Technology Enhances Pedagogy

A hundred years ago in a bustling corner of London, some of England’s greatest literary and artistic figures established a network of social, intellectual and aesthetic connections that made them famous as the Bloomsbury Group.

At the same time, Ezra Pound was discovering the work of James Joyce, and in Paris, Ernest Hemingway was learning from the strange cadences of Gertrude Stein. Together, the web of these contacts comprise what we think of as Modernism, and it flourished without tools like Facebook and Twitter.

Now technology is deepening our understanding of Modernism. The Yale Modernism Lab (http://modernism.research.yale.edu/about.php) is a brilliant example of the application of technology to scholarship. Inspired by the collaborative environment of laboratories in the physical sciences, Pericles Lewis, professor of English and Comparative Literature, developed a virtual space designed to promote collaborative learning. Humanities research has always been collaborative, he says, with scholars revising or adding to the pool of accumulated knowledge, but often only after their articles or books have been printed. “In an online environment, that type of collaboration assumes a real-time character that pre-Internet research just didn’t offer,” he says. “We hope, by a process of shared investigation, to describe the emergence of modernism out of a background of social, political and existential ferment.”

The main components of the Lab are an innovative research tool, Ynote—conceived by Lewis and developed by Yianni Yessios, manager of Yale’s Web Technologies—and a couple of outreach programs, one of which is being run in New Haven with funding from the Graduate School at Hill Career Regional High School, where they taught a pilot course last year. This year they received a grant from the Squire Foundation to continue the project.

Not many public high schools offer courses in philosophy, but students in New Haven are luckier than most, thanks to a couple of Yale graduate students.
The Modernism Lab is a collaboration involving more than 100 graduate and undergraduate students and faculty at Yale and 12 other universities. Its focus is on literature of the modern era. In 2009, it received a grant from the C.J. Davis foundation to develop a website for the study of the Modern British Novel. That website became the nucleus for the Modernism Lab, and its director, Stephen M. Ross, has been working on the Modernism Lab since 2007 and has written articles for the site on authors including W. H. Auden, T. S. Eliot, Dorothy Richardson, and Lytton Strachey. He currently serves as managing editor for the site. A student of British modernism, he is writing his dissertation on the history of the genre in the 20th century.

This semester, Sam and a group of students in Lewis’s Ulysses seminar have been working with Abraham Parrish and Stacey Maples of the Yale Maps Collection to design an interactive map of James Joyce’s Dublin. Using GIS (geographical information systems) software and a digitized map of Dublin in 1900, students will be able to reconstitute the setting of the novel, follow its characters as they wander the streets of the city, and begin to map the sociopolitical context of Joyce’s Ireland. “Reading Ulysses is an immense challenge, and not only because of Joyce’s experimental prose style,” Sam says. “The novel ranges across an entire city and includes a very large cast of characters. GIS gives students an unprecedented opportunity to visualize the novel and reach new insights about the way in which characters and events relate to one another.”

Lewis says that in the years ahead, the Modernism Lab will continue to support projects that allow participants to enhance their own learning experience while at the same time creating useful resources for a broader audience of students and teachers.

“Through the c.l.c.s.” says Bill Rand, director of the Graduate Teaching Center, “we have been able to marshal three central elements of teaching innovation — pedagogy, technology and academic content — in service to the faculty. It’s been a powerful collaboration.”

One of the c.l.c.s.’ signature projects, Teaching with Technology Tuesday, gives faculty members and graduate students access to the latest technological innovations. Recent sessions have explored laptops in the classroom, video games to convey subject matter and ways to teach quantitative reasoning through technology. T3C also helps instructors explore emerging technologies for educational use. Its Digital Commons is a collection of online tools for students and faculty to use in creating websites, blogs, podcasts, interactive maps and timelines, virtual field trips and databases. T3C also assists in the use of classroom response systems (clickers), Smartboards, pen-based computing, PowerPoint, Keynote and other presentation software.

Encouraging Technology
Yale actively encourages using technology to enhance pedagogy. The Innovation Fair, part of the Graduate Teaching Center’s annual Spring Teaching Forum, showcases effective, unusual classroom techniques by some of Yale’s most creative teachers.

Many, but not all, of these instructors use high-tech, computer-based approaches, and Yale’s Information Technology Services (ITS) is always well represented among the exhibitors at the Fair. Under the broad umbrella of ITS, the Academic Technologies division provides support for the entire academic enterprise: teaching, research and scholarship. Its subunits — Academic Computing Resources, AV Systems Integration & Learning Space, Classroom Technologies & Event Services, the Film Study Center, Photo & Design, Research Services and the Instructional Technology Group — support Yale’s learning environment. The Instructional Technology Group (ITG) assists teaching fellows and faculty members across the disciplines in the use of technology to achieve their pedagogical goals. Four years ago, leaders from ITG, Sterling Memorial Library, the Center for Language Study and the Graduate Teaching Center formed the Collaborative Learning Center (c.l.c.s.), located on the lower level of the Bass library.

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The Yale students brought a level of philosophy and education to the table that we otherwise lacked. Their love for the subject inspired the Yale students “brought a level of philosophy and education to the material for the pure intellectual stimulation of it. I think it is invaluable for students to have the opportunity to explore the limits of their own understanding, and this course allowed them to do so. Most of the students came away with a respect for philosophy, and also with a greater respect for their own intellectual abilities,” he adds.

The program this year includes six weeks of philosophy led by Gaurav and then six weeks of training in critical thinking led by Arik. Gaurav presented an ethical dilemma – cyberbullying – during the first meeting and, with input from the students, identified the component parts of the issue, such as the role of consent and the concept of fair play. During subsequent weeks, they will examine each of these aspects in depth, then revisit the initial dilemma and write about it.

“My hope is that with a deeper understanding of some of these factors, students will be able to engage with their normal ethical issues – bullying, cheating, dealing with parents, etc. – in a more thoughtful manner,” Gaurav says.

He and Arik are currently working with the high school to construct a curriculum unit on critical thinking that can be incorporated into existing classes next year, independently of a course devoted specifically to philosophy. They also hope to introduce an elective philosophy course that will be offered during the school day. Kelley Schiffman (Philosophy) will take over the course next year.

“Being able to reason analytically is required to do good work, regardless of your field, and although people talk about ‘critical thinking’, they don’t explicitly teach it,” says Gaurav. “If we gave students the tools to understand and evaluate arguments, that fundamental skill set would aid in all aspects of their education. And perhaps even more importantly, it would offer them the opportunity to reflect on their own lives and to work out their own thoughts in a manner not usually available in school.”

Arik says they both wanted “to impact lives through philosophy” by teaching teenagers “how to think in a more engaged, critical way about deep, big questions whose answers serve as important assumptions in our lives. We hope this will enhance their ability and desire to be authentic, self-transforming thinkers who can consume information intelligently and productively engage in discourse with others, even those with whom they passionately disagree.”

Taking a more pragmatic view, Arik adds, “On the off chance that this idealistic goal is not reached, I also hope students will leave our classes as improved critical thinkers who are more attractive to colleges, better prepared for college and primed with enough of a sense of the value of philosophy to pursue it further in college.”

Gaurav became involved in the outreach project because expanding the horizons of public school students “seemed like the right thing to do.” He was inspired by the Rutgers University Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy, in which he participated after his senior year of college. That program exposed young people from a wide range of racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to academic philosophy. “I wanted to continue that tradition,” he says. “By exposing high school kids to philosophy, I think we have opened them up to both a subject matter and a way of thinking about their education that most high schools can’t provide.”

Arik was looking for “a way to contribute that would be true to me, reflective of my particular combination of strengths and weaknesses.” Philosophy was the natural choice for an outreach project. He was drawn to study philosophy “after unsuccess- fully staking out a pre-med student and in a job in public policy,” he reports. “This turn to philosophy was driven by a desire to find a way that self-reflection and genuine engagement with other points of view — what I see as two of the core elements of philosophy in its best moments — could be brought into our everyday lives and into our societal deci- sions in such way as to enrich and improve them.” And now he and Gaurav share that way of thinking with young people in one of New Haven’s public schools.

The Yale students’ program is part of the greater outreach programs of the Yale China India Consumer Insights Program, an initiative of the Yale Center for Customer Insights at SOM. Doug completed his under- graduate degree at Korea University in Seoul, South Korea.

HELEN ANNE CURRY
The History of Science Society has awarded the 2010 Nathan Reingold Prize to Helen Anne Curry (History) for her essay, “Vernacular Experimental Gardens of the Twentieth Century.”

The prize, awarded annually since 1993, honors an outstanding original graduate student essay on the history of science and its cultural influences. Accessing that home gardens have been largely ignored as sites of scientific practice in the twentieth century, Helen reveals a tradition of amateur experimental science that suggests such gardens are more significant to the his- tory of genetics and horticulture than previously realized. Her dissertation, “Accelerating Evolution, Enginerring Life: Science, Agriculture, and Technologies of Genetic Modification, 1925–1995,” is advised by Stanley Woodward, Professor of History Daniel J. Kevles.

KUDOS
DOUG CHUNG
Doug Ching (MBA ’99) has been awarded Yale’s Harry and Helen You Fellowship, given to an outstand- ing doctoral candidate in the field of management. His dissertation on sales personnel performance analysis includes an essay titled “Do Bonuses Enhance Sales Productivity? A Dynamic Structural Analysis of Bonus-Based Compensation Plans.” His advisor is K. Sudhir, professor of marketing and director of the Yale China India Consumer Insights Program, an initiative of the Yale Center for Customer Insights at SOM. Doug completed his under-graduate degree at Korea University in Seoul, South Korea.

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PHILOSOPHY IN HIGH SCHOOL, CONTINUED
of the social studies teachers. Gaurav and Arik attended club meetings several times “and that just led to a natural starting point for developing this course,” says Gaurav.

The course ran for about 20 weeks as an after-school, for-credit program, with the first five weeks devoted to basic critical thinking, such as how to distinguish premises from conclusions. The students then chose topics in ethics (ethical implica- tions of abortion and biomedical enhance- ment), theology (arguments for and against

The existence of God, especially the problem of evil) and metaphysics (the conditions for maintaining personal identity over time, despite physical and psychological changes).

“Responding to student interest that was revealed as the course progressed, we also decided to throw in a couple of sessions on free will and determinism, a session on distributive justice and a session on courage,” says Arik.

Justin Boucher, who advises the Philosophy Club and teaches history, psychology and government at Career, says that the Yale students “brought a level of philosophy and education to the way of thinking with young people in one

The study of philosophy had a strong positive impact on the high school students’ overall academic performance, Boucher says.

“Last year’s students made admirable strides in improving their literacy skills, improving both comprehension and retention over the course of the semester. Those strides appeared greater than those of their peers in the same period of time. Many already made impressive gains in terms of their ability to frame an argument and justify their position.”

In addition, “The students really came alive in class, actively engaging in difficult material for the pure intellectual stimulation of it. I think it is invaluable for students to have the opportunity to explore the limits of their own understanding, and this course allowed them to do so. Most of the students came away with a respect for philosophy, and also with a greater respect for their own intellectual abilities,” he adds.

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Whiting Fellows

Whiting Fellowships are among the most prestigious student honors in the United States. Funded by the Mrs. Elks Whiting Foundation, these fellowships are given at seven universities known to have outstanding graduate programs in the humanities. A faculty committee appointed by the Dean selects the very best students from among those nominated by their departments to be Whiting Fellows.

ELINA BLOOM, Comparative Literature

“Nineteenth-Century Narratives: Strategies of (Not)Telling in Nineteenth-Century Narratives”
Advisor: Peter Brooks, Margaret Hansen, Katie Tanigawa

This dissertation examines the interrelations between non-telling and conventional “truth” and evaluates the reasons for the prominence of hidden narration in nineteenth-century writing. Elina demonstrates that the displacement of the confessional into narrative and discursive modes can reveal veiled textual and stylistic strands. She elucidates realism’s orientation towards non-representation and highlights the relevance of narratology for examining the unassailable and the assertable.

MICHAELA BRONSTEIN, English Language & Literature

“Imaginable Consequences: The Nature of Meaning in the Modernist Novel”
Advisor: Radu Nazarea

What is the relation between literary innovation and social change? Michelle examines Modernist novels whose techniques are ana-

led not by a thrill at the literary possibilities of new social orders, but by a nervous conviction that “old verities,” as William Faulkner would call them, still existed and were worth uncovering. Modernism does not just represent a break from the past, but develops new literary techniques in order to preserve continuities.

Megan’s dissertation explores the origins and consequences of Leibniz’s “‘Rhetoric’” (1680–1710) in New York and reveals why its legacy continued to shape New York politics for the next three decades. Previous scholarship has portrayed the rebellion as an ethnic, class, or religious conflict. She shows that Leibniz’s Rebellion was an ideological conflict that had deep roots in contemporary political developments in England and the Netherlands.

REGIONAL STUDIES

STEFAN ESPOSITO, Comparative Literature

“The Pathological Revolution: Romanticism and the Image of Horror”
Advisor: Paul Fry

Stefano’s dissertation will shed light on the association of Romanticism and the Romantic period with metaphors of disease by analyzing the ways in which dominant theories of health and organic structure both influenced and were creatively reformed by writers such as Coleridge, Wordsworth, Schelling, Kierkegaard, Hegel, Herderlin and Percy and Mary Shelley.

JAYME FREITAS, African American Studies & History

“Women Front: The Restoration Covenant Cases and the Role of the Civil Rights Movement”
Advisor: Dena Greenlaw

This dissertation explores a set of Supreme Court cases from 1948 in which the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) challenged racial housing discrimination in American cities. The project looks at how the fight for access to decent housing shaped black protest in the past World War II era and transformed the legal battle against Jim Crow segregation.

Linda’s dissertation explains the origins and development of the “confessional” movement in the modernist era. Her work and analysis range from the poetry readings of the confessional poets to the rise of the “confession book” on reality TV and YouTube—from the autobiographical imperative of early performance art to the ubiquity of confessional monologues in theatre.

JAMES ROSS MACDONALD, Renaissance Studies & English Language & Literature

Advisor: David Quin and John Rogers

Michael’s dissertation explores a new way of analyzing human behavior that emerged in the seventeenth century. As honor, civic virtue and conscience proved inadequate explanations for ethical action during civil war and economic expansion, writers like Marvell, Hobbes, Milton and Dryden turned to representations of self or national interests—meant for understanding the emergence of capital markets, individual rights, and the place of literature in society.

LARA SAEVESTAD WING, English Language & Literature

“Mary’s Book: The Illumination in Medieval England”
Advisor: Azabkar Winkler and Jessica Bradford

The most prominent model of female literacy in the Middle Ages was the Virgin Mary—depicted as the Annunciation, when Gabriel brings the news of Christ’s conception in her womb (Luke 1:26–38). Laura’s dissertation explores the reasons behind the success of the image of Mary’s book and how Mary became a model of literate devotion that profoundly shaped the spiritual consciousness of medieval readers.

JANNETTE MCKENNA, Comparative Literature

“Aristotle and Eleatic Ethics”
Advisor: Michael O’Rourke

Sarah’s dissertation places the concept of pluralism under systematic and critical scrutiny and reveals its problems. “You are one thing, I am another: We are not the same. In what sense are we different?” she asks. Her dissertation argues against the pluralist framework from a scientific methodological perspective and sheds new light on some recent metaphysical issues within a pluralist framework.

SARAH ELLIOTT MEASGIAN, English Language & Literature

“Aristotle and Eleatic Ethics”
Advisor: Michael O’Rourke

Sarah’s dissertation investigates the ways in which writers and artists variously figure Noah’s ark, the human heart and the underworld: as stronghold of the past, as sites of temporal mediation and as spaces within which to forge and structure new worlds. Sarah considers how each archetypal model becomes a nexus for thinking through the dangers and desires associated with the amazing and ordering of knowledge.
**STUDENT RESEARCH: Chemistry**

**Tricking bacteria**

More Americans die each year from Staphylococcus aureus infections than from HIV/AIDS, Parkinson’s disease or emphysema. Staph infections range from boils to meningitis, toxic shock syndrome and antibiotic-resistant MRSA.

The bacteria can invade the lungs, the heart, the bones, the intestines and the blood, causing staphylococcal pneumonia, endocarditis, osteomyelitis, food poisoning and sepsis.

“The technique has the potential to help illuminate basic biological processes as well as lead to novel therapeutics against some of the most common and deadly diseases afflicting us today.”

David Spiegel

The good news is that Yale scientists recently made a breakthrough that may lead to new methods of combating Staphylococcus aureus, which is responsible for so many life-threatening diseases.

Led by assistant professor and Yale alumnus David Spiegel (Ph.D. 2004, Chemistry, M.D. 2004), the team altered the cell wall of Staphylococcus aureus bacteria and caused it to incorporate foreign small molecules. By engineering one end of the small molecules to contain a peptide sequence that would be recognized by the bacteria, “We tricked the bacteria into incorporating something into its cell wall that it didn’t actually make,” says Spiegel. In Staphylococcus aureus, an enzyme called sortase A is responsible for attaching proteins to the cell wall. “It’s as if the cell thought the molecules were its own proteins rather than recognizing them as something foreign.”

The finding, described online in the journal ACS Chemical Biology, represents the first time scientists have engineered the cell wall of pathogenic “Gram-positive” bacteria. The research focused specifically on the cell wall because it contains many of the components the cell uses to relate to its environment, Spiegel explains. “By manipulating the cell wall, we can, in theory, perturb the bacteria’s ability to interact with human tissues and host cells.”

They used three different small molecules in their experiment—biotin, fluorescein and galactose. The molecules to contain a peptide sequence that you are attempting to understand. After the bacteria incorporated the small molecules, meaning they did not have to genetically modify the bacteria. “This research will be part of Patric’s dissertation.”

Being able to engineer the cell walls of not only Staphylococcus aureus but a whole family of bacteria could have widespread use in combating these illnesses. “If we tag these bacteria with small fluorescent tracer molecules, we could watch the progression of disease in the human body in real time,” Spiegel notes. The molecules could also be used to help recruit antibodies that occur naturally in the bloodstream, boosting the body’s own immune response to bacterial diseases. “This technique has the potential to help illuminate basic biological processes as well as lead to novel therapeutics against some of the most common and deadly diseases affecting us today,” according to Spiegel.

One member of the team was graduate student Patrick McManus (Chemistry), whose contribution to the groundbreaking research included both the synthesis of the compounds they tested and the development of assays to test the molecules in biological systems.

“In the beginning of this project I was involved in the synthesis, purification and characterization of the peptides we used,” he says. Synthesizing compounds involves “taking simple building blocks and connecting them in a way to make larger and more complex structures in a controlled fashion,” he explains. “Developing biological assays consists of finding a way to measure or visualize the response of a living cell to the variable that you are attempting to understand. After that, I added others in the biological testing, specifically, some of the earlier labeling and imaging of the bacteria.” This research will be part of Patric’s dissertation.

**GSA UPDATE**

It has been a busy month for the GSA. Dean Thomas Pollard came to a meeting to identify areas of future cooperation with the Assembly. He emphasized the need to enhance the quality and frequency of mentoring in the Graduate School, encouraging students to schedule regular research group meetings that include their advisors and fellow students, expect regular their committee meetings with feedback regarding areas of excellence and concerns, and continuing to engage in writing and other skills, organize reading groups and more.

“We should raise the expectations of the graduate students regarding the mentoring they get,” said Dean Pollard. GSA is now in the midst of organizing Mentoring Work, planned for the last week of February 2011, which will “raise expectations” by providing a platform for dialogue between faculty and students regarding best mentoring practices. If you have suggestions concerning the speakers or the subjects of the panels, or if you would like to contribute to the organization of Mentoring Work in any other way, email GSA Secretary Andrea Stavoe (Cell Biology) at andrea.stavoe@yale.edu or come to our biweekly Wednesday meetings (the next one is December 8).

GSA representatives are also working to improve registration and TF assignments during the shopping period. Luke Thompson (Political Science) is assembling a report about undergraduate registration, enrollment and TF allocation. Please contact him to share your experiences (lucas.thompson@yale.edu).

In addition, the GSA is concerned with infrastructure issues and has been identifying problems at the gym (e.g. malfunctioning equipment or poor heating/AC). Contact Luke about those concerns. The lack of 24-hour study space for graduate students is another important issue. The GSA continues to gather information about the availability of space where students can collaborate, study and hold office hours. The GSA recently met with the Provost and established a pipeline for addressing these issues. Please email Andrea (andrea.stavoe@yale.edu) with questions or comments about study space.

Sigma Colon (American Studies) has been named the GSA’s Student Advocacy Officer for the coming year – a new post created to provide personalized advice and support to graduate students at Yale. The Steering Committee is currently in the process of establishing a peer mentoring program managed by Sigma. Stay tuned in the coming weeks for more information! If you have any questions about this program, please contact Sigma (sigmasolon@yale.edu).

**CONTRIBUTED BY JULIETTA JASINA** (European & Russian Studies)

**AS EASY AS PIE...**

Graduate students are as capable in the kitchen as in the lab or library. Some non-bakers came to sample and judge the goods (left photo). Winners of this year’s Pie Baking Competition, pictured from left to right: Jonny Stamp, Ellen Fortgang, Markos Lakeo (judge), Lauren Martin (judge), Andrew Fleischer (judge), Lucian Okita, Rachel Buxbaum.
Two years ago, then-candidate Obama, in an effort to encourage young students to focus on their education, offered the following rationale: “You are probably not that good a rapper. Maybe you are the next Lil Wayne, but probably not, in which case you need to stay in school.”

To some, education is a fall-back for a rap career. I wonder how many rap careers would be successful if the threat of jail is used as a motivation. To quote the very wise Dr. King, “You are probably not even a hero in an effort to encourage young students to focus on their education, offered the following rationale: “You are probably not that good a rapper. Maybe you are the next Lil Wayne, but probably not, in which case you need to stay in school.”

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To be honest, I feel like my days are less overtly exciting than they once were. Of course, there are still those days where I feel like my jeans will need to be next season. However, most days I call home, like many other graduate students, my office is a café. Nearest and dearest to my heart is McDougall Center’s Blue Dog Café, where I have worked the past four-and-a-half years. But I also like Willoughby’s on Grove and Blue State on Wall. Every once in a while I will even venture to the Willoughby’s on York, but that is usually just to learn from the Art, Architecture and Drama students how skinny my jeans will need to be for the next season.

Outside of math, I actually enjoy having a few student jobs. Besides the cash-money, my jobs at the Blue Dog Café, as a Graduate Career Services Fellow, as a Morse tutor and as a Davenport affiliate have allowed me to build amazing relationships with Yale students, faculty and staff I might never have gotten to know.

In addition to studying and work, though, a lot of really crazy stuff happens at Yale. But I don’t know about that. I do, however, know that intramural soccer is a blast, that squash is the best-kept secret in the world and that the Yale hockey games are shockingly entertaining.

When I last spoke with my advisor, he used the phrase, “When you graduate...” which was the first time that I felt confident I would eventually be forcing my siblings to call me “doctor.” But it was also the first time I seriously thought about life after Yale and by contrast life at Yale. And to be honest, I’m happy I never entered the rap game.

Gila Reinstein, ph.d.

This is the first in a series of personal essays by current graduate students. If you’d like to contribute an essay about your life at Yale, please send it to gila.reinstein@yale.edu.
Finding a Lost City

A Yale team led by Professor of Egyptology John Coleman Darnell has unearthed a lost city — site of a massive bread-making industry — that flourished more than 3,500 years ago in the Western desert of Egypt. Three NELC graduate students, Julia Hsieh, Marina Brown and Tasha Dobbin-Bennett, were members of the group that made the stunning discovery.

The remains of this mud-brick settlement, which functioned as an administrative center as well as major supplier of bread, stands to shed new light on an obscure era in Egyptian history, the Second Intermediate Period, when rival factions contended for domination of what had been a prosperous state united under the rule of the pharaohs. During this period, the descendents of an immigrant group from Asia, the Hyksos, took control of the Nile Delta in the north. The Nubian kingdom of Kerma was centered in the south, and what remained of Pharaonic power struggled to survive in the region around modern Luxor.

Egyptologists have been puzzled by the fact that the Pharaonic forces, based in the city of Thebes, managed to come out on top. Predating the only other major settlement in the area by some thousand years, the recently discovered town stretches over a kilometer in the southern Kharga oasis, a location long-held to have been an uninhabited no-man’s-land, but which, Darnell says, was actually a hub for caravan routes connecting the Nile Valley of Egypt to what is now Western Sudan. The bustling ancient city suggests that a fourth faction flourished in this region.

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"I also helped record and map the location of key features such as the ancient walls," Marina reports. "In addition, the students performed some of the more manual tasks, such as taking down levels and hauling dirt to the sifter, " Tasha says. "Naturally, all this work occurs in temperatures that rarely fall below 85 degrees, and sandstorms whip up with regularity. It becomes quite difficult to tell people apart as we are usually swaddled in hats, scarves and sunglasses. It is a testament to the fascination the material holds that these somewhat suffocating (and scratchy) conditions often pass into the background, becoming nothing more than a vague irritant, as the work holds our entire focus."

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The remains of this mud-brick settlement, which functioned as an administrative center as well as major supplier of bread, stands to shed new light on an obscure era in Egyptian history, the Second Intermediate Period, when rival factions contended for domination of what had been a prosperous state united under the rule of the pharaohs. During this period, the descendents of an immigrant group from Asia, the Hyksos, took control of the Nile Delta in the north. The Nubian kingdom of Kerma was centered in the south, and what remained of Pharaonic power struggled to survive in the region around modern Luxor.

Egyptologists have been puzzled by the fact that the Pharaonic forces, based in the city of Thebes, managed to come out on top. Predating the only other major settlement in the area by some thousand years, the recently discovered town stretches over a kilometer in the southern Kharga oasis, a location long-held to have been an uninhabited no-man’s-land, but which, Darnell says, was actually a hub for caravan routes connecting the Nile Valley of Egypt to what is now Western Sudan. The bustling ancient city suggests that a fourth faction flourished in this region.

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"I also helped record and map the location of key features such as the ancient walls," Marina reports. "In addition, the students performed some of the more manual tasks, such as taking down levels and hauling dirt to the sifter, " Tasha says. "Naturally, all this work occurs in temperatures that rarely fall below 85 degrees, and sandstorms whip up with regularity. It becomes quite difficult to tell people apart as we are usually swaddled in hats, scarves and sunglasses. It is a testament to the fascination the material holds that these somewhat suffocating (and scratchy) conditions often pass into the background, becoming nothing more than a vague irritant, as the work holds our entire focus."

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Outstanding Alumni

Howard Dean Hosgood III

The National Cancer Institute has honored Howard Dean Hosgood III (Ph.D. 2008, EPH; MPH 2005) with two Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics (DCEG) Fellows Awards for Research Excellence. At NCI, his research on lung cancer susceptibility in populations with indoor air pollution exposures from solid fuel combustion, such as coal and wood, has shown that improvements to stoves in rural China can reduce lung cancer mortality by about 50 percent. He primarily focuses on studying the causes of lung cancer among nonsmoking females in Asia. His work has led to more than 30 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters.

Hosgood has also received the NIH Outstanding Graduate Research Award, the Outstanding Paper by a Fellow Award, an Intramural Research Award, a Molecular Epidemiology Research Funding Award and a DCEG Fellowship Achievement Award. Hosgood was given the Eric W. Mood New Professional Award from the Association of Yale Alumni in Public Health. He is currently a Research Fellow in the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch of the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at the NCI.

While at Yale, he helped improve recycling during the year-end move-out, along with his wife Sara Elizabeth Smiley Smith (Ph.D. candidate, EHS; MPH 2007, MESC 2007), bringing the total from 18 to 34 tons in one year. He traveled to El Salvador with Yale Health Community Outreach and Education (COE) to assess the quality of the drinking water and was chosen by his peers to lead the group back to El Salvador to help implement a sustainable water sanitation intervention.

Siobhan Phillips

A book by Siobhan Phillips (Ph.D. 2007, English), The Poetics of the Everyday: Creative Repetition in Modern American Verse, was published earlier this year by Columbia University Press. Focusing on Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, Elizabeth Bishop and James Merrill, Phillips shows how these writers used the repeating patterns of daily life in their poetry and argues that such patterns led to a rethinking of both twentieth-century literature and the function of the lyric. Phillips is now a member of the Harvard Society of Fellows with a three-year research appointment that enables her to devote her time to scholarship. At the Society, she is working on a new project about poetry and personal letters from 1930–2000. Next fall, she will join the faculty of Dickinson College as an assistant professor of English. Phillips’s book was based on her dissertation, “The Poetics of Everyday Time in Frost, Stevens, Bishop, and Merrill,” advised by David Bromwich and Langdon Hammer.

Katherine Mellener Charron

Freedom’s Teacher: The Life of Septima Clark (University of North Carolina Press) by Katherine Mellener Charron (Ph.D. 2005, History) has won the 2010 Julia Cherry Spruill Prize from the Southern Association for Women Historians for the best published book on Southern women’s history. Septima Clark (1898–1987) was a lifelong educator, civic activist and civil rights leader, most known for developing the Citizenship Schools, a civil-rights-era adult program that taught African Americans to read and write so they could register to vote. Clark also aimed to guarantee that the newly enfranchised made informed decisions after they left the voting booth and could assume leadership roles to bring improvements to their local communities. Her political activism began in the era following World War II and continued beyond her retirement from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1970. Placing the worldwide and deeds of southern black women activist educators like Clark at the center, Charron shows how segregated schools functioned as sites of citizenship struggles and how Clark adapted the organizing traditions of southern black women to the post–World-War II civil rights movement. In so doing, she demonstrates that the citizenship education enabled black women to define the issues that concerned them as women, while the civil rights movement offered them a vehicle for taking action. Their ongoing activism at the local level also extends the movement’s chronology beyond 1965 and 1968.

Charron is an assistant professor at North Carolina State University. Her dissertation, “Teaching Citizenship: Septima Poinsette Clark and the Transformation of the African American Freedom Struggle,” was advised by Glenda Gilmore.

Life after Yale is a lot like life after Eden: all of a sudden one finds oneself outside the walls, blinking, dumbstruck, asking an unresponsive universe, “Did I really deserve this?” To paraphrase Adam: I never realized I had it that good.

Nostalgia and angst, and, yes, 3½ teaching loads, tenure committees, budget cuts, commuting and some variation of the colleague who BLANK. After Yale, real life’s just begun.

Or has it? For me, there is no life after Yale because Yale remains a critical part of my everyday life. Skills learned in skimming (sorry, reading!) over 200 monographs for my oral exams inform my daily preparations for discussion sections and afternoon seminars. My teaching reflects my Yale mentors, from whom I learned to value both sides of personal connection. But most importantly, writing. I have come to see myself as a writer who teaches, as a writer who is a historian, but as a writer above all. Along with my ongoing connection with South Africa, that’s the passion that sustains me. It’s not for everyone in their post-Yale life (my good friend and fellow African history Ph.D. Wiebe Boer has just been appointed founding CEO of the most important emerging foundation in Africa), but writing is that for me.

During my second year at Yale, in my uncle’s guestroom in Toronto while the rest of the family celebrated some momentous occasion or another, I composed (in long hand on a yellow legal pad) a dinner-party scene set in a stately London townhouse in 1780. The scene became part of an experimental paper in narrative history. A project was conceived. It was nurtured and sustained by a core group of friends and mentors in the Andrew’s Society Writing History working group. It demanded years of research that, thanks to Yale, I was able to conduct. It went through revising, and adding, and editing, and revising, and editing, all in conversation with friends from Yale, mentors from Yale, with the legacy of Yale. If this all sounds a bit too much like an Obama campaign speech—from the summery green lawn of a suburban Toronto backyard to the rustling of the leaves in the deciduous tree behind my house I’m sure you can appreciate. But yes, I could. The Press tells me to expect bound copies of A Living Man From Africa any day now. Yes, I did. Now, that’s life!}

Editor’s note: Levine’s biography of Jan Traité (born circa 1792), A Living Man From Africa: Jan Traité, Xhosa Chief and Missionary, and the Making of Nineteenth Century South Africa (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), will be available online and in bookstores in late December.