

OCCIDENTAL

WINTER 2011

TO THE RESCUE

Pablo, Cody, and Timmy
all have loving homes for
the new year thanks to
Indrani (Stangl) Gardella '91



OCCIDENTAL

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE MAGAZINE
VOLUME 33, NUMBER 1 WINTER 2011

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Revisionist Historian

Exiled from the ivory tower by his Columbia University peers, **Thaddeus Russell** serves up *A Renegade History of America*

Photo by Marc Campos



POP QUIZ TIME: Who were the movers and shakers of American history? Were they (a) presidents and “great men” such as Thomas Jefferson and Ulysses S. Grant; (b) civil rights activists and feminists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Betty Friedan; or (c) society’s outcasts, including prostitutes, criminals, and slaves?

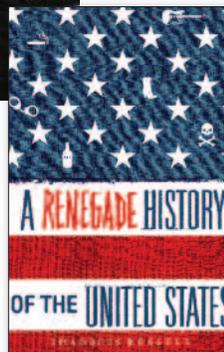
If you chose (c), you may have already picked up *A Renegade History of the United States*, a controversial new book by adjunct history and American studies professor Thaddeus Russell. Russell argues that many of the freedoms and conveniences we take for granted—from racial integration and women’s liberation to shopping, birth control, and the weekend—were advocated not by religious social reformers and elected leaders, but by the louche, lazy, and lascivious. “I look at American history through the lens of conflict between those interested in their own individual desires,” he says, “and those interested in preserving the social order.”

Russell’s revisionist take on American mythology has its champions and detractors.

Russell’s book examines “history from the gutter up,” he writes in the introduction.

Kirkus Reviews praised *A Renegade History* as a “lively, contrarian work,” and *Everything Bad Is Good for You* author Steven Johnson hailed the book as “rare mix of wit, scholarship, and storytelling.” On the other hand, *Metro UK* critic Robert Murphy lambasts the tome as “offputtingly shallow” and suggests Russell’s ideas should be taken “with a heavy dose of skepticism.”

But he’s not “spoiling for a fight,” as Murphy suggests. Russell studied under a generation of historians who, like the late Howard Zinn, author of *A People’s History of the United States* (1980), espoused the growth and progress of America from the perspectives of common people. But he takes that concept one step further. “The new left historians created new saints for the canon out of labor organizers, feminists, gay rights leaders,” Russell says. “But there was a whole set of social strata missing—the so-called ‘bad people.’”



Perhaps it’s no surprise that the author champions America’s rebels and outcasts. He considers himself a misfit—first as a kid with what he describes as “hippie, nudist, social revolutionaries” as parents in Berkeley, then as a revisionist scholar in the hushed halls of academia. His stepfather and mother graduated from UC Berkeley, but they “dropped out of middle class life” and took up blue-collar jobs to rouse the working class, he says. His stepfather joined the Teamsters, and Russell recalls spending a lot of time standing in picket lines with his parents.

To say he didn’t show early promise as a scholar is an understatement. He was the class cut-up, cracking jokes in the back of the room. As long as he was in the room, that is: Russell frequently left eighth-grade math class early by rolling out the window when the teacher’s back was turned (he was never caught). An indifferent student in junior high, he was tracked into a remedial English class in high school, where he graduated with a 2.4 GPA. “No one ever talked to me about SATs,” he says. “I didn’t know how to be a student until I got to college.”

Russell was “a part-time employee at a cookie store” in 1984 when he landed at Ohio’s Antioch College, renowned in academic circles for its left-wing bent, its no-grades policy, and its generous admission philosophy of accepting all applicants. “For the first time, I had teachers paying attention to me,” Russell says. “There was no looking back.”

He learned how to think deeply, to question, debate, and discuss ideas. As a junior, Russell spent a year studying at the London School of Economics, where he found that he could hold his own against Oxford- and Cambridge-educated students. After graduating from Antioch in 1989 as a history and philosophy major, he received his Ph.D from Columbia University and published his dissertation in 2001 as a book, *Out of the Jungle: Jimmy Hoffa and the Remaking of the American Working Class*.

For four years, Russell taught history at Barnard College and a “great books” survey course at sister school Columbia. While his classes were popular with students, his revisionist ideas of American history apparently

did not sit well with some of his colleagues when Russell presented his work to secure a long-term contract in 2005. “E-mails came into the hiring committee from ‘important places,’ I was told, calling my ideas ‘improper,’ ‘frightening,’ and ‘dangerous.’ They said my ideas had no place in the academy and insisted that I be terminated,” he recalled in a recent Huffington Post piece.

Russell’s contract with Barnard was not renewed—a decision that was met with protests by hundreds of students on the Barnard campus and even an editorial in the *Columbia Spectator*. Following his exile from the ivory tower, “Bad Thad” (as his students called him) subsequently taught at Eugene Lang College and the New School for Social Research as a visiting professor while he wrote *A Renegade History*. The book has sold briskly since its publication this fall by the Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster. Russell recently sold British, Italian, Chinese, and Korean rights to his work, which he also is developing as a documentary series.

In addition to teaching history and American studies at Occidental, Russell contributes occasional pieces to the Daily Beast website (past topics have ranged from “Glee” and Gaza to climate change and Ryan Seacrest) while pondering his next research project. “My leading idea is to write the history of American foreign policy,” he says.

Members of the international relations community and the world of diplomacy: Consider yourself warned.—RHEA R. BORJA

FOOD JUSTICE, by Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi (MIT Press; \$27.95). The emerging social movement to transform the nation’s food system from seed to table is examined in *Food Justice*. While chronicling America’s food inequities, excesses, and deteriorating state of production, distribution, and consumption, the authors tell how food activism has succeeded at the highest level. Gottlieb is the Henry Luce Professor of Environmental Studies and director of Oxy’s Urban & Environmental Policy Institute. Joshi is co-director of UEPI’s National Farm to School Network.

THE CLEFS MEET THE BUG BAND, by Joella Williams; illustrated by Jennifer (Martin) Diaz ’01 (KATI Books; \$19.95). Designed to introduce musical concepts to children ages 3 to 8 in a bedtime story—preparing them to learn to read music before their first lesson—*The Clefs* features heroes Mr. Bass and Mrs. Treble and the musical alphabet (aka the Bug Band). Later titles will introduce the bass and treble staves, middle notes, and rhythm. Diaz is an artist and teacher in Champaign, Ill.

TWO YEARS AT OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE IN THE LATE SIXTIES, by Charles E. Rouse ’68 (*CreateSpace*; \$14). Rouse arrived as a junior transfer in the fall of 1966, a young Air Force veteran not inclined to drug experimentation or political protest. Yet he was “willy nilly” caught up in the spirit of the time, with painful and confusing results, as he recounts in this college memoir. He lives in Corning.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mission Improbable

I was disgusted by the military puff piece published in *Occidental* (“Over There,” Fall 2010). As even the Pentagon’s own new statistics released Nov. 1 reveal, the U.S. military is killing civilians at an increasing rate with the relaxation of the rules of engagement that Erik Villard ’90’s battalion found so onerous. Villard may talk about the “extraordinary care the Americans take in applying force,” but his paean to the U.S. occupation is completely at odds with the reality documented by non-embedded journalists and the military’s own leaked documents.

Plenty of evil can be accomplished by men who are not monsters but “dedicated and selfless in their mission.” I imagine that

the Afghan resistance are also dedicated and poorly paid. Villard’s portrait of uniformly professional soldiers is particularly galling given his association with the Stryker Combat Brigade. It was members of a platoon in the 5th Stryker Brigade that conducted some of the most grisly war crimes so far reported: routinely murdering civilians, dismembering and photographing corpses, hoarding a skull and other human bones.

It makes sense that the Pentagon would wish to use any available media for propaganda purposes, but is this really whom *Occidental* wishes to exemplify as a model alumnus—an imperial stenographer?

DYLAN SCHWILK ’96

Lubbock, Texas

OCCIDENTAL

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Let's Get D | I | G | I | T | A | L

As students and professors sweat the transition from the printed page, Oxy embraces the flexibility of new technologies in the library and classroom

BY DICK ANDERSON & HUGO MARTIN | ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES STEINBERG

IN THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED *The Book in the Renaissance*, English historian Andrew Pettegree describes the excitement and confusion mechanical printing created in 15th-century Europe: bitter criticism from humanists raised on manuscripts; eager embrace of the new technology by entrepreneurs; and the transformation of the book itself, “a physical artifact ever more radically different from the familiar manuscript.”

Pettegree allows readers to draw their own conclusions about the many parallels with the current digital era. But he makes clear that online catalogs and search engines made it possible for the first time to locate copies of the roughly 350,000 books published in Europe between 1450 and 1600—many of them unique copies. “Ironically, it has been the next great information revolution—the Internet—that has allowed this work on the first age of print to be pursued to a successful conclusion,” he writes.

The information revolution that is transforming the history of the book is also having a profound impact at Occidental, with ground zero located in the Beaux Arts confines of the Mary Norton Clapp Library. Oxy students and faculty who were previously limited to a relatively modest collection of books and journals on the library's shelves now have access to millions of volumes, as well as newspapers, archival materials, photos, audio files, and the like from a wide array of online databases. The ability to share, juxtapose, and layer this information

online has opened up new ways of seeing the world, fresh ways of teaching and learning, and innovative forms of scholarship whose possibilities are still being explored.

In his inaugural address in October 2009, President Jonathan Veitch set forth the notion of transforming the Occidental library “into a dynamic intellectual commons in which the College's primary commitments are made visible to all, bringing together advanced digital resources and the skills needed for using them effectively; supporting both the core curriculum and advanced undergraduate research; and innovative teaching and the critical skills of writing and quantitative analysis.”

Creating the Academic Commons, as the reimagined library has come to be known, requires transformation in three areas: increasing the capacity to support innovations in teaching, learning, and scholarship in a digital environment for faculty and students; enhancing and integrating the access and delivery of information systems and academic support; and renovating the physical space and furnishings of Clapp Library.

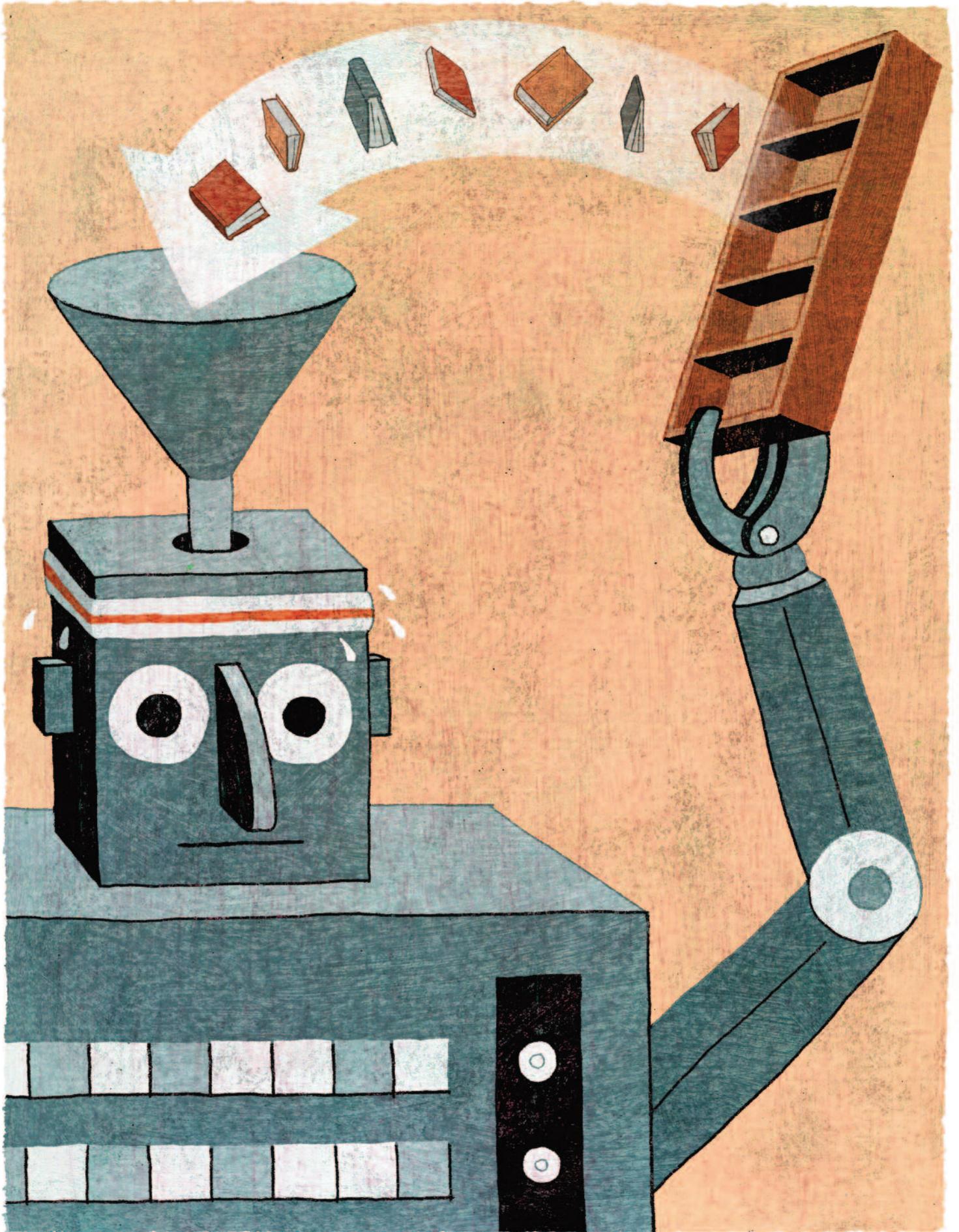
While planning for the Academic Commons is still underway, the digital revolution at Occidental is moving forward on multiple fronts. In 2010, the College launched a mobile phone app to help students find and contact faculty and staff, search the library catalog, and navigate the campus. Last summer, Oxy purchased access to an online collection of more than 40,000 electronic books—twice the size of the entire Clapp Library holdings

when the building opened in 1924—giving users instant access to a library of current publications from a network of academic and commercial presses.

In working to stay current with the turbo-fast pace of the digital revolution, “I'd say we are on par with many colleges our size,” says Marsha Schnirring, associate vice president for scholarship technology. She points to the Center for Digital Learning and Research, which was created in early 2009 with a focus on enhancing scholarship by faculty and students through new applications of digital technologies.

In fall 2009, the College rolled out OxyScholar, an open-access digital platform to collect, preserve, and distribute the scholarly work of faculty and students to anyone who clicks on its link. The emergence of multiple open-source platforms, cloud computing (a means of sharing resources, software, and information with computers and other devices on demand), and the like will only stoke the fires of digital publishing, circumventing increasingly expensive print journals.

Last spring, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded Occidental a three-year, \$700,000 grant to integrate digital resources into faculty teaching and student scholarship. Amy Lyford, associate professor of art history and the visual arts, was among 10 faculty members chosen to attend a weeklong digital summer institute last August funded by the Mellon grant. Over the next two summers, another 20 faculty will participate in the institute, achieving a critical mass of professors



taking full advantage of digital technologies in the humanities and social sciences.

The institute helped crystallize Lyford's thinking about documenting a linked system of drivable Pacific War memorials proposed for Honolulu in the late 1940s, of which only two were realized: the *USS Arizona* and Punchbowl Cemetery. While she has lectured on the subject and plans a conventional journal article, "in a Web-based format you could layer the original design as planned, what was actually built, and new sites that respond to the changing ways in which we understand the war, like the Japanese-American detention camp on Sand Island," she says. "There's so much potential for making scholarship available to a much wider public."

The digital revolution is already making for a greener classroom. Professor of geology Margi Rusmore was one of the College's first faculty members to all but eliminate printed materials from her courses. She posts all of her assignments on Moodle, the popular learning management system implemented at Oxy in fall 2006. Rusmore also sets assignment deadlines on Moodle, which includes an online drop box that allows students to download their classwork digitally. "I just look at it as a common file cabinet," she says. "It cuts down on paper waste."

Current trends point to a future when students and faculty rely on both digital resources—particularly journals—and printed material. Clapp Library still houses more than 400,000 printed books and journals, ranging from dusty leather-bound tomes to new paperbacks. Perhaps tellingly, 45 percent of the books in Oxy's collection have not been checked out in the last 20 years, according to College librarian Bob Kieft—although he notes that students may still read the books without checking them out.

Writing in the November issue of *Against the Grain*, a journal devoted to books, journals, and electronic information, Kieft outlined Occidental's plan for 21st-century collection "redevelopment" or "renewal" as it relates to the Academic Commons. Citing the existence of "robust user-initiated borrowing networks," the opportunity to establish new ones, and the likely emergence of a cooperative regional and national plan for storage/archiving of journals and other materials within the next five years, "the library will continue to grow, but it will grow mostly in

electronic resources or through the strength, number, and variety of access partnerships."

Although mass digitization and improved reading software and devices such as the Kindle and iPad will accelerate the shift away from print, the library "will continue to buy monographs in print until e-publication and screen reading become generally accepted," adds Kieft. But the College will budget for increased access activity or support of the institutions that afford access to their print materials, and seek joint acquisition programs for printed monographs "with our closest or most vigorous trading partners."

As for the library's collection of printed books, the College will maintain a large reserve—most likely in the low six figures—of well-circulated current titles, select titles of classic interest, and "those that have artifactual value in teaching," Kieft writes. "Although we will be reducing the size of the print collection and shaping it to rely on other libraries for older, lesser-used titles, we will also work with faculty to renew areas of the collection that they feel need updating in order to meet their teaching needs."

While the pace of change libraries must address is unrelenting, reshaping the deeply ingrained habits of readers—even those who rely heavily on digital resources—is a slower process. Kevin Grier-Roddy '11, a biochemistry major from Los Angeles, already spends a lot of time running keyword searches to pull up information from online medical journals. It's clearly a much faster process than thumbing through printed books or journals in search of specific topics, even though he characterizes himself as "a hard copy sort of person. There is nothing quite as satisfying as holding an actual book in my hand to read."

It's the kind of reluctance to change that academics and librarians say came years ago when digital music supplanted physical recordings, digital cameras replaced cameras loaded with film—and when print was first introduced five centuries ago. "Transitional times make some people uncomfortable," Schnirring says.

For most college librarians, the greatest task ahead will be devising easy ways for students and faculty to navigate the new sea of digital data, says Steve McCracken '93, who co-founded Serials Solutions, a company that offers a platform for libraries to manage digital books and online journals. "The

challenge is how to present it as powerful and easy to use," he says.

In the digitally powered library, students will be able to read and borrow almost every book and journal via the Internet from their dorm rooms. Still, librarians predict the services and study space offered at the libraries of the future will make them the newly revitalized centers of intellectual life. In fact, colleges and universities that have already redesigned their libraries to accommodate digital books and online journals report a spike in demand for library services. Clapp Library is now open 24 hours a day, five days a week, during the academic year in response to student feedback.

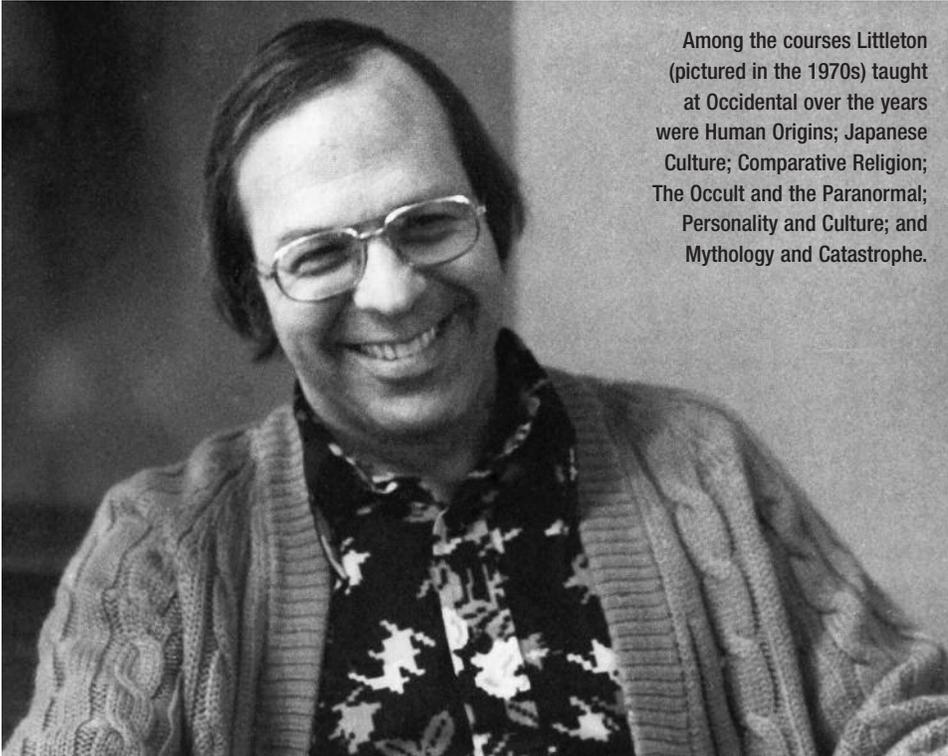
Over the course of this academic year, Kieft hopes that the planning process for the Academic Commons "will engage the campus about the many dimensions of the work that we do in and with a library," he writes in *Against the Grain*. "...In addition to the, for many, counterintuitive notion of a small printed book collection in a prestigious college's library, the transition from page reading to screen reading is problematic for many of us, and much remains uncertain in terms of the future of scholarly publishing and of the legal arrangements needed for access to digitized copies of in-copyright works."

Still, he calls the move to digitized text "inexorable and financially desirable"—and expects that "in the next 10 to 20 years most printed texts will be treated the way we now treat special collections—that is, they will be used by certain readers for certain purposes, not for general academic reading."

Even the Occidental bookstore began to give students the option last semester to order some textbooks in digital or printed format, a practice that will be expanded next year. And while it still may be premature to write an obituary for the printed page, consider this: Damian Stocking, assistant professor of English and comparative literary studies and impassioned cheerleader for the written word, is a recent convert away from print. "I actually enjoy reading electronic books now," says Stocking. "As a classicist, maybe I'm trying to break out of the tyranny of the paper and return to the scroll."

Where Damian Stocking leads, others are sure to follow. □

Hugo Martin is a staff writer with the Los Angeles Times.



Among the courses Littleton (pictured in the 1970s) taught at Occidental over the years were Human Origins; Japanese Culture; Comparative Religion; The Occult and the Paranormal; Personality and Culture; and Mythology and Catastrophe.

The Man, the Myths

Anthropology professor emeritus C. Scott Littleton (1933-2010) brought prowess and passion to folklore and the fantastic

In 40 years as an anthropology professor, C. Scott Littleton fostered an avid curiosity about esoteric subjects combined with painstaking scientific study. His opinions were often controversial and never less than entertaining: In 1968 he suggested injecting birth control pills into the world's water supply to combat overpopulation. He held that UFOs have been visiting Earth for 10,000 years. He studied the Atlantis myth on sabbatical in 1972. He believed that the existence of ESP "has been established beyond a reasonable doubt" and that such abilities were likely genetic. He explored Hitler's occult beliefs in a 1975 seminar, which also touched on Kirlian photography to capture auras and other paranormal topics.

"Scott was extremely animated and passionate about his teaching," says Dana Valk '02, acting director of alumni relations, who credits Littleton with her decision to minor in anthropology. "His classes were so much more than textbooks and tests—they were

about truly learning and appreciating the culture to which he was so connected."

Littleton—who died Nov. 25 at age 77 at his home in Pasadena—had an impact on many students' lives outside the classroom as well. "Although as a sociology major I only took one anthro course from Scott Littleton, he became an instant friend," says Bill Hawkins '69, who last saw Littleton during Reunion Weekend in June. "He really exemplified that intimate relationship between students and faculty at Oxy in the '60s, when you could learn as much in the Cooler or Quad as in the classroom."

A native of Hermosa Beach—where he claims to have seen a UFO at age 8—Covington Scott Littleton graduated from Redondo Union High School in 1950. Following two years of service in the Army, he earned his undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees at UCLA, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He began his teaching career at UCLA before joining the Occidental faculty in 1962.

A cultural anthropologist specializing in comparative myth, folklore, and religion, Littleton was internationally recognized for his studies of ancient Indo-European religious traditions; the origins and distribution of the legends of King Arthur; and Japanese culture, including the origin and practice of Shinto. Longtime chair of what was then the department of sociology and anthropology, he was the author or editor of eight books, including *The New Comparative Mythology: An Anthropological Assessment of the Theories of Georges Dumézil* (first published in 1966); and *From Scythia to Camelot* (with Linda A. Malcor, 1994), which proposes a Russian origin of the King Arthur legend.

Littleton—who spoke German, French, and Japanese—also lectured widely and was a Fulbright visiting lecturer in Japan in 1980-81 and 1994. The recipient of Occidental's Graham L. Sterling Award for outstanding teaching in 1991, "Scotty was at his best when he was 'data dumping' one-on-one rather than lecturing," Hawkins recalls. "I remember asking him a casual question about the relationship of Old and New World linguistic families, and he followed with an hour-long extempore treatise that seemed to sum up the entire field."

Although Littleton retired from the classroom in 2002, his mind never stopped working. "I'm pretty healthy and plan to keep on researching and writing until I can no longer tap a keyboard or hold a pen," he wrote in September 2007 in *2500 Strand*, a memoir of his childhood growing up in Hermosa Beach during World War II. He gave a talk on "The Battle of Los Angeles" at a major UFO symposium in Aztec, N.M., in March 2006 and even published a science fiction novel, *Phase Two*, in 2009.

"To me he embodied a kind of Southern California authenticity, which was more real to me as a student at Oxy in Eagle Rock than the more common view of glitzy, vapid Los Angeles," says Peter Hong '87, who never took a class with Littleton but "knew him well." "He liked to talk with me about my home in Hawaii. He said he was a bodysurfer and looked the part: compact, trim with sun-bleached, disheveled hair. Scott Littleton was without pretensions but full of substance."

Littleton is survived by his wife of 49 years, Mary Ann, and daughters Leslie and Cynthia '94.—SAMANTHA B. BONAR '90

Scaling the SCIAC

Volleyball and women's soccer make a run at the top of the conference, while Eric Kleinsasser '12 just keeps running



Take your pick: Depending on how you measure it, this fall was Oxy volleyball's best season since 1992, or 1983, or since the program began in 1964. Led by third-year coach Mike Talamantes, the youthful Tigers finished with a 25-8 record, 10-4 in SCIAC, good for second place and the best finish in 18 years. Oxy advanced to the conference postseason tournament, the first playoff berth for volleyball since 1983. The 25 wins were the most ever for Oxy, including a record 12-game win streak.

Outside hitter Stephanie Gann '14 was named SCIAC Freshman of the Year—a program first—and to the American Volleyball Coaches Association All-West Region team (honorable mention). Sophomore captain Logan Boyer-Hayse, ranked fifth nationally in kills per set and No. 8 in points scored, was named a third team AVCA All-American, first team All-West Region, and first team

All-SCIAC member. Libero Madyson Cassidy '14 also received All-SCIAC honors. All but one member of this year's squad are expected to return next fall.

While Gann and the Tigers were tearing it up in Rush Gymnasium, Eric Kleinsasser '12 was outrunning the competition en route to his third consecutive individual SCIAC cross country title, once again being named SCIAC Runner of the Year. Although the men's and women's teams finished third and fourth, respectively, in conference competition, both teams advanced to the Division III West Regionals in Salem, Ore., in November, each running to an eighth-place finish. Kleinsasser, who had to come back from early season injuries, finished fifth overall, advancing to the National Championships for the third time. But he had an off day on a cold, windy course in Iowa on Nov. 20, finishing well off the frontrunners' pace.

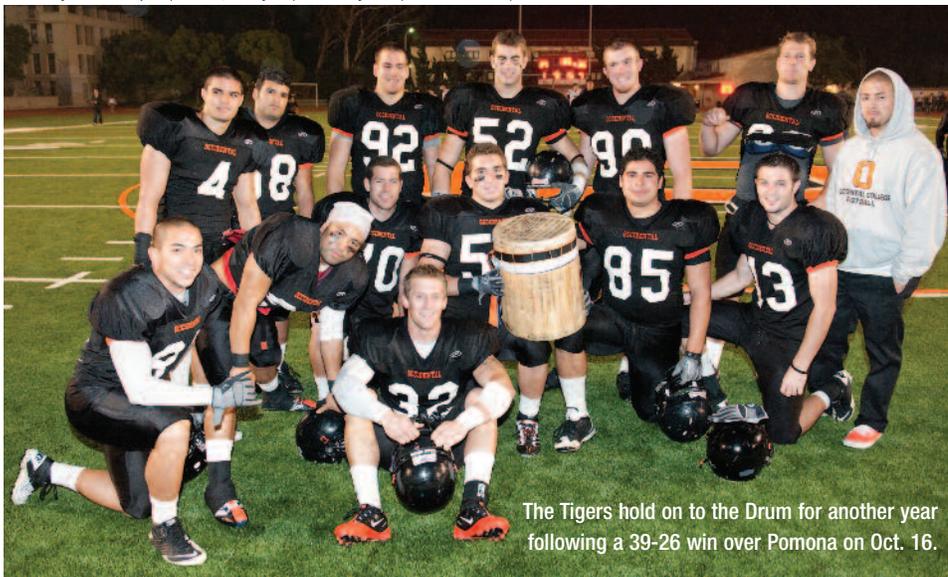
Junior Gwynne Davis (10), freshmen Jessie Altman (16) and Stephanie Gann (7), and sophomore Alyssa Mort (3) go 3-0 against Pomona-Pitzer on Oct. 19.

It also was a season to remember for women's soccer, which posted a 9-2-1 SCIAC record (11-4-3 overall) to place second in the conference during regular season play. In the postseason tournament, the Tigers advanced to the championship game, losing a double-overtime heartbreaker to Redlands.

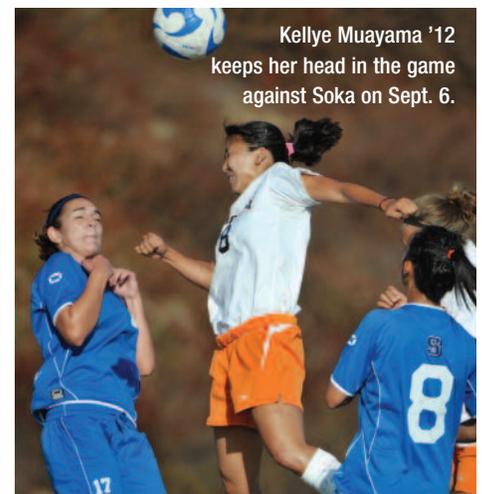
Five Tigers were named to All-SCIAC teams this fall: senior defender Season Falkler-Rodriguez (first team); senior goalkeeper Robin Feldman, who recorded a school-record eight shutouts and allowed only six goals in conference play (first team); junior midfielder Kellee Murayama (first team); junior defender Maddy Rasch (second team); and freshman forward Elissa Minamishin.

In other action, Oxy football, plagued by injuries, skidded to a fourth-place finish in the SCIAC with a 3-3 record (5-4 overall). Nine Tigers were named to All-SCIAC teams, including senior defensive standouts Jim Hildensperger, Kyle Spaulding, and Dillon Tucker. Men's water polo splashed to a sixth-place, 5-5 SCIAC mark (9-19 overall). ▣

Photos by Marc Campos (football, volleyball) and Kirby Lee (women's soccer)



The Tigers hold on to the Drum for another year following a 39-26 win over Pomona on Oct. 16.



Kellee Murayama '12 keeps her head in the game against Soka on Sept. 6.

New Alumni Center

Samuelsons Break Ground Where Fiji House Stood

With a skirl of bagpipes and a special cheer from Oxy cheerleaders, ground was broken for the Jack and Sally Samuelson Alumni Center at the corner of Alumni Avenue and Campus Road on Nov. 6 during Homecoming & Family Weekend. With the former Fiji fraternity house just a memory—demolition having been completed less than 48 hours before—there was plenty of dirt for the Samuelsons and other dignitaries to dig into before a crowd of alumni, students, and staff.

Photo by Marc Campos



Sally (Reid) Samuelson '48, husband Jack Samuelson '46, and President Jonathan Veitch share the honors at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Samuelson Alumni Center at Homecoming & Family Weekend on Nov. 6.

“As many of you know, Jack Samuelson is a builder,” said President Jonathan Veitch. “His first project as a contractor was a two-bedroom, one-bath house in Van Nuys he built with his brother, Bob, in 1947. Today, 63 years later, Jack has come full circle and is about to build another house. This time, though, it is for a much larger family—the more than 21,000 living Occidental alumni.”

In his own remarks, Samuelson recounted his decade-long quest to make the new center and a greater sense of connectedness for alumni a reality. “I was the first trustee

who got to meet Jonathan after he was picked as president,” he said. “And I laid it on the line. I told him we’ve been fooling around for 10 years, and it’s time to do something ... Oxy alumni really deserve a place that they can call their own.”

John Cushman '55 conjured up the long history of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, which was one of Occidental's first Greek organizations and gave its chapter house to the College in 1970. Three Fijis with a distinguished record of service to the College—Morgan Odell '42, Bill White '47, and Jim Goss '51, all of whom died in 2010—were among the alumni center's biggest supporters. “In keeping with the Fiji tradition of service, we are proud to have played a role in making possible an important new resource for all Occidental alumni,” he said.

Designed by architect Craig Stoddard to echo the classic lines of Occidental's Myron Hunt buildings, the Samuelson Alumni Center will house the Alumni Relations offices together with a kitchen, an outdoor patio, and the Fiji Assembly Room on the first floor. Upstairs will be four guest rooms for use by distinguished visitors. The 8,000-square-foot building with a red tile roof and white stucco walls will replace the current alumni office, a converted single-family home one block to the south that was intended as a temporary arrangement 11 years ago.

“We are grateful that Alumni Relations staff will no longer have to store files in a bathtub or have a copy machine in the kitchen,” said Silva Zeneian '01, president-elect of the Alumni Board of Governors. “I can't think of a more appropriate location for the Samuelson Alumni Center than here at the main entrance to campus—a site that signals the importance of alumni to the College.”

“I know this kind of thing is old hat for Jack and Sally, who have participated in many Oxy groundbreaking ceremonies over the years, but it is a first for me,” Veitch added. “I'd like to thank them for giving me the opportunity to preside at what I hope will be the first of many groundbreaking ceremonies in the years ahead.”

Occidental in Brief

Eight politics majors and one urban and environmental policy major enjoyed front-row seats to the midterm elections through Occidental's Campaign Semester, in which students earn academic credit for working in key House and Senate races. After 10 weeks in the field leading up to Election Day, the nine students returned to campus for a five-week seminar to put their experiences in broader context. □ While competition for entry into medical schools is greater than ever, the 2009-10 academic year was one of Oxy's best in 30 years, with nearly two dozen students and recent graduates accepted by such leading institutions as Harvard, Yale, Vanderbilt, and Duke. □ Occidental enrolls more Pell Grant recipients—students from low- and moderate-income families—than almost all other top-ranked liberal arts colleges, according to 2008-09 school year data compiled by *U.S. News & World Report*. The 19 percent of Oxy students who are Pell recipients is matched only by Mt. Holyoke College and surpassed only by Smith College, where 25 percent of students receive Pell Grants. □ The Occidental Bookstore has begun carrying T-shirts from Alta Gracia, a new sweat-free clothing line made by Knights Apparel. The Spartanburg, S.C.-based company pays its Dominican Republic factory workers a living wage, provides a safe working environment, and freely allows them to unionize.

Photo by Danielle Gruen



Members of the cast of “Glee” (if you're a Gleek, you know who they are) and film director Adam Shankman joined comic Kathy Griffin in Thorne Hall on Oct. 10 for a surprise performance at the Models of Pride conference at Oxy. Sponsored by the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, activities included workshops, roundtable discussions, a resource fair, and a dinner/dance for LGBT youth.





GOLDEN COMPASS

BY ANDY FAUGHT PHOTOS BY KEVIN BURKE

Have record deficits, partisan infighting, and dueling fiscal priorities made California ungovernable? As the winds of change blow through Sacramento, public servants and prominent lobbyists look for ways to navigate the political morass

“IF I SOUND BITTER, it’s because I’m ticked,” says Acquanetta Warren ’78, the Compton-born Republican who was elected Fontana’s first African-American mayor in November. “The state has turned the cities into ATMs.” Last May, the California Legislature ordered her city of nearly 200,000—located 50 miles east of Los Angeles—to return \$33 million in redevelopment funds to help balance the state’s ever-hemorrhaging budget.

With 73 percent of Fontana zoned for redevelopment—land or buildings that can be restored in hopes of creating business and generating new tax revenues—city officials worry the refunds will delay construction of a senior center. One effort that has been bled of funds is a much-anticipated Interstate 15 overpass the city hopes will spur a commercial center and the creation of 16,000 jobs. “That’s not what local governments are for, to fund state deficits,” says Warren, an eight-year city council member who was so “fed up” that she ran for the state Assembly District 63 seat last June. “That’s ridiculous.”

Warren’s lament is an all-too-familiar refrain in California. Local governments struggle to do the work of the people at the same time the state has become mired in gridlock, partisanship, and dueling fiscal priorities—not to mention the persistently mulish state and national economies, the country’s third-highest



unemployment rate (12.4 percent), shrinking personal income, and the foreclosure crisis. State tax revenues aren’t projected to return to their 2007-08 high-water mark until 2015-16, according to the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office.

Employees in the world’s eighth largest economy have endured furloughs, layoffs, and job cuts, while government services are being reduced across the board—from healthcare and public safety to library and DMV hours. Students in the University of

Lobbyist Jay Hansen ’85, *left*, criticizes the Legislature as “overly partisan,” but hopes that Gov.-elect Jerry Brown will improve relations. **ABOVE:** Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren ’78 visits the children’s wing of a community center. With regards to prioritizing new projects, “We are moving forward in spite of the state.”



Termed-out Assemblyman Hector De La Torre '89, *above*, stands outside South Gate City Hall, home base to his career as a city council member and mayor before going to Sacramento. After an unsuccessful run for state insurance commissioner last June, he is considering his future options. **RIGHT:** A fifth-generation Tulare County native, Steve Worthley '75 (shown with a four-legged constituent in an autumn peach grove in District 4) was narrowly elected to a fourth term as a county supervisor in November.

California and California State University systems will pay tuition increases next year of 8 and 15 percent, respectively, and school districts have handed out tens of thousands of pink slips to teachers. The list goes on, with nary a prediction for a quick turnaround.

Given these stormy dynamics, is the Golden State ungovernable? That's a question that Occidental alumni have been wrestling with at the city, county, and state level. And while this bipartisan aggregation of mayors, assemblymen, supervisors, and lobbyists may not agree on a single cure, they all understand the urgency to shepherd California through the turmoil.

"Government is a service business," says Steve Worthley '75, who was re-elected in November to his fourth term on the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. "When you look at the fundamental needs of people, they all want basically the same kinds of things: roads, safety, jobs, and schools where their kids can be suc-

cessful. Too often what we've done is go outside those things, and then you find yourself in difficult times. Now is the time to retrench."

Worthley is familiar with austerity. Tulare County, in the state's vast Central Valley, is the No. 1 dairy region in the state, home to twice as many cows as people, and among the poorest areas in California. In a region where half of the county budget is earmarked for health and human services, officials were forced to trim a quarter of its employees in those areas over the past five years because of budget shortfalls.

"Government is going to have to shrink," says Worthley, likening it to the contraction of the American auto industry in the 1980s, and blaming unions for driving up the cost of services. In an effort to better manage its resources, Tulare has embarked on ventures big (severing its 80-year relationship with state-run CalFire, opting instead to build its own fire stations, negotiating contracts locally and saving millions of dollars in the process) and small (buying replacement parts from eBay for 30-year-old phone systems in some county offices). "You have to look for ways to be smarter with what you have," Worthley says.

That's what recently termed-out Democratic Assemblyman Hector De La Torre '89 set out to accomplish when he formed the Assembly Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review in early 2009. The 18-member body meets regularly to investigate wasteful spending, inefficient use of state funds, and questions of accountability. The group has created tens of millions of dollars in savings, De La Torre says. Legislation that came out of the committee included Assembly Bill 635, which required competition and financial disclosure in school and state roofing projects, and Assembly Bill 1749, which grants whistleblower protection to employees of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

De La Torre, who served the maximum six years in the Assembly's 50th District (covering eight cities in southeast Los Angeles County), faced a sobering reality while in the Assembly. "There is one fundamental in California politics, which is the voters want it both ways," he says. "They want all these services that government provides and the robust public oversight, but they don't want to pay for them. Democrats want to provide the services, but Republicans don't want to pay for them. That's the conflict in the two parties. We're each addressing part of what the public wants."

As a two-term former mayor and city council member for eight years in South Gate, De La Torre considers himself sympathetic to the challenges facing local government. "But you've got to have an honest dialogue," he says. "Because of Proposition 13, because of structures of state government, the state is subsidizing local government in a way it didn't before."



Proposition 13, which voters approved by a nearly 2-to-1 margin in 1978, brought a sea change in state governance. It shifted control of property tax revenues away from local governments to the Legislature, effectively transferring control of health, welfare, and education programs from city councils, boards of supervisors, and school boards. Local governments complain they aren't getting their fair share of the pot and must develop budgets based on volatile sales tax revenues.

Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian '82 isn't sympathetic to the Legislature as it struggles to lead the state. "We have fiscal restraints that perhaps the government in Sacramento does not have. We have immediate and frequent rapport with our constituents, which keeps us very much in tune to what their desires and wishes and problems and complaints are. I believe that as you move up the chain of government, those in governance and leadership lose touch with the immediate issues, contact, and feedback that we at the

lower levels get quite often. It keeps us honest; it keeps us pragmatic."

In Glendale, population 220,000, officials have cut department budgets by 5 percent this year. Municipal employees also have received 1.5 percent pay cuts, and, as in Fontana, the city has returned \$11 million in redevelopment funds to the state during the past fiscal year. "That is money we know how to use," says Najarian, who has served on the city council since 2005. "We know how to best apply it to create jobs, to eliminate blight, to encourage business and growth that will in turn lead to greater tax revenues and greater property values for everyone in California."

Warren, who moved to Fontana in 1993, believes California can work, but only if the leadership acknowledges it is broken. She points to a handful of voter initiatives passed in November as reasons for optimism. Proposition 25 requires only a simple legislative majority—as opposed to the longstanding two-

Ara Najarian '82 inspects the railyards at Union Station while on duty as chair of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority. He was elected to the Glendale City Council in 2005, won a second term in 2009, and is currently serving his second one-year appointment as mayor, a ceremonial position.



thirds super majority requirement—to pass a budget. (Tax increases still must meet the two-thirds threshold.) Meanwhile, Proposition 22 bars “raids” on local redevelopment and transportation funding, but could signal cuts to the already enervated education budget.

Proposition 22 was a “clear statement” by voters for Sacramento to keep its hands out of local tills, Najarian adds. “We are very suspicious, very wary. We are strained with our relationship with Sacramento. We are frustrated and dumbfounded as to how a group of elected officials can essentially fail, number one, to create a budget and, number two, work within that budget once it’s created. There’s no one who sings the praises of Sacramento at the local level. We feel they don’t get it.”

While passing a budget will become easier with Proposition 25, Najarian is concerned that special interests will now have greater control of the legislature, and that members won’t have to reach across the aisle to arrive at a consensus. “Will we pass a budget? Yes, but I don’t think that’s the real issue.”

Jay Hansen ’85, who represents 35,000 doctors statewide in his current role as chief strategy officer for the California Medical Association, disagrees with contentions that special interests have unlimited sway. He quotes the aphoristic Jesse Unruh, the late state Assembly speaker who said: “If you can’t eat their food, drink their booze, screw their women, and then vote against them, you have no business being up here.”

“It’s a weak legislator who can’t stand up to a special interest,” says Hansen, who previously spent a decade as chief lobbyist for AFL-CIO construction unions. But he does criticize the money-flush initiative process—by which citizens can get propositions put on the ballot—as too lenient. An initiative can be taken to a vote if it secures the signatures of 5 percent of the previous election’s voters, with wealthy benefactors often driving efforts.

“Here’s where special interests have undue influence on the initiative process,” Hansen says. “Direct democracy is broken in California.” He points to neighboring Nevada and Oregon as exemplars of “thoughtful democracy.” In the Silver State, voters have to pass an initiative twice before it goes into effect. The Beaver State, meanwhile, requires a two-thirds vote to pass propositions. Hansen also criticizes term limits for being too short—six years for the Assembly, eight years for the Senate. Such limits, he suggests, force officeholders to consider their political future almost as soon as they enter office.

Republican Assemblyman Chris Norby ’72, whose 72nd District spans seven Orange County cities, isn’t sure whether there’s less room for compromise in a Democrat-controlled Legislature. “Whether Proposition 25 makes it better or not, we’ll see.” Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed this year’s state budget 100

Photo by Jim Block



Carmen Chu ’00 (shown talking to a constituent in 2009) ran unopposed for a second full term on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in November. On Election Day, the board made national headlines by banning toys in McDonald’s Happy Meals as a means to curb obesity.



BRINGING THEIR OXY EDUCATIONS TO BEAR

Politics has been described as the art of the possible, and these Occidental alumni credit their liberal arts experience with helping them to make good on the notion. Just ask Acquanna Warren ’78, who got some formative advice from James Lare, professor of politics emeritus. “He told me that I should never give up. You get a lot of people trying to tear you down, and I learned early on that you will have those situations. But they’re just challenges, and you work your way around them.”

Steven Worthley ’75 says his Occidental experience helped to develop his critical thinking skills and continues to influence him today. “There’s the education you get that’s not book learning, but being with people of different social and economic groups. We’ve got to be thinkers; we can’t just be doers. Oxy caused me to examine myself.”

Similarly, Carmen Chu ’00 credits Peter Dreier, Dr. E.P. Clapp Distinguished Professor of Politics, for helping to shape her political career. “His classes were always hard, but they were always educational,” Chu says. “Being able to get an education that was top notch and being able to think about the critical issues in the public policy program was very helpful. I always take my Oxy experience with me.”

“I owe a lot to the economics department, but I’ve also got to give a call out to the Core program’s broad liberal arts immersion,” says Ara Najarian ’82. “There isn’t a day when I’m not faced with an issue or question upon which I draw from my Oxy experience, whether it’s psychology or history or sociology. It really was a great background for being a mayor.”

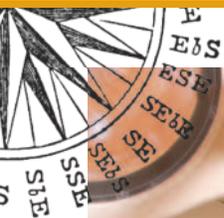
Growing up in suburban Orange County, Chris Norby ’72 says Oxy gave him new perspectives on Los Angeles: “I gained an appreciation for the city and the concentration of different kinds of people.” He was particularly taken by urban studies and architecture classes taught by Bob Winter, the Arthur G. Coons Professor in the History of Ideas Emeritus.

“Certainly my experience and education I received at Oxy prepared me for working in a very dynamic environment like it is here in Sacramento, both as a legislator and a legislative advocate,” says Martin Gallegos ’80, a psychology major. “In Sacramento, things change very rapidly. To analyze and have the thought processes to formulate a timely and appropriate response, these are all things that were developed in my time at Oxy.”

For Hector De La Torre ’89, a diplomacy and world affairs major, “There was a rigor to the thinking at Occidental that has really benefited me in trying to find rational processes and solutions,” he says. “I try to look at the big picture in any issue.”

Jay Hansen ’85—who is working on state and federal implementation of health care reform as chief strategy officer for the California Medical Association—thinks back to his Buddhist philosophy class at Occidental as something to “help me keep balanced in this crazy business and try to do the right things for people. Oxy taught me how to make personal connections, how to communicate effectively and have fun while you’re doing it. That’s a key part of being successful in politics.”

—ANDY FAUGHT



“When increasing revenues is not an option, you’ve got to come to some hard decisions,” says former Democratic Assemblyman Martin Gallegos ’80, now chief legislative advocate for the California Hospital Association. “Oxy was very good about teaching you how to think through things, and I think that’s been a valuable part of the work I’ve done in Sacramento.”

days after the July 1 deadline. That budget already is out of balance, with the shortfall expected to balloon to \$25.4 billion over the next 18 months. The governor released a \$7.4-billion deficit-reduction plan Dec. 6; Gov.-elect Jerry Brown will have a week to submit a budget proposal to the Legislature when he takes office Jan. 3.

Norby—founder of Municipal Officials for Redevelopment Reform, a group concerned about eminent domain abuse and using public funds for private development—also has reservations about the initiative process. He complains that special interests are able to “lock in funding for certain pet priorities.” Once such priorities are codified in the state constitution, government “has no way of readjusting it to reflect our true

priorities,” says Norby, who previously served on the Orange County Board of Supervisors and Fullerton City Council. “Every program becomes a sacred cow.”

A big concern facing governments everywhere is pension reform. California—which has the largest public pension system in the country—is one of 38 states to date that have cut their pension liabilities by reducing benefits or increasing employee contributions, according to the Pew Center on the States. The center says that at the end of fiscal year 2008, there was a \$1-trillion gap between the \$2.35 trillion states had set aside and the \$3.35 trillion total needed to pay retirement benefits.

Democrat Carmen Chu ’00 and her colleagues on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors have watched

the value of the city and county's combined pension fund drop by as much as 23 percent as a result of Wall Street volatility. "We continue to meet the obligations, but we have got to spend time to make up for that," says Chu, who was appointed District 4 supervisor in September 2007 in place of suspended predecessor Ed Jew and ran unopposed for her second full term in November.

The slow economic rebound also means the city and county of San Francisco—one of the few arrangements in the country in which both jurisdictions work from a joint budget—are projecting a \$30-million shortfall in state funding for the coming year. Officials have relied on layoffs, labor concessions, salary cuts, and pay freezes to stay within their budget. A higher-than-expected shortfall could impact health and human services and welfare programs, Chu says. And because a state mandate doesn't allow San Francisco to make cuts to its In-Home Supportive Services for the aged, blind, or disabled, long-seen-as-essential programs such as recreation, parks services, and street repaving could be forced to absorb the blow.

Chu doesn't point fingers, but attributes a "confluence of a lot of different issues" for California's woes. "Whatever occurs at the state or does not occur at the state has a very profound effect on cities and counties," she says. "It's going to take some time and real work before the state can turn around. The economic recovery is an important part of everything."

Times were better when Martin Gallegos '80 was a legislator. Silicon Valley was fueling a dot-com boom and lawmakers enjoyed budget surpluses. Since then, critics charge, paralysis has settled on the capitol. "I wouldn't characterize the difficult decision-making as a lack of courage so much as a fear of making the wrong decision and hurting folks," says Gallegos, a Democratic assemblyman in the San Gabriel Valley's 57th District from 1994 to 2000 and currently senior vice president and chief legislative advocate for the California Hospital Association. "The people who are called to public service want to do good."

"Our issues here are larger. We have a lot more people and a higher unemployment rate. There's a much greater need for healthcare services and a higher population of uninsured—almost 25 percent of our population," Gallegos adds. "All of these factors make it very difficult to govern. Legislators look at these huge problems and the choices to solve them aren't good, whether you're on the side of the cuts or whether you're on the side of increased revenues and increased spending. The decisions are not easy."

Gallegos authored Assembly Bill 78 when he was in the Legislature. That bill created the HMO regulator known as the Department of Managed Health

Care, the first effort of its kind in the country. He also co-authored legislation that created the Healthy Families Program, a low-cost health program for uninsured children. In his current role as an advocate for hospitals at the state and federal level, Gallegos this year successfully raised support for legislation that will bring more than \$2.6 billion in federal funds to California's beleaguered Medi-Cal program, which provides services to poor Californians.

Jay Hansen doesn't believe for a moment that the state can't return to being a place of promise. "California is the place the whole world wants to be. There's no way we can't make this state successful if we choose to do it. Everybody needs to be involved if they care and not on the sidelines griping." □

Freelance writer Andy Faught lives in Fresno. He profiled Ruth (Griswold) Coleman '82 ("Back on Track") in the Summer 2010 issue.

"Term limits make legislative memories very short," says Chris Norby '72, making long-term goal-planning all the more difficult to sustain: "People start looking for a different office as soon as they get in." What that means for the state, he notes, is "there are no long-term goals." The Republican assemblyman representing California's 72nd District adds that the capitol itself is more remote than those of other states, further challenging governance. "Sixty percent of Californians live south of the Tehachapis," notes the legendary Oxy yell leader.



How did **Nash Petrovic '08** and **Logan Stockwell '09** wind up schlepping bags, schmoozing guests, and parking cars in Manhattan's Meatpacking district? Sam Mowe '07 recounts his own journey from Buddhist scholar to bellhop



Stockwell, *left*, and Petrovic on the job at the Standard, New York, "the trendiest new hotel in lower Manhattan," according to Mowe.



SAVED BY THE BELL HOP

BY SAM MOWE '07 | PHOTOS BY DENNIS DRENNER

SO I'M STANDING BENEATH the High Line—a section of elevated railway converted after years of disuse into a public park—and in front of the entrance to the trendiest new hotel in lower Manhattan, where I'm working as a bellhop. If New York City is your playground, then the Standard, New York is your hotel.

A taxi trunk pops, a young woman emerges, and *oh my* look at all that baggage. A bellhop will do nearly any task for a tip, but had this woman asked I'd have paid her cab fare just to check her in.

Moments later, we're in the elevator together. "What do you do?" I ask. She thinks I'm joking. When she sees the question is in earnest, she replies, "I work on TV shows." She doesn't seem offended that I don't know who she is, just surprised. "In L.A.," she adds.

"I went to college in L.A.," I say, smiling, not registering that I should recognize this 30something beauty. "A small school named Occiden—"

"Occidental!" She interrupts. "I know exactly where that is! We filmed '90210' there."

At this point my 8-year-old self tugs my sleeve and whispers in my ear: "That's Kelly Kapowski." I was in the elevator with Tiffani-Amber Thiessen, known to Gen Xers the world over for her roles on "Saved by the Bell" and "Beverly Hills, 90210."

"Oh, so you're like totally famous!" We both laugh.

I have never been good at recognizing celebrities. If you were to ask me what famous people I met during my 11-month stint at the Standard, I couldn't honestly tell you. During training, bellhops are asked not to harass high-profile guests with autograph or photograph requests. I assured them it wouldn't be an issue.

The year before working as a bellhop in New York I was studying the development of Lumbini, birthplace of the Buddha, as a Fulbright scholar in Nepal. You'd be hard-pressed to find two more opposite locations and vocations, but my experiences overseas made me an impressive candidate for the bellhop position.

The Standard doesn't care if you've worked in hospitality before; what matters more is being young, attractive, and interest-

ing. In my cover letter I wrote, "I've lived in a Buddhist monastery in India, hiked across the Himalayas, and last week I had my photograph in *The New York Times*. I'm anything but your Standard bellhop ... but I'd like to be." During one of my two interviews for the position, I likened Buddhist pilgrims to hotel guests. They loved that.

Graduating from Occidental with a degree in religious studies didn't make me young or attractive, but I suspect that it helped in the "interesting" department. Factor in an uncertain economy and the struggle to make ends meet in the Big Apple, and perhaps that explains why not one, but three recent Oxy grads—Logan Stockwell '09, Nash Petrovic '08, and yours truly—all ended up working as bellhops at the Standard, New York at the same time.

"Being a bellhop means being a good actor," Stockwell tells me. "The entire hospitality industry relies on its employees stepping outside themselves and always bringing the positive energetic persona that the hotel needs—no matter what their personal life might be dealing them at the time."

After graduating from Oxy with a degree in biology, Stockwell moved back home to New York City. Unsure of his next move, he replied to a Craigslist posting for the Standard. His training consisted of three shifts of shadowing a seasoned bellhop, taking mental notes on how he interacted with guests, parked cars, and stored luggage. "Storing luggage came to me naturally, but I really had to push myself to be outspoken and accommodating to guests," Stockwell admits. "Giving a hearty greeting is not always easy for eight hours straight, especially if the tips are not going well."

After nearly a year at the hotel, Stockwell helped Petrovic get on board at the Standard. The two had been living together in an apartment in Tribeca. Petrovic (an economics and group language major at Occidental) was getting fed up with his office-consulting job and wanted to focus more on his DJ-ing.

"Our incentive is clear—it's almost exactly 'variable pay,' as the econ department taught us," Petrovic says. "It's pretty easy work, almost everyone around you smiles, we never have to think about our job outside of the hotel. We all have other interests—acting, music, modeling—and it takes 32 hours a week or less, while giving me the



Bellhops at the Standard make "embarrassingly good money to store bags and open taxi doors," says Mowe, left, pictured with Stockwell last spring.

same, or slightly higher, income that I had in a depressing office that would control my life. Now, I feel like I control things, with minor eight-hour distractions, four times a week."

It takes heart to make it as a bellhop in Manhattan—to say nothing of strength, grit, patience, and charm. One must possess the charisma to generate a tip and the humility to accept it. The unspoken job description is: "Make sure everyone is happy." Is that even possible? An important part of what it means to be a bellhop is to be able to, without judgment, continually ask yourself, "What does it mean to be a bellhop?" You're floating, one foot in the lobby and one foot on the curb, waiting for your guests to arrive. Like choosing a liberal arts education, it requires optimism.

Jerry Lewis's 1960 comedy *The Bellboy* opens with a studio executive explaining that the movie has no plot—that it simply shows Lewis bumbling from one ridiculous situation to the next. That pretty much sums up what it's like to be a bellhop and my life experiences post-Occidental. From the vast Himalayas of Nepal to the High Line in lower Manhattan, the bellhop is now my guiding metaphor.

Not that ridiculous is a bad thing; Tiffani-Amber Thiessen tipped me a twenty. □

Sam Mowe '07 left the Standard last July. He now works as the editorial & Web assistant for Tricycle: The Buddhist Review.



Auteur Theory

Juggling genres, securing locations, and keeping their casts and crews fed, fledgling filmmakers [Tefari Casas '11](#), [Gabe Feinberg '11](#), and [Robin Feldman '11](#) discuss the creative process as they shoot their senior comps

By DICK ANDERSON | Photos by MARC CAMPOS

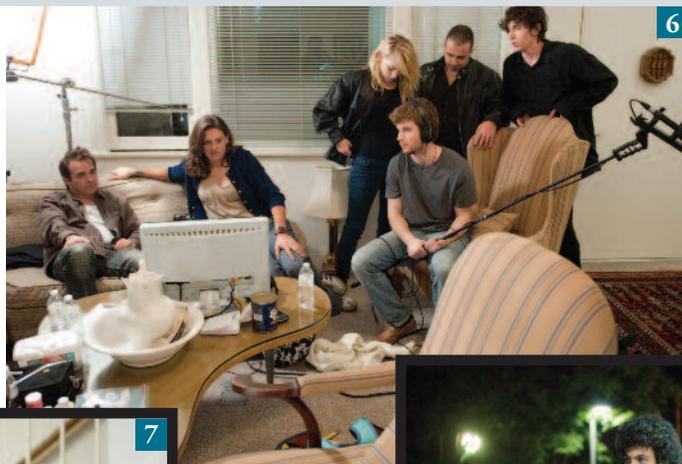
AS A JUNIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL, Robin Feldman '11 took the plunge into feature filmmaking after writing a one-act play for a festival in Louisville, Colo. *I Miss You, Dignity*—a boy-meets-girl romantic comedy about a high school grad who falls in love with a college-bound coed (played by Aylia Colwell '11)—“was not the best movie at all,” Feldman admits. But it ignited a passion for directing that led her to pursue a film major at Occidental.

Feldman has made two narrative shorts while at Oxy: *Muse* is a film without dialogue about a studio artist (Tucker Eason '12) who,

battling ennui, remembers an old sketch he made of a girlfriend (Leandra Lehmann '11) and frantically attempts to find that drawing. And *Dusk* takes place on a beach where a young guy who's all wrapped up in bandages overhears a conversation between two girls from his past—before fangs. (Both shorts can be found on Feldman's YouTube channel.)

“Projects for me are like emotional splinters that get stuck in your brain,” she says. Feldman views her senior comps film, *Death of the Artist*, as the culmination of a variety of politics and English classes she has taken at Occidental. The title pays homage to French literary critic Roland Barthes's 1968





DEATH OF THE ARTIST

Writer-director Robin Feldman '11 describes *Death of the Artist* as “a surreal gangster dramedy” about a girl who has dreamlike fantasies as she tags along on her mobster father’s business.

1. Director of photography Ghassan Jaradat '13, left, and sound/gaffer Brady Gillerlain '12 review production notes with Feldman at the craft service table. The small crew would work overnight, from 7 p.m. until past 3 a.m., in the upper parking lot at Oxy. **2.** Actors Michael Taber and Becky Goodman relax between takes in the College Guest House. The two would face off in a tense fight moments later. The actors were all found through Casting Networks LA (lcasting.com).

3. Feldman assists Brady Gillerlain '12 in placing a gel on a light. **4.** Actors Goodman and Crystal Stranger prepare for a scene in Feldman’s car (which wound up slightly dented from filming).

5. Feldman offers a lesson in gunmanship to actor Alex Gurevich. **6.** From left, stunt coordinator John Ross, Feldman, Goodman, boom operator Marc Patrick '14, Gurevich, and Taber watch footage on a monitor after filming a scene.

7. From left, Feldman works closely with Ross to choreograph a fight scene as Jaradat stands over actors Gurevich, Taber, and Goodman. Each scene involving stunts of any kind is carefully blocked and rehearsed. **8.** Goodman shows off some fake blood on her teeth during a light moment between shots. **9.** Jaradat and Feldman iron out the details of a shot during a late-night filming session in the upper parking lot at Oxy.

10. “I want the pace to be high and jumpy,” says Feldman, eyeing the monitor as a scene is filmed.





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UNGODLY

Ungodly is a trilogy of five-minute episodes (the first two of which will be graded for comps) depicting the earthbound adventures of two “juvenile deities—they’re gods, but they’ve not been given full responsibilities,” explains writer-director Gabe Feinberg ’11. **1.** From left, boom operator Tara Daley ’11, Feinberg, and director of photography Jordan Puryear ’12 hover over lead actors Robert McHalfey, left, and Adam Miller. **2.** Feinberg stands in for delivery man Jon Sterritt on the floor of his living room. **3.** Miller works on his gag reflex while Puryear checks the camera settings. **4.** McHalfey and Miller practice hoisting Sterritt into a bathtub. The confines of Feinberg’s bathroom necessitate careful blocking. **5.** Feinberg and his actors wait for final preparations on the last day of filming. **6.** Cast and crew review footage on the camera’s small screen.

essay “Death of the Author,” which puts forth the theory that an artist enters into his or her own death after a piece is done, and that the work of art must be able to live and breathe on its own. “That’s really important to me in seeing myself as an artist,” Feldman says. “I have to rely on the film to explain the film. It’s this weird circular thing.”

The senior comp, or comprehensive exam, is a staple of an Oxy education. While most comps culminate in a traditional thesis, others (depending on the major) embrace a variety of forms, among them art exhibits, music recitals, and field research projects. For the seniors in Occidental’s film and media studies program—part of the art history and visual arts department—this year’s comps include a documentary, an installation piece, a multi-channel video, and a cluster of narrative film shorts, each unique to its director.

Compared to USC or UCLA, Oxy’s film program is more indie than *Avatar* in scale. Those schools “have access to better equipment and more money,” says Gabe Feinberg ’11, a film and American studies major from Newton, Mass. Still, he sees Oxy’s modest size as a virtue: “We focus more on story than on the actual production. There’s a benefit to learning to do everything on the cheap.”

Feinberg aspires to a career writing for television, and his previous works have been mostly comedies (including the three-episode series *Get Oriented*, which can be found on his YouTube channel). For his comps, he’s taking a stab at fantasy with *Ungodly*, a three-part film about two young gods who commit “unspoken crimes” (which are eventually revealed to the audience), are stripped of their immortality, and are forced to live out their mortal existence on Earth. “It’s been a lot of fun, because I really like science fiction. You get to make things up, and no one cares.”

Feinberg took an interest in filmmaking when he was a junior in high school. “I was a terrible writer when I was younger,” he recalls. “I had to go see a writing tutor, because it was a painful process for me.” Another plus of the film major at Occidental, as he sees it, is that students tend to be more collaborative than competitive in spirit: “We all look at each other’s stuff. Sometimes we’re a little bit introverted.”

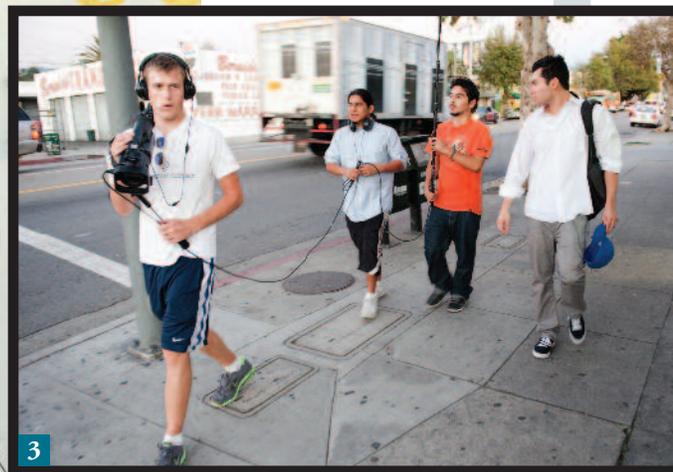
From her perspective, Feldman adds, “I really like the classroom experience—it’s more of a seminar environment, which is not the way I expected film to be taught. It’s like a forum and open discussion. There’s such a high range of projects for senior comps that



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the competitive aspect is not even applicable. You're pushing yourself and each other."

Writer-director Tefari Casas '11 is trying to involve not only Oxy students in his movie, but Highland Park residents as well—from contributing music to the soundtrack to filming on location. "We have a shoot at Benjamin Franklin High School in Highland Park that has probably been the hardest bureaucratically," he says. "I've never tried to shoot on state or city property before."

Casas, who got his start making videos in a communicative arts and sciences program at Berkeley High School, enrolled at Occidental with the goal of producing "films of my own about social injustices in our society." Last summer, he studied the relationships between Los Angeles and film noir by examining the films *The Big Sleep* (1946), *Chinatown* (1974), and *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995). "It was like a taste of graduate school," he says of his research project.

That experience informed the writing of his senior comps film, "a hip hop noir" titled *Black*. "Hip hop to me is a journalistic art, for it very much portrays and critiques and breaks down a side of the United States that we don't see a lot," says Casas. *Black* evokes "a snapshot of recession-era California. How

are the recession and the dichotomy of Eagle Rock and Highland Park and gentrification playing out within the context of education? How is the recession affecting schools? Where are they putting their money? Why are they putting it there? Those are some of the things I wanted to touch on."

Casas likes the way film noir plays with language. He wrote the role of the *femme fatale* in his film as equal parts Lil Kim and Batman (at one point in *Black* she declares, "I'm the dark-skinned knight")—"very open with her sexuality and believing that men are her lesser." Early into filming, Casas admits, he was having trouble getting that vibe from his actress—prompting him to wonder if a bit of Method acting might be in order, "even if she has to take a swing at me."

Artists are accustomed to making sacrifices for their work. Casas is preparing to take a beating from his main actor as a stunt man in *Black*. Feldman's car is a bit dinged up after shooting a scene for her film. And Feinberg has been cutting back on "excessive spending" for the last year or so with an eye toward squirreling away some of the budget for *Ungodly*. While the cast and crew are working for free, he still has to feed them, he says: "Meals are always expensive." □

BLACK

A 21st-century L.A. noir, *Black* tells the story of two Latino youths from Highland Park who are investigating the murder of a local high school football player. Their search leads them to a very conflicted coach whom viewers may or may not view as the villain of the piece. "*Chinatown* was a huge influence on my comps," says writer-director Tefari Casas '11. "I wanted to tackle a real-life issue"—in this case, racism in the sports industry. 1. Filming outside Joe's Mini Market on York Boulevard near Avenue 52 are, from left, actor Diego Castañeda '10, Casas, actor Alex Medina, and boom operator Nelson Melgar '10. 2. Producer Kristine Chong '11 posts a notice that they will be filming. The notice, written in both Spanish and English, is intended to let locals know what they are doing. 3. The cast and crew walk along York as they prepare for filming. "I opted to shoot it in long takes to give it a documentary-like feel," Casas says. 4. Casas, Melgar, and director of photography Samuel Jackson '13 do a sound check.

HARDER BETTER FASTER STRONGER



Moawad, *above*, offers encouragement on the sidelines to members of the Florida State football team. As head of IMG Performance Consulting, Moawad is on call to 82 Division I universities, including the Seminoles.

Mental conditioning professional
Trevor Moawad '95 M'96
maximizes athletes' potential by unlocking
the power of the mind

BY RHEA R. BORJA
PHOTOS BY KIRBY LEE

GROWING UP WITH A WELL-known motivational speaker for a father—Bob Moawad, former president of the National Association for Self-Esteem and an original contributor to the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series—Trevor Moawad '95 M'96 learned many important lessons at home. “My dad always told me that the problem with most people is that they live their lives as if they go into a grocery store without a shopping list,” he recalls. “So I learned quickly that where I wanted to go and what I wanted to do was going to depend largely on me.”

The elder Moawad, who died in 2007 after a seven-year battle with cancer, remains a big presence to his son. Cheering on the sidelines of the Rose Bowl last January when the University of Alabama Crimson Tide rolled over the Texas Longhorns to win their first national football championship in 18 years—the culmination of four years of work with coach Nick Saban's squad—Trevor remembers looking up at the sky and thinking, “This one's for you, Dad.”

As director of the IMG Performance Institute in Bradenton, Fla., Moawad manages a squad of employees who boost both amateur and professional athletes' leadership, communication, and mental-conditioning skills, as well as regulate their nutrition and vision, improve their physical conditioning, and maintain their overall health. “Our belief is that you don't have to be sick to get better,” he says.

Moawad employs an array of positive reinforcement tools, including motivational videos, pep talks, concentration tests, common-sense advice, and text messaging. The long list of pro athletes he has helped includes tennis great Serena Williams, teenage soccer phenom Freddy Adu, U.S. men's national soccer team member Jozy Altidore, and the Miami Dolphins football team.

Seven months after the Crimson Tide won the Bowl Championship Series title game, Moawad told the Alabama players that it was time to get back to work—that last year's champions are last year's news. “You earned your right to be here; that's great,” he said. “Now you have to earn your right to stay here.”

He encouraged them to concentrate on details that add up to a big payoff on the field: getting enough sleep, eating right, reviewing

game films, helping out teammates, and working hard. “Success,” Moawad said, looking at each player seated before him, “needs to sustain itself with more success.”

Academics didn’t come easy to the Seattle native, who spent so much time at Occidental studying in Clapp Library that he had his own carrel. “Oxy was a difficult school for me,” Moawad says. “So I outworked the average student.”

He brought that same work ethic to the athletic field. At basketball or soccer practice, he was often the first player to arrive and the last to leave. At 5’11”, he didn’t outdunk, outblock, or outscore his opponents—and, lacking the lightning-quick speed of some of his rivals, he didn’t outrun them, either. But he asked his coaches to help mitigate his weaknesses and improve his strengths. He studied how pro players elevated their game and incorporated those skills into his own. And he tried to maintain a positive attitude. “I gave every ounce I could give,” Moawad says. “I had a significant desire to be the best I could be.”

Colm McFeely, the Tigers’ assistant soccer coach at the time, remembers Moawad’s unbridled enthusiasm. When Moawad first approached him and head coach Costa Nicolaou on the lower soccer field and said he’d like to play for the Tigers, he noticed a soccer ball lying on the grass. “Well, he took that ball and screamed toward the halfway line at 100 miles per hour,” McFeely recalls. “He jumped up in the air to kick the ball—and fell down on the flat of his back.”

First impression notwithstanding, Moawad proved himself to be one of the most effective players on the team. He earned All-SCIAC honors in 1994 and 1995, and was runner-up for league MVP as a senior. “Through his attitude, hard work, performance, and sheer love of the game, he improved himself enormously,” McFeely says. “He was always looking to learn.”

Brian Newhall ’83, Occidental head basketball coach and associate athletics director, can relate to Moawad. “Both of us were more the ‘try hard’ athletes,” he says. “We had to work a little harder, do the little extras to make it on the basketball court.” As a player, Moawad stood out not just for his work ethic, but also for his mental toughness and



LEFT: Moawad (standing to the left of Alabama fullback Baron Huber, No. 40) cheers the Crimson Tide to their first national championship in 18 years last January.

BELOW: Moawad visits with Oxy soccer players Ann Trombetta ’05, Martine Donovan ’07, Sarah Havern ’06, and Mark Eaton ’07 following a talk in 2004.

support of other players, Newhall says. “Trevor represented all the positive intangibles on the team. He had the ‘it’ factor.”

International Management Group’s 400-acre training facility in Bradenton is a long way from the overcrowded Los Angeles high school where Moawad started his career. After he graduated from Oxy with a B.A. in comparative politics in 1995 and a master’s in education in 1996, Moawad taught for two years at John Marshall High School in Los Feliz—where some of his students couldn’t speak English, and his classes were often so crowded that some students had to share desks.

Moawad taught courses in history and psychology, as well as a class he developed titled “Unlocking Your Potential.” He learned how to work with students’ short attention spans, how to engage them with visual imagery and other tools, and how to change direction in his lessons to better reach students. “It was like Harvard for classroom management,” Moawad says. “My ability to get in front of the Miami Dolphins or 1,500 athletes at the Under Armour Combine [an event open to high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors looking to measure their athletic potential] was shaped in large part by learning how to survive at John Marshall.”

He taught for another two years at a private high school in Boca Raton, Fla., where he also served as a golf and soccer coach. Moawad’s introduction to IMG Academies—which has grown into one of the top multi-sport training and educational institutions worldwide since its founding in 1978—came through an IMG coaching clinic. He was so impressed with IMG’s people, teaching methods, and facilities that he interned for the company. That internship led to a full-time gig as a mental-conditioning consultant.



Florida State, Alabama photos courtesy Trevor Moawad ’95 M’96

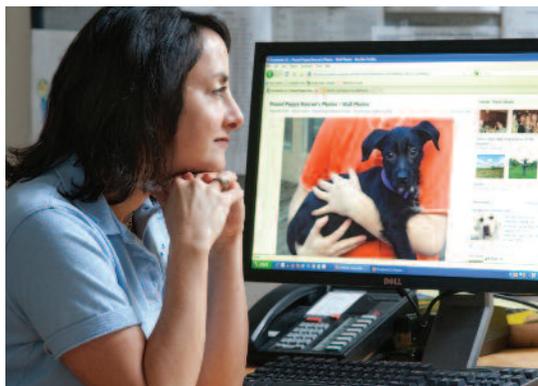
After 11 years at IMG Academies, the last three of them as director of the IMG Performance Institute, Moawad is transitioning into an even bigger role. In his new job as head of IMG Performance Consulting, he is on call to Division I universities and sports franchises such as Dutch pro soccer team Ajax Amsterdam and the Welsh Rugby Union national team.

In addition, Moawad is helping IMG partner with sportswear manufacturer Under Armour and the Mayo Clinic to develop the Combine 360, a global measurement standard for sports performance for recreational and professional athletes alike. The 90-minute test measures mental and physical fitness, nutrition, mobility, and other factors. “It’s trying to help athletes more than just running faster and jumping higher,” he says. “It’s about improving how you train, what you eat, and how you mentally prepare to perform at your best.”

Like his father, Moawad lasers in on people’s untapped potential by helping them understand the power of the mind. “When you have an *internal* locus of control, then you maintain a firm hold on the direction you’re going,” he says. His career trajectory brings to mind another piece of advice that his father imparted to Moawad long ago: “Your attitude, not your aptitude, ultimately determines your altitude.” □

One PUPPY at a Time

By SAMANTHA B. BONAR '90
Photos by JIM BLOCK



Thanks to the Internet (and to Facebook in particular), Pound Puppy Rescue can quickly get the word out about dogs in need to a social network more than 6,000 members strong. To visit the PPR website, go to poundpuppyrescue.org or “like” PPR at facebook.com/PoundPuppyRescue.

Indrani Gardella '91 devotes more than 40 hours a week as a volunteer for a Bay Area animal rescue group—and her work results in many a happy tail



Lydia

Lydia is a mother of nine who was taken to an animal shelter in Bakersfield with a case of double pneumonia, mastitis, and three shots to the chest with a pellet gun. After Gardella nursed her back to health, Lydia found her “forever family” (“a match made in heaven,” according to the Pound Puppy Rescue Facebook page). Now she has a new name: Juno.

WHEN AN EMACIATED YELLOW LAB MIX with a litter of nine newborn puppies was dropped off at a Bakersfield animal shelter last year, a shelter volunteer knew just the person to call. Indrani (Stangl) Gardella '91 of Los Altos is well known among California pound and shelter operators as a board member of Pound Puppy Rescue, a non-profit animal rescue organization founded in 2001.

“We get pleas and calls from shelters all over the state any time a pregnant dog, a litter of puppies, or a single puppy under 4 months old is found as a stray or surrendered by owners,” Gardella says. “In shelters, sometimes they euthanize the whole litter, sometimes they euthanize the pregnant mom before she gives birth. Our mission is to pull puppies out of pounds and shelters who are at risk of disease and euthanasia.”

PPR quickly arranged to pick up “Lydia” and her nine pups—who were already slated to be put down. Lydia was suffering from double pneumonia and mastitis and had been shot three times in the chest with a pellet gun. Gardella slowly nursed her back to health, and two months later Lydia was adopted by a young married couple—both doctors—in the Bay Area. PPR found “wonderful homes” for all of her pups as well.

Lydia now enjoys daily runs, trips to the city and Tahoe, and hiking. “She looks like a different dog,” Gardella says. “Her coat is shiny, and her ribs don’t show anymore. It warms my heart thinking about her!”

Pound Puppy Rescue does not have a physical shelter; it consists of a network of about 50 dedicated volunteers who retrieve puppies from shelters and foster them in their homes (trying to keep litters together if possible) until they can find permanent placements. They arrange to have the puppies spayed and neutered, given shots and any needed medical attention, and have them microchipped and de-wormed. Photos of the available puppies are posted on PPR’s website and Facebook page (which has more than 6,000 fans) when they reach 6 weeks old. Prospective adopters fill out an online application, then go through a rigorous screening process before they are approved.

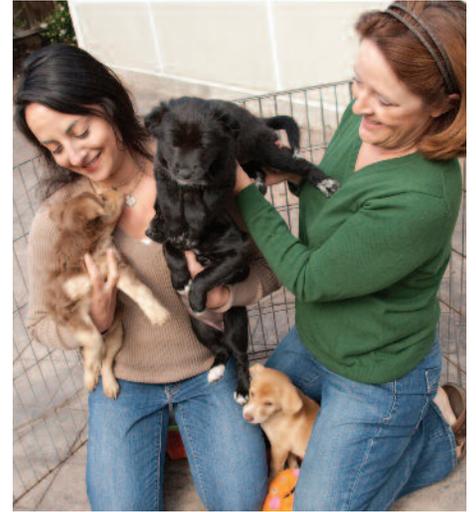
PPR will rescue dogs from as far south as Los Angeles and as far north as Humboldt, but only adopts them out to people living within about a half-hour drive of the Bay Area, since the organization requires in-person interviews and home checks. “Most of our puppies come to us from shelters in more rural areas outside of the immediate Bay Area, where there are fewer homes and opportunities for adoption,” Gardella explains. “Many of these shelters are overrun with puppies and dogs that just need a chance to prove how wonderful they can be.”

Lacking the staff or foster network to be able to care for young puppies and pregnant moms who need extra TLC, many shelters turn to PPR for help. Although the focus is on puppies, “We cannot always



Gardella cradles **Cody**, a pup from the *Little Giants* litter. He recently enjoyed a playdate with his brother, **Chili** (aka Timmy), and both “are settling into their forever homes really well,” according to an update on the PPR Facebook page.

Gardella talks with a young couple about the adoption process, *right*, and lends a helping hand to Sharon Ashley, the foster of the *Little Giants* litter, *far right*. The pups all have since found loving homes.



turn away adult dogs,” says Gardella, who lives with two rescue dogs of her own. Sutter, 4, is a cattle-dog-shepherd mix who wakes her up every morning with “his nose 1 millimeter from my nose, wagging his tail.” And Marshall, almost 2, is a Lab-Great Dane mix so obsessed with fetching that he once dropped a slimy tennis ball into Gardella’s morning bowl of oatmeal.

In 2009, its busiest year to date, PPR saved 375 puppies—“more than one puppy for each day of the year!” says Gardella, who, when not rescuing canines, is the student services manager in the mechanical engineering department at Stanford University.

“Indrani is awesome,” says Charlin Yamamoto, who has worked closely with Gardella in PPR for the last four years. “She’s like the other set of hands that I don’t have. It’s one of those roles that you kind of fall into, and the only people who are good at it are the people who care. She’s one of those people who really cares about getting the puppies into good homes. She’s really driven by that passion.”

The American Humane Society estimates that as many as 4 million dogs and cats are euthanized every year, and that more than half of the dogs who enter shelters (56.5 percent) are put to sleep. (The actual numbers could be much higher, as shelters are not required to report such data to a government agency.)

“There are too many people who consider dogs expendable and drop them at the shelter whenever a life change makes them inconvenient,” says Gardella, who majored in cognitive science at Oxy and later received a master’s in counseling. “It is heartbreaking to think about these dogs sitting in a shelter waiting to be put down while puppy mills and breeders are producing millions more, selling them for a huge profit.”

A dog enthusiast for as long as she can remember (“We’ve always had dogs in my family”), Gardella began volunteering at a shelter in the Bay Area about 12 years ago, but wasn’t happy with the way it was run. In 2003, after a chance encounter with a woman walk-

ing a dog adopted from Pound Puppy Rescue, Gardella contacted the organization that same day and started volunteering. Soon they asked her to be on the board.

Most PPR volunteers have full-time jobs on top of their volunteer activities. “If I could figure out a way to make a living doing this, I definitely would,” she says. “I have my day job. Almost all my other time is spent working on dogs.”

Gardella estimates she spends at least 40 hours a week on her dog rescue activities, which include answering 50 to 60 e-mails a day, making veterinarian appointments, screening applicants, arranging foster care, coordinating adoption events, interviewing potential adopters and doing home visits, running puppy orientation sessions, administering PPR’s Facebook page, and attending quarterly board meetings. She also fosters the occasional puppy herself, and keeps a crate behind her office door. “PPR is pretty much my life,” she admits. “I work at Stanford to put food on the table.”

“Indrani is crucial to the day-to-day operations,” Yamamoto says. “She follows up with everybody and feels guilty when she doesn’t. She will take the time to respond to people and to answer questions about training and medical issues even after the dogs have been adopted.”

PPR’s main source of funding is the adoption fee (\$300 for puppies, \$175 for adult dogs), “Every penny of which goes back to the dogs,” Gardella says. The rescue gets a handful of private donations as well. “We are like a big family with one thing in common—our love of dogs. Our only reward is knowing that we have changed the lives of the puppies we have touched.”

Since PPR doesn’t have its own facility, volunteers hold adoption events at area pet stores. Would-be puppy owners are pre-screened from online applications. “Most of our litters have more people interested in them than we have puppies, and we have to turn people away,” Gardella says. “We’ve been really fortunate.”



Tobey, a Lab mix, and a sibling from their litter of eight were taken in by PPR—the other six went to a Lab rescue group. After an initial adoption that lasted all of three days, he found a new home with a second family three days later.

A Catahoula leopard dog-German shepherd mix with a broken pelvis and a litter of five newborn puppies was dropped off at a Bakersfield animal shelter last year. A PPR volunteer took her in, naming her **Hope**. Hope healed and wound up being adopted by her PPR foster mom.

Every puppy who comes into PPR gets a name—and with so many rescued puppies each year, the staff must get creative. They've named litters after types of pasta (Penne, Rigatoni, Gnocchi, Fusilli), coffee drinks (Mocha, Latte), American beers (Bud, Miller, Coors), the Three Stooges, the Powerpuff Girls, and characters from *Steel Magnolias*, "Mad Men," and "Glee."

Facebook has been a boon for the group. When Gardella was notified of Lydia and her litter, she immediately posted a video of the mother and pups and an urgent plea for help on PPR's Facebook page. "The outpouring of support was unbelievable," she says. "I had people volunteering to drive to get her within a couple of hours. Someone who just happened to be a 'fan' of our page, but who had never adopted from us, lives in Fresno. She offered to drive that afternoon to pick them up, and then keep them overnight until we could figure out how to get them from Fresno. Someone else who lives in Fresno offered to drive them to Los Banos, and a PPR volunteer up here picked them up from there and brought them to us." PPR also raised \$1,800 in just three days on Facebook for Lydia's urgent medical care.

Besides finding dogs homes, the group's secondary mission is education. "We talk to hundreds of people every month who are interested in adopting a puppy but have no idea how much work and effort it takes to raise a good dog," Gardella says. "We turn away people who we feel are not ready, but we give them homework and tell them to come back and try again." Before adoption events, PPR gives an orientation session that describes what life with an 8-week-old puppy will be like. "Puppies are going to bite, they're going to chew, they're going to pee and poop," she says. "There are several families that walk away each time, rethinking their plans. This is a great outcome because it saves us from having to re-home a dog that was too much for the family to handle."

One of the "most heartbreaking things" is when, a year or two after adopting out a puppy, PPR gets a call from a shelter saying one of their now-adult dogs has been dumped there. "In the contract, adopters are supposed to call us first and let us take the dog back," Gardella says. "People break up, and neither one wants the dog. Or people break up, and one dumps the dog on the other. These are stories we hear every day. A lot of times when people give up their dog there are other issues, such as they never trained the dog. We've gotten some dogs back that have been a real challenge. But we are dedicated to the dogs to the end. We will hire trainers. We will help pay for training so the family will keep the dog."

PPR doesn't discriminate by breed. "We've had lots of pit bull-mix puppies," Gardella says. "We joke that any rescue dog more than 60 pounds is part pit

bull and any less than 30 pounds is part Chihuahua. Lab-pit is very common. When we know they are part pit, we are looking for savvy people. Pit bulls are awesome dogs, but they do have to be managed. If you are docile or passive, they will take over the house."

Gardella and Sutter, a cattle-dog-shepherd mix whom she has had since he was 7 days old. Her friends call him "the Brad Pitt of dogs."



Sometimes, however, PPR, which just opened a Grass Valley/Nevada City chapter, simply doesn't have the resources to take a dog or a litter. "Our unofficial motto is 'We can't save them all,' and sometimes we have to turn them away," Gardella says. "It's really hard."

"Indrani has a problem with saying no to shelter requests," Yamamoto says. "We get two to three shelter requests a day, and she can't say no a lot. She's working on that."

In some instances, fosters can't say no to their adorable charges. PPR calls these puppies their "failed fosters"—meaning the foster parent fell in love with the pup so "we didn't even look" for a new family for it, Gardella says. "Every one of the volunteers has one." (Sutter and Marshall are her own "failures.")

But for Gardella and PPR, which has rescued more than 2,000 dogs in the last 10 years, the work is never done. "We can only do so much, and I focus on the ones I can save," she says. "Nursing a dog through an illness, like Lydia; bottle-feeding a puppy; going to the home of a potential adopter and just getting that great feeling; knowing that our puppy will thrive—those things keep me going. I love seeing how happy and appreciative the families are. We change people's lives for the better—in addition to saving the dogs." ■



Lazarus was given a euthanasia shot and left for dead in an overcrowded shelter 10 years ago. He woke up in the refrigerator and was discovered when Animal Control heard him barking the next morning. Facing euthanasia a second time 10 years later when his owner abandoned him, Pound Puppy Rescue successfully fought to free him from the shelter last August. Now he has a new home and gets to go to the beach every day.

John Paul, Bill Spencer, Randy Peterson, and Corey Evans—all 1972 grads of Oxy—reunite near Spencer's home in Estes Park, Colo., in early October.

Photos courtesy Bill Spencer '72



together all these years. (Some of us regret leaving those Oxy girlfriends behind.)

At the time, we viewed the undergraduate experience as a procession of classroom studies, student attachments, athletic and artistic endeavors, parties, romantic liaisons, and travel on the path to being thoughtful adults. Over the years, we realized that the depth of our Oxy-born bonds became some of the most treasured of our maturing lives.

Our first get-together in a dozen years occurred in 2008, at a cabin in the Sierras. We sat down for breakfast and did not leave our chairs for nearly 14 hours of catching up. Then, and more recently at another cabin in the Rockies, we discussed the highs and lows of our lives; the lessons learned and our unfinished yearnings. We shared our accomplishments and wish lists; our careers and compromises; our successes and short-

comings; the love of our families; and the simple, honest meanings of who we are.

From left, Kim Bailey '71, Evans, Peggy Bryant '71, Spencer, Sandy Wayne '71, Peterson, Paul, and Sandy Dravo '73 at an ATO party in November 1969.

Brothers for Life

Bill Spencer '72 and his closest Bell-Young buddies ruminate on their four-year college odyssey—and the depth of their Oxy bonds

IN THE FALL OF 1968, when the four of us arrived for freshman orientation at Bell-Young, two things were certain. First was the annoying realization that Occidental had only one coed dorm and we were not in it (a situation that we would remedy as sophomores). Second, we were complete strangers, and did not know that the Oxy environment had already begun to transform our unfamiliar beginnings into lasting friendships that would bond us for more than four decades.

One of us saved the life of another in the spring of 1970 while scuba diving off Catalina Island. Two of us traveled together in Europe for two months between our junior and senior years. Three of us went to grad school. We stood up for one another at the altar; among us, we have fathered 11 children. We have attended six weddings and a

funeral and lost spouses, found new ones, and blended families.

Our lives have grown apart through career choices, marriages, and the constraints of geography. In the 38-plus years since graduation, we have gathered just three times to celebrate our friendship and trade our life stories. One powerful insight we shared at a reunion in October is that the Occidental experience goes beyond the Quad, classroom, athletic field, fraternity, and our diplomas.

At Oxy, our collegiate journey churned with activity as we pursued various majors; competed in football, track, rugby, water polo, and swimming; and pledged ATO. We sat on the Quad, worked for Clancy, jumped off the Student Union into the arms of waiting fraternity brothers, and won scholarships and grants to pursue our studies. Two of us married our Oxy girlfriends and have been

Sure, we told old stories about faculty members, campus life, and the milestones that seemed to define us. The memories of our Oxy years have turned into meditations on relationships that could have been; career-related decisions that we celebrate or second-guess; and the events we have most needed to reconcile or have lived to regret. We sat on mountaintops and asked big questions: “How much is enough?” and “When will we be done?”

In our later years we have not always agreed on politics, religion, ethics, or even our Oxy memories. We tease one another about our expanding waistlines, collegiate foibles, and unmet challenges. But in the end, it is our Oxy-grown relationships and the shared experiences of friendship, honesty, and mutual respect that define our love.

One day we will gather to go fishing or take a hike, and one of us will be missing—the idea of which is still too much to accept. After all, we expect to live forever—just as we did that first morning in Bell-Young. □