

GW

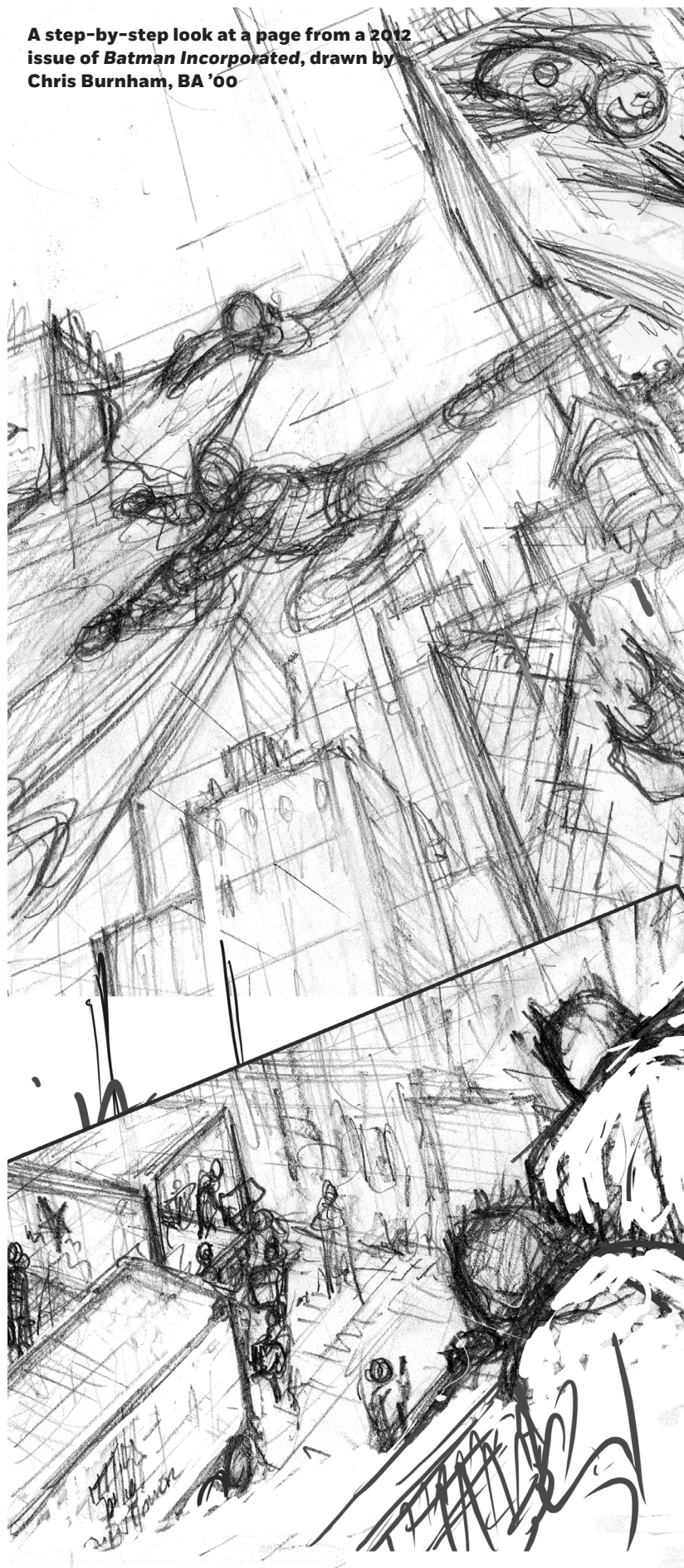
THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
MAGAZINE
FALL 2018

The Lord of Little Washington

THREE-MICHELIN-STAR
CHEF PATRICK O'CONNELL



A step-by-step look at a page from a 2012 issue of *Batman Incorporated*, drawn by Chris Burnham, BA '00



GW MAGAZINE FALL 2018

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

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A decade after leaving GW, chef Patrick O'Connell started shaping a rural town in his whimsical image, building a Michelin-starred restaurant out of an old gas station and remaking Washington, Va., as a gastronome's paradise. Forty years in, realm and creator are all but indistinguishable.

/ By Matthew Stoss /

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Comic book artist Chris Burnham, BA '00, spent two years drawing Batman. It wasn't as glamorous as he imagined, but it led somewhere big: making a comic with *Walking Dead* creator Robert Kirkman.

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Photojournalist Gabriella Demczuk, BA '13, captures acclaimed chef Patrick O'Connell and his dalmation, Luray, in October at O'Connell's three-Michelin-star Inn at Little Washington.

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GW
TODAY



GW MAGAZINE

Fall 2018
Volume 29, Issue 1

What's been your best food experience?

About 10 years ago I had viral meningitis and bronchitis at the same time. I didn't eat for days. Then I got three **Burger King** cheeseburgers. I've never been happier eating food.

With a dying cell phone and the place we intended to go closed, we "discovered" the best Indian food we've ever had—in Glasgow, Scotland.

Picking crabs every summer growing up in Baltimore. Mallets and hot butter—your hands would smell like **Old Bay** for the rest of the day, no matter how much you washed them.



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Getting back to a Baltimore hotel room in the small hours of the morning after a great night out and finding **Cheetos** in the minibar. The crunchy, neon blasphemy of Cheetos, at that moment, was worth every ludicrous penny.

A whole-roasted pig on a spit when traveling through a remote village flanked by the Andes in Peru.

Eating fresh, sun-warmed apricots in the springtime shade of a linden tree in Tuscany was not the worst.



Thomas J. LeBlanc

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The Mill in Spring Lake, NJ, was a favorite gathering place for my family.

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Mourning Robert Kennedy Anew

Thank you for sharing Seth Beckerman’s profoundly moving photos of spectators paying tribute to Robert Kennedy on his final journey (“Looking Out at the People Looking In”).

I returned to Ireland in 1966 after receiving my DSc from GWU. I had come back for an interview with a company in Dayton, Ohio, in June 1968. I was offered the job, but when I opened the *Dayton Daily News* at breakfast the following morning and read of Sen. Kennedy’s assassination, I wanted to dash to the airport and escape from a country gone mad. I ended up taking the job and have lived in the U.S. ever since. But I still mourn the loss of Robert Kennedy. The photos bring back the horror and grief I felt on that morning when I learned that a kind and caring leader had been taken from us.

Malcolm O’Hagan, DSc ’66
 Chevy Chase, Md.

A Bon Voyage

Bravo to Matthew Stoss for his vivid, engaging, well-written “Return to Sea”! It was a pleasure to read as well as making me wish for a different past—one where the military draft would have offered more choices than just the Army!

And thanks to the entire magazine staff for producing such consistently interesting issues.

Robert Goldhamer, BS ’65, MD ’69

Recalling the Scene

Thank you for the excellent article and the Seth Beckerman photographs of the Robert F. Kennedy funeral train from New York to Washington (“Looking Out at the People Looking In”).

As a young volunteer in the Kennedy campaign, I waited patiently along with hundreds of others for the delayed funeral train to arrive that night at Union Station. It was a hot and muggy night in Washington, and the long sheets of black fabric that draped the façade of Union Station hung motionless in the summer night. The crowd stood quietly outside the station, making small talk, but in low voices, until past 9 o’clock when the funeral train finally arrived.

Soon after the train arrived, the crowd stood in a hushed silence as a hearse carrying the late senator’s body emerged slowly from the Union Station entrance, followed by members of the family in black limousines. Thus began the sad final drive along Pennsylvania Avenue to Arlington Cemetery.

Alex E. Dunn, Jr., EdD ’81
 Pompano Beach, Fla.

‘The Horror of It’

I always look forward to the seasonal issues of the *GW Magazine*. This summer’s issue was especially interesting with the inclusion of the (“Looking Out at the People Looking In”) pictorial-story by Seth Beckerman and Danny Freedman.

I was visiting my parents in New York, having just graduated from GW and pondering and seeking advice whether to accept employment with the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments or join the Peace Corps. It was 3 a.m. Eastern Time, and my mother and I had been watching Kennedy’s live press conference from the Ambassador Hotel.

I clearly remember the horror of it, my mother crying, running upstairs to wake my father and, as for myself, a sharp fear for what type of country we had become.

Having been a student at GW during the ’60s and ’70s, I was fortunate to be at a university and in a city that was a focal point of the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War protests and the Watergate hearings. It is articles such as this that serve as key reminders of those times and which make the *GW Magazine* an anticipated arrival.

Bernard Peters, BA ’68, MURP ’73



The Power of Narrative

Professor Abdourahman Waberi's commentary on his experiences visiting post-genocide Rwanda in John DiConsiglio's article, "Echoes of Rwanda" (spring 2018), affirms the importance of individual narratives in developing understanding of global affairs, human rights and the ethical implications of catastrophic events such as the Rwandan genocide against the Tutsi. Genocide, in particular, because of its massive scale and scope, and the unique nature of its totalizing dehumanization and aim of mass murder and annihilation of an entire people, can overwhelm the human capacity to empathize and try to understand the individual human experience of those targeted in genocide. Literature that enables such empathy and understanding has an essential and powerful role in education that fosters ethical reflection and action, global civic responsibility and the advancement of human rights.

Noam Schimmel
 Visiting Associate Professor of Ethics and International Affairs
 Elliott School of International Affairs

FOR THE RECORD

A Missed Opportunity

The article titled "Pocket-Sized Protector" (summer 2018) is irresponsibly written and upholds rape culture at GW and beyond.

While Danya Sherman's KnoNap invention is innovative and worthy of high praise, the article normalizes sexual assault by presenting it as a casual, common problem for which Sherman has found a lucrative solution.

The article affirms the stance that the responsibility of sexual assault prevention rests on victim's shoulders and minimizes the reality that sexual assault is a pervasive issue at GW. In fact, the article refers to Sherman's assailant as a "friend" and the words "sexual assault" never appear in the article, removing any responsibility from those perpetrating sexual violence and framing the narrative as an entrepreneurial success story where a napkin is the victor against a drug-laced drink.

But let us be clear: Sherman started KnoNap in response to the all-too-common occurrence of sexual assault on and off campus. The article does nothing to address the glaring root of the problem.

Hannah Ayasse, BA '16
 Oakland, Calif.

Correction:

The article "Back to Sea" (summer 2018) included a typo, spelling "physician assistant" as "physician's assistant." Thanks, as always, to the sharp-eyed reader who notified us of the typo. We regret the error. —Eds.



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Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

Prelude

NEWS AND INSIGHTS FROM CAMPUS AND BEYOND



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Events Calendar



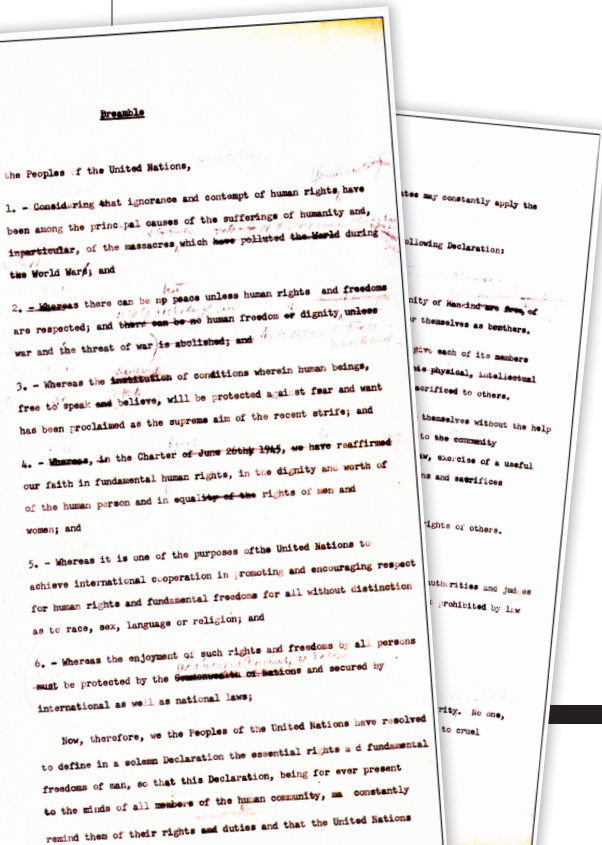
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The Future Of ...



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Colonials Weekend



“

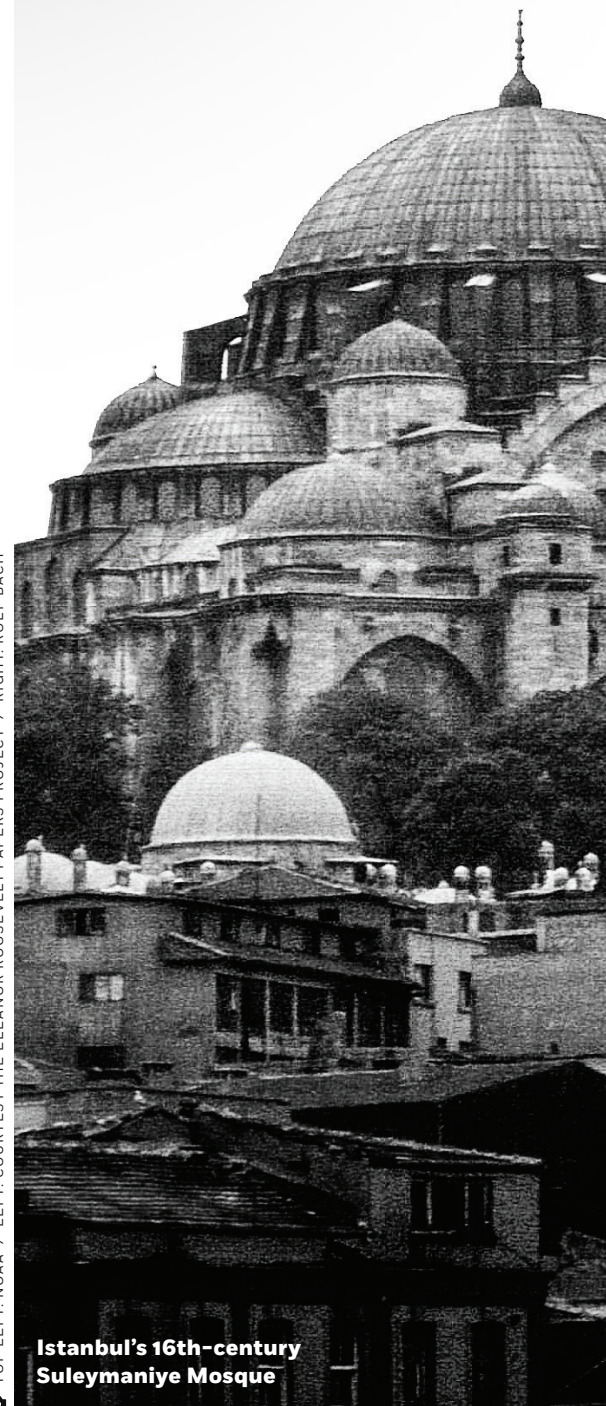
I've found myself searching through a collection of letters in our filing room and ending up sitting on the floor crying my eyes out over how moving their content is.

Lee Fobos, an undergrad working on the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, an archive that includes Roosevelt's handmade edits to the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

P. 7



TOP LEFT: NOAA / LEFT: COURTESY THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PAPERS PROJECT / RIGHT: ROLF BACH



Istanbul's 16th-century Suleymaniye Mosque



RELIGION

Drafted Divinity

A marked-up, early version of a canonical Islamic text glimpses the evolution of a tract previously known only in its final form, built to withstand the centuries.

By Menachem Wecker, MA '09





S

Scholars who wish to pore over the medieval manuscript collection at Istanbul’s lavish and sprawling Suleymaniye Mosque have to visit its library in person, if they can find it.

Joel Blecher could not.

“You can’t blame me for missing it,” says Blecher, a historian of medieval Islam.

The 16th-century mosque itself sticks out like an impeccably manicured thumb from the warrens and bustle of the city. It’s “one of the greatest architectural achievements of its time,” Blecher says, designed “to look like a domed Byzantine church squared into a perfect cube in the hopes of offering mosque-goers a glimpse of divine symmetry on Earth.”

The library, on the other hand, is tucked away in what seems like the back alley of another back alley.

Blecher flashed his passport and soon was in a roughly 450-square-foot room with a dozen tired-looking computers, which had a habit of displaying partially darkened screens at inopportune times.

Still, the arrangement worked in his favor during that summertime visit in 2014. Blecher, who is now an assistant professor of history at GW, had come to dread the looks on the faces of rare-book librarians after they’d spent half an hour retrieving a manuscript, only for him to open it, check the date and the copyist’s name, and hand it back. At the Suleymaniye Mosque library, where the entire collection had been scanned

but not pored over by a curator, he could click through dozens of manuscripts in a single sitting.

He’d already worked through some 150 or 200 medieval Arabic manuscripts over two days there when he opened a file that would change the course of his career.

Two things immediately leapt off the scanned page amid some messy handwriting: the year 822 in the Islamic calendar (1419 in the Gregorian count) and the phrase “*min imlā’ ... Ibn Hajar*”—“from the dictation of ... Ibn Hajar.”

Blecher could not believe his eyes.

A Commentator of Biblical Proportions

Though he died in 1449, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani remains something of a household name, someone that most Sunni Muslims with a religious education beyond childhood would know of and revere, Blecher says.

More than 500 years after his death, his name and work still are touchstones for Islamic scholars, clerics, ISIS propagandists and the mainstream media, including what Blecher calls a “soap opera” in Egypt based on Ibn Hajar’s life and times.

His renown stems from an encyclopedic, 13-volume commentary on the *hadith*, the collected sayings attributed to the prophet Muhammad and stories about the way in which Muhammad lived. Individual *hadiths* number in the thousands, and while they are not part of the Quran, they carry the weight of law for many in Islam’s global Sunni majority.

Ibn Hajar’s commentary, published as *Fath al-Bari*—literally “Victory of the Creator,” although Blecher prefers the more poetic “Unlocking the Divine Wisdom”—was, in the 1400s, an unprecedented undertaking in Islam.

The work was “a monumental intellectual feat that helped

reshape the way a religious community viewed its own tradition ... an instant classic,” as Blecher described it last year in *The Atlantic*.

Ibn Hajar worked for at least 30 years on *Fath al-Bari*. It was officially pronounced complete in 1438 but, like similar works, tinkering continued and the effort only truly ended when the commentator died a decade later, Blecher says.

Encountering the hastily scratched text, Blecher saved the file immediately. He couldn’t yet make heads or tails of it, but its promise was undeniable.

When he got home to Virginia, where he was teaching at Washington and Lee University at the time, Blecher studied the PDF more thoroughly. It turned out to be an early version of *Fath al-Bari*—one that the Ibn Hajar had dictated to a student.

“It actually documents what the narrative sources had been saying,” Blecher says, which is that students would gather around the master and transcribe his oral dictation. “I could see that there were things crossed out and added in the margin.”

Most everything that was known about *Fath al-Bari* up to then came from the text itself and narrative sources surrounding it, Blecher wrote in reporting the discovery in 2017, a year after he arrived at GW. Here was an opportunity to study its DNA.

A Diamond in the Rough Draft

The unlikely planetary alignment that led to the unearthing of this manuscript, hidden in a repository that had to be sifted through in person, was eclipsed only by the fact that many scholars wouldn’t have cared to search for it. Most are interested in completed manuscripts or commentators’ own copies, not rough drafts which were meant for private rather than public consumption,



**Joel Blecher,
an assistant
professor of
history**

Blecher says.

But a final product offers only part of a story.

Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, he says, wasn't created in a single, masterfully planned stroke, and shouldn't be studied as if it were. It was alive with variables, dead ends, improvisations and false starts.

The same, Blecher says, goes for hadith commentaries. He'd known that in theory, but here finally was proof: The commentaries weren't one-offs, but texts that evolved over time.

In reporting the discovery last year in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Blecher even points out that a close look at just one part of that early text finds 25 percent fewer words than in the same section in the final published *Fath al-Bari*. And this is a text in which even a single word change might wield profound significance.

"These drafts are meaningful, useful and valuable, and give us insight into when these texts are written and the ways that *hadiths*

are interpreted over time," Blecher says.

One major difference between the draft found by Blecher and Ibn Hajar's final version relates to an additional call to prayer issued in marketplaces on Fridays. Many Sunnis approved of it, while Shiites saw it as the product of a corrupted text, which had either been transmitted improperly or outright fabricated. At first, Blecher says, Ibn Hajar said the call to prayer was acceptable, without addressing its origins. But in revisions added to the margins decades later, Ibn Hajar laid down "withering criticism of the trustworthiness and plausibility of each [underlying] hadith's chain of transmission" and scolded those who had circulated them, Blecher wrote in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.

While Ibn Hajar had left out those *hadiths* in the earlier dictation, Blecher surmises that after he'd later read works in which they were taken at face

Below and next page: Folios from the 1419 manuscript showing notes in the margins that are described as being added in 1446—an update to reflect a later, pre-final version



value, he "decided it was part of his charge" to include them, "if only to unequivocally reject them."

Blecher's discovery and analysis of the manuscript informed not only the understanding of the *Fath al-Bari*, but also the much broader pursuit of a book he published last year, *Said the Prophet of God: Hadith Commentary across a Millennium*.

The cumulative work shows the Islamic intellectual tradition didn't become stagnant around the year 1000, as many assume, says Jonathan Brown, the Alwaleed bin Talal Chair of Islamic Civilization at Georgetown University and director of Georgetown's Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim Christian Understanding. Brown is familiar with Blecher's work and has studied *hadiths* extensively.

"Muslim engagement with the foundations of their tradition, and how to bring it to bear on contemporary issues, never stopped," Brown says.

"Hadiths are perhaps the most important source for Islamic law and dogma, eclipsing even the Quran, which is a relatively short text," Brown says, noting that Blecher's reading of the hadiths is novel, but not as controversial as it may seem: When looking for rationale to innovate, Islamic commentators have tended to locate new approaches within earlier discussions. Commentaries are great sites to chart that change.

Deep dives into the commentaries and their authors can lend context to those shifts. They might shine a light on social and intellectual pressures—even Ibn Hajar took pains to thwart a cross-Cairo rival he suspected of spying on the project—and the influence of economic factors and patronage on these religious texts.

The last two are consistent threads in Blecher's work, and ones he'll carry into his next book, about the intersection of the spice trade and Muslim commentators—a project that's already garnered grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies and the Library of Congress.

In *Said the Prophet of God*, Blecher tracks the evolution of commentary surrounding a range of economically oriented *hadith*, including one that states that slave owners must clothe and feed their slaves as they clothe and feed themselves.

The *hadith* stems from a close companion of the prophet's, named Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, who was seen walking with his slave, and the two were dressed in nearly identical



COURTESY JOEL BLECHER

garb.

“When asked to explain this unusual practice,” Blecher writes, “Abu Dharr confessed that he used to abuse his slave until Muhammad scolded him, stating, ‘Those whom God has placed under your authority are your brothers. He who possesses his brother feeds him what he feeds himself and dresses him in what he dresses himself.’”

Over the centuries, commentators have vacillated on how to interpret it. In the 11th century in Andalusia, one commentator ridiculed the idea of dressing and feeding slaves as if they were above their stations.

Ibn Hajar landed on the side of absolute equity on this point, while others across time have advocated for a middle road. Much more recently, in 1999, a Pakistani commentator explained the hadith, in the absence of slaves, in terms of equality between capitalists and “labourers who work in factories, shops, and homes,” Blecher writes. And ISIS has embraced it, along with other texts, as a justification of slavery.

Argument Is a ‘Mercy’

The branching and intertwining system of hadith and interpretation that Blecher charts gains even more complexity by aiming to codify and preserve contradictory interpretations of the same text.

But all that has led Blecher to see hadith commentaries as a “kind of time travel,” he says. “They’re bundling these commentaries together. They themselves know that 600 or 700 years separate them and the compilation of the text, and they imagine that their commentary may have to endure for another 200, 300, 400 or 500 years.”

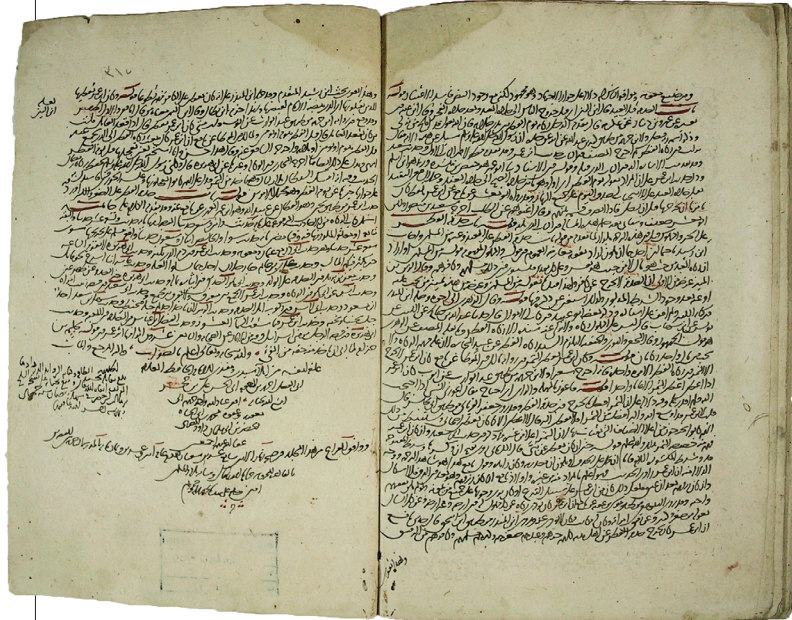
To explain the benefits of debate and multiple interpretive traditions, Blecher quotes a hadith: “The differences of my community are a mercy.”

He interprets that to mean that the doubt and evolution inherent in the interpretations over centuries are part of the divine plan, as the devout see it. The arguments are wrapped up irrevocably in the tradition itself.

“It’s not that you are treating the religious text as a toy or device to play around with the meaning, to make it say what you want it to,” Blecher says. “You are interested in making fine distinctions precisely because you don’t want to claim to speak for the text and to get it wrong. In a sense, the more seriously you take a text, the more serious you are to make sure you understand the range of possible opinions and meanings.”

In the book *Said the Prophet of God*,

In reporting the discovery last year in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Blecher even points out that a close look at just one part of that early text finds 25 percent fewer words than in the final, published *Fath al-Bari*. And this is a text in which even a single word change might wield profound significance.



Blecher says he’s aiming to open a window onto that process.

“It’s often the case that when insiders present their tradition to outsiders, they like to present a unified consensus and a stable, foundational text that’s uncorrupted and an opinion that can’t be challenged,” Blecher says. “Part of what this book is about is giving scholars some insight into the internal dynamics.”

That includes, he noted in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, a lingering sense of “the artifice of completion.” He argues, instead, that seeing “a commentary and its revision as a serial performance” adds dimension to a text that otherwise might seem to have been hatched whole.

“With each word dictated,” Blecher writes in the case of Ibn Hajar, “and each explanation inked on paper, new riddles, new debates and new ambiguities emerged both for him and his readership.”

Blecher is finding some of the same for himself.

After his piece in *The Atlantic* offering insights into the discovery, Blecher noticed

an unauthorized, verbatim Arabic translation of his story in an online publication. Then a television anchor in the Middle East posted it on his Facebook page, and a bit of a debate ensued as the article spread through 8,300 shares and more than 22,000 views.

“For modernist Muslims and secularized Muslim and Christian audiences, the article seemed to suggest that Islam has the capacity to change as the modern world changes,” he says.

“For learned Muslims, who were familiar with the textual tradition, it reinforced something they knew already: that the ulama—or Muslim religious authorities—“have always opened Islamic texts to a wide range of interpretations across time, and that they were always in the process of refining their interpretations.”

Others seemed threatened, jumping headlong “into the flame war,” he says. Blecher was called names, and was accused alternately of a plot to distort Islam and of being too generous to the religion.

And the story of history’s interpreters marches on. ☞

COURTESY JOEL BLECHER

QUIZ SHOWS

'Who Is Laura Coates?'

The GW Law lecturer is named by Alex Trebek as a potential successor on Jeopardy!



"I was as shocked as anyone else."

That was the response of Laura Coates, a professorial lecturer at GW Law, after hearing *Jeopardy!* host Alex Trebek's unexpected endorsement of her as a potential successor on the quiz show.

Trebek's comments came in late July during an interview on Fox News with Harvey Levin of TMZ. Trebek, who has hosted the show since 1984, said there was just a "50-50" chance he would return after the end of his contract in 2020. Asked who might be a good successor, Trebek named Los Angeles Kings play-by-play announcer Alex Faust and then Coates.

"There is an attorney, Laura Coates," Trebek told Levin. "She's an African American, and she appears on some of the cable news shows from time to time."

A spokesperson for the production company of *Jeopardy!* said this summer that the show had no comment on Trebek's suggestions.

Coates, who hosts an eponymous daily show on SiriusXM's Urban View channel and is a frequent legal analyst on CNN, is a former federal prosecutor and assistant U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia. Since leaving government three years ago, she has

Five other times GW came up on Jeopardy!, either as an answer or a question, according to fan site J! Archive:



lectured at GW on social justice issues and led a writing course in criminal litigation. (Coates says she's not teaching this fall, but that she intends to return soon.)

Coates was surprised that Trebek even knew her name, and says she was honored by the suggestion. "It would be an opportunity I could not pass up," she says.

Before that announcement, Coates says she only saw two possible *Jeopardy!* hosts: "Alex Trebek with a mustache and Alex Trebek without a mustache."

—Tatyana Hopkins

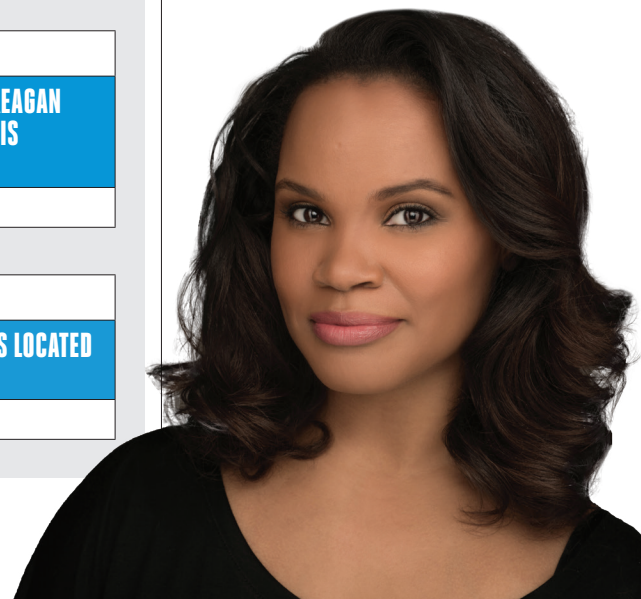
BACK TO SCHOOL WITH POLITICIANS	\$800
A STAR DEBATER AT HER OKLAHOMA HIGH SCHOOL, SHE WOULD GET A FULL DEBATE SCHOLARSHIP TO GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY	
(ELIZABETH WARREN)	

YOU MUST BE PRESIDENT TO WIN	\$400
IN 1946 HE ATTENDED DAUGHTER MARGARET'S GRADUATION FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY & WAS AWARDED AN LL.D.	
(HARRY TRUMAN)	

COLLEGES NAMED FOR PEOPLE	\$800
D.C.'S COLUMBIAN UNIVERSITY GOT THIS NEW NAME IN 1904	

GENERAL HOSPITAL	\$1000
AFTER BEING WOUNDED IN 1981, PRES. REAGAN WAS RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL OF THIS "PRESIDENTIAL" UNIVERSITY	

COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES	\$800
THIS UNIVERSITY NAMED FOR A PRESIDENT IS LOCATED 4 BLOCKS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE	



HISTORY

Pieces of Eleanor

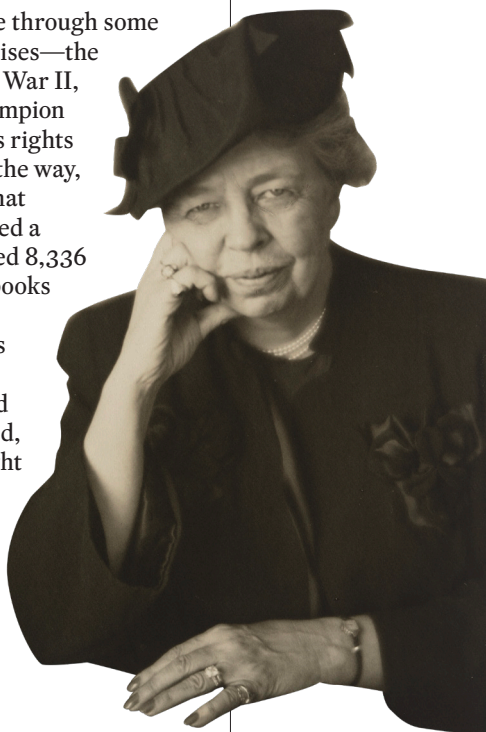
For nearly two decades, researchers have followed a transnational paper trail to create a later-in-life political portrait of Eleanor Roosevelt, post-FDR and unbound after a dozen years in the White House.

// By John DiConsiglio

S

She was a towering figure through some of the nation's greatest crises—the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War—and a champion of human rights, women's rights and racial justice. Along the way, first lady and later diplomat Eleanor Roosevelt amassed a trail of words that included 8,336 newspaper columns, 27 books and nearly 600 articles. She averaged 75 speeches a year, penned up to 150 letters a day (and received two to four times that) and, over the years, hosted eight radio programs and three TV shows.

For 18 years, it's been the mission of the History Department's Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project to create a public archive of that vast trove.



And while the project has collected from every phase of Roosevelt's public life—from her marriage to Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1905 (her cousin and then-President Theodore Roosevelt gave away the bride) to her death in 1962—its work primarily targets the era after she left the White House in 1945.

Those 17 years were among Roosevelt's most productive, nearly eclipsing her time as first lady, but are perhaps the least studied.

"Our historical memory of her is usually in her role as first lady, but that only captures a small part of the identity she assumes in American public life," says Project Director Christopher Brick, BA '02. "Her career isn't over, by any stretch of the imagination, when FDR dies. She continued to shape politics, international law and human rights."

It's a period that included her service as chair of the UN Human Rights Commission, where she was the chief proponent and central architect of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She traveled the world and met with foreign leaders, such as David Ben-Gurion in Israel, Jawaharlal Nehru in India and—twice—Nikita Khrushchev in the Soviet Union.

During that time, Roosevelt also continued to campaign for civil and women's rights, taking high-profile stances to dismantle Jim Crow and oppose Joseph McCarthy. She challenged the nation to live up to the same ideals it espoused to the world.

"Until we have complete equality of opportunity in every field, equal rights socially and economically," she wrote in December 1945, "we cannot consider ourselves a real democracy."

Founded in 2000 by retired Research Professor of History Allida Black, PhD '93, the project is funded primarily through grants from the



In the Archive

100,000
documents

500
audio and visual recordings; some rare, like her radio address to the nation hours after the Pearl Harbor bombing

5,000
photographs

3
shelves of binders recreating Roosevelt's daily schedule

40
boxes of Christmas cards

8,000
"My Day" newspaper columns

Not in the Archive

12
redacted pages from a 3,000-page FBI file detailing J. Edgar Hoover's targeting of Eleanor Roosevelt as a suspected Communist sympathizer. The project is suing the federal government for the pages, which likely deal with Roosevelt's trips to the Soviet Union in 1957 and 1958.



ABOVE: WILLIAM ATKINS / RIGHT: NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

National Archives and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Scouring more than 250 archives—from the Library of Congress to the FDR Library in Hyde Park, N.Y., to collections in nine other countries—its initial goal was to publish a five-volume print edition of the most important papers and unpublished correspondence from Roosevelt’s later political life.

Volumes I and II—covering 1945-1952 and featuring, respectively, forewords by Hillary and Bill Clinton—were published in 2006 and 2012. And the final three volumes are currently in production. The team recently was awarded \$195,000 from the National Archives to support the completion of the third installment, covering 1953-1955, which Brick expects to be in

draft form next year and possibly published in 2020.

As the project evolved, its scope expanded to include digital initiatives and audio archives from Roosevelt’s entire public life, with staff and student researchers spending thousands of hours, Brick says, uncovering, transcribing and reviewing Roosevelt recordings.

“Honoring Eleanor Roosevelt’s extraordinary record means making this material available to a broad swath of people—not just historians, but students and anybody who wants to learn about this remarkable woman,” says Project Editor Christy Regenhardt, BA ’95. “Eleanor Roosevelt’s legacy is part of our American story, and these items are valuable pieces of American heritage.”

Brick and his colleagues have uncovered a series of historical

Above: Director Chris Brick and Editor Christy Regenhardt; Below: Roosevelt as drawn mid-century by Charles Johnson Post



treasures: photos of Roosevelt with Tuskegee Airmen; audio conversations with Albert Einstein and John Steinbeck; records of a flight with Amelia Earhart where both women took the plane’s controls. Along the way, the staff has become intimately familiar with their subject.

“I’ve found myself searching through a collection of letters in our filing room and ending up sitting on the floor crying my eyes out over how moving their content is,” says Lee Febos, a history major and student research assistant.

They are words that continue to resonate.

In 2013, the project was awarded a special designation by UNESCO as part of its historical heritage register. And in 2017, *Hamilton* creator Lin-Manuel Miranda retweeted a Roosevelt quotation—“We have to get over our complacency and stop thinking that democracy is something we have achieved and no longer have to work for”—causing an immediate 500-follower boost for the project’s Twitter account.

“Her voice is every bit as relevant today as it ever has been,” Brick says. ☐

CURRICULUM

Melding the Old and New

▣ HARRISON JONES

When Davide Prete talks about teaching his students “traditional techniques” of metalsmithing, he talks of things like forging steel, shaping and embossing copper, working with gold leaf—but also tuning in to the ping of the hammer to know how well the strikes are landing, and reading the color of steel as it comes out of the fire.

“We don’t check the temperature,” says Prete, an adjunct professor and third-generation Italian metalsmith who teaches the fall class “Metals and Metalsmithing” in a sub-basement studio in the Corcoran School’s Flagg Building.

“Bright yellow is around 2,000 Fahrenheit; you have 30 seconds to do the work, so you have to already know what to do, you have to have a plan. ... When it’s orange and red, it’s really low in temperature and you cannot do a lot.”

Students learn to combine those techniques with newer ones, like computer-aided design and using a plasma cutter, and they get an overarching sense of how art is created for an environment and of the life of a project from proposal to presentation.

“They really like it,” he says—even those who enroll more for the sake of curiosity than of art. “... I think, in part, it’s a stress-reliever, where you can use a big hammer to smash steel and make something.”





Davide Prete, a third-generation metalsmith and adjunct professor, forges steel over an anvil during class earlier this year

Calendar

28 / NOVEMBER

NEW YORK CITY

Join fellow alumni for a networking breakfast and conversation with Carol Ann Smith, BA '71, who is vice president, publisher and chief revenue officer of *Harper's Bazaar*. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

12 / DECEMBER

DENVER

Enjoy the holiday sights at the Denver Botanic Gardens during this annual holiday party. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

21 / DECEMBER

SAN DIEGO

Alumni, family and friends take in an early morning hike and a solstice sunrise viewing. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)



THROUGH DECEMBER 23

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Woven by women to adorn tents and camel caravans, kilims are enduring records of life in Turkey's nomadic communities as well as abstract art. The exhibition *A Nomad's Art: Kilims of Anatolia* marks the public debut of treasures from the museum's Murad Megalli collection. (museum.gwu.edu)

THROUGH DECEMBER 23

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The exhibition *Eye of the Bird: Visions and Views of D.C.'s Past* examines the evolution of the city through two newly commissioned panoramic landscape paintings by local artist Peter Waddell. One shows the grand city that planner Pierre L'Enfant envisioned, while the other captures the city's development by 1825, the year L'Enfant died. (museum.gwu.edu)



6 / JANUARY

PHILADELPHIA

Alumni gather for a tailgate ahead of the men's basketball game versus St. Joseph's. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

16 / JANUARY

ONLINE

Join fellow Colonials for an Alumni Industry Networks Virtual Networking Hour, happening online from noon to 1 p.m. ET (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

19 / JANUARY

PALM BEACH, FLA.

South Florida alumni, families and friends welcome GW President Thomas LeBlanc, who will share his strategic initiatives for the university and take questions from the audience. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

23 / JANUARY

DAVIDSON, N.C.

Alumni gather for a tailgate ahead of the men's basketball game versus Davidson. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

THROUGH JANUARY 25

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Howard Hodgkin in Venice showcases 10 prints by the British painter, including the 1995 series, *Venetian Views*, recently gifted to the Luther W. Brady Art Gallery. They will be shown along with a Hodgkin-designed rug and a companion exhibition curated from the GW Collection and from works by alumni, all depicting the sites and feel of Italy. (corcoran.gwu.edu)

30 / JANUARY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Renowned singer and songwriter Alexander Rozenbaum, also known as the "Russian Bob Dylan," presents a new show, *Neforamt*. (lisner.gwu.edu)



13 / FEBRUARY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Foggy Bottom campus will be one of just six hosts of *Enduring Ideals: Rockwell, Roosevelt & the Four Freedoms*—the first international touring exhibit of Norman Rockwell's iconic oil paintings that capture the four freedoms outlined by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his 1941 State of the Union address: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. (*Through April 29*; museum.gwu.edu)

14 / FEBRUARY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Master illusionist Ivan Amodei—winner of competition TV show *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*—brings his new 90-minute stage show, *Secrets & Illusions*, with his signature thought-provoking vignettes, storytelling and audience participation. (lisner.gwu.edu)

19 / FEBRUARY

WORLDWIDE

Join the GW community in celebration during George's Birthday Bash! (go.gwu.edu/GBB19)

APPRECIATION

Physician, Arts Patron Remembered

Luther Brady arrived in Foggy Bottom for his freshman year in 1942, a “wet-behind-the-ears 16-year-old” from Wilson, N.C.

“It was a revelation to me,” Brady told a crowd in 2015, upon receiving the GW President’s Medal. “Immediately, I was gathered together into the arms of an incredible faculty.”

The experience propelled Brady, AA ’44, BA ’46, MD ’48, into a life as an internationally recognized oncologist, a philanthropist and a celebrated arts patron, including for GW, where the emeritus trustee leaves an art gallery and a professorship bearing his name.

When Brady died July 13, at age 92, the reverence he held for those communities was reflected back.

“Luther was one of the finest people in the

world,” GW Board of Trustees Chair Nelson Carbonell said. “... He was always very positive and proud of the accomplishments of the university. Over the years, I had come to rely on his counsel and wisdom.”

GW President Thomas LeBlanc said that Brady helped the university “become what it is today. We are forever indebted to him, especially for his strong support of medicine and the arts.”

Brady was a pioneering physician in the field of radiation oncology, including establishing the field’s modern treatments for eye tumors, cervical cancer and other conditions, and serving as the founding president of the American College of Radiation Oncology. His teaching and clinical work spanned more than 50 years at Philadelphia’s Hahnemann University Medical College, which later became Drexel University College of Medicine.

In 1999, Brady was the recipient of the American Medical Association’s

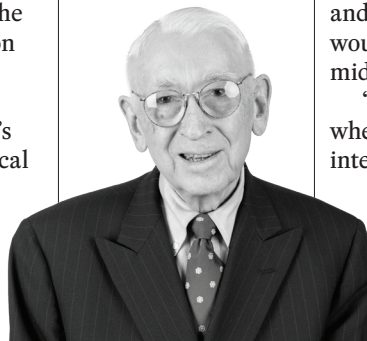
Distinguished Service Award.

In the arts, Brady’s service and philanthropy stretched from the National Gallery of Art to the Opera Company of New Mexico and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. In 2001, he stunned the group on hand at GW at the opening of a new building with a gallery space—showcasing an exhibit curated from his collection—by announcing that he would endow the new gallery, which is named for him.

Brady’s interest in art formed while serving in the Navy in California during the Korean War; he met a group of young artists—Richard Diebenkorn, Sonia Gechtoff, William Wiley and Nathan Oliveira—who would become luminaries in the mid-century American art scene.

“Physicians burn out quickly when they don’t have an outside interest,” Brady told the School of Medicine and Health Sciences’ magazine in 2015. “We get so involved with what we’re doing that we sometimes lose sight of the big picture.”

Luther Brady



Briefly...

"THE VAST MAJORITY OF AMERICANS BELIEVE VACCINES ARE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE, BUT LOOKING AT TWITTER GIVES THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS A LOT OF DEBATE."

David Broniatowski, an assistant professor in the School of Engineering and Applied Science, on a study he led that found Twitter bots and Russian trolls—including some now known to have interfered in the 2016 U.S. election—promoted discord by playing to both sides of the debate or spreading false information about vaccines on Twitter

GW Hospital announced in August that it has signed a letter of intent to oversee the opening of a new hospital and health complex in Southeast D.C. in partnership with the city government. The complex, slated to open in 2023, might include urgent care, outpatient surgery, diagnostic imaging and physician offices, and is designed to improve health care access and outcomes in Wards 7 and 8.



The Future of...

... Candy Canes

A

At 98-year-old Hammond's Candies, the future of the candy cane *looks* a lot like the past, but there's room still for evolution of the candy cane, even after a few centuries of existence.

The Denver confectionary, which since 2007 has been owned by **Andy Schuman, MBA '96**, makes candy canes by hand, like it always has—hand-cooked, -pulled, -crooked and -packed with protective cotton-gloved hands (the candy is kept pliable at 200 degrees Fahrenheit) that buff the canes to a shine as they toil.



And the hands do toil: This year, Hammond's will make more than 10 million candy canes to sell in its factory shop and for outlets like Whole Foods, Williams Sonoma, Nordstrom, Target, Safeway and Cracker Barrel. That's not the only item Hammond's makes—it's also home, for instance, to the caramel-dunked marshmallow called a Mitchell Sweet—but candy canes are the biggest seller by a long shot, Schuman says.

Here's a look at how his candy canes are going quaintly but not quietly into the future.

As Nature Intended Them

This year, the company for the first time is making organic candy canes, which come in mint, cherry, cinnamon, butterscotch, strawberry and root beer. It's a follow-up to a line of all-natural-ingredient candy canes Hammond's began producing about a decade ago, using elements of red beets,

red cabbage, turmeric, oranges and other fruits to build a palette of colors.

Buffet of Flavor

"You name it, we have it," Schuman says. (Which is mostly true—asked about a spicy cane, he says they don't have one but they've tried. "They weren't tremendous sellers," he says. "... Let's just say they're not kid-friendly.") There's a smorgasbord of two dozen or so flavors, from sugar plum to birthday cake to cranberry, with new ones pulled in from the cultural flavor *du jour*. "If something came out next year that was different," he says of the lineup, "it might be a coconut cream pie [candy cane]. Coconut's pretty popular right now, and I don't see that going away." But perhaps the most interesting thing happening in flavors is the filled candy cane, like Hammond's chocolate-filled cane (which vies with classic peppermint for the top-seller spot), and a caramel cane filled with marshmallow cream.

Bittersweet Truth

Hand-making candy canes is one of the things that defines the company, Schuman says, though that makes it "very much a dying breed." Holding tradition and modernity at once is an ongoing challenge. As candy-cane production goes up every year, Schuman is also nurturing the company's cachet in nonseasonal treats, like chocolate and popcorn. And in a couple of years, he says, he may need to automate pieces of the candy-cane process—like the more time- and labor-intensive pulling of the candy and bagging it—while keeping hands where they're most important: cooking the candy, constructing the cane and giving the candy its polish.

—Danny Freedman, BA '01

10M
Number, roughly, of candy canes Hammond's will make this year

600
Number of 1.75-oz. candy canes made from a 75- to 90-pound batch of candy

1.5
Length, in years, that a Hammond's candy cook will train before their candy is shipped to retail shelves

75%
The amount, roughly, of sales for an entire year that occurs during a 90-day period, between August and October, when Hammond's is stocking up stores with confections.

1670
The year, according to the legend passed along by the National Confectioners Association, that a cathedral choirmaster in Germany handed out white, shepherd-crook shaped sugar sticks to his flock to quiet them during the Christmas service



2
Weight, in pounds, of the scissors used to snip the ends of each cane



2018-19 GEORGE MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME (ET)	WATCH
TUE	NOV 6	STONY BROOK	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
THU	NOV 8	SIENA	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Nov 11	at Virginia	Charlottesville, VA	2:00pm	ACC NTWK
Sat	Nov 17	vs. Michigan	Uncasville, CT	12:00pm	ESPN3
Sun	Nov 18	vs. S. Carolina/Providence	Uncasville, CT	1:30/4pm	ESPN/ESPN2
SAT	NOV 24	MANHATTAN	WASHINGTON, D.C.	4:00PM	ESPN+
WED	NOV 28	VERMONT	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sat	Dec 1	at Princeton	Princeton, N.J.	4:00pm	TBA
WED	DEC 5	TOWSON	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
SAT	DEC 8	VALPARAISO	WASHINGTON, D.C.	4:00PM	ESPN+
FRI	DEC 14	HOWARD	WASHINGTON, D.C.	4:00PM	ESPN+
Sat	Dec 22	at Harvard	Cambridge, MA	2:00pm	ESPN+
SAT	DEC 29	AMERICAN	WASHINGTON, D.C.	2:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Jan 6	at Saint Joseph's*	Philadelphia, PA	2:00pm	NBCSN
WED	JAN 9	DAYTON*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
SAT	JAN 12	RICHMOND*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	4:00PM	ESPN+
Wed	Jan 16	at La Salle*	Philadelphia, PA	8:00pm	ESPN+
SUN	JAN 20	DUQUESNE*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	4:00PM	NBCSN
Wed	Jan 23	at Davidson*	Davidson, N.C.	7:00pm	ESPN+
Sat	Jan 26	at George Mason*	Fairfax, VA	7:00pm	ESPN+
WED	JAN 30	FORDHAM*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	STADIUM
WED	FEB 6	VCU*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sat	Feb 9	at Richmond*	Richmond, VA	6:00pm	ESPN+
WED	FEB 13	SAINT LOUIS*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	6:00PM	CBSSN
Sat	Feb 16	at Duquesne*	Pittsburgh, PA	12:00pm	NBCSN
WED	FEB 20	MASSACHUSETTS*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sat	Feb 23	at VCU*	Richmond, VA	2:00pm	CBS 6.1 (Richmond)
Tue	Feb 26	at Rhode Island*	Kingston, RI	TBA	ESPN+
SAT	MAR 2	ST. BONAVENTURE*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	4:00PM	ESPN+
Wed	Mar 6	at Fordham*	Bronx, NY	7:00pm	ESPN+
SAT	MAR 9	GEORGE MASON*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	2:00PM	STADIUM

*A10 Conference Game

To purchase tickets, visit GetGWTix.com

Dates and times subject to change. For more information, visit GWsports.com

2018-19 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME (ET)	WATCH
Thu	Nov 8	at James Madison	Harrisonburg, Va.	7:00pm	
SUN	NOV 11	PRINCETON	WASHINGTON, D.C.	2:00PM	ESPN+
WED	NOV 14	MARYLAND	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Nov 18	at Iona	New Rochelle, N.Y.	1:00pm	ESPN+
Cancun Challenge - Hard Rock Hotel Riviera Maya					
Thu	Nov 22	vs. Georgia Tech	Cancun, Mexico	4:00pm	
Fri	Nov 23	vs. NC State	Cancun, Mexico	4:00pm	
TUE	NOV 27	TOWSON	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
SUN	DEC 2	MONMOUTH	WASHINGTON, D.C.	2:00PM	ESPN+
THU	DEC 6	VILLANOVA	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Dec 9	at South Florida	Tampa, Fla.	2:00pm	
FRI	DEC 21	MERCER	WASHINGTON, D.C.	12:00PM	ESPN+
Sat	Dec 29	at William & Mary	Williamsburg, Va.	2:00pm	
TUE	JAN 1	MEMPHIS	WASHINGTON, D.C.	2:00PM	ESPN+
SAT	JAN 5	FORDHAM*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	11:00AM	CBSSN
Wed	Jan 9	at Rhode Island*	Kingston, R.I.	7:00pm	ESPN+
SAT	JAN 12	DAYTON*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	12:00PM	ESPN+
Wed	Jan 16	at La Salle*	Philadelphia, Pa.	5:00pm	ESPN+
SAT	JAN 19	GEORGE MASON*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	2:00PM	ESPN+
WED	JAN 23	VCU*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Jan 27	at Duquesne*	Pittsburgh, Pa.	2:00pm	ESPN+
THU	JAN 31	DAVIDSON*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	12:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Feb 3	at Saint Louis*	Saint Louis, Mo.	2:00pm	CBSSN
Wed	Feb 6	at George Mason*	Fairfax, Va.	7:00pm	ESPN+
SUN	FEB 10	SAINT JOSEPH'S*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	12:00PM	ESPN+
Sun	Feb 17	at Dayton*	Dayton, Ohio	12:00pm	ESPNU
Wed	Feb 20	at Massachusetts*	Amherst, Mass	7:00pm	ESPN+
SUN	FEB 24	ST. BONAVENTURE*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	12:00PM	ESPN+
WED	FEB 27	DUQUESNE*	WASHINGTON, D.C.	7:00PM	ESPN+
Sat	Mar 2	at Richmond*	Richmond, Va.	11:00am	ESPN+

Support our student-athletes by making a gift to the Buff & Blue Fund at go.gwu.edu/give2athletics





Q&A

The Long, Deadly Tail of a Storm

Milken Institute School of Public Health Dean Lynn Goldman discusses the school's recent study of the fatalities in Puerto Rico from 2017's Hurricane Maria—a study that caught the attention of President Trump.

In August, Milken Institute School of Public Health researchers released a report that dramatically recast the death toll in Puerto Rico from Hurricane Maria, determining that an estimated 2,975 people died as a result of the hurricane between September 2017—when the hurricane hit—and February 2018.

The study was commissioned by the local government after early counts drew just a few dozen fatalities from the Category 4 storm, as well as skepticism. The new study, published in October in *The Lancet Planetary Health*, is notable for its methodology (it considers excess mortality—deaths occurring over time, not just immediately after the disaster) and because President Donald Trump questioned its veracity in several tweets. The researchers, including Milken Institute School Dean Lynn Goldman, stand by their work. Goldman, who found out at 3 a.m. about the initial tweet while in Singapore, talked with *GW Magazine* about the study and what they learned.

XAVIER GARCIA/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES

What do you study when you study a natural disaster?

One of the fundamental aspects of disaster epidemiology is not only counting—trying to estimate the magnitude of these events—but also trying to uncover clues that allow you to prevent people from dying in the future. You use the scientific tools—mostly statistical tools—but also data gathering and mapping and interpretive skills to try to home in on the people that are at the highest risk, the circumstances causing those risks and what, if any, of those are preventable in the future.

What did you learn about Puerto Rico?

In this case, we could see certain geographic patterns of the deaths, certain temporal patterns, patterns with regard to age and sex. And so, hidden within those patterns are clues. Who are the people that are at risk? What are they at risk from, and how do we protect them? Deaths occurring into November, December, January, February, especially in poor communities, particularly among the elderly—in the long run, these deaths relate to the risks that people faced because of the conditions after the storm, including a lack of electricity, food or water. For example, an elderly father or grandfather walks down to a community well or spring trying to get water for his family. He ends up carrying a heavy jug of water back to the house and then has a heart attack.

What was different about your study?

Most studies, what they have done is they've examined the codes that are written on the death certificates and looked for codes that indicate a disaster or a storm did it and/or looked at specific causes—drowning after flooding, for example. How many people were drowning? A lot of those deaths would've been caused by the flooding. In a normal month, there wouldn't have been as many drownings, trees falling on people, that kind of injury. We instead developed a model to try to understand in a normal year what would be the number of deaths on a week-by-week basis and then how many actually occurred during that time period, and we're able to develop an estimate of excess mortality.

Is anyone going to adopt this methodology?

We hope so. One thing that did happen two weeks after Maria is the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued new guidelines for how to fill out death certificates that would more generously attribute deaths to disasters and would change how the coding is done—so that if the doctor thinks the disaster caused the death, it would be listed as such.

There are a lot of preventive things people can do when facing a hurricane—evacuate, stiffer building codes—but we don't appear to be good at that.

We're not good at it. What we do in public health is that we amass data and we try to hone our message and we try to get better at communicating our messages. And then we wait for a teachable moment and we swoop in and get our message across. I could move to a farm; I could enjoy life or just give up, but that's not who we are in public health. We know—and again, there's good data to back this up—that the message certainly doesn't work if you just say the same thing over and over and over to people who aren't listening to you. And we also know that there are times when people are more receptive.

With the Puerto Rico study, one of the things that [Study Principal Investigator Carlos Santos-Burgoa] and I have both tried to do is to make sure that when we've had the opportunity to speak up, we do so. For example, look at the op-ed published in *The Washington Post*. One of the key messages from that op-ed is that the storms

are getting bigger and we need to prepare.

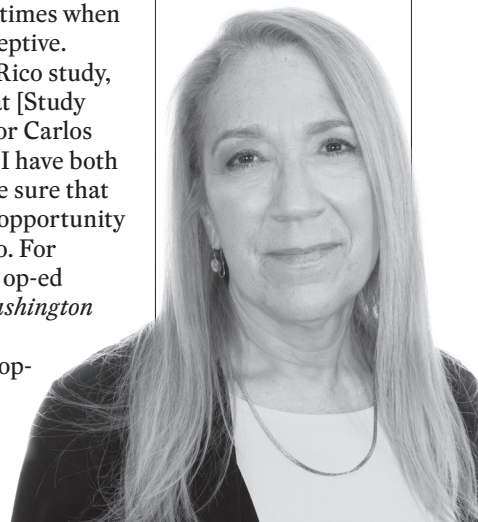
What are some things people don't think about when considering the impact of a natural disaster?

People have been knocked down to a lower rung in terms of socioeconomic status—having gone through something that is extremely stressful. We are not good at taking care of that stress, or the ongoing disruption and the impact it can have on health as time goes on. We do the Red Cross shelters, and when people come in we give them a cot and a blanket and something to eat—and that is some immediate comfort. But such relief doesn't address the long-term consequences that are the result of a disaster like Hurricane Maria. Parts of the community have been ripped apart, and the importance of a stable community when it comes to health can be easy to overlook. For children, such disruption can mean they are taken out of the neighborhood where they've been secure, and now they must cope with the stress of life in a completely new place—without the friends, social ties and other factors that can help them stay healthy. **EW**

One of the fundamental aspects of disaster epidemiology is not only counting—trying to estimate the magnitude of these events—

but also trying to uncover clues that allow you to prevent people from dying in the future.

Lynn Goldman





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The Vern Harvest on Mount Vernon Campus; former President Steven Knapp and Board of Trustees Chair Nelson Carbonell Jr., BS '85, unveil a portrait of Knapp by Bradley Stevens, BA '76, MFA '79; junior Justin Williams at a season kickoff event; Student Association President Ashley Le moderates a town hall with GW President Thomas LeBlanc

ALUMNI AWARDS

Nine GW alumni were honored during Colonials Weekend for their accomplishments on the job and in service to the university:

Nelson A. Carbonell Jr., BS '85, CEO of Nelson Carbonell and Associates, which assists companies with strategy, financing, operations and technology. He also serves as chair of the GW Board of Trustees.

Mischel L. Kwon, CERT '04, founder and CEO of MKACyber and a former deputy director for IT security staff at the U.S. Department of Justice, where she built the first Justice Security Operations Center to defend the DOJ network against cyber threats.

Joshua D'Angelo, DPT '13, co-founder and chief operations officer of Move Together, a nonprofit that increases access to quality rehabilitation medicine. He co-created the first global physical therapy day of service and recently co-founded MovementX, a mobile physical therapy company.

Stephen J. LaForte, BA '86, JD '93, director of strategic corporate operations and general counsel for Cascadia Healthcare. He also has served on and co-led GW's Luther Rice Advisory Council and the Seattle Alumni Network.

Renee Lewis, MS '90, CEO and president of Pensare Group LLC. She previously served as a member of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development Advisory Council and as the School of Engineering and Applied Science's representative to the GW Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Ronald R. Peterson, MHA '74, president emeritus of the Johns Hopkins Health System and special adviser to the dean of Johns Hopkins Medicine.

Jacob S. Sherman, BA '08, a senior writer at *Politico* and author of the *Politico* Playbook. He previously served as *Politico*'s lead congressional reporter and is writing a book, due out in 2019, about Congress in the era of President Donald Trump.

Steven L. Skancke, BA '72, MPhil '78, PhD '81, chief investment officer for Keel Point, an adjunct professor of economics and international affairs, and chair emeritus of the Elliott School of International Affairs' Board of Advisors. He previously served on the White House National Security Council and at the U.S. Treasury Department.

Ashley N. Trick, BA '15, MPA '18, a program associate at GW's Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service whose programs reach thousands and have an economic impact of more than \$1 million annually on the D.C. area.

EVENTS

A Homecoming

More than 3,000 alumni, family members, students and friends celebrated Colonials Weekend in October, a three-day coming together that combines two annual gatherings: the alumni reunion and the fall weekend for students and their families.

Dozens of events were held over the weekend, including a town hall with President Thomas LeBlanc; GDub Madness, which marks the beginning of the women's and men's basketball seasons; a Taste of GW event showcasing university-affiliated eateries; as well as pumpkin carving, outdoor games and more at the Vern Harvest.

For more photos from the weekend, visit: ColonialsWeekend.gwu.edu.



Briefly...

The value of a gift that includes **one of the world's foremost study collections of textiles, plus an endowment**, from the trust of the late Lloyd Cotsen, a former Neutrogena Corp. CEO and board chair, and a longtime trustee of The Textile Museum.

\$18.4M

"NUMBER ONE: FLOATING. NUMBER TWO: FLOATING. NUMBER THREE: AAAND FLOATING."

NASA astronaut and physician Serena Auñón-Chancellor, BS '97, speaking from the International Space Station in September as she took questions from an audience in the Jack Morton Auditorium, including **what three things she'll miss about her six-month mission when it ends**. "Honestly, floating is one of the best parts—flying to and from work; flying everywhere you go," she said. "We become like little graceful airplanes up here after a while."

9,708

The cumulative number of **hours volunteered** by more than 2,400 students, faculty and staff who pitched in at 46 sites for the annual Freshman Day of Service in September. In each of the past two years, the university logged more than 700,000 service hours.



"On social media, very little is worth remembering, but nothing is forgotten."

President **Thomas LeBlanc** cautioning incoming freshmen at a welcome ceremony. He warned that, while on campus, "we expect you to experiment with the ideas of the world and sometimes fail spectacularly," social media is less forgiving.

Researchers working in Western China **uncovered a new early-Cretaceous dinosaur species** that helps fill in the evolution of bird-like alvarezsaur, which transitioned from relatively long arms, three-digit hands and sharp teeth to having "highly specialized" mole-like arms, a single claw and reduced teeth. The expedition that found *Xiyunykus pengi* (above, second from left) was co-led by GW's James Clark, the Ronald Weintraub Professor of Biology.

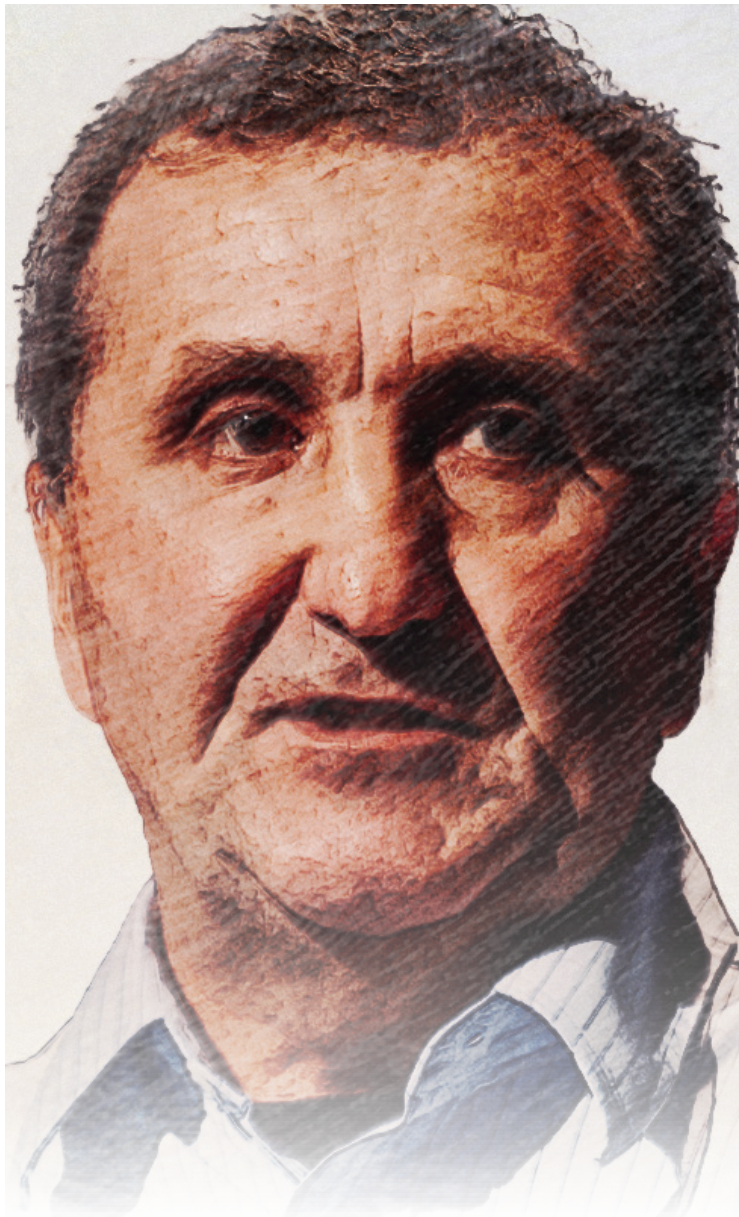
Robert H. Miller, a neuroscientist and senior associate dean for research at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, has been named GW's new vice president for research.



Fifteen D.C. **recycling trucks got new skins** from local artists this summer, including this one by photography professor Dean Kessmann. He drew from an earlier project, *Utilitarian Abstraction*, in which he focuses on the ornately patterned printing swatches that appear on the flaps of cardboard boxes.

George Welcomes

Headliners at University Events



“The shootings at Newtown took everything out of me.”

Pete Souza, referring to the killing of 26 people at Connecticut’s Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012. He described it as his worst day during eight years as the Obama White House photographer. Souza spoke at Lisner Auditorium in October at a GW author event hosted jointly with D.C. bookstore Politics & Prose.

“I had three strikes against me.”

U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Ruth Bader Ginsburg** on being Jewish, a woman and the mother of a young child as she sought her first job out of law school in 1959. Ginsburg, who spoke at a GW Law event at Lisner Auditorium in September, was one of nine women in her Harvard Law class of 500 students and later the first woman hired with tenure at Columbia Law.



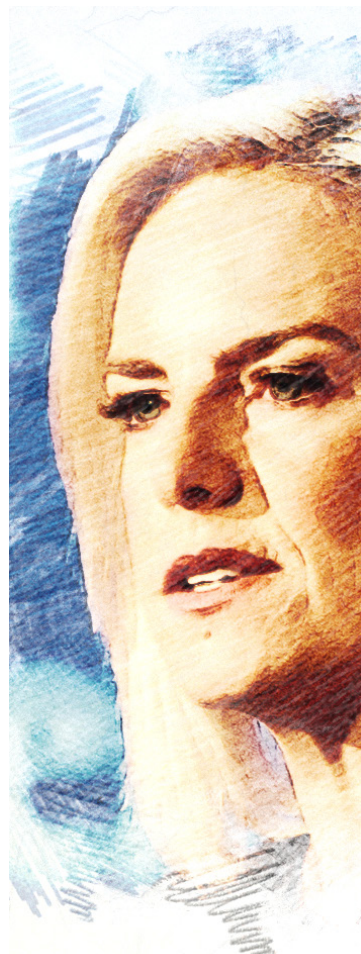
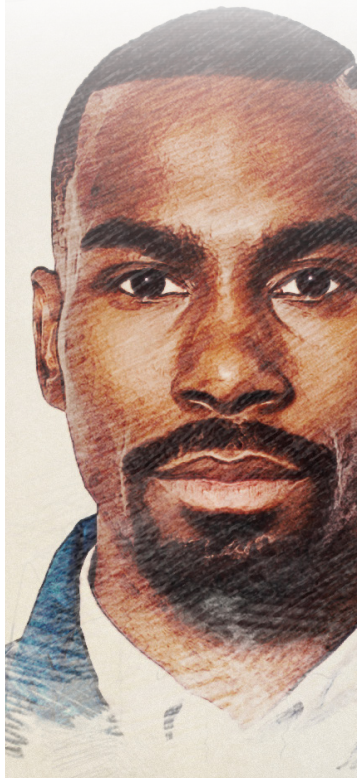
“I’m of the school of thought that thinks true allies will be and need to be uncomfortable. Allyship doesn’t exist if I need to build a bridge to get to where you’re at.”

Prisca Dorcas, founder of online activism platform Latina Rebels, speaking in September during the 2018 Latinx Heritage Celebration sponsored by the GW Multicultural Student Services Center.

COMPUTER ILLUSTRATIONS BASED ON PHOTOGRAPHS BY: HARRISON JONES (SOUZA) / WILLIAM ATKINS (GINSBURG, DORCAS)

“She looked at me like, ‘This kid’s crazy. What is he talking about?’”

Activist **DeRay Mckesson** on the response of the Portland, Maine, police chief when he pointed out a clause in the union contract stating officers should be disciplined in a way that is least embarrassing to them. Reading the clause herself, he said, she had no response. “There was no way to justify it.” Mckesson—on campus to discuss his book, *On the Other Side of Freedom*—turned up the clause, among others, in a study of about 100 police union contracts undertaken by himself and two others from the Black Lives Matter movement.



“We are witnessing the re-rise of the hostile nation state.”

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary **Kirstjen Nielsen**, speaking in September about nations such as Russia, China, Iran and North Korea that are “increasingly asserting themselves in ways that endanger our homeland”—threat levels between governments not seen since the Cold War, she said at a GW Center for Cyber and Homeland Security event.

“Nobody believed the Watergate stories.”

Acclaimed journalist **Bob Woodward**, in September, recalling the feeling in 1972 of beginning to lose faith in the efficacy of his reporting after Richard Nixon was re-elected president. He recalled then-*Washington Post* owner Katharine Graham insisting, in turn, that he go after the truth even more aggressively. Woodward, at Lisner Auditorium to discuss his new book, *Fear: Trump in the White House*, told the crowd that sometimes the pursuit of truth has to be its own reward.



“You can’t get someone into recovery if they’re dead.”

U.S. Surgeon General **Jerome Adams**, urging awareness of the signs of opioid overdose and readiness to respond, including having on hand the opioid-overdose-reversal drug naloxone. Adams’ younger brother is serving a 10-year prison sentence after stealing \$200 to fuel his opioid addiction, he said in October at an event hosted by the School of Nursing’s Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement.

ment that he could
 on and then tena-
 Lewis seemed to
 at crucial moments
 in Paris, when the
 helped James Joyce
 man in his theatrical
 time exile in Amer-
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 resistance against the
 Hadley Hemingway
 and of Ernest. But
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 to its unfolding his-

· CHAPTER 1 ·

LEWIS AND ERNEST AND HADLEY

*Lewis went on to satirize this conflict in his 1927 book, **France is Full of Frenchmen**—published just before he was hired by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to assist in pulling France out of its post-war economic spiral.*

To the reader—who has a fuller, more truthful portrait of the person—he is “Lewis,” while others in the book call him “Galantière.” It differentiates the man from the façade.

LEWIS SCOOPED A HANDFUL OF mail from the pile on his desk and riffled through it, his eyes scanning the senders’ names on the envelopes. He recognized some as American bankers, undoubtedly asking him to impress on the French that their war loans must be repaid. And some as French officials, reminding him that the loans *had* been repaid with the blood of their country’s youth along the Somme and the Marne and the Meuse. And, of course, there were the inquiries from all quarters about whether the reparations scheme, agreed to in the Treaty of Versailles and not yet three years old, was being circumvented, by whom, and in what ways. Then the address on one envelope caught his eye and quickened his pulse. It was a letter from the novelist Sherwood Anderson, whom Lewis had gotten to know while working as a book salesman in Chicago. Sherwood and his wife had visited Lewis in Paris the previous summer. Lewis eagerly sliced open the envelope:

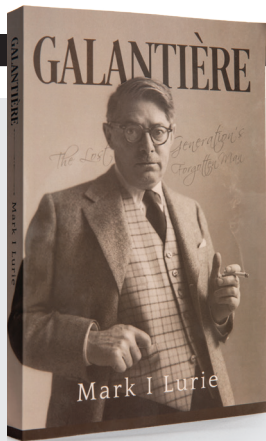
With the stage set, the story begins.

November 28, 1921

My dear Lewis: A friend of mine and a very delightful man, Ernest Hemingway, and his wife are leaving for Paris.¹ They will sail December 8th and go to Hotel Jacob, at least temporarily. Hemingway is a young fellow of extraordinary talent and, I believe, will get somewhere. He has been a quite wonderful

More than anything, Lewis aspired to be thought of and respected as an intellectual. He would have been thrilled to receive this letter from the preeminent author.

Annotated: Mark Lurie, JD '69, offers insights into Page 1 of his book, Galantière.



Galantière: The Lost Generation's Forgotten Man (Overlook Press, 2018) By Mark Lurie, JD '69

A Legend Little Known

The author's first cousin once removed, Lewis Galantière (1895-1977) is a name that was obscure to him when his sister mentioned they were related to a literary luminary. When he got around to researching Galantière a few years later, Mark Lurie, JD '69, found himself poring over thousands of pages at Columbia University and traveling to Chicago and Paris for further digging.

The figure he turns up is a self-invented man and an intellectual with an almost Gumpian presence among 20th-century literatti: A son of Jewish Latvian immigrants, who lived in a Chicago tenement and left school to work at 13, Galantière would later claim French parents and a French education—through college. His path meaningfully intersected with the budding careers of Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, John Houseman and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry; he worked with the Federal Reserve, he led the ACLU and PEN America.

"Today, to the few who know his name, he is a cipher," Lurie writes. "To the fewer still who think they know him, he is not what they think." —Menachem Wecker, MA '09



Join fellow alumni in an online book club covering professional development, lifelong learning, personal growth and other career topics. For more information, visit: www.pbc.guru/gw

The Opposite of Hate: A Field Guide to Repairing Our Humanity (Algonquin Books, 2018) By Sally Kohn, BA '98

Among Kohn's credentials as an easygoing person are two years as a liberal commentator on Fox News. But she reached a point of having trouble following her own advice to practice "emotional correctness," respecting those with whom one most disagrees. "Instead of being a prominent critic of incivility, I felt like I was auditioning to be the poster child for partisan hate," she writes. Recognizing that everyone hates is the first step, and then the hard work begins.

Hydrocarbon Nation: How Energy Security Made Our Nation Great and Climate Security Will Save Us (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018)

By Thor Hogan, MPhil '03, PhD '04
Although some speak of hydrocarbons (coal, natural gas and petroleum) as pure evil, Hogan—for whom the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill marked an "environmental awakening"—writes that any solution must begin with understanding how these resources helped create both the progress and the perils of the modern world. "The current state of affairs is dire, with our very security imperiled at every level. The time for action is upon us," he writes. The book ends with a sense of optimism for the nation's future.

The Company of Demons (Greenleaf, 2018) By Michael Jordan, JD '79

In this intense novel—gory at times, but flecked with humor—lawyer John Coleman struggles to keep his life in order as his situation becomes increasingly precarious. The writer (no, not *that* Michael Jordan) weaves dramatic, *Law & Order*-worthy courtroom scenes as part of

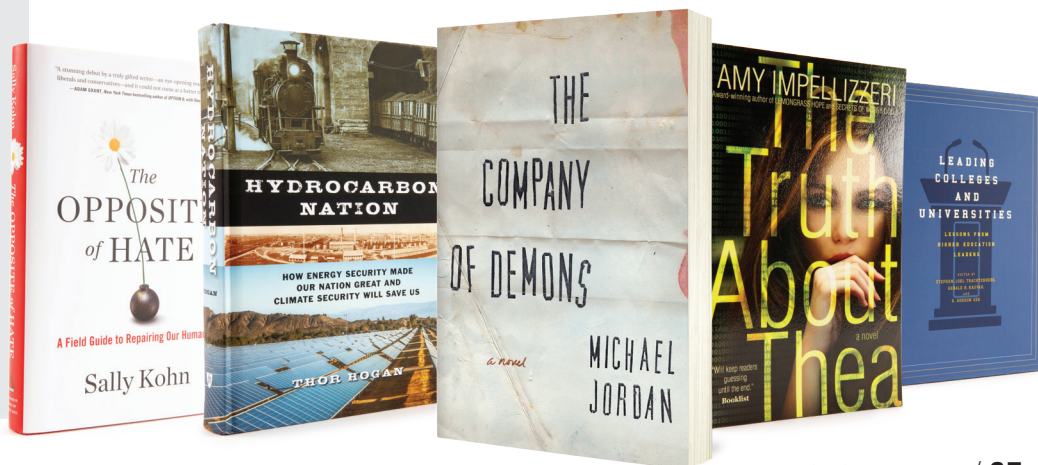
a page-turner about deception, betrayal, addiction and mystery, in which nearly every poor decision comes back to haunt.

The Truth About Thea (Wyatt-MacKenzie, 2017)

By Amy Impellizzeri, JD '95
Twenty-three-year-old Thea's company, Alibis, is in the business of crafting fake identities and, yes, alibis. "Tell me the story you want me to know," Thea would tell prospective clients. When she's charged with abetting an arsonist, Thea portrays herself as a social media addict and lands in the care of a therapist with a drug-infused past. The two learn their untruthful lives have a good deal more overlap than either expected.

Leading Colleges and Universities: Lessons from Higher Education Leaders (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018)
Edited by GW President Emeritus and University Professor of Public Service Stephen Joel Trachtenberg; Gerald Kauvar, research professor of public policy and public administration at GW; and West Virginia University President E. Gordon Gee

The editors asked higher-ed leaders to reflect on their careers while avoiding advice—"particularly that of the 'floss daily' variety"—and sharing, instead, candid reflections and examples of how they handled challenges. That, the editors felt, would be more useful than a book purporting to do the impossible: offering a how-to guide to becoming a university president. ☐





THE

THE LORD
OF
**Little
Washington**

BY MATTHEW STOSS

A DECADE AFTER

LEAVING GW, CHEF

PATRICK O'CONNELL

STARTED SHAPING

A RURAL TOWN IN

HIS WHIMSICAL

IMAGE, BUILDING A

MICHELIN-STARRED

RESTAURANT OUT OF

AN OLD GAS STATION

AND REMAKING

WASHINGTON, VA.,

AS A GASTRONOME'S

PARADISE. FORTY

YEARS IN, REALM

AND CREATOR

ARE ALL BUT

INDISTINGUISHABLE.



ACT I

The late wine magnate and one-man conclave Robert Mondavi once declared Patrick O'Connell the "pope of American cuisine." Watching O'Connell emerge from the dimness of the Inn at Little Washington's main dining room, it's clear he would not look unfabulous in a mitre.

A long, slim figure of 73, he is the proprietor and chef, the everything of the Inn, a venerated luxury hotel and a three-Michelin-star restaurant set for 40 years in one of Virginia's most idyllic towns: "Little" Washington. It has become the unlikely seat of O'Connell's culinary see, and all of it—the warm rooms, rustic grounds and bewitching stagecraft—is a testament to the splendid force of O'Connell's *élan vital*.

It is early August, a sunny Wednesday, and we're eating lunch at one of the Inn's white-clothed tables in one of the Inn's dining rooms. O'Connell is explaining how *this* happened *here*.

"Because it didn't exist," says the chef, who attended George Washington University in the late 1960s, "people didn't know that it could. But seeing it there, proliferating throughout Europe, reinforced the idea that if it could be embraced there, perhaps Americans would be capable of embracing it here also."

"Were you nervous about that?" I say. "That people wouldn't come? Was there apprehension? From talking to you and reading about you, it sounds like you just knew absolutely all the time that this might work, and I don't know if that's true."

He smiles.

"I willed it."

"Bold," I say.

"If I have learned any really important life lesson, it's if you want something badly enough, you can make it happen."

"And why did you want this so badly?"

"I read that if you hadn't done something with your life by the time you were 33, you never would."

I tell O'Connell that I'm 33.

"It's a wonderful age," O'Connell says, presumably abasing himself. "But it's also a scary age. It spooked me so badly even though I recognized that I wasn't, by my own standards, a failure. But I certainly was by many other people's because I had never, what they might call, *made a go of anything*. ... It was life or death."

"Well, what if you couldn't will it? Did you ever think about that?"

"There is a power that you have that, if you have to draw on it, is there. It's the reserve tank in a car—like the truck that backed over the 2-year-old's leg. The mother runs out of the house, lifts the truck up and frees the toddler. She has no earthly idea where the energy came from or the power to do that. If you asked her to lift a quarter of the car again, she couldn't. She doesn't know what lifted the car, but it happened. That car *had* to be lifted, so she *cheated*. She drew on superhuman strength without ever being conscious of it."

O'Connell says that, like his mother, he is transcendently inclined. He claims that later in life she developed the ability to slip back and forth, Billy Pilgrim-style, through time.

"She would say, 'Did you see Mama and Papa last night?'" O'Connell says. "And at first I would say, 'Mom, you know your mother died about 64 years ago and your father's been dead 50 years,' and I wasn't [a] safe [person] to talk about it with. Finally, as it happened with greater frequency, she would say, 'Do you think I'm crazy?' And I would say, 'No, I think it's wonderful. I think you have a gift, to be able to transcend this

plane and enter another.' She was going back and forth. So she had a two-dimensional sort of experience. I've had a multidimensional experience for a long time, even as a small child."

O'Connell describes his abilities as more empathic than trans-temporal.

He studied theater at Catholic University and GW but found the curricula overly traditional and he despaired of all the Shakespeare. He started working in restaurants at age 15—his first job was at a takeout joint, Mr. H's Hamburgers, in Clinton, Md., his hometown—and gradually he came to view waiting tables as improv. To him, restaurants were "living theaters." They were places where he could be himself after enduring a guarded childhood lived like a "long-tailed cat walking through a room full of rocking chairs." Years later, he built his stage.

"I always call the guests 'the humans,' because otherwise you would confuse them," O'Connell says. "I have a deuce on table 46!" or "Those four top on table 36!" Just tell me how many humans! And then I'll say to [the staff,] 'Don't you see this is a simple enough business?! You feed the ***** humans! Don't make more out of it than it is. I'll do that.'"

He pauses.

"So, one day, all hell's breaking loose back there and I'm screaming about the humans, and one little boy says, 'Chef, chef, may I ask you a question?' 'Well, yeah!' He said, 'If they're the humans, what are we?' 'You ***** idiot, we're the superhumans!'"

"What was he doing?"

"He was peeling something."

Another pause.

"You have to enter a profession with the idea that you can do it so well, you become a superhuman."



COURTESY THE INN AT THE LITTLE WASHINGTON



The Inn at Little Washington's main building, which houses the dining room and 12 guest rooms



COURTESY THE INN AT LITTLE WASHINGTON

“Little” Washington, Va., cuddles the eastern nape of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It’s about 20 miles west of Warrenton and about 70 miles southwest from “Big” Washington. Named for George Washington—he, purportedly, danced in a building that’s now part of the Inn—Little Washington has a population of about 140 and it sits in roughly the geographic center of 267-square-mile, 7,300-resident Rappahannock County.

The county’s per capita income is not quite \$35,000. There are no stoplights or chain businesses. Most of Little Washington’s money comes from the meals and lodging tax levied about 25 years ago to take advantage of the millions in revenue generated by the Inn, where dinner costs \$228, a wine pairing \$150 and a room for a night at least \$500.

Little Washington, it would seem, is an odd place to build an aristocrat’s playland.

“It’s in a small, rural county with hard-working people,” says John Fox Sullivan, who’s in the final year of his second four-year term as Little Washington’s mayor. “And then someone comes along and creates, first, it’s modest, then it’s famous, a restaurant that serves ‘fancy food’—and Patrick painted the building interesting colors. It’s like a different world that they were bringing to the county, and the populace didn’t like it.

“There were cultural differences and there were some in the county that saw the Inn as a place where a bunch of wealthy people come from New York or Washington and spend all this money for fancy food. ... That’s always been there, and in the early days of the Inn, there were some fractious relationships. All that’s gone, though. But there’s a history that goes back and he’s got some scars. ... I’d have to say that it started to shift 15 years ago or something like that. Some of the power structure that was in the town with whom he had some fights sort of passed on, left, retired, died.”

The Inn at Little Washington opened in January 1978 in an old gas station. O’Connell was 33 and had a mustache. He used to pass that gas station while on childhood family vacations to the Shenandoah Valley with his (at the time) four brothers and mom and dad, who had an old Navy buddy that lived in Little Washington. O’Connell now owns that

buddy’s house, absorbing it into the 17-acre, 22-building Inn complex that’s staffed by 150 people and features a meadow the size of two or three football fields.

The Inn has grown to be the county’s second-largest employer after the public school system. It also relies on area farms for meat and produce, a practice that started in the Inn’s first years because suppliers delivered not to the hinterlands. (Conscripting local farms also served a political purpose. It gave suspicious residents a stake in the interloping restaurant.)

After 40 years, O’Connell owns much of Little Washington, including the post office and many other buildings. The town’s longtime lawyer also pays rent to O’Connell, who saw in Little Washington a setting that mimicked the lovely hillocked vistas around the rural Michelin-starred restaurants he visited during various formative trips to France.

He first went to France in 1967 after, he says, a GW English professor observed his flagging scholastic enthusiasm and, over a one-hour lunch at a Chinese restaurant, encouraged O’Connell to do something more personally edifying. Two weeks later, O’Connell says, he boarded an ocean liner, the S.S. *France*, to Le Havre. He was 21 and stayed nine months, wandering about Europe.

There’s also a now-famous January 1979 trip, suggested by among other noted early Inn fans, David Brinkley, and financed by the Inn’s first-year profits. O’Connell spent weeks ranging about France, eating at as many Michelin-starred restaurants as time and funds allowed. It was education and it was inspiration. He returned an aspiring voluptuary, believing he could do in the provinces of Washington, D.C., what they’d been doing in France since the age of Auguste Escoffier.

“The Inn is Patrick O’Connell,” Sullivan says. “People say, ‘Well, what happens when Patrick O’Connell is no longer here?’ which is an interesting question. He just dreams up things to do that are constantly entertaining or different. He doesn’t get set in a rut. Let me put it differently: He’s obsessed.”

Joyce Conwy Evans, a British stage designer, devised the look of the Inn at Little Washington. These are her concept sketches for the “living room” and the kitchen.



D

ACT III

Patrick O’Connell and I are sitting in an auxiliary-type dining room that’s also a wannabe sun porch. The ceiling is a carnival tent and there are flowers looking adamant in their vessels. We’re at one end of this dining room. At the other is the main dining room, a draped place made luxe by neo-Victorianism and Wonderland elegance, cautious eccentricity and mirrors in strange places, potted ferns, aged arras, nap-worthy cushions, fine, fine furniture and a large toy cow on wheels that conveys cheeses to the well-dressed guests.

The dining rooms—decorated by a British stage designer—of course, match.

We each had one half of an off-menu grilled-cheese sandwich and tomato soup

before O’Connell curated some Inn dishes proper as I ate them. He offered guidance and perspective and spoke in disquisitions. There was a caviar sandwich, a ravioli with dill and chanterelle mushrooms, and finally, a sorbet flight arranged semicircularly on an artist’s palette made of glass.

“It’s cut,” O’Connell says of the caviar sandwich, “so you can pull a little one if you want to be dainty. But it’s kind of fun to throw the whole thing in your mouth.”

“This is the first time I’ve ever had caviar,” I say.

“Oh, that’s exciting. We should have brought a bowl of it.”

O’Connell is seated just askew of next to me, posed as if next in line for the throne

of Bacchus. He has on a chef’s coat and chef’s pants. The former is a holy shade of white and the latter a handsome Dalmatian print. (A Dalmatian named Luray is the Inn’s mascot.) O’Connell wears both like ecclesiastical vestments.

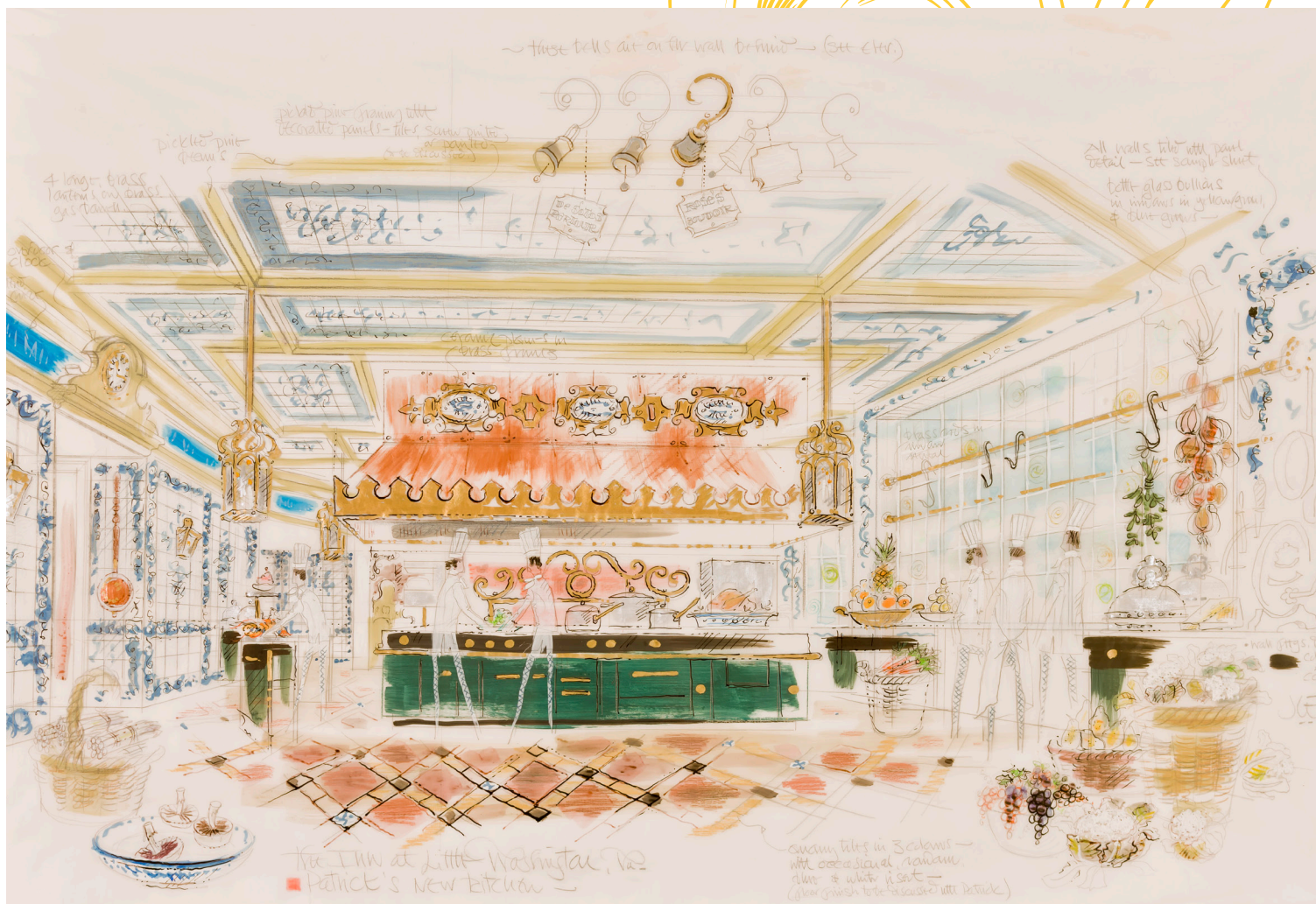
“Close your eyes,” O’Connell says. “And shove the whole thing in your mouth and try to think about the mouth-feel as if it were bubbles of champagne that you wanted to burst quietly.”

“How would you describe a ‘mouth-feel?’”

“Oh god, in so many ways. It helps if you close your eyes. Let’s focus.”

“So this is caviar with





radishes? I see a little red onion—”

“And some compound butter, yeah, yeah, yeah. So you’re primitive now. So think of, uh—sex. It’s all the same.”

I eat. He’s dismayed.

“You opened your eyes very early,” he says.

“Sorry.”

“Are you receiving any sensation of fullness in your mouth?”

“Yes.”

“Yeah, good.”

“Oh, there’s an aftertaste.”

“Yes, yes, this is good.”

What most people don’t focus on is that there is: one,



two, three—there’s an echo chamber that continues.”

“When did you throw this together? Wait, is that reverent enough?”

“Oh, that’s perfect. A month ago. Six weeks ago. Don’t make more out of it than it is. It’s just you and that. You’re blind—I love primitive, peasant ingredients paired with expensive and decadent things.”

“Why is that?”

“Because I have a foot in both camps. Aristocratic food—it lacks soulfulness and a connection to the earth. It’s sort of overrefined sometimes. So the sandwich would be okay without the caviar but it puts [the sandwich] into a different light, and it makes [the caviar] accessible and it makes

it more exotic than just having, you know, caviar on toast.”

“Do you try to do that with all the things you make?”

“You always want *something*. What we’re conveying here is the sense that you’re visiting someone’s home, so that it has a great deal of personality and authenticity. And whatever you’re eating is probably what you would be likely eating in someone’s home who loved food or loved to cook. It wouldn’t be in any way restaurant-like. It wouldn’t feel like you were in a restaurant. Every two days, I have to tell the staff, ‘Would you stop acting like you’re in a restaurant?!’”

He laughs. It could be the soundtrack to a magnificent sin.

ACT IV

There is a tendency to conflate in a mystical fashion the Inn at Little Washington and its puckish chef. O’Connell is not just the restaurant’s chef and proprietor, he is its first mover and sustainer, its once and present force.

He shaped the tiny, Rappahannock County town of “Little” Washington, Va., around the Inn and into his own pocket universe, remaking it in the image of fine, pastoral restaurants in France and the lucid dreams of Lord Dunsany.

Over time, the Inn at Little Washington has become one of the world’s great shiny objects, burnished daily for 40 years by O’Connell’s fanciful immanence.

“I don’t know what would happen to the Inn without him,” says former Inn sous chef Tarver King, now the executive chef at the Restaurant at Patowmack Farms in Lovettsville, Va. “If Patrick sold the Inn, there’s no way it would survive. For anyone who would go there afterward, it would just be something completely different. It would be like a dead star, kind of just be this hole where Patrick was.”

King worked at the Inn from 2002 to 2003. He was in his early 20s at the time and served as what the French call a *tournant*: a utility chef. He says he kept notebooks of what he learned at the Inn, ensuring that O’Connell’s wisdom could be of future use.

“It was like being in some weird, theatrical circus every day,” King says. “But it was serious and there was a lot that went into it and a lot of eyes on you, and you had to do things exactly right.”

O’Connell is known to take wayward cooks into the Inn’s elevator—it’s said to be the only elevator in Rappahannock County and it’s decorated like a country grandma’s dining room—to correct them in private. The one-on-one chats are often conducted at volumes exceeding Standard Indoor Voice. The vocabulary is as direct as it is creative.

One time on a busy Saturday night when King did not plate a pistachio-crusted lamb dish satisfactorily, O’Connell didn’t bother with the elevator.

“He just comes up to me and he’s like, ‘What the **** are you doing?!’” King says. “Then he starts screaming at me and then he was like, ‘You’re not just smashing it down! You don’t just throw it on the plate! It should look like elves leaning their treasures against a tree!’”

King did not ask O’Connell to specify the type of elf.

“I’m saying it calmly now; he was yelling that at me—‘It should be like elves leaning their treasures against a tree!’” King says, laughing. “And I just did not know what the heck he was talking about. ... It was terrifying and scary and all that kind of stuff, but it really gave me an insight into what he wanted.”





Washington Post food critic Tom Sietsema has eaten at the Inn at Little Washington nearly 30 times, at first keeping a tranche for finer eating in the grim days before his expense account. In 2017, he eschewed basic geography not for the first time and named the Inn at Little Washington the best restaurant “in” Washington, D.C.

Typically, Sietsema dines anonymously. He doesn't want his status, which involves a certain amount of kingmaking, to influence food or service. But he's known Patrick O'Connell for years and he, like O'Connell's sous chefs current and not, has trouble squaring an Inn at Little Washington sans its sovereign.

Would an O'Connell successor redo a room in a race car theme for a hot-rod-enthusiast guest? Try to rent elephants for a lawn party? Make Caesar salad ice cream? Let guests drive a rented Rolls Royce around town? Put a chandelier in the chicken coop?

“Who does that?” Sietsema says. “Who sees this?”

O'Connell purveys a funky theology. The five-time James Beard Award winner is as avant-garde as he is a classicist. An audition to cook at the Inn involves creating a multi-course meal and finishing with an omelette, rolled, not folded. It is a French technique that has washed out of fashion, as presenting an “envelope of scrambled eggs” takes time and requires a dexterity uncommon to common cooks.

“Eighteen years of doing this professionally and that's the only job interview where I ever had to make an omelette,” says Kristin Butterworth, a sous chef at the Inn from 2009 to 2010. She's now the executive chef at Lautrec at the Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort in Farmington, Pa. “That's one of the things that's going back to the classics and his appreciation of the classic technique. Julia Child and a lot of French chefs swore by the fact that if you couldn't make an omelette, you probably couldn't make most things right.”

Butterworth's tryout version was, alas, not rolled.

“It was summertime,” she says, “and I did just a cheese omelette with a ratatouille over the top of it and he did not like the way I folded it.”

O'Connell is known for helixing a fidelity to the hallowed tenets of French cuisine with subversion and good fun. He likes oxymoronic ingredients, compound flavors and dabbling in whacked alchemies.

“I remember one dish when I started was a scallop ceviche with local blueberries,” says David Shannon, an Inn sous chef from 1987 to 1995, who in 2014 founded L'Opossum in Richmond, Va. “And at first I was like, ‘Oh my god, you're crazy, you're putting blueberries with scallops’—and it was fantastic. It not only completed the scallops, but the scallops also brought out a spiciness in the blueberries that you would not notice otherwise.”

O'Connell, in what might be some brand- and myth-building, describes his feel for flavor pairing as an “innate intuition” and something akin to synesthesia. He also speaks of his sense of taste in algebraic terms. He goes on about solving for X and finding variables and says he's cursed himself to taste only flaws. Essentially, he doesn't believe he eats like everyone else.

“It sounds cliché, but everything he just touched turned to gold,” Shannon says. “You could be struggling with a presentation of a plate, not being able to get it right, and he would come and just touch a few things, shift things here and there and say, ‘Oh, you need to add this, take this off,’ and it was just improved a thousand percent. He could do the same thing when you were tasting something and couldn't get the flavor quite right or needed something else but didn't know what it was. And he would say, ‘Oh, well, try this,’ and that was it.”

O'Connell, largely, is a self-taught cook but he also spent nearly 20 years as a restaurant itinerant. He moved through kitchens and dining rooms around the United States while also exploring France, where, starting around the opulent time of Louis

XIV, they codified cooking.

Brian Patterson, a former culinary instructor who is now chef at the Glenstone modern art museum in Potomac, Md., says the French way champions technique over ingredients, but that it was ingredients that helped move France toward culinary supremacy. The country's climate and soil, he says, make it befitting of good agriculture and provided the French the necessary software.

High-class French food started as royal fare. The French Revolution in 1789 helped democratize it. The people, in part, used food to establish a new national identity, Patterson says. In the late 19th century, the aforementioned Auguste Escoffier made it all academic, standardizing cooking techniques and even devising the *brigade de cuisine*, a military-inspired organization of a kitchen that delineates jobs and ranks. It is still followed today.

“It's the precision and it's the history, and it's always been a benchmark for serious cooks,” Sietsema says of French cooking. “There's a structure and history and this romance attached to France and the French way of cooking and living.”

Its influence on O'Connell is obvious.

“His food is always very precise—there's a hominess to it, which seems like a contradiction,” Sietsema says. “I like that his flavors are never jarring. They're always flattering. He does the best version of X, Y and Z, with a touch of whimsy.”

“Take one dish. It's a classic on the menu. It's lamb carpaccio—rosy, sheer slices of lamb crusted in herbs with a scoop of Caesar salad ice cream. In anyone else's hands this would be a mess, but in this case, the lamb is perfectly cooked; it's got that little crackle, that little brightness from the herbs, and the Caesar salad ice cream melts into the lamb and becomes a room-temperature sauce—and even before it becomes a room-temperature sauce, the chill against the warm lamb is delicious and you see where it totally makes sense.”

Sometime in his 20s, O'Connell ended up in a commune where, as a birthday present, a friend gave him Julia Child's seminal *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. (Child would later celebrate many birthdays at the Inn at Little Washington, including her 90th when O'Connell told her she could order anything on or off the menu and she asked for a cheeseburger and fries.) O'Connell says he made every recipe in the 700-page bible exactly as written three times before permitting himself to fool about with Child's sacred dictums.

O'Connell was succumbing to Francophilia. By the time he opened the Inn, it had spread to his heart.

A view of the Inn's kitchen from the chef's table, where guests can eat and watch a dinner service from behind the scenes





COURTESY THE INN AT LITTLE WASHINGTON

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ACT VI

The *Michelin Guide* this year is 118 years old. To some, the exalted and French-lensed fine-dining manual is more fusty than fresh, especially when assessing American restaurants. To many, many others—Patrick O’Connell among them—this little red book started by a tire company trying to move product remains the inviolate standard of haute cuisine, despite any shortcoming, real or leveled.

“There’s an international playing field, which is so much needed,” O’Connell says. We’re having dessert. He’s got a creamsicle and I have six sorbets. He’s opened a door because it’s a nice day. “In the U.S., you have *The New York Times*, you have *The Washington Post*; you have usually the dictates of one individual. A lot of trust is placed in that individual. They have oftentimes earned it and gone to great lengths to be fair but they’re seeing and evaluating through one prism. The Michelin model is a group of inspectors who pool. It’s a committee. It’s not based on one inspector’s perspective solely.”

Initially, the guide focused on France and featured car-maintenance tips, maps and gas station recommendations. By 1920, it started to resemble the modern guides, and in 1931, Michelin introduced its three-star rating system. The most recent guides cover more than 40,000 restaurants in 24 countries, including the United States. Four American cities—Chicago, New York, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.—are in the purview of Michelin inspectors, who operate so anonymously that they’re, reportedly, forbidden from telling their families what they do.

Michelin is oft assailed for that secrecy. Even former inspectors have betrayed Michelin omertà to criticize the organization. In these screeds—one defrocked inspector, Pascal Remy, wrote a book about it—the

guide-makers are usually portrayed as understaffed, biased to celebrity and tradition, and not opposed to payola. Those are extreme grievances.

O’Connell acknowledges that the guide is probably more accurate in France on its homefield, while American restaurants, on the strength of the United States’ multiculturalism, have evolved well outside the French model enforced by Michelin.

However, the Inn at Little Washington, with O’Connell as its steward, lord and lobbyist, has that Michelin allure. O’Connell also worked the appropriate parties for years to lure Michelin to the D.C., area and have it rule on the Inn.

Michelin did so in 2016, awarding the Inn two stars in the first edition of its D.C. guide. The Inn picked up its third star in September, becoming the first Washington, D.C., area restaurant to do so. Currently, 14 American restaurants hold Michelin’s highest rating. Michelin’s first U.S. guide, which covered only New York, came out in 2005.

“Why are you so enamored with this model?” I say.

“It was a broader plane,” O’Connell says. “I fell in love with true hospitality—not the American idea of making money in a restaurant. There are so many ways to exemplify true hospitality, but one that a journalist wrote about once was: There is a great country house and hotel where a guest is having such a glorious time that he feels that he’s at a house party. And as he departs, kissing everyone and shaking hands, he forgets to ask for the bill. And the host—the proprietor—is flummoxed but wants to keep the illusion going so badly that he never presents him with one. No one wants to break the spell.”

In September, Patrick O'Connell celebrated the Inn's 40th anniversary with a Woodstock-inspired lawn party dubbed "Innstock" that featured former Inn chefs, music and fireworks. O'Connell, dressed as a hippie, emceed the event.



ABOVE Chef José Andrés feeds a llama. RIGHT "Inn bucks" were used to buy food and drinks at Innstock

Patrick O'Connell and a Cher impersonator—who performed three times at the Inn's 40th anniversary party—watch fireworks at the end of the night.



In early September, the Inn at Little Washington threw a 40th anniversary party dubbed “Innstock.” It was modeled off Woodstock, which O’Connell attended and vaguely remembers.

Innstock attracted two dozen former Inn sous chefs and a thousand or so guests to eat, drink and sweat on a Sunday night. O’Connell tried to rent elephants but no-fun insurance companies frowned, so the chef, emceeing the ruby to-do in traditional hippie regalia, settled for his cheesemonger doing a Jimi Hendrix impression (the guy even learned to play his Strat left-handed), a classic rock cover band, three performances by a Cher-impersonating drag queen and 25 minutes of fireworks that left the lawn party smoky.

It was a clear night in the middle of nowhere. Behind the usual stars, you could almost see the Milky Way, its brightest dust dully sheening, and off in the dark grass

there was some fey sense that hidden in the hills is a forgotten door to Faerie and the last talking caterpillar. When the sun went orange down at 7:37, Little Washington felt like somewhere else.

“It is clear to me that the Inn has a life of its own and identity of its own,” O’Connell says. “It not only deserves to continue to evolve and flourish, but definitely will. We have a second and third generation here now, which is committed to carrying that on.”

I have asked about what happens to the Inn at Little Washington after Patrick O’Connell.

“Bob Fasce, who I believe has returned twice, began as a young apprentice and later became the executive sous chef, is our acting general manager and is committed to the Inn’s continuance.”

O’Connell veers fittingly into a food analogy.

“I baked a cake. Now we’re depending on you to frost it. The key isn’t so much a building or a compound of buildings; it’s a culture. It’s an international legend that isn’t just dependent on any one person. It definitely stands on its own.”

Others disagree.

“Now, does it need constant attention and is it a bear to operate? Yes. I’m certainly not naive enough to believe that it will not change and evolve in some fashion—and I would not want it to be a shrine to me or a museum. I wouldn’t want to impose on it. It changes every day and it evolves. I liken it to a garden

that needs to be weeded and fertilized. It’s growing. So what I take confidence from is that it has deep in its DNA and its track record a history of evolution and growth and adaptability. It’s never been frozen in time.

“In the early days, people would leave and they always said, ‘That was so good; don’t ever change a thing!’ And the minute the door closes, we’re changing everything as fast as we possibly can to keep pace with everything that’s changing around us. Change is inevitable, but what cannot ever disappear is the collective memories of such a vast number of people and generations that this place has had meaning for and has been a symbol of something.”

Would you name an heir?

“I think that I would not choose a successor unless I thought they were as passionate as I have been about the Inn’s continuance and evolution. The world is changing pretty rapidly. Tastes are changing pretty rapidly. No one should think that I feel that this is static. Each year, I play a slightly different role. Other people have been able to rise to the occasion and do some of the things that we used to be totally dependent on me for. So I remain a presence and a visionary and sort of a driving force, but it’s a very simple philosophy and it’s one that everyone here understands. When something is done, we have to ask ourselves: *Is that the best we can do or is there any way it could be better? And how can it be better tomorrow, even when you think it’s perfect today?*”





2018 GW GIFT GUIDE

WILLIAM ATKINS

The Stationary Bike of the Stars

About seven years ago, **Tom Cortese, BA '02**, and a small band of tech workers wanted to make working out at home more accessible and maybe even fun. What they came up with was Peloton, a stationary bike and exercise content company (it live streams fitness classes).

Peloton, founded in 2012, sold its first bike in 2014, and now the company is valued at \$4 billion. David Beckham, Ellen DeGeneres, Hugh Jackman and Leonardo DiCaprio ride Peloton bikes.

Cortese, a co-founder and the company's chief operating officer, chatted with us about how all that happened.

Where did the idea come from?

Once you start to have kids, families, you have all the stresses of a job. You layer all those things together, and it's amazing how quickly fitness doesn't have as much of a place in your life, and [Peloton CEO John Foley] found himself trying to fit going to these different boutique cycling classes, et cetera, and they were expensive. They were hard to book. The best instructors were

never available. Getting a timeslot meant juggling your kids' schedules and your schedule, so that's where the idea came from—is there a better way to give people access to the most remarkable fitness instruction on the most remarkable piece of fitness equipment at a great value from the most convenient places on Earth? And how could we use technology to make that a reality?

Did Peloton end up as you expected?

We never set out to be a bike company. We wanted to solve a bigger problem, which was moving fitness into the comfort and convenience of home so that it was accessible. ... Virtually everybody told us that our idea wouldn't work at all, so that helped lower our expectations on how successful we would be. But we had lots of people say if you can pull it off, it's exactly what we want.

Why did you think you could motivate people to work out at home?

We focused on user testing with folks that we knew, and we focused on looking at real-



COURTESY PELOTON



Peloton

\$2,245

for the basic bike, plus \$39 a month to access classes onepeloton.com

world brick-and-mortar experiences that were clearly resonating with folks.

At the time, SoulCycle and Flywheel were taking off. There were tons of successful yoga studios around the country, so this idea of a boutique fitness class that focused on a single activity with a great instructor, a group of people together in a room and real music—those pieces all coming together, that was clearly working in the marketplace, but it had its limitations.

What were the limitations?

If you hire the world's greatest fitness instructor in New York City and you want to open 50 locations around the country in order to scale that business, well, that person is only one person—and the instructor is such a critical piece of the puzzle.

For us, it was: Let's take what's working, let's make sure that we're focused and understand what the

consumer loves and what's resonating for that consumer, and now, let's figure out how to scale it and bring it into a convenient location, which is the home.

You said Peloton was conceived as a content company. Why did it start manufacturing exercise equipment?

We realized that the best way to make this work was with a piece of hardware. There was no great [stationary] bike in the world. There was no tablet that was going to be four times bigger than an iPad and sweat-resistant and all the things that we need it to be to really pull this through and create a great experience. It was a necessary evil.

Why begin with a stationary bike and not a treadmill or something like that?

The beautiful thing about the bike is it's an incredibly approachable piece of equipment. People understand the concept of a bike. You can adjust the resistance and cadence yourself. There's no machine that's driving you. To us, it was a really great starting point. —Matthew Stoss

Compressed to Impress

After a 17-hour flight to South Africa in 2011, **Susan Costa-Walston, BA '84**, was exhausted. Her legs, however, were not.

"They felt like: Let's go for a run, let's party," she says.

The credit, she says, goes to her first-ever pair of compression socks.

Purchased at the recommendation of the health clinic nurse who gave Costa-Walston her pre-trip immunizations, the socks sat in her carry-on bag nearly forgotten until a few hours into the flight when she made the life-changing decision to roll off them on. It was only when she landed and started walking off the plane that she fully realized the socks' power.

"I remember looking down at my legs in disbelief, thinking, woah, you guys feel amazing," Costa-Walston says. Back in the States, though, her hunt for "comfortable and pretty" compression socks proved futile.

"I couldn't find any that hit the mark," she says. "I felt like Goldilocks. Some were either way too tight—after a run I couldn't wait to take them off—or didn't do anything. And none of them looked good."

So the Baltimore-based designer decided to craft her own. She partnered with a textile mill in North Carolina, tested prototypes with more than a hundred female athletes and began pre-selling socks—which are moisture-wicking, antimicrobial and often with whimsical designs—through a 2015 Kickstarter campaign.

She named the company Lily Trotters, harkening back to that 2011 Africa trip and a nearly fruitless search there for a souvenir. Finally she found a foot-high metal sculpture—a bird teetering on almost absurdly long, skinny legs—that spoke to her. It was a lily trotter, she learned. Also known as the "Jesus bird," they use elongated claws to skirt across lotus flowers, appearing to walk on water.

Women runners are the primary, but by no means only, market. Costa-Walston also touts the socks for air travel, for anyone who sits or stands for a long time ("basically all of us") and for pregnant women. And, yes, men wear them too.

"We call them the Secret Society of Men Who Wear Lily Trotters," she says.

The biggest surprise, she says, has been how young many of her customers are—mainly women in their late 20s to early 40s.

They don't have the preconceived notions of compression stockings as "ugly beige grandma socks."

"To them," she says, "it's another thing they can do during their day that's about living healthy and a smart piece of gear to help them perform better and be more active."

—Rachel Muir

Lily Trotters

\$35-\$40

lilytrotters.com

Use code **GW20 to save 20 percent on socks and calf sleeves*



WILLIAM ATKINS

A Place at the Table

Katilu Home

\$12-\$30 katiluhome.com/collections

**Use code GWALUM18 to save 20 percent*

Sarah Vreeland traveled to northern Spain in October 2017 and came back with a name for her business.

“Katilu”—Basque for “bowl”—was “the perfect word to represent bringing people together, a dish you put food into and everybody takes from it,” she says. “It’s the centerpiece of a meal.”

Vreeland, BA ’07, also says that the uniqueness of the Basque language—it’s not related to any European tongue—and its evolution to incorporate words from many other languages had resonated with her.

“I wanted to take that idea of coming together while also emphasizing the individuality of the pieces in the collection.”

The Iberian trip came at a crucial juncture for Vreeland: A week earlier she’d left her job in product development in the apparel industry, she was three months pregnant and she’d been toying for years with starting her own company.

“I love design, and I love food,” she says. “I knew that it was now or never. So I just dove right in.”

It’s been a year of milestones and little sleep since.

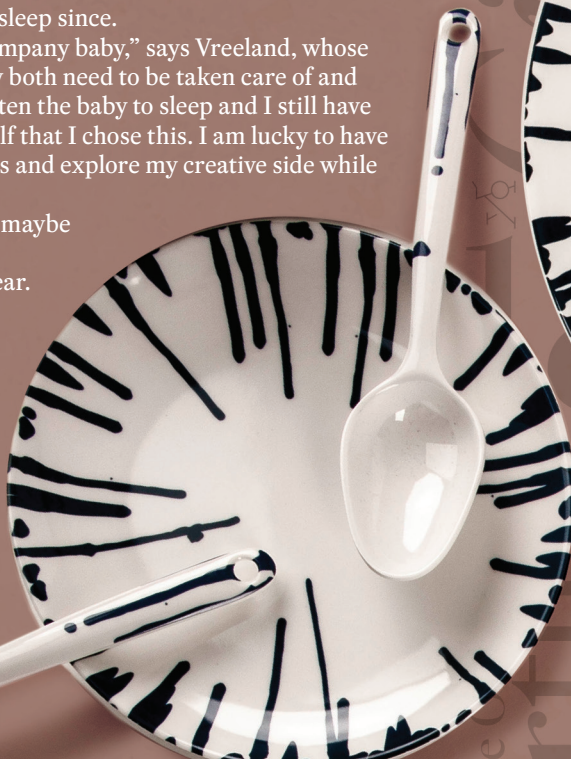
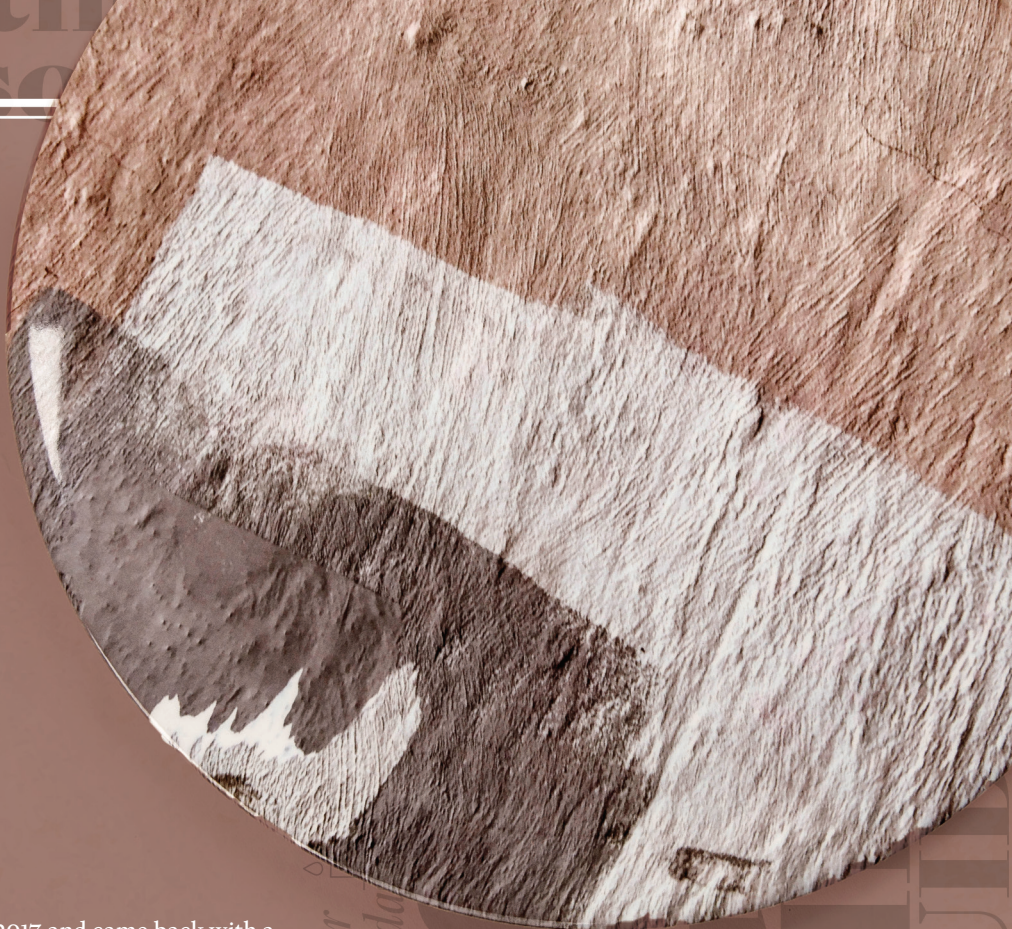
“I have my *baby* baby, and I have my company baby,” says Vreeland, whose daughter, Eva, is now 7 months old. “They both need to be taken care of and nurtured. When it’s 8 p.m., I’ve finally gotten the baby to sleep and I still have hours of work ahead of me, I remind myself that I chose this. I am lucky to have this opportunity to merge my two passions and explore my creative side while building a company.”

But she says she hasn’t looked back (or maybe hasn’t had time to).

Katilu’s first collections debuted this year. They feature trays, platters, plates, bowls and serving utensils in designs created by Vreeland, including one marbled with swirls of pink and another sporting nautical navy paint drips. And they’re all made out of melamine, a durable hard plastic.

“Whether you have a toddler running around or friends who have had one too many, they’re not going to break easily,” she says.

—Rachel Muir



WILLIAM ATKINS

SEASON'S GREETINGS



Board Game On!

UNCORKED! Games
\$40 uncorkedgames.com

As a child, **Lars Thorn, MTA '04**, invented a lot of games. At 7 or 8 years old, he devised his first masterpiece.

"I created something called Toilet Bowl Sinkers," he says. "You would bounce a bouncy ball into the bathroom and try to get it in the toilet bowl, and because it's porcelain everywhere, it just rattles around like crazy. ... We'd have a little fishnet for goldfish that we'd scoop it out and wash it off."

Thorn's love of games has matured alongside his hygiene in the past three decades.

In November, Thorn and the small company he co-founded with an ex-girlfriend, UNCORKED! Games, completed their drinking game trilogy with the debut of *Whiskey Business!*, which joins *Read Between the Wines!* (2014) and *Brew Ha Ha!*

(2016). The games are available through only Amazon and the UNCORKED! website.

"We think of them as sophisticated drinking games," Thorn says. "They're not drinking games with the intention of getting drunk. It really is to accompany a wine tasting, a tasting of craft beer."

Thorn says each game is adaptable for all levels of temperance. For example, *Whiskey Business!* can be played dry—Thorn's 3-year-old niece excels at this iteration—or with whiskey sips or full-on shots. The rules are simple and reasonably intuitive.

"If you're trying to teach drunk people how to play a game, their attention span is limited, to say the least," Thorn says.

Thorn, 41, has held various jobs. He's worked in sports media relations (he spent a year with the Washington Nationals) and been a high school coach, teacher and administrator. He also organized the torch relay for the Salt Lake City Olympics in 2002—he's worked three Olympics total—and served as an event manager for Barack Obama, Joe Biden, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. Thorn still does some political event work but he says he's this close to making board games a full-time gig.

Since *Read Between the Wines!*—it's the Pictionary of writing wine descriptions—UNCORKED! has sold about 15,000 games overall, and this year the company grossed more than \$200,000, Thorn says. Each game costs \$40 and is developed through continual play-testing. He estimates that he played *Whiskey Business!* at least 100 times before finalizing the rules. The goal of the dice game is to produce the most barrels of whiskey without getting "three sheets to the wind." Alcohol puns pervade.

"It was based on playing Yahtzee," Thorn says. "I love the dynamic of a dice game and the excitement around it. So with the name 'Whiskey Business!,' I wanted a *Press Your Luck* component with it—how far are you willing to risk it? How risky do you want to get with your whiskey?"

UNCORKED! started on Kickstarter where it competed in the most competitive category. From 2009 to 2016, nearly \$500 million were pledged to game-oriented projects, the majority of which were board games. The next-most-pledged genre during that span was tech at \$450 million.

Thorn says he's gone 4-for-4 on

Kickstarter projects, raising about \$100,000 on the crowdsourcing platform for *Read Between the Wines!*, *Brew Ha Ha!*—which is *Cards Against Humanity* meets craft beer—*Whiskey Business!* and the forthcoming *Ice Cream Empire*. That will be released through Thorn's second game company, *Empire Games*.

"I've always liked to create fun things to do and fun things to play," Thorn says. "But with the advent of Kickstarter, there was a mechanism to actually fund it. With the advent of Amazon, there was a mechanism to be an independent seller, to really be able to compete head-to-head with the big gaming companies."

Globally, board games have become a more-than-\$9-billion-a-year industry. From spring 2016 to spring 2017, board game sales in the United States went up 28 percent, according to the marketing research company NPD Group, fueled by the "Eurogame" model, that is driving a board game golden age. These games are antithetical to the American—or, in the parlance of the Eurogame enthusiasts, "Ameritrash"—model which emphasizes conflict, elimination and luck. *Monopoly* would be in this category.

The Eurogame style is predicated on strategy and parity while minimizing direct conflict. The style originated in Germany—Earth's capital for board game innovation—and went mainstream with the release of *Settlers of Catan* in 1995.

Thorn's mother is German, and German was his first language. He spent summers as a kid in Germany visiting his relatives and playing the latest, hippest board games. Today, the biggest board game convention in the world is in Essen, Germany. Every October, it draws more than 1,000 gamemakers and 180,000 visitors.

Thorn plans to present there in the future. He also has other *Empire* games in development—*Coffee Bean Empire*, *Tea Leaf Empire*—as well as an oldie he'd love to update: *Toilet Bowl Sinkers*.

"I'll have to bring this to market at some point," Thorn says, laughing.

—Matthew Stoss



On the UNCORKED! website, use the promo code "GWgames" by the end of the year and get 15 percent off any game.



WILLIAM ATKINS



Miss
Henrietta's

**FROG
JAM**

NET WT. 20 OZ (567g)



savannah
SAUCE COMPANY

Tangy Orange
BBQ Sauce

NET WT. 19 OZ (538g)



savannah
SAUCE COMPANY

Medium
Bacon Sauce

NET WT. 16 OZ

It's Always Saucy in Savannah

In 2014, medical laboratory technician, former postal worker and Army vet **Tracey Richburg, CERT '03, AS '05**, started a barbecue sauce company. At the time, she'd never made a barbecue sauce, nor did she consider herself to be any kind of cook.

"The internet has a plethora of information," Richburg says. "We knew nothing about the business and we just kind of stepped out on a limb and crossed our fingers, and four years later, we're still at it."

Buoyed by a Whole Foods connection nursed from a since-ended distributorship with another sauce company, Richburg and her now-husband Mike Roberson founded the Savannah Sauce Company. To start, they sold two hot sauces, one cayenne and one chipotle, in a Savannah, Ga., Whole Foods. Now the company makes 24 hot and barbecue sauces, salsas and jams that are sold at more than 20 Whole Food locations in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee, with tentative plans to expand nationally.

The sauces are also available at *SavannahSauceCompany.BigCartel.com*.

"It was totally by accident,"

Richburg says of her latest career move. "It's not what I was supposed to do, but it was what I was meant to do."

The Savannah Sauce Company's bestsellers, Richburg says, are a Georgia peach bourbon barbecue sauce, the FROG jam—it's an acronym for figs, raspberries, oranges and ginger—a Georgia peach salsa and a bacon salsa. An avowed bacon enthusiast, Richburg also makes a bacon ketchup.

Richburg says the company's sauce inspiration comes from perusing grocery shelves and seeing what's not there—hence the jalapeño honey mustard—and by listening to customer requests at in-store tastings.

Richburg's brother, Joseph T. Richburg, was an Army cook and offered culinary consulting on the R&D end for the sauces, which are designed to be dietarily ecumenical. Richburg says the sauces are all-natural and have ingredient lists that don't necessitate a chemistry degree to understand.

"We wanted people to be able to enjoy it and not have to worry about their diets," Richburg says. "We also wanted people to have sauces that were good on a number of things. One of our sauces is raspberry chipotle. You can use it on meat, you can use it on cheesecake, you can use it on ice cream." —**Matthew Stoss**

Savannah Sauce Company
\$6.50-\$8.00

savannahsaucecompany.bigcartel.com



Bristle Defense

Kelly Carnes, MA '07, had already been playing around her kitchen for a while with essential oils, coconut oil and shea butter, using online tutorials and recipes to make chemical-free candles. Then one day, her husband, Ryan, came up with a request. “He was like, ‘Can you replace this beard balm that I’m using with all of these indescribable, illegible chemical names on the back with something that’s more natural?’” Carnes says.

She could.

In March 2018, Carnes launched the Etsy-based Moonstruck, a company that sells hair wax, candles, body butters, bath salts, sugar scrubs, roll-on essential oils, yoga mat mist, toilet spray and, yes, beard balm and beard oil.

Carnes, a former Kennedy Center public relations director, does Moonstruck on the side. Her full-time job is running her PR company, Carnes & Co.

“I’ve been doing very cerebral work in this communications sphere for such a long time,” says Carnes, a yogi who studied for three weeks in India. “I’ve never made anything. I’ve never created anything with my hands, so [Moonstruck] was this really meditative outlet, too—of just working with my hands and raw materials to create a product, and it’s surprisingly rewarding.”

Carnes makes all the products to order, still in the kitchen of her H Street Corridor home. She likes to work by herself and to listen to music as a way to “let her imagination either take a rest or run wild.” Recently, she has been listening to violin instrumentals, as she is currently learning how to play.

Even though PR remains her primary revenue source, Moonstruck is a fun side project.

“My only anxiety is that it’s unsustainable,” Carnes says. “It can’t be this good forever, right? A shoe has to drop at some point, but, knock on wood, so far, things have karmically supported success.”

—**Jennifer Cheng, CCAS '21**



Moonstruck’s Breccia Beard Balm and Gibbous Beard Oil
From \$8 etsy.com/shop/MoonstruckByCarnesCo



Skin in the Game

Pocket Palette
From \$4.50
thepocketpalette.com

The business world is all about multitasking: the working lunch, the elevator pitch. And sometimes even the bathroom market research.

Lynda Peralta, MBA '17, was in the restroom at the School of Business last year when she overheard fellow students bemoan having to lug bulky makeup bags on days that they had interviews

or networking events after a full day in the classroom. Peralta burst out of her stall and asked what they would think of travel-sized, disposable makeup.

"The three women just stared at me," she says.

One asked where she could buy this product. Peralta said she'd have to get back to her on that.

A year later, the result is the Pocket Palette: a single-use shot of mascara, bb cream (or foundation), and lip and cheek color in a kit that's roughly the size of a Post-it Note. The product became available this year, on the heels of Peralta's fourth-place showing out of 112 teams in the 2017 GW New Venture Competition (in which she won she won \$7,500 in cash, \$5,000 in legal services and six months' membership in a coworking space) and then a Kickstarter campaign that raised more than \$56,000 from more than 400 backers.

It's a product that was born of practicality, she says. Peralta recalls an early morning D.C.-to-New-York train ride a few years earlier, when she ditched her makeup bag for small amounts of cosmetics in sandwich bags instead, which could be applied quickly once she arrived at Penn Station.

"I created the product because I wanted to buy the product." —**Menachem Wecker, MA '09**

Bottling the Foggy Bottom Buzz

Founding Spirits Amaro Liqueur

\$60, with 10 percent of each sale benefiting the GW apiary foundingspirits.com

The arrival of this new, small-batch amaro is owed to two chief ingredients: honey, from the GW beehives, and frustration.

Jon Arroyo, the beverage director at **alumnus Dan Simons'** Farmers Restaurant Group—best known for its flagship dining room, Founding Farmers, on Pennsylvania Avenue—had spent three years testing a dozen sweeteners at varying concentrations in his formulation of amaro, the bitter and herbal Italian liqueur that increasingly is adding syrupy depth to bar shelves and cocktails in the U.S.

"I was at the point where I believed in the botanical blend, everything was working; it was just like, I couldn't get the lightbulb to stay on for longer than a minute," Arroyo says. "It would burn out."

The amaro needed something sweet to beat back the bitterness and the alcohol content, but many recipes—traditionally heaps of regional herbs, roots and other bounty—have existed for tens or even hundreds of years as homespun, handed-down secrets.

"If you ask an amaro producer, 'Hey what do you sweeten that with?' They're like, 'Ehh, you know, a little bit of this, a little bit of that,'" Arroyo says. "I had to learn the hard way."

(The same secrecy reasonably applies to name-brand bottles, like Campari and Fernet

Branca, as it now does for Arroyo's brew, which he describes only as "a minimum of 22 different types of botanicals, which is a proprietary recipe.")

Finally, it happened. Tasting an amaro that seemed to strike the right note, an importer told Arroyo that it was cut with honey, and it hit him: "Oh my god, this might be the answer to my problem."

Honey was something that Arroyo had access to—and, actually, one-of-a-kind, urban-bee gold: In 2011, Simons and Founding Farmers helped the GW Biology Department establish an apiary on the roof of Lisner Hall on the University Yard. Faculty and students use the hives for teaching and research; the restaurant gets the honey, which it had been serving with its cornbread and bottling as gifts.

"From my perspective, the GW honey sort of completed the picture," says Simons, BBA '92, who co-owns the restaurant group with Mike Vucurevich and the North Dakota Farmers Union.

So a few years ago, Arroyo began using leftover GW honey, supplemented with honey from Virginia apiaries, for his Founding Spirits Amaro. But last year, he and Simons decided to hang on to the entire harvest from the GW hives and to pour it into a limited-batch amaro made exclusively with the campus honey. They were able

to squeeze from it 300 bottles, which are available online and at the restaurant group's Founding Spirits distillery in D.C.

"It's special," Simons says, "because of our relationship with GW [and] the proximity of our restaurant; it's special because of my personal relationship with GW; it's special because those little bees are up there fighting the fight as urban bees, and they could be getting pollen from the flowers that are directly adjacent to our Founding Farmers right there."

It's the first of what Simons plans to be an annual release, limited only by the bees' bounty, which can swing widely. This year's take was 25 gallons of honey, up from 15 last year. Plus, the apiary doubled its hives in April to a dozen.

Of this inaugural, GW-only vintage, Arroyo says: "You immediately smell the presence of honey, the richness of honey ... But you'll also get the true essence of botanicals lingering, like anise and wormwood, fennel, and things of that nature. And then when you taste the amaro, it isn't as sweet as you might think it is from the honey that you get on the nose. It'd be very smooth, a very botanically driven finish, where you start to really pick up all the other nuances that the botanicals deliver, like cinnamon, and you get some mint that's in there and more of the root feel."

The honey itself, he says, is "a little floral, and very, very balanced in its sweetness." The character differs slightly each year, tempered by the realities of life inside the hives. "We're getting the real deal. It comes in raw, unfiltered."

—Danny Freedman, BA '01



WILLIAM ATKINS

Happy Holidays
Season's Greetings
'Tis the Season

FENWAY PARK

LOCATION: 4 Jersey Street Extension
NEIGHBORHOOD: Fenway-Kenmore
ARCHITECT: James McLaughlin

Fenway Park opened as home to the Boston Red Sox days after the sinking of the R.M.S. *Titanic* in April 1912. It is the oldest ballpark in Major League Baseball. Boston beat the New York Yankees during the first game. Babe Ruth, who gained fame with the Yankees, began his career with the Red Sox. Just over thirty-seven feet high, the "Green Monster" is a large left field green wall popularized at the ballpark as a target for right-handed hitters. The official mascot, Wally the Green Monster, is named after the wall. Over the years, Fenway Park has been renovated and expanded several times. The ballpark is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



A Tour of Boston's Contours

Historic Buildings of Boston Coloring Book (Commonwealth Editions, 2018)

\$15 applewoodbooks.com

Unlike coloring books that are used only to scratch at and relax, **Scott Clowney's** 80-page tour of Boston is also educational, deepening the outlines with historical details, like that Fenway Park opened just days after the *Titanic* sunk, and that the 749-foot Prudential Tower, with its 8,200 windows, was the largest U.S. building outside New York when completed in 1964.

Clowney, MA '11, who lives in D.C.—and published a capital city coloring book in 2017—spent a whirlwind three days in Boston last year to research the book. He hit 35 sites then and whiled the hours drawing and photographing the architecture.

"There is an incredible vibe in the city," he says. "I was like a kid opening my eyes for the first time. I was just trying to absorb as much as I could."

Clowney arrived in Boston with a plan of the buildings he would draw and photograph, but he also sought sites off the beaten path. Walking past the Beaux-Arts-style Berkeley Building, for example, he knew he had to include it.

His technique involves tracing his photographs with pen-and-ink, and although he admits tracing is controversial in the art world, he thinks his research-intensive approach lends itself to coloring-worthy images, which are complete with signs of city life—cars, traffic lights, milling pedestrians. Some drawings even offer interior views, such as the iconic, Venetian-inspired courtyard and garden in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

It's a book that he hopes offers a taste of Boston and inspires visits there, as well. Meantime, Clowney is already inking the contours of a third city, but he's not tipping his hand on which will be next.

—Menachem Wecker, MA '09



Brittany Watson Jepsen, the designer behind the blog *The House that Lars Built*—the name is a nod to the silly *nom de dinner reservations* her father, Bob, would use—sits in her office in an old building on a Utah dairy farm. And she thinks of her father as she talks about the ways people learn to see color around them.

As a Corcoran design student, Jepsen, MFA '10, blogged about the colorful doors she spotted in Georgetown. Soon her father—whom she describes as the sort to never notice that kind of thing—was calling to share the doors he enjoyed.

“If my dad can pay attention to a turquoise door, I promise you anyone can,” she says.

Jepsen looks outside her window and describes a white horse with brown spots.

“That color combination is so trendy right now,” she says. “We can really connect the dots by seeing what’s in our immediate region.”

Seeing the potential for art in everyday objects is a major theme of this colorful, do-it-yourself book—arranged so the reader traverses the rainbow in its pages—and of the popular #crafttherainbow hashtag she created in 2014.

From piñatas to balloon arches to paper flowers, Jepsen teaches readers how to craft dozens of projects. And each section of the book is introduced with historical tidbits and memories from Jepsen’s travels: Colorblind bulls aren’t drawn to red; boys used to be dressed in pink, not blue; yellow makes babies cry; and Santa wore green until Coca-Cola made his clothes red in the 1950s.

Readers who struggle to make things that turn out as perfectly as they look in the book should know that even Jepsen had to do a few mockups to perfect a project.

“There’s a journey in the creation, just as much as there is pleasure in the final project,” she says.

And Jepsen sees the DIY movement as a calming escape from politics and social media.

“There’s a need more than ever to pursue the handmade part of life,” she says. “We’ve kind of removed ourselves from what makes us human, which is using our hands.”

—Menachem Wecker, MA '09

Color Decoded

Craft the Rainbow: 40 Colorful Paper Projects from *The House That Lars Built* (Abrams, 2018)
\$29.99 thehousethatlarsbuilt.com



home for 
the holidays

GIF 1 
GIVING 

Coat D'Azure

209 Mare's Towel Tuxedo
from \$335 209mare.com

"Dapper" isn't a word that's often applied to the half-dressed who are baking in the sun along even the classiest spits of sand. But **Gabriel Uribe, BA '16**, is trying to imagine a world where it could be.

"We're trying to really wake up the beachwear industry and say, 'Guys, you've been doing the same thing for the past 30, 40 years. There needs to be some innovation,'" he says.

Compared to the world of women's swimwear, Uribe says, the options for men tend to have all the panache of the cold, dead moon.

"It's always been, y'know, you buy a pair of swim shorts or swim trunks, you put on a T-shirt, maybe a linen shirt, and that's it," he says. "And it doesn't matter if you spend 30 bucks or \$300 on a pair of swim shorts, at the end of the day, it's honestly going to look the same when you're at the beach."

To bring in that sense of styling, of expression, of complementary fit, Uribe and his brother, Federico, turned to one of fashion's universal augmenters—the formal jacket—and reimagined it as a towel. Federico wore a prototype during the Monaco Grand Prix in 2016 and garnered interest. A year later, the brothers launched the company, 209 Mare, in the luxe, itty-bitty French Riviera nation with their slim-cut Beach Blazer. This year, they followed up with a more casual line of Towel Tuxedos (shown, at left, in black and paired with 209 Mare's Kambuku trunks.)

Whereas Gabriel Uribe says the Beach Blazer, with its light fabric shell over a terry interior, is recommended to be worn over a shirt and is intended for, say, dinner in a beachy atmosphere (and, yes, a yacht was mentioned in this scenario), the tuxedo is beach- and pool-ready, an exceedingly svelte towel that's intended for toweling.

Both styles are made with a "cashmere-like" Italian bamboo terry cloth; mother-of-pearl buttons on the cuffs, for rolling up the sleeves; and shawl lapels made of a velvet specially engineered to withstand water.

"If somebody gets thrown in a pool wearing our Towel Tux, we don't want them to worry," Uribe says. —**Danny Freedman, BA '01**



The Ghosts of Gift Guides Past

Here it is, your first re-gift of the season: It's a second look at some of the alumni-made goods featured here in the recent past, but still have presence. As presents. OK, we'll stop now.

1 SWAP Socks

The company with its mission hidden in the name—an acronym for “style with a purpose”—was co-founded, in part, by **Roger Nahum, BS '13**, and **Cole Page, BS '13**, and sells tastefully mismatched socks to provide care to people with preventable blindness. swapsocks.com

2 Harmony Creek Farm Soaps

Husband-and-wife duo **Ruta Qureshi, BBA '85**, and **Ali Qureshi, BBA '86**, since 2007 have been churning out soaps in dozens of varieties that look and smell good enough to eat (... but don't eat them). harmonycreekfarm.com

3 DIY Gift Boxes

Claudine Hellmuth's whimsical gift boxes come with a twist: You build them. Hellmuth, BFA '97, sells the patterns, which are printed and then cut, folded and taped into shape using her easy-to-follow instructions. etsy.com/shop/claudinehellmuth

4 Charcoal Goods

Brian Twilley, MFA '06, uses a World War II-era vertical mill and other vintage tools to carve intricate razor handles and retro razor heads for double-edged blades out of copper, bronze and stainless steel. charcoalgoods.com

5 buddingSTEM

Frustrated with frilly, pink clothing options that mismatched with the science-y interests of their preschooler daughters, **Jennifer Muhm, BA '00**, and **Malorie Catchpole, BS '02**, decided to fill the commercial void themselves with dresses, headbands and leggings bearing images of dinos, rockets, trains and planes. buddingstem.com

6 Luke's Toy Factory

Two father-and-son pairings—including **Evan Achiron, BA '09**, and his dad, Mitch—came together to form this company that makes toy trucks from a mix of sawdust (reclaimed from furniture mills and window factories) and medical-grade plastic. lukestoyfactory.com



Still stumped? The GW Campus Store has winter gear, year-round apparel, baby gifts, home decor and more:

📍 800 21st Street NW

🌐 bkstr.com/georgewashingtonstore



To Simply Name It

Aloud

On the cinders of her career, her past identity and her family's expectations, **Helena Bala, BA '10, JD '13** built *Craigslist Confessional*, an index of trauma—dealt and endured—that strangers ask her to divulge.

Samantha Cole
STORY



Kailey Whitman
ILLUSTRATIONS



It's a late July night in New York,

and what's left of the summer is hanging on like a wet Band-Aid. Helena Bala's apartment on the Upper East Side sits 21 stories above Sloan Kettering. Ambulances meander in and out of the emergency lanes, lights on but silent. A haze hangs off the East River and bleeds up to First Avenue. It's one of those nights where a drip of mystery liquid landing on your scalp is either air-conditioner condensation or a fat drop of fog water.

Everyone's air conditioning is working overtime this summer, including Bala's. I'm greeted first by Stanley, a chihuahua-corgi mix named after that mustachioed, rumpled *Golden Girls* character. Bala shoos him away with a slippered foot—she is very, very pregnant. Her husband, Alex Fortenko,

MPH '11, MD '15, an emergency physician, steps out of their bedroom for a moment to say hello and dips back in—he's studying for a test coming up later this week. In exactly two weeks, she'll give birth to their son, Ronan.

Usually, when Bala meets a stranger, it's to listen to them talk for an hour about their lives. She's the creator of *Craigslist Confessional*, a side project turned full-time gig, an online column and now a book deal. She quit her job as a lobbyist on Capitol Hill to do this. But tonight, she's on the other end of the notebook.

Joe was a homeless man who hung out outside of her office building in downtown D.C. You can almost see the White House from there—it really is almost next door.

It's tough to get accurate surveys on homeless populations, but in D.C., there's something like 7,000 people living on the streets. The disparity can be shocking: A block away from an encampment of houseless people, some of the wealthiest individuals in the country make decisions for the rest of the nation.

Joe liked to hang out at this particular spot on 13th and G, despite the building's security guards harassing him frequently. Bala, BA '10, JD '13, saw him on her daily trips in and out of the lobbying firm, often to go to the Hill for catered meetings. On those days, she'd bring back the leftovers for Joe, and they built a friendly, albeit superficial rapport: niceties, a handoff of food, a tenuous carb-based thread of connection.

Until one day, she didn't. *Are you upset with me?* she remembers him calling after her, when she came back from one of those meetings empty-handed.

"It hit me," she says of that day in 2014. "It was this realization: I think that this is a casual, 'I'll bring you food whenever I can' thing, and he's actually depending on me for the food."

Bala sat down on the sidewalk outside of her office and had her first real conversation with Joe. He told her how he got to be in this place, and she told him how deeply unhappy she was with where her career was taking her.

"It was dawning on me that I'm complaining to this homeless man about my life, but it was just this moment of realization that I didn't feel like I had anybody else in

my life to tell all this to, and he certainly probably didn't have anybody else," she says. "So we had this genuine heart-to-heart. It was like an unburdening, a confession, basically, for both of us to be able to tell somebody something and not feel like it was going to make us regret being honest about what we were going through."

Eventually Bala went back up to her office, to the job she loathed, and posted an ad on Craigslist that implored, simply: "Tell me about yourself." It seemed like a natural thing to do at the time, in small-world D.C., like selling an old TV or posting an ad for a free couch on the curb. Maybe it would fill the void she'd opened with Joe.

"I posted it, and I was like, alright, I'm probably not going to hear anything back." She woke up the next day to dozens of replies in her inbox.

In the months that followed, Bala started meeting strangers who contacted her through Craigslist in coffee shops and over the phone during her lunch breaks, after work, on weekends, during any spare time she could fit an hourlong conversation. They punctuated her days at the lobbying firm as small moments of clarity in an otherwise beige drift.

Her first meeting was during a lunch break. The stranger was a former heroin addict, a woman who walked Bala through a tour of her past: *This was the corner where I used to shoot up, this is the JCPenney I used to steal from for more drugs, these are the scars I keep hidden with long sleeves.*

"You see her life, you see the city and everything transform in the context of what she's shared," Bala says. "This person, who before was just like any other person you didn't know anything about, and now an hour and a half later,

you've become immersed in their lives."

"It's transporting," I say. "You're entering a different dimension through someone else's perspective."

"Imagine doing that three, four, five times a week. It's the most fascinating thing."

Late back to work, Bala got to her office, closed the door and wept. She immediately knew she had to do more of these meetings, somehow.

"When you do something you really love, even though you're not getting paid to do it, it feels almost like you're cheating to do something else," she says. "It was a constant thing in the back of my head."

The decision to quit law was eventually made for her. A few days before her 26th birthday, Bala's parents—still under the impression that their girl was happy and thriving in law—announced that they were coming to D.C. as a surprise. She emailed her boss to say she would need to take a day off, and did.

When she came back on Monday morning, HR was waiting for her, with her boss. Taking an unexpected day off at this firm was nearly a capital offense. They confronted her about the unplanned vacation day, and asked her if she was happy there. No, actually, she wasn't, she told them.

"There was this weird standstill where it felt like something wasn't being said," she recalls, "and then I realized what wasn't being said was, 'I quit.'"

She didn't tell her parents she'd quit her job for about a year.

"They were asking every day, 'How's work?' and I was saying, 'Really good!' It wasn't a lie, for the first time."

When Bala did finally confess, her mother cried, she says, and her father didn't speak to her for almost a year. ■





“They were asking every day, ‘How’s work?’ and I was

saying, ‘Really good!’

It wasn’t a lie, for the first time.”



When Bala was 11, in August 2001, her family moved to Fairfield County, Conn., from their home country of Albania.

She brought with her a “terrible accent,” a mix of her mother tongue and the British affect of her teachers at international embassy schools.

A month later, two planes hit a pair of buildings in New York, and a classmate called her a “towelhead.”

Bala was born in that tiny nation on the Balkan peninsula in 1988, right on the cusp of revolution.

“It went through a huge political turmoil,” she tells me—a very succinct way of saying that communism in Europe was on the precipice of upheaval. With the tiny nation—and the world’s only atheist state—standing as a hardline communist dictatorship, the revolution would not roll smoothly through the Bala family’s home country.

But Bala was a child through all this, and the way she viewed it all was through osmosis of her father’s outlook about their future.

He was in the Albanian foreign service, the Albanian ambassador to Slovenia, and they moved to Slovenia when she was 6, then back to Albania again shortly after. She describes him as “highly hopeful and idealistic,” a man whose optimism about his efforts to effect change in Albania’s fledgling democracy started to wane only once they were forced to seek asylum in the U.S. The combination of turmoil back home and life in Fairfield (a place that two years ago *The Atlantic* called “the epicenter of American inequality”) ground him down.

They moved into a one-bedroom apartment that belonged to Bala’s aunt in the south end of Bridgeport, a deeply poor, frequently violent city. She slept on a futon in the living room. Her father got a job as a security guard at the nearby Home Depot. Her mother—who had a career as a medical doctor back home—cleaned houses and brought her young daughter with her on jobs to help.

“That was crushing for her, having gone through all that education and finding yourself suddenly knee-deep in somebody else’s bathtub,” Bala says.

The one thing her parents did spend money on was their daughter’s education. They sent her to a private school in an affluent part of Fairfield, a trial she describes as “play acting” to fit in with her wealthy,

white classmates.

Then there was 9/11 and that cruel classmate, whose dad was a firefighter.

“I just remember being completely destroyed in a way I didn’t understand,” she says, recalling her 11-year-old brain trying to wrestle with what she knew was senseless, petty cruelty, but couldn’t place why. “I just so badly wanted to be accepted at that point, to be one of the rest, and the tragedy of what just happened I had perceived as something that had affected me just as much,” she says. “I felt like I was part of the aggrieved, and being separated and made into this part of the problem was just ...”

Stanley the dog has sidled up to my crossed legs on the couch and is licking them with relish.

“Oh stop, come here, Stan,” she coos, and he toddles over to flop into her thigh.

Bala slept on that futon until she left Connecticut for GW.

“For four years [GW] was just frickin’ fantastic,” she says. Bala arrived on a scholarship and other financial aid; she was in Phi Beta Kappa and graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in international affairs and a minor in Italian.

You’re doing so well, her parents told her, why not just follow that momentum straight through to law school?

“I remember having this mini crisis; I didn’t know what to do, whether I wanted to go to law school or even be a lawyer, but I wanted to help people and do human rights,” she says.

When Bala tried to communicate these reservations to her parents, it could have gone better.

“The level of freak-out, I have yet to see to this day—of just the panic: ‘No! We did all of this for you. We made such big sacrifices that you’ve seen and been a part of. Why would you want to do this? You have an offer and it’s a good one and you can go and it’s a great school and you get to stay in D.C.’”

She skids to the end of this sentence and pauses to think before summing it up, bluntly: “I got strong-armed into basically going straight to law school.”

The first year of law school? It’s a “shock and a half,” she says. “... I knew immediately this is not for me; that I’m not gonna do this for the rest of my life.”

For a little while, it looked like she might anyway. The momentum didn’t stop after graduating: She worked as a legal fellow on Capitol Hill and eventually contacted a classmate who was working at a lobbying firm. The next Monday, Bala was a lobbyist on the Hill. They handed her work for clients at universities and research centers focusing on health, and a salary she calls laughable.

“My parents were so proud,” she says. “They saw my office was right next to the White House, and they were like, ‘Wow we’ve made it, this is what we worked for’ ... and it was just crushing, this feeling of being completely stuck; I don’t know how to get out of this, I’m not happy.”

She stayed nearly a year.

Bala’s thumbing through a set of notebooks from confessions

over the years. She keeps meticulous notes for each, writing neatly in every space on the page, and flagging each with a Post-It Note: “Childhood incest.” “Addiction.”

The three of us—me, Bala and Stanley Zbornak—have interrupted Alex’s studying to unearth these notes from a dresser drawer in their bedroom. She pulls out several notebooks from the pile of all different sizes, most with sticky notes and paper scraps peeking out between pages. We flip through a few, pausing briefly to reflect on various marginal notes.

“I’m an atheist, so I don’t believe in higher power or fate, things like that,” she says. “What I believe is the here and now, and the humanity of us—the love we give to each other, and the good moments we create, and the struggles we help each other through ... I think it’s very incremental, little by little, these moments that have the capacity to change our lives completely.”

Four years of living on credit and pushing back loans in order to be the scribe of people’s lives—or at least the small window they cracked open into their lives: The heroin addict who wept to God in a rainy Toys-R-Us parking lot. The father who molested his two young daughters, decades ago. The widower who found the strength to rebuild his life in New Orleans. The double-amputee veteran.

“It’s the activity of being human every day, and this just so happens to be my way of acting out my humanity,” she says. “I always think of how life could have been so very

different had something not happened or had something been skipped over. The little coincidences that keep us together, and push us apart.”

There are moments in life when the reality of what’s happening to you, around you, can be

heard. The clatter of the day stops and it comes: in the dim blue light of early morning, when a mother creeps into her child’s room to make sure her child is still breathing. Or when the sallow glow of waiting-room fluorescence draws it out. When a wife looks at her husband and thinks: *He’s wasting away.*



When you admit to yourself that you’re not just tired, but that the tiredness is bone-deep, a long, cold well you’ll tumble into if you lean too far over it.

“What do you do, where do you go with that sadness,” Cyd asks me. “Where? When, in a quiet moment, you look over at that person and think, ‘Oh my god ... This is happening overnight, my god.’”

Cyd—who asked to remain anonymous to preserve the spirit of Bala’s project name—is calling from her home on a river in Montana. Months earlier, in April, she’d been sitting near the same spot when she first heard Bala’s story. She was sitting alone, reflecting on the month she’d had. It had been a hard month. A segment featuring Bala and *Craigslist Confessional* on *CBS Sunday Morning* came on the television.

“I’m watching this piece, and I’m thinking, what an amazing project,” she recalls. “I just felt compelled to write to her and to say, this is an amazing project.”

The email she set out to write wasn’t the one she sent.

“I started writing, but instead of just saying ‘great job,’ I was writing and expressing my sadness, my fatigue, my feelings,” she says. “I just kept typing, it kept getting longer ... It was just sort of, *Hey I’ve had a great life, I’m still having a great life,*

“It’s the activity of being human every day, and this just so happens to be my way of acting out my humanity,”

this is who I am, here are some things that have happened to me through my life. I know everyone has them, but I was telling her: These are mine.”

Hers are not everyone’s. Cyd was raped when she was 13 years old. Her daughter, now an adult, was born with congenital heart disease, and her husband, a former Marine, fireman and “all-American guy,” she says, was recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

These are the things she and Bala talked about, over three phone calls. Three calls is an exception to how the confessionals usually work—if someone has something particularly complex to talk about, Bala allows for several conversations. Usually, however, it’s just one.

“I was saying, ‘I’m tired,’” Cyd recalls of their first contact. “I hadn’t really said that to anybody; I’m a very positive person—energetic, happy—I don’t have depression or any of those things, so for me

to actually say out loud to someone, ‘You know what, I’m tired,’” she laughs, resigning to the admission again. I can hear her smile through the phone. “And I’m a little bit sad. And that’s the truth.”

So she and Bala talked about these not-so-ordinary crises. As they began, Bala listened, and then interrupted: She wanted the feelings about this event, not the facts on a timeline.

“It’s easy for some people to intellectualize—*oh, this happened to me, and this is a reason I’m feeling sadness*—but not really go to the deeper layers: If you would really like to know, yes, this was devastating,” Cyd tells me. “She wants the real, true, raw feelings that I had when this rape occurred.”

Cyd’s in her 60s now. This happened to her decades ago. So much has happened since—some of it beautiful, some of it also painful—and she’s had time to process it and move on. But this phone conversation with a stranger she’d emailed days earlier brought things to the surface Cyd hadn’t wrestled with before.

What do you think this man thinks today about what happened? What was his reaction after?

“Answering those questions was very healing,” Cyd tells me. “It had so much to do with her insightful questioning ... For lack of a better description, she identifies something for exactly what it is. She’s very straightforward. She doesn’t try to candy-coat it, she just identifies, ‘This is what you’re talking about.’”

In the CBS piece that Cyd saw on that quiet Montana morning, a psychotherapist was interviewed to pose a contrary perspective: What if reopening deep wounds of the past actually isn’t healing?

Bringing up the psychotherapist’s words from that segment still rankles Bala.

“The guy did this interview on how he thinks that this is just helping people pick at their scabs and unless you teach them to heal ...” she says, trying to remember the rest.

“I think he said you’re just putting a bandage on serious mental health issues,” I correct, cringingly.

“Yeah! Yeah, yeah, yeahyeahyeah,” she says, rocking. Stanley, unexpectedly jostled, adjusts his haunches and resettles.

It’s a comparison Cyd rejects entirely, too. It’s not the same as therapy, and isn’t meant to be. The confessions aren’t meant to give anyone tools to cope with their pain, but to

begin to simply name them aloud.

“There’s something very different about just the human-to-human connection with a fellow human being who is just not necessarily trained to do this specific type of work, but who is sort of saying, ‘Tell me about your life, tell me about you, tell me something about your sadness, your troubles, your struggles,’” Cyd says. “It’s a very different experience. It’s a very free feeling, so it seemed very easy to say, ‘Well, if you’re asking, if you’re interested, this is it. This is how I’m feeling.’”

Bala asks these probing questions, she says, not to rip off scabs, but to get at the meat of what the other person is feeling.

“That building of the narrative, of the person trying to lead you from point A to B and tell you how it all happened, that I think forces the need to come up with a ... conclusion.” She draws out this word to its last syllable, dragging it through every letter. Con-cluuu-sion. “It isn’t always a happy conclusion.”

A lot of people call Bala with stories that end with some hope. Like Cyd, they just need to tell someone what they’ve felt in the early hours, in the waiting rooms, in the darkness, alone.

“This is the end of the chapter of what they’re trying to tell and lets them put that aside for a little bit,” Bala says. “That’s the purpose of it, the ability to unburden, to say anything without fear.”

Stanley snorts and scoots off the couch.

I glance at the clock; It’s late, and it’s going to take me an hour and a half to get back to Brooklyn, but there’s still a question I haven’t asked.

We’ve done a lot of talking about other people, a lot of looking at Bala sidelong—through a rearview mirror of her subjects, her passions. I don’t know if I’ve seen her directly yet.

“Do you think this project will affect the kind of mother you’re going to be?”

“Um ... I’ve always—it’s funny—I’ve always thought about doing this in a very idealistic way,” she says, folding one foot under her and passing her hands over her stomach. “It humanizes that vacuum we feel around us, of people we don’t quite know and don’t know how to reach through this tough

membrane, and just grab onto the mushy parts and say ‘Hey, I get you, I see you, I understand.’”

She lets go of her belly for just a second to clutch at the space in front of her.


“It has always been the overarching theme of this, creating that space in hopes that people will take it into their hearts and make that understanding. With Ronan on the way, it’s made ...”

The atmosphere in the apartment changes. It’s a little thicker, a little more charged with some tension I can’t place. It feels like it might rain in here, like the late July humidity outside might break in this room.

This is the moment, for us, where the world shifts just a little. The dimension of her perspective starts to open up to me—not as a window into the past, but as she sees the future, the very near future. I start to notice things around us I’d only passingly taken into account before: the Uppababy and Pack and Play boxes still unopened in the corner, the crib and bureau that will soon be filled with diapers and clean bibs. They were always there, but now they’re really there, different for being under the spell of her perception.

“It’s made it so much more real, because I’m not any longer doing this in hopes of the world benefiting from it. I kind of almost do it in hopes of him benefitting from it one day.” Her voice breaks, and now I realize why the room’s electrified. We’re talking about *her*, finally. We are through that tough membrane.

“You never know what your kid’s gonna go through, you never know the life he’s going to have, the struggles he’s gonna deal with,” she says. “You want the world to be kind for him.”

One day, maybe, someone will do the same for him. She hopes. One day, he’ll feel it in other people: a kindness, a softness. “So you put out good and hope it comes back.” 


Helena Bala’s stories can be found at CraigslstConfessional.com, and are reposted in part on TheOutline.com and QZ.com.


Her book is due in stores
July 2020 from Simon & Schuster.



LIFE AFTER A DARK

KNIGHT // COMIC BOOK

ARTIST **CHRIS BURNHAM,**

BA '00, SPENT TWO YEARS

DRAWING BATMAN. IT

WASN'T AS GLAMOROUS AS

HE IMAGINED, BUT IT LED

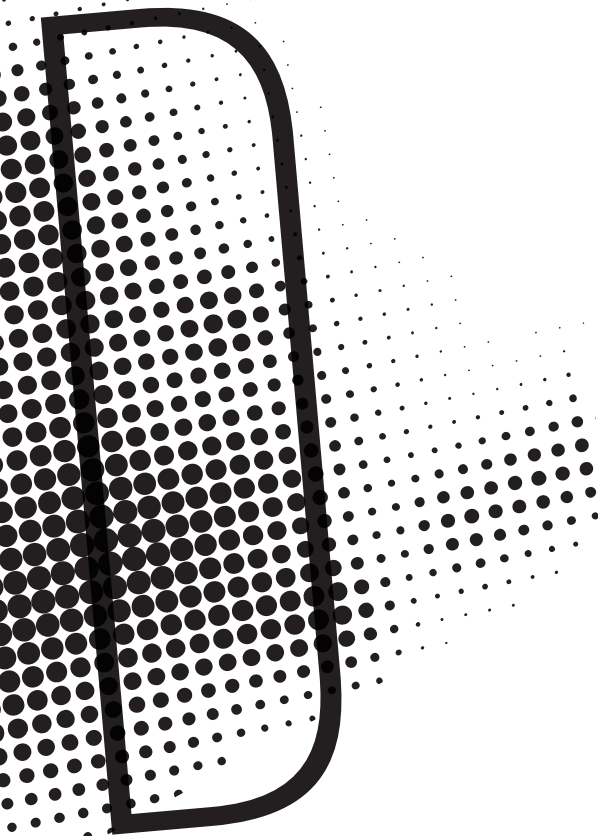
SOMEWHERE BIG: MAKING

A COMIC WITH 'WALKING

DEAD' CREATOR ROBERT

KIRKMAN. //

BY MATTHEW STOSS



Drawing a monthly Batman comic book disabused Chris Burnham, BA '00, of the fantasy that drawing a monthly Batman comic book would be a dream job.

"I was easily working 14 hours a day, 16 hours a day, or something like that," he says by phone from his Los Angeles home. "I'd gotten into some horrible, horrible habits. I would drink all sorts of coffee in the morning to wake myself up, but then I'd be jittery, so then I'd drink a beer to calm myself down. And then I'd have to drink another cup of coffee to wake myself up. I was drinking a pot or two of coffee a day and three beers a day to keep myself awake and level. That's no way to live."

Burnham first got paid to draw the cowed and venerable vigilante in *Batman and Robin* No. 16, published in January 2011. Burnham drew seven pages, serving as second alternate after two artists whiffed the deadline on the Grant Morrison-written book.

Those seven pages led to a full-time gig on another, subsequent Batman series, *Batman Incorporated*, also written by Morrison, a Scottish comics scribe and industry superstar responsible for some of the most definitive Batman and Superman stories. He wrote *Arkham Asylum* in 1989, *All-Star Superman* from 2005 to 2008, and in 2006, created the fifth and current Robin, Damian Wayne, who is Batman's son.

Batman Incorporated—a series in which

Batman franchises himself—ran for 21 issues (Burnham drew 16) and employed four artists. Monthly comic book series frequently necessitate rotating artists. Artists, at best, average a page a day. The typical comic is 24 pages, months are 30 or 31 days long, and math is unforgiving.

"I'm averagely slow," says Burnham, who describes a good day for him as a half or two-thirds of a page. "But then there are guys like Chris Samnee who have absolutely no problem doing a page a day, those bastards. I also think he is so good, he just has to draw something once and it'll be right. I seem to have to draw something four times to get it right. So maybe I'm drawing four pages a day but you only see one of them."

Burnham is 41 years old, usually laughing, and as endearingly irreverent as he is endearingly self-effacing. He draws—he's mostly analog, pencil and paper, going digital only to clean up line work—with a strange, detailed style that's B-movie-flavored in the most affectionate way and he's endorsed by some of the industry's most august creators: Morrison, Frank Quitely (he drew *All-Star Superman*) and *Walking Dead* comic book and TV show creator Robert Kirkman.

"There's just a grittiness to it and a realism to what he does," Kirkman says. "I could see that some people might not consider his characters to be the most realistic looking but there is a level of detail to them that makes their existence believable in a way that you identify with the characters a little more."

Burnham approaches his job with the enthusiasm of a child giving his younger brother a wedgie on Christmas morning. Drawing *Batman Incorporated* for two years made him the younger brother.

Created in 1939, Batman has become DC Comics' most popular character as well as one of the most valuable intellectual properties owned by Warner Bros., DC's parent company. Batman movies have grossed \$2.4 billion, according to Box Office Mojo, more than double that of Superman movies (\$1.1 billion).

Drawing Batman means abiding (or suffering) decades of sacred tradition and inviolable canon while staving bouts of inadequacy. The greatest comic artists have drawn Batman, and pantheons, historically, are gated communities.

"I definitely felt the weight of history," Burnham says. "I definitely realized that Batman's been around for 75 years—all the amazing artists that have worked on him and, now, me. ... I was, really, super nervous about being mentioned in the same sentence as those guys and hoping everyone wouldn't think I was the worst."

Burnham amalgamated his Batman from

iterations drawn by Frank Miller (square, beefy, bludgeon-like in *The Dark Knight Returns* comic) and Bruce Timm (sleek, agile and Max Fleischer-inspired in *Batman: The Animated Series* cartoon). Among Burnham's personal touches: imagining Batman as a gymnast.

"Batman should be able to do 500 pull-ups," he says.

Then there was the Batcave and its giant penny, a mainstay of Batcave decor introduced in 1947 after a fight with an obscure villain named the Penny Plunderer.

"This was the end of Grant [Morrison]'s run," Burnham says, "and he'd been writing Batman for five or six years at that point, so I wanted to be very faithful to the Batcaves of everyone who had been working on his run. ... So that was where all my anxiety was based. On those first couple of pages, I was trying to figure out how the Batcave actually looked and how I was going to handle it. To a certain extent, I didn't even notice that I was drawing Batman because I was so worried about where the penny went."

Over Burnham's two years on *Batman Incorporated*, the famously sedentary lifestyle of the comic book artist became infamously sedentary for Burnham. A wiry man of 6 feet, 3 inches, he put on 30 pounds and smudged the line dividing studio and tomb. He was as famous as he'd ever been and he couldn't enjoy it. Sixteen-hour work days leave little time for adulation.

That's what he thought, anyway.



Turns out, drawing a monthly Batman comic book led to Chris Burnham's dream job: drawing a spy series co-created by Robert Kirkman and former *Walking Dead* showrunner Scott Gimple.

Published by Image Comics, *Die! Die!* debuted in July. It's about three assassin brothers—triplets—and the under-workings of murder cabals and world governments. Bloody violence, sex and naughty language abound. It's the comic every 13-year-old-boy's mom wishes they wouldn't read and a concept seemingly born of Burnham's manic, splatter-film-loving heart.

"This is a high-action comic, but for the most part, it's people in plainclothes," Kirkman says. "It's people having conversations. It's potentially very dull visually. I wanted somebody who had an energy to their work—a quirkiness that can make those kinds of scenes entertaining even though, visually, they may not be. Chris is somebody who draws extremely interesting people, does very expressive faces."

Image Comics operates differently than

the “Big Two”: DC and Marvel. Founded in 1992 by seven hotshot artists who expatriated from Marvel, Image lets artists and writers own their creations, and this arrangement is helping Image increasingly make it a “Big Three.” Conversely, DC or Marvel own any character their artists and writers invent.

Not only is Image’s model potentially more lucrative—thanks to *The Walking Dead* franchise, Kirkman, reportedly, now is worth millions—it affords infinite creative latitude. No holy corporate edicts; coffee is for pleasure, beer for recreation.

Kirkman pitched Burnham on *Die! Die! Die!* in fall 2015. They convened at the Vivienne Restaurant in the Avalon Hotel in Beverly Hills, not far from Kirkman’s office, and confabulated for an hour. Burnham was wooed easily.

“It was like, Yeah, whatever Kirkman says, that’s what I’m doing,” Burnham says. “This is the safest bet in comics. I’ve got to do something to keep this kid alive”—he’s referring to his first-born, 3-year-old Dashiell; Burnham’s second child, Parker, was born in 2018—“and this is it, for sure. And then he describes it. *Superspies killing each other? International intrigue? Yeah, great, I’m in.*”

Burnham and Kirkman nursed a mild acquaintance for a few years before that. They met at the Emerald City Comic Con in Seattle around 2010, their tables somewhat adjacent. It was around the time Kirkman’s *Walking Dead* comic had been adapted for television, on its way to becoming AMC’s biggest show. Burnham was pushing his latest comic, an Image book called *Nixon’s Pals* (2008) about a parole officer for supervillains. He detected opportunity.

“There was a big long line for Kirkman and it was right in front of my table—people trying to get their *Walking Dead*s signed,” Burnham says. “*Nixon’s Pals* is aesthetically very similar to [Kirkman’s superhero comic] *Invincible*. Very similar sort of world—goofy and violent—and I had a captive audience and I was just picking them off one by one. ‘Oh, you like *Invincible*? You should read this—parole officers for supervillains.’ And they’re like, ‘All right!’ I think I sold out of all the copies I brought to the show, purely based on people being stuck in front of my table. I probably gave Kirkman a copy.”

Kirkman knew of Burnham through his friend Joe Casey, who wrote *Nixon’s Pals*, as well as the comic that directly led to Burnham getting hired to draw *Batman: Officer Downe*, which came out in 2011 and is about an unkillable L.A. cop. Both are esoteric, over-the-top action comics, similar in tone and content to *Die! Die! Die!*.

“I snuck into DC [Comics] based on Grant [Morrison] wanting to work with me—and he kept wanting to work with me,” Burnham

says. “So they’re just like, ‘I guess this guy’s here,’ and I think they got used to it. I tried to get work with DC a year before and they said, ‘Yeah, your stuff is great but we don’t see you as a superhero guy.’ They saw me as a quirky sci-fi guy and a horror guy or whatever—and fair enough. But after working on *Batman* for three years because Grant wanted me there, I think they got used to it.”

Kirkman followed Burnham’s run on *Batman Incorporated*—adulation works in mysterious ways—and they had their first conversation that exceeded three sentences in 2014 while carpooling to and from an Image convention.

“We got along very well right off the bat,” Burnham says. “... We were very, very comfortable talking to each other even though he was, obviously, maybe the most successful guy in the history of comics and I was just a guy who drew *Batman* for two years.”

By now, Kirkman and Scott Gimple had been for five or so years devising in the weirder nethers of their brains the comic that became *Die! Die! Die!*.

“The spy genre is somewhat sanitary, between James Bond and *Mission: Impossible*,” Kirkman says. “They’re doing dangerous things, and bad things are happening to people, but oftentimes you don’t see it because they’re very slick. They’re very polished and we wanted this to be different in that respect.”

They wanted “messy” and they wanted an artist adept at depicting brutal, bloody, ridiculous, fun and detailed action. They

wanted an artist who thinks *Evil Dead 2* is just about the best movie ever made.



“I think *Evil Dead 2* is just about the best movie ever made,” Chris Burnham says.

Burnham didn’t major in art. He decided he could refine his drawing on the side at GW and got an electronic media degree, reasoning that it would be more useful if his comic book career bombed. But he took art classes as electives, doing four semesters of life drawing, and he taught himself what he could, copying hands from Burne Hogarth books and trying to be “one of those guys who carries a sketchbook and draws people in the park.”

After college, Burnham hit the comic convention circuit to get his art reviewed/ crushed by the pros and hope one of them liked his work enough to vouch to someone important. This is how comic artists are often discovered, and the experience steeled Burnham’s humility. He did this for about two and a half years while spending his nights drawing four-page demo comics. He paid bills by drawing technical manuals and slogging at a photo lab.

“You’d go to a convention and it’d be your storytelling that was good but your faces are screwy,” Burnham says. “So you’d go back home and work on your faces and then they’d go, ‘Your faces are good but your backgrounds are crummy.’ So you’d work on backgrounds for the next four months

Chris Burnham stands outside his North Hollywood studio.



Two finished pages from the comic *Die! Die! Die!*, penciled and inked by Chris Burnham and colored by Nathan Fairbairn, shown alongside Burnham's rough sketches for those pages



and then at the next show, they go, ‘Oh, your backgrounds are great but your faces are crummy’—god damn it. And my faces, they’re not as crummy as they used to be, but now my backgrounds are so much better than my faces that my faces look crummy, relatively speaking. It’s constantly trying to make everything of even quality.”

Burnham broke into comics in 2003 and did his first book for one of the Big Two in 2008, drawing two short X-Men stories. Then there was *Officer Downe* in 2011, which he drew off the posthumous largesse of his Grandma Priscilla. She willed him \$5,000, and that paid his bills for a few months.

“I was able to focus all my efforts on *Officer Downe*,” Burnham says, “just making it the most hyper-detailed, disgusting comic I could—it is the B-movie of comics. It is halfway between the Toxic Avenger and Robocop. It’s great. My grandmother would be absolutely appalled by it.”

“But that’s the book that when it came out—it was a mild critical success but the other pros I knew who saw it, everyone was like, Oh man, this is awesome! It’s very much the sort of comic that artists wish they were making, but most of the time we get stuck drawing dialogue scenes and heartfelt emotions and couches and whatnot. But *Officer Downe* is just mayhem the whole way through.”

Burnham says he still battles consistency and that his artistic powers shrivel when he’s drawing people that are too small or too large. The extremes undermine the strength of his style (all that great detail) and skew proportions. He finds drawing handsome people irritating.

“The only thing I’ve ever been hammered at by editorial was on my first X-Men story—a Forge story,” Burnham says. (Forge is an X-Man whose superpower is building machines; it’s cooler than it sounds.) “They kept saying, ‘Oh, Forge isn’t attractive enough. You’re making him look like a 40-year-old guy. We want him to be a 27-year-old Hollywood hunk.’ I was just adding too many wrinkles. He just looked old and haggard when he should be a beautiful Brad Pitt of a guy.”

It annoyed him, but finally Burnham made Forge a dreamboat.

“I’m much more comfortable drawing someone tired and haggard than bright-eyed and handsome,” Burnham says. “I think the core of that is if you’re drawing an ugly monster, if you draw that ugly monster’s head 10 degrees too wide or his eyes 10 percent too big, it’s still going to look like an ugly monster. But if you’re drawing a handsome guy and you draw his face just a little bit too wide, he looks like a completely different person now and goes from perfectly

handsome to a schlubby office worker with just a little bit of difference. Sometimes you nail a great drawing that just doesn’t happen to be a perfect drawing of that character. That is super frustrating. I did a perfect drawing of that guy who looks nothing like Bruce Wayne.

“I remember there was an issue of *Batman Incorporated* that’s the life story of Talia al Ghul, so I had to draw her at multiple ages on the same page. So she’s 8 years old, 10 years old and 14 years old all on the same page, and my girlfriend says, ‘Uh, are those supposed to be the same people?’ That’s the worst thing you could say to someone. She was right, but, man, it was dispiriting.”



The mood of *Die! Die! Die!* is nuanced. There is a lot of violence and some kitschy gore, but in the third issue, there’s a moment of pathos for a character who had shown no previous moral proclivity. This moment unfolds across four boldly paneled pages.

“You can feel the frenetic sort of energy,” says *Die! Die! Die!* co-creator Scott Gimple, the *Walking Dead* showrunner for seasons four through eight; season nine premiered in October. Gimple also wrote some Simpsons comics a long time ago. “He really does get the humor in there with the way that he composes the panels, the character’s expression. It’s a very tricky tone. I mean, it’s a crazy book. A character’s nose is cut off in the very first issue. And I think it was really critical that that not be done in a way that is so traumatically horrific that an audience is turned off or doesn’t quite get the tone that we’re after.”

Gimple and Kirkman co-compose story arcs. Kirkman writes the scripts.

“When I write stage direction for *The Walking Dead*,” Gimple says, “it is for a line producer and a director and a costumer and a prop person and an actor and a locations person. But for these scripts, Robert is writing to Chris, so there’s a conversational shorthand in the stage direction. There’s that thing he knows that he knows Chris knows. ... I don’t want to betray a trust and say too much, but it can be a little insult comic-y between them.”

Kirkman really considers the action choreography. *In Die! Die! Die!* No. 1—issue 6 will be out in December—there’s a sequence that involves a guy backflipping off a crashing motorcycle to death-battle three goons in a river. Kirkman says he plotted that fight in detail. He could’ve left it to Burnham but he feels it presumptuous to so burden an artist.

But there are times, Kirkman concedes,

that he just doesn’t have it. There’s a fight in issue No. 3 that involves one character stabbing other characters, and Kirkman forgot to introduce the knife. The stabber also has a briefcase that she’s trying to keep those she’s stabbing from stealing. Burnham saved him by drawing a secret knife-holder on the briefcase.

Burnham belongs to a school of comic art largely defined by European illustrators (notably Moebius) and artists Geof Darrow, an American, and Frank Quitely, a Scotsman to whom Burnham’s work is often compared.

Both, for example, draw clothing so that it has weight and it’s obvious how the clothing fits and how the character put it on. It’s not just the usual spray-on, muscle-rubbing superhero spandex, a level of detail Kirkman says elevates Burnham to Quitely’s class. Burnham also sweats the physics required to make action followable panel to panel. He’ll go as deep as to figure out how a foot pivots and how body weight transfers.

Quitely says that the first time he met Burnham—it was about six years ago at New York Comic Con—Burnham jokingly apologized for stealing his style.

“He has a very obvious voice,” Quitely says. “When I first saw his work, I was impressed by the balance between the realistic and the cartoony. I like the fact that it doesn’t rely heavily at all on photo reference and it’s very much coming from an internal place—and of course, he’s got a great attention to detail. He’s got a sense of a humor and he’s a good storyteller. ... Even looking at some individual pages and not knowing what’s happening in the story, I could tell what’s going on.”

Burnham says *Batman Incorporated* sated any and whatever urge he had to draw superheroes who tote mega-dollar multimedia franchises. Drawing creator-owned books on charitable deadlines is really nice. He can indulge his discrete, bizarre and bloody influences—everything from the very metal Marvel comics of the early 1990s to an obscure indie book like *Plasma Baby*, which he discovered at a 1980s comics convention in a Ramada Inn conference room, an event with all the gravitas of a county fair.

“This is a pretty cool place to be right now,” Burnham says. “At some point, I’ll probably work with Grant Morrison again. We’re supposed to be getting around to *Arkham Asylum 2*, which is a totally insane thing to say. That’ll probably happen at some point.”

“Honestly, creating a book with Robert Kirkman and doing Batman with Grant Morrison for years and then creating [2016’s sci-fi horror comic] *Nameless* with him—my bingo card is basically filled up with dream projects.”

CLASS NOTES



GEORGE WASHINGTON
The equestrian equestrian by The Gorham Foundry from the original by Jean Antoine Houdon (1741-1828), which stands in the State Capitol of Richmond, Virginia, it was presented by The George Washington Bicentennial, after standing in a number of locations on the campus, the statue found its permanent home in the University Yard and was dedicated on this spot on September 6, 1931. "George Washington" is part of the George Washington University Permanent Collection.

Umbrella-wielding alums gather behind the George Washington statue on University Yard during a rainy kickoff to Colonials Weekend in October.

ABBY GREENAWALT

// 1960s AND EARLIER

William R. Stewart Jr., MS '65, authored *Alcatraz Kid* (Crane River Press, August 2018), a memoir about the author's five years living on Alcatraz during its last years as an Army prison.

Richard Pugh, MBA '68, authored his second book, *What Is The Answer: Finding Peace and Joy In Your Life* (Xulon Press, 2017), which focuses on how the love of God and Christ can produce a peace and joy in life that cannot be manufactured on one's own.



Mark A Cymrot, BA '69, authored *Squeezing Silver: Peru's Trial Against Nelson Bunker Hunt* (Twelve Tables Press, March 2018). The memoir centers on the author's role as lead counsel in the trial by a Peruvian state company against Texas oil billionaires and Saudi royalty in 1979 and 1980. Cymrot also was quoted in two successive issues of *The New Yorker* in August 2018 about two of his other cases.

// '70s

S. David Fineman, JD '70, of Fineman Krekstein & Harris P.C., in Philadelphia, was named chair of the Fair Elections Center, a D.C.-based nonprofit dedicated to removing barriers to voter registration for traditionally underrepresented constituencies.

William A. Hamilton, MA '71, a lieutenant colonel, was inducted into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame in November 2018 for his 20-year military career that included service in Vietnam and Cambodia. He earned a Silver Star for gallantry, a Bronze Star for heroism and an Army Commendation Medal for heroism.

J. Phillip London, DBA '71, executive chairman of CACI International, helped inaugurate the company's new Dr. J. P. London Shared Services Center in Oklahoma City in July.

Alan S. Nadel, BS '71, JD '76, retired partner of Panitch Schwarze Belisario & Nadel LLP, was recognized in the 2019 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*.

Charles K. Steiner, BFA '73, has a collection of his paintings, "Dep(art)ing Passengers," on display at the Fort Smith Regional Airport in Arkansas through Jan. 7, 2019. Steiner's studio also was highlighted on the website *Hyperallergic*.

Roger B. Jeans, PhD '74, authored *The CIA and Third Force Movements in China during the Early Cold War* (Lexington Books, November 2017) and *The Letters and Diaries of Colonel John Hart Caughey, 1944-1945* (Lexington Books, June 2018).

James D. Blair, DPA '75, ended a 66-year professional health care career after the Center for Healthcare Emergency Readiness in Nashville, Tenn.—which Blair founded—closed in December 2017. He now plans to work as a freelance journalist.

William Simpson, MS '75, was awarded the 2017 Best Paper Award from the International Conference on Computer Science and Applications for his paper, "Enterprise Level Security: Insider Threat Counter-Claims."



Howard L. Williams, LLM '75, of Brooks Pierce in Greensboro, N.C., was recognized in the 2019 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*.

Brian Kirk, BA '76, had an art collection, "Natural Reaction," on view at the Art League Gallery in Alexandria, Va. The show closed Oct. 7. Kirk uses chemical reactions to create ephemeral, phantom-like prints from rusting metal.

// '80s

Stephen M. Wander, MEA '80, and **John Steven Newman, DSC '02**, co-authored *Harnessing the Power of Failure: Using Storytelling and Systems Engineering to Enhance Organizational Learning* (Emerald Publishing Limited, September 2018).

Rob Weinberg, BA '80, celebrated the 12th anniversary of his "Ask Mr. Marketing" column, a marketing advice column published Thursdays in *The San Diego Union-Tribune*.

Khatmeh Osseiran-Hanna, BA '82, was named vice president for university advancement at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Debbie Albert, BA '83, launched *Prove it!*, a 10-minute podcast featuring three questions and a proof point about marketing communications clarity.

David Moskowitz, JD '83, was named to the McDaniel College board of trustees.

Luis J. Fujimoto, BS '85, was elected president of the American Association of Dental Boards.

Cheryl Smith, BS '85, was hired as the marketing lead for Privia, a proposal software and services company in Herndon, Va.

British A. Robinson, BA '89, was named president and CEO of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.

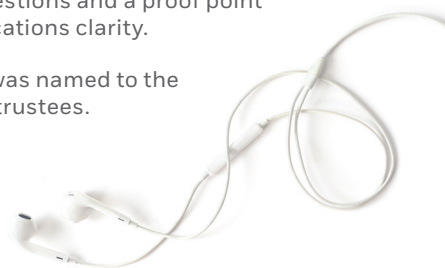
// '90s

David Hanzlick, MA '90, authored *Benevolence, Moral Reform, Equality: Women's Activism in Kansas City, 1870-1940* (University of Missouri Press, August 2018). The book traces the evolution of women's activism in a post-Civil War, rapidly growing Midwestern border city. It also considers the social construction of gender, class and race, and the influence of political philosophy in shaping responses to poverty.

Michael A. Kotula, JD '90, a partner at Rivkin Radler in Uniondale, N.Y., was named to the 2018 *New York Metro Super Lawyers* list.

Greg Brower, JD '92, a shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck in Denver, will co-chair the firm's government investigations and white collar defense group.

Scott Dantley, BS '92, was appointed associate dean for academic affairs and professor of curriculum and instruction at the Howard University School of Education.



Doug Pagliaro, BBA '93, is the senior vice president and executive director of the FDIC Sweep at UMB Bank. The program provides expanded FDIC insurance on uninvested cash balances at financial intermediaries totaling more than \$50 billion.

Terrence Casey, MA '96, PhD '00, was appointed the inaugural Alfred R. Schmidt Chair for Excellence in Teaching at the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Ind.

Deanne Mazzochi, JD '97, was appointed state representative for the 47th district of the Illinois General Assembly.

Deborah DeWolfe Waddill, MA '99, EdD '04,

authored *Digital HR: A Guide to Technology-Enabled Human Resources* (SHRM, June 2018), which ranked in the top eight books sold at the Society of Human Resource Management Conference in Chicago. The text provides a broad overview of leading HR technologies to inspire HR thought leaders in designing a comprehensive technology strategy.

// '00s

Ernest G. Eugene, BS '00, was named the Orlando Magic's head athletic trainer.

Nancy W. Gleason, BA '00, authored *Higher Education in the Era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution* (Palgrave Macmillan, June 2018). The book examines how government, industry and higher education industries in China, Singapore, South Africa and Costa Rica are preparing for shifts in labor market demands.

Jorge Morera, MA '00, and his wife, Stephanie, run Pura Vida House, a luxury beach resort in Costa Rica that was named TripAdvisor's top high-end villa in the world in 2018. The pair started their house-rental business seven years ago.

Maura Burke, BA '01, a partner at Fox Rothschild LLP, was named to the "40 & Under Hot List" by *Benchmark Litigation*.

Anibal Armendaris, BA '02, a veterinary technician at the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Bronx Zoo, participated in Miami University's Earth Expeditions global field course in Hawaii. The program developed and tested site-specific methods of community engagement to sustain ecological and social health.

Robert S. Hepler, MBA '02, retired from the Marine Corps after 22 years of active and reserve service as an infantry officer. He works as a senior vice president at Bank of America and serves as the vice president on the board of his family's corporation, Hepler's Hardware, which celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2017. It also recently added a coffee shop and farmers market to complement its hardware business and grist-milling company, which has operated continuously for 165 years.



Brett Berman, BBA '03, partner of Fox Rothschild LLP, was named to the "40 & Under Hot List" by *Benchmark Litigation* for the third consecutive year.

Dan LeClair, BA '05, was named the director of donor relations at Middlebury College in Vermont.

Hope Ferdowsian, RES '06, authored *Phoenix Zones: Where Strength Is Born and Resilience Lives* (The University of Chicago Press, April 2018). From stories about human victims of torture to chimpanzees kept in labs, the book reveals the link between violence and the biological foundations of recovery, peace and hope.

Peter Jaslow, JD '06, was named a partner at Ballard Spahr LLP in its Philadelphia office.

Myriah V. Jaworski, BA '06, helped found the law firm Beckage PLLC, which focuses on cybersecurity, data protection, information technology and privacy issues. The firm has offices in New York City and Buffalo, N.Y.

Erica I. Nuckles, MA '06, received her PhD in history at the University at Albany-SUNY and currently serves as director of history and collections at Fort Ligonier in Ligonier, Pa.

Ryan Holeywell, BA '07, was in June named communications director of the Texas Medical Center in Houston. Holeywell and his wife, Blayre, welcomed their first child, Emersyn, also in June.

Sam Slater, BA '07, produced *Hearts Beat Loud*, a film about a record store owner who tries to convince his daughter to start a band with him. The film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2018 and stars Ted Danson and Nick Offerman.

Christina Boyadjis, BBA '08, was promoted to senior associate at Booz Allen Hamilton in McLean, Va.

Lisa Revitte, MBA '08, was appointed chief operating officer of FOX Architects, an architecture and interior design firm in Washington, D.C.

Kristen Gudsnuk, BA '09, authored her second graphic novel, *Making Friends* (Scholastic, 2018), which follows seventh-grader Danny, who has just changed schools, and her magic sketchbook that brings to life anything drawn in it—even new best friends.

David Staples, BBA '09, and **Alexis Cates, BS '10**, welcomed son Nathan Carter Staples on July 30, 2018.

Ben Walsh, MPS '09, MA '12, married Julie O'Dell on Sept. 2, 2018.



// '10s

Veronica Goodman, BA '11, authored *E is for Economics* (Veronica Goodman, April 2018), a humorous, colorful introduction to the language of economics for preschool-age children.

Deena Disraelly, PhD '12, a research staff member in the strategy, forces and resources division at the Institute for Defense Analyses, received a 2018 Society of Women Engineers Prism Award in recognition of her leadership and contributions to the engineering community.

Kelly Donahue, MS '14, CERT '14, was awarded a certificate of added qualifications in orthopaedic surgery from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. She works at the Centers for Advanced Orthopaedics in Washington, D.C.

Elizabeth Howard, MA '14, was named the inaugural Madeleine L'Engle Fellow at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. L'Engle wrote *A Wrinkle in Time*, and the cathedral's library is named for L'Engle, who was in residence there until 2002. Howard's fellowship will last three years and she will use the library for her writing and to gather people for poetry, reading, conversation and music.



Eric Setzekorn, PhD '14, authored *The Rise and Fall of an Officer Corps: The Republic of China Military, 1942-1955* (University of Oklahoma Press, August 2018), which tells the story of a professional, apolitical military force that briefly existed in mid-20th century China—how it came to be, why it ultimately failed and what it meant for the country at home and abroad.

Jack Stanton, BA '14, ran against four-term Republican incumbent Randy Hunt for the 5th Barnstable District seat in the Massachusetts State Legislature. Stanton ran unopposed in the Democratic primary.

Marissa Price, BA '15, was featured in a 10-part online documentary series by PETA in which she advocates for expanding the ideals of feminism to encompass and help female animals. She says: “[A]t an incredible time when amazing women are rising up and sharing their stories and saying ‘Time’s up’ on abuse and exploitation, it’s time for feminists and every decent person to say, ‘No more’ to the ways that our sisters of other species are being systematically exploited in the food industry.”

Debra Emmons, PhD '17, was promoted to general manager of the communication technologies and engineering division in the civil systems group at The Aerospace Corporation.

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Alumni

IN MEMORIAM

Pattie Moore Gray, BA '44,

(June 7, 2018, Washington, D.C., 95) went to Princeton Theological Seminary and was a member of the first female class of the Directors of Christian Education. She had a deep interest in, and understanding of, the history of the Christian church, was a lifelong birder, and made maple syrup with her husband, Doug, on a 30-acre sugarbush in Schoharie, N.Y.

John Alton Boyer, BA '48, JD '50,

(June 2, 2018, Alexandria, Va., 91) was a partner at Kominers, Fort, Schlefer and Boyer in Washington, D.C. He worked there for 34 years as a specialist in maritime law. Boyer was a longtime donor to The Textile Museum and supported the establishment of the Boyer Family Scholarship at the GW Law School. He was one of the original financial supporters of the Arena Stage.

Sheldon S. Cohen, BA '50, JD '52, HON '03,

(Sept. 4, 2018, Chevy Chase, Md., 91) was a World War II veteran, served as chief counsel for and then the commissioner of the IRS under President Lyndon Johnson, becoming the youngest person to hold that position. He created the first presidential blind trust and served as the general counsel for the Democratic National Committee, litigating the Watergate civil suit. He also taught at the GW Law School.

Robert Louis Stilmar, BL '55,

(Dec. 16, 2017, Midvale, Utah, 99) served in World War II with the Army Signal Corp., running early warning radar in the Philippines. He later worked with NASA at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., to prepare for the moon missions.

Nancy J. McGlynn, JD, '88,

(May 2, 2018, Falls Church, Va., 58) spent most of her career in corporate law at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom in Washington, D.C., rising from summer assistant to counsel for complex transactions in mergers and acquisitions. Prior to that, she served as a legal intern to then-D.C. Circuit Judge Kenneth Starr—despite being a lifelong Democrat. McGlynn loved reading, sewing and exploring the outdoors.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Carmela Hernandez Garcia,

(Aug. 14, 2018, Madrid, 74) led the GW Madrid program for about two decades, shaping the program to be a rich cultural experience for students studying abroad. With degrees in both Spanish and French literature, she had a love for the arts and humanities as well as tennis and scuba diving. Having come from a family with an Old World sensibility, she enjoyed passing on this version of Spain to her students through small lessons like how to eat an orange with a fork and knife.

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Dear alumni,

As members of our worldwide community, you have access to professional development programs, regional events and communications that keep you up to date on the university's news. To further develop these opportunities for GW to play an ongoing role in your life, we are in the process of creating a new, integrated, volunteer-led alumni association that will provide counsel and support to the Office of Alumni Relations.

This association will work to advance GW by building a strong community of alumni through programs, services and communications, and by providing alumni with positive, lifelong and meaningful engagement and volunteer opportunities wherever they may live and work.

It is a best practice of private institutions like GW to have an integrated alumni association that supports the university's goals, strengthens the bonds and fosters loyalty between alumni and their alma mater. The GW Board of Trustees Volunteer Engagement Task Force has been charged with developing next steps toward this new alumni association's structure and we will keep you updated on our progress.

As we embark on the creation of this new model, we are grateful for the thousands of volunteers who currently support GW through more than 100 alumni networks. We will provide more opportunities to engage with GW through the creation of a President's Council (a group of industry leaders who will work with university leadership), and through new legacy programs for alumni with college-aged students who are interested in attending GW. We look forward to sharing more updates with you in the near future. To ensure that you receive the latest news from across the university, please update your contact information at go.gwu.edu/contactupdate.

This new integrated model will lead to a stronger connection with you, our best ambassadors. We welcome your comments, questions and ideas as we work to serve you better and continue to make you proud.

Raise High,

Roslyn M. Brock, GWSPH MHSA '89,
Chair of the Board of Trustees Volunteer Engagement Task Force

Matthew R. Manfra,
Senior Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations and Annual Giving

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