Governor Taps Paolucci, Badillo to Head CUNY Board

The following press release was issued by Gov. Pataki’s office on Feb. 22:

G overnor George E. Pataki today designated Dr. Anne Attura Paolucci as Chair of The City University’s Board of Trustees. Dr. Paolucci will replace James P. Murphy, who has served as Chairman since 1989. Gov. Pataki also designated Herman Badillo to be Vice Chairman of the Board, replacing Edith B. Everett.

“I am grateful to Mr. Murphy and Ms. Everett for their steadfast commitment and leadership during their tenure as Chair and Vice Chair,” Gov. Pataki said. “I am pleased they will remain as Board members and look forward to working with them to provide the highest quality education to each and every student in the CUNY system.”

Chairman Murphy said, “It has been a great honor to have served as Chair since 1989. My principal focus as Chair has been and will continue to be to preserve and strengthen the mission of the University in providing access to affordable quality higher education for thousands of New Yorkers.”

Gov. Pataki said, “Dr. Paolucci’s and Mr. Badillo’s exceptional credentials will ensure that CUNY students continue to receive the highest quality education possible as we move into the 21st century. I am confident they will bring commitment, leadership, and vision to their new roles as Chair and Vice Chair of the CUNY Board.”

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said, “Herman Badillo has a proven record on education. He has committed his career and his livelihood to the betterment of New York City schools. I am sure that Herman, a product of CUNY himself, will continue to be a role model for the thousands of students who have entrusted The City University with their hopes and dreams for a quality education.”

Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds said, “We are pleased to welcome Anne Paolucci to her new role as Chair of The City University’s Board of Trustees. Dr. Paolucci has received numerous honors, including appointment by President Regan as a member of the National Council on the Humanities (1986-94); Honorary Degree in Humane Letters, Lehman College, 1995; nomination for the Pulitzer Prize for Queensboro Bridge (and other poems), 1995; the First National Elena Cornaro Award of the Order of the Sons of Italy, 1993; and the City-Wide Italian Heritage Award, 1982.

Badillo said, “As a graduate of City College, I found that my degree was the avenue of opportunity for me. I am pleased to serve on the Board in any capacity Gov. Pataki wants me to. I want to make sure the high standards that enabled CUNY to open doors for me will enable those of generations after me to benefit as well.”

Badillo is currently practicing law at Fischbein, Badillo, Wagner, Harding in New York City. He currently serves as a member of the General Education Committee at Lehman College and as a member of the Coalition of Chancellors, Presidents and New York State legislators to increase the investment of funds in New York’s colleges and universities.

CUNY Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds and SUNY Chancellor John W. Ryan joined Chancellor Kenneth A. Shaw of Ssyracuse University and six Presidents—Thomas H. Jackson (Rochester), Augusta Kappner (Bank Street College of Education), Joseph A. O’Hare (Fordham), L. Jay Oliva (New York University), Hunter R. Rawlings III (Cornell), and George Rupp (Columbia)—in declaring that campuses are “inextricably linked to the future economic, cultural, and social health of the Empire State” and that “higher education is a major industry.” They urged support for student and institutional aid, budgetary flexibility, educational opportunity programs, and the State’s Centers for Advanced Technology (CATS).

CUNY’s CAT is headquartered at City College. The leaders said, in part, “These are difficult financial times. State financial support for higher education, including institutional funding per student and other forms of aid, has been substantially reduced over the last eight years. The institutions we represent in both the public and independent sectors have adjusted their programs, pooled their resources, trimmed their budgets, and cut their costs. To the fullest extent possible, they have sought to cushion their students and faculty from the effect of these reductions, increasing the provision of financial aid from their own resources to retain the opportunity for student access and choice; but their ability to continue to do so is stretched to the limit and they need help in the priority areas we have identified.”

For the full text of the coalition’s statement, visit the CUNY Web site (http://www.cuny.edu) and click on News and Events.

Coalition of Chancellors, Presidents Urges Greater Support for Colleges

A n extraordinary coalition of leaders of public and private higher education in New York State met on Feb. 26 to issue a joint statement urging the Governor and New York State legislators to increase the investment of funds in New York’s colleges and universities.

CUNY Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds and SUNY Chancellor John W. Ryan joined Chancellor Kenneth A. Shaw of Ssyracuse University and six Presidents—Thomas H. Jackson (Rochester), Augusta Kappner (Bank Street College of Education), Joseph A. O’Hare (Fordham), L. Jay Oliva (New York University), Hunter R. Rawlings III (Cornell), and George Rupp (Columbia)—in declaring that campuses are “inextricably linked to the future economic, cultural, and social health of the Empire State” and that “higher education is a major industry.” They urged support for student and institutional aid, budgetary flexibility, educational opportunity programs, and the State’s Centers for Advanced Technology (CATS).

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Return to New York: The CUNY Investment

R eproduced above is the cover design, by Bill Freeland, Director of LaGuardia Community College’s Communications Department, of the new published economic impact report describing CUNY’s contributions to the financial vitality of the New York metropolitan area. Some highlights from the report:

- The University’s total economic impact within New York State is nearly $13 billion annually, more than 10 times the size of CUNY’s budget.

- CUNY graduates and employees generate $717 million in State and City tax revenues yearly, almost exactly returning the $716 million in State and City aid the University received in 1996-97.

- Ten years after graduation, 80% of CUNY alumni are still living in New York.

- The average bachelor’s degree recipient earns $690,000 more than a high school graduate during a 40-year career.

Continued on page 5
Removing “In” from Incurable

On Nov. 26, 1996, Hunter College’s 1937 summa cum laude graduate Gertrude Elion added to her impressive array of honors the Distinguished Alumna Award of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). The Bronx native, who has devoted her life to the study of so-called incurable diseases, has taken home no fewer than 25 honorary degrees, has had a scholarship fund endowed in her name by her longtime employer, Burroughs Wellcome, and became the first woman admitted to the National Inventors Hall of Fame (she holds more than 40 patents). But the jewel in her crown is the 1989 Nobel Prize she shared with George Hitchings for research that led to the development of AZT, the first drug approved for AIDS treatment.

In her remarks on the festive occasion at the annual AASCU meeting in Atlanta, Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds observed, “For myself and a generation of women who do science, Gertrude Elion served as a role model. The New York Times imagined her as your favorite aunt, the one who encourages your dreams and hopes. Of course, encouraging the dreams and hopes of women is often a risky proposition. Her characteristic humility notwithstanding, this is a woman who had guts when women were not asked to have guts, who was an innovator when women were expected to follow routines, and who parlayed limited opportunities for women in science into an internationally recognized career.”

Noting the folly of calling Dr. Elion’s recent years a “retirement,” Chancellor Reynolds concluded, “She knows what Eleanor Roosevelt knew: When you cease to make a contribution you die.” Retirement for Gertrude Elion has included faculty positions at Duke University, the University of North Carolina, and Ohio State, as well as a position as Scientist Emerita at GlaxoWellcome. Her light has burned brightly for the 50 years since she graduated from Hunter College. Her peers in science have studied by this light, and generations of women scientists have taken their own candles to hers.

A reception was organized in Atlanta by Hunter College and its alumni office for the occasion. President David Caputo and Hunter alumni living in the area joined in recognition of their distinguished alumna.

ESTIMATING CUNY’S GRADUATION RATE

A More Equitable Measuring Stick

By David Rindskopf
Professor of Educational Psychology, Graduate School and University Center

A college’s or university’s graduation rate is often used to evaluate its quality. With a low graduation rate, a school is sometimes considered inadequate, while a high rate supposedly indicates that the institution has taken in high-quality students and given them the support they needed to make it to Commencement Day.

But when a CUNY undergraduate transfers to Harvard, and graduates from Harvard, who do you think gets credit for her? Given the traditional way of calculating graduation rates, she lowers the CUNY rate. Public institutions around the country are becoming aware of this problem, but few are able to follow every student who leaves. For this reason I have developed a new concept: the “estimated graduation rate.” This offers a more equitable measure of a college’s or university’s performance than traditional rates.

The concept of using statistical methods to produce estimated graduation rates comes from Matthew Goldstein, President of Baruch College and also a statistician. I have developed methods that can be used easily by administrators to get a better picture of their institution’s performance.

If you follow an entering class of students for a length of time, one of three outcomes will generally occur for each individual: graduation, failure, or a departure in bad standing or good standing. The usual graduation rate statistic considers all dropouts as failures, even if they were in good standing at the time the student departed. The usual rate is thus the number of graduates divided by the number in the entering class.

Of course, not all dropouts are failures, nor would they all have failed if, for example, they had continued at one of CUNY’s colleges. We have reason to believe, in the light of research by Prof. David Lavin of Lehman College and the Graduate School, that many graduate from other institutions (see the interview with Prof. Lavin in the Fall issue of CUNY Matters). My method estimates the number of well-performing dropouts who would have graduated if they had stayed at CUNY. These are added to the actual number graduating. This number is then divided by the number in the entering class to produce the “estimated graduation rate.”

I have drawn this model from survival analysis, a technique that is often used in medical research to model the length of time that patients survive when receiving different treatments. Since survival time is rarely constant, I focused my model on the actual number graduating in each degree program. For the associate degree, the usual graduation rate for full-time, regularly admitted students is about 28%; the estimated rate is 45%. For the bachelor’s degree, the usual rate is 40%, but the estimated rate is 65%.

The estimated graduation rate can be used by administrators as an additional tool to evaluate how well the institution is performing, and to plan for the future. If the estimated rate is much lower than the traditional rate, a school might see what can be done to retain more students.

Clearly, the unsophisticated use of only the usual graduation rate unfairly penalizes schools such as CUNY that have large numbers of students who transfer. The estimation methods predict that many students who dropped out would have graduated had they stayed at CUNY.

LEHMAN’S DRUID LUKE SKYWALKER

Rare Mounting of Yeats Cycle

In January five rarely performed plays by William Butler Yeats were staged as The Cuchulain Cycle by the young Terranova Company at Lehman College’s Lovinger Theatre. Time Out New York described the cycle as “alldysyncratic and elu- sive—part supernatural autobiography, part portrayal of the artist as a Druid Luke Skywalk- er” and praised the Terranova-Lovinger collaboration as a “stirring interpretation...full of seductive lyricism.” The Celtic hero Cuchulain (pronounced coo-hullen) figures in each of the dramas, which range in style from imitations of highly realistic Japanese Noh to neo-Shakespearean tragedy and heroic farce. The plays also range over much of Yeats’s life: the earliest, On Baile’s Strand, dates from 1904, and the last, The Death of Cuchulain, presaged by months the poet’s own death in 1939.

Terranova’s artistic director brought an extra “e” and ideal experience to the production; Ray Yeates was formerly the deputy artistic director of Dublin’s venerable Abbey Theater. For the cycle’s sets and costumes he chose the currently very active Mexican-American visual artist Andrea Arroyo, who found Yeats’s characters “a boundless gift. They took me into a new realm of my imagination.” Featured here are her designs for the Blind Man and the Fool in On Baile’s Strand and the hero in sea-sprite form in The Death of Cuchulain.

Pictured from the same play is Stacy KomLosy as the spirit temptress Fand who lures Cuchulain, played by Chris Gonzalez Denzer, back to life. Yeats held cantankerous views about large congregations of theater-goers. In The Death of Cuchulain the poet’s alter ego complains, “I wanted an audience of 50 or a hundred...If there are more than a hundred, I won’t be able to escape people who are educating themselves out of the Book Societies and the like, sciolists all, pick-pockets and opinionated bitches.” Happily mindful of this, Lehman’s Yeats cycle ran for two weeks to large audiences.
Delivering a Campus to Students with Disabilities

Since 1973 Merrill Parra has been director of the pioneering External Education Program for the Homebound at Queensborough Community College. An M.B.A. program with its own accreditation, Parra describes an exciting new era of digital and laser technology opening up for current and future Homebound students.

On Mondays at 8:00 a.m., while thousands of CUNY students are on subways and buses to their various home campuses, another group of students is getting ready for class with a different itinerary. Throughout the boroughs, they are at home turning on their speaker phones and preparing for a “connect” to Queensborough Community College. “Are you ready for class?” asks Prof. Larry Cohen, as he speaks to a Homebound student from a classroom in the Humanities Building. “Yes I’m all set, but I have a question about last night’s homework,” says Bob Cimino, a Homebound student living on Staten Island. As the accounting class gets underway, the 40-plus students seated in the classroom also begin to take part in the discussion.

The year was 1973, eight years before the passage of Amendment 504 to the Federal Rehabilitation Act, a landmark in assuring civil rights for the disabled, and 18 years before the Americans with Disabilities Act. In that year President Kurt R. Schmeller took a bold step forward by introducing Queensborough’s telephone-to-home program. Initially launched to accommodate a small number of graduating students from New York City’s Bureau of Home Instruction, the experiment in distance learning proved so successful that it soon became a permanent operation. Course offerings were quickly expanded so that students could register in a variety of degree programs. With faculty support the program eventually swelled to include almost all academic departments. The program was quick to receive national recognition from the higher education and disability communities and has served as a model for similar programs at many other institutions.

Telephone technology was originally selected as the medium of instruction because it offered great flexibility in class scheduling at very low cost. Unlike other distance learning programs, QCC’s External Education Program can offer as many as 60 different course sections simultaneously. The telephone provides a real-time link to the student at home, who can join in classroom dialogue and become an active class participant. This is an important feature for a population that often, and with good reason, can feel quite isolated from campus life.

Since its inception the Program has continued to seek new and effective modes for classroom instruction. A 1993 collaboration with CUNY-TV produced a unique 15-week course in Film Studies. Last year, computer and whiteboard—a.k.a. softboard—technology was used to pioneer the teaching of mathematics to Homebound students using a revolutionary single-line modem (hitherto, voice and graphics required very expensive separate phone lines). The advantage of a whiteboard is that, through laser technology, certain information a student writes on a whiteboard can be stored and reviewed. New technology also makes it possible now for the student at home to both see and hear what is happening in the classroom.

We at Homebound are constantly on the lookout for ways to use major marketplace advances in technology for applications in higher education. Applications that reduce cost are especially appealing to us, since about two-thirds of Homebound students are from economically disadvantaged circumstances. Indeed, since 1976, when the city’s budget crisis led to the elimination of college funds for the Homebound program, the bulk of our funding has come from the U.S. Department of Education’s Student Support Service Program.

Prof. Cohen’s accounting class nears the end of the hour. As he gets ready to assign an exam problem, he announces a midterm exam for the following week. Before locking the speaker phone into one of 60 telephone cabinets located throughout the campus, he reminds Bob Cimino to ask his Homebound counselor to schedule a proctor for the midterm. He then puts the Homebound key-ring into his briefcase and hurries on to his next class, another Homebound student awaits his call. Each year approximately 100 students participate in Homebound studies. Like Cimino, they may reside on Staten Island or in any of the seven counties that constitute the greater metropolitan area.

Homebound students are like other CUNY students except for a significant disability that prevents them from attending classes on campus. They come to us from diverse backgrounds with a range of experiences and goals. They’re frequently prepared and disabling conditions also vary. Some have had successful careers but need to make major career adjustments for disability-related reasons. Some come in pursuit of specific credentials and skills, and others hope to fulfill a lifelong dream of a college diploma.

Participants in the program are required to meet the same academic requirements as students on campus, sending homework assignments by fax, modem, or mail. The College’s librarians assist with materials for research projects and have developed a mail-order service. Where required, computer and other equipment is loaned to the student for the duration of a particular course. Exams are proctored in the student’s home. Limited-at-home tutoring, supplementary video tapes, portable lab kits, language tapes, and other academic aids help the homebound student to compensate for being at a distance from the classroom.

Every student coming into the program is assigned a counselor, who becomes the student’s eyes, ears and legs on campus. In addition to performing the traditional roles of a college counselor, the Homebound counselor works in tandem with faculty members to provide special tutoring and any required supplementary materials. Since many of our students are supported by state rehabilitation agencies—the Vocational Education Services for Individuals with Disabilities for Homebound students—special material has been procured by the Homebound Program. Approximately 10% of our students use computer voice recognition systems, purchased for them primarily through State funding.

Since many of the students enrolling in the program have employment as an end goal, the Homebound Program has been a steadfast proponent of home-based learning. To this end, participants are encouraged to register for a three-credit co-op class that places them in real-world learning environments. A series of State vocational education grants has made it possible for students to fulfill their 120-hour requirement by interning from home as researchers, desk-top publishers, mediators, accountants, counselors, and developers of business plans. With the explosive recent growth of World Wide Web-related commerce, a number of our graduates have gone on to establish home-based offices, primarily in the business arena.

Over the years participants in the Program have done very well academically. We are particularly proud that the retention and graduation rates for this group exceed those of their on-campus counterparts. Homebound students are frequent recipients of special honors and awards at both the local and national level. Graduates have been counted among prestigious Bello, Zeller and Vera B. Douthit awardees. Graduates may transfer to Queens College’s Homebound Program, an option made possible through a FYFSE grant.

Firmly believing that academics alone will not produce a fulfilling collegiate life, we encourage Homebound students to “participate” via speaker phone in other on-campus events and clubs. Over the years, Homebound students have been elected to serve as officers in student government and in the alumni association. They also have their own organization. Every Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., students riding throughout the city are linked to the College by conference call, in which they exchange ideas, socialize, and hear guest speakers.

Past special events and programs have included a collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art and with the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (the latter funded by the Dole Foundation). The Homebound organization presents a vehicle whereby students can “come together” to form partnerships. We can even boast of a marriage between two students who met over their speaker phones. A reception for students, faculty and staff is held annually. This often presents the first opportunity for students and teacher to meet face to face. When Prof. Cohen meets his homebound student Bob Cimino next month, no doubt they will erase the fantasy pictures of each other they have imagined through weeks on the speaker phone.

De Louise Mirrer
Vice Chancellor

Spanish, Sephardic Scholar Named

O n Feb. 10 the Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Louise Mirrer to be the University’s Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The widely published scholar of Spanish and Sephardic language and literature and women’s studies arrives from the University of Minnesota at Twin Cities in July and will succeed Richard Freeland, who departed to assume the presidency of Northeastern University last fall.

In addition to his dual appointment as Professor of Arts, Sciences and Engineering at Minnesota for the last two years, Mirrer pursued several initiatives, including the development of Web page use in large-enrollment courses, the improvement of graduate student teaching skills, and the enhancement of K-12 articulation and university-business community relations. Her most recent post, however, belies long experience on the New York scene. She joined Fordham University’s Spanish department in 1979, eventually became its chair, and departed in 1994 after three years as chair of Fordham’s Humanities Division.

Mirrer holds a double Ph.D. from Stanford University in Spanish and Humanities, as well as a Diploma in Linguistics from Cambridge University. Her magna cum laude B.A. in Spanish was earned at the University of Pennsylvania.


Mirrer is married to Professor David Halle, a sociologist at U.C.L.A.; they have three children.
Just as CUNY Law pioneered new ways of teaching, its graduates have been trailblazers themselves. Ruth Lowenkron, for example, is Director of the Disabilities Law Center. With the passage in 1988 of New York's Fair Housing Act (which expressly included those with disabilities within its protections), and the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, the field of disability law has truly come into its own. Lowenkron now heads an office of five attorneys, who are handling ground-breaking disability law litigation. Among their most recent battles was a suit to force insurers to treat mental disabilities as they do physical disabilities in long-term disability insurance. In yet another case, the right to accessible housing is being sought for people with mobility impairments living in New York City Housing Authority apartments.

Most recently, Lowenkron represented patients with psychological disabilities who were subjected to medical testing without their consent. The Appellate Division found in their favor, and their victory was prominently reported in the New York Times. The ruling marks a significant expansion of protections accorded to the mentally ill. (The decision is currently on appeal to the New York Court of Appeals.) Lowenkron credits her success in part to the simulations that form a critical part of the Law School's first-year curriculum. Students assume the role of lawyer for client interviewing, negotiating, and counseling. They also marshal case law and statutes to their clients' advantage. "We were really having a good time trying to figure out how to help person X solve problem Y," says Lowenkron. "I was intrigued by the process."

Ruth Haven was a classmate of Lowenkron's, and they still keep in touch. Haven is currently Legislative Counsel to the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), a non-partisan, student-funded educational and lobbying organization founded by Ralph Nader. Haven works chiefly in pressing state legislators on consumer protection issues. He is currently lobbying for greater consumer protection in banking, credit cards, auto rentals, and credit reporting.

Haven worked with NYPIRG before he enrolled in law school, and he chose CUNY Law specifically because he wanted to study in an environment where others shared his social activism. He wanted to work in an atmosphere where, as he put it, "you can bring your conscience to the job each day."

He adds, "I would have been bored out of my mind, and I would have withered on the vine at a more traditional law school." At CUNY Law, Haven explains, "the faculty were phenomenally accessible—you could go out for a beer and argue legal philosophy. There was no paper chase, no student backbiting. The law was humanized...and demystified."

From the start, Haven felt as if he were practicing law in the real world. First-year students were responsible for drafting legal memoranda, reviewing legal documents, conducting simulated client interviews, and performing directed research. From the very beginning of their legal education, students at CUNY Law acquire the tools and techniques of legal practice.

All third-year students participate in legal clinics, where they represent actual clients and provide a full range of legal expertise (see below). Haven worked in the immigrants' and refugees' rights clinic, where he and his colleagues fought for greater access to health care on behalf of immigrants. He had the opportunity to argue his first case in an administrative proceeding under the auspices of the clinic, and he still remembers it vividly. "I finally got it!" he explains. "I understood how to construct, how to analyze and how to present a legal argument." He credits his experience in the clinic with giving him the confidence to take and pass the bar exam on his first attempt.

Like Haven, Barbara Lerner was drawn to CUNY Law because of its public interest mission. She is now an attorney with the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, an independent advocacy group for First Amendment rights. She specializes in insuring press access to legal proceedings.

CUNY Law Clinical Program

Main Street Legal Services, Inc., CUNY Law School's on-site clinical law office, enables students to learn to practice law while providing necessary legal services to underserved communities. For the past six years, the School's clinical programs have been rated among the top 10 in the nation by U.S. News and World Report. In addition to national recognition for academic content, the clinics have been praised for the legal services they provide to clients. Clinic students represent more than 800 clients and provide advice and referrals to another 300 each year. Students are supervised by practicing attorneys, but they have direct responsibility for their clients. These are the clinics currently offered:

The Battered Women's Rights Clinic provides free legal services to those suffering from domestic abuse. Students assist clients in a number of complex issues, including safety for themselves and their children, custody and support, visitation, and protective orders.

The Immigrants' and Refugees' Rights Clinic serves individuals with immigration and refugee status problems. Students represent indigent clients in matters of naturalization and also identify and resolve other legal problems that clients face, such as housing, access to public benefits, and application for asylum.
Most media organizations are represented by private law firms,” she explains. “But my work from the faculty is to prepare students for what it is good for the public.” Her organization, which is privately funded, counsels reporters, monitors First Amendment cases, and submits friend-of-the-court briefs on First Amendment issues. Lerner also completed a brief in the Oklahoma City bombing case to prevent the lower court from sealing court documents and denying access to reporters. She is also at work on the Internet indecency case that is now on appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lerner still remembers how much she learned about legal practice in the battered women’s clinic during her third year of law school. “CUNY Law really reinforced my commitment to public interest work. The fact that there were no grades fostered a very cooperative atmosphere among students. We were helping each other.” Those sentiments are echoed by Tracey R. Hampson, a 1996 graduate. Hampson says of her fellow students, “We are bonded for life.” She currently has a fellowship to work for Harlem Legal Services, where she provides direct representation for indigent clients in Family Court. While her practice—which involves matrimonial cases, child custody and protection orders for battered men and women—may seem daunting, Hampson can’t imagine a better calling. “I feel at home in Family Court. We try to give parents the right to control their own destinies.”

Hampson served in several internships while she was in law school. “At every internship I went to, there were students from Harvard and Yale Law, and they were always surprised by how well I knew the law and my role in it. I was comfortable in court. I got that through CUNY Law.”

CUNY, incidentally, has been a real family affair for Hampson. Not only are her husband, her sister, and her mother CUNY graduates, her daughter was cared for at the Law School’s on-site day care center while Hampson attended law school. (CUNY Law is the only law school in the nation with on-site day care for students.) “It’s my hope that the School remains what it is,” says Hampson, “a place where women, mothers, older returning students and students of color can have an opportunity to make their dreams real. That’s what it’s been for me.”

Recently, CUNY Law School continued its tradition of social service by launching a new inter-campus program, the Welfare Reform Project. The Law School, in collaboration with the Welfare Rights Initiative of the Hunter College Center for the Study of Family Policy, has designed a pilot project to provide legal counsel to CUNY students jeopardized by new workplace policies.

Law students, under the direction of Associate Prof. Stephen Loffredo, have been working overtime to master the intricacies of the new regulations as well as a complex body of law underlying welfare policies. They will offer representation and counseling to students whose work assignments interfere with or prevent them from continuing their education. According to Loffredo, “Typically, an undergraduate is wrongly told, you must choose between your benefits and education. In many cases this is simply a false choice.”

CUNY Law students under Loffredo’s supervision will represent students at contested hearings with the Employee Relations Division of the Human Resources Administration and offer counseling to others. The project will also develop data for future legal action and advocacy before legislators. They are also creating resources with other CUNY programs and outside agencies that are now challenging welfare policies wherever they adversely affect students.

Kristin Booth Glen is particularly excited about this and other projects to work collaboratively with other branches of the University. “Projects like the Welfare Reform Initiative allow us to reach out and make connections with other parts of the University, and with the community as well,” she observes. Dean Glen foresees expanding such collaboration.

A similar project is underway to provide naturalization and immigration services throughout the University. Other projects involve a community and economic development project with Baruch College, a public health law concentration with the Public Health School at Hunter, placement for Hunter’s Masters of Social Work students at the Law School’s Battered Women’s Clinic, and a joint J.D./Ph.D. in Criminal Justice with John Jay College. “We are looking for ways to serve the University and the community at large,” says Dean Glen.

The Dean is very excited about the impact CUNY Law students and graduates are having on their communities and on the legal profession as a whole. Many graduates, after a few years of practice with a larger organization, are returning to their communities and opening single-practitioner offices there. “Our graduates are doing what the organized bar has been healing its breast about for 20 years. They are delivering quality services to whole populations that traditionally have had no access to them. My dream is to find ways to link these offices with each other and the Law School, and have each serve the other.”

CUNY, faculty development seminar on “Balancing the Curriculum” and reports on its accomplishments since its founding in 1987.

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"Balancing the Curriculum" began life under the sponsorship of CUNY’s Office of Academic Affairs. Its origins lay in a group of University faculty who called for more effort to integrate the new scholarship on women and race into the undergraduate curriculum. It has weathered many a budget storm, including one in which released time for participation went overboard. But committed faculty, self-selected and seriously interested in maintaining the high quality of what can be greatest depth with the newest tools of interdisciplinary analysis, kept the seminar afloat.

The seminar’s previous co-facilitators have included Marie Buncombe (English, Brooklyn), Barbara Bardes (Sociology, City), Altugrara Ortiz (History, John Jay), and Joan Tronto (Political Science, Hunter). It has been our pleasure to preside over the provocative readings and discussions of our three-hour meetings once a week during the academic year. As Elizabeth Minnich, guest commentator at the 10th anniversary celebration, pointed out, participants in the seminars have developed a strong group identity and comprise a valuable resource pool for each other.

At the beginning of each year’s seminar, members receive a list of seminar “graduates” on their own campus. This helps them connect with colleagues with shared interests and expertise. In the past, such groups have continued on page 12
NEW TEACHING METHODS: A SYMPOSIUM

Students " normalize " themselves in one of a number of ways when they are in the presence of professors. In other words, they say, "he's a marvelous professor" that brings him or her to the point of wanting to become an educator.

I t was a bright Monday morning in the second-floor far corner of the sociology building at Lehman College. A talk with Robert Murphy, assistant professor of sociology, present as a part of the College's " FYI " show, it was a typical beginning to the symptomatic days when things got done—laundry was washed, ironed, folded; malls and dry-cleaning were visited. Murphy was enthralled by a talk he heard at the College during registration/apply time, when students, friends, and family members find the registrar and see if she could identify more with the first part of her academic background. Murphy has been assigned to work on the weekend.

The Murphy "FYI" show was excellent, another memory of his experience as a student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong." A student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong." The Murphy "FYI" show was excellent, another memory of his experience as a student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong." The Murphy "FYI" show was excellent, another memory of his experience as a student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong." The Murphy "FYI" show was excellent, another memory of his experience as a student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong." The Murphy "FYI" show was excellent, another memory of his experience as a student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong." The Murphy "FYI" show was excellent, another memory of his experience as a student who was surveyed. Said another, "I think I really would like to think that I am a part of that team, like I belong."
TESTIMONY ALERTS STATE LEGISLATORS

University Presses Case for Students on Welfare

By John Mogulescu
University Dean for Adult
and Continuing Education

I
n the early 1990s, City University, like many urban institutions across the United States, experienced significant growth in the number of public assistance recipients attending its degree and continuing education programs. The University welcomed the increase of highly motivated students who were committed to their future and personal development. By the Spring 1994 semester, a record 27,000 welfare recipients were enrolled in credit-bearing programs alone. Nearly a third of these students were receiving supplemental sums for childcare and coursework provided through the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) for individuals pursuing vocationally oriented associate degrees.

CUNY had in fact worked in close cooperation with HRA to provide special programs for these students. One of them, College Opportunity to Prepare for Employment (COPE), is an umbrella program that includes an array of services, including admissions counseling, a Center for College Options, and special initiatives designed to improve retention and graduation rates. COPE funding also supports similar services for participants in Family College, an innovative collaboration with the New York City Board of Education that enables parents to attend CUNY while their children are enrolled in an on-campus satellite school for pre-kindergarten through second grade. A separate program, Retraining and Educational Access to Careers in Health (REACH), is aimed at students enrolled in degree and credit/non-credit certificate studies in health and human services fields.

In spring 1995, however, HRA promulgated policy guidelines that emphasized work experience over education and training. This led to a steep decline in the number of welfare students attending CUNY. By December 1996, the University’s welfare student population had substantially declined—by 30%—to fewer than 19,000. HRA referred only 59 individuals to the Center for College Options during the six-month period from July 1 to December 31, 1996; this compared with more than 600 referrals for the previous year.

In addition, Federal welfare reform legislation signed by President Clinton in August 1996, and scheduled to be enacted no later than July 1, 1997, eliminated the so-called “special needs” category and also put in doubt support for college attendance by public assistance recipients. Specifically, the new law:

• imposes a lifetime limit of five years of welfare benefits;
• denies welfare benefits, Medicaid, and food stamps to legal immigrants;
• requires recipients to participate in work activities; and, most critically for CUNY,
• eliminates explicit support for college and training, instead permitting welfare recipients to count only 12 months of vocational education towards work requirements (in any case, the cap on eligible participants taking vocational courses is 20%).

Face[d] with the loss of even greater numbers of welfare recipients, CUNY’s need to protect public assistance as a result of these provision, CUNY responded in a number of ways. Chancellor Reynolds reconvened the CUNY Welfare Advisory Task Force, which is chaired by President Frances Degen Horowitz of the Graduate School and includes college presidents, faculty and student representatives, and other senior CUNY officials. The group meets regularly to review the impact of the new law on our students and to develop policy recommendations. The Chancellor has also reached out to college and university presidents across the United States to form the National Coalition for the Education of Welfare Recipients. To date, this consortium has 65 members.

CUNY students also organized a rallying day in Albany last spring to support a bipartisan bill, co-sponsored by State Senator John Marchi and State Assemblyman Roberto Ramirez, that would require social service agencies to designate public and private campuses and nearby locations as work sites, thus making it easier for students to meet their workfare obligations and continue their studies.

Students and faculty have testified at City Council hearings and, in addition, have discussed the following issues with State officials charged with developing a welfare reform plan to meet the new Federal requirements:

• counting a minimum one year of study towards a vocationally oriented associate degree as meeting the work requirement under vocational educational training;
• providing childcare and college to students on welfare who attend college and perform work assignments;
• continuing support for the successful COPE, REACH and Family College programs; and,
• designating campuses and nearby locations as worksites.

We welcomed the prospect of reaching out to welfare recipients and providing them with the services and support that would assist their move toward economic independence. Did we know what the outcome would be? Not exactly, but we knew that our students would be unlike the average college student. They would need special services to help them navigate through a maze of personal obstacles—low self-esteem, responsibilities for raising children as single parents, and inadequate housing, just to name a few. And there would be special academic needs, since a majority of COPE students have been out of school a number of years. On our campuses we committed sensitivity training for staff and faculty to gauge their level of commitment, and, to maximize COPE’s support system, five basic components have been maintained: administrative, academic, counseling, social services, and job placement.

One might say that COPE is a college within a college. Faculty and counselors work with a student to develop a two-year plan of completion and assist him or her in understanding degree requirements and faculty expectations. We monitor progress through reviewing transcripts, meeting with faculty, and talking with the student. Unusual absences from class are investigated. Our tutors reinforce lectures, model and teach taking and thinking strategies for COPE students.

Our social worker and the HRA case worker meet often with students who need crisis intervention. We even integrate current welfare reform issues into our curricula and conduct welfare reform seminars. Internships are developed in students’ majors to help them learn through meaningful work experience.

Several factors dictate whether COPE students succeed in college. Meeting the costs of child care, tuition, books, and transportation is, of course, foremost. COPE also provides moral support when these students are threatened by such misfortunes as illness in the family, eviction, fire, and the full array of tragedies created by violence in their neighborhoods. But I hasten to point out that through all these difficulties, COPE students are surviving and succeeding. Their motivation, their incentive, is to get off— and stay off—welfare. The success of COPE at LaGuardia has been tremendous. Overall, 45% of COPE students have maintained grade point averages of 3.0 to

"Experience has taught me that I need a college degree to move out of poverty."—Blanca Vela

Dr. Audrey Harrigan
Professor of Business and Director of COPE, LaGuardia Community College

TESTIMONY OF DR. AUDREY HARRIGAN
President of Business and Director of COPE, LaGuardia Community College

 efficiency in testifying before you today is to offer each of you some insight as to what education means to welfare mothers like myself.

How can I explain or articulate what it takes to try to get ahead when burdened with poverty? Everyone who has had to choose between work and school, it would be "spirit." As I stand before you today, an example of a spirit-driven individual, keep in mind that I am not the exception but the rule. There are 20,000 other students like me on public assistance who, in spite of their poverty, have taken the initiative to enroll at The City University of New York. Like these 20,000 impoverished students, it is a daily struggle for me to balance all the responsibilities I have.

For starters, I am a mother of two children who are four and 13, each of whom demands my attention and care in very different ways. To them I am a responsible full-time parent, and let me tell you it is a struggle when you are poor. In addition, I am a full-time honor student majoring in government at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. I began to pursue my college education 10 years after graduating from high school and suffered many unsuccessful attempts to secure long-term employment. Experience has taught me that I need a college degree to move myself out of poverty.

I am now in my junior year, and I want to tell you what college is doing for me. First of all, I am getting from it what you probably got from your undergraduate experience: knowledge and a world view. I am also learning to think critically, analyze problems, and communicate effectively.

College has taught me to value commitment and hard work. But something else John Jay has given me was even more valuable. I knew I would gain practical, marketable skills that would help me in everything I would do. But I had no idea how the college experience would change my spirit. I started off a fearful little girl. Like most people who live in poverty, I had very low self-esteem and very little hope or belief in a better life. College has changed that in every way. I have learned that not only can I bring myself and my family out of poverty, but I have an authentic potential to make valuable contributions to society. In college, I am learning like others I always admired: strong, independent, motivated, capable.

With this transformation, I have become a board member of the National Welfare Rights Union and of the John Jay College Child Care Center. Through participation in the Welfare Rights Initiative at the John Jay College, I have also become an advocate for increased access to higher education as a route out of poverty. It is so very important to us that legislators understand the impact of educational goals. We believe that poor people must have the
By the time I was 14, I was already working to prepare for a career in gerontology. I was interested in the idea that aging was a natural process that could be studied and understood. I wanted to work with elderly people and help them maintain their independence and dignity. This interest led me to pursue a Ph.D. in sociology, and eventually a career as an aging scholar.

At the time, I didn't realize how much the field had changed since I began my studies. When I first started, gerontology was a relatively new discipline, and there were few resources available to help me understand the complexities of aging. But as I continued my research, I began to see the potential of gerontology to help improve the lives of older people.

One of the most important things I learned during my time as a graduate student was the importance of community. At the time, there was a lack of community resources for older people, and I saw the potential of gerontology to help fill this gap. I began working with community organizations and advocating for the rights of older people.

As I continued my work, I began to see the importance of intergenerational relationships. I realized that older people had a wealth of knowledge and experience that could benefit younger people, and vice versa. I began to work with younger people on projects to help them understand the perspectives of older people.

Throughout my career, I have continued to work with older people and advocate for their rights. I believe that we all have a role to play in helping to ensure that older people have the resources and opportunities they need to live fulfilling lives. And I believe that the study of aging has the potential to help us all understand how to live better, longer lives.
Forging Links Between Campus and Community

By Richard Donovan
Professor of English, Bronx Community College and Director, National Center for Urban Partnerships

If you ask most New Yorkers about major American foundations and philanthropies, they usually think of eminent cultural institutions like Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or Channel 13. Yet in 1991, the Ford Foundation made a 10-year, multi-million-dollar commitment to Bronx Community College that has enabled it to assist the National Center for Urban Partnerships in operating a major educational initiative called the Urban Partnership Program (UPP).

Ford made this commitment to UPP now at the mid-point of its funding cycle, because it believes UPP teams are effective means for promoting close, deep, and lasting collaborations among educational and community institutions and for significantly increasing the numbers of urban minority students who earn baccalaureate degrees.

The Urban Partnership Program is one of the first, largest, and most broadly-based collaborative ventures in the United States. Its ambitious goal is to expand post-secondary opportunities for at-risk students with college potential—and to do so in a way that fosters systemic change. UPP is active in 16 cities and boroughs, among them the Bronx, Queens, Denver, Memphis, San Juan, Seattle, and Los Angeles. This past year, five South African sites became UPP international affiliates; the Center has been coordinating this consortium with the University of Natal.

How does a UPP team function? Each UPP city has established one, and most have been functioning for five years. A team includes college and school leaders, elected officials, representatives from community-based organizations and local businesses, in addition to K-12 educators. Because student attrition is especially high at the point of transition from one school to another, UPP teams often concentrate at these critical junctures—between middle and high school, high school and college, or two- and four-year colleges. They establish, for example, summer institutes for 8th or 9th graders, bridge programs, cross-sector faculty dialogues aimed at curricular reforms and better articulation, and middle colleges (high schools situated on college campuses).

Though such initiatives are often successful, they are not enough. Their impact can be limited, and they can vanish when external funding or a charismatic leader moves on or burns out. That is why the National Center for Urban Partnerships pays so much attention to promoting systemic change.

An example of such change can be seen in Santa Ana, Calif., where a battery of activities is increasing the transfer rate of under-represented and at-risk students. Each year a Summer Scholars Transfer Institute identifies about 120 students who appear unlikely to go on to four-year colleges. They attend the 10-day residential Institute at the University of California at Irvine. Nearly 80% of these students eventually enroll in B.A. programs.

In another UPP city, the Newark Educational Partnership has worked for five years to improve the transfer curriculum between Rutgers and Essex County College. Their efforts have played a major role in increasing the transfer rate 400%—from 50 to 200 students a year. The same team is also analyzing the content of K-12 classes throughout Newark’s public schools to improve preparation of students for post-secondary degree programs.

BCC’s new president, Carolyn Williams, is an ardent UPP supporter—indeed, she is a member of the Bronx UPP team, which is called the Bronx Educational Alliance. Before arriving at the College, Pres. Williams held the presidency of Los Angeles Southwest College and for three years led the executive committee of the Los Angeles UPP team, called LA PASS. She admits that one reason she found BCC so inviting was her awareness that the campus was deeply involved in the Bronx Educational Alliance. (BCC was originally based on her campus but is now located at Lehman College: as with all UPP sites, it rotates to other post-secondary institutional partners.)

Among BEAs recent accomplishments is the implementation of a two- through four-year degree program to prepare elementary teachers that links BCC and Lehman. This program is being replicated in a similar link between Hostos Community College and Lehman.

Recently, the administrative duties of the new BEA leader were built into a tenure-track position in the Lehman Education Department. Lehman President Ricardo Fernandez was able to secure this line because the collaborations BEA fosters are viewed as critical to improving education in the Bronx. This position, in which Dr. Marietta Saravia-Shore now serves, dramatizes the “institutionalization” of BEA within CUNY. Pressing for such formal recognition of collaborative work is another key UPP goal.

The other New York City UPP team, the Queens Urban Partnership, is based at LaGuardia Community College. Its executive committee is led by Dr. Margaret Harrington, Superintendent of Schools in Queens, and Dr. Arthur Greenberg, Superintendent of District 27. The Queens team, joined by faculty members from the Queens College School of Education, is drawing upon the full local educational community to improve the K-12 curriculum.

The Bronx and Queens partnerships are seriously addressing the fact that far too few students are adequately prepared for college work, too few students move on to four-year colleges, and fewer still earn baccalaureate degrees. The two teams also recognize that institutional or systemic barriers are not only wrong-headed but deters talented faculty and administrators from exploiting the full potential of collaboration. The BEA and UPP are learning that if our system is to improve, participating institutions must accept responsibility for the success of their students beyond their own traditional jurisdictions.

We at the National Center for Urban Partnerships are delighted to be in the midst of this ferment. We continually draw upon CUNY experiences to conduct our work. For example, David Dobrof, Professor of Sociology at Lehman and the Graduate School and an expert on the open admissions policy, offered the keynote address and led a data-gathering workshop at the national UPP meeting in Minneapolis last fall. With so much to offer the students of the Bronx, and with the strong personal leadership of Pres. Fernandez and Superintendents Harrington and Greenberg—now augmented by the experience Pres. Williams brings from Los Angeles—it is fitting that the Center is based at Bronx Community College.

A PICTURE OR 1,000 WORDS?

For three decades Jack Kligerman has been refusing to make that odious choice. A Professor of English at Lehman College since 1967, when it was still a Hunter campus, he bought his first 35mm camera in the same year. Since then he has become a specialist in writing about nature as well as photographing it. His vita is downright Thoreau-esque, boasting essays on pigeons, fireflies, lettuce, alternatives to laws, and the nature essayist John Burroughs.

A devout of black and white, Kligerman has taught photography and conjured up interdisciplinary courses combining composition in both the shutterbug and scribal senses of that word. He has studied and worked with the renowned Ralph Weiss, won several photography grants, and mounted several exhibitions, most recently “Paris in the Nineties” last fall at Lehman’s Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

Reproduced here are two photographs from his portfolio: a panorama of the Great Sand Dunes National Monument in southwestern Colorado and an itinerant blind storyteller captured by Kligerman in 1988, when he was on sabbatical and teaching in southwestern China.

Dubrof, continued from previous page

RD: My daughter is Assistant Director of Social Work at Mt. Sinai, and I think that’s a marvelous department. I’m putting this through the sieve of maternal pride, you understand. Social work is like any other profession, and you find variations in competence, knowledge, and skill. But there are social workers who really understand how old people live in communities and who knock themselves out to hook older people to just the right support services. At home, but also in hospitals and nursing homes, we need to avoid what a great psychiatrist, the late Alvin Goldfarb of Mt. Sinai, called the isolating “four-wall complex.”

MM: Are you teaching now?

RD: After my appointment as Director of Brookdale in 1975, I continued to teach for seven years or so, but I stopped when I found I couldn’t give the students the time they needed. Recently, however, I volunteered to teach because CUNY’s been so badly hit by budget cuts. It’s wonderful being back in the classroom. I kept saying during my years as Director that I didn’t miss seeing young social workers in the classroom, but I discovered when I came back last year that I did! The students are wonderful, and CUNY is like no other place. It’s tremendously important that it survives and is strengthened.

MM: What do you do for fun?

RD: I have a marvelous husband. We go to the theater, to concerts. We enjoy our children and grandchildren. We do many things together. I also love mysteries. Oh, and cooking—I love to bake!
FROM BELL HOOKS’ RECENT MEMOIR

Spelunking in the Cave of Self-Creation

Last fall City College’s prolific Distinguished Professor of English, bell hooks, most recently the author of Killing Rage: Ending Racism, offered readers familiar with her fervent confrontations illuminations of race and gender in American society something quite different—a probing, haunting memoir. Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood (Henry Holt & Co.), bell hooks grew up in the small town of Hopkinsville, Ky., as Gloria Watkins (her pen name comes from a great grandmother), and in the pages of Bone Black she takes readers, as Gloria Steinem has observed, “into the cave of self-creation.” Her exploration of how childhood is refracted in our adult selves is captured in one of the book’s epigraphs, from James Hillman’s The Soul’s Code: “Our lives may be determined less by our childhood than the way we have learned to imagine our childhoods.” Following, here with the author’s kind permission, is the foreword to Bone Black.

This is not an ordinary tale. It is the story of girlhood rebellion, of my struggle to create self and identity distinct from and yet inclusive of the world around me. Writing imagistically, I seek to conjure a rich magical world of southern black culture that was sometimes paradisiacal and at other times terrifying. While the narratives of family life I share can be easily labeled dysfunctional, significantly that fact will never alter the magic and mystery that was present—all that was deeply life-sustaining and life-affirming. The beauty lies in the way it all comes together, exposing and revealing the inner life of a girl inventing herself—creating the foundation of selfhood and identity that will ultimately lead to the fulfillment of her true destiny—becoming a writer.

Nowadays, more than ever before, feminist thinkers are writing about the significance of girlhood as a time when females feel free and powerful. Our bodies do not yet distinguish themselves as definitively from those of boys. And our energies are just as intense, if not more so. Not enough is known about the experience of black girls in our society.

Indeed, one of my favorite novels in the whole world is Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye. When the book was first published she explained that it was her desire to write about “the people who in all literature were always peripheral—little black girls who were props, background; those people were never center stage and those people were me.” I was still in my teens when I read this book. It shook me to the very roots of my being. There in this fictional narrative were fragments of my story—my girlhood. Always an obsessive reader, I had felt this lack. To see this period of my life given serious recognition was awesomely affirming.

My life was never going to be the same after reading this book. It wasn’t simply that Morrison focused on black girls but that she gave us girls confronting issues of class, race, identity, girls who were struggling to confront and cope with pain. And most of all she gave us black girls who were critical thinkers, theorizing about their lives, telling the story, and by so doing making themselves subjects of history.

Many feminist thinkers writing and talking about girlhood right now like to suggest that black girls have better self-esteem than their white counterparts. The measurement of this difference is often that black girls are more assertive, speak more, appear more confident. Yet in traditional southern-black life, it was and is expected of girls to be articulate, to hold ourselves with dignity. Our parents and teachers were always urging us to document right and speak clearly. These traits were meant to uplift the race. They were not necessarily traits associated with building female self-esteem. An outspoken girl might feel that she was worthless because her skin was not light enough or her hair the right texture.

These are the variables that white researchers often do not consider when they measure the self-esteem of black females with a yardstick that was designed upon values emerging from white experience. White girls of all classes are often encouraged to be silent. But to see the opposite in different ethnic groups as a sign of female empowerment is to miss the reality that the cultural codes of that group may dictate a quite different standard by which female self-esteem is measured. To understand the complexity of black girlhood we need more work that documents that reality in all its variations and diversity. Certainly, class shapes the nature of our childhood experiences. Undoubtedly, black girls raised in materially privileged families have different notions of self-esteem from peers growing up poor and thus destitute. It’s vital, then, that we hear about our diverse experience.

There is no one story of black girlhood. As a girl growing up in a family that included five sisters I am aware that our childhood experiences were often incredibly different, even though we were in the same household. Our memories reflect those differences. Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood is not a family memoir. It draws together the experiences, dreams, and fantasies that most preoccupied me as a girl. I share my secret world—the various names I created, for example (calling my grandmother Sarah in imagination because it was better than her real name, Sarah).

This is autobiography as truth and myth—as poetic witness. That rebellious writer of the Beat generation, Jack Kerouac, always declared “memories are inseparable from dreams.” In Bone Black I gather together the dreams, fantasies, experiences that preoccupied me as a girl, that stay with me and appear and reappear in different shapes and forms in all my work. Without telling everything that happened, they document all that remains most vivid. They are the foundation on which I have built a life in writing, a life committed to intellectual pursuits. Laying out the groundwork of my early life like a crazy quilt, Bone Black brings together fragments to make a whole. Bits and pieces connect in a random and playfully irrational way. And there is always the persistence of repetition, for that is what I do—goes over and over the same things, looking at them in different ways. The prevailing perspective is always that of the intuitive and critically thinking child mind. Sometimes memories are presented in the third person, indirectly, just as I do sometimes talk about things that way. We look back as if we were standing at a distance. Examining life retrospectively, we are there and not there, watching and watched. Evoking the mood and sensibility of moments, this is an autobiography of perception and ideas. The events described are always less significant than the impressions they leave on the mind and heart.

Jumbo Classes, continued from page 6

a huge time commitment, I tell students that I will assign every grade in the course. And I do. I meet with the TAs after finals and I go over every person’s grades. This ensures fairnsess and uniformity, which is crucial in a large class. The last thing you want is for word to get around that some TAs are easier than others, mass migration into the easier sections will be attempted.

I don’t want one TA giving a C- for what another TA would give a B. Unfortunately, this does happen, especially in disciplines like philosophy not subject to easy statistical quantification. TAs bring different standards with them, especially I have observed, at the beginning of teaching careers. But if the professor assigns the course grades, disparity can to a large extent be mitigated.

Along the same line, you must have standardized exams and never allow TAs to grade only their own sections. If exams are essay type, then have the same TA or TAs that give the written report on the discussion. Thus, if TA Mary Jones is a hard grader, everyone gets the benefit of that on Question A, and if Bill Smith is easier, everyone gets the benefit of that on Question B. Also intercalating TA’s and keeping up with their levels, a definite concern to our students at the City University.

Jumbo Classes, continued from page 6

F

inally, let me urge experimentalism. For example, I have been experimenting with a course Web page. It is managed through my Web page. It is managed through my computer literacy, I never put anything on the course Web page. It is managed through my computer literacy, I never put anything on the course Web page.

In conclusion, let me say that I realize that different sorts of classes may have different goals. But I try to bring the same spirit to the large lecture course. My strategy will probably work best with the humanities, but I see no reason why something similar could not be applied to the sciences. Some colleagues at Hunter want to try these techniques out with science courses, where discussion groups could be especially valuable. Again, the key ingredient is the professor’s involvement. Students will always respond to teachers who believe in what they are passing on to their students...and who care about them. Sad is the course—whether 16 or 600—where both of these things aren’t abundantly clear.

I would be happy to correspond with anyone interested in implementing new techniques in very large classes. My e-mail address is ahussman@hejira.hunter.cuny.edu.
who graduated with a 3.87 grade point aver-
age. She won a social work scholarship to 
New York University School of Social 
Work and is now working part-time as a 
aparaprofessional. The are like Nora, 
mother of one, or Monica, mother of two. 
Both were homeless and for a time called 
a subway car home. Yet they never missed a 
day of class. Now both have completed 
terminations at the daycare centers attached 
to their shelters, and have been offered per-
manent positions in social service.

Or consider our trio of Mariya, Marie, a 
former drug addict and mother of five, two 
of whom are afflicted with sickle cell anea-
mia. Marie graduated with a 3.87 GPA, is 
a scholarship recipient, and now works in 
one of New York City's mental health facili-
ties. Then there is Marjia, a Russian immi-
grant and mother of two, who saw her 
brother murdered and her father jailed 
before emigrating to the United States. She 
will graduate in February with a 3.73 GPA 
and is entertaining a job offer as an occu-
pational therapist assistant at $17 an hour. 
Finally, Mary is a mother of seven aged four 
to 19. She is a paralegal major and is cur-
rently interning with a local law firm.

There are 414 students like these—succ-
cess stories waiting to happen—currently 
enrolled in the COPE program. College is 
working for them, just as it worked for 
those of us in this audience who have pro-
fessional degrees. So why not let it work 
for other welfare recipients?

Therefore I ask you to please bear in 
mind when determining the welfare reform 
plan for New York State, that our goal 
should be to break the chain of dependence 
permanently. Do not overlook this invest-
ment in human lives. Other special popula-
tions have benefited from education and 
achieved financial independence. So, I ask 
a final time, why not welfare recipients?

Seminar, continued from page 5

joined to meet campus-specific challenges, 
as happened some years ago at Brooklyn 
College, for example, where an “anti-bigotry” 
committee was formed, involving Nancy 
Romer and Len Fox. Some seminar mem-
bers—like Sonja Jackson and Ellen Gold-
smith at New York City Technical College— 
have teamed up to write articles together. 
Others have rallied to change the curriculum in 
particular departments, as has happened 
at Queens and Medgar Evers Colleges.

New interdisciplinary programs have ges-
tated at the “Balancing the Curriculum” 
seminar table. Several members from 
Kingsborough established a women's studies program, 
and our seminars helped to ini-
tiate a minor in gender studies at John Jay.

Finally, any number of seminar partici-
pants simply found the impetus to finish 
books, as did Marcia Baynes Smith at 
Queens (Race, Gender, and Health) and 
Suzanne Lasenza at John Jay (Lesbians 
and Psychoanalysis: Revolutions in Theory 
and Practice).

Joseph Muzio at Kingsborough has been 
asked to write a textbook on women and bi-
ology. And the seminar urged Carol 
Groneman of John Jay to commence a study

Vela Testimony, continued from page 8

same opportunity as everyone else to enroll 
in ESL, GED, vocational training, and two-
and four-year degree-granting programs.

It makes no sense to deny me and thou-
sands more welfare recipients access to 
higher education or force us to participate in 
workfare positions that are obstacles to 
our studies. And we know that the vast 
majority of people on welfare who obtain 
college degrees are able to move perma-
nently off welfare. It makes great sense, 
therefore, to allow me to continue my full-
time college studies, and count it as work, 
which it is! It is especially hard work for 
those who are struggling as single parents.

I know that education is my surest route 
out of poverty. Everyone on welfare who 
seeks education and wishes to work this 
hard should be permitted this opportunity 
to gain knowledge, credentials, self-esteem, 
and financial independence. And many have 
already distinguished themselves as 
student council presidents, Belle Zeller 
Scholars, Thomas Hunter Scholars, National 
Dean’s List recipients, and valedictorians.

On behalf of hardworking students on 
wellfare, I thank you for the work you are 
doing and the opportunity to testify. I also 
look forward to a continued involvement in 
your efforts to implement realistic, humane, 
and constructive welfare reform.

COPE has assisted in placing students in 
more than 100 full-time positions and 60 
part-time positions. They are serving 
where New York City needs them most, in 
the helping professions, as nurses, occupa-
tional and physical therapy assistants, drug 
abuse counselors, paraprofessionals, day 
care workers, and geriatric care providers, 
emergency medical technicians, and corre-
cational officers. Others have obtained posi-
tions in the private sector, working as com-
puter technicians, accountants, paralegals, 
secretaries, word processors, and adminis-
trative assistants.

Who are these students, so determined 
to be self-supporting? They are 40% 
native English speaking, 42% Hispanic and 
8% Caribbean; 10% are from the former 
USSR, and 2% Asian. Approximately 
8% are from the former 
Soviet Union, and 2% Asian. Approximately 
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