William Thalmann, Amy Richlin and Thomas Habinek

Classics: Back to the Future

With a roster of only eight faculty, the USC College classics department is small but mighty. As its professors continuously engage ancient examples to explain modern phenomena, like the war with Iraq and racial conflicts, and with its cutting-edge syllabi, like the one that compares the leadership styles of Socrates to Thomas Jefferson, the department has gained a reputation as being a laboratory for the future of the classics.

"In the College, the study of classics is much more than a search for roots," says College Dean Joseph Aoun. "By understanding the successes and failures of ancient civilizations we are better equipped to analyze modern society."

"What we can draw out of the ancient world are historical patterns that impact the way our society functions today," says department chair Thomas Habinek. “USC classicists are very good at putting the nuts and bolts of language, philosophy and archaeology into a broader framework.”

Despite its focus on the past, the department is often very contemporary. Last spring, William Thalmann’s course on Homer’s “The Iliad” coincided with the onset of the U.S. war in Iraq. “As a result,” Thalmann says, “students ‘got’ this text like I’ve never seen before. On many levels, the poem is about how individuals come to terms with controlling and eradicating violence.”

In the Classroom

The comprehensive study of Latin and Greek is the foundation of the classics department and offers USC classicists a window on the ancient world. Thalmann, who began learning Latin when he was 11 and was fluent in Greek by his 14th birthday, says John Milton’s “Paradise Lost” is one of his favorite texts to teach.

“Language is a wonderful way into the ancient world. When you just read the translation, there is a real barrier between you and the text. There is a wonderful analytical aspect to learning the languages. It carries over to the way you think, read and write,” he says. Thalmann and Habinek are revising our understanding of the relationship between oral and written performance through their research on Latin and Greek literature respectively.

Classics professors and their graduate students often find themselves in the midst of unusual research projects that link two seemingly unrelated topics. Take associate professor Vincent Farenga’s study of communication and psychology. His research explains how communication influences the political and cognitive development of the Greek city-state citizens. Anthony Boyle’s expertise in Senecan drama has also led him to teach courses on the reception of Seneca in the Renaissance. Kate Gilhuly researches prostitution in the ancient world. It’s this unusual mix of subjects that makes the Classics: Back to the Future issue so unique.

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The Classics: Timeless Teachings

Fall 2003

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Classic Answers to Perennial Problems

Students who study the classics in USC College often use innovative means to connect the ancient world to contemporary problems. Understanding these ancient cultures provides students with a deeper understanding of contemporary affairs and provides a basis for creative thinking.

Throughout the department's offerings, students look to the ancient world to explore the timeless concepts of leadership, democracy, and diversity, concepts brought to us from democracy's birthplace in Greece.

In one course, students examine the readings of Sophocles, Melville and Shakespeare, repeatedly poring through the texts to analyze race, ethnicity, nationality, gender and religious differences within the Western tradition.

A new minor examines the political and moral leadership qualities of history’s tyrants, lawgivers, oligarchs, demagogues and autocratic emperors. A collaboration with the USC School of Religion embraces the Western tradition of many academic programs at competitive institutions.

Aoun focuses on a particular theme, “In most institutions of higher education right now, the greatest challenge is having the leadership and financial resources to pursue your goals. Reduced levels of support have severely impacted the development of many academic programs at competing schools. At USC, we have these resources,” he says. “Our goal of becoming one of the top 10 private colleges in the nation is certainly achievable.”

Initiative and is an example of how we value and constantly improve undergraduate education in the College. Our classics students may do hands-on field work in archaeology at one time, then use Homer’s “The Iliad” to understand and analyze the war in Iraq. All of this reinforces the idea that studies of the ancient world reveal historical patterns that impact the way our society functions today.

This exceptional department has gained much prestige in recent years. Three faculty members have recently won coveted senior fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), given to fewer than 10 percent of applicants.

New faculty appointments provide broadened scope, adding to the department scholars of late antiquity, the intersection between Greek and Roman culture and the Mediterranean world.

There are four undergraduate tracks for study: civilization and society; literature and mythology; and separate tracks in language, literature and culture, in Greek or Latin. This array of concentrations gives students multiple pathways for academic discovery. The department also offers the Ph.D. in classics (Greek and Latin) and the M.A. in Greek, Latin and classics.

Studying the classics teaches students how to think, write, analyze and read with a critical intellect. Learning about the ancient world provides a solid basis for other areas students may wish to pursue, such as art history, history, philosophy, political science, comparative literature, law and other professions, to name just a few. But most importantly, the classics teach us about ourselves—where we have come from and how we have been shaped by our history, culture, language and literature.

Robert Beyer

Dean of USC College

Anna H. Bing Professor

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Beyer Sold on Well-Rounded Education

Robert Beyer has a list of subjects he wants to learn more about—and it’s growing fast. “Every time I visit the College, I hear of another topic or subject that just fascinates me,” he says.

As president, chief investment officer and director of Trust Company of the West, a Los Angeles-based investment advisory firm that manages more than $85 billion in assets, Beyer is a well-respected expert in the business arena. He earned his B.S. in business administration from USC in 1981.

“Initially, it seemed my business orientation wouldn’t have much to offer the College,” says Beyer, who joined USC College’s Board of Councilors in 2002. “But that was when I had an architectural view of what education is all about. In the work- place today, people no longer have one career, and as a result, students no longer want to be prepared in only one academic discipline.”

A father of four who lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Catherine, Beyer is particularly excited about the vast opportunities students have to enrich themselves in the College, specifically, with the emergence of more joint degree programs. “Joint degree programs are critical to building new and exciting businesses into established and mature industries. It’s a privilege to have a front-row seat while these transformations take place.”

Beyer is excited to be serving on the board of councilors, especially at a time when the College is so fortunate. “In most institutions of higher education right now, the greatest challenge is having the leadership and financial resources to pursue your goals. Reduced levels of support have severely impacted the development of many academic programs at competing schools. At USC, we have these resources,” he says. “Our goal of becoming one of the top 10 private colleges in the nation is certainly achievable.”

Like many students who study in the College, Beyer has a must-read list that expands with every campus visit. “At each board meeting, Dean Aoun focuses on a particular theme, such as the life sciences or the Pacific Rim. The faculty, researchers and students I have met at these meetings have caused my list of what I want to learn more about to grow substantially.”

It’s the unbridled energy on campus that inspires Beyer. “If for nothing else, I love having an excuse to visit the USC campus during days that would otherwise be a tough work day in the financial markets.”

—Nicole St. Pierre


good Reads

USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences

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College Launches New NIH Genomics Center

$18.7 million grant funds USC efforts to speed up search for disease-related genes

UCSC will expand its role in the fast-paced world of genomics research this fall with the launch of the USC Center of Excellence in Genomic Science (CEGS), an interdisciplinary center funded for five years by $18.72 million in grants from the National Human Genome Research Institute of the National Institutes of Health (N.I.H.).

The research center and a companion training program will unite scientists from USC College and the Keck School of Medicine of USC to develop new methods for studying human genetic variation data that can be used to identify the causes of diseases and explain differences in the way people respond to treatments.

The center will enable the USC team, led by University Professor Michael Waterman, to play a leading role in the effort to turn the promise of genomics into advances in understanding human disease and evolution.

“We will focus on developing and testing new experimental and computational techniques that will increase our ability to find disease-related genes and extract useful knowledge from the human genome,” says Waterman, holder of the USC Associates Chair in Natural Sciences.

The researchers will play an integral role in the International HapMap Project, the largest study of human genetic variation ever attempted, which involves researchers in five nations investigating patterns of genetic variation in samples from about 300 individuals, including Han Chinese, the Yorubas in Nigeria, Japanese and U.S. residents of northern and western European descent.

The long-term aim of the USC center is to build the tools needed to reveal the causes of diseases influenced by multiple genes, or by a combination of genes and the environment—such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer’s, diabetes, asthma and depression, which rank among the nation’s biggest killers and most expensive diseases.

USC is one of only seven universities selected as a site for a national CEGS program grant and the only one in Southern California. Other CEGS sites include Yale, Stanford, Columbia and the University of Washington, Seattle.

“This center grant is a fantastic boost for the molecular and computational biology program at the College, and for USC genomics research in general,” says Joseph Aoun, dean of the College and holder of the Anna H. Bing Dean’s Chair. “This marks the NIH’s recognition that USC has built phenomenal programs in genomics and computational biology, and in the application of these fields to the epidemiological study of disease.”

Understanding Variation

The center’s core research mission focuses on investigating patterns of human genetic variation. Although all humans are 99.9 percent alike genetically, slightly variations determine differences such as blood type or eye color. While most variations have no deleterious effects, a few determine why one person is more likely than another to develop high blood pressure or breast cancer, or whether a drug will work or cause unintended harm.

Such differences may stem from a variation as small as one DNA base. There are millions of these “SNPs,” or single nucleotide polymorphisms, in the genome. Identifying SNPs important in common diseases has proved challenging.

Scientists hope to simplify the search by characterizing certain regions of the genome inherited in big chunks. These “haplotype blocks” contain many SNPs that are found in unique patterns. The plan is to use the patterns, instead of individual SNPs, to build a genetic map to link specific mutations with diseases that would cover the entire genome. But scientists do not yet know the origins of haplotype blocks nor how best to use them.

Through a variety of interrelated projects, the USC team seeks answers to these questions. One will focus on determining how SNPs could be used as tags to label haplotype blocks. Another will investigate the utility of human genetic variation data, and look at ways to improve techniques used to find SNPs. Another group will study biological processes that have created haplotype block structure.

One hypothesis is that blocks arose from variable rates of recombination within chromosomes, genetic shuffling that occurs during fertilization. The USC team will test the idea that the blocks are chromosome regions with low recombination rates, bordered by areas that undergo frequent recombination.

If true, team members expect there will be a few types of haplotype blocks found in people all around the world. If not, and populations from different geographic regions have block patterns that are substantially different from other groups, the approach will not be as powerful as hoped.

The USC team will refine computational methods they develop using real cancer genetics data collected by the epidemiology group in the medical school.

“The USC group is one of the world leaders in computational biology—with a long track record of contributions and a number of young stars—and in epidemiological disease research,” says David Altshuler of the MIT/Whitehead Center for Genome Research, who co-chairs the HapMap analysis group.

“Our understanding of how to analyze and utilize human genetic variation remains in its infancy. [We] will look to USC, along with others, to develop new methods to interpret genetic variation data and to apply that data to better understand, diagnose and treat common human diseases,” he says.

Grants

A sampling of recent support

**RECENT GRANTS**

- **Kim Lindsey and Franklin Manis**, psychology, received $1,096,875 from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development for the project “Literacy Development in English-Language Learners”

- **Curt Wittig and Vitaly Kresin**, chemistry, received $473,333 from the National Science Foundation for the project “Molecules and Clusters in Helium Nanodroplets: Chaotic, Collective and Anionic States”

- **Edward Rhodes Jr.**, physics, received $300,379 from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for the project “The Study of the Changing Solar Interior Using Global and Local Helioseismology”

- **Myron Goodman**, biological sciences, received $2,031,250 from the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences for the project “Biochemical Basis of SOS-Induced Mutagenesis”

- **Donald Miller**, religion, received $100,000 from the Union Rescue Mission for the project “Union Rescue Mission”

- **Robert Rye**, earth sciences, received $80,000 from the NASA for the project “Geobiology of Non-Saline Hyperalkaline Springs: A Novel Extreme Environment”

- **Laura Baker**, Social Science Research Institute, received $37,288 from the National Institute of Drug Abuse for the project “Prenatal Smoking and Aggression in Twins”
Let There Be Light
Words lost in time are revealed online

Although he’s not an archaeologist, Bruce Zuckerman unearths treasures of the past by deciphering ancient inscriptions that have been illegible through the centuries. Using sophisticated technology, Zuckerman is bringing words to light that have been lost to time.

For the past 20 years, Zuckerman, with his brother, photographer Kenneth Zuckerman, has developed advanced photographic techniques for capturing images of ancient texts from biblical times. This past summer, for example, the Zuckermans were in Berlin photographing worn text on the kilt of a 14-foot statue with a nine-foot-high studio camera stand and large format camera.

The brothers gained national attention in the early 1990s, while working with a team of scientists from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Together they employed specialized infrared imaging cameras to uncover a previously undeciphered phrase in a Dead Sea Scroll that made reference to “the Book of the Words of Noah.” More recently, a team led by Zuckerman and his colleague Marilyn Lundberg documented the earliest known alphabetic inscriptions, written on a cliff face in the Wadi el Hol, literally “the Gulch of Terror” in the Sahara desert in southern Egypt. This work was featured on the front page of the New York Times.

The Zuckermans and Lundberg are the core members of the West Semitic Research Project (WSRP), a photo archival project that has amassed a collection of more than 100,000 images of ancient inscriptions available for study by scholars around the globe.

Now, another chapter in the history of lost texts is about to begin. Zuckerman, associate professor of religion and director of WSRP; Lundberg, associate director of WSRP; and Leta Hunt, a software development expert from the Information Services Division; have

Enduring Principles
Leadership, democracy and diversity courses merge the past with the present

In one classroom, a lively discussion takes place about the intellectual and moral dilemmas that challenged Republican leaders like Thomas Jefferson.

Down the hall, students pore over “The Federalist Papers,” written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, which highlight the republican and democratic principles that trace back to Athenian democracy, the Roman republic and city-republics of early modern Italy.

Meanwhile, in another nearby class, students look to the writings of Herman Melville to understand how the difference between white and black became a social rather than a biological distinction.

Sometimes it’s easy to forget this is a classics department. In intellectual circles, USC College has gained a reputation as being a laboratory for the future of classics. “We strive to be innovative, without sacrificing the disciplinary core,” says department chair Thomas Habinek.

Indicative of this politically and socially engaged approach are three courses in which students look to the ancient world to explore the timeless concepts of leadership, democracy and diversity.

Several years ago, when the College created a new minor called Critical Approaches to Leadership, associate professor of classics and comparative literature Vincent Farenga was intent on incorporating the classics. “You can’t fully understand contemporary leadership without first examining the political and moral leadership qualities of history’s tyrants, lawgivers, oligarchs, demagogues and autocratic emperors,” he says.

Out of Farenga’s vision grew the undergraduate course “Leaders and Communities: Classical Models.” Greek philosophers like Socrates and Zeno of Citium (the founder of Stoicism) are compared to leaders like Pericles and Alexander the Great. Students question how political counselor Niccolo Machiavelli redefined the morality of successful leadership and community in the early modern age. They also dissect the writings of Roman intellectuals like Cicero, Sallust and Seneca, to better evaluate powerful generals and emperors like Julius Caesar and Augustus.

Integrating the classic and contemporary into one syllabus seems to be old hat for Farenga. Five years prior to his creation of the leadership course, he pioneered a course in the College called “Democracies Ancient and Modern,” in which students explore the formations, achievements and ideologies of democratic and republican societies in Athens, Rome, early modern Italy, the new American republic and the contemporary world.

In the course, students study how Athenian democracy and the Roman republic served as positive and negative models for later societies.

“I believe knowledge of the Greeks and Romans is only worth pursuing for what it can tell us about ourselves and our societies today,” says Farenga.

Farenga’s colleagues in the College embrace this approach, too. In the general education course “Diversity and the Classical Western Tradition,” Habinek’s teachings also look to the past to understand modern-day challenges. In this course,
developed the logical extension to WSRP, a database of the images collected by WSRP, digitized and organized in a user-friendly format called InscriptiFact. Hunt serves as associate director of this image distribution project under Zuckerman's supervision. The Internet database prototype became available online in May with a test set of 840 images. By the end of the year this will be increased to 5,000 images. Within three years, thanks to a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, it is expected to house more than 20,000 high-resolution images available for use by anyone who registers and establishes a password online.

Its creators say InscriptiFact is the first of its kind. Other digitized databases of ancient images are available, but none with the kind of high-resolution images and advanced search and display features that are found in InscriptiFact. "We are the leaders of our field in computer imaging technology," says Zuckerman. "We're collecting the highest quality data we can possibly get and digitizing them for everyone to use. This will be a tremendous aid to scholars studying these important texts. And the educational potential of InscriptiFact for the general public is also significant."

With curator Lynn Swartz Dodds, Zuckerman also runs the Archaeological Research Collection in Taper Hall, which houses more than 5,000 ancient artifacts found in archaeological digs or donated by private collectors. It is the only such program to allow undergraduates the opportunity to do sophisticated, mentored, original research on the material culture of the ancient world, says Zuckerman. "Our students have done so well in their undergraduate research that for the five years since the competitive Undergraduate Research Symposium has been in existence, our students have always won at least one first prize and usually much more," he adds. "It's a record unmatched by any other program in the university."

Zuckerman says studying ancient texts can be challenging because in so many cases, significant portions of the writings are either gone or obscured so they can no longer be seen. WSRP has harnessed advanced technologies in photography, computer imaging and enhancement to reclaim ancient texts—in many cases making their readings available for the first time since they were written.

"When you have these kinds of clear images, you study things differently," he adds. "Because of the quality of data, you ask different questions and get better answers. Because the data is so detailed, we have to totally rethink our methodological approach to language and culture and impact the way our society functions today."—Thomas Habinek, classics department chair

Back to the Future

creates the intellectual fervor so easily spotted in the classics department, whose faculty can also be found teaching in the departments of philosophy, German, art history and English.

Setting the Pace

USC College classics holds some of the top honors in their field. In the past few years, three faculty members—Habinek, professor Amy Richlin and associate professor Clifford Ando—have won prestigious senior fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), a coveted humanities research award that fewer than 10 percent of applicants win annually. Also notable, associate professor Carolyn Dewald recently wrote the introduction to the popular Oxford World's Classics translation of Herodotus, the world's first historian who recorded the astonishing achievements of both the Greek and non-Greek peoples dating back to the fifth century B.C.

New faculty appointments have broadened departmental expertise. Research of late antiquity has been enhanced with the addition of Ando, and the exploration of the intersection between Greek and Roman culture and the larger Mediterranean world has been augmented with the appointment of assistant professor Bryan Burns.

In addition, collaborations with the USC School of Religion in the areas of archaeology and the ancient world further extend the reach of the department.

With such a broad wealth of knowledge it's no wonder why the department's contributions to USC's general education program outstrip that of classics departments at most other research universities. Classics faculty are key contributors to the intellectual excitement of USC's vigorous honors program. "Setting the Pace..."—Nicole St.Pierre

continued on page 6

What we can draw out of the ancient world are historical patterns that impact the way our society functions today."
Lost Letters,
Forbidden Love

Classics professor Amy Richlin is striding into an area of scholarship where others have only tip-toed.

For reasons lost to history, love letters between two figures of antiquity have been largely ignored for two centuries. But now a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies is allowing Richlin the time to explore a collection of passionate exchanges between Cornelius Fronto, a famous Roman orator, and Marcus Aurelius, who later became emperor of Rome from 161 to 180 A.D.

The letters were discovered in a palimpsest—a manuscript that had been scraped down in order to use it again. When Roman cardinal and celebrated philologist Angelo Mai discovered the manuscript in Milan’s Ambrosian Library in 1815, he published the letters thinking they would attract as much attention as the Cicero orations he discovered had years before.

But the letters drew little attention and, as Richlin puts it, “for almost 200 years they have lain hidden in plain sight.”

The question is, why?

“There are many amazing things about these letters,” Richlin says. “But one of the most surprising things is that they were illegal. It was criminal for Fronto and Marcus, a free-born teenager, to have had a sexual relationship between two prominent figures, some 200 years they have lain hidden in plain sight.”

International Impact

With their explorations through the ancient world, many classicsists find themselves far away from urban Los Angeles. “In many ways, classics is really an international field,” says Habinick. “As a department, we compete with classics departments all over the world for the best graduate students, students, and faculty. And our own faculty often do important work in other countries.”

For example, Burns spends each summer on a tiny island in the Aegean Sea heading up the volunteer program for the excavations at Despotiko (see story, page 8). Professor Anthony Boyle helps the department maintain strong links with British classical studies through his regular participation in seminars and conferences at the University of Cambridge. As a professor of ancient art, John Pollini’s passion for classical art and archaeology leads him to exhibitions at the Greco-Roman site of Aphrodisias, Turkey, and the Etruscan site of Ghiauccio Forte, Italy.

Graduate and undergraduate students pack their bags too, traveling to Athens and Rome where they view historical sites, ruins and relics that mark where Western civilization began (see story, page 10). Some spend their summers with Burns at Despotiko, taking through rubble to identify ancient objects.

The department’s distinctive identity enables it to compete with larger graduate programs. Graduate students come from first-rate schools in Europe, such as Oxford and Bristol University, as well as leading American college and universities.

Many USC classics students have marked success in the job market. Ph.D. alumnus Pete O’Neill recently completed a year as a Rome Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Rome and will join the faculty of the University of Exeter. Meanwhile, his USC classmate Rhiannon Evans has accepted a faculty position at the University of Melbourne.

“When I was a sophomore in college, I was torn about what to major in: architecture, history, literature? Then I discovered in classics you study all of these things,” says Habinick. “There is so much someone can learn—about our past and present—by analyzing an entire civilization.”

—Nicole St. Pierre
The Art of Ancient Acting

Before great literature, the world was a stage. At USC College classicists study how cultural performances shaped society long ago.

“Literature as we know it today, where you curl up on the couch with a book, was very different in ancient culture,” says William Thalmann, professor of classics and comparative literature. “In ancient Rome, people made their career by making speeches. One can’t begin to understand Greece and Rome without acknowledging the cultural influence of public performance.”

In Thalmann’s seminar “Early Greek Literature,” poetic texts are examined as one of the discursive practices of Greek culture during its critically formative period from the late eighth century through Ephialtes’ reforms in Athens in 460 B.C. Students ask questions like what roles did performances of epic, choral and monodic song and tragedy play within the process of the formation and evolution of the polis.

“In addition to providing entertainment, the performances of ancient texts were occasion for the convergence of class and gender discourse,” says Habinnek. His other research concerns literature’s involvement in the construction of social authority and distribution of power within traditional societies.

At USC College, one can catch a public performance reminiscent of the Greek and Roman era. On sunny afternoons, students gather in Founders Park to act out plays from Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Recently, graduate students performed scenes from Aristophanes’ “Lysistrata”—a play about the Peloponnesian War where the women withheld sex to get the men to stop fighting. It was part of a worldwide staging of the bawdy ancient Greek anti-war comedy to promote peace during the Iraq war.

Analyzing how texts were performed holds unique challenges for scholars of Greek epic and drama. For instance, there is no written record of exactly where and how Greek drama was performed in the fifth century. In addition, key elements beyond the script of the play are inevitably missed when studying only the text, such as scenery, inflection of actors’ voices, actors’ gestures and postures, costumes and masks, singing, dancing, sounds of the original language and its various poetic rhythms.

One unique characteristic is that the writer of the classical script was also the producer, says Thalmann. In ancient Greece, when the writer’s work was approved for presentation at the state religious festival in honor of Dionysus (the god of wine and fertility), the state assigned him actors and chorus. The author then had to perform the additional tasks of training the actors and chorus and of composing the music for the various songs and providing choreography for the chorus.

Since women were not allowed to take part in dramatic productions, male actors had to play female roles. As a result, masks with broad variations helped the audience identify the sex, age and social rank of the characters.

“Because the actors were masked and there was likely always someone sitting very far away in the top row, the performances included very broad, obvious effects and there are traces of this in the text,” says Thalmann. For example, when a character was supposed to weep, he (or more often she) would draw attention to the fact by saying in effect, “I am weeping.”

“These descriptions make it easier to piece together details and visualize how these ancient dramas were performed,” says Thalmann. “It can still be frustrating, but the insight leads to a greater appreciation of literature and drama.”

—Nicole St. Pierre

A Love of Learning

They read Homer’s “Odyssey,” write about Shakespeare’s “Hamlet” and debate the virtues of Virgil’s “Aeneid.” They are the intellectually adventurous students of the freshmen class who have been invited to participate in an intense liberal arts program for honors students called Thematic Option.

Since its beginning in 1975—due, in large part, to a $350,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities—Thematic Option has grown from 60 students to the nearly 200 who each year are invited to participate in the unique combination of core classes, supplemental theme courses and writing seminars.

Just as the level of excellence of USC students has increased, so has the quality of those enrolled in Thematic Option. This year’s participating freshmen have an average GPA of 4.17 and an average SAT score of 1463.

Housed within USC College, it’s not surprising that Thematic Option includes a majority of liberal arts students. However, the program serves the entire campus; this year’s freshmen are enrolled in the USC Annenberg School for Communication, the USC School of Cinema-Television, the USC Thornton School of Music and other units across the university.

Thematic Option also includes many classics majors, supported by the program’s close connection with the classics faculty. “Students in Thematic Option and the classes have a lot in common,” says Robin Romans, director of the program. “They begin with the foundation of Western culture in Greece and Rome, and examine the evolution of culture from many perspectives. They think about the connections between how we live our lives today and how that compares with cultures earlier cultures.”

With its emphasis on small interdisciplinary classes, Thematic Option provides a learning environment comparable to the finest small liberal arts colleges, says Romans. “It’s an intellectual community that emphasizes serious liberal arts study. Faculty are attracted to the program because there is room for experimentation in classes with serious students that have a thirst for learning. The students are attracted by its focus on writing, close advisement, field trips and annual research conference.”

“These kinds of activities foster tight bonds among classmates and faculty, and help strengthen community,” adds Romans.

—Karen Neezell Young
USC Students Dig Greek Culture

It’s 6 a.m. USC College Assistant Professor Bryan Burns and a dozen student volunteers prepare to leave the quiet fishing village of Soros they call home. From the western edge of the small Greek island of Antiparos, they stare across the Aegean Sea at the scores of Cycladic islands, many of which are now only inhabited by rabbits, birds and goats.

As the sun rises, the group boards a boat for the island of Despotiko, where people no longer reside, but traces of earlier Greek civilization—a Greek sanctuary, a Roman farmhouse, a medieval tower, early Bronze Age tombs—remain.

Since 2001, Burns, who teaches in the College’s classics department, has led volunteer student groups on six-week summer excursions to Despotiko, a rocky island measuring only 4 square miles. Here, students from USC College, the University of Athens and various other institutions learn the basic techniques of field research through hands-on experience recovering, reviewing and recording ancient objects.

Sifting and Sorting

A number of early Cycladic tombs were excavated from Despotiko in the 19th and 20th centuries, and isolated remains of Doric architecture were discovered in 1958.

Today, excavations focus on Mandra, a sanctuary site with significant remains of the archaic period (800-500 B.C.). During this era, the technologies and styles of classical Greece were developed, producing works such as finely painted pottery, intricately carved brooches, sturdy iron sickles and sharp bronze daggers.

On hands and knees, students work with small picks, trowels and brushes to sift through dirt and identify such relics. One student finds the remains of a cooking pot. Another dusts off a fragment believed to be part of a larger Greek sculpture.

“I would encourage anyone to participate in this archaeology dig,” says Georgiana Nikaia, a student in the College who spent a summer digging and wheelbarrowing on Despotiko, along with students Sameer Asad, Jonathan Vidar and Nicholas West.

“I learned how to set up trenches and document all of the pottery, marble and other artifacts we found. And it’s always exciting when you uncover an important artifact and you start yelling at the top of your lungs and everyone rushes over in a big group to see what you’ve found.”

Mainly what the students find are shards of ancient pottery—seemingly unexciting at first, but the writing and designs on the small fragments offer great value. Inscriptions on the pottery discovered at the site suggest worship to Apollo, the Greek god of the sun and music.

“The remains of the archaic period were partially covered by domestic structures of the Roman and medieval periods, but some have been preserved, such as the architectural remains of three archea buildings that were discovered built into later walls on the modern surface,” says Burns, whose own research focuses on the study and publication of “small” finds, including a wide range of artifacts such as ivory and stone jewelry, intricate figurines and metal tools.

Each day, students wash and attempt to piece the vessels into their original form. “It is a painstakingly slow and detailed process,” says Burns.

Focusing on the cultural connection between ancient Greece and other areas of the Mediterranean, Burns is now in the final stages of writing a book on the consumption of imported goods and materials in late Bronze Age Greece.

Island Life

Despite the promise of crystal blue water and white sandy beaches, the Despotiko program is hardly a holiday. There are a number of practical challenges due to the area’s remote location and unstable weather patterns, even in mid-summer.

Students live in a modest house, with four or five to a room, although many opt to sleep in tents outside. A night on the town in Soros presents the choice of only two small restaurants. Weekends are spent swimming and recording the week’s finds. There are no phones, no e-mail. A trip to buy milk requires a 6-mile trek to the main village of Antiparos.

“The students endure many hardships, but they always seem to rise to the occasion,” says Burns. Some mornings, the fierce winds stir up so much dust and dirt on the excavation site that it is almost impossible to see. By mid-afternoon, the temperature can surpass 100 degrees. But the team of budding classicists and archaeologists barely seems to notice.

An interest in antiquities isn’t the only prerequisite for students interested in making the trip to Despotiko. “It helps if they like goats,” says Burns, who is not being entirely facetious.

Until 2002, the Mandra site on Despotiko was home to a large flock of goats. “The Greek word Mandra means ‘animal pens.’” Because the modern activities were negatively impacting the archaeological remains, a rescue excavation was initiated, and the goats were relocated to another area. The original Mandra was built 70 years ago by the grandfather of the goat keeper who still tends to his animals, which roam alongside the student volunteers in the same area.

“When we started this project, we were literally surrounded by 700 goats,” Burns remembers.

Supporting the Cause

The current excavation at Despotiko Mandra was initiated by the Greek government in 1996 as a continued on page 27
From Roman Rule to Religious Relics
Ando offers a fresh perspective

Countless scholars before him have chased the question of what led to the fall of the Roman Empire. Clifford Ando, the young associate professor who recently received a prestigious American Council of Learned Society fellowship, asks what led to its longevity.

In his new book “Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire,” Ando explores the empire that stretched from the Tyne to the Euphrates and concludes Rome did not rule the world in power as much as it ruled in ideology.

“Why did the Roman Empire—with 50 million inhabitants who shared neither language nor dress, neither climate nor cuisine—last so long?” he asks.

“Rome survived its crises because the two centuries of peace after Augustus allowed the population of its provinces to internalize its ideology,” says the classicist who earned a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1996 and joined the USC faculty in 1998.

By revealing the positive aspects of the Roman Empire, Ando’s book suggests that the longevity of the Empire rested not on Roman military power, but on a gradually realized consensus that Roman rule was justified.

Specifically, Ando describes how the emperor used coins and laws, codes, roads and aqueducts, and statues and portraits to remind his subjects of the stability he provided and common values they shared—and thus disposed them to receive favorably his requests for information, money and obedience.

Cult Comparisons
Today, the books on Ando’s shelves include “The Religion of the Greeks and Romans” and “Myth, Religion and Society.” The titles bear testimony to his latest academic quest: to understand what caused some religious cults to spread and others to fail in ancient times.

“I think most people assume religions want to grow, with the exception of Judaism, perhaps. But over time only a small number of religions have actually grown and spread, like Christianity. Why is that?”

Ando is currently writing a book on the history and periodization of religious change in the ancient world.

“Many people study the ancient world seeking to learn something about themselves, and so they are comforted by its similarities. But in matters of religion, it is the staggering difference with modernity that is most striking,” he says.

In his journey through the ancient world, Ando offers comparisons between ancient and modern religions.

“Today people assume that joining a religion is a matter of individual choice,” he says. “But in the ancient world, the power to choose was often understood to belong to the God, not to humans.”

Ando’s research also sheds new light on the value and importance of religious images and relics, and the sacralization of space.

“Today most people believe that God exists up in the heavens somewhere, or in some place that’s not a place at all. But Romans believed their gods had ‘tolls,’ ‘seats,’ or ‘homes’ and that they moved around. They were present in the world—very different from what mainstream religions hold today.”

To illustrate the importance, Ando shares one of his favorites examples: the Romans once consulted the Oracle of Delphi. It told them to find the Goddess Cybele and worship her.

continued on page 27

Parties, Politics and Poetics
Classics come alive for college graduate student Eleanor Rust

In the Doheny Library Humanities Reading Room, graduate student Eleanor Rust scans the shelves of green and red cloth-covered books. This collection of compact volumes, color-coded into red (for Latin texts by ancient Romans) and green (Greek works), contains the canon of the classics, the textual heart of scholarship into the language, literature, history, art and culture of the ancient world.

A fourth-year doctoral student in classics at USC College, Rust reaches for a single, compact red volume titled “Satyricon by Petronius.” In Rust’s hands the book, written long ago in a tongue often referred to as a “dead language,” brings antiquity to life.

One story describes a dinner party, Rust explains with the air of a born teacher, hosted by a freed Roman slave who has become extremely wealthy. The party’s extravagant food and spectacle, including live birds escaping from one of the main courses, earns the host the disapproval of the text’s hero.

“The party, the narrator seems to be saying, is tacky.

“The narrator is defining ‘good taste,’” says Rust. “The narrator labels the host ‘trimalechus as a crass social climber, a member of what today we would call the nouveaux riches. This story is about the anxieties of social class and class mobility—issues as relevant in our world as they were in ancient Rome.”

Rust’s interest in classical languages began early. Her father, an amateur classicist, began teaching her the Greek alphabet while she was still a child. Her own appreciation for the classics began when she read Ovid, the Roman poet, in college. Rust found a kindred spirit in this writer, whose retelling of traditional myths, often from the perspective of the heroine instead of the hero, were infused with humor and even irreverence. She found them surprisingly modern.

Now, she sees that the ancient texts not only reflect the beginnings of Western thought and literature, but also can inform the world in which she lives today.

“Two thousand years ago, Rome had already become what today we would call an urban landscape,” says Rust, who as an undergraduate at Indiana University won eight academic scholarships, was named a member of Phi Beta Kappa and graduated with highest distinctions in classics.

“There was a moment when I realized that the Romans were the first to deal with issues similar to those we see in our modern urban culture.”

Recently, the U.S. Department of Education selected Rust to receive the Jacob Javits Fellowship, a national award given to students of superior academic ability and exceptional promise.

“Eleanor is exactly the kind of student who makes USC classics special,” says Thomas Habinek, professor of classics and department chair. “She has the technical skills of the traditional classicist, but uses them to understand ancient culture more comprehensively. She is both a scholar and an intellectual.”

In August, Rust took her last set of qualifying exams and started crafting a research project for her dissertation work. She is considering focusing on the origins and customs of symposia and convivia. In ancient Greece and Rome, these were terms for “drinking parties” where elite young men were informally mentored by older men in public speaking, poetry, philosophy, politics and, Rust says, how to drink properly.

—Eva Emerson
Ronald Steel is one of the few international relations professors in USC College who mentions Native American struggles, slavery and Western movies when he talks about the United States’ occupation of Iraq.

As a scholar who analyzes international relations from a historical vantage point, Steel will spend the next semester as a Whitney H. Shepardson Fellow with the Council on Foreign Relations, during which he will study foreign policy from a cultural perspective.

“When we consider domestic policy, close attention is paid to issues like a state’s historical origins, interstate relations, religion and demographics. But these cultural issues are rarely discussed in the context of how our foreign policy has evolved through time,” says Steel, who has published three books that analyze the forces governing American foreign relations since World War II.

In his next project, Steel’s research will culminate in a book that identifies the various cultural, social and ideological factors that have shaped the U.S. approach to foreign policy. “It’s a big undertaking, but I hope my work will open the door a crack, and give people a different lens through which to view and analyze foreign policy,” he says. “By examining the social customs and traditions that are unique to the United States, you can ultimately understand why we have the foreign policy we do.”

So how does one begin analyzing 227-plus years of history? “You have to take a very hands-on approach and not limit yourself,” says Steel. His research will include talking with religious leaders about America’s origins; reading publications that shaped the U.S. identity; townships in a unique geographical location; it’s in a beautiful valley among some of the highest peaks of the Pindus.”

Caldwell’s favorite destinations: “It’s a tie between the island of Skopoulos and a mountain village in northern Greece called Metsovo.”

Metsovo has only 4,000 people and is the richest city in the European Union per capita. A posh ski resort with alpine architecture, it is comparable to some of Switzerland’s finest destinations, Caldwell says. “It’s one of Greece’s most picturesque small
Dissecting Diversity, Vote by Vote
Trio studies changing face of politics

n the 2003 primary election, immi-
grians will make up roughly 13
percent of the voting-age population.
Because these voters are concentrat-
ed in key states of the Electoral
College, including California, New
York, New Jersey, Texas and Florida,
political strategists and candidates are
racing to understand what influences
their political participation.

The study of diversity in politics is
hardly new to USC College's political
science department, where professors
look to the diversity of Los Angeles
and their individual heritages to
ask—and ultimately answer—some
important questions on the subject.

“If one is to understand the shape
of American politics in the future,
people will need to understand the
process by which new immigrants
become voters, as well as how to
increase the interest and voter turnout
of uninterested and unregistered
black voters,” says professor Michael
Preston. “American democracy will
only profit from the increased engage-
ment of immigrants.”

Preston taught USC’s first course
about African-American politics when
he joined the faculty in 1986. Since
then, his area of expertise has expand-
ed beyond issues of black and white
to include Latinos’ involvement in
politics. He is currently editing a book
titled “After Bradley: Black and Latino
Politics in Los Angeles,” which dissects
the political changes that have shaped
Los Angeles since the early 1980s when
Tom Bradley was mayor.

“We are studying whether black and
Latino political empowerment has
increased, decreased or stayed the same.
It is clear that the growth of the
Latino population and increased
evoter turnout makes them major players.
One of the key questions will be whether
we are likely to see more coopera-
tion between these groups rather than
conflict in the future,” says Preston.

Assistant professor Ricardo Ramirez,
who joined the College this semester
from Stanford University, first began
examining diversity in politics in the early
1990s, when both the size of the Latino
electorate and the number of Latino
elected officials ballooned.

Today, he researches how Latinos’
presence in the population, the elec-
torate and among elected officials is
impacting party control and competi-
tion at national and state levels. He is
currently working on a book titled
“Continuity and Change: Latinos in
American Politics Since 1990.”

Understanding that Latinos are
not a monolithic group, Ramirez
identifies the intragroup differences
that are evident among Latinos, and
gauges how these differences interact
with state-specific social and political
contexts to impact the future of the
national political landscape. “One
clear example is the fact that recent
Latino naturalized citizens in
California appear to be more
engaged in the electoral system than
their counterparts in Texas or
Florida,” he says.

When it comes to analyzing the
political attitudes and practices of
Asian Americans, assistant professor
Janelle Wong is the College’s expert.
Wong, who has a Ph.D. from Yale
University, is part of a team of
researchers currently completing the
first multi-ethnic, multi-city, multilin-
gual study of Asian-American political
participation in the United States.

Her latest book, “Diversity and
Community: Asian American Political
Attitudes and Behavior,” with co-
authors Pei-Té Lien and Margaret
Conaway, is scheduled for release in
January 2004. One of her key findings
is that Asian Americans as a group are
more liberal than conservative in their
political orientation. They also tend
to have a lower voter turnout than other
immigrant groups. However, once
registered to vote, Asian Americans
vote at rates that are comparable to
to their white and African-American
counterparts.

Preston, Ramirez and Wong all
believe that the College’s Pacific Rim
location creates an ideal environment
in which to study diversity in politics.
“For one study, I was able to focus
specifically on Chinese and Mexican
immigrants in Los Angeles,” says
Wong. “There aren’t many places in
the world I could have done that.
This is an invaluable research site.”

—Nicole St Pierre

By examining the social customs
and traditions that are unique to
the United States, you can ulti-
mately understand why we have
the foreign policy we do.
New Faculty

Beautiful Minds: College Attracts Renowned Scholars and Rising Stars

The College’s Senior Hiring Initiative, which will allocate as much as $100 million over three years to hire top-rank faculty, received widespread media attention when it was announced last year. The College has had great initial success in attracting faculty in the top of their fields. Meet some of the new faces joining the College this year.

Malcolm Baker, Art History Professor
Baker, a scholar of museums and collecting, is a research fellow at England’s prestigious Victoria and Albert Museum, where he heads a project to redesign the presentation of the museum’s thousands of Medieval and Renaissance objects. Baker is a world-renowned curator and a prize-winning scholar with several books to his credit. He worked at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh for 11 years, where he was responsible for European metalwork, woodwork and sculpture. His honors include: a two-time visiting fellow at the Yale Center for British Art; a Getty Scholar; an Andrew W. Mellon Fellow at the Huntington Library; and recipient of the Mitchell Prize for the History of Art. Baker will head a new collaborative graduate program between USC College and the Getty Research Institute, a program of the J. Paul Getty Trust, about the culture of art collecting.

David Lloyd, English Professor
Born in Dublin, Lloyd joins the English department as a full professor. He has studied extensively in Belfast and Cambridge receiving a Ph.D. in Anglo Irish Literature at King’s College, Cambridge University. He was previously the Hartley Butt Alexander Chair in the Humanities at Scripps College in Claremont and was a professor of English at UC Berkeley, where he specialized in teaching literature and colonialism, modern Irish literature and poetry. He has published a collection of essays on Irish culture and history and several books, including: “National and Minor Literature: James Clarence Mangan and the Emergence of Irish Culture Nationalism;” “The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse;” and “Anomalous States: Irish Writing in the Postcolonial Moment.”

Hashem Pesaran, Economics Professor
Pesaran is one of five new scholars to join the economics department as it rapidly strengthens its core in econometrics, economic policy development and behavioral economics. As a leading expert of applied econometrics, Pesaran brings expertise in quantitative analysis of financial markets, macroeconomic modeling, energy demand and the Middle East economy. He comes from University of Cambridge (where he also earned a Ph.D.) and joins the College on a part-time basis. A former economist of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Pesaran began this process by developing recursive techniques now used in financial modeling. “I am hoping I will be able to continue my work in this area and build the foundation of what might one day be called Real-Time Econometrics.” He has published more than 150 academic articles and 13 books.

Bruce Smith, English Professor
A member of Georgetown University’s English department since 1972, Smith studies the literature and culture of early modern England, including Shakespeare, gender, sexuality, acoustic ecology and historical phenomenology. A former president of the Shakespeare Association of America, he has held fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Council of Learned Societies. Among the six books he has published, “The Acoustic World of Early Modern England” won the 2000 Roland H. Bainton Prize for Literature, attracting the attention of theater professionals, communications specialists and musicologists. At USC College, Smith hopes to develop courses that interest English students, as well as students of music and drama. Smith, who has a Ph.D. from the University of Rochester, has also been a curator at the Folger Shakespeare Library. His current work explores what it was like to live in the kind of body imagined by early modern medicine and to perceive the world through that body.

“T and in particular interested in how important the senses and the passions were to perception before Descartes divorced the thinking mind from the sensing body in the middle of the 17th century,” says Smith. “USC has a reputation these days as a happening place. I’m happy to be part of it.”

Dennis Hedgecock, Biological Sciences Professor
Hedgecock, who is in the marine and environmental biology program, comes from UC Davis’s department of animal science where he was a geneticist in the Bodega Marine Laboratory. His research interests include genetics of aquatic animals and evolutionary and conservation genetics of commercially important marine organisms, particularly Pacific oysters and salmon. He received his Ph.D. from UC Davis in 1974.

Guofu Tan, Economics Professor
Tan specializes in the economics of East Asia and the Chinese economy. Tan has a Ph.D. and M.Sc. from the California Institute of Technology. A former consultant to the World Bank, Tan was most recently an associate professor of economics at the University of British Columbia and has held positions at Tsinghua University in Beijing and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
Juan Carrillo, associate professor of economics, is an expert in industrial organization and behavioral economics. After earning his Ph.D. from the University of Toulouse in France, he became an assistant, then associate professor at ECARES, Free University of Brussels. Fluent in Spanish, French and English, Carrillo is an associate editor of the Spanish Economic Review and has an M.A. in statistics from Harvard University.

Assistant Professors

Michelle Arbitman, assistant professor of biological sciences in the molecular and computational biology program, has a Ph.D. in developmental biology from Stanford University School of Medicine. She received the National Science Foundation Pre-doctoral Award, the NIH National Research Service Award, and the L.L. Chakoff Award from UC Berkeley, where she earned a B.A. in molecular cell biology.

Amy Barrios, assistant professor of chemistry, studies inorganic biochemistry and has a Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As an NIH postdoctoral fellow at UC San Francisco, she studied the development and application of a novel method for assaying the substrate specificity of proteolytic enzymes.

Isabelle Brocas, assistant professor of economics, comes from Columbia University focused on spinal sensory axons in the developing mammalian spinal cord.

Elena Guerzoni, assistant professor of linguistics, received her Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she studied semantics, pragmatics, and the syntax-semantics and semantics-pragmatics interfaces.

Anna Lubowicz, assistant professor of linguistics, studies phonology, optimality theory, formal semantics and Slavic languages. She has a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She comes from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus, where she was a visiting professor in the linguistics academic program and taught courses in phonetics and phonology.

David McKemy, assistant professor of dentistry and biological sciences in the neuroscience program, has a Ph.D. in cellular and molecular pharmacology and physiology from the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine. He comes from UC San Francisco where he was a postdoctoral fellow in the department of cellular and molecular pharmacology. His research interests include cloning and characterization of the cold/mint receptor, a cold and menthol-gated ion channel in the somatosensory system.

Tara Nummedal, assistant professor of history, served as assistant professor of history at Brown University. She received her Ph.D. in history from Stanford University and currently is working on “Anna Zieglerin and the Lion’s Blood: A Female Alchemist’s Career in Reformation Europe,” which is under contract with the University of Pennsylvania Press. Her area of expertise is early modern Europe.

Ricardo Ramirez, assistant professor of political science and American studies, is an expert in Chicano studies. A Stanford alumnus, he has a Ph.D. in political science and an M.A. in education administration and policy analysis. Ramirez has published essays about Latino incorporation in California and patterns in political mobilization by naturalized Latinos. He is particularly interested in studying diversity in politics, with a focus on election and voting behavior, state and local politics, judicial politics, constitutional law and voting rights policy.

Megan Reid, assistant professor of religion, is a Ph.D. candidate from Princeton University who expects to receive her doctorate in November. Her most recent teaching position was as an instructor in the theology department at Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia. Her teaching interests include the history of Islam, modern Islam and the study of religion.

Jeffrey Wall, assistant professor of biological sciences in the molecular and computational biology program, analyzes DNA sequences to better understand the origins and evolution of humans and other species. A theoretical evolutionary geneticist, he has a Ph.D. in ecology and evolution from the University of Chicago, where he was recently a research associate in the department of human genetics. As a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University, he studied biological informatics.

Jianfeng Zhang, assistant professor of mathematic, comes from the University of Minnesota and has a Ph.D. in mathematics from Purdue University. Zhang’s research interests include stochastic analysis, backward stochastic differential equations, numerical methods for stochastic differential equations and mathematical finance.

Xianghong (Jasmine) Zhou, assistant professor of biological sciences in the molecular and computational biology program, received her doctorate in natural science from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, where she worked at the interface between computer science and biology. She recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship in bioinformatics at the Harvard School of Public Health. Zhou researches ways to predict gene and protein function through data integration and analyzes microarray data. She plans to develop new computational techniques aimed at solving problems in cancer genomics.

Wiebke Ziebis, assistant professor of biological sciences in the marine and environmental biology program, is a bio-geochemist with a Ph.D. in geology and an M.S. in biology. Most recently a research fellow at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, her interests include biogeochemical marine research, including high-resolution studies of chemical micro-environments.
Poetry in Motion
St. John directs rare Ph.D. program for aspiring writers

Students who are admitted to the selective program study under some of the most distinguished poets and fiction writers of their generation, including St. John, Muske-Dukes, Aimee Bender, T.C. Boyle and Amin.M. Most students already do, USC graduate student Chris Abani is entering its third year.

If you are an aspiring English/creative writing professor, having a Ph.D. makes you far more competitive in today’s job market,” says St. John.

Each year, the caliber of applicants becomes more exceptional. About 80 percent of our applicants already have a graduate degree of some kind and I have little doubt many of them will someday have books.”

In fact, some students already do.

“Each year, the caliber of applicants becomes more exceptional. About 80 percent of our applicants already have a graduate degree of some kind and I have little doubt many of them will someday have books.”

In Good Company
Students who are admitted to the selective program study under some of the most distinguished poets and fiction writers of their generation, including St. John, Muske-Dukes, Aimee Bender, T.C. Boyle and Percival Everett.

In many ways, St. John has matured as a poet in the public eye, after his first book, “Hush,” was a huge success. Since then, he has been honored with many of the most significant prizes for poets, such as the Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the O.B. Hardison prize—a career award for the teaching and writing of poetry—from the Folger Shakespeare Library. His work has been published in countless literary magazines and in 1995, St. John’s collection “Study for the World’s Body; New and Selected Poems” was nominated for The National Book Award in Poetry.

The Face
St. John’s eighth book of poetry, “The Face,” will be published by HarperCollins in May 2004. The poems is about a man who struggles to reassemble his shattered identity while a movie is simultaneously being made about his life. In an unusual twist, a female actress is cast to play him in the movie. The poem ends with the movie premiere. That’s all the details St. John will give away.

“This book is so nuts, people will either love it or hate it,” he jokes. But St. John has actually been developing the premise of the book-length poem for more than ten years. “I’ve always been intrigued by the connection between cinema and contemporary poetry. In a very provocative way, I hope, ‘The Face’ brings both of these worlds together.”

“It’s a wild ride,” he says. “And I’m very excited about it.”

In Tune
Cinema is not the only field intrinsically linked with poetry. St. John says. Last spring, he taught a pioneering course in conjunction with Frank Ticheli, a professor of musical composition at the USC Thornton School of Music, where graduate students teamed up with budding musical composers to understand how operas are made.

“Fascinating stuff came out of this course. The writers and composers developed relationships that will transcend their lives as students and continue into their professional lives as artists,” says St. John.

Because of the course’s collaborative approach, College graduate student and writer Jennifer Kwon Dobbs is now working with musician and composer Charles Lee to develop an opera about Korean Comfort Women who were prisoners of the Japanese during World War II.

In the future, St. John hopes to incorporate more cross-disciplinary workshops into the College’s creative writing program. “I want to continue to ensure that our creative writing courses are taught in a context of other realms, not just of the arts, but also of the sciences as well. The possibilities are limitless.”


—Nicole St Pierre

Heads Together

Shirkanth Narayanan, an associate professor of electrical engineering, linguistics and computer science, enjoys interdisciplinary research involving many people. This way, “the same problem can be viewed from different angles,” he says. Narayanan has...
Providing a Pipeline

Center boosts opportunities for underrepresented students

In a state with dramatically changing demographics, USC recently faced with a tall order. It sought to create a climate that supports diversity and academic success, and to increase the number of graduate students of color who go on to faculty positions.

With generous partial funding from The James Irvine Foundation, and a commitment from the provost’s office, and the deans of USC College and the USC Rossier School of Education, the Center for American Studies and Ethnicity was created in the fall of 2001.

The goals of the center are to overcome the socioeconomic gap in college achievement, and the gap between higher-education professionals and professors. Since its inception, the center has expanded opportunities for graduate students of color, fostering a diverse climate at USC that better reflects the population of the Golden State; attracted ambitious graduate students who are guided into higher levels of education and scholarship; and provided a pool of trained candidates for faculty recruitment across the nation.

Creating Opportunities

As part of its campus diversity initiative, the Irvine Foundation bestowed a $3.6 million grant to launch the center and fund more than 45 fellowships. Graduate students are nominated by their departments, and are provided with two years of funding from the Irvine Foundation and three years from USC. The five-year program focuses on preparing graduate students to become professors at research institutions such as USC.

To be eligible, students must be a member of an underrepresented minority, generally African-American, Latino or Asian. Their work must take on issues of race and ethnicity. Fellows participate in Ph.D. programs in American studies and ethnicity, cinema-television, communication, education, English, geography, history, political science, psychology and sociology.

The stipends are especially important to underrepresented minority graduate students, many of whom are working class and the first in their families to attend college. Without the fellowship support most would have to work and would not be able to focus on their academic ambitions full time.

Along with research opportunities, the students are provided faculty mentoring, dissertation workshops, academic resources and interaction with professors at other universities who are experts in their chosen fields. The grant allows students to attend conferences, obtain peer reviews and meet students at other universities in similar programs.

A critical phase of the fellowship is the summer dissertation workshops. The students are enrolled in intense, one-on-one sessions with experts in their fields of study and are guided through the dissertation process. The summer workshops provide participants with a tight schedule of peer review and faculty input. By the end of the workshops, students are ready to apply to national fellowship competitions that allow them time and financial support to focus on their dissertations the next academic year.

Something for Everyone

George Sanchez, associate professor of history, director of the program in American studies and ethnicity, and head of the center, says that the Irvine Foundation fellowship program not only benefits graduate students of color, but also benefits professors in the humanities who do not ordinarily receive research assistance from graduate students.

“Unlike in the scientific fields, little outside money comes the way of humanities professors,” he says. “So both faculty and students have a lot to gain from the fellowships.”

Graduates say the center and fellowships go far beyond mentoring and expanded opportunities. What they gain is a community of scholarship and support.

“For me it was a lifeline,” says Ana Rosas, who graduated in 2000 with a bachelor’s degree in history and American studies. Her dissertation, “Cultural Capital, Mexican Immigration and the Politics of Ethnicity, Race and Place in Los Angeles, circa 1942-1965,” landed her a fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington for the 2003-2004 academic year. “As a working-class student, the fellowship gave me tools and skills I could not have gotten elsewhere,” she says.

“Sanchez was always there for me at every stage, always encouraging people by his example. I want to do the kind of work he does.”

Rosas, who was the first member of her family to attend college, says her Irvine Foundation fellowship provided her with a wealth of knowledge she otherwise would not have received, including essential information on how academia works, how to put together a competitive package for attracting fellowships and what to include in her C.V. “The whole program was community-building and very supportive for students like me,” she adds.

“The Irvine fellowships address a lot of issues in higher education,” Sanchez says. “They help expand the pipeline of future professors of color, they shorten the length of time most students take to complete their dissertations and they provide research help to professors who don’t ordinarily receive it. In this program, there is something for everyone.”

—Karen Newell Young

A diverse mix of students benefit from the College’s Center for American Studies and Ethnicity programs.

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 3 Fall 2003

USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences
College scientists reveal spots, quakes and flares

The extreme sun: Each of these false-color images was taken at a different wavelength of light in the extreme ultraviolet spectral region from SOHO.

Edward Rhodes Jr., Darrell Judge and Werner Däppen—has been crucial to the development of the new vision of the sun. Perhaps most important, their work is providing new insights—and as many new questions—about how its wild ways impact the climate and lives of people on Earth.

The Inside Story

Däppen considers physics his true calling. It just happens that the physics problems that most intrigue him occur at the very core of the sun.

“The sun’s size and its enormous inward gravitational pull make the sun’s center an extremely hot and dense place. At temperatures of nearly 29 million degrees Fahrenheit, even the hydrogen and helium gases that make up the sun become 150 times as dense as water and eight times as dense as gold.

The conditions are so intense that atoms regularly fuse in a nuclear reaction that powers the sun and, by extension, the entire solar system.

A theoretician, Däppen develops sophisticated computer models of the sun’s core. He has shown how the action of very small forces acting deep within the sun can lead to significant changes in the sun’s structure, and thus, its activity.

“We know like particles repel and opposites attract. But, if you’ve got a soup of negatively and positively charged particles, as we see inside the sun, what happens?” Däppen says.

“We discovered that, added up, these very small pushes and pulls can change the overall density of the sun’s core by about 5 percent.” By taking this effect into account, Däppen has created more accurate models of the sun’s interior.

Däppen’s work is ultimately important to understanding the connection between sun and Earth. “What happens in the solar interior affects events in the outer layers and surface of the sun,” Rhodes says. “In turn, changes in solar surface dynamics lead to the kinds of changes in solar output that have come under intense scrutiny in terms of climate.”

Sun Spots, Quakes and Flares

Rhodes has the work habits most would associate with an astronomer, except that he works by the light of day. He does much of his research high atop a mountain, where he operates the 60-Foot Solar Tower of the Mt. Wilson Observatory. Rhodes studies the sun from space, too, as part of the joint NASA/ESA Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO) Mission.

“I try to understand what’s going on at the sun’s surface, and below that in the sun’s convection zone,” says Rhodes, who is also a part-time astronaut at the Jet Propulsion

Compounds May Help People Remember

The latest work of USC College neuroscientist Michel Baudry tempers the good with the bad. The bad news, for mice at least, is that mild memory loss begins earlier in life than previously thought. The good news is that two experimental compounds Baudry, professor of biological sciences, has helped to develop can prevent that memory loss. And while his results apply to mice, not humans, they do support the notion that in the future drugs may help people halt the memory loss that has been an unavoidable consequence of aging.

Beyond its implications for those battling the loss of memory, Baudry’s work gives new support to a leading theory of aging and points to early middle age as the time when the first cognitive declines begin.

“This was definitely one of our more dramatic results,” says Baudry, who did the research with then graduate student Ruolan Liu—the paper’s first author and currently a postdoctoral fellow in Baudry’s lab—as well as colleagues from USC, UC Irvine and Eukarian, Inc. (a company co-founded by Baudry).

One popular explanation of aging posits that aging results from oxidative damage—itself caused by destructive forms of oxygen called free radicals formed as a byproduct of metabolism. Free radicals wreak havoc on cells by damaging key molecules such as DNA, proteins and fats. Dependent on oxygen, the body makes its own antioxidants (such as catalase and superoxide dismutase) designed to capture free radicals and render them harmless.

In the study, Baudry’s team looked at the effects of two antioxidant compounds, EUK-189 and EUK-207, on memory in middle-aged mice.

They trained 120 eight-month-old mice to associate a tone with a mild electric shock. The mice learned to react fearfully (freezing in place) whenever they heard the tone or were put into the training cage, whether or not a shock followed. Researchers tested memory by tracking how long mice froze when placed in the cage or hearing the tone—those that froze the longest had the sharpest memory.

After three months, the team compared memory function in groups treated with one of the two compounds to those of an untreated control group. Memory significantly declined in the untreated mice, while the treated groups fared much better. Mice treated with EUK-207, for example, scored three times higher than controls of the same age in the cage test, with an ability to remember equal to that of younger, eight-month-old mice.

“We found that these drugs prevent the age-related decline in memory,” says Richard F. Thompson, the William M. Keck Chair in Biological Sciences and professor of psychology in the College, who took part in the research.

In his study, Baudry found strong evidence that the antioxidant compounds protected the brain from oxidative assaults, preventing damage and maintaining memory. To measure the drugs’ ability to sop up oxidative stress, the team analyzed the brain tissue from the mice, looking for telltale signs of oxidative damage. Overall, treated mice showed fewer signs of damage than controls, with cells of the older, treated mice most closely resembling cells found in younger mice. In fact, some of the treated 11-month-old mice actually had fewer oxidative scars than untreated eight-month-olds.

That, Baudry says, suggests that the compounds may not only prevent damage, but may actually reverse prior damage to brain proteins. For his next step, Baudry will investigate these and similar compounds in younger and older mice, investigating how they affect memory, learning and other brain functions as well as longevity.
A Catastrophic Breakthrough

Periana taps precious metal for new one-step method

USC chemist has found what eventually could be a cheaper and more efficient way to create acetic acid, a petrochemical used in products ranging from aspirin to cosmetics. Acetic acid is typically made from methanol and carbon monoxide, both of which are derived from methane, the major component of natural gas.

The technology is expensive because it requires the chemicals to be blasted at temperatures up to 900 degrees Celsius, and in three separate steps. But USC chemistry professor Roy Periana has made acetic acid directly from methane at 180 degrees Celsius.

“What our chemistry shows for the first time is that you don’t have to take the methiane, blast it to pieces and then recombine it,” says Periana. The key to the one-step process, he explains, was the catalyst.

Periana and his team, which included USC graduate students Oleg Mironov, Gaurav Bhalla and C.J. Jones, used palladium, a precious metal. They introduced the methane into a solution of sulfuric acid containing palladium sulfate, heated the mixture to 180 degrees Celsius and watched as the methane was converted to acetic acid and methanol.

“This is the first time we’ve obtained acetic acid with methane as the only starting material with any of the catalysts we’ve tried,” Periana says. “This reaction cannot be commercialized as it is, but it shows the first possibility for making the acetic acid molecule in a fundamentally different way than it was made before.”

Finding new, cheaper ways to convert natural gas—one of the planet’s most abundant resources—to useful products is considered one of the “Holy Grails” of chemistry, Periana says.

“I wouldn’t say this has solved that problem, but it adds another piece to the solution,” he says. “We are inventing the next generation of catalysts that will allow us to convert methane at lower temperatures.”

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Exotic bacteria could aid in search for alien life and improved data storage

Magnetic Personality

Exotic bacteria could aid in search for alien life and improved data storage

G

ese and caribou move to new ground with the changing of
the seasons, crossing thou-
sands of miles of terrain to
find food and survive. While their
migrations escape the notice of most,
magnetic bacteria traverse a path for
survival no less dramatic.

Magnetic bacteria are extremely
mobile, thanks to flagella that propels
them at a speed of about half-a-meter
per hour. The bacteria use special
senses, including magnetism, to navi-
gate between the oxygenated water
of lakes or seas and the anaerobic
sediments.

“These guys are some of the
fastest bacteria I’ve ever seen,” says
Radu Popa, a research assistant pro-
fessor of marine biology at USC.
College. Popa and Kenneth Nealson,
the Wrigley Chair in Earth and
Environmental Sciences, study these
 speedy microbes to understand their
exotic lifestyle, from their migration
speeds to understand their
survival no less dramatic.

The duo’s work may lead to new
ways to detect evidence of past life
on Mars, increase storage capacity of
magnetic recording tape and clean
toxic metals from waterways.

‘A Living Compass’

“A magnetic bacterium is a living
compass,” says Popa, a member of
the interdisciplinary geobiology and
astrophysics research group led by
Nealson. “They align with the
north-south direction.”

These bacteria earned their name
from the chains of iron-rich magnetite
crystals that, seen through a micro-
scope, seem to dot the bacterial cell.

Enveloped within a membrane, the
magnetic crystals form structures
called magnetosomes.

Popa and Nealson’s interest in
these microbes began after a group
from NASA Ames found magneto-
some-like particles preserved in the
ancient Martian meteorite ALH-
84001 and offered it up as evidence of
fossilized extraterrestrial life.

While most of that group’s arguments
have since been reconsidered, Popa
says the meteorite’s putative magne-
tosomes remain “the one possible
‘proof’ that life could have existed in
the meteorite.”

The resilience of the magnetite
suggest that the crystals might be use-
ful “fingerprints” in the search for life
(signs of past life) on Mars or
Jupiter’s moon Europa. “We don’t
expect to see proteins or DNA on the
surface of Mars,” Popa says. “But
perhaps we could find some of these
 crystals.”

Magnetite is made of oxygen and
iron, which exists in four stable forms,
or isotopes. In general, magnetite
contains a ratio of the iron isotopes
reflective of the isotopes’ natural
abundance. However, when magnetic
bacteria make the crystals they incor-
porate the isotopes in a slightly
different ratio. Analyzing the ratio of
the four iron isotopes in a sample can
give scientists a clue as to whether fos-
silized crystals are biogenic—made by
living things—or not.

The team has also focused efforts
on finding a way to harvest the high-
quality magnetite crystals made by the
bacteria. Reel-to-reel magnetic record-
ing tape, used to record and play
audio, video and computer data,
remains a multibillion-dollar industry.
Greater tape data storage capacity
would be a boon for those wresting
with the limits of state-of-the-art digi-
tal data storage. The biogenic
magnetite crystals, Popa says, are
smaller and more uniform than stan-
dard industrial crystals, and so
theoretically could be used to increase
the number of data tracks (currently
about 600) that could fit across a half-
inch of tape.

The crystals may also find uses in
bioremediation, medicine, nanotech-
ology and space, Popa says.

Harvesting Crystals

But getting the bacteria to produce
magnetite on a scale large enough
to be useful has proved formidable.

New work by Popa and Nealson’s
group shows why others have failed to
get the finicky bacteria to produce har-
vestable amounts of magnetite.

Investigating the environmental fac-
tors that control the production of

College Life Sciences in Brief

Bacteria to the Rescue?

College research on microscopic
marine bacteria that “fix” or convert
nitrogen gas to a form usable by
plants may reveal how the
world’s oceans
could slow global warming.

Marine biologist Douglas Capone, the Wrigley
Chair in Environmental Studies and a member of
the USC Wrigley Institute, studies bacteria called dia-
zotrophs that pull nitrogen from the atmosphere,
break its chemical bond and pass on the fixed nitro-
gen to marine plankton that need it to grow.

In the process, diazotrophs sequester carbon diox-
side, even in ocean regions where short supplies of
fixed nitrogen would otherwise prevent the process.

Learning about the bacteria’s ability to promote
the absorption of the greenhouse gas may shed light on
how the oceans could mitigate the effects of pollution.

Mimicking immunity

Earlier this year, a team of researchers led by USC
discovered the workings of AID, a vital enzyme
involved in the body’s immune response. The find-
ing, reported in April, moved scientists closer to a
precise understanding of how the body’s immune sys-
tem can respond to different pathogens.

Just three months later, the team reported new
progress in the journal Nature. Led by John Petruska,
professor of molecular biology, the team simulated
the biochemical mutation process that diversifies
antibodies responsible for immunity in a test tube.
Antibodies enable the body to fend off a wide range
of diseases.

“This is a big step in building an in vitro system
that would completely mimic the body’s immune
response,” says Petruska.

Minuscule Martians

“To the chagrin of almost everyone, it is clear there
are no large life forms on Mars—no plants, no ani-
mals, nothing obvious. So the search has turned to
microbes,” says the College’s Kenneth Nealson, co-
principal investigator of the THEMIS infrared
instrument on NASA’s Mars Odyssey mission.

“I would be happy to find anything resembling
primitive microbial life. But it will not be easy,” says
Nealson, the Wrigley Chair in Earth and
Environmental Sciences. THEMIS will pinpoint
areas on the Red Planet rich in minerals like iron,
regions he thinks are the most likely to harbor signs
of alien life, past or present.

“We’re looking for the footprint that bacteria left
behind. Since these creatures are so small and have
no hard parts, it’s a huge challenge. We have to be
clever.”
Shaking Things Up

SCEC internships enrich the undergraduate experience

It isn’t every day that interns show veteran researchers a new way of seeing things. But that’s exactly what undergraduates in the Southern California Earthquake Center (SCEC) internship program have done for the past two years.

Last summer, interns at SCEC—a national research center composed of 14 core institutions, based in USC College—developed a method of capturing earthquake images on a computer screen that can be downloaded by a TV station to illustrate what happens when a temblor strikes. Traveling along the fault, above and below ground, the digitized movie shows viewers the earthquake potential under such features as land, buildings, bridges and nearby towns.

By developing their own computer code with free, widely available software, the students were able to produce the “live” images in less than an hour—a big advantage for the media and others whose need for immediacy during a potential disaster is critical.

SCEC Director Thomas Jordan says he has never seen anything like it. “A lot of people said it was impossible, and to my knowledge, it’s the first time an earthquake has been captured by a computer in this way,” says the W.M. Keck Foundation Chair in Geological Sciences. “It illustrates the kind of sophisticated information technology projects the interns attack each summer.”

The intern program is funded as part of a $10 million, five-year grant from the National Science Foundation for earthquake information technology (EIT) research. In its second year, the EIT intern program has guided some 20 undergraduates through complicated projects involving information technology and earthquake science. Each term, interns and graduate mentors interact with researchers at the top of their field, including SCEC scientists from USC, Harvard University, Caltech, the U.S. Geological Survey and other prestigious institutions.

“One of the most exciting aspects of the program is that these interns are at the center of earthquake research and working on extremely sophisticated problems with the best in the field,” says Jordan. “This is really something special. They are learning how to use advanced technology in a way they would never learn in a typical classroom.”

Sometimes I get a little envious,” says Sue Perry, director of the EIT intern program. “It would really have been fabulous to have experienced this as an undergraduate.”

Along with workshops, symposia, field trips, mentoring and advanced training and research in earthquake sciences and information technology, the students gain invaluable experience in teamwork and collaboration. Many of them have had no experience or education in earthquakes but are attracted to the computer science aspect of the program. Others have had no experience in computer science or earthquake science, but seek the synergy of earth science and information technology.

Brandee Pierce, for example, is a fifth-year pre-law student majoring in philosophy. She was attracted to the program’s emphasis on visually capturing a natural phenomenon. “The program is a challenging, technologically and academically aggressive session that engages students to not only go beyond themselves, but also beyond the current technology and science out there today,” she says. “I had to stretch a bit intellectually to think even further outside the box to creatively solve visualization issues.”

Jed Link, a 2002 summer intern, was a USC communications major who is now a graduate student in rhetoric at California State University, Northridge. He returned to work for SCEC this past summer. Neither Link nor Pierce had any experience in computer science or earth science before their SCEC internships.

Jeremy Zechar was a senior in computer science when he became an intern. By his own admission, he couldn’t tell a fault from an earthquake, but now he is a graduate student in geophysics, working with Jordan.

Each summer, the interns are challenged to accomplish a large-scale innovative research project in 10 weeks. They then present their work at the SCEC annual meeting, which serves as a culmination of the summer program. Throughout the school year, the program continues with part-time internships and some of the less-ambitious challenges geared toward school year schedules.

This past summer, the challenge was to create computer-scripted movies of “L.A. 3-D,” the visualizations produced by the interns to show Southern California’s faults, earthquakes and surface features in 3-D, in order to gain a better understanding of the spatial and temporal relationships among them.

Last summer, the students prototyped computer code that creates 3-D visualizations of multiple, large data sets that represent seismic activity. They projected their images of faults and earthquakes onto a special 3-D system called Geowall, which uses two polarized images that create the illusion of three dimensions when a viewer wears special glasses. Unlike other 3-D projection systems, Geowall is portable and priced reason-ably enough to be used on a broad scale.

“Earth science is becoming a more advanced science in terms of using high technology,” says Jordan. “The experiences these interns get will equip them for a wide range of opportunities in fields other than earthquake science. The increasing intersection of information technology and the natural sciences will demand the kind of skills these students are gaining.”

Karen Newell Young

On the edge of discovery: Interns get an upclose view on a field trip.

—Eva Emerson

EVA EMERSON
David Dornsife and his wife Dana have given an $8 million lead gift to establish a Cognitive Neuroscience Imaging Center headquartered at USC College.

The new center will house a state-of-the-art functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scanner. The non-invasive fMRI system provides researchers with a “real-time” view into the living brain, allowing them to see not only what the brain looks like, but also what’s happening and where. Color changes on the scans reveal the precise parts of the brain that become active when a subject performs a specific task, such as reading, seeing a face or tapping a finger.

Already, fMRI studies have led to a rush of new discoveries about the organization of the human brain, shedding light on the biological bases of difficult-to-study functions such as memory, sensation and creativity. Access to this indispensable tool will speed up the pace of human brain research at USC, and lead to new insights into the brain-based disorders and diseases that afflict more than 55 million Americans.

Mr. Dornsife, a USC trustee and chairman of the board of the Herrick Corp. and Gillig Corp., is also vice president of the Hedco Foundation and a 1965 graduate of the USC Marshall School of Business. His family has a long history of promoting brain research at USC, and led to new insights into the brain-based disorders and diseases that afflict more than 55 million Americans.

Mr. Dornsife, a USC trustee and chairman of the board of the Herrick Corp. and Gillig Corp., is also vice president of the Hedco Foundation and a 1965 graduate of the USC Marshall School of Business. His family has a long history of promoting teaching and research at USC.

“As part of the USC community, my family and I have experienced first-hand the benefit of the high-quality education and research provided by USC,” says Dornsife. “I can think of no better way to support the university’s efforts to advance research than to jumpstart the Cognitive Neuroscience Imaging Center. We’re confident USC will use this gift to make major discoveries and strengthen its position as a major player in the field.”

The gift continues a history of support from the Dornsife family. David Dornsife’s parents, Harold and Estet, were USC alums and generous supporters of USC until their deaths in 1999 and 2000, respectively.

“The Dornsifes’ gift will provide funds to launch construction of the $16 million center, which requires a specially designed building to house the large magnet and other sensitive equipment at the heart of the fMRI scanner.

Work is expected to begin this winter on the 2,500 square-foot building, which will feature the scanning room, a subject preparation room, offices and a networked seminar room that will be used to teach imaging methods to students from all USC campuses. Currently, there is a high demand for researchers trained in advanced imaging technologies.

Optimized for research, as opposed to clinical use, the center will feature the latest in computational infrastructure, enabling real-time, interactive data analysis and visualization; large-scale, sharable data storage (vital for neuroinformatics research); remote observation and other advanced capabilities.

“The facility, which will be overseen by the Provost’s Neuroscience Advisory Group, is designed to allow scientists at the USC Health Sciences Campus or other remote locations to take an active part in experiments, fostering collaborations among faculty across the university and integrating university-wide teaching efforts.

USC faculty plan to undertake fMRI studies that will lead to new understandings of how the brain processes learning, emotions, spoken language, reading acquisition and visual information, and how the brain generates movement. Psychologist Adrian Raine will use fMRI in his studies of convicted murderers. Using other techniques, he revealed deficiencies in a brain region important in moral learning and self-restraint.

Larry Swanson, director of the USC Neuroscience program, and holder of the Milo Don and Lucille Appleman Professorship in Biological Sciences at USC College, says: “The Dornsife’s support of the new facility ensures that research into the mysteries and wonders of the brain will continue to flourish at USC.”
Clinical psychologist and master of suspense Jonathan Kellerman spends an August afternoon touring USC’s Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library. The setting was already somewhat familiar to him. Kellerman graduated with a Ph.D. in psychology from USC College in 1974. But during this visit, the author carefully jots down descriptive details since the library will be a backdrop to a scene in an upcoming crime novel.

Creator of the psychologist-sleuth Alex Delaware, Kellerman published his first novel “When the Bough Breaks” in 1985. Since then, the clinical professor of psychology at USC College has published 19 consecutive best-selling suspense novels. “I’ve wanted to write since the fourth grade. Getting published was quite a milestone for me,” he says.

But milestones don’t come without work. For the first decade of his writing career, Kellerman wrote from an old desk in his garage. After years of rejection from magazine and publishing houses, he caught a break in 1985 when his book “When the Bough Breaks” sold more than one million copies and kick-started his career as a suspense novelist. Five years later he stopped practicing psychology and devoted his career to writing full-time. (However Kellerman still enjoys talking with Trojan graduate students and post-docs when they have specific questions about psychological issues.)

His wife, best-selling author Faye Kellerman, has a similar story. She earned a B.A. in mathematics and a doctorate in dentistry at UCLA, where she conducted research on oral dentistry. Faye’s first groundbreaking novel, “The Ritual Bath,” was published in 1986 and introduced the characters Peter Decker and his wife Rina Lazarus to the mystery world.

“The Kellermans’ joint success has only strengthened their interest and respect for higher education.

“What I admire most about USC is that they treat people like human beings. Not like a number. As an alumnus, you really appreciate that,” he says. The Kellermans recently committed $750,000 for graduate fellowships in psychology. “And I owe a great deal of my current success to the school. I could have never become a novelist without first becoming a psychologist and gaining the insight and life experience necessary to write a bestseller,” says Jonathan, adding it was Faye who prompted him to attend USC College.

“She was attending UCLA when we first met and I had just received fellowships to numerous schools on the East Coast, but I couldn’t bear to leave her, so I ended up, thankfully, at USC,” he says, noting that their 31 years of marriage and four children are his proudest life accomplishments. “The two oldest children are engaged to wonderful people and we couldn’t be happier.”

While in graduate school at USC College, Jonathan completed his clinical work at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA). In 1977, he directed the first comprehensive rehabilitation program to pediatric oncology. Specifically, it trained physicians, psychologists, nurses and social workers to help children who survived chemotherapy make a healthy transition back to normal life. The program recently celebrated its 25th anniversary.

“The thing about psychology is that when psychotherapy and clinical work are scientifically applied, they are very effective, especially with children. And as life gets more complicated, there needs to be more of a role for clinical psychology. But psychologists need to be trained at a good clinical program. USC prepares students to be highly competent in research, clinical work and teaching.”

As for his advice to aspiring writers: “If you want to write a book, listen to the Nike commercial. Just sit down and do it. Introspection is the worst thing you can do,” he says. “And you need to experience life as fully as possible, and read as much good stuff as you possibly can.”

—Nicole St.Pierre
Fascination vs. Information

Ironically, Sternheimer says, the news media themselves help individuals fear the media.

“When News at 11 makes a connection between the Columbine killers and Goth music, they’re ignoring a lot of other factors, possibly a real look at those troubled kids,” she says. “So it’s more about fascination than information. It’s not critical analysis but a sound bite.” Video games also have been heavily criticized as being responsible for violence—especially among young male players, the primary audience.

“We ought to take a step back and ask why simulated killing is frequent—ly a young male pastime,” she says. “Those who blame video games often don’t realize that while the video game industry exploded in the 1990s, incidents of juvenile violence actually declined sharply.”

—Gileen Sibley, USC News Service

Blame the Media?

Karen Sternheimer

A Declaration of Independence

In his new book, “At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America” (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), USC College historian Peter Mancall looks at the distinctive backcountry culture that inspired a desire for independence long before 1776.

“Since the founding of Plymouth and Jamestown, the West has played a major role in shaping American history,” says Mancall, who also directs the USC-Huntington Library Early Modern Studies Institute, which has been described as a nurturing ground for intellectual activity, according to its research director Robert C. Ritchie.

“The backcountry was not a fixed place, but rather a shifting geographic and metaphorical region that evolved as the British Empire expanded westward,” says Mancall.

From the early 17th to the late 18th centuries, the land lying to the west of Colonial settlements remained dominated by Native Americans but also became home to Colonial explorers and traders, and land-hungry settlers and speculators, he explains. “At the Edge of Empire” chronicles the interactions between Colonists and Indians, who came together to make alliances, fight wars and trade goods and ideas. It describes the devastation suffered by native populations, societies and cultures exposed to the violent pathogens brought by Europeans to North America.

Mancall and co-author Eric Hinderaker, who teaches at the University of Utah, trace English experiences with the backcountry to the medieval Anglo-Norman expansion in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, where English authorities and settlers repeatedly encountered native populations resistant to alien rule. This earlier experience shaped a culture in which violence toward others was accepted as a part of daily life, says Mancall.

“We set out to write an engaging narrative history that we hoped would deepen and widen our understanding of America’s Colonial experience,” Mancall adds. “We hope people will look at our history a little bit differently.”

—Gileen Sibley, USC News Service

New programs expand student academic choices

Four new interdisciplinary programs got off to a smooth start at USC College this fall. They include:

Ph.D. in Integrated and Evolutionary Biology

Students in the Integrated and Evolutionary Biology (IEB) Ph.D. program will explore a broad set of questions about the life sciences, using the lens of evolution. IEB students will study emerging areas at the interface of genomics, evolution and physiology, in both humans and other living things.

“Figuring out what genes do in an integrative sense is the challenge for the future,” says program director Jill McNitt-Gray, associate professor of kinesiology, biomedical engineering and biology. Students will be trained by faculty from the College, engineering, gerontology, medicine and the L.A. County Natural History Museum.

Ph.D. in Computational Biology and Bioinformatics

Biological sciences is offering a new Ph.D. program in the interdisciplinary fields of computational biology and bioinformatics. The program seeks to train hybrid young scientists conversant in molecular biology, genetics, math and computer science. Jobs in this field currently far outnumber high-quality, trained applicants, says program director Simon Tavaré, holder of the George and Louise Kawamoto Chair, and professor of biology, mathematics and preventive medicine.

Ph.D. in Politics and International Relations

A new Ph.D. program offered jointly by the political science department and the School of International Relations enables students to benefit from the combined faculties’ expertise in theoretical and regional issues. The program will make it easier to carry on existing research and teaching in areas that bridge the two fields.

Ph.D. in Health and Humanity

Students considering going into medicine, nursing or other health professions can pursue a B.A. in health and humanity at the College. The new liberal arts major, offered by anthropology, blends basic training in biology and chemistry with explorations of health-related social sciences. For instance, students can complete a health-related internship while studying bioethics, health or aging.

“Medical schools are looking for students with a broad background,” says Janelle Herrick of the Office of College Advising.
The Case of the Hidden Gender
Russett Considers Genre-Bending Mysteries

Quick: Are Harlequin romance novels male or female? What about tales of the Old West? And what about mysteries with tough-talking detectives? Do books have a gender? Not exactly, but our culture tends to associate certain genres of books with a specific gender, says Margaret Russett, associate professor of English at USC College. In doing so, many belittle the more feminine genres. Even calling a novel “a genre novel” lowers the book’s perceived value in the literary world, she says.

So perhaps it isn’t too surprising that one of today’s leading female mystery writers, Ruth Rendell, tries to “transcend” the detective genre and publish books more literary in style. Writing under the pseudonym Barbara Vine, Rendell has authored more than a dozen novels that depart dramatically from the 40-odd who-dunits written under her own name.

Rendell is “a writer long overdue for critical treatment. This is an interesting person doing serious work,” says Russett, who specializes in the Romantic period in literature. Using her skills as a literary scholar, Russett explores the Vine books and, through them, Rendell herself in a recent essay titled “Three Faces of Ruth Rendell: Feminism, Popular Fiction, and the Question of Genre.”

Vine’s books are more mysterious than mysteries. There’s no professional detective, only a narrator. The reader is often told about a crime, and who committed it, early in the story, leaving the reader to figure out the why, the how and sometimes even the what.

In her analysis, Russett explores Rendell’s ambition to move beyond genre, and how this reveals the line separating the literary from the “generic,” the high culture from the low and popular fiction from elite literature. Gender issues also complicate Rendell’s shift into the persona of Barbara Vine. For example, Rendell considers Vine a feminine alter ego, and the Vine books focus more on women and their issues than Rendell’s other books.

Russett notes many similarities between the Vine novels and the female Gothic genre. In the book "The House of Stairs," Vine/Rendell makes explicit allusions to earlier gothic works,” says Russett, an expert on the Gothic tradition. “Gothic novels are worried about one’s relationship to one’s mother, which for women is central to identity. Vine writes a lot about how a mother defines you, and about the relationship between biological mothers and chosen mother-figures.”

Russett argues that Rendell, writing as Vine, seeks to define herself as a writer. Metaphorically, Rendell’s literary “natural mother” might be Agatha Christie, but her “chosen mother” would be Gothic novelists Ann Radcliffe or one of the Bronte sisters. Russett also identifies male literary influences in Vine’s work, including Sigmund Freud, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Henry James. Russett links Freud’s case histories to Vine’s unusual style, which “mimics the progress of psychoanalysis.”

Russett hopes her work will encourage other scholars to recognize Rendell as an author worth their attention. Rendell appreciates the effort: In a note to Russett, Rendell wrote: “It’s always nice to be treated seriously and not invariably asked if I think about murder all the time. Your essay was a joy to read. I will treasure it.”

Russett seems to have earned a new fan.

—Eva Emerson

Surfs Up in Cyberspace

A new Web site has been launched by the lifeguard division of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, in partnership with the USC College Sea Grant Program at the Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies and the county’s department of beaches and harbors.

By going to the Web site at: www.watchthewater.org the public can view images of the beach, get current weather and surf conditions and search a database of facilities and amenities. The information is updated every 30 minutes.

Part of a technology initiative known as the Coastal Monitoring Network, the program is funded by a federal grant with applications in public safety, public education and environmental studies.

The public will be able to look for a beach based on criteria such as showers, parking or volleyball courts, then see regularly updated information about that beach, such as surf, current conditions and advisories, says chief lifeguard Mike Frazier.

When completed, the network will consist of 27 Web cameras, three sets of meteorological instruments and five water thermometers. Four cameras currently are installed, with others being added this year.

The network will help lifeguards make staffing decisions, track rescue activity, create public education materials and collect environmental data for the scientific community.

The network also will help USC Sea Grant scientists, who have partnered with UCLA to improve marine science education in grades K-12 in the Los Angeles area.

“Beach images will help us develop classroom and Internet-based curricula for students and families living in Los Angeles County far from the coast,” says Phyllis Grifman, associate director of the USC Sea Grant Program.
In the Sept. 1 issue of the Chemical & Engineering News, the American Chemical Society (ACS) announced the selection of USC College chemist G.K. Surya Prakash as the winner of the prestigious 2004 American Chemical Society Award for Creative Work in Fluorine Chemistry. The award will be presented to him at the 227th ACS meeting to be held in Anaheim in March 2004.

Prakash has made major contributions to the field of fluorine research. Despite the difficulties of working with the very reactive element, the unusual properties of fluorinated molecules have made them valuable in biology, materials science and the pharmaceutical industry.

The award follows a flurry of fluorinated activity: Earlier this year, Prakash co-chaired the nation's largest meeting on fluorine chemistry in Florida. There, his group presented results from his latest work, describing his team's development of a new chemical method for introducing trifluoromethyl (CF3) groups into molecules.

The team's method “tames” the trifluoromethylation process, Prakash says. The new method is easier to use than existing methods and provides a more stable source of the trifluoromethyl groups for applications in the lab and industry. The finding also has environmental value; previously, ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) had been the most common source for the trifluoromethyl groups. Prakash's “environmentally friendly” trifluoromethyl reagent is made from non-ozone-depleting trifluoromethane, which itself is an inexpensive, industrial chemical by-product that has had few uses.

"Fluorine is a small atom with a big ego, because it does so many valuable things," Prakash says.

Faculty News

A Historian of Household Government

From colonial times until the Civil War, households in the United States consisted of a single head (usually an adult male) who had authority over the property, labor and mobility of his wife and minor children.

In her new book “A History of Household Government in America,” Carole Shammas—the John R. Hubbard Chair in History—analyzes the changing nature of household government in America and the effects these changes had on the governmental system. Combining evidence from legal sources, literature, and census records, Shammas argues that the disintegration of the household powers during the middle of the 19th century was much more central to the definition of a modern United States than industrialization or urbanization.

Published by University of Virginia Press, the book analyzes why heads of households ultimately lost their power and considers factors previously ignored by other theorists, including weak lineage controls, testamentary freedom, and the lack of an established church.

Naipaul’s Strangers

The new book “Naipaul’s Strangers,” by Professor of German and Comparative Literature Dagmar Barnouw, explores the strategies and literary techniques that VS. Naipaul, the winner of the 2001 Nobel Prize in Literature, used in his controversial writings about the strangeness of the world. Other books by Barnouw include “Weimar Intellectuals and the Threat of Modernity” and “Germany 1945.”

Davidson’s Lifetime Achievement

Gerald Davidson, professor of psychology, received the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy 2003 Lifetime Achievement Award, for his outstanding contributions to the field of cognitive behavioral therapy.

Sellers to Lead Metropolitan Project

Jeffrey Sellers, assistant professor of political science, received a grant of support from the French GRALE, a joint funding organization of the National Ministry of Research and the National Center for Scientific Research, to lead the International Metropolitan Observatory project. The project will conduct a series of workshops over several years to collect and analyze data on metropolitan areas throughout 13 developed countries in North America, Europe and Asia.

Linguistic Scholars Release Book

In their new book, “Essays on the Representational and Derivational Nature of Grammar: The Diversity of Wh-Constructions,” Joseph Aoun, the Richard Dekmejian’s Lifetime Achievement Award, for his contributions to the field of behavior therapy, and David Davison, professor of linguistics, and Yen-Hui Audrey Li, professor of East Asian languages and cultures, include detailed analyses of novel data and a sophisticated appreciation of current grammatical theory. Published by MIT Press, the first part of the book investigates the distribution and interpretations of multiple wh-interrogative constructions, focusing on notions of superiority. Part two investigates the structure and derivation of relative constructions.

“This book contains the most interesting and provocative syntax I have seen in the last five years. Aoun and Li are considered to be two of the best syntacticians around. This wonderful book shows why,” says Norbert Hornstein, professor of linguistics at the University of Maryland College Park.

Dekmejian’s Manual of Leadership

Professor of Political Science Richard Dekmejian co-authored the new book “The Just Prince: A Study of Leadership.” The book will be used in Dekmejian’s world political leadership course.

Braudy’s Next Book

In November, University Professor and holder of the Leo S. Bing Chair in English and American Literature Leo Braudy will release his next book “From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity,” published by Alfred Knopf.

Virtually Aging @ USC

Faced with an aging population and a maturing research community, investigations of aging and aging-related diseases have exploded at USC over the past 30 years. Today, by one estimate, more than 100 USC scholars, representing natural science and social science disciplines and professional schools, are studying biological, social, economic, policy and other aspects of aging. For a glimpse of just how extensive the USC aging research enterprise has become, and for information on aging-related research and resources, visit University Wide Aging Nexus at USC, a new Web site designed by Caleb Finch, USC University Professor, the ARCO/William F. Kieschnick Chair in the Neuro-biology of Aging in the School of Gerontology and a College professor of biology, and his team. Visit the site at: www.usc.edu/projects/nexus

Visiting Assistant Professor of English and American Literature Peter Rosendorff, associate professor of international relations and economics, is the director of the Center for International Studies.

Peter Rosendorff Directs Center for International Studies

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Prakash Wins Major Chemistry Prize

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Fluorine's tendency to overreact, or “catch fire,” and its usefulness—it is a key component in drugs used to treat malaria, HIV and cancer—has made finding a way to tame it a goal of chemists for more than 40 years, notes Prakash, holder of the George A. and Judith A. Olah Nobel Laureate Chair in Hydrocarbon Chemistry and scientific co-director of the Loker Hydrocarbon Institute at USC.

Prakash has made major contributions to the field of fluorine research. Despite the difficulties of working with the very reactive element, the unusual properties of fluorinated molecules have made them valuable in biology, materials science and the pharmaceutical industry.

The award follows a flurry of fluorinated activity: Earlier this year, Prakash co-chaired the nation’s largest meeting on fluorine chemistry in Florida. There, his group presented results from his latest work, describing his team’s development of a new chemical method for introducing trifluoromethyl (CF3) groups into molecules.

The team’s method “tames” the trifluoromethylation process, Prakash says. The new method is easier to use than existing methods and provides a more stable source of the trifluoromethyl groups for applications in the lab and industry. The finding also has environmental value; previously, ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) had been the most common source for the trifluoromethyl groups. Prakash’s “environmentally friendly” trifluoromethyl reagent is made from non-ozone-depleting trifluoromethane, which itself is an inexpensive, industrial chemical by-product that has had few uses.

"Fluorine is a small atom with a big ego, because it does so many valuable things," Prakash says.

—Eva Emerson

Faculties News
“Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art” (Oxford University Press, 2002). The prize will be awarded to Meyer by the director of the Smithsonian American Art Museum at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

The Eldredge Prize recognizes originality and thoroughness of research and is meant to honor authors who deepen or focus debates in the field, or who broaden the discipline by reaching beyond traditional boundaries.

Meyer will deliver the Eldredge Prize lecture, titled “Outlaw: Queer Art and Public Controversy: Since the Culture Wars,” Nov. 20 at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Letters to the Editor

A glaring omission
What a beautiful publication! And so inspiring. But with one inconceivable omission: Our university seems to be on the cutting edge of future planning and thinking. How then is it possible that no attention is paid to religion? Seeking full maximization of scientific research to develop solutions to current and future societal problems, how is this subject left unattended?

From a lack of academic study and clarification, the public is divided by opinion and prejudice with little substance for guidance. Are homosexuals and other sexually different persons normal people with equal human rights? This question has created issues that separate American thinking from Canada, the European block of nations, Israel and others and that is a major breaking point for many organized religions.

USC seems to see through a very narrow opening when it comes to basic human issues. I’m afraid our university is going to be left far behind others that are rapidly moving ahead into such valuable research programs and studies in the area of human sexuality.

—J. Douglas Elliott
Los Angeles
Elliott, who earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from USC and lives in Monterey Park, is a third-generation Trojan.

Too many men
My daughter is a recent graduate of USC and we receive the magazine at my address. Imagine my shock and sadness to see the large color picture of four white males on the front of the Summer 2003 issue. “Universal Beliefs,” indeed. I can’t understand how you could place such a picture on any USC publication in this day and age! It’s especially difficult to comprehend given your supposed claims about diversity.

I simply cannot support a college that could make such a decision. There’s so much more to religion than four almost dead white males.

—Nancy Cerverti
Kansas City, MO
Unfortunately for the cover photo, it was four men—a Jew, a Protestant, a Catholic and a Muslim—who coordinated the interfaith conference that we highlighted in the magazine. The picture was not intended to represent the subject of religion at the College. We hope you like the cover of this issue better. Thanks for writing.

Neuroscience All-Stars

Like batting averages of baseball players and the approval ratings of politicians, the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) tallies career stats for scientists. Among the most important is the number of times a scientific publication is referenced in another scientific work. To many, these citation stats provide an objective view of the impact of their work. Highly cited works are considered major contributions to the field.

Using citation indices like these, the ISI recently calculated the 100 most highly cited researchers between 1981 and 1999 for a number of scientific fields. USC Neuroscience racked up some strong stats, with 5 faculty members listed in the Top 100. USC College can claim four of these—Larry Swanson, holder of the Milo Don and Lucille Appleman Professorship in Biological Sciences; National Academy of Sciences Member Richard F. Thompson, holder of the William M. Keck Chair in Biological Sciences and a professor of psychology; Samoff Mednick, director of the Social Science Research Institute; and Michel Baudry, professor of biological sciences. For more information go to the ISI site at http://isihighlycited.com.

—Eva Emerson

Corrections

In the Summer 2003 issue, news that Bettine Birge had received a Fulbright Scholar Award to Beijing was mistakenly listed under Student News. Birge is an associate professor in East Asian languages and culture and should have been listed under Faculty News.

Tracy Hersley’s name was inadvertently omitted from a Summer 2003 article on the Undergraduate Symposium for Scholarly and Creative Work. She received a First Place/Special Interdisciplinary Award at the symposium last spring.

USC College Magazine welcomes your comments and reactions. Please submit all communication to college.pr@usc.edu. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.
Alumni News

Prince named Citigroup chair

Charles Owen Prince. (M.A., ’75) who holds three USC degrees, was recently named Chairman and CEO of Citigroup’s Global Corporate and Investment Bank. Before taking over as chairman, Prince was chief operating officer of Citigroup. Prince began his career as an attorney at U.S. Steel Corporation in 1975 and in 1979 joined Commercial Credit Company (a predecessor company to Citigroup). Born in 1950, Prince holds a master’s degree in international relations and a law degree from USC as well as a master of law degree from Georgetown University. He lives in Manhattan and has two grown children.

Akiyama heads religious program at Occidental

Diana Akiyama (Ph.D., ’01) was recently named director of religious and spiritual life at Occidental College in Los Angeles. She will direct a $2 million grant from the Lilly Foundation to explore the relationship between spirituality, human values, vocation and meaningful work. She will also provide leadership for the campus interfaith center whose programs encourage students to explore their religious beliefs in a multi-faith world. She will also be teaching gender studies. Akiyama earned her Ph.D. in religion and social ethics.

International reach

Peter O’Neill (Ph.D., ’00) and Rhianne Evans (Ph.D., ’99) are expanding the international influence of the classics department by taking jobs overseas. O’Neill recently finished a year as Rome Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Rome and will be joining the faculty of the University of Exeter in his native England. Evans has accepted a faculty position at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Shortnacy joins NYC firm

Michael Shortnacy (B.A., ’96) received his law degree from American University Washington College of Law in May and is now a litigation associate with the law firm Loeb & Loehr in New York City.

Meador writes about book trade


Osterman helps preserve the past

Joe Osterman (B.A., ’50) taught and coached at El Rancho High School in Pico Rivera for 40 years before retiring in 1991. He has been active in preserving memories of the southern Orange County rural lifestyle before urbanization, water and wheels. He is the author of three books and close to 100 articles and essays.

Albanese retirees

Bobbie F. Albanese (B.A., ’61, M.A. ’68) recently retired from the law firm Lozano Smith. Her husband and her son also have degrees from USC. She is a member of USC Associates.

Pisarik develops sports series

Michael Pisarik (B.A., ’90) is currently developing a collegiate sports competition series for a cable television network. Since graduation, he has been involved with the marketing and sales of feature films and TV content to the international market, with an emphasis on documentary projects.

McIlwain pens first book

Jeffrey McIlwain (B.A., ’91) has written his first book, “Organizing Crime in Chintatown: Race, Crime and Acculturation in New York’s Chinatown, 1890-1910,” which will be published this year. McIlwain is an assistant professor of public administration and criminal justice, and coordinator for the international security and conflict resolution program at San Diego State University.

Wilson attends graduate school

Janet Wilson (B.A., ’99) is attending graduate school at the University of Florida in Pensacola, studying public history, with an emphasis on museology and exhibit design. She is engaged to be married in 2003.

Chiu receives Phi Alpha Theta award

Alden Chiu (B.A., ’01) received the Phi Alpha Theta award for best history paper of the year in 2001. He is currently a first year student at Cornell Medical School.

Money Can’t Buy Me Love

The Beatles said it. Benjamin Franklin said it. Even your mother said it—money can’t buy happiness. Now, there’s scientific proof.

Greater wealth does not lead to greater happiness, according to a USC study titled “Explaining Happiness,” published in the current online edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The study also concluded that there is no internal “setpoint” of happiness, as many psychologists have theorized. Many people are under the illusion that the more money we make, the happier we’ll be,” says USC University Professor Richard Easterlin, a College economist and member of the National Academy of Sciences. “So we put all of our resources into making money at the expense of our family and our health.”

Easterlin based his analysis on data from the United States General Social Survey (GSS), which asks questions such as: “Taken all together, how would you say things are these days? Would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy or not too happy?”

The survey queried roughly 1,500 people annually for 28 years—from 1972 to 2000. Easterlin recast the data to study people’s experience from early adulthood through their retirement years.

The data show people are no happier when they acquire greater wealth, Easterlin says. Happiness, he found, typically came from spending quality time with loved ones and from good health.

Using the data as a gauge, Easterlin tested two opposing theories of happiness—the psychological theory that claims individuals are wired with an internal happiness “setpoint” to which people eventual- ly return despite life events such as the loss of a job, divorce or serious injury; and the economic theory that increasing a person’s wealth increases his or her well-being.

Neither theory was supported by the data, Easterlin says.

To view the complete study, visit: www.pnas.org.

Got Nutrition?

Healthy foods may prevent schizophrenia

Toddlers who eat well, exercise daily and attend preschool are less likely to develop mental illnesses as young adults, a USC study has found. Published in the current issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry, the study is among the first to look at ways to prevent psychotic disorders.

“Parents often feel helpless as though there’s nothing they can do to ward off mental illness,” says Adrian Raine, a psychology professor in USC College and leader of the project, which was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and the Ministry of Health in Mauritius where the study was conducted. Mauritius is a small tropical island in the Indian Ocean.

“Our results clearly show there are several proactive steps parents can take,” says Raine, the Robert Granford Wright professor of psychology.

In the study, 83 three-year-olds were fed hot meals, led in 2¾ hours of daily exercise and treated to intense cognitive stimulation over a two-year period in a preschool setting.

Compared to 355 children who received no special treatment, the enriched group had a 31.9 percent reduction in schizotypal personality at age 17, a precursor to schizophrenia. Those who received the intervention also had a 27.9 percent reduction in antisocial-behavior problems at age 17. The crime rate also was cut by 35 percent at age 23. The benefits of the enrichment were much stronger in children who were poorly nourished before the study started, suggesting that good nutrition was the active ingredient in the prevention program.

“This suggests that proper nutrition, exercise and cognitive stimulation in preschool very likely will create better behavior 20 years later,” says Raine. “The implication for society is that we may have identified some of the building blocks of schizophrenia and crime.”

—Gilden Silsby, USC News Service
Obituaries

Arthur W. Adamson, professor, 83
Arthur Adamson, emeritus professor of chemistry, died on July 22. With a B.S. from U.C. Berkeley and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, he joined the USC faculty in 1946. An inspirational teacher and a prolific writer, he has been called “the father of inorganic photochemistry” and is known for his textbooks about physical chemistry, and surface and colloid chemistry.

The recipient of numerous scientific awards for research and excellence in education (including many from USC), Adamson received three national American Chemical Society awards and four great-grandchildren.

David Henry Malone, dean, 84
David Henry Malone, professor emeritus and former dean of humanities, passed away June 8 in Kirkland, WA, after a four-year struggle with cancer. Born in Washington, D.C., in 1919, Malone attended the University of North Carolina where he met his wife of 60 years, Alice Wells. He received both his undergraduate and graduate education at the same university, earning his Ph.D. in 1940.

Malone came to USC in 1962 as a professor of comparative literature and English after serving on the faculty of Auburn University from 1948 to 1962. During his tenure at USC he held several administrative positions: chairman, comparative literature (1962-1972); chairman, English department (1964-1968); dean of the Division of Humanities (1972-1980); acting dean, College of Letters, Arts & Sciences (1980-81).

He also received several fellowships and visiting professorships, including a post-doctoral Ford Foundation grant to study at Phillips University in Germany and the University of Paris, and a Visiting Fulbright Professorship at the University of Vienna. During his career at USC he received two grants from the National Endowment of the Humanities and one from the Rockefeller Foundation.

Malone served as an officer in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1945 and continued as a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve, attaining the rank of commander. He leaves his wife, Alice; sons, Stephen of Seattle and Bruce of Sun Valley; and four grandchildren.

James E. Mussleman, alumnus, 77
A resident of Fullerton, Calif. James Mussleman (B.A., ’53) died on July 21. He studied English at USC College and is survived by his wife, Susan; daughter, Julie; sons, Tim and Tim, granddaughter, Lani, and four sisters and one brother.

Armando Francisco DeCastro, CEO, 61
Armando Francisco DeCastro (B.A., ’66), CEO and founder of Diversified Maintenance Systems studied political science at USC College and was a member of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity. DeCastro was a strong supporter of the USC athletics program. His daughter Stephanie graduated from USC in 1997 with a degree in communication. He is also survived by his wife Jane.

Donald Schuster, professor, 76
Donald Schuster (Ph.D., ’61), a psychologist whose professional accomplishments include more than 100 papers, nine books and 10 patents, died June 7 of congestive heart failure. A professor emeritus at Iowa State University, he is survived by his wife, two daughters, five grandchildren and two brothers.

What’s New?

USC College values the close-knit community created by its students, alumni, faculty and affiliates. That’s why we’re interested in learning about what you’ve been up to. Have you won an award? Written a book? Started a new career? Please let us know by e-mailing the information to college.pr@usc.edu.

Louis Warschaw Lecture

Students Dig Greek Culture

continued from page 8

The Romans found the Goddess at a shrine in Turkey. As it happened, Cybele was a black stone. “They successfully brought the goddess back to Rome and worshiped her stone form for 700 years, until it was outlawed by a Christian emperor,” he says.

Worship today involves far less travel, says Ando.

“If I was to build a church today, I would raise money, seek co-religionists, build a building and seek a tax exemption. I wouldn’t have to travel to another church and take its God.”

—Nicole St.Pierre

Louis Warschaw (left) poses with the Fifth Annual Carmen and Louis Warschaw Distinguished Lecturer, Senator Norm Coleman (R-Minn.), and his wife Laurie (right).

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Capturing the Spirit of Armenia
The faces of triumphs and tragedy

The faces of triumphs and tragedy. The intensive interviews and experiments of survival and hope. Members document their own experiences and workshops around the globe. The trio also was invited to speak about Armenia at conferences and workshops around the globe. In 2001, Donald and Lorna were asked to participate in an international conference on genocide in Kigali, Rwanda, where they presented their research and became acquainted with survivors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide that claimed the lives of 800,000 people. “Through interviews with members of an association of orphans who were heading households of surviving siblings, we could see these young adults struggling with the same issues that Armenians faced a decade after their genocide—but in some ways with even less support than Armenian survivors had experienced,” says Donald.

Their interactions in Kigali have led the Millers to start a new project on genocide, this time collaborating with the orphan organization as its members document their own experiences of survival and hope.

—Karen Newell Young

A man takes a break while reconstructing his earthquake-damaged house.

A warmly dressed child studies in an unheated primary school.

Fall 2003

INSIDE:
• Genomic Science Set to Expand at USC
• Mystery Writer Reveals His Own Story

Californi Press, September 2003). The intimate interviews and Berndt’s photography trace the social, economic and spiritual journey of Armenians during the 1980s and 1990s, when the country faced a series of tragic setbacks, including earthquakes, pogroms, poverty and war. The authors focused on four groups of people: survivors of the earthquake that devastated northeastern Armenia in 1988; refugees from Azerbaijan who fled Baku and Sumgait because of pogroms against them; women, children and soldiers who were affected by the war in Nagorno-Karabakh; and ordinary citizens who survived several winters without heat because of a Turkish and Azerbaijani blockade.

While working on the book, the Millers and Berndt created an exhibit of their work, which was displayed in major metropolitan areas. The trio also was invited to speak about Armenia at conferences and workshops around the globe. In 2001, Donald and Lorna were asked to participate in an international conference on genocide in Kigali, Rwanda, where they presented their research and became acquainted with survivors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide that claimed the lives of 800,000 people. “Through interviews with members of an association of orphans who were heading households of surviving siblings, we could see these young adults struggling with the same issues that Armenians faced a decade after their genocide—but in some ways with even less support than Armenian survivors had experienced,” says Donald.

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