mary Newburn '97 | Photo: Fotobuddy

The Alumni Council officer team — Monica Moore Thompson '89, Juan Goytia '00 and Adam Lichtenstein '95 \*10 and I — are committed to keeping that momentum going. Now equipped with both virtual tools and best practices for in-person gatherings, we're excited to support both new and existing engagement efforts to ensure that all Tigers feel an enduring sense of belonging in our alumni community. We are particularly focused on and excited about welcoming our most recent graduates into the alumni journey, and our council-wide focus on diversity, equity and inclusion continues on the excellent work begun during my predecessor Rich Holland's tenure.

Each Alumni Council has the opportunity to create a theme for the upcoming two-year tenure. After receiving thoughtful counsel during the summer from Alumni Council leaders, and with consideration for the moment in which we live — a moment where we have been separated from one another, a moment where we continue to reckon with racial and social injustice, a moment where uncertainty about the future lingers in many spheres — the spirit of Princeton alumni continues to be a source of inspiration. Tigers always rise to the moment and, therefore, we chose **"Tigers Rising"** as our theme. We're particularly excited that the University's recent launch of the Venture Forward campaign has alumni engagement as one of its three primary goals, which will shine a bright light on alumni volunteer efforts and showcase the many ways together we are Tigers Rising.

During the next two years, we hope you might engage with your fellow alumni in some way — find a compelling event through your regional association, explore one of the incredible affinity groups, engage with your class, check out the community pride that was on display during Orange and Black Day. Whatever avenue you choose, we hope you will join this incredible, inspiring community of Tigers Rising.

## THREE CHEERS...

*Mary*

Mary Newburn '97

Chair, Alumni Council; President, Alumni Association

Mary.Newburn@gmail.com



Stay Safe.

Carlos King '72

From Carlos King



Go Tigers!

Will celebrate Princeton's 275th anniversary from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Feliz Cumpleaños Princeton,

Juan Goytia '00

From Juan Goytia

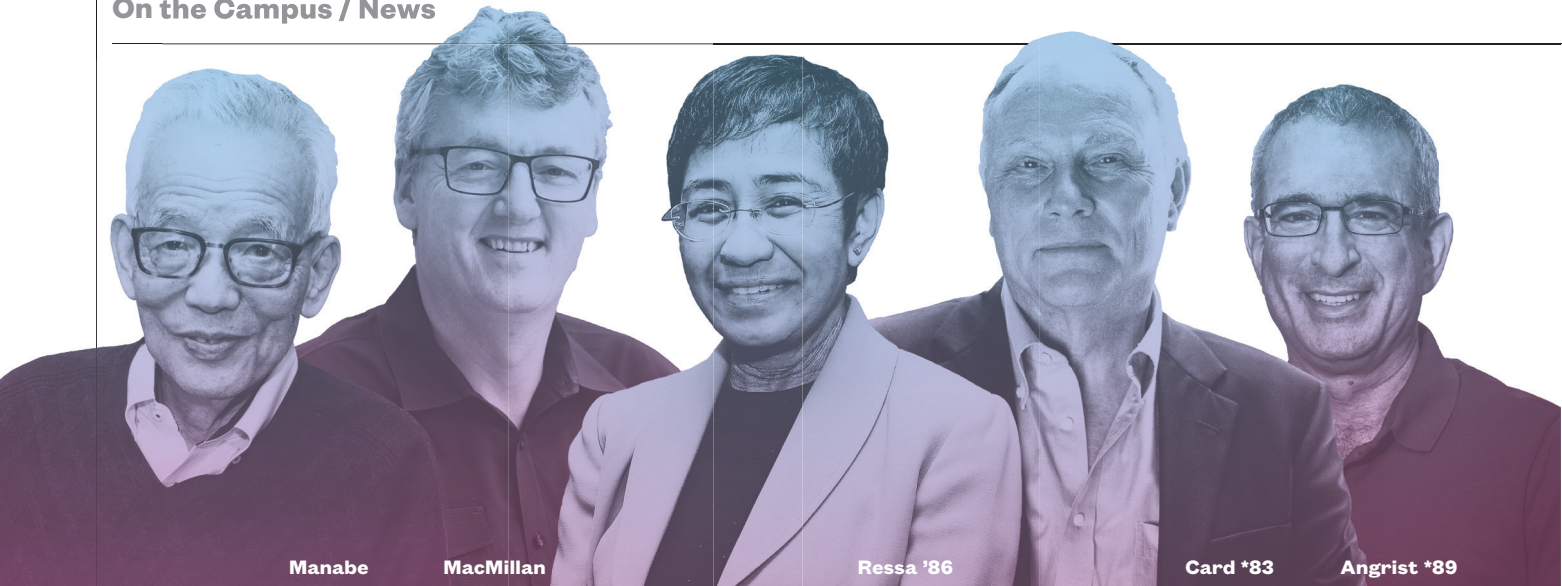


NEWS, SPORTS, AND RESEARCH ♦ 'VENTURE FORWARD' ♦ NOBEL HONOREES ♦ ELAINE SHOWALTER

# On the Campus

Students pass through the gateway outside Little Hall on a picture-perfect day in late September. According to *The Tigers of Princeton University* (1992), these statues were the first freestanding tiger sculptures on campus.  
Photograph by Ricardo Barros





Manabe

MacMillan

Ressa '86

Card '83

Angrist '89

# A Season of Nobels

## Three alumni and two faculty honored for chemistry, economics, physics, and peace

**P**inceton alumni and faculty members had a banner year for Nobel Prizes, with five laureates honored in four of the six Nobel categories—including the only woman to be honored this year, Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa '86, a journalist recognized for fighting for press freedom in the Philippines.

Other alumni and professors among the 13 new laureates are David Card '83 and Joshua Angrist '89 (economics) and faculty members Syukuro “Suki” Manabe (physics) and David MacMillan (chemistry). The Nobel Prize for each category includes a monetary award of 10 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.14 million), which is often split among multiple recipients.

Manabe’s honor was the first of the Princetonians’ to be announced, on Oct. 5. A senior meteorologist in the Program in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, Manabe and two co-winners in physics were honored for devising new methods to describe Earth’s climate and predict its long-term behavior, according to the Nobel press release. Manabe began modeling Earth’s climate in the 1960s, showing how increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere lead to higher temperatures on the Earth’s surface.

“He led the development of physical

models of the Earth’s climate and was the first person to explore the interaction between radiation balance and the vertical transport of air masses,” the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in a statement. “His work laid the foundation for the development of current climate models.”

Manabe and Klaus Hasselmann of the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology will share one-half of the physics award for laying “the foundation of our knowledge of the Earth’s climate and how humanity influences it,” according to the Nobel press release. Giorgio Parisi of the Sapienza University of Rome was honored for discovering hidden patterns in disordered complex materials and will receive the other half.

Colleagues praised Manabe for his work and foundational contributions to climate science. “Climate models built on Manabe’s foundation are critical tools today for predicting and analyzing how the world will change as a result of greenhouse-gas emissions and to quantify the enormous benefit of rapidly decreasing greenhouse-gas emissions for life on Earth,” said Denise Mauzerall, a professor of civil and environmental engineering and public affairs, in Princeton’s announcement.

“I’ve always viewed Suki as the Michael Jordan of climate,” said Tom Delworth, senior scientist at the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL), at a press conference at Princeton. He said Manabe’s work has helped to elevate the field and that he continues to teach research papers based on Manabe’s early findings. “What you learn from those papers in the ’60s stands the test of time,” he said.

Manabe, 90, was born in Ehime-Ken, Japan, and earned his bachelor’s and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Tokyo. In 1958, he began working as a research meteorologist with the National Weather Service (now the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). He came to Princeton in 1963 to lead the GFDL and began teaching at the University in 1968.

Noting that it took him some time to figure out what he was good at, Manabe encouraged students in the audience to find a career that aligns with their passions. The younger generation, he said, will have to find ways to both mitigate and adapt to the current changes in climate.

Asked if he foresaw the current climate crisis while experimenting over a half-century ago, Manabe said that he did not. “I never imagined that this thing I was beginning to study [would have] such huge consequences,” Manabe said. “I was doing it just because of my curiosity.”

**The next day, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced that MacMillan, the James S. McDonnell**

From left: Princeton University/Office of Communications/Denise Applewhite; Sameer A. Khan h'21; Sipa USA/AP; Noah Berger/AP; L. Barry Hetherington/Wikipedia

Distinguished University Professor of Chemistry, won in chemistry, sharing the prize with Benjamin List for an innovation that has major implications for pharmaceuticals and greener chemistry.

Independently of each other, in 2000, the two scientists developed asymmetric organocatalysis, a type of catalysis that uses organic molecules. (Catalysts control and accelerate chemical reactions without becoming part of the final product.) Before MacMillan and List made their discoveries, scientists believed there were only two kinds of available catalysts: metals and enzymes. They found more environmentally friendly and cheaper ways to produce catalysts using common elements such as oxygen and nitrogen.

“David MacMillan is a brilliant chemist whose transformative insights and accomplishments have enhanced the power of organic chemistry to benefit human health and address other practical problems,” said President Eisgruber ’83 in a statement.

At a press conference that afternoon, MacMillan thanked his lab group, colleagues, family, and the University for supporting him and reflected on the value of science. “Without science, we wouldn’t have anything,” he said.

MacMillan, 53, born in Bellshill, Scotland, received his B.Sc. degree from the University of Glasgow and Ph.D. from the University of California, Irvine. He worked at both the University of California, Berkeley, and Caltech before joining Princeton’s faculty in 2006.

#### The economics prize was awarded

Oct. 11 to Card “for his empirical contributions to labor economics” and to Angrist and Stanford economist Guido Imbens “for their methodological contributions to the analysis of causal relationships.” Card will receive half of the award for his 1990s studies that explored the labor-market effects of minimum wages, immigration, and education. Angrist will split the other half with Imbens for their work highlighting the cause-and-effect relationship between education and income.

In their work, the winners used “natural experiments” that

resembled clinical trials in medicine, studying how policy changes or chance events result in groups of people being treated differently, the Nobel committee said. For example, Card’s research with the late Princeton professor Alan Krueger showed that increasing the minimum wage does “not necessarily lead to fewer jobs.” The methodological contributions by Angrist and Imbens have made it easier to interpret data from natural experiments.

“Card’s studies of core questions for society and Angrist and Imbens’ methodological contributions have shown that natural experiments are a rich source of knowledge. Their research has substantially improved our ability to answer key causal questions, which has been of great benefit to society,” said Peter Fredriksson, chair of the Economic Sciences Prize Committee.

Card, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and director of the Labor Studies Program at the National Bureau of Economic Research, taught at Princeton after earning his Ph.D. in 1983 until 1996. Angrist is a professor at MIT.

#### Ressa was honored along with Russian

journalist Dmitry A. Muratov for “their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for democracy and lasting peace,” the Norwegian Nobel Committee said. Ressa co-founded Rappler, a digital media company for investigative journalism, in 2012. Since then, Rappler has shone a light on violence, abuses of power, and authoritarianism in the Philippines — and Ressa has faced death threats, a cyber libel conviction, and other criminal charges as a result.

As a journalist and CEO, “Ressa has

shown herself to be a fearless defender of freedom of expression. Rappler has focused critical attention on the [President Rodrigo] Duterte regime’s controversial, murderous anti-drug campaign,” the committee said in a statement. Ressa responded to the news on Rappler’s Facebook Live, and said she hoped the Nobel was a “recognition of how difficult it is to be a journalist today.”

Ressa, 58, was born in the Philippines and has worked for various news shows and outlets including *60 Minutes*, CNN, and ABS-CBN, and has received many awards for her work. Her Nobel Prize drew cheers from journalists around the world, but it’s unclear whether it will change working conditions for those in the Philippines. There have been 89 media-related murders in that nation since 1992, including 32 killed in a massacre in 2009. “We hope that Ressa’s win drives international attention to the plight of the Philippines’ local media workers, and sends a signal that a free, unstifled and critical press is necessary for a healthy democracy,” said a statement from the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines.

In an essay for the January 2020 issue of PAW, Ressa asked readers: “What would you sacrifice for the truth?”

“It’s a question all of us have to answer,” she wrote, “because as the Philippines has proven, democracy crumbles fast. In our case, it took less than six months from the time the attacks against Rappler began on social media in 2016 to the severe erosion of our national values and the collapse of the independence of our institutions.” (Read more at [bit.ly/ressa-essay](http://bit.ly/ressa-essay).)

“Free, independent, and fact-based journalism serves to protect against abuse of power, lies, and war propaganda. The Norwegian Nobel Committee is convinced that freedom of expression and freedom of information help to ensure an informed public. These rights are crucial prerequisites for democracy and protect against war and conflict,” the committee said. “The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov is intended to underscore the importance of protecting and defending these fundamental rights.” ♦ By C.S.







Q&A: RODNEY PRIESTLEY

## From Lab to Market

### Princeton to lead regional innovation hub

**C**hemical and biological engineering professor Rodney Priestley began his work as the University's first vice dean for innovation in February 2020, and when COVID disrupted that semester, he had plenty to keep him busy, including a proposal for Princeton to take a key role in the National Science Foundation Innovation Corps (I-Corps), which aims to bring discoveries from federally funded research into the marketplace. That work bore fruit in August 2021 when Princeton was selected to lead one of five regional I-Corps hubs. Priestley spoke with PAW about the program.

#### **Why was Princeton interested in leading an I-Corps hub, and what made the University a good candidate?**

I think Princeton has, rightfully so, a world-class reputation for basic, foundational, and translational research, and the next step, one may argue, is helping to translate that work into benefits for society. The fastest way to do that is through the creation of new ventures. We receive quite a bit of government funding for our research,

whether it's from the National Science Foundation or other entities, and so participating in I-Corps just made a lot of sense for us.

#### **What are the strengths of the Northeast region, in terms of university partners and potential industry partners?**

The institutions that we have in our hub are leaders in conducting research that has the potential to improve everyday lives — including Princeton, Rutgers University, the University of Delaware, and the rest of our affiliates. That, combined with the fact that three of the hub institutions were already strong participants in I-Corps, gave us a solid foundation for how we would put together our hub and how we would operate it.

The Northeast region is a stronghold for companies in the life sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, fintech, and the energy sector. We felt that the presence of those industries, combined with the support from regional and state governments for innovation and entrepreneurship, allowed us to put together a really strong argument for centering the I-Corps hub at Princeton.

And I'd endeavor to say that for Princeton in particular, the pieces are really starting to come together. For us, it just felt like the time was right to be more involved in this space.

#### **Among the primary aims for the I-Corps hubs is to provide opportunities to diverse communities of innovators. How does that resonate with your work?**

It's a huge component of the work that we're already doing in the Office of the Dean for Research. We've announced a slate of new programs to support more inclusive research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. (Read more at [bit.ly/dean-for-research](https://bit.ly/dean-for-research).)

In terms of the hub in particular, I am pleased that we are one of the two hubs that have an HBCU as an affiliate member, Delaware State University. We have identified what we believe to be several unique components for how we will partner with Delaware State University to effectively become a catalyst for further engagement of HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions. I think diversity comes through in the leadership of the team as well as the makeup of the hub's instructional and mentorship teams. We are leading by example.

#### **You split your time between the innovation vice dean's role and your other job as a professor. Has your administrative work influenced the way you view the research in your lab?**

There is certainly overlap and connection. My research group, like many on campus, is rooted in basic questions that have potential implications in various technologies. And when we see an opportunity to translate our discoveries into technologies for wider use, we try to participate in the entire pipeline. I view this as a natural extension of my research. I wake up every morning thinking about research and innovation in my own group, and then think about how I can help the campus research, innovation, and entrepreneurship community grow. ♦

*Interview conducted and condensed by B.T.*



**READ MORE** in a longer version of this interview at [paw.princeton.edu](https://paw.princeton.edu)



## ENGAGEMENT AND FUNDRAISING

## Princeton Looks Forward, Launching New Campaign to Fund Key Initiatives

The University has launched Venture Forward, a campaign to build community and alumni engagement, seek support for Princeton's strategic initiatives, and share its "defining principles and their impact on the world," according to an Oct. 1 announcement.

"The Venture Forward campaign puts Princeton's values into action," President Eisgruber '83 said in the announcement. "It aims to engage our alumni and friends, encourage a spirit of service to the University and to humanity, and help us expand the frontiers of knowledge."

The campaign's fundraising priorities align with areas highlighted in Princeton's most recent strategic plan, including college access



**The campaign "aims to engage our alumni and friends, encourage a spirit of service to the University and to humanity, and help us expand the frontiers of knowledge."**

— President Eisgruber '83

and affordability, financial aid, data science, bioengineering, the environment, American studies, and other areas of the liberal arts. Venture Forward's website, [alumni.princeton.edu/venture](http://alumni.princeton.edu/venture), hosts a video entitled "Dare to Venture," and invites alumni to participate in online events and volunteer activities, from interviewing prospective students to supporting student and alumni entrepreneurs. On Oct. 22 — the 275th anniversary of Princeton's charter — the Alumni Council celebrated Orange and Black Day, "a new digital tradition for Princetonians to show their Tiger pride on social media."

Three alumni co-chairs will lead the campaign's steering committee: Katherine Brittain Bradley '86, Blair Effron '84, and James Yeh '87.

Venture Forward is Princeton's fifth major campaign, and each has been led by a different University president. The most recent campaign, Aspire (2007-12), led by Shirley M. Tilghman, raised \$1.88 billion, surpassing its \$1.75 billion

goal and yielding major additions in the creative and performing arts, neuroscience, sustainability, and engineering.

Princeton would not release the fundraising target for the current campaign. "We are not announcing a specific financial goal for Venture Forward," University spokesman Michael Hotchkiss said in a statement to PAW. "Rather, this campaign is mission-driven," he continued, listing the three primary goals of engagement, philanthropic support, and sharing Princeton's vision for the future.

The campaign's quiet phase began in 2015, Hotchkiss said, and previously announced major gifts include funding for a new home for computer science in a renovated and expanded Guyot Hall, which will be renamed for donors Wendy and Eric Schmidt '76; the lead gift for Hobson College, on the site of First College (the former Wilson College), from Melody Hobson '91 and the Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation; and a gift to support environmental research and educational initiatives, made by the High Meadows Foundation, a philanthropic organization co-founded by Judy and Carl Ferenbach III '64. The amounts of the gifts were not announced. ♦ By B.T.



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Elaine Showalter and  
PAW's Mark F. Bernstein '83

PAW GOES TO THE MOVIES, NETFLIX EDITION

## Lessons from *The Chair*

Elaine Showalter sees familiar themes in a fictional world of academe

**A**fter an extended absence, PAW Goes to the Movies returns, though in a slightly different form in the age of COVID: With many movie theaters still closed or operating at reduced capacity, we turned to streaming video.

The popular Netflix series *The Chair* follows Professor Ji-Yoon Kim (played by Sandra Oh) as she becomes the first woman to chair the English department at fictional Pembroke University ("one of the lesser Ivies" in the words of actor David Duchovny '82, who has a cameo appearance playing himself). Across six episodes, Professor Kim tries to juggle departmental politics, declining enrollment, a politically volatile campus, and her role as the mother of an adopted child.

Who better to review the show than Elaine Showalter, who taught at Princeton from 1984 to 2003 and was the first woman to chair the English

department? Showalter, now retired and living in Washington, D.C., watched the series' final episode with PAW senior writer Mark F. Bernstein '83 and then discussed a dramatized academic world that is very different from the one she knew, yet strangely familiar.

### What did you think of the show?

I loved the idea of having a woman chair and having her be a woman of color. Sandra Oh gave a terrific performance. The whole cast did.

The show was conceived by a screenwriter with a Ph.D. in English and financed by the two guys who produced [the hit HBO series] *Game of Thrones*, and when I watched the show, it seemed like it could have been titled *Game of Chairs*. But unlike *Game of Thrones*, nobody wants to fight to be the chair. It's a middle-management job. You have no real power, although you're perceived as

having a lot of power, and it's stressful, even for the best people.

### What makes a good chair?

The people I have admired as department chairs were open to new ideas. You're there to support the people in the department, and people do that in many different ways.

In my experience, and I think this was represented in the show, being departmental chair is akin to parenting. Many people experience a department as a kind of family, and they are used to seeing the male chair as a father figure. Now, a father figure attracts a lot of anger but also respect. A woman in that role is different. The mother figure is a love-hate figure for both sons and daughters whether in mythology or Freudian psychology. Ji-Yoon always has the support of all the women in the department. In reality, you cannot count on that.

### As a teacher, what did you think of the show?

The faculty members in the show aren't exactly caricatures, but they are simplified. For example, the Bill Dobson character [played by Jay Duplass] was sort of a '60s throwback. I once taught

with someone like him, but he's too wild, too irresponsible to get tenure now. Still, it's television. The show did not get to be No. 1 on Netflix because English professors were watching it. It had to play to a wide audience.

Some of the classroom scenes, though, really connected. In one of the last scenes, Ji-Yoon reads aloud Emily Dickinson's poem "Hope is the thing with feathers." First, she read the poem beautifully, but she also asked her class what that line means. That was exactly the sort of question one might ask a class. A student also mentions Dickinson's use of hyphens, and Ji-Yoon suggests that they represent something she's not ready to say. I thought that was a helpful way to open discussion.

**During the disciplinary-hearing scene, Ji-Yoon says, "The world is burning and we're talking about the endowment." You didn't like that. Why?**

It's a great line, but it ends the wrong way. The real issue for students is that the world is burning and we're talking about Emily Dickinson. The world is burning and we're still saying that it's important to study novels and poems. There is a tremendous push now against the humanities. Students are under increasing pressure to study something that will get them a job, so how do you respond to that?

**How do you respond to that?**

Reading great literature, reading in general, is always relevant and meaningful, but you don't have to be an English major to read, or an English professor to celebrate the joys of literature. But choosing to major in English, in the context of the current attacks on the humanities as impractical, does need to be championed.

I believe an English major in 2021, certainly at Princeton, is exceptionally flexible and capacious, open to a huge variety of individual interests. It prepares students for many traditional professions, such as teaching or law, but also for new careers, including showrunning and speechwriting, which didn't even exist when I was a department chair. ♦ *Interview conducted and condensed by M.F.B.*

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

### Report Outlines Anti-Racism Efforts

Princeton published its first University-wide report on diversity, equity, and inclusion in mid-October, just over a year after President Eisgruber '83 made his call to address systemic racism on campus and beyond.

The 39-page report highlights dozens of initiatives in three areas: climate, inclusion, and equity, which includes new principles for naming, renaming, and iconography; the academic experience, spanning faculty diversity goals and programs to build a more inclusive pipeline of future professors; and access and outreach, featuring the new Emma Bloomberg Center for Access and Opportunity, established last spring to support students from first-generation, lower-income and underrepresented backgrounds. The report (online at [inclusive.princeton.edu](https://inclusive.princeton.edu)) also includes demographic data and results from campus climate surveys of recent graduates, faculty, and staff.

"It is a progress report," Michele Minter, the vice provost for institutional equity and diversity, told PAW. "There are some things in it that we're proud to be able to celebrate. There is a lot more work to be done. So we hope that the tone expresses that this is just one more step on a journey that we are committed to permanently."

**"If we are going to be at the cutting edge, ... we need to prepare our students to deal with the reality of the situation that exists in our society."**

— SPIA Dean Amaney Jamal

Last year, 16 University departments or programs added diversity, equity, and inclusion committees, raising the campus total to more than 30. Shawn Maxam, the senior associate director for institutional diversity and inclusion in the provost's office, said these departmental committees bring together a broad range of stakeholders and cater to

the needs of each academic discipline. "We're not going to succeed in this space without the active participation of academic departments," Maxam said. "They're critical to fulfilling our aspirations."

Minter said the past year also has been a promising one in faculty hiring. The University has set a goal to increase the number of underrepresented tenured and tenure-track faculty members by 50 percent within five years. According to the report, 4 percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty identified as Black or African American and 4 percent identified as Hispanic or Latino/a in 2019-20, compared with 3 percent in each category a decade earlier.

At the School of Public and International Affairs, a faculty review of the curriculum, in response to student concerns, has led to updates to the syllabi of core graduate courses and the creation of a new required course on race, power, and inequality, taught in the three-week August program for first-year MPA candidates. Amaney Jamal, the new SPIA dean, said that student evaluations for the new course were encouraging.

Studying power inequities and systemic racism is key for training future policymakers, Jamal said. "If we are going to be at the cutting edge, ... we need to prepare our students to deal with the reality of the situation that exists in our society," she said.

Educational outreach — from enhancing existing efforts such as the Prison Teaching Initiative and Princeton Online Tutoring Network to adding new ones, including a potential degree-granting program for adult learners — was listed near the top of Eisgruber's September 2020 announcement that outlined the University's priorities for combatting systemic racism. "There is a lot of work to do to develop the strategy, but I think it will be a major investment on the part of the University in a whole new strategic area," Minter said. Provost Deborah Prentice is leading the effort, and the University also plans to hire a vice president to oversee outreach programs, Minter said. ♦ *By B.T.*



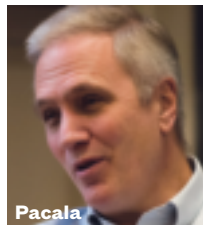
## IN SHORT

President Joe Biden appointed Princeton faculty members Andrea



Goldsmith

Goldsmith, the dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science, and Stephen Pacala, the Frederick D. Petrie Professor in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, to the **PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**.



Pacala

Two alumni, Caltech engineering professor John Dabiri '01 and UCLA mathematician Terence Tao '96, were among the president's new appointments, which were announced Sept. 22. Two of the

council's three co-chairs, biomedical engineer Frances Arnold '79 and geneticist Eric Lander '78, are alumni as well.

There was a **"SIGNIFICANT INCREASE" IN THE NUMBER OF A GRADES** awarded during the pandemic, according to a report of the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing. About 59 percent of all transcript grades were A's during the 2020-21 academic year. The report showed an increase of 0.042 points in the overall GPA from 2019-20 (3.520) to 2020-21 (3.562). The overall GPA has increased 0.172 points since the revised grading policy went into effect in 2015. The committee cited generous grading during the pandemic, including the optional P/D/F policy, for the raise and questioned whether it was helpful or encouraged "the race to attain a 4.0."

## IN MEMORIAM

**ALBERT RABOTEAU JR.**, a leading scholar of African American



religious history, died Sept. 18. He was 78. In three decades on the faculty, Raboteau taught religious history and African American

studies, mentoring generations of students and publishing several books. He also chaired the religion department, served as dean of the graduate school, and received the Howard T. Behrman Award, Princeton's highest award in the humanities, in 1998. In a University obituary, colleague Cornel West '80 called Raboteau "the godfather of Afro-American religious studies."

**PETER C. BUNNELL**, a professor and curator who left a lasting mark



on the study of photography, died Sept. 20. He was 83. After serving as a curator at the Museum of Modern Art, Bunnell joined the Princeton faculty in 1972 and

spent 40 years as the inaugural David Hunter McAlpin Professor of the History of Photography and Modern Art — the first endowed professorship in the field in the United States, according to a memorial from the Princeton University Art Museum, which he served as director (1973-78) and acting director (1998-2000).

**BYRON CAMPBELL**, an expert in behavioral and developmental psychology, died June 24 at age 94. He joined the Princeton faculty in 1956, was named the Eugene Higgins Professor



of Psychology in 1971, and transferred to emeritus status in 2002. Campbell's research ranged from infantile amnesia (the inability of human beings to retain memories from infancy) to age-related declines in learning and memory. His professional activities included serving as president of the International Society for Developmental Psychobiology. ♦



# PRINCETON BUILDS

2021 Guide to Alumni Architects



From top: David Kelly Crow; Isometric Studio; Faith Angle Forum 2015; courtesy Department of Art and Archaeology; courtesy Campbell family



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PARALYMPICS

# Pursuing Gold

**Blinded by an IED, doctoral candidate Brad Snyder made history in the triathlon**

**A**t the Paralympics in Tokyo this summer, Brad Snyder GS won a gold medal in the triathlon, becoming the first American man to do so either in the Paralympics or the Olympics.

Back in New Jersey just a few days later, he got a new seeing eye dog: Mr. T. The next day, he started his third semester at the School of Public and International Affairs, where he's working on a doctorate.

Sound like a whirlwind? Keep reading.

When Snyder was 8 and growing up on the Gulf Coast of Florida, he wanted to join the Navy, following in the footsteps of three of his four grandparents. In high school, he set his sights on the U.S. Naval Academy, where he competed in swimming all four years and ultimately captained the team his senior year. After graduation, he started competing recreationally in triathlons and really enjoyed it — he even convinced himself that he should start training for the Half-Ironman Nationals, so he bought a fancy new bike.

Then came his second deployment. Snyder had joined the Navy as an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) officer — “the bomb squad of the Navy,” he says. EOD officers have spent a lot of time in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa trying to mitigate the improvised explosive devices used by insurgents.

“Everything is covered in IEDs as far as I can see, and so my job was to kind of clear a path for us to get from point A to point B,” Snyder says. That’s what he was doing in Afghanistan on Sept. 7, 2011.

While another EOD officer led the patrol, Snyder saw a giant blast up ahead: Two Afghan commandos in the mission had stepped off the cleared route and onto a 40-pound IED. Snyder cleared a path with his metal detector for the medics to get through, and he helped deliver the first casualty to a site 100 feet away where a helicopter could land.

On his way back to help the second casualty, Snyder stepped on another IED,

presumably about the same size.

“I was convinced more than anything I’ve been convinced of in the past that I was dead and I was moving on,” Snyder says. “I reflected on my entire life, on all the things that I had done — good and bad, stupid or smart, whatever it was — and I thought, ‘I think I’ve lived a pretty good life, and I’m proud of the life that I’ve lived, and I’m sad that it won’t continue on, but I’m ready for whatever happens now.’”

**“Every day, every moment, everything after this was something that I might not have had, and nobody could feel that more potently than me.”**

— Brad Snyder GS

But he didn’t die. “It’s an incredible experience to go up to that brink and come back,” he says. The IED detonated about 2 feet in front of Snyder instead of underneath him. That distance saved his life, but the blast glanced his face and left both of his eyes irreparably damaged.

His younger sister, Elyse, remembers sitting with their mother in his hospital room as visitors came through, distressed. Snyder remained calm, she says, treating each visit as a joyous moment. “One thing that he’s





really good about is his perspective — there's always a way to flip a negative to a positive."

Snyder remembers family and friends were upset by his loss of vision, without appreciating that he had gained back his life. "Every day, every moment, everything after this was something that I might not have had, and nobody could feel that more potently than me."

Then he met a man who almost seemed excited about Snyder's blindness. A representative from the U.S. Association of Blind Athletes kept saying, "Do you realize how lucky you are to be injured in a Paralympic year?" Snyder remembers. "He was like, 'If you go anywhere close to the times you did as an able-bodied swimmer, you'll crush the Paralympics!'"

Snyder hesitated, but the representative was persistent. Elyse remembers that her brother's scars were still purple and pink the first time he got back in the pool. He swam with a scuba mask covering his whole face, and the pool was lined with foam noodles so he wouldn't crash into the walls. "Watching him swim again just made so much sense," she says.

He competed in the London Paralympics less than a year after his injury, winning two gold medals and a silver. In Rio four years later, he won three golds and a silver, and he broke a 30-year-old world record in the 100-meter freestyle. It was an incredible experience, but he wasn't sure he wanted to

keep swimming.

"This whole endeavor is not about a gold medal," he says. "It's not about winning, it's about competing. It's about putting yourself out there ... setting a goal that's beyond what your current capability is and then holding yourself to it and putting in the time and trying to develop to a point where you can do something beyond what you thought you were capable of."

"That's what I'm trying to inspire people to do."

So Snyder set a new challenge and in



Brad Snyder and guide Greg Billington exit the swim stage at the Paralympic triathlon in Tokyo.

2018 turned back to his triathlon dreams. Shortly after, he met his future wife, Sara, who's athletic herself. They trained together, and Snyder credits her for keeping him going on the hardest days.

He planned to return from Tokyo in 2020 to begin classes at Princeton, where his principal interest is civil-military relations. A few years earlier, Snyder had taught part time at the Naval Academy, an experience that inspired him to pursue a doctorate to perhaps return as a professor of leadership and ethics one day. But then the pandemic delayed the Paralympics. That meant he'd have to keep training while working on his Ph.D.

"I knew it was going to be incredibly difficult, if not impossible, for me to even make the Tokyo team," he says. He told himself he'd be OK if it didn't happen, then went out and trained hard.

**"It's not about winning, it's about competing. It's about putting yourself out there ... setting a goal that's beyond what your current capability is and then holding yourself to it and putting in the time and trying to develop to a point where you can do something beyond what you thought you were capable of."**

— Brad Snyder GS

Right after the school year ended, Snyder won a triathlon for the first time and made the team. It lit a fire under him. He spent the summer training in Hawaii with his guide, Greg Billington, a member of the 2016 U.S. Olympic triathlon team.

"I liked the energy with which he attacks triathlon," Billington says. "He's a fun guy to be around: not only very competitive and athletic, but also just fun to know as a person."

The pair completed the Paralympic triathlon — 750 meters of freestyle swimming with a tether between them, 20 kilometers of tandem cycling, and 5 kilometers of running with a tether — in 1 hour, 1 minute, and 16 seconds.

"When he crossed the finish line and he held the tape up really aggressively, I knew it wasn't just because he was winning," Sara says. They hadn't told anyone yet, but she had just reached the 12-week mark in her pregnancy with their first child. "In my head, the monologue in Brad's head was: 'I just won and I'm going to be a dad!' That was a big drive for him as he was racing and then winning gold."

While Snyder thought he might retire after Tokyo, he had second thoughts while on the podium.

"I've been working so hard to set a positive example for people I don't know. Why would I stop if I want to set a good example for my kid?" Snyder says. And he's up for another challenge. ♦ By Anna Mazarakis '16





Adjii Bousso Dieng started her new position in September.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

# Impactful Intelligence

## Professor Adjii Bousso Dieng is out to change the world through computer science

**T**his fall, Assistant Professor Adjii Bousso Dieng became the first Black female faculty member in the engineering school's 100-year history, and the first Black faculty member in the computer science department. She has spent the past few months settling into the University community, teaching a course on foundations of probabilistic modeling, and doing research in artificial intelligence.

For Dieng — and the students and colleagues celebrating her appointment — becoming an educator is at once an achievement and a sign of how much more progress is needed. Her parents never got the opportunity to complete school, and since leaving her hometown of Kaolack, Senegal, in 2006, she has

never been taught by a Black lecturer. These experiences have instilled in her a sense of purpose that informs her research interests. “I’m looking to expand my work into science and health care, because you can do a lot with that,” she says. “I want to make a meaningful impact in Africa and also do things that could help make the world better.”

Dieng works in machine learning, a subset of artificial intelligence that

**“I want to make a meaningful impact in Africa and also do things that could help make the world better.”**

— Adjii Bousso Dieng

seeks to derive knowledge and make decisions and predictions from the vast amounts of data generated by people and processes. Specifically, Dieng works on probabilistic modeling with unlabeled data, incorporating uncertainty into automated decision-making systems. This provides a measure of how “sure” a decision is, which in turn makes it easier to understand why a decision was made, permitting greater confidence in the predictions generated.

After winning a competitive STEM exam in high school, Dieng was awarded a scholarship to study at Télécom ParisTech in Palaiseau, France, where she earned a degree in engineering alongside a master’s in statistics from Cornell through a dual-degree program. She spent a year working for the World Bank before deciding to pursue a Ph.D. in statistics at Columbia University, largely because she felt it would enable her to do more impactful work. Her dissertation won the prestigious Savage Award, making her the first Black woman to receive the award since it was created in 1977. Following her 2020 graduation, she began a research fellowship at Google, and later that year, she was hired by Princeton.

Throughout her years in France and the U.S., Dieng has found herself constantly encountering negative stereotypes and misconceptions about Africa and Senegal in the media and in discourse — and she has been trying to clear them up. “You never see positive stories,” she says.

To provide another perspective, Dieng founded a nonprofit called The Africa I Know, to highlight Africans succeeding in STEM fields and to share the writings of African historians. Dieng was strongly influenced by her interactions with a similarly inspiring figure: Cheick Modibo Diarra, the first African to work at NASA as an astrophysicist. “We tell stories from our own perspective with the goal of inspiring young Africans, and in the process, educating the general public,” Dieng says. The organization has also launched the TAIK Education Fund to enable children from impoverished areas to attend school. “I believe every kid deserves education,” she says. ♦ By *Eveline Chao ’02*

Q&amp;A: KEITH WAILOO

## A Historian's View of COVID-19

From the Black Death to the emergence of HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, pandemics have menaced human civilization for centuries. Keith Wailoo, the Henry Putnam University Professor of History and Public Affairs, has written widely about intersections among health policy, politics, and race. PAW spoke with Wailoo about how pandemics can change societies and what future historians might find when they revisit the COVID-19 era.

### What long-term changes might we expect to see as a result of COVID-19?

Pandemics can transform social behavior. Tuberculosis prompted aggressive public-health campaigns to stop spitting. HIV/AIDS brought the previously taboo topic of “safe sex” into mainstream conversation. With COVID-19, I suspect that mask-wearing and social distancing will persist as long as there is still a fear of contagion.



Keith Wailoo

Pandemics can also reshape entire economic systems. The plague in 14th-century Europe caused massive depopulation, which made feudalism less viable and laid the foundations for capitalism. With COVID-19, we've seen the rise of the “Zoom economy.” Without question, remote work and communication will persist, and may even become the new norm.

### What do you think future historians will be drawn to when they look back on the current pandemic?

I've been tracing the history of the vaccine, from the initial hope that it would be possible, to the different emergency approvals of vaccines, the

discussions of their relative efficacy, the question of whether the United States would share this resource with the world, and so on. Although Americans are used to criticizing the government, there's now an acknowledgment of the vital role of federal and state governments in coordinating the response to this pandemic. In my lifetime, I've never before seen a phenomenon where there's a vital resource, a vaccine, that is developed through the private sector with government support, and the government has then committed massive amounts of resources to make sure that every single person in the country has access to that vaccine.

Over time, I think that looking at the development of the vaccine will become a lens through which we can understand how COVID-19 has changed society. ♦ Interview conducted and condensed by Joanna Wendel '09



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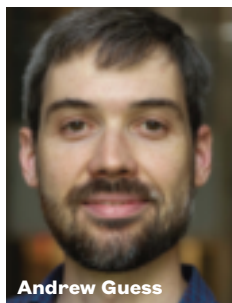
# Social Media Meets Politics

**Andrew Guess studies how we interact with new media platforms**

**A** few years ago, Andrew M. Guess' academic specialty suddenly got a lot more salient.

Guess, now an assistant professor in the Department of Politics and the School of Public and International Affairs, began studying the intersection of politics, journalism, and social media more than a decade ago. What was once a low-profile academic subspecialty got a lot of new attention during the 2016 presidential campaign, with the growing realization that Facebook, Twitter, and other social-media platforms had turbocharged Donald Trump's rise to the presidency. "After 2016, it didn't really require convincing people anymore that these were important topics to study," Guess says.

His findings might surprise some. His research suggests that the notion of social-media "bubbles" — self-reinforcing diets of ideological information — are real, but more limited than media coverage would suggest. Guess estimates that perhaps 10 percent of social-media users



Andrew Guess

belong to these ideologically isolated bubbles, while the other 90 percent are either consuming a "healthier" diet of credible media coverage or aren't paying much attention to politics at all.

"Not to say those 10 percent don't matter — quite the opposite," Guess says. But what he's found is nuanced. "From the perspective of an online publisher, if you're getting a ton of engagement, there's an incentive to produce more of that content, but you can't tell if all of that engagement is coming from a large swath of the population or if it's a smaller group of people who are really into this content and who are repeatedly going back to the same items," Guess says. "I suspect it's the latter."

Guess is also skeptical that dubious online content helped sway the 2016 election or other elections. "Not to say this has been definitively disproven, but there's not a lot of strong evidence for it," he says. While it's possible, he says, the effects are likely limited. "People who are already committed to certain candidates or parties are not the ones you expect to be persuadable."

Doing research in Guess' field has its challenges. Details on user data and the platforms' algorithms aren't always available, since the platforms are private entities. (Guess' research methods include collecting online data and recruiting volunteers to participate in experiments.) It can also be tricky to separate the effects of social media from that of the more partisan corners of traditional media, such as cable networks, which fall beyond Guess' purview. And it's hard for researchers like Guess to know whether media users' behavioral patterns are changing faster than they can be studied. "We're aiming at a moving target," he says. "That keeps me up at night."

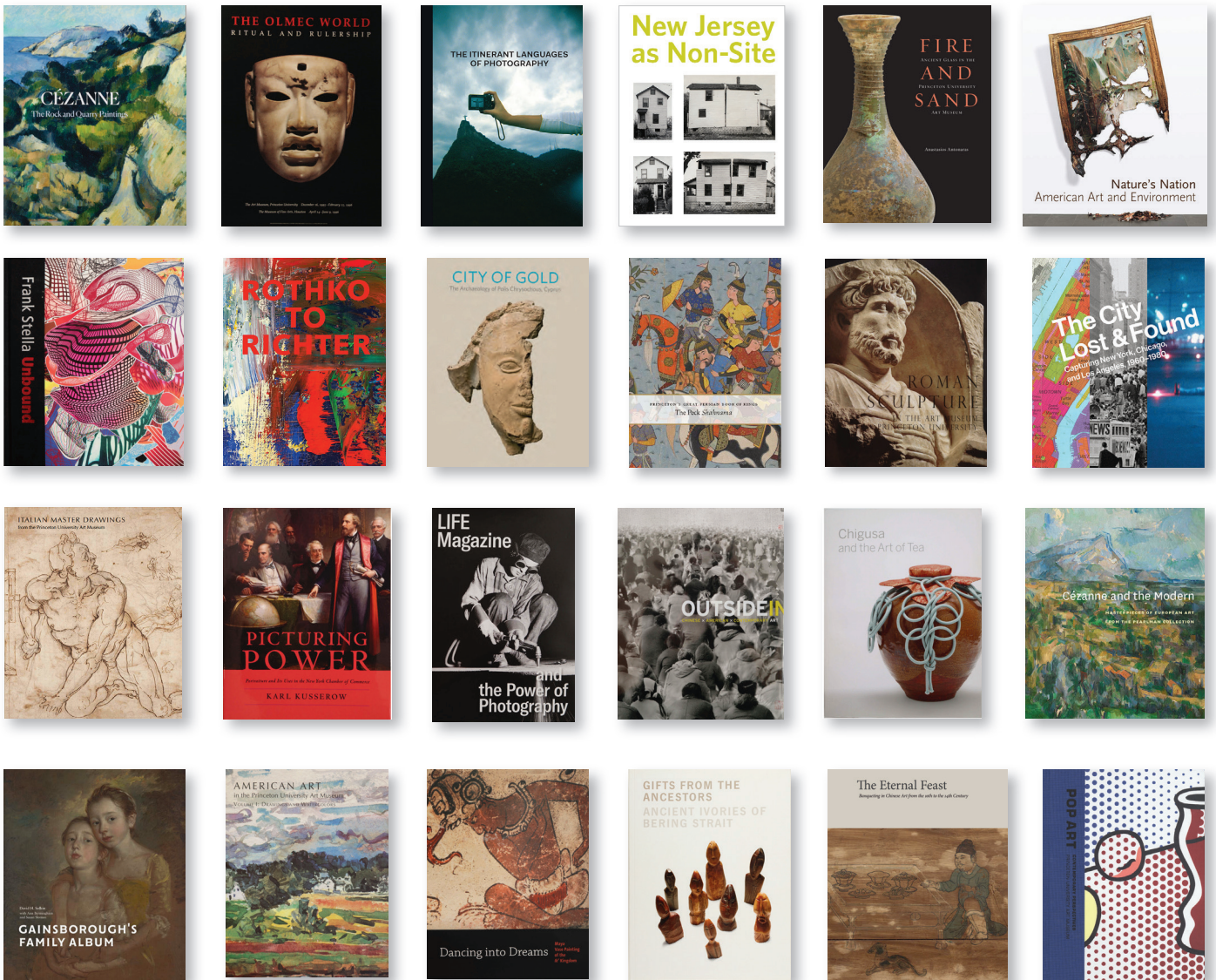
Growing up in Potomac, Maryland, Guess was always interested in computers and journalism. After earning a bachelor's degree in information science from Cornell, he worked as a journalist for the education news website Inside Higher Ed. He then earned his master's and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia and did postdoctoral work at New York University. He's been teaching at Princeton since 2017.

Guess offers a few tips for maintaining a balanced media diet. Rather than just reading the news on social media platforms, he urges regular visits to the home pages of credible news sources, because they offer a wider cross-section of the articles being published that day. He also suggests subscribing to daily newsletters from trusted media outlets. Other good habits include cross-checking dubious-sounding claims with mainstream media outlets and fact-checking sites, and reading through articles rather than just glancing at the headlines.

Guess does have one guilty media pleasure. "I'm a complete Twitter addict," he says. "It's not healthy, and I try to stay aware of that fact." ♦ *By Louis Jacobson '92*







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# LOOKING BACK AT A FOREVER WAR

*Alumni speak out on their experiences in Afghanistan*

**F**our years ago, **Mykola Petrenko '13** was in northern Afghanistan helping Afghan commandos hunt down Taliban leaders. As an Army intelligence officer, Petrenko sifted through data to identify the locations of key insurgents so they could be captured by Afghan soldiers or killed by drone strikes. Fifteen years had passed since 9/11 — Petrenko was 9 years old on the day of the attacks — and the United States still hadn't quashed the insurgency.

According to America's prevailing narrative, the Afghan people hated the Taliban, the repressive Islamist political movement that took control of the country in the 1990s. Many Afghans were indeed jubilant to have been liberated back in 2001, and policymakers assumed the Afghan population largely supported the new U.S.-backed government.

But what Petrenko saw on the ground suggested that narrative was no longer clear-cut. One day, several thousand Afghans gathered nearby for the funeral of a Taliban leader.

"We'd been looking for this dude for years," Petrenko says. "Clearly everybody knew where he was. They just didn't want to tell the Americans."

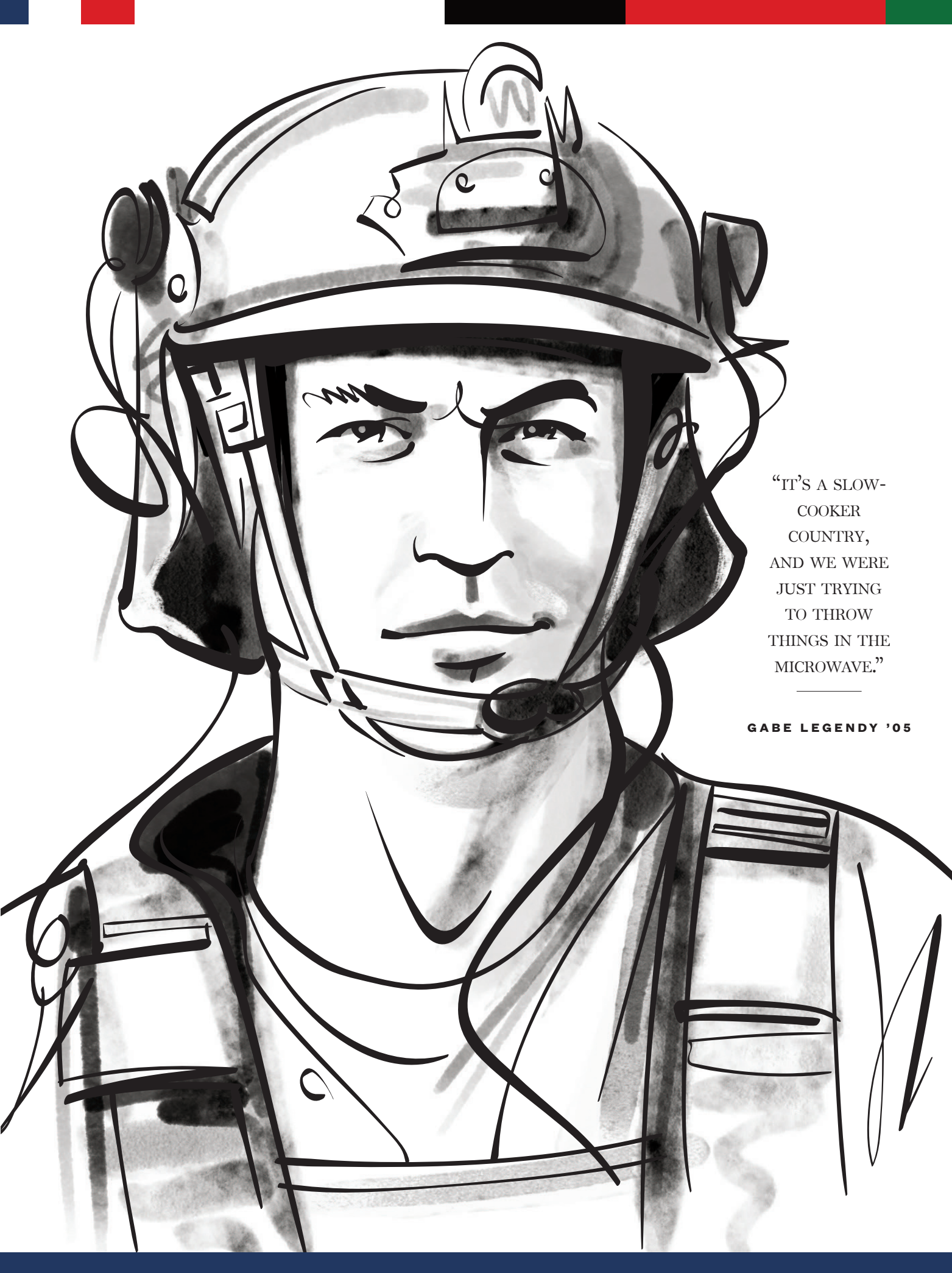
The U.S. had long touted the strength of the Afghan military, a critical prerequisite to a U.S. and NATO exit. But Petrenko wasn't so sure. The Afghan commandos he worked with were "the best-trained Afghan units," Petrenko says, before pausing to correct himself: "At least, quote, 'best trained.'" He says he would take a platoon of regular American soldiers over these elite forces "in a heartbeat."

Petrenko recorded his prognosis in a journal entry dated March 2, 2017:

*"This evening we had a long conversation with [the team warrant officer] about the state of affairs in Afghanistan ... I was surprised to hear the concession that Afghanistan was never going to be won. Ultimately, as soon as the U.S. leaves ..., we all acknowledged that this country was going to descend into chaos [and] the Taliban would take over."*

That's precisely what happened this summer.





“IT’S A SLOW-  
COOKER  
COUNTRY,  
AND WE WERE  
JUST TRYING  
TO THROW  
THINGS IN THE  
MICROWAVE.”

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GABE LEGENDY '05



The United States invested 20 years in Afghanistan. Over \$2 trillion was spent on the war and reconstruction. More than 2,300 U.S. troops were killed — with thousands more severely injured or committing suicide once they returned home.

In April, President Joe Biden announced he would stand by an agreement the Trump administration had made with the Taliban to leave this year. In July, the U.S. pulled out of Bagram Airfield, long the centerpiece of American military operations. Both the Afghan forces and the Taliban read that as a pivotal sign. With little opposition, the Taliban started toppling provinces and eventually sailed into the capital Aug. 15. Two weeks



**MYKOLA PETRENKO '13**

“ULTIMATELY, AS SOON AS THE U.S. LEAVES . . . , WE ALL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS COUNTRY WAS GOING TO DESCEND INTO CHAOS [AND] THE TALIBAN WOULD TAKE OVER.”

later, after the tumultuous evacuation at Kabul’s airport, a C-17 transport plane carried out the last U.S. troops. After 20 years, the U.S. war was over. The Taliban were back in charge.

The *Princeton Alumni Weekly* reached out to nearly 20

alumni who’d worked or served in Afghanistan in different capacities over the last two decades — not generals or policymakers, but people who experienced the war as soldiers, diplomats, or researchers. Not one was surprised by the collapse of the government. All had observed deep flaws in their part of the enterprise. Most wondered how it had been allowed to continue for so long.

The chaos of the evacuation underscored for many a belief that the U.S. leadership was never able to get its arms around Afghanistan. Few thought there was any point in staying. Still, the total loss of the country was a bitter pill for many. One alumnus, who spoke anonymously because he is still on active duty and didn’t have permission to speak to the media, says he worries about a new wave of suicides among veterans. “We’re asked to carry out some very violent acts on behalf of our country,” he says. A soldier can come to terms with that if they believe there’s a larger purpose at work. “And now their purpose is gone.”

★ ★ ★

**Robert Finn \*78** was tapped in the winter of 2001 to be the first U.S. ambassador in Kabul since the Soviet invasion more than two decades earlier. He was teaching at Princeton, on sabbatical from the State Department, when he got the call. “I had a reputation as someone who’d do well in those kinds of conditions,” he says. He had opened the first embassy in Azerbaijan after the collapse of the Soviet Union and had weathered violent protests outside the embassy in Pakistan.

Finn arrived in Kabul on St. Patrick’s Day in 2002 and moved into the old U.S. embassy building along with several hundred staffers. By then, Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida and the Taliban had fled to safe zones in Pakistan. Finn had everything he needed except one: “I didn’t have marching orders.”

The Bush administration understood the entire country would have to be rebuilt from scratch. After years of civil war, there was little in the way of a functioning government, military, police, courts, education system, or economy. Washington wanted to get Afghanistan stable enough so it would never again serve as a launching pad for terrorism. In April 2002, President George W. Bush declared that a Marshall Plan-style effort would be needed. Behind the scenes, however, Finn saw little interest in doing the actual work.

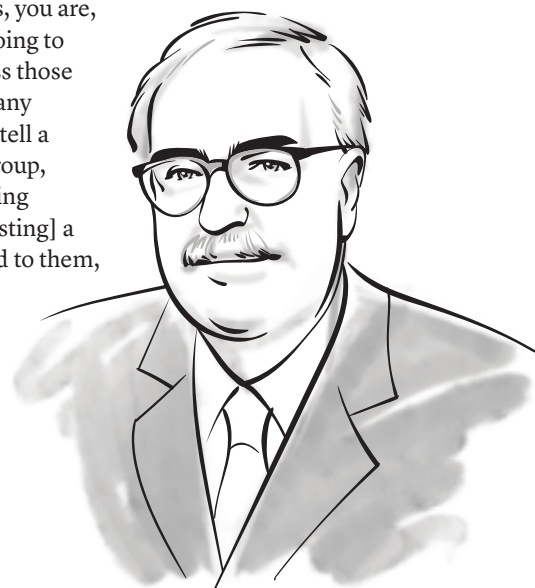
“Washington was always saying, ‘We’re not doing nation-building,’” Finn says. His own experience told him otherwise. “I said to myself, ‘Yes, you are, because you’re not going to be able to leave unless those things are there.’” Many years later, he would tell a Pentagon research group, “Everybody was talking about [the mission lasting] a year or two, and I said to them, we would be lucky if we were out of here in 20 years.”

Meanwhile, Washington was starting to refocus its attention on Iraq, shifting military and diplomatic resources away from Afghanistan. “It was sort of like watching a tsunami forming in the distance,” Finn says. “I was hoping it wouldn’t happen.” Finn says there had been a period of calm in those first

few years when American efforts could have given the country a running start while the Afghan people were still optimistic. Instead, the U.S. decision to chase a new goal unintentionally sent a message that would have implications for years to come. “The Afghans learned they were not important,” Finn says, “that we were not going to be there for them.”

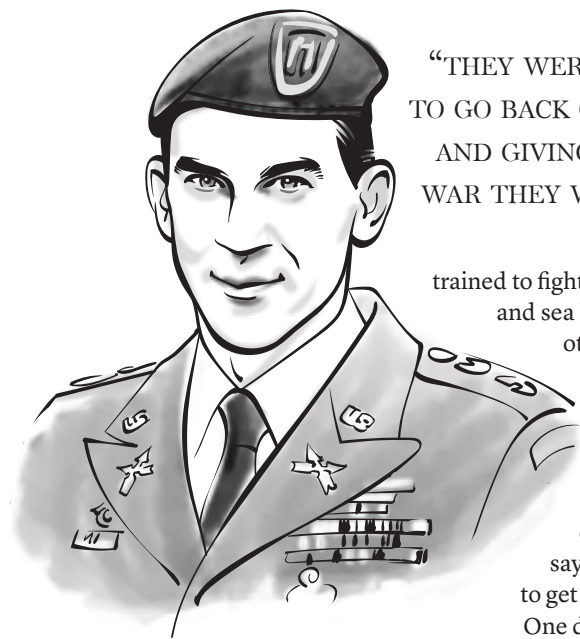
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**Liam Collins \*10** was one of the first Special Forces soldiers to drop into Afghanistan in the first weeks of the war. He teamed up with local militias to go after al-Qaida and the Taliban — a task especially suited to Green Berets, who are trained in irregular warfare. By 2002, conventional U.S. forces — those



**ROBERT FINN \*78**

“EVERYBODY WAS TALKING ABOUT [THE MISSION LASTING] A YEAR OR TWO, AND I SAID TO THEM, WE WOULD BE LUCKY IF WE WERE OUT OF HERE IN 20 YEARS.”



**LIAM COLLINS '10**

“THEY WERE TRAINING ALL THESE MAJORS TO GO BACK OUT TO THE OPERATIONAL FORCE AND GIVING THEM NO EDUCATION ON THE WAR THEY WOULD ACTUALLY BE FIGHTING.”

trained to fight high-tech land and sea battles against other nation-states — began arriving. “Everybody was afraid the war would be over,” Collins says. “They wanted to get into the fight.”

One day, an officer from a conventional brigade told Collins about a major operation in the works and showed him a list of potential targets they planned to raid. But when Collins looked at the imagery, he recognized one target as a school under construction. “You probably don’t want to hit that,” Collins told the man. Instead, he gave the officer a handful of leads he’d collected on suspected bomb-makers.

The next day, however, the officer told Collins the brigade was sticking to its original plan. It had taken the school off its list but wasn’t going to act on Collins’ leads. It was too late to make additional changes, he explained. Conventional army brigades needed long lead times to plan operations because they rely on processes designed for larger, traditional battles. They weren’t used to the nimbler operations required in insurgencies, Collins says, noting, “I was in shock.”

Throughout the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, “Big Army” remained oriented toward conventional warfare, rather than the irregular battles called for in these new conflicts, Collins says. In 2005, he rotated through a standard Army training program to prepare majors for the next stage of their careers. “There was nothing directed toward counterinsurgency,” Collins recalls. “They were training all these majors to go back out to the operational force and giving them no education on the war they would actually be fighting.”

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**Will Bardenwerper '98** was working on Wall Street when the Twin Towers fell. Inspired by the selflessness of New York police and firefighters, he quit his job, joined the Army, and was sent to Iraq’s Anbar Province. In 2010, after he completed his military commitment and was a civilian again, Bardenwerper joined the Pentagon’s Pakistan Afghanistan Coordination Cell in Washington, which served as the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s brain trust on the war.

By the time President Barack Obama arrived at the White House in 2009, Afghanistan was burning a hole on his desk. Far from being stable and terrorism-free, the country was in worse shape. The lack of concerted focus after 2002 had given the

senior officials in Kabul to the lowliest provincial policemen. Corruption was eroding Afghans’ faith in this new government, and without legitimacy, it could lose support to the insurgents.

Bardenwerper watched from his perch as these issues were presented to the National Security Council — the collection of Cabinet officials and top advisers who help the president set policy. “Nothing happened,” Bardenwerper says. “These larger strategic issues were just too hard and required too much political capital to really address.” So instead, he says, the focus of the civilian NSC staff stayed on tactical issues, such as how many troops should go back in.

Bardenwerper says few of the senior officials he worked with seemed willing to go to the mat over high-level strategy. “In the military culture, you’re trained from the moment you join not to ask questions,” he says. “If you’re given an order, you’re not supposed to ask why, and certainly not to say you can’t do it.”

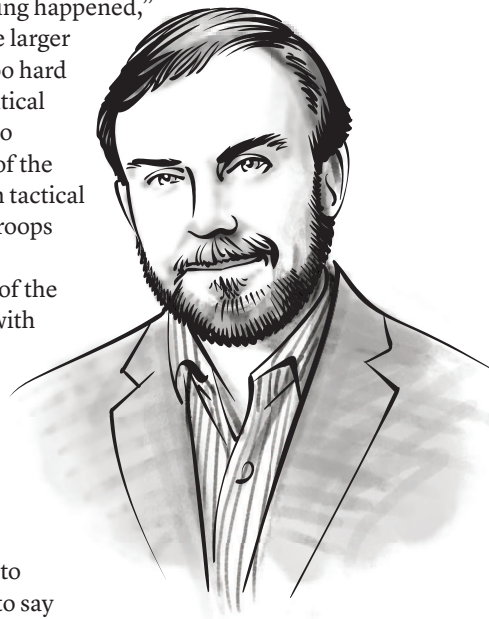
The problem, Bardenwerper says, is that mindset — invaluable in the heat of battle — persisted even while hashing out strategy. “If you have reason to believe [a policy] is not going to work, you should feel free to communicate that ..., as opposed to saying, ‘Yes, sir, we’ll make it happen’ — which is basically what happened for 10 or 15 years.”

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**Andrew Markoff '06** saw similar dysfunctions on the ground in 2014 as a Marine captain training Afghan units. “Reports that were sent up [the chain of command] that painted a negative picture ... were highly unwelcome — and were frequently edited,” he says. The pressure to deliver only positive news created a pernicious paradox for anyone willing to speak up. Their commanders would peg *them* as the problem, Markoff says, “because

Taliban in Pakistan time to regroup.

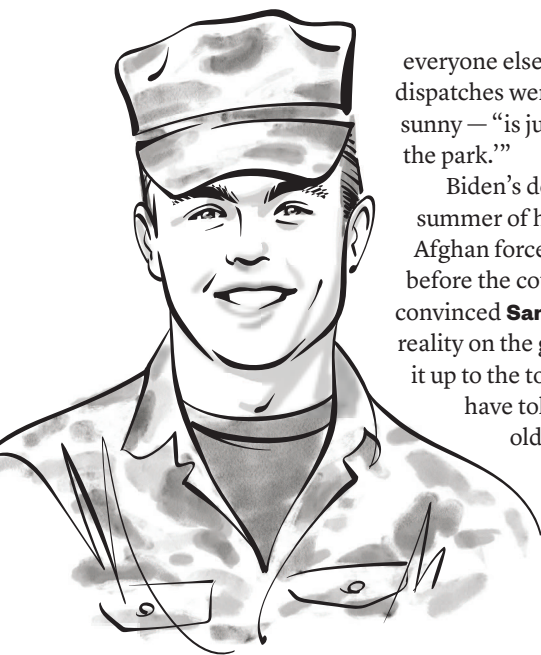
“There were two fundamental problems that had to be addressed,” Bardenwerper says: “these Pakistan sanctuaries and Afghan governmental corruption.” Fraud and theft pervaded all levels of government, from the most



**WILL BARDENWERPER '98**

“IF YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE [A POLICY] IS NOT GOING TO WORK, YOU SHOULD FEEL FREE TO COMMUNICATE THAT ..., AS OPPOSED TO SAYING, ‘YES, SIR, WE’LL MAKE IT HAPPEN’ — WHICH IS BASICALLY WHAT HAPPENED FOR 10 OR 15 YEARS.”





**SAM FENDLER '21**

“THEY WERE NEVER AN EFFECTIVE FIGHTING FORCE. SO WHEN I HEAR FOUR-STAR GENERALS, CONGRESSMEN, AND PRESIDENTS SAY THAT THE AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES CAN HOLD THEIR OWN, IT JUST BLOWS MY MIND.”

standing guard smoking marijuana and staring at their phones. Fendler’s unit repeatedly trained the Afghans on how to use tourniquets — critical in a war where roadside bombs routinely ripped off limbs. But one day, when Afghan soldiers were hit by such a device, Fendler watched in disbelief as a soldier returned to base with both legs shorn off — but not a single tourniquet. And as for the actual fight, he saw the Afghans avoiding doing the patrols they were supposed to be taking over from the Americans. “They were never an effective fighting force,” Fendler says. “So when I hear four-star generals, congressmen, and presidents say that the Afghan security forces can hold their own, it just blows my mind.”

**Gabe Legendy '05** landed in Afghanistan in 2013 as part of a Special Forces team that also had an advising mission. Continuity was an issue. Afghan officers had to live with the war for years on end, but U.S. deployments, and those of their NATO partners, were comparatively short — from a few months to a year. The ability to build trust and make an impact was inherently limited as the local units were handed off from one foreign team to another.

Legendy was paired with an

everyone else” — those whose dispatches were probably overly sunny — “is just ‘knocking it out of the park.’”

Biden’s declarations this summer of his confidence in the Afghan forces — just four weeks before the country toppled — convinced **Sam Fendler '21** that the reality on the ground never made it up to the top generals. “I could

have told you as a 19-year-old in 2012 that that

was ridiculous,”

he says. Fendler enlisted in the Marine Corps out of high school and came to Princeton as a transfer student

in 2019. He served in Helmand Province in 2012-13 when U.S. forces were moving into advising roles and turning the front-line fighting over to the Afghans.

Fendler says he witnessed a general lack of discipline and professionalism among the Afghan soldiers. He sometimes saw those

elite police unit whose commander NATO had been tracking for a decade. But when Legendy arrived, there was no file on the officer. “I don’t mean some fancy dossier kept at the CIA,” Legendy says. “There was no Word document given to me by the [adviser] before me.” All Legendy had was a point on a map. “I drove out there, knocked on the door, and said, ‘Hey, I’m your partner.’” Though they proceeded to work together, the Afghans remained skeptical of Legendy. “They’d heard a lot of bullshit, and they could smell mine, too,” he says. “They knew that, no matter my intention, I was not as good as my word.”

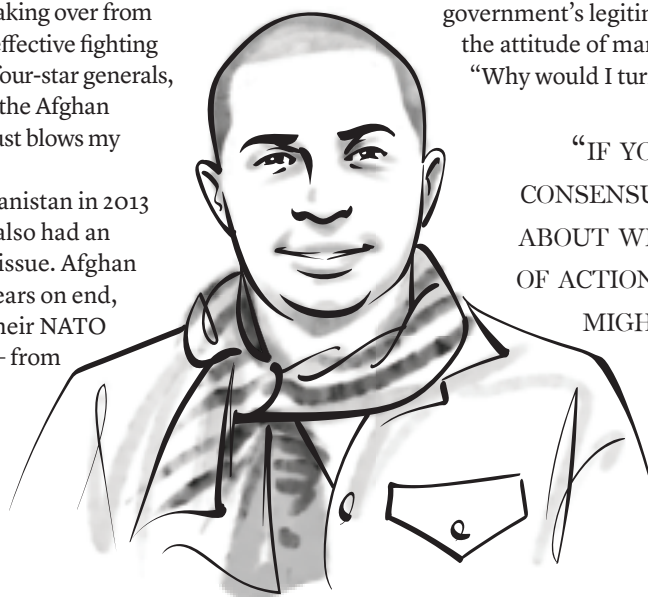
Legendy says U.S. officers felt enormous pressure to demonstrate progress. “Don’t ever report that nothing happened on a given day” was the order from above. At the same time, there wasn’t any clear sense of what they were supposed to be accomplishing. So leaders just reached for anything that could be characterized as a “win,” regardless of long-term impact. “It’s a slow-cooker country, and we were just trying to throw things in the microwave,” Legendy says.

At the end of deployments, he says, unit leaders wrote cherry-picked summaries of what their teams had done. “We just moved the goal posts and said, ‘Here’s what we accomplished, so that’s what we set out to do,’” Legendy says. Pushback from superiors was rare. “It rolls up and becomes their boss’s success,” he says. In the absence of a clear idea about what was supposed to be happening, it ended up mattering less *what* was accomplished and more that *something* had been accomplished. “I’m sure the [top commanders] had a roadmap,” Legendy says. “I just didn’t know what the heck it was.”

★ ★ ★

When President Bush gave his speech calling for a Marshall Plan approach in Afghanistan, he breezed past a critical difference between post-World War II Europe and the situation in Afghanistan: Germany had surrendered; the Taliban had not. In Europe, the U.S. could focus on reconstruction exclusively. In Afghanistan, it had to build a country while also fighting a war.

**Charlie Phelps '99** worked in Kabul in 2010 as a finance adviser to the Afghan government and then from 2011-12 as a top Treasury official at the U.S. embassy. He had corruption in his sights because of its corrosive effect on the government’s legitimacy. Over time, Phelps says, the attitude of many Afghans had become: “Why would I turn to my government [for



“IF YOU HAVE TO REACH CONSENSUS [AMONG AGENCIES] ABOUT WHAT THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION IS, ANTI-CORRUPTION MIGHT NOT WIN OUT.”

**CHARLIE PHELPS '99**



MIRNA GALIC \*07

“THIS WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE EITHER A REALLY, REALLY LONG-TERM PROJECT, OR WE WERE GOING TO GET SUPER-LUCKY.”

rather than one better suited to Afghan dynamics. We naively thought nation-building could happen quickly, when it actually requires decades. “This was always going to be either a really, really long-term project, or we were going to get super-lucky,” says **Mirna Galic \*07**, who worked for the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan in the State Department in 2011-17. “But neither of those things happened.”

From 2001 to 2003, **Robert Orr \*96**, now the dean of the University of Maryland’s School of Public Policy, led a bipartisan commission on postwar reconstruction for a Washington think tank. In 2003, he wrote in the *International Herald Tribune*, “War is won or lost in two phases”: first, the military fight, and then, the efforts to create stability through reconstruction. “What is won on the battlefield can be lost entirely if the countries attacked are not turned into better and safer places,” he wrote. Back in November 2001, Orr had called for an explicit plan on reconstruction. “Drawing a blueprint for rebuilding Afghanistan requires a clear understanding not only of what needs to be done,” he wrote in *The Baltimore Sun*, “but also of who will do it.”

That blueprint, it seems, was never drafted. In 2015, **Candace Rondeaux \*14** worked on a project at the Pentagon to extract lessons from the war. Hundreds of people were interviewed — Rondeaux herself spoke to 200 — and, she says, “down to a man and woman, [they] said there never was a plan.”

Rondeaux, a national security scholar at Arizona State University and a program director at the New America think tank, says part of the problem is that the U.S. national security

help]? My government’s corrupt. They’re just there to enrich themselves.”

The ongoing war, however, complicated those efforts. “Everyone was trying to do the right thing,” Phelps says, but sometimes the need to maintain relationships with important actors — to gain intelligence, for example, or to mount an operation — was at odds with holding them accountable. “If you have to reach consensus [among agencies] about what the best course of action is,” Phelps says, “anti-corruption might not win out.”

Alumni point to other problems as well: We built an army in our own likeness — heavily dependent on technology, airpower, and logistics — that the Afghans couldn’t sustain after the U.S. and NATO left. We built a centralized government

apparatus still thinks in terms of conventional wars rather than today’s irregular conflicts. Give it a typical land or sea war against another nation-state, and it will do smashingly.

But ask it to deal with failed states — which easily become havens for terrorism as Afghanistan did (and could yet again) — and the national security apparatus struggles. The U.S. government isn’t set up structurally to tackle reconstruction work. For the “war” half that Orr talked about, it has the Department of Defense. But there’s no similar organization for the post-conflict rebuilding. To fix that, the 2003 report produced by Orr’s commission recommended creating a “director of reconstruction” position — think of a FEMA director, with the commensurate authority, budget, and tools to work on stability overseas.

Orr says the “original sin” of the war in Afghanistan was that responsibility for rebuilding Afghanistan wasn’t turned over to such a civilian force at the beginning. Instead, for lack of an alternative, it remained primarily with the military, which isn’t designed for such work. “We lost it out of the gate,” Orr says. “You know the old adage: If the only tool you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail ... But the problems in Afghanistan were not all nails.”

By the time Obama entered office, it was impossible to course-correct, Orr says. “The Taliban had their narrative confirmed for a large part of the Afghan population,” he says — that the U.S. was more interested in war than helping the people. For the next decade, as the military continued to drive action on the ground, including efforts to “win hearts and minds,” the hole only got bigger. The U.S. did not fail at nation-building, Orr says, because “we did not ever try real nation-building in Afghanistan ... We just stayed in the war,” he says. “Another 20 years couldn’t have made this succeed.” ♦

*E.B. Boyd ’89 reported periodically from Afghanistan from 2011 to 2017. She is at work on a book about female startup founders.*



CANDACE RONDEAUX \*14

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WERE INTERVIEWED — RONDEAUX HERSELF SPOKE TO 200 — AND, SHE SAYS, “DOWN TO A MAN AND WOMAN, [THEY] SAID THERE NEVER WAS A PLAN.”



**READ A Q&A** with former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ryan Crocker \*85, at <https://bit.ly/QA-RyanCrocker>



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“Certain wars cannot be avoided,  
and ... this one, against Hitler,  
had to be fought and won.  
But it had to be won precisely  
by those who hated war.”

## A RITCHIE BOY

Before Victor Brombert became a beloved Princeton professor,  
he journeyed home to war in Europe

BY ELYSE GRAHAM '07

**T**WO YEARS BEFORE HE RETURNED to France to fight the same Nazis his family had fled, Victor Brombert — then 18 years old and newly arrived, as a refugee, in the United States — saw Princeton University while on a day trip with his family to explore his new country. He had no way of knowing that he would one day become a professor there.

A family friend who was taking them to Pennsylvania made a special detour to Princeton, stopping at the corner of Witherspoon Street so that the refugee family could take in the American scene of abundance: busy shops; pleasant lawns; people walking around with books, looking, at every age, distinctly youthful.

The friend, a lawyer, waved toward the campus with a flourish that might have impressed a jury and said, “This is where Einstein teaches.”

Well, Einstein did give lectures at the University, though his faculty home was at the Institute for Advanced Study. The little tableau of American optimism stayed in Brombert’s mind for a long time afterwards, he says: “I had never seen anything like that in France. The façades of French schools are grim, military-looking.” But even then, as a teenager who had spent just a week in his new country, he was determined to return to

the terrors he had left behind in Europe, this time with an army behind him. His journey back to the United States would be long and filled with harrowing turns.

**B**ROMBERT BELONGS TO A REMARKABLE group of veterans called, today, the Ritchie Boys. During the Second World War, thousands of young refugees from Europe trained at Camp Ritchie, a military training facility in Maryland, to learn methods of combat, interrogation, and lie detection. Many of them, like Brombert, were Jewish. They fought with the American military in the lands they had recently escaped, helping to turn the course of the war.

Of late, the Ritchie Boys have been the subject of growing media attention — including, in May, on the television news program *60 Minutes*. (Brombert appeared on the show, discussing the group’s training and casually explaining how to garrote a sentry.) In September, the book *Ritchie Boy Secrets*, by Beverley Driver Eddy, joined other recent histories of this unlikely fighting force. It’s not a history that Brombert is in the habit of telling. War puts us in stories outside our control; times of peace give us more freedom to write our own stories. For Brombert, that self-written story leads to the classroom.

Sameer A. Khan '21





"My real passion is not war. It is teaching, which I have always loved," Brombert told me when I spoke with him at his home in Princeton in the summer. "Whatever you write, I hope you will write something about my love of teaching."

**B**ROMBERT GREW UP IN PARIS. His parents were Russian Jews who fled to Berlin to escape the Russian Revolution and then, when Berlin became hostile to Jews, fled again to France. In 1940, his family escaped from occupied France and made its way through Spain. Passing from one country to another was exceedingly difficult, since it required exit visas, travel visas, entry visas, and other hard-to-get documentation, all of which had to be unexpired at the same time. At the last possible minute, his family assembled the necessary papers to go to America and boarded a ship that — when it arrived in New York — newspapers called "the floating concentration camp" because of the horrible living conditions and the on-board deaths from typhus and starvation. A banana freighter, the ship normally held 15 people along with its cargo; when Brombert's family crossed the ocean, it held 1,200 refugees. "We were the bananas in the hold," he says.

He joined the Army as soon as the United States entered the war. "My parents were determined pacifists and made me read anti-militaristic books," he later wrote in an essay for the *Alumni Weekly*. "Yet they knew that certain wars cannot be avoided, and that this one, against Hitler, had to be fought and won. But it had to be won precisely by those who hated war."

When Brombert's superiors realized he spoke German and French, they reassigned him to Camp Ritchie. In a memoir, *Trains of Thought*, he writes of this transfer: "Someone in the Pentagon, it would seem, had the bright idea that those foreign types in American uniform could be put to a different use. They spoke other languages, thus they were linguists. They had lived in other countries, therefore they must have insights into the mentalities of those we fought or liberated. And so, quite a few of us were



**Brombert and his girlfriend, Dany Wolf, on the boardwalk in Trouville, Normandy, around 1939. She later was murdered at Auschwitz.**

and musicians — held advanced degrees, and during downtime, he listened to chatter about Piero della Francesca, Wilhelm Furtwängler, and Mozart.

"It was fascinating, fascinating," he says.

In his classes, Brombert learned how to interrogate civilians, how to interrogate prisoners of war, and how to liaise with members of *La Résistance*. He memorized the whole hierarchy of the German and Italian armies, the insignia on their uniforms down through every branch, the look and capabilities of their cars and tanks and guns. He learned how to read aerial photographs, how to do reconnaissance in the field, and how to make sense of documents that had been captured from the

*War is sweet to those who have not tried it. Somewhere in the muddy woods of Hürtgen, or while clinging to the bluffs of Omaha Beach as gunfire exploded above, Brombert lost the virus.*

sent to Camp Ritchie for training in military intelligence."

Camp Ritchie was among the most important of the dozens of secret training facilities that the U.S. military ran on home ground during the war — often at country clubs or in national parks, which offered terrain that could support combat exercises as well as enough seclusion to keep the goings-on secret. At one camp, the administrators told the trainees that townspeople nearby had decided that the camp was an insane asylum. At Camp Ritchie, where trainers often used German uniforms and equipment to make exercises more realistic, local civilians — alarmed at the sight of German tanks and soldiers lumbering down the road — warned the government that the Germans were invading Maryland. After several false alerts, the locals got the picture.

"Camp Ritchie was my first university," Brombert says. Many of his fellow trainees — who included lawyers, professors,

front. He learned Morse code. He practiced finding his way around at night in unfamiliar terrain. He learned how to kill someone silently by using a stick to garrote them from behind.

In the fall of 1943, he was put on a ship to England. "Standing on the deck near the railing," he writes in his memoir, "looking out at the other ships and the angry winter sea, I indulged in silly talk about fighting, liberating, heroic action, and the noble side of military servitude." An older officer gave him a chilly look. "*Tu as le virus*," he told Brombert: "You have the virus."

**U**PON ARRIVING IN ENGLAND, Brombert got his first taste of teaching. He joined up with the Second Armored Division, which was preparing to land in France on D-Day. Exactly where they would be landing was a closely guarded secret. Because Brombert had lived in France,

Courtesy Victor Brombert

the officers asked him to deliver a lecture about what they would find when they arrived. Even during this first tentative chalk talk, the teaching gods smiled on him.

"I had spent my summers in Normandy with my parents, in Deauville and Cabourg," he says. "I wasn't going to talk about that because that was too close to autobiography. So I invented a place and pointed to a map, which happens to have been exactly where we landed: Omaha Beach."

"When we finally landed there, they were convinced that I had advance information — that I knew where we were going to land," he adds. "But I didn't."

War is sweet to those who have not tried it. Somewhere in the muddy woods of Hürtgen, or while clinging to the bluffs of Omaha Beach as gunfire exploded above, Brombert lost the virus. He hauled himself through the grim work of pushing back enemy forces and interrogating civilians, but without his earlier enthusiasm. The purpose of interrogation was to gather simple, concrete tactical details: how many men were ahead, and where, and with what kinds of weapons. Witnesses could be misleading, accidentally or on purpose — as when a French woman said danger lay to the right and pointed to the left.

The experience gave him, he says, an enduring education in interpretation: "You had to learn how to hear things between the words, which is like reading between the lines. That was very important training. One had to be very keenly sensitive to not only what people said, but how they said it."



Brombert in  
November 1944

THE RITCHIE BOYS "took part in every major battle and campaign of the war in Europe," according to Bruce Henderson, the author of a book on their exploits. The U.S. Army credited them with capturing some 60 percent of the credible combat intelligence that it acquired. Typically, a team of Ritchie Boys embedded with an Army unit, performing interrogations and reconnaissance as the soldiers pushed forward into new territory. Often the teams were small, but they performed essential duties that no one else could. Brombert worked with two different teams, one in France and one in Germany. His teammates came from all kinds of national backgrounds, from German to Czech to Latin American to British.

Once, a Hungarian Ritchie Boy with the surname Lukács got Brombert's team into serious trouble. When they arrived at an American guard post, Lukács caused alarm by giving the password in a strong Hungarian accent. "We could have been shot right there," Brombert says. The guards were suspicious that the men were not actually U.S. soldiers: "They were trigger-happy because the Germans had infiltrated, in American uniforms, our troops in the Battle of the Bulge."

The guards asked a question designed to check the interlopers' American credentials: "What's the Windy City?" Nobody knew. The guards gave them another chance: "Who won the World Series?" Nobody knew. They were all recent American immigrants.

"I talked very fast and convinced them to take us to headquarters," Brombert says. "I explained the whole situation, what kind of outfit we were."

In another unit, Brombert says, a Ritchie Boy got killed returning from the latrine at night because he gave the password in a German accent.

Slowly, while making his way through the shattered cities of Europe, Brombert realized that he wanted a life of learning. Once the war was over, he got perhaps his first experience of scholarly research while working with a de-Nazification task force in Germany, when he hungrily read and annotated everything he could find about the Nazis' rise to power. But what he had learned during the war about politics and human character exhausted him: the way French civilians condemned their neighbors as collaborators while excusing themselves; the way German civilians refused to condemn anybody or speak of what had happened; the way Americans left Nazi officials in place in the name of keeping the engines of the German state running. In an episode that he later described with more shame than is perhaps warranted, Brombert lost control while questioning a Nazi official, yanking him around by his beard and shouting at him, "Did you know about the camps?"

He was ready for something new. He enrolled as an undergraduate at Yale University. Twenty years later, he left Yale's faculty to teach at Princeton.

PRINCETON IS NOT THE HISTORICAL teaching home of Albert Einstein, but it *is* the historical teaching home of Victor Brombert. He became a beloved professor of Romance and comparative literature, whose influence at the University continues to this day.



"I loved every moment of my teaching profession," he says. "I liked the small seminars, I liked the discussion classes, I liked the large lectures. But what I liked most of all, I think what gave me the greatest satisfactions, also of a histrionic nature, is the large lecture course I had for a freshman class in European literature. I had between 300 and 400 students every year."

One day in 1994, while Brombert was giving a lecture on Virginia Woolf in his freshman lecture class, a student in a balcony seat started shouting, "Brombingo!" The campus humor magazine, *Tiger*, had published a bingo card that listed Brombert's pet topics and favorite phrases: *Nietzsche*, *Dionysus*, *epiphany*, *black sackcloth*, *Pascal's human condition*, and more. (Some of these topics came from Brombert's interest in the work of Thomas Mann, a refugee writer who taught at Princeton after fleeing Nazi Europe in 1939.)

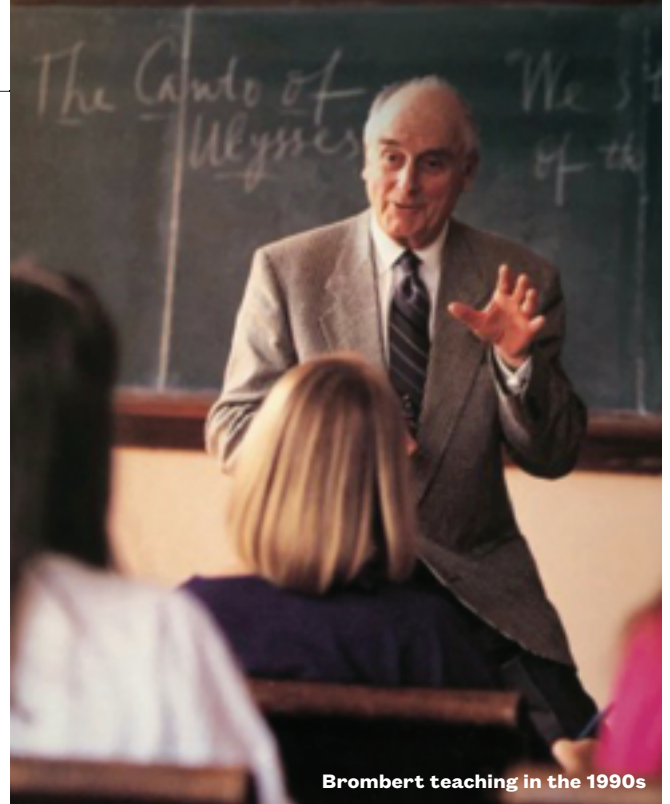
When he learned about this teasing from his students, Brombert felt deeply moved. "For teasing is usually a sure sign of fondness," he later wrote in an essay on teaching. "And playfulness, the ludic element, I told myself, should be at the heart of learning and of teaching. Playing with ideas is never a frivolous activity. This is when we are at our best."

Between classes, Brombert sometimes lifted his voice in song as he walked across campus, spending a few moments in the life he might have led as an opera singer had history not pushed him in a different direction. John V. Fleming '63, an emeritus professor of English and comparative literature, recalls Brombert's "high-decibel rendition of famous Italian arias as he traversed the quad from its southeast corner by Washington Road along the path leading to his office in East Pyne. His '*Che manina gelida*' was second only to Pavarotti's and once garnered spontaneous applause from a large classroom of students awaiting a Chaucer lecture in McCosh Hall."

*"Harkness Tower in New Haven and the bell tower of Nassau Hall in Princeton were for me emblems of serene contentment in academic strongholds, especially after the chaos of the war."*

"It was famous that Victor had somehow the most elegant office in East Pyne, and that it was a kind of salon," says Leonard Barkan, a professor of comparative literature. "Victor has the most spectacularly complex and enjoyable sense of humor. Just the way he looks at you when you're talking, you know he's traveling through a multiplicity of languages and cultures and looking at what you've claimed through multiple points of view."

The Brombertian element that remains in the Department of Comparative Literature today surely includes the department's sense of irony. This is a department that takes irony seriously, so to speak — that has spent serious time teaching and writing and thinking about irony as a way to embrace cultural multiplicity and resist the dangers of ideological absolutes. Brombert's style as a teacher and colleague, says another of his colleagues, Maria DiBattista, accentuates "irony, but not irony that puts people down or cuts. It's very generous. It's very kind."



Brombert teaching in the 1990s

Brombert lights up with recognition when I mention this to him.

"This is one reason I like, not the irony of a Voltaire, which is very cutting, but the irony of a Stendhal," he says. "It's marvelous. It's marvelous. And it is an irony that goes together with tenderness. Mozart is that way. The operas of Mozart, *The Marriage of Figaro*. I am very moved by what Maria has said."

Of course, he gave more than a tone to the University: decades of course content, scores of supervised theses, some 15 books written and edited. In 2018, almost 20 years after

he retired, Brombert wrote an essay for *The New Yorker* that described academia with a young person's awe: "When I reflect on my nostalgia for the decades of teaching, Wordsworth's striking image of 'pensive citadels' often comes to mind. Harkness Tower in New Haven and the bell tower of Nassau Hall in Princeton were for me emblems of serene contentment in academic strongholds, especially after the chaos of the war." He saw beauty and then — after leaving to liberate France — returned years later and added to that beauty. Or at least this is one way of glossing what Brombert calls his "fate of Princeton": the idea that he was always, if he survived the war, going to find his way back here.

"There and back — 25 years later, more than that," he says. "Because that is a thing I still remember, my astonishment. It was a wonder, this view of a campus." ♦

*Stony Brook University professor Elyse Graham '07 is the author of You Talkin' to Me?: The Unruly History of New York English.*

Courtesy Victor Brombert

# PRINCETONIANS



Michael Falco/Blackstar

**SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK:** Shaken after a racist encounter in March 2020, Donna Weng Friedman '80 turned to music for comfort. "Music is healing for me," says the classical pianist. "It gives me clarity and hope." She was drawn to Asian American, African American, and female composers, and earlier this year she released an album, "Heritage and Harmony: Silver Linings," highlighting composers who are underrepresented in classical music. The album raised funds for the Korean American Community Foundation, which fights against racism. "There is a world of glorious music out there that deserves to be heard," Weng Friedman says. ♦

**READ MORE** at [paw.princeton.edu](http://paw.princeton.edu)





Ping Foong \*06, left, and Xiaojin Wu \*11 in the Seattle Asian Art Museum's "Are We What We Wear?" gallery.

PING FOONG \*06 AND XIAOJIN WU \*11

## RECREATING AN ART MUSEUM

*Two alumni had just finished a major renovation project when the pandemic hit*

At the beginning of 2020, Ping Foong \*06 and Xiaojin Wu \*11 were riding a career high when the Seattle Asian Art Museum reopened after a three-year, \$56 million renovation and expansion project. As the museum's curators, Foong and Wu were generating buzz for their daring new presentation style, which rejected the convention of chronological and culture-specific exhibits for new thematic displays that pulled together objects from across Asia.

But for all of the detailed planning that went into this overhaul of the museum, nobody had anticipated that a global pandemic would come along, forcing the museum's closure just weeks after its grand reopening. Now, the Asian Art Museum has reopened — again.

Foong, who received her undergraduate degree from Brown University, was one of the last grad

students of Princeton professor Wen Fong '51 \*58. Early in his career at Princeton, Fong co-founded the United States' first doctoral program in Chinese art and archaeology, and later chaired Princeton's Department of Art and Archaeology while consulting on Asian art for New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. He produced several generations of U.S. historians of Chinese art.

So for Foong, his mentee, "It seemed a very clear path," she says.

Likewise, Wu was enrolled in a graduate program in Singapore when

**In reimagining the museum's 13 galleries, Foong and Wu assembled pieces from across Asia and time periods in new juxtapositions.**

she had a chance to work with Soho Machida, who had been on the faculty of Princeton's East Asian studies department. After earning her master's degree, there was no question about where she wanted to go for her Ph.D., she says: "Princeton is the only place that encouraged students to hold academia and museums at equal weight." Her adviser was Japanese art history expert Yoshiaki Shimizu.

Wu also worked at several prestigious East Coast galleries and was an associate curator at the Princeton University Art Museum. She moved to Seattle in 2012 as the Asian Art Museum's curator of Japanese and Korean art.

Meanwhile, Foong had remained in academia, teaching at the University of Chicago and the University of California, Berkeley. And then she heard about an opportunity to recreate the museum from scratch. "For me, it was my once-in-a-lifetime chance."

Arriving in Seattle in 2015, Foong became the Foster Foundation Curator of Chinese Art. And shortly thereafter, the museum's reinvention began. While both curators drove this process, they

shared credit with Darielle Mason, who has expertise in South Asian art and helped ensure that the art of cultures that had received scant attention — such as Vietnamese and Filipino art — was represented.

The Seattle area boasts a large pan-Asian population, and the curators felt it was essential to expand the museum's scope, drawing on input from a community-centered advisory group.

In reimagining the museum's 13 galleries, Foong and Wu assembled pieces from across Asia and time periods in new juxtapositions. The "Are We What We Wear?" gallery, for example, showcases garments used in work, play, and ceremony — from an 11th-century gold dowry bracelet from Persia to textiles from the South China Sea, an Ainu robe, and photographs by 21st-century Korean photographer Yeondoo Jung, whose subjects appear in their work apparel next to alternative images depicting their wildest fantasies.

Another gallery invites visitors to consider "What Is Precious?" and offers answers from Asian cultures spanning three millennia. In the 17th century, while tea masters in Japan were embracing the simplicity of raku pottery, the ruling class in India coveted daggers with gem-encrusted grips. Elegant minimalism or exotic ostentation? The curators leave it to visitors to ponder.

In the first two weeks of its reopening in February 2020, the Asian Art Museum had more visitors come through its doors than in the entire year before the renovation.

But then: the pandemic. During the shutdown, the curators pivoted to digital platforms, creating new programming. They also altered the visitor experience, establishing a one-way traffic pattern and developing free smartphone tours.

On May 28, the museum reopened to the general public on a limited schedule with a cap on attendance, due to public-health protocols. Both curators acknowledge that they lost some of the momentum of the 2020 reopening, but they're taking a glass-half-full approach.

"If you go to the museum right now," Foong says, "you'll have it basically to yourself. How wonderful is that?" ♦ By Barbara Lloyd McMichael

## THE JOURNEY HERE

## A PH.D. AND A DJ



## Tao Leigh Goffe '09 Plumbs Narratives

Taking a class with literary giant Toni Morrison at Princeton proved to be a pivotal moment for Tao Leigh Goffe '09. The way Morrison framed the role of African Americans in the American literary imagination "really preoccupied me," Goffe recalls. She went on to earn a Ph.D. at Yale in 2015, penning a thesis that explored literary depictions of Black people and Chinese people in the Americas. — Jennifer Altmann

- **Eight years ago**, while she was halfway through graduate school, Goffe began DJ-ing at nightclubs and parties. "I needed to do something nonacademic," she says. In the last six years, she has been a DJ at a variety of venues, from a linguistics conference to events at New York's Museum of Chinese in America to Reunions. Her hobby has become an important part of her academic research, which focuses on the narratives that emerge from histories of imperialism, migration, and globalization.
- **After a postdoctoral fellowship** in Princeton's Department of African American Studies, Goffe taught at New York University before becoming an assistant professor of literary theory and cultural history at Cornell in 2019.
- **Her latest venture** is Dark Laboratory, a humanities incubator that supports and promotes Black and Indigenous storytelling. Its programs include a podcast, a lecture series, a photography competition, and various academic resources, all accessible at [darklaboratory.com](http://darklaboratory.com).
- **The lab "reckons with the history of slavery,"** Goffe says. "It's a collective for people interested in this entanglement at the crossroads of Black studies and Native studies." The advisory board — composed of experts in technology, academia, and Hollywood — includes Princeton professors Ruha Benjamin and Tracy K. Smith.
- **Mission:** "To write more complete and thus ethical histories and textbooks. We all have stories to tell."

*The Journey Here* is a new feature appearing occasionally. To nominate someone with an interesting career path, please email [paw@princeton.edu](mailto:paw@princeton.edu).





**SAVE THE DATE**

# **TIGER ATHLETICS GIVE DAY**

**TUESDAY, NOV. 30, 2021**



Tiger Athletics Give Day, a 24-hour giving challenge, returns for its eighth year on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> (*National Giving Tuesday*). We encourage you to join the more than 20,000 Princetonians who have participated in TAGD, to date, in support of our Tiger varsity student-athletes!

To learn more or join the action on Tiger Athletics Give Day, visit  
**[TAGD.Princeton.edu](https://TAGD.Princeton.edu)**



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# CLASS NOTES

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Online Class Notes are password protected. To access, alumni must use their TigerNet ID and password. [Click here to log in: http://paw.princeton.edu/class-notes](http://paw.princeton.edu/class-notes)

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# MEMORIALS

**PAW posts a list of recent alumni deaths at [paw.princeton.edu](http://paw.princeton.edu). Go to Reader Services on PAW's home page and click on the link "Recent Alumni Deaths." The list is updated with each new issue.**

## THE CLASS OF 1938



### John V.E. Hardy '38 \*39

John died Aug. 28, 2021, of the coronavirus and old age in Vero Beach, Fla. Born Oct. 26, 1915, he was 105 and in reasonable health until the coronavirus lockdowns and ensuing isolation took their fatal toll.

John grew up in Upper Montclair, N.J., and attended Woodberry Forest School in Virginia. At Princeton he majored in chemical engineering, joined Elm Club, and roomed in Brown Hall. After earning an undergraduate degree with honors, John and William Coors '38 \*39 roomed together in Princeton as they pursued master's degrees in chemical engineering.

John joined the DuPont Co. the following year and had a sterling career during what he called the golden age of chemical engineering, leading the research, development, and manufacture of DuPont's largest chemical business and subsequently leading the design and startup of DuPont's first plant in eastern Asia. After retiring, he and his wife, Margaret "Muggie" (who died in 2019), had a fantasy retirement of golf, tennis, skiing, archeological digs, and a trek through the Himalayas.

John remained close to many of his classmates, many of whom joined John and Muggie in their travels. Theirs were bedrock friendships that carried on throughout his and Muggie's lifetime.

John is survived by three children and four grandchildren.



### Clyde Hubbard '38

Clyde died Oct. 26, 2020, at the age of 104 in Cuernavaca, Mexico, where he had lived for almost 50 years. He was born Feb. 16, 1916, in Philadelphia, N.Y.

At Princeton he was a member of Elm Club. During World War II he served in the Army Air Corps as a bombardier and instructor before joined the Elizabeth Arden cosmetic firm, which assigned him to Cuba and then Mexico in 1947.

Clyde chose to stay in Mexico to pursue a long-term interest in native coinage, founding the Numismatists Society of Mexico in 1952 and

becoming a noted authority on Mexican and Latin America numismatics. He was inducted into the American Numismatic Association's Hall of Fame in 1994.

Clyde is survived by two children, Felice and Jason. The Class of '38 wishes to extend its condolences to all of Clyde's family.

## THE CLASS OF 1945



### Vincent L. Gregory '45

Vince was born in Oil City, Pa., and he was class president at Oil City High School. He obtained a scholarship to Princeton, where he boxed, ran track, and was in Whig-Clio, the band, and Gateway Club. He majored in economics and graduated *cum laude* with election to Phi Beta Kappa in 1949, the same year he earned an MBA from Harvard Business School.

During the war he was a first lieutenant fighter pilot in the 8th Army Air Force in England and Germany.

In 1949 he joined Rohm & Haas as a junior accountant. He was sent to France to start up their first plant abroad and to England to manage the company's agricultural-chemical operations before becoming director of European operations.

Vince moved back to Philadelphia, assumed control of operations in Latin America and the Pacific, and became head of Rohm & Haas. He instituted a 10 percent across-the-board downsizing and revamped the firm's management system. He tightened the company's environmental controls, participating in hearings that led to the passage of the Toxic Substances Control Act in 1976.

He received many awards over the years, and created a post at Harvard, the Vincent L. Gregory Chair of Cancer Research.

Vince died June 3, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie; son Vincent III '69 and his wife, Jacqueline; granddaughters Melanie and Emma; and four great-grandchildren.

## THE CLASS OF 1951

### Earle Graham Helton '51

Earle came to Princeton from Decatur, Ga., having won the NROTC scholarship at Decatur



High School. Earning a degree in chemistry and naval science, he also had the good fortune of meeting his wife of 66 years, Virginia French, an accomplished organist and

Westminster Choir College grad. A member of Campus Club, Earle was on the fencing team and active in a variety of campus organizations. He roomed with Bill Coale, Lou Emanuel, and Dick Williams.

After three years serving on the USS *Norris*, an antisubmarine destroyer, Earle joined the research and development division of Procter & Gamble, where he did research on personal-care products in Cincinnati for 29 years. He then did regulatory work for P&G Pharmaceuticals in Norwich, N.Y., until he moved to Ipswich, Mass., upon retirement in 1994. During his career he did postgraduate work at Cornell, Michigan, and Cincinnati.

Earle died Aug. 14, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Virginia, and three children.

### Bruce Wescott Hotchkiss '51

Having come to Princeton after graduating from the Lawrenceville School, Bruce left us during our sophomore year, briefly attended Columbia, and graduated as an English major from Rutgers in 1951.

He began his newspaper career as a cub reporter for the *Newark Evening News* and, after editing newspapers in New Jersey and Colorado, moved to Easton, Md., in 1977 to become editor of *The Star Democrat*. With a farm background, a year later he became editor of what became the *Central Shore Farmer*, a major weekly insert serving the Middle Atlantic states for which he continued to serve as senior editor until 2018. During his career he also managed his own business, Agri Media Services, and received several prestigious awards from agricultural groups.

Bruce died Oct. 19, 2019. He is survived by his wife, Phyllis; five children; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



### Hugo Roeser Paladino '51

Hugh was born in Newark and graduated from Barringer High School with awards in science and math.

He majored in chemical engineering, was a member of Dial Lodge, roomed with Bernard Strickman, and had several campus jobs. Joining the Army after graduation, he was assigned to a highly secret biological weapons research lab. He then began a long career as a food-process engineer, starting with Quaker Oats in Chicago. His research work for Ken-L Ration, Burry Biscuit, Schaefer Brewing, and Keebler led to the development of several innovative food products, and he was manager of major plants

and product lines.

In 1982 Hugh was appointed vice president of King & Prince Seafood, the largest packer of frozen shrimp in the world, in Brunswick, Ga. Upon retirement in 1994, he and his wife, Marie, settled on St. Simons Island, where they lived until Hugo's death May 25, 2021. His wife, a son, and a daughter survive him.

#### THE CLASS OF 1952



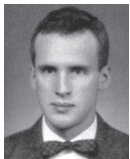
##### **Charles Douglas Hardy Jr. '52**

Doug came from the Morristown School and followed his father, a member of the Class of 1925, to Princeton. He studied basic engineering and

joined Cottage. He played 150-pound football, was on the Orange Key freshman committee, and belonged to the Rugby Club. He roomed with Dick Billings, Bill Mills, and Bob Warren.

After Navy OCS he served in Korea and earned an MBA at Harvard in 1958. His work life was spent running his family business, Old Deerfield Fabrics, in Cedar Grove, N.J.

Doug died May 6, 2021. He is survived by his children, Charles, Ann, Jean, and Jill. The class sends good wishes with special thanks for Doug's service to our country.



##### **William A. Nicely '52**

Bill graduated from Monroe High School in Rochester, N.Y. At Princeton he majored in economics and joined Elm, Triangle, and the band. He belonged to the Republican Club and the Pre-Law Society. He roomed with Roy Lawrence and John Damerel.

After graduation he joined the Navy and served three years as operations officer on a destroyer. He graduated from Harvard Law School in 1959 and practiced law before joining the Callahan Mining Corp. where he was counsel from 1972 until 1990, then CEO until 1992.

Bill died May 16, 2021. He is survived by his wife, Linda; and their sons, Andrew and Matthew. The class offers them its good wishes, with a salute to Bill for his service to our country.

#### THE CLASS OF 1953



##### **Peter Ashurkoff '53**

Peter died June 16, 2021, in Ashburn, Va., where he and his wife had moved when he retired from General Motors after some 40 years in the auto industry.

Peter was born in Mexico City, Mexico, and became a U.S. citizen while attending Phillips Exeter Academy. At Princeton he joined Campus Club and majored in mechanical engineering. After graduation Peter earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering at

MIT, then moved to Detroit to take a training position in the research laboratories of General Motors Corp. His career with General Motors was interrupted after a few months by two years of military service that took him to the Army Ordnance Depot in Okinawa.

Returning to Detroit, Peter married Patricia Dow, and they settled in Grosse Pointe Farms. After an early assignment in Mexico City, Peter returned to the Detroit area and finished his career as a design engineer with Buick and Powertrain in Flint. He earned a number of patents for automotive innovations and was known for his attention to detail.

Peter was predeceased by his wife, Patricia. He is survived by a son, a daughter, and three grandchildren.



##### **William Maxwell Davis '53**

Davis died peacefully July 2, 2021, at his home in Charleston, W.Va. He was 89.

He was born in Charleston and came to Princeton after attending Charleston public schools and Lawrenceville School. He joined Tiger Inn, majored in history, and wrote his thesis on "The Growth of Manufacturers and Railways in the South: 1840-1860."

After graduation, Davis returned to West Virginia, where he spent his entire business career with the Bank of West Virginia, stepping down as president in 1979 to devote more time to his various nonprofit interests throughout the state. He twice served as the head of the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, appointed by the governor in 1968 a year after the commission's founding, and remained on the commission through 2004. He also served on the foundation board of the Kanawha County Public Library and supported the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences (formerly Sunrise Museum); various music organizations such as Chamber Music and the West Virginia Symphony; the University of Charleston, of which he once served as acting president; his schools, Princeton and Lawrenceville; many auto-related museums; and his church.

A passionate automobile enthusiast, Davis judged the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance for more than 30 years. He was the oldest continuous American member of the UK-based 20-Ghost Club, the oldest Rolls Royce auto club in the world, and his cars often won best in class. On one occasion, he took an American-built left-hand-drive 1928 Rolls Royce Springfield (Mass.) roadster to England with him on the QE2.

Davis is survived by a nephew, a niece, and five great-nieces.

##### **William Francis Kenny '53**

William died June 22, 2021, in Stamford, Conn.

He was born in Plainfield, N.J., and



prepared for Princeton at the Lawrenceville School. He was a member of Cap and Gown, majored in history, and wrote his thesis on Alfred Smith.

After graduation Bill served as a first lieutenant with the Marines in Korea. He then settled on Long Island, where he worked in advertising for several years and then became chairman and CEO of a family company, the Meenan Oil Co. He was a board member of a number of organizations, including the Green Vale School and Glen Cove Hospital.

William was predeceased by his wife, Joan. He is survived by a son, two daughters, and eight grandchildren.

#### THE CLASS OF 1954



##### **Donald H. Rumsfeld '54**

Champion wrestler, dedicated public servant, wordsmith, and loyal alumnus and classmate, Don died June 29, 2021, of multiple myeloma.

At New Trier (Ill.) High School he was active in student government, football, and notably as captain of the Illinois championship wrestling team. At Princeton he majored in politics, joined Cap and Gown, and was captain and three-time place winner in the Eastern Wrestling Intercollegiates (which may account for his being nominated "Best Body" in the senior class poll).

After service in the Navy, working for several congressmen, and a brief time in investment banking, Don served four terms in Congress. Presidents Nixon and Ford assigned him important roles in their administrations, the latter appointing him secretary of defense in 1975. He then held high positions in the private sector before receiving his second appointment as secretary of defense in the George W. Bush administration, overseeing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Whether assessing him as a wrestler, as a student, or in his roles in government and the private sector, admirers and critics alike tended to agree about Don's personal characteristics: his discipline, determination, self-assurance, and *joie de vivre*. In our 50th-reunion yearbook he wrote "I remain deeply appreciative for ... my great, good fortune to be able to serve."

He is survived by his high school sweetheart and wife of 67 years, Joyce; their three children; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

#### THE CLASS OF 1955

##### **Tracy H. Logan Jr. '55**

Tracy, a devoted environmental activist long before that was common, died Feb. 25, 2018, in Yellow Springs, Ohio. He was born Aug. 7, 1934, in Huchow, China, and graduated from





Baldwin (N.Y.) High School.

At Princeton, where his father was a member of the Class of 1929, he majored in electrical engineering and joined Prospect Club. His senior-year roommate was Dick Kreyer. Special interests were camping, tennis, sailing, and cycling, the latter becoming a strong part of his adult life. After Princeton he attended the University of Hamburg, Germany, Wesleyan University, and Penn State.

In 1960 he moved to Yellow Springs, drawn by the liberal and environmental focus of Antioch College. He handled nearly every job at the *Yellow Springs News* and served for decades on the town's environmental and bicycle committees, also staffing the table at the weekly farmer's market and promoting environmentally sound living.

Tracy was best known for bicycle advocacy, going for months or years without stepping into a car. For 17 years he ran a Saturday bike clinic out of his house, where tools and expert advice were offered at no cost. He also pioneered a fleet of community bikes, decades before that idea took root worldwide.

In the latter part of his life, he taught at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa.

At the time of his death, Tracy was survived by his wife, Beverly; son Mek; daughter Amy; and two granddaughters.



**Alton P. Mendleson Jr. '55**  
Alton, of Glenmont, N.Y., died June 22, 2021, at the Hospice Inn at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, N.Y.

He was born June 28, 1933, in Albany, and attended Albany Academy for 13 years. He was a three-letter man — football, basketball, and baseball — and graduated *cum laude* in 1951.

At Princeton he majored in chemical engineering and joined Campus Club. Alton served on the Undergraduate Schools Committee and was active in IAA football, baseball, basketball, and pool. His senior-year roommate was Ed Mason. After serving in the Air Force, he earned an MBA from Stanford.

For seven years he worked for B.T. Babbitt, a consumer-goods company. When it was sold, he joined the Eden Park Nursing Home organization and spent 45 years there, the last 40 as president.

Alton's wife, Gaynelle, said, "Alton lived a very rich and full life, much of it centered around his job and our lovely home. Everyone who knew him loved him; he left a lot of friends." He also amassed a vast stamp collection, which he bequeathed to his grandsons Zachary and Steven.

Alton is survived by his wife, Gaynelle; sons Alton and Andrew; daughter Holly; stepchildren Maureen, Hugh, Jennifer, and Anthony; and three grandchildren.



**Fredric J. Neuman '55**  
Fred, a psychiatrist specializing in phobias, a novelist, and a prolific commentator on a vast range of interests, died May 13, 2021, in the Bronx, N.Y.

He graduated from Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School, earning a scholarship as an accomplished child pianist.

At Princeton he majored in philosophy, joined Court Club, and had a weekly radio program on WPRU. His senior-year roommate was Ed Orshan.

At New York University medical school Fred supported himself playing poker and became a skillful artist, creating abstract paintings with whimsical images somewhat reminiscent of Picasso. He also met Susan Kley, a student at Smith, was instantly enamored, and attempted to woo her by sending her a poem written in Middle English. He soon discovered he had copied the wrong selection, but still managed to persuade her to marry him.

In 1962 he was drafted into the Army and stationed in Germany. Two well-regarded mystery novels followed that featured a crime-solving psychiatrist, who he not-too-convincingly denied was based on himself. In later years he had a blog in which he opined about emotional issues, dating, politics, and a broad range of topics.

Fred is survived by his wife, Susan; children Eve, James, and Michael; and four grandchildren.

One former patient said, "He saved my life and was an important influence for over 25 years. Rest in peace, Doc. You told me many times there was a one-in-one chance of dying."



**Richard G. Smith '55**  
Dick died May 4, 2021, in Villa Rica, Ga. He was born May 19, 1933, in Albany, N.Y.

He came to us from Albany Academy, where he was a class officer, a member of the student council, and played varsity football, basketball, and baseball.

At Princeton Dick majored in psychology and wrote his thesis on juvenile delinquency. He joined Cap and Gown and participated in freshman football and baseball, varsity football, and IAA basketball. His senior-year roommates were Harry Berkowitz and Pete Van Gytenbeek.

After graduation he served in the Navy, leaving as a lieutenant commander. He then earned a law degree at Stetson Law School and National Judicial College. He was a member of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, past president of the Naval Officers Association of Carroll County, Ga., and was inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame at Albany Academy. For several years he was chief magistrate judge for Carroll County.

Dick was predeceased by a son, Douglas Richard Smith. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Judith Ann Kraft Smith; son and daughter-in-law Donald and Cat Smith; daughter and son-in-law Deborah and Kevin Bernhardt; and five grandchildren.



**Richard Hutchinson Willis '55**  
Dick, an avid traveler and athlete, died June 26, 2021, at Care Dimensions Hospice House in Lincoln, Mass.

He was born Oct. 2, 1932, in Boston and graduated from Noble and Greenough School in Dedham, Mass. There he was involved in student government, football, crew, wrestling, dramatics, publications, and the glee club.

At Princeton Dick joined Elm Club and majored in German and history and the Special Program in European Civilization. He participated in freshman 150-pound crew, IAA hockey, the Westminster Fellowship, Theatre Intime, and the Outing Club. Senior-year roommates were Henry King and Rollin Otto.

After graduation he served in the Army and embarked on a career in finance and private banking in Boston. Dick lived life to the fullest. He enjoyed marathon running, downhill skiing, and cycling; climbed all of New England's 4,000-footers; and took frequent long walks along the Charles River. He was a lifetime member of the Country Club in Brookline and was a benefactor of many local philanthropic organizations dedicated to the arts, historic preservation, and education.

Asked for the class's 50th-reunion yearbook what surprised him at Princeton, Dick wrote, "Lending a comb to Albert Einstein. Mother being propositioned at graduation. Doing the Charleston with Mrs. Dodds."

Dick is survived by a sister, Nancy Willis Pendleton.

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## THE CLASS OF 1958



**Edward J. Seaman '58**  
Ed died July 20, 2021, in Edison, N.J. He was 84.

He came to Princeton from Perth Amboy High School, where he participated in student government and played varsity basketball and baseball.

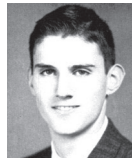
At Princeton Ed played varsity baseball for three years, captaining the team senior year. He majored in politics, was a member of the Pre-Law Society, and was vice president of Cannon Club.

In 1961 he graduated from University of Virginia Law School and then served in the Army National Guard as a commissioned captain. In 1962 Ed married his high school sweetheart, Yolanda Magro, and joined a law firm to become a major litigator of personal-

injury actions in New Jersey. In 1976 he was appointed to the Superior Court of New Jersey, eventually becoming presiding judge of the Law Division. He retired in 1993. Thereafter Ed was a popular and sought-after mediator and arbitrator in New Jersey for personal injury and other complicated cases.

Ed was predeceased by Yolanda and son David. He is survived by daughters MaryAnn Matthiessen and Ann Seaman, and grandsons Christopher and Ryan Matthiessen. The class extends its deepest sympathy to them all.

### THE CLASS OF 1959



#### **Albert C. Crofton '59**

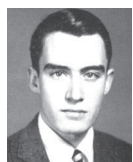
A lifelong "upstater," Bert succumbed to multiple myeloma June 7, 2021, near his home on Canandaigua Lake, N.Y.

Born in Rochester, N.Y., Bert attended Rochester's Allendale School, where he edited the yearbook and served on the student council. Moving on to Princeton, where he roomed with Bingle, Bodman, Burkhardt, Humphrey, and Schumacher, he majored in economics, rowed with the varsity heavyweights, and joined Dial, serving on the bicker committee.

Commissioned an ensign out of Navy OCS following graduation, he served at sea as an air intelligence officer on an aircraft carrier. Upon his release from the Navy his upstate roots took hold again and he returned to his hometown, taking a position with Lincoln Rochester Trust and rising to vice president. Marrying in 1967, he adopted his wife's two daughters, quickly produced two sons, and earned an MBA from the University of Rochester.

By 1974 the marriage ended, Bert's banking career was coming to a close, and he turned to real-estate property management, eventually forming his own company from which he retired shortly after our 55th reunion. He married Deirdre "Dee" Helton in 1982, and they had a wonderful life together.

Predeceased by his sister, Margaret, Bert is survived by his wife of 38 years, Dee; his daughters, Lynne '81 and Elizabeth; his sons, Winton and David; and seven grandchildren. We have sent condolences.



#### **Michael Kimmel '59**

Mike died April 29, 2020, of complications from COVID-19 at Goddard House Assisted Living in Brookline, Mass. He was a retired senior appellate

counsel with the U.S. Justice Department and 50-year Washington, D.C. resident.

The son of a U.S. foreign service officer, Mike was born in Amarillo, Texas, attended Hutt Valley High School in New Zealand, then the Hun School from which he entered

Princeton. He was a cox on the lightweight crew, Boudinot Collection guide at Firestone Library, and a member of Tower Club.

Post graduation he joined his family for an extended stay in Costa Rica, where his father was posted as deputy mission chief. Returning to the U.S. in 1961, he joined the Coast Guard. Assigned first to a buoy tender servicing navigational aids in New York harbor, then to an icebreaker on the upper Hudson River, he left the Coast Guard to obtain a law degree from George Washington University in 1967.

Serving briefly at the FDIC as a bank regulator, he joined the Justice Department, from which he retired in 1988. He then took up part-time duties as a mediator in the D.C. Superior Court and, in his words from our 35th-reunion yearbook, "more demanding activities, e.g., ski slopes, sailboats, geographic expeditions, etc."

Twice divorced, Mike is survived by two brothers; his son, Gregory; and three grandchildren. An avid recreational sailor, Mike was buried at sea.



#### **Peter A. Lareau '59**

Peter died March 13, 2021, near his home in Ladson, S.C., where he had recently moved. Coming to Princeton from Exeter Academy, he

majored in history, joined Whig-Clio, served on Orange Key, chaired Charter Club's athletic committee and served on the bicker committee, and was business manager of the *Bric-a-Brac*. Roommates Brumbaugh, Harbin, Helms, Holmes, J.M. Gross, Oelman, and Strom formed lifelong bonds with Peter and with each other.

Commissioned upon graduation through NROTC, Peter served aboard the destroyer USS *Bigelow* during the Cuban Missile Crisis and later during the Bay of Pigs invasion, picking up survivors swimming from the Cuban beach. Following the Navy, he pursued a career in finance as a certified financial analyst and later as a portfolio manager, first at Chemical Bank, later at Legg Mason.

In 1989 Peter married Kate Compton. He began a second career on the media side of finance, working as a consultant to Dow Jones, then to CNBC, then to Bloomberg News, where he simultaneously began a media company specializing in the development of content for, and distribution of, educational news for adolescents and teenagers.

Peter is survived by Kate and his children, Thomas, Margaret, and Geoffrey. We have sent condolences.

#### **Dennis A. Miller '59**

Born and raised in Shaker Heights, Ohio, Dennis came east to attend the Lawrenceville School and stayed the rest of his life in New Jersey, passing away in Chatham, N.J., June 4, 2020.

While at Lawrenceville Dennis made his



first foray into the field of finance, which was later to become his lifetime career, as business manager of *The Lawrence*, the school newspaper. He continued

this interest at Princeton, serving as business manager of the *Prince*, combined with duties as freshman wrestling manager and chairman of the Advertising and Selling Forum. He majored in politics and belonged to Cloister Inn. Immediately following graduation Dennis served his two-year NROTC commitment in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

Upon leaving the Navy, Dennis began at Bankers Trust in New York City, then in 1965 moved to New Jersey to join the financial division of Warner-Lambert. In 1968 he earned an MBA from New York University and in 1980 signed on as a managing director of Wm Sword & Co. in Princeton. He concluded as executive vice president at the Fireplace Place in Summit, N.J. Serving as a Presbyterian Church elder, YMCA adviser, and Alumni Schools Committee volunteer rounded out this full career.

Dennis is survived by his daughters, Deirdre Hatfield and Debra Lloyd '90; their husbands; and many grandchildren, to whom the class offers condolences.



#### **Charles G. Moment '59**

Born in Baltimore, Charlie spent the bulk of his life in Maryland. When his health began to fail in 2017 due to prostate cancer, he moved to Madison, Wis., to be near his sisters. He died there June 5, 2020.

Preceded at Princeton by his father, Gairdner Moment '28, he had relatives in the classes of 1896 and 1938 as well as in 1959 (our classmate Reade Ryan, a second cousin). A math major, Charlie joined Wilson Lodge and played the bass violin in the Triangle Club and Savoyard orchestras. Intrigued with numbers, he wrote his senior thesis on game theory. After Princeton he earned a master's degree in math from Purdue and a Ph.D. in math from Texas Tech, taught himself piano by playing Beethoven sonatas, then settled down to work at the Social Security Administration in Baltimore as a senior statistical analyst, retiring in 2007.

A Contract Bridge Association life master, Charlie was also an avid member of Where's George?, a currency tracking group, paying restaurant tabs in small bills marked with the organization's URL, then tracking their circulation. Some of the data obtained were used to project the spread of epidemics.

Charlie is survived by his sisters, Sarah Atis, Ann Combs, and Jane Jordan; their husbands; and many nieces and nephews, to whom the class extends its sympathies.



**THE CLASS OF 1960**

**William R. MacMaster '60**

Bill grew up in Evanston, Ill., and graduated from Evanston High School. At Princeton he joined Quadrangle and majored in history. He was

chairman of the *Nassau Herald* and active in the Pre-Med Society. He earned a medical degree and did his internship at Northwestern Medical School, after which he did his psychiatric residency and was selected chief resident in psychiatry at Cincinnati Medical School.

Called to the Army in 1968, Bill served two years at Fort Bliss, Texas. Released in 1970, he opened his private psychiatry practice in Palo Alto, and later in nearby Sunnyvale and Mountain View, Calif. He also served as chief of the department of psychiatry for the El Camino Hospital complex in those three communities.

Retiring in 2000, Bill remained in Northern California until 2013, when he moved to Eugene, Ore., to be near two of his children and their families. He loved the outdoors, especially hiking, camping, and birding. He also enjoyed traveling, visiting at least five continents. He was active in the Sierra Club and later in BOGS (Birds of Oregon and General Science) in Eugene.

Bill died May 27, 2021, of pneumonia (non-COVID) and is survived by his three children and eight grandchildren, to whom we send our condolences.

**THE CLASS OF 1965**

**Owen D. Nee Jr. '65**

Our class lost a trailblazing member May 7, 2021, after a short battle with pulmonary fibrosis. Owen was that rare combination of high-achieving

and self-effacing, melded with a wicked sense of humor. He came to Princeton from the Loomis School in Windsor, Conn., majored in English, ate at Quadrangle, and was editor-in-chief of the *Bric-a-Brac*. Two years teaching in the Princeton-in-Asia program took Owen to Hong Kong, where he met his wife, Amber, as a student and later served for years as a trustee of the program.

After one year at Columbia Law School, where he later became an editor of the *Columbia Law Review*, he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Army and sent to Vietnam, where he earned a Bronze Star. After graduation he joined the international law firm of Coudert Brothers and was soon asked to open the firm's new office in Hong Kong. During that time he did important fundamental work that permitted commencement of commercial relations between China and the United States.

Owen was a dapper dresser, fond of bow ties

and straw boater hats. He was a fanatic about golf and asked that we recall that his holes-in-one were innumerable.

He is survived by his wife, Amber; daughters Claire Nee Nelson '96 and Alexandra Nee '06; and three granddaughters, to whom the class extends its deepest sympathy.

**David R. Pohndorf '65**

David arrived from Lawrenceville School with a host of accomplishments and achievements in the classroom and sports. Born in Durham, N.C., and raised in Champaign, Ill., where his father was a professor at the University of Illinois, he remained a lifelong fan of the Illini.

At Princeton he was a premed major and ate at Tower Club. David remained a lifelong student, "reading" Churchill at Oxford in the years just after the millennium. His roommates included John C. Clark III, Tom Coburn, and Donnie Dial. His college years were filled with jokes and pranks that sought to touch but not transgress established standards, and he was well known for his quick and lively sense of humor.

After Princeton David was active in public relations work, then translated his experience to Wall Street, where he helped to place equity securities offerings at Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette; Tucker, Anthony & Day; and Whitman, Heffernan, and Rhein. Later he went into business for himself managing money, then retired to Florida with his wife of 54 years, Karen "Dorfina" Pohndorf.

David died March 7, 2021. He is survived by Dorfina; his children, Kristen Staub and her husband Robert, Mark and his wife Bethany, and Michael and his wife Amy; and seven grandchildren. David was a "hail fellow well met" and a live wire in every sense. Condolences to the family and his friends on their loss.

**THE CLASS OF 1966**

**George William Sisley II '66**

Bill died June 24, 2021, after a three-year battle with non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Bill came to Princeton from Morristown (N.J.) High School, where he was president of the student council and played varsity basketball and baseball.

At Princeton he majored in politics, ate at Cannon, played interclub sports, and was a member of the Orange Key Society and the Stock Investment Club.

After graduation Bill enrolled in New York University Law School, earning a law degree in 1969. His legal career included service as in-house counsel for two major corporations and as managing partner of the Stamford (Conn.) office of the firm now known as Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman.

A natural athlete, Bill won squash

championships at the Princeton Club of New York and club championships in tennis at Innis Arden Country Club in Old Greenwich, Conn. He continued playing tennis regularly until the month before his death.

Always loyal to Princeton, Bill served as a Schools Committee interviewer, Class reunion committee member, and special-gifts solicitor for Annual Giving.

He is survived by his wife, Eileen; children Amanda and Andrew; stepson Daniel; granddaughter Evangeline; brother Edward; and several nieces and nephews. The class extends its heartfelt condolences to them.

**THE CLASS OF 1967**

**Kenneth L. Oliver Jr. '67**

Ken died Nov. 13, 2020, near his Philadelphia-area home of Lower Gwynedd, Pa.

Ken graduated from Conestoga High School in

Berwyn, Pa. where he played on the golf and basketball teams and was part of the band, the newspaper, and the Honor Society.

At Princeton he roomed at 431 1903 Hall with Dick Weiss and the late Bill Stinger. A basic engineering major, he participated in Orange Key, the Pre-Law Society, and the Wesley Foundation, and played interclub basketball, softball, and golf for Cloister Inn.

In 1973 Ken graduated from the University of Virginia Law School and began a long career in Philadelphia specializing in employment law with several firms. He retired in 2001 from affiliation with firms and opened a private office specializing in employment law.

Ken served the Episcopal Church Education for Ministry Program, youth coaching, and the Boy Scouts of America in local and regional positions for many years. His hobbies included golf, opera, and reading theology.

In 2002 Ken married Cynthia Gum. They enjoyed cooking for and entertaining friends. He was a member of St. Thomas' Church, Whitmarsh, Pa.; and Manufacturers' Golf and Country Club.

Ken is survived by Cindy; sons Kenneth III and David; daughter Lauren; and grandchildren Joseph and Zoe. Classmates who knew Ken considered him one of the friendliest, most thoughtful, and kindest members of the Class of 1967.

**THE CLASS OF 1969**
**John Sacret Young '69**

An artistically talented, accomplished, and admired member of our class; a great writer and storyteller; and the son, brother, and father of Princetonians, John died June 3, 2021, at his home in Brentwood, Calif., after a 10-month battle with brain cancer.

The son of William C. Young '33, he entered Princeton with the Class of 1968, leaving

during his sophomore year but eventually returning to Princeton with '69. John wrote a novel for his thesis in the religion department, and looking back said this experience taught him the beginnings of how to write.

John's career in Hollywood led to seven Emmy nominations, two Writers Guild Awards, a Golden Globe, a Peabody Award, and Humanitas' Kieser Award for lifetime achievement. He was a sought-after writer, director, and producer of television series including *China Beach*, which he co-created, and *The West Wing*, as well as several feature films. A highly regarded author of the memoirs *Pieces of Glass: An Artoire and Remains: Non Viewable*, John's final book, *Pieces of Tinsel*, will be published posthumously in 2022.

A great mentor, John frequently taught and lectured, including at Princeton in 2001 and again in 2017. He established the John Sacret Young '69 Fund for Visiting Filmmakers, supporting film series at the Lewis Center and campus visits by guest artists.

John dearly loved his family. He is survived by his wife, Claudia Sloan; children Jacy, Jake '02, Julia, and Riley; brother Mason '67; and three grandchildren. To each of them, the Class of 1969 offers its most sincere sympathy.

#### THE CLASS OF 1970



##### Gerald E. Grossman '70

Gerry, one of our exemplary medical experts, died Jan. 2, 2021. A leading neurologist and teacher for decades, he contracted multiple system atrophy (MSA), a rare neuromuscular disorder, which he battled for years, and then COVID-19 while in hospice care.

Gerry joined us from Valley Stream North High School on Long Island and was active in Hillel and as a member of Stevenson Hall while majoring in psychology. He had many adventures hitchhiking across the country in the true spirit of the '70s, then settled into medical school at the University at Buffalo, followed by residencies in pathology and neurology at Case Western. He remained there for a distinguished career as a neurology practitioner, researcher, and teacher.

In the meantime, he was always a beacon to his family and friends, enthralling them with tales ranging from co-authoring a textbook with the Unabomber to convincing the authorities he was not an outlaw physician with a different middle initial; being true just made them funnier. He even continued to entertain and lighten the work of his hospice staff as well.

Gerry is survived by his wife of 48 years, Jennifer S. Kriegler; daughters Joanna Grossman Newton and Marissa Kriegler Grossman '06; three grandchildren; and siblings Kenneth, Elise, and Richard. His legacy

of important medical study, love of family, and courage in adversity will remain with all of us as it does with them.

#### THE CLASS OF 1972

##### Douglas Andrew Blake '72

Doug died March 12, 2021, in Forked River, N.J., at age 70. He was one of the most gifted athletes of his era.

At Hackettstown (N.J.) High School, Doug excelled in football, was a state champion in wrestling, and an all-state pitcher and outfielder in baseball who was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1968. He chose Princeton instead and after freshman year, continued to play football and baseball, where he led the nation in triples as a senior. An easygoing fellow, he was nicknamed "Trout," because his hometown of Hackettstown is the location of the New Jersey State Fish Hatchery.

His classmates recognized his talent and voted him Best Athlete in the 1972 *Nassau Herald*.

Doug worked in sales at Pitney Bowes in Pine Brook, N.J., until his retirement as national sales manager. While at Pitney Bowes, Doug reached high sales honors in numerous years.

Doug was predeceased by his father, Arthur E. Blake, and his first wife, Gayle Lecheler Blake. He is survived by his wife, Meg Coogan-Blake; his mother, Helen Blake; brothers Arthur and Andrew; and sisters Elyse Allen and her husband, Daniel; Pamela Wolfe; Diane Schank and her husband, Harold, and Allison Struble and her husband, Robert. We extend our condolences to his family.

##### David C. Mercer '72

Dave died July 1, 2021, in Oklahoma City. He had been in declining health for several years. He was 70.

Dave was a native of Western Springs, Ill., and followed his late father, Aaron L. Mercer Jr. '41, to Princeton. He was a member of the Glee Club and sang with the Tigertones.

In 1975 he earned a master's degree in public administration from Indiana University and the following year moved to Oklahoma City, where he began a 30-year career as a stockbroker and branch manager and became a certified financial planner. He was active in civic affairs and charitable organizations, serving on the boards of the American Red Cross, Prevent Blindness Oklahoma, Oklahoma City All Sports Association, OKC Beautiful, and Youth Leadership Exchange. He was also a member of Class XX of Leadership Oklahoma City.

Dave is survived by his, wife Helen; brothers Aaron h'41 and his wife Renee, and Fred; and numerous nieces and nephews and his beloved guide dog, Treva. Donations can be made to Foundation Fighting Blindness (Columbia, Md.) or Guide Dogs for the Blind (San Raphael, Calif.). The class sends its condolences to his family.

#### THE CLASS OF 1973



##### Peter C. Kallop '73

Peter died suddenly May 26, 2021, in Cambridge, Md. He was 70.

His father, Arthur, was a member of the Class of 1939. Also alumni were his uncles John '51 and Harry '46 '49.

Peter was born April 21, 1951, and came to Princeton from the Pingry School, where he excelled academically, played soccer, and was inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame. At Princeton Peter's extensive accomplishments and pursuits included freshman soccer, a politics major, membership in Cottage Club, business manager for *Bric-a-Brac*, and president of the Young Republican Club. He roomed with Myles Morrison, Jeff Shaw, and Steve Hausmann. After earning an MBA from the University of Virginia in 1975, he enjoyed a successful career in consulting work for thrift institutions and smaller community banks.

Peter and Nancy Johnson were married in 1993 and lived in Georgetown in Washington, D.C., until they relocated to Cambridge, where they built a home fronting the scenic Choptank River 13 years ago.

We enjoyed and will miss among other things Peter's sense of humor, quick wit, and concern for others.

Peter was predeceased by his brother William '65. He is survived by his wife, Nancy; his brother George '67 '69; and numerous nieces and nephews. To his family and friends, the class extends its warm remembrances and condolences.

#### THE CLASS OF 1977

##### David A. Quick '77

David died April 9, 2021, in Berlin, Germany.

A New Jersey native, David entered with the Class of '77 and graduated with the Class of '78, but maintained his status with '77. Summer internships cemented the course of his life: a summer in a German bank and one with the Department of the Interior, from which he retired to live in Berlin, where he died of a heart attack.

A German major, David played the viola in the University Orchestra and was active in what was then the Gay Alliance of Princeton. At Interior, he served first at the Bureau of Mines, then at the Office of Land Management. He held public relations and editorial responsibilities.

Throughout his Washington career David played the viola professionally with the Fairfax Symphony, the National Gallery Orchestra, the Washington National and Baltimore operas, and at many Kennedy Center events.

David is survived by his sister, Linda.



## THE CLASS OF 1980



### Elizabeth Clay Pratt '80

Lisa died Aug. 7, 2021, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Lisa majored in religion at Princeton, and like her father, Robert Pratt '44, she was a student-athlete. She played five varsity sports and was a member of Cap and Gown. Recently, Lisa could be seen at Roberts Stadium cheering on her younger daughter, Katie '18, as she played soccer for the Tigers.

Lisa earned an MBA from Pepperdine University. She excelled in her role as president and CEO of the Health Research Association and established several successful nonprofits. In 2013 she relocated to Washington, D.C., where she worked as a senior management analyst and special adviser at the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as deputy director of the Center for Women Veterans.

Lisa kept the Princeton motto of "in the nation's service and the service of humanity" close to heart as a board member of the Princeton Bisexual, Transgender, Gay and Lesbian Alumni Association (BTGALA) and as a mentor to numerous Princeton undergraduates. At age 59 she was offered a spot on the U.S. master's field hockey team. Suffice it to say she never stopped moving!

Lisa is survived by her daughters, Elizabeth and Katherine '18; her mother, Elizabeth Walker Pratt; her brothers David, Robert, and Henry '77; and her partner Suzanne MacKall. Lisa was an inspiration to everyone who knew her.

## THE CLASS OF 1990



### James E. Lockhart '90

Jim died May 30, 2020, of a heart attack in Houston, Texas, just a few weeks shy of his 52nd birthday.

At Princeton Jim majored in politics and was a member of Campus Club. He is remembered as the philosopher king of Wilson (now First) College dining hall and expert DFS student manager. He was known for his ability to approach everyone with charm as well as to seek humor and conversation with all who were within earshot.

After Princeton Jim did postgraduate work at George Washington University and worked as an economist specializing in the areas of oil and gas. He was active in his community, teaching Sunday School and volunteering at the Houston Food Bank. Similar to his student days, He was known for being smart, funny, caring, and supportive, making friends wherever he went.

Jim is survived by his wife, Florence Snively; children Margaret, William, and Jennifer Lockhart; parents Walter Coffill Lockhart III and Ann Broderick Lockhart; and brother Walter Coffill Lockhart IV.

## GRADUATE ALUMNI

### Leo A. Goodman \*50

Widely considered to be among the founding fathers of modern statistics, Leo died Dec. 22, 2020, of a COVID-19-related lung infection in Berkeley, Calif.

Leo was born Aug. 7, 1928, in Brooklyn. He earned a bachelor's degree in sociology and mathematics from Syracuse University and a Ph.D. at Princeton at age 22. His passion for statistics was ignited by mentors Sam Wilks and John Tukey '39.

In 1950 he joined the University of Chicago faculty as one of the nation's youngest professors. After a year at Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Leo began a 30-year tenure as UC Berkeley's Class of 1938 Professor of Sociology and Statistics.

By addressing the intrinsic difficulty of studying categorical distinctions like race, religion, and gender with statistics designed for continuous variables like time and distance, Leo revolutionized the study of poverty, inequality, and other social phenomena. Techniques he developed are considered a gold standard in sociology scholarship worldwide.

Three statistics used in software — Goodman-Kruskal Lambda, Gamma, and Tau — are named after Leo and his Chicago colleague William Kruskal.

Leo is survived by sons Andy and Tom; sister Janice; five grandchildren; and his former wife, Ann Hayes.

### John B. Rogerson Jr. \*54

Jack, a professor emeritus at Princeton, died July 8, 2021, in Pennswood Village, Newtown, Pa., just two months short of his 99th birthday.

Born Sept. 3, 1922, in Cleveland, Ohio, Jack earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Case Institute of Technology in 1951. He earned a Ph.D. in astrophysics from Princeton in 1954, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship awarded by the Carnegie Foundation.

During his career at Princeton Jack took a lead in developing techniques suitable to space astronomy. His work with Stratoscope 1 and 2, in which a balloon lifted a telescope 80,000 feet above our atmosphere to film the surface of the sun, earned him the appointment of executive director of the Princeton Observatory's space telescope program. That appointment led to NASA's launch of the Copernicus Satellite in 1972, an orbiting astronomical observatory that produced significant advancement of knowledge to the astronomy community around the world.

A Navy veteran, Jack loved music, reading, and travel, especially to countries where he could use his language skills.

Predeceased in 2012 by his wife of almost 70 years, Elizabeth, and his son Jerry, Jack is survived by sons John and Alan, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

### Ahmad R. Haffar \*61

Ahmad died July 26, 2021, in Hyrum, Utah, from complications of Parkinson's disease.

Ahmad was born in Tripoli, Lebanon, in 1927, and immigrated to Logan, Utah, in 1949. He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Utah. In 1961 Ahmad attained what he called his "life's dream," a Ph.D. in politics from Princeton.

For 30 years Ahmad taught at SUNY New Paltz. He was active in his field of political science and highly respected by his peers, participating in working groups pursuing peace and reconciliation in the Middle East. He was affiliated with Harvard, the United Nations, and the Woodrow Wilson School, as well as private-interest groups working in the Middle East.

Proudly self-sufficient, humble, and eager to learn, Ahmad had the disposition to build a stone wall and lay brick for a 23-foot chimney while teaching and writing. Curious but with strong opinions, his best lectures came if you accompanied him clamming at his summer home in New Brunswick, Canada. He will be missed by many, but not by the clams of New Brunswick.

Predeceased by his wife, Shirlee, Ahmad is survived by his children, Nadra, Richard, Derek, and Warren; and three granddaughters.

### Benjamin R. Beede \*62

Ben died suddenly July 4, 2021, while walking in North Brunswick, N.J.

Born Jan. 12, 1939, in South Portland, Maine, Ben earned bachelor's and master's degrees in political science and an MLS from Rutgers, and studied politics at Princeton. Although he did not complete a Princeton degree, Ben was a stalwart volunteer for graduate alumni Annual Giving.

In 1964 he enlisted in the Army. A supply specialist in a combat engineer battalion in Germany, he was awarded a Commendation Medal for meritorious service.

After a year at the Linden (N.J.) Public Library in 1969, Ben became a librarian at Rutgers Law School, Camden until 1980, when he transferred to the Kilmer Area Library (now the Carey Library) on Rutgers' Livingston Campus. His career was spent largely in reference and instructional services. He retired in 2003.

Ben worked on eight reference books; journal articles in political science, history, library science, and sociology; and more than 40 encyclopedia articles. His scholarly interests included guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency; interfaces between police and military organizations; and political development in the United States during the Progressive Era, 1900-1921.

Ben was predeceased by his wife, Anne Brugh, in 2001.

*Graduate memorials are prepared by the APGA. An undergraduate memorial appears for John V.E. Hardy '38 \*39.*

# Classifieds

## For Rent

### Europe

**Italy/Todi:** Luxurious 8BR, 7.5BA villa, amazing views, infinity pool, olives, lavender, grapes, vegetable garden, housekeeper included, cook available, A/C, Wi-Fi. Discount for Princetonians. Photos/prices/availability: [www.luxuryvillatodi.com](http://www.luxuryvillatodi.com), p'11.

**Paris, Tuileries Gardens:** Beautifully-appointed, spacious, 1BR queen, 6th floor, elevator, concierge. [karin.demorest@gmail.com](mailto:karin.demorest@gmail.com), w\*49.

**Paris:** 1870 apartment between Louvre Muséum and Ritz Hotel. Six night minimum for 2. [apower7@icloud.com](mailto:apower7@icloud.com), 831-521-7155, 310-614-1537, w'49.

**Provence:** Delightful stone farmhouse facing Roman theater, 5 bedrooms, pool, market town. [Frenchfarmhouse.com](http://Frenchfarmhouse.com)

**Paris, Marais:** 2BR 2B spacious, quiet apartment facing inner courtyard. Walk to Louvre, Notre Dame, Picasso Museum. Vibrant neighborhood on pedestrian street, full kitchen, w/d, AC. [kdanders12@gmail.com](mailto:kdanders12@gmail.com), k'58, k'62.

**Ile St-Louis:** Elegant, spacious, top floor, skylighted apartment, gorgeous views overlooking the Seine, 2 bedrooms sleep 4, 2 baths, elevator, well-appointed, full kitchen, WiFi. 678-232-8444. [triff@mindspring.com](mailto:triff@mindspring.com)

### Worldwide

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### United States Northeast

**Stone Harbor, NJ:** Beachfront, 4BR, upscale. 570-430-3639, [stoneharborbeachhouses.com](mailto:stoneharborbeachhouses.com), [radams150@aol.com](mailto:radams150@aol.com)

### United States West

**Big Sky Montana:** Charming 4 BR log home on 20 acres beautifully furnished, spectacular views, Big Sky sunsets, skiing, hiking, fishing and golfing within 5 minutes. Close to Yellowstone National Park and Bozeman. Enjoyment all 4 seasons. 610-937-0529. [janegriffith655@gmail.com](mailto:janegriffith655@gmail.com), s'67.

**Park City/Deer Valley, Utah:** 3 BR ski-out condominium in Upper Deer Valley. Newly remodeled, hot tub, beautiful views, available all seasons. Reasonable rates. 937-825-4137 or [jmkolodzik@gmail.com](mailto:jmkolodzik@gmail.com), p'12 p'21.

## International Travel

### CHILE, Northern Patagonia

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## Books

**The perfect gift for your college student:** How To Intern Successfully — Insights & Actions To Optimize Your Experience. Available: Amazon. [Robert@agilerainmakers.com](mailto:Robert@agilerainmakers.com), '90.

**Creative Uncertainty: A New Philosophy for a World Out of Balance** by David Keppel. Available on Amazon Kindle and in paperback (ISBN 978-1-7377-359-1-5).

## Educational Services

**SAT/ACT & ISEE/SSAT Tutor:** Robert Kohen, Ph.D., Harvard and Columbia grad, provides individualized tutoring for the SAT/ACT and ISEE/SSAT. 212.658.0834; [robertkohen@koheneducationalservices.com](mailto:robertkohen@koheneducationalservices.com); [www.koheneducationalservices.com](http://www.koheneducationalservices.com)

## Professional Services

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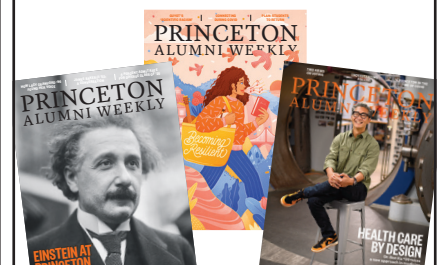
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## A Hunter of Lost Art and Lost Alumni

By Elyse Graham '07

Readers of the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* may occasionally wonder whether people in the University's Office of Alumni Records have training in intelligence. When you move to a new address, the University seems to know it. When you change your title, the University seems to know that, too. If you get stranded on a desert island, the odds are 10 to one that the next issue of PAW will greet you right on schedule, washing up on shore in a discreet watertight package.

In fact, Sarah (Sally) Sillcocks, the director of the Office of Alumni Records for many decades, *did* get her training in intelligence. During World War II, Sillcocks worked as a member of the Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU) of the Office of Strategic Services — the so-called “Monuments Men” — to track down works of art that the Nazis had stolen. When she joined the University in the 1950s, she used her tracking skills to locate alumni who had fallen off the map.

If you needed something or someone found, Sillcocks was your woman. Between 1952 and 1957, her office reduced the number of “missing” alumni by more than half, to 220 from 576.

Sillcocks grew up in Brooklyn, where she belonged to the socialite class whose dances, debuts, and afternoon teas were tallied in the society pages. Although she had a debutante party at 18, she would not marry for another three decades. Instead, she looked for adventure.

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**If you needed something or someone found, Sillcocks was your woman. Between 1952 and 1957, her office reduced the number of “missing” alumni by more than half, to 220 from 576.**

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In 1944, she joined the ALIU. The Allies feared that, as the Axis lost ever more ground on the Continent, it was smuggling art out of occupied countries to fund Nazi cells. The unit's task was to reverse the flow of treasure. (Lane Faison Jr. '32, an art historian at Williams

College, was the head of the ALIU.)

The unit found whole national archives — and whole museums' worth of art — hidden in castles and salt mines, without papers of provenance. Sillcocks had to find order where none existed, wrangle new documentation, and write endless reports on whom the unit interrogated, where artifacts came from, and whether the owners of those artifacts were still alive.

The investigation unveiled heroes and villains. Hans Van Meegeren, who sold Old Master paintings to worthies, confessed under interrogation that he had forged the paintings — rendering many priceless works suddenly worthless. Rose Valland, a staffer at the Jeu de Paume Museum, pretended to be a Nazi collaborator by day, and by night gave detailed reports to the Resistance — which meant the ALIU could work with “the most magnificent card catalog of works of art that were gone from Paris. And to what place they had been shipped,” Faison later said.

In 1953, Sillcocks became the new head of the University's Office of Alumni Records. By now a seasoned tracker, she turned up missing alumni all over the world and found interesting data patterns among alumni — for instance, finding in 1958 that Ev Crawford 1901 was the biggest living fan of Tiger football, having attended 65 Princeton-Yale games. Sillcocks even used a vacation in Southern France to track down an alumnus from the Class of 1914 who was rumored to live there. “It was found,” the *Princetonian* said, “that just nobody had bothered to get in touch with him and that he had been living there for quite some time.”

In 1959, Sillcocks married James Staples Graham Jr. '37, an interior designer. She wrote regularly to the Class Notes section of Vassar's alumni magazine. In one missive, she said, “We've been chuckling over the mispronunciation of the Founder's name by an unknown candidate as reported to us by a Wells graduate. The prospective student told her he was applying to Vass-ARR, with the accent on the second syllable! Actually, it sounds quite distinguished!” She added, “There is a slight precedent for a second syllable stress down here in Tigertown, where they end up their cheer with ‘PrinceTON, PrinceTON, PrinceTON!’” ♦





# Kindred Spirits Have a Way of Reuniting – Even After Years Apart

Andreas Prindl and Deborah Robbins grew up together, spending long childhood summers in northern Michigan where their parents had adjacent cabins on the lake. Then their paths diverged, but they and their families always remained in touch. Today, they share an active life filled with friendships, culture, and travel.

**A**ndy graduated from Princeton University in 1960, where he majored in German, French, and Italian, a choice that proved to be very useful during his long and illustrious career in international banking. Most of his professional life was spent overseas, first in Japan and then for many years in London. His passion for travel and books led him to write and publish five books focused on the literary heritage of places he knew and loved.

Deborah, too, enjoyed a happy professional career, earning a master's degree in library science and working as a librarian. Later, her love of music led to a rewarding career as a school music teacher. She has always been interested in biking and, as with almost everything she does, she took that to the next level by cycling across the entire North American continent from Boston to Vancouver.

## Princeton Reunions

In 2015, Andy's multinational life included a trip to Princeton University for a major Reunion. He knew that he would find Deborah in town; she had lived there for years as part of the communities associated with the Center for Communications Research and the Princeton Junior School. They learned that their connection to each other was still strong.

***"We discovered that we had the same passions and interests – travel, books, languages, music – and having both lost our spouses, we decided to combine our lives."***

Their new life together needed a new home. They wanted to live in a well-located community, with a diverse group of active and intellectually engaged residents, with easy access to cultural events and fine dining... and with stress-free home ownership offered by a well-managed condominium. In 2019 they found that community at **Princeton Windrows**.

One of the attractions of Princeton Windrows that resonated with them was the impressive library which includes shelves of books by resident authors. Andy's books are now displayed there. Living with others who also love books offers him opportunities to serve as a presenter at the weekly "Wednesday at Windrows" lecture series.

He has been known to transform himself into Henry James, delivering monologues in character. He and Deborah also enjoy the movies, art exhibitions, and concerts that are a regular part of life at Windrows.



## Hitting the Right Notes

Deborah and Andy love music as much as they do books. They fill their beautiful apartment with the sounds of their daily harpsichord and recorder duets. They enjoy attending Princeton Symphony Orchestra concerts in the Windrows living room as well as live jazz evenings in the Pub.

But neither Deborah nor Andy would be content with a sedentary life, however rich it might be in cultural events. Both of them enjoy all the physical activities that Princeton Windrows offers: swimming (Andy teaches a water exercise class), exercising in the gym, tai chi and yoga, tennis, pickleball, and walking and biking along Lake Carnegie.

***"Princeton Windrows has everything we could have wanted, with the added benefit of new friends who also like travel, books, music, outdoor activities, and a fine dinner – plus a glass or two of good wine."***

Living among fellow Princeton University alumni and retired professors and staff, as well as an internationally diverse group of interesting neighbors, has made their experience truly special. As we emerge from the pandemic, these two kindred spirits will surely be jet-setting around the globe again. When it is time to head home, the beauty, security, and community of Princeton Windrows will be right here waiting.







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