Giving Something Back

On a crisp, sunny fall morning, about 200 students, along with family members and friends, gathered in HGS before heading to sites around New Haven, where they spent the morning painting, gardening, sorting and providing other useful services for 21 local community agencies.

The Yale Day of Service (ydos), organized by Public Service McDougal Fellows Katherine (Kara) Jackson (Divinity) and Catherine Fontana (fes), fell on the anniversary of the founding of Yale 309 years ago. Associate Vice President for New Haven and State Affairs Michael Morand noted in his welcoming remarks that Yale was established to prepare youth for public service in both civic and religious spheres, according to its original charter, and applauded the ydos as a continuation of that tradition.

In a letter encouraging students, faculty and staff members to participate, Dean Thomas Pollard wrote, “At this year’s matriculation ceremony, I spoke about the new responsibilities students have as scholars and researchers. One of those responsibilities is in giving back to the community in which we all live.”

The Graduate School encourages community service all through the year. Winter coats, food, books and toys are collected for donation, and blood drives are held on a regular basis. To further encourage the spirit of community, the Graduate School initiated two Public Service awards earlier in 2010. The first Community Service Award was given to Dana Asbury (Sociology) in recognition of the hundreds of hours she has devoted to Camp Antrum, which offers underprivileged local children programs that help them grow, play and learn. The Public Scholar Award was given to Christina Roberto (Psychology and eph) for research that transforms social policy and aids the community at large. Christina’s work on nutrition labeling and packaging has been cited in court decisions and in the development of federal requirements.

As the next generation of scholars evolves, graduate students in the Humanities and Social Sciences begin to take their strongest seminar papers and research reports and turn them into publishable articles. Even highly capable writers can learn new skills that strengthen their essays, help them communicate better and make their articles more likely to be accepted for publication. The Graduate Writing Center is ready to coach students as they edit and submit articles to the journals in their field.
“I volunteer because I think that if you have the ability to do something, then you have a responsibility to help.” PATRICK MULLEN

Not-for-profit agencies assisted that day included the Diaper Bank, Neighborhood Housing Services, Urban Resources Initiative and the Ronald McDonald House. At the Yale Peabody Museum, science students served as docents for the newly opened “Black Holes” exhibition. At Edgerton Park, they gardened, spread mulch and assisted in the greenhouse. One team assembled educational kits at the Eli Whitney Museum. Another improved nature trails at Yale’s West Campus, where environmental workshops are held for schoolchildren.

Participating students shared a sense of satisfaction after they completed their assignments. Joyce Xua (International Development Economics) worked at the Lauros and Fishes Clothes Closet. “It took five of us a couple of hours to sort out the mountain of old clothes. It really wasn’t much work compared to the immensity of the tasks the people there face every week, and I’m definitely looking forward to helping out on a more regular basis over the next year,” she says.

Thirteen people worked in the Fair Haven community garden, Jing Wang (Computational Biology and Bioinformatics) reports, where they weeded, removed dead plants, replanted vegetables and painted the wall, leaving the garden looking “a lot friendlier than before.”

“I volunteer because I think that if you have the ability to do something, then you have a responsibility to help,” says Patricia Maloney (Sociology). “That’s an attitude I brought with me to Yale, but also something bolstered both by my research (on teachers and their effects on students) and by the opportunities fostered by the McDougall Center. As an ethnographer, my favorite thing to do is to go out into the community and observe what people are doing and saying. Community service is a natural outgrowth of that desire.” Her group worked at the New Haven Reads Book Bank. “I think we may have sorted thousands of books for them, but the best part of the day was being educated about all they do to help the community in terms of tutoring and giving books to local schools.”

Patricia was one of the organizers of last year’s TDOS along with Daniel Eiler (Chemistry), who gardened at Edgerton Park this year.

“Volunteering is a way to get your hands dirty, learn about the New Haven area, meet new people, and for some, find a new hobby or cause,” he says.

Some Yale staff members came forward to help, too. One was Betty Jane Schiller, who has been in the Yale College Student Affairs Office for over 25 years. “I’ve worked with dedicated student leaders of undergraduate organizations for many years who, like me, spend quality time volunteering in New Haven and in hometown communities. I wanted our team to be ambassadors of care from Yale, in our actions and volunteer efforts,” she says.

With Leah Kelley, associate director of Undergraduate Admissions, and graduate student Linette Bosques (Cell Biology), Schiller went to the Ronald McDonald House, which hosts the families of children being treated at nearby hospitals. They cleaned both kitchens, top to bottom, and raked up the common areas as well as the outdoor spaces.

TDOS was hosted by the Graduate School and sponsored by McDougall Graduate Student Life, Dwight Hall, the Graduate Student Assembly, the Graduate and Professional Student Senate, the University Chaplain’s Office, the Office for Diversity and Equal Opportunity, the Office of New Haven and State Affairs, the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Business Operations, Locals 34 and 35 of UNITE HERE and the United Way of Greater New Haven.

The one-day event gives volunteers a taste of public service, exposes them to a range of available volunteer options and “inspires them to recognize the needs of the community.” Catherine says. To build on its success, Kate and Catherine are creating a McDougall Service Corps that will spend the second Saturday of each month assisting at a local non-profit agency.

“Yale students are experts at philosophizing, analyzing, annotating. But sometimes the most important thing is simply to act.”

“As a Public Service Fellow, I’m reminded of the quote by Ghandi: ‘Be the change you want to see in the world,’” Kate says. “Yale students are experts at philosophizing, analyzing, annotating. But sometimes the most important thing is simply to act.”

The impulse to make the world a better place motivates many individual graduate students. On their own, they find a project and carve out time to tutor city children, cook at a soup kitchen or visit the residents of a homeless shelter.

Esther Kim (Sociology) volunteers at Columbus House, a facility that serves people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. It makes her “feel connected to the community I’m living in.” Spending time at Columbus House “makes me think about how fragile life can be. It also makes me think about the importance of community. Some people end up at Columbus House because they didn’t have a supportive community to help them out during tough times.”

Narasin Sullivan (History) tutors at the New Haven Reads Book Bank for an hour or two every week because she believes “It’s important that kids learn core skills when they are young. I want to inspire their love of learning, so that they will value education for their whole lives. I like that I can help in some small way.”

Giving a few hours of her time feels good, too, she says. “Graduate school can be pretty insular, and I felt kind of strange to be thinking only about myself and my work, and not about others in my community. When I saw an email about New Haven Reads, I jumped at the chance. Plus I love the little girls I tutor and have fun with them! Even when I am super-stressed, it all sort of melts away when I am working with them. I am always in a great mood when I leave.”

Jay Kerwin (Chemistry) has been a mentor for the New Haven’s Citywide Science Fair since his second year of graduate school. “I’m not sure why or what it is inside me, but I get great fulfillment from helping people. I find it easier to motivate myself to help others than to do things for myself. It gives me a sense of community as well as accomplishment. Given that I am a science student, the science fair was a natural area to get involved in. I received an email from my department about the science fair and I got in touch with the contact person and the rest is history. Interest- ingly, in my third year of graduate school, I joined the Center for Research on Interface and Surface Phenomenon (CRISP) at Yale and as a member, you are expected to do community outreach and education. Since I was already heavily involved, I had no problem fulfilling the expected 10 hours per semester.”

Jay is now a member of the steering committee for the science fair and works along with the person who coordinates the mentors.

Graduate students are busy people, with course work, teaching obligations, research and all the responsibilities of adult life. As Joyce Xua observes, “We’re usually so caught up with school that it’s easy to forget New Haven isn’t just made up of people from Yale.” But once a year—and for many students, more often—they do remember and reach out to make a difference.

For more information on ways to volunteer, subscribe to Public Service Notes at www.yale.edu/mcdougal/studentlife.

To contact Public Service fellows, email mcdougal.service@yali.edu.
fall’s workshop, which began September 23 and concluded October 11, drew more than 30 students. It will be offered again next fall.

“Publishing is vitally important for graduate students, but the idea of publishing may seem daunting,” Kallestinova says. “In this workshop, I try to demystify the nature of publishing and make it accessible for all.”

Kallestinova, a linguist by training, takes a highly practical approach to the challenge. She walks students step-by-step through the process of turning an already-written academic essay or conference paper into an article of publishable quality. She first reviews the kinds of papers that are likely to be accepted for publication, such as articles with particularly strong and unusual findings, texts that have been well researched or conference papers. Then she discusses texts that offer challenges for publication: broad surveys, for example, don’t often make the cut. Book reviews and translation articles are used as models for publishing, and academic articles in the Humanities, especially useful was the workshop’s focus on techniques for evaluating and revising essay structure,”

The Humanities presents original analysis of some form of human expression. A successful article in the Social Sciences reports on data about an aspect of human behavior and aims at conjecturing the general rule from the particular case. These are the papers she urges students to edit, polish and submit for publication.

Kallestinova advises students at the outset that they need to answer some basic questions about how they work: at what time of day are they most productive? Do they work best where there are no distractions or in a place that has background noise? How much time can they realistically devote to the project every day? Designing a workable plan and sticking to it are crucial to success.

Each hour-and-a-half workshop session begins with a progress report from the participants and sets specific, manageable tasks for the week ahead. Kallestinova’s instruction is mixed with encouragement, warmth and humor. The sessions are informal, and lunch is served along with advice.

Topics covered include how to compose an abstract, select the appropriate journal, review existing literature without getting lost in it, strengthen an essay’s main argument, present evidence effectively and write an introduction and conclusion. Kallestinova provides specific guidelines on how to submit the article and how to respond to a journal’s decision.

Rejection is the most frequent response, but Kallestinova knows that students should not be paralyzed by them. People who write inevitably get rejections. Instead of becoming demoralized, students should take advantage of the criticism and feedback. During the workshop, Kallestinova discusses different types of decision letters and how to draft revision cover letters.

“The workshop provides strategies for writing a paper as well as for conceptualizing the project,” says Arewenda Grantham (French, African American Studies), who is currently taking the workshop. “I’ve learned, for example, to think more like a lawyer when writing a paper and less like a detective. Approaching my writing like this has made it easier. The tips about what to avoid when writing a journal article have been as useful as the discussions of format, style and procedure.”

Nishe Wright (English), ‘Graduate students are constantly enjoined to ‘publish or perish,’ and publication record is among the primary criteria for advancement in our profession, so I was happy to see that the Writing Center was offering a workshop on the details of the process. Elena’s program homes in on specific of preparation and publication of academic articles in the Humanities. Especially useful was the workshop’s focus on techniques for evaluating and revising essay structure.”

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Kallestinova became director of the Graduate Writing Center in the spring of 2008. Since then, she has launched many new initiatives and dramatically expanded the individual consultations. In the year before she took charge, only 64 students made appointments for writing consultations. The following year, 274 consultations were held; last year, 449 appointments were scheduled. The staff now has six Graduate Writing Advisors and four McDougall Graduate Writing Fellows.

The Graduate Writing Center’s workshops and panels include "Writing a Successful Research Paper in the Sciences," "Dissertation Prospectus Writing," "NSF Grant Writing," "Writing Clearly" (for non-native English Speakers), "Choosing a Dissertation Topic" — with separate sessions for the Humanities and the Social Sciences — and more. In the fall and spring, Dissertation Support Groups are organized to help advanced doctoral students understand the dissertation-writing process. Peer-Review Groups form, bringing together four or five students from similar disciplines on a weekly basis to discuss their writing.

And three times a year, the Writing Center runs its wildly successful Dissertation Boot Camps, which immerse students in their writing, free of distractions, for intense and concentrated work.

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Literary Nationalism and Linguistic Choices

Annette Lienau (Comparative Literature) is doing research that takes her to the Middle East, Africa and Indonesia.

Her dissertation, provisionally titled “Terms of Exchange: on the Politics and Poetics of Linguistic Choice in the Comparative Literature of Egypt, Indonesia and Senegal,” compares nine writers who lived and wrote during key historical moments “through which the contours of literary nationalism were posited and challenged by ideologically informed transnational movements, namely Communism and pan-Islamism,” she says.

Most of the writers she is studying share a religious heritage, “a common Islamic and Arabic textual tradition.”

Raised in Indonesia under the Suharto regime at a time when open discussion of contemporary politics and historical controversy was forbidden, Annette sees her research as “a form of recuperation from these omissions in my early education. The limited depiction of current events (after 9/11) in mainstream, educational media further convinced me that literacy in Arabic was paramount for understanding the dramatic changes of our current cultural and political landscape, as witnessed by my generation.”

Annette left Indonesia for college in the U.S. in 1998 as the Suharto regime was crumbling, “when legitimate student protesters were being snipped in the streets, and ethnic and religious minorities were violently targeted. I graduated on the eve of the Bali bombings, as America was invading Iraq and mired in Afghanistan. Conceived in the wake of these events, my dissertation is a means of contextualizing Indonesia’s embattled cultural history and of accessing the complex narratives behind movements historically antagonized in the United States.”

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Annette is happy she came to Yale because “it is one of the few institutions worldwide that boasts a critical mass of scholars and colleagues in every subfield of my project: Arabists, Indonesianists, Africanists, scholars interested in sociolinguistics, leftist internationalism and Indonesian Islamic history.”

“The authors she is studying evaluated the political subtext of the work gives the dissertation a compelling sense of urgency and relevance.”

Her work focuses on writers who changed the cultural history of their countries. One is Amadu Bamba, the Senegalese Arabic-language poet who founded his country’s most influential Sufi order. Another, Sayyid Quabi, was the populist leader of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, who began his career as a literary critic and a novelist. He, in turn, strongly influenced Hamika, an Indonesian author and the first chairman of Indonesia’s Council of Islamic clerics under the Suharto regime. Her work “bridges the discrete literary histories of Senegal, Indonesia and Egypt as parallel case studies in the evolution of Asian-African literatures, in order to test the limits and utility of a national paradigm as a unit of literary analysis and to suggest an alternative to the binary (colonial/postcolonial) constructions that traditionally have informed the study of this literature.”

In examining twentieth-century Arabic writing in Indonesia and Senegal, “What I unexpectedly found was evidence of the parallel marginalization of an indigenous, Arabic textual tradition, advanced through colonial French and Dutch policies (which considered the Arabic language a potential conduit for Islamic radicalism). Romanization (use of the Latin alphabet) was a way of guarding against the political threat of Islamic fundamentalism and accompanied the preliminary assertion of a secular state apparatus in both colonies. This is a process that is central to the formation of official, national languages in the post-independence context and to eventual claims of ‘literary modernity’ in both countries.”

The marginalization of Arabic occurred subtly, she learned, and now Indonesians and Senegalese overwhelmingly write in Latin script, despite the continued use of Arabic as a devotional language for the Muslim majority. This phenomenon “is generally taken for granted and has never been methodically examined. My project is a contribution to changing this oversight,” she says.

Because the authors Annette studied wrote in multiple languages and were influenced by many cultural traditions, she has developed what she calls “a palimpsestic method of reading” their texts. Layers overlap, two languages appear within a passage, vernacular and formal threads intertwere. The authors she is studying evaluated the “opportunity cost” of the language in which they wrote and made choices according to a complex equation that included religious affiliation, political history, literary genre, audience and local tradition.

A major challenge that faced her when she undertook her project was the need to learn Arabic quickly. She managed to fit three years of training into 14 months, spending two summers at Middlebury College and a year at the Center for Arab Studies in Cairo. More recently, she spent close to a year in Indonesia (funded by the Social Science Research Council), with side trips to Kuala Lumpur, Amsterdam and Egypt. Three months in Senegal gave her some time to do archival research and to study the Wolof language, funded by the Macmillan Center and an Enders Fellowship.

Although her work takes her far afield, Annette is happy she came to Yale because “it is one of the few institutions worldwide that boasts a critical mass of scholars and colleagues in every subfield of my project: Arabists, Indonesianists, Africanists, scholars interested in sociolinguistics, leftist internationalism and Indonesian Islamic history. I chose Yale over other graduate schools in part because of the breadth of Yale’s programs and faculty expertise, and because of the generous financial support offered to graduate students—which has improved annually since my arrival.”

She also cites Yale’s library as an exceptional resource. It is “efficient, comprehensive and well-equipped,” she says. “Conducting research overseas made me appreciate this all the more. Yale would have, for example, an original copy of an obscure mid-nineteenth century French novel, its turn-of-the-century Arabic translation and its final Malay adaptation from the 1930s—and I could request all three for consultation in an hour.”

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GSA UPDATE: http://gsa.yale.edu
Atomic Physics And Some Very Cool Molecules

Using a variety of precision lasers, graduate student John Barry (Physics), postdoctoral fellow Edward Shuman and Professor David DeMille are able to cool molecules down to temperatures just a fraction of a degree above what’s known as absolute zero, about -460 degrees Fahrenheit (-273 °C).

Their new method, described in the online edition of the journal Nature, is a substantial step toward using individual molecules as information bits in quantum computing. Their new method, described in the online edition of the journal Nature, is a substantial step toward using individual molecules as information bits in quantum computing. In order to still the molecules, In order to still the molecules, they are able to reduce the random velocities of the molecules. The technique is known as “laser cooling” because the temperature of an object is a direct measurement of how fast its atoms and molecules oscillate. Reducing the molecules’ motions to almost nothing is equivalent to driving their temperatures to virtually absolute zero.

John’s experiment in DeMille’s lab uses strontium monofluoride (SrF), a dipolar molecule. Dipolar molecules can be thought of as having a positively charged end and a negatively charged end. In an electric field the molecules align either with or against the field, which would serve as the “0” and “1” values in an ordinary computer. John explains: “The interaction between dipolar molecules is both strong and long-range, which allows for relatively easy entanglement of the molecules. By exploiting the entanglement of many quantum particles, a quantum computer has a unique advantage over classical computers in solving certain types of massively parallel problems. Consequently, polar molecules are strong candidates for quantum computation.”

In addition to quantum computing, this research has other potential applications. Near-absolute-zero temperatures allow for a more detailed study of the large scale quantum tunneling plays in chemical reactions. Large quantities of cold molecules will also prove useful for testing the standard model of particle physics and the search for new physics.

John was drawn to this field because of its close connection to quantum mechanics, which, he says, “I find by far the most interesting part of physics. Quantum mechanics leads to many bizarre and interesting results.” He also enjoys what he calls the “clean and precise” nature of atomic physics and its well-established theoretical framework.

Since the research team is very small, John has been able to make significant contributions to the project. A former electrical engineering major at Princeton, he designed and fabricated the lasers, the laser frequency stabilization system and the vacuum apparatus inside which the experiment takes place, among other things. “Because many parts necessary for our research are not commercially available, they must be designed and made in-house. As an engineer, this design process is probably one of my favorite tasks,” John works closely with the machinists in the Gibbs machine shop to fabricate and assemble the parts.

Additionally, a significant portion of the experiment involved aligning the laser optics, optimizing parameters within the experiment (setting the magnetic field strength and direction, the power and frequency of the lasers, the flow rate of helium gas used to pre-cool the molecules) and the constant assembly and disassembly of the vacuum apparatus. “I’ve learned, in large part from Edward, that patience is extremely important,” John admits.

In addition to quantum computing, their efforts to develop quantum processors. But individual atoms often don’t communicate strongly enough with one another to be very useful in quantum computing. Artificial atoms—which are actually circuit-like devices made up of billions of atoms that are designed to behave like a single atom—communicate strongly with one another, but tend to pick up interference from the outside world. Ultra-cooled molecules, however, might do the job. The Yale team was the first to use lasers to successfully cool molecules.

Their new method, described in the online edition of the journal Nature, is a substantial step toward using individual molecules as information bits in quantum computing.
Confronting Corruption
Can transparency be an effective strategy against corruption in a culture where corruption is endemic?

Political science graduate students Leonid Peisakhin and Paul Pinto spent six weeks in the slums of India conducting a field experiment to answer that question. The surprising results were published in "Right to Information: An Experiment in the Slums of Mumbai" (2010) in the journal "Right to Information Act (RTIA) and Governance." The experiment involved bribing local officials to secure ration cards for applicants who were not able to do so through normal channels.

India, the government issues ration cards allowing card-holders to buy food at subsidized prices and, in some cases, to get food for free. The ration cards are doubly useful since they serve as legal identification for people who have neither a passport nor a driver's license.

"Provincial politicians regularly promise to have ration cards issued to potential voters in exchange for their electoral support," Leonid says. "As a result, strict eligibility criteria are commonly disregarded. Certain communities are over-supplied with them to regional depots and from there to local official who withholds the requested document. The RTIA requires government agencies to maintain records and to provide those records in a timely manner when requested. A bribe is necessary to complete the process.

The outcomes were dramatic and unexpected. By the end of one year, 94 percent of the applicants in the bribe and control groups had received ration cards, as opposed to 21 percent in the NGO and control groups. "While those paying 'speed money' predictably had the lowest median processing times, approximately two and a half months, virtually all those who filed an RTIA request a ration card in a median time of approximately four months," the researchers found. The NGO letter proved to be of no help to applicants, while the RTIA request (and the implicit threat of sanctions) produced excellent results.

"We found support for the theoretical proposition that greater transparency and voice lowers corruption, even in highly hierarchical and unequal societies," Leonid and Paul are pursuing other projects for their dissertations. The corruption project was advised by Professors Donald Green and Susan Rose-Ackerman. Leonid's dissertation advisor is Green; Paul's is James Scott.

The first experimental group submitted an information request under the RTIA shortly after filing their ration card applications. In the request, they asked the Public Information Officer about the status of their application and about the average processing time for applications in the district. People in the second experimental group presented a letter of support from a local non-governmental organization along with their application, to see if the recommendation from an NGO might speed up the process.

"We hypothesized that the RTIA treatment and the NGO intervention were two different 'voice' options. Filing a request for information under the RTIA, the applicant sends a direct signal to the civil servant that he has some leverage over the bureaucracy. A letter of support from a locally influential NGO is an indirect signal that the applicant has a certain amount of influence," the article says. Before carrying out the experiment, Paul and Leonid thought that the freedom-of-information intervention and the NGO letter would yield roughly equal results.

Those in the third experimental group followed the conventional course and paid a bribe equal to $20 to a local official via a middleman. The outcomes were dramatic and unexpected. By the end of one year, 94 percent of the applicants in the bribe and control groups had received ration cards, as opposed to 21 percent in the NGO and control groups. "While those paying 'speed money' predictably had the lowest median processing times, approximately two and a half months, virtually all those who filed an RTIA request a ration card in a median time of approximately four months," the researchers found. The NGO letter proved to be of no help to applicants, while the RTIA request (and the implicit threat of sanctions) produced excellent results.

"We demonstrated that India's recently adopted freedom of information law is almost as effective as bribery in helping the poor to secure access to a basic public service," Leonid says. "But in developing countries (and often in developed states as well), there is a substantial gap between the theory and the reality of political life—an gap that might be filled by transparency."
Outstanding Alumni

MILLER TO LECTURE AT CAMBRIDGE
Mary Miller (Ph.D. 1981, History of Art), dean of Yale College and a leading author-
ity on Mesoamerican art, presented the A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts at the
National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and will deliver the Slade Lectures at
Cambridge University in 2014–15. These two lecture series are considered the most
prestigious in the field of art history.

The Sterling Professor of Art History at Yale, Miller is known for her scholarship
on Maya art and architecture and has pub-
lished six major books and dozens of articles
on those subjects. Before her appointment in
2008 to the Sterling Professorship, the
highest honor bestowed on members of the
Yale faculty, Miller was the Vincent J. Scully
Professor of the History of Art. She is the
author of Maya Art and Architecture (1990),
The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and
the Maya: An Illustrated Dictionary of Meso-
american Religion (with Karl Taube, 1993),
The Art of Mesoamerica: From Olmec to Aztec
(1986), and The Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art (with Linda Schele,
1986). She is also the director of a project
to digitally reconstruct the ancient Maya
murals of Bonampak in Chiapas, Mexico,
which she described as “the single most
important artifact—and source of informa-
tion—of ancient Mesoamerica.”

LATIN AMERICAN SCHOLAR AT BRANDEIS
Kirsten A. Weld (Ph.D. 2010, History),
now holds the Florence Levy Kay Fellow-
ship in Latin American History at Brandeis
University, where she is pursuing research
on Cold War-era refugees and exiles from
Latin America. Weld’s research focuses
on state terror and popular resistance movements, forms
of post-conflict reckoning, including truth
commitments, human rights tribunals and
historical memory initiatives; Latin
American immigration and diaspora; and
ethnographic approaches to documents
and archives in historical research. Her
dissertation, “Reading the Politics of History in Guatemala’s National Police Archives,”
was awarded both the John Addison
Porter Prize and the Stephen Vella Prize
for combining scholarship with a commit-
ment to social justice. While at Yale, she
received an Andrew W. Mellon Dissertation
Writing Fellowship, the Social Science
Research Council’s International Disserta-
tion Research Fellowship, and the Social
Sciences and Humanities Research Council
of Canada’s Dissertation Research Fellowship.
She will serve as the Kay Fellow at Brandeis
from 2010–2012.

UNDER VARED YALE
Frank M. Turner (Ph.D. 1975, History), the
John Hay Whitney Professor of History at
Yale, became the Yale University Librar-
ian on September 1. He served as interim
University Librarian since last January and
as director of the Beinecke Rare Book and
Manuscript Library since 2003. He was

A distinguished intellectual historian,
Turner has explored Victorian intellectual
life in his books and many of his articles.
His John Henry Newman: The Challenge to
Religious Reform (Yale University Press
2002) describes Newman’s career in the
Church of England and the motivations
and circumstances leading to his conver-
sion to Roman Catholicism. Turner has also
edited Newman’s Apologia Pro Vita Saez and
his Idea of a University for Yale Press. His
earlier contributions to the history of Vic-
torian thought include Between Science and
Religion: The Reaction to Scientific Naturalism
in Late Victorian England (1974) and The
Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain (1981),
both published by Yale, and Conting
Cultural Authority: Essays in Victorian Intel-
llectual Life (1993), published by Cambridge
University Press. The Western Heritage, co-
authored with Donald Kagan and Steven
Ozment, is in its tenth edition and has
long been regarded as one of the leading
textbooks on Western Civilization.

As a graduate student, Turner was
awarded the John Addison Porter Prize for
original scholarship in 1972. He served as
Graduate President of the Alpha Chapter
of Phi Beta Kappa of Connecticut at Yale
from 1995–2001. William and Mary College
awarded him an honorary degree in 1991,
as did Quinnipiac University in 2003 and
Wilton College in 2007.

Yale

VOL. 13, NUMBER 2, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010
Yale Graduate School News is a publication of the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

When I left New Haven 16 short months ago, nothing (and I mean nothing) prepared me for what I would encounter. I was hired by a small Christian col-
lege in northwest Iowa to teach history. Though I did teach Medieval Europe in
my first semester, my teaching responsibil-
ities also include Ancient History, Early Modern Europe, Muslim World and
the two halves of the Western Civiliza-
tion sequence. These last courses are by far my greatest challenge. In addition to taking me far
afraid of my area of expertise, they are quite large and contain a widely diverse
student population: some could hold their own at Yale, others are much less pre-
pared; some really enjoy history, others do not want to be in college. Almost all
of them are freshmen and many come from very small, homogenous towns.

Needless to say, these classes provide a significant challenge. But it seems
worth it when I see the “aha moment” when a student says, “I never thought of that
way.” Happily, I also get to teach an upper-level seminar each year, and this allows me
to focus on areas more closely related to my dissertation and work with excited, motivated
students. However, adjusting to teaching a 3–4 load was the easiest part of the transition
to my new life.

The town I now live in is a relatively rural community of 7,000 people about half an
hour from the Minnesota and South Dakota borders. From the moment I arrived, I felt like
I stepped back into the past—a past that existed before my own birth. The gas station is
continuum. The streets and avenues then
count outward from those points. Thus, for every number there are four possible roads! I
live at 301 and 2nd St. You can imagine what fun the pizza guy has.

Another thing I’ve had to get used to is the siren. They use the civil defense siren for
more than indicating severe weather. It sounds three times a day: at noon, 6 pm and 9 pm
to tell the farmers to come home for lunch, dinner and for the evening.

People here have immaculate lawns; some of them even wash their edging stones
each year. Except, one cannot mow on Sunday. I was warned about this several times
before I moved in.

Though I did teach Medieval Europe in
my first semester, my teaching responsibil-
ities also include Ancient History, Early Modern Europe, Muslim World and
the two halves of the Western Civiliza-
tion sequence.

Thomas Pollard, dean; Gila Reinstein, editor; Bjorn Askuchen, design/production; Yale Pro F; production supervision; Michael Marland; Harold Shapiro; Jonene Wilcox, photography.

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