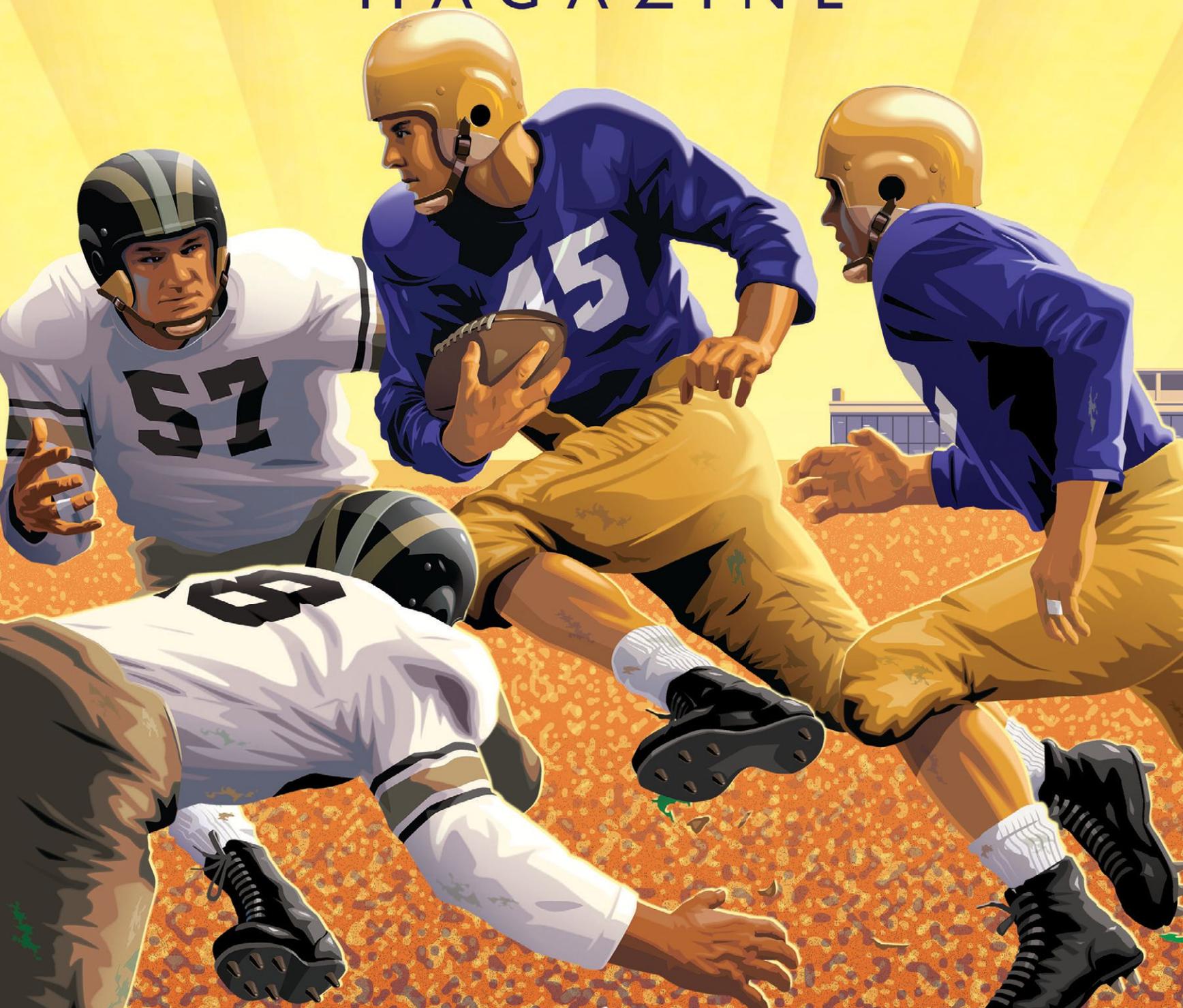


# NOTRE DAME

SUMMER 2012 \$8

## MAGAZINE



125 YEARS *of* NOTRE DAME

# FOOTBALL

COE GROUP

## KICK-OFF

**Y**ou remember when you first heard about Fighting Irish football. It was the first time you'd ever heard of Notre Dame. The game served as an introduction to the institution, the sport the school's emissary.

You were probably told that the teams used to be very good, the best in the land, a tradition of winning. And they often overcame incredible odds to be victorious, to triumph over more heralded opponents. An underdog past. Catholic boys proving their worth, fighting their way into mainstream America, capturing the imagination of a sports-addicted nation whose playing fields set the stage for morality plays of good versus evil.

Notre Dame did it the right way, the virtuous way. Its players were students who attended class and graduated. They lived in residence halls with other real students. They gave you reason to hope, to cheer, to attach your conceits to real-life heroes. They carried your dreams, your sense of justice into epic gridiron battles. And you cared so deeply that losing hurt, caused your heart to ache, your mood to be altered (maybe for days in a post-plummet funk).

Some of you have gone so far as to stop watching the team live, preferring the emotional distancing of watching replays — but only after victory has been assured in real time.

Most everyone else knows it is only a game. The players mere people, the school so much more than its football team — losing or winning. Still, when Domers get together, when alumni convene, when faculty and administrators gather round long tables for the serious business of making Notre Dame a first-rate research university and top-rank institution of higher learning, the talk eventually will turn to football (at least fleetingly). And most concede — when it's pointed out — that the place's self-esteem, its sense of well-being, rises and falls, ebbs and flows with the fortunes of the gold-helmeted Fighting Irish.

It can just make us feel good about ourselves.

And it is, along with everything else college football has become, a colossal enterprise, a multimillion-dollar industry, a complex machine of television deals and bowl revenue and international travel and ticket prices and scandal and feel-good stories and stunning contracts for coaches hailed and pressured to be the latest savior of Notre Dame football.

It all began 125 years ago, and over the next 12 decades Notre Dame football came to be one of America's longest-running dramas. It made a mediocre Midwestern Catholic college one of the most celebrated institutions in the world, and the games and the band and the rituals and the traditions and the coming together have done as much as anything else — from Catholic character to academic excellence — to make the place what it is today.

Celebrate that.

— Kerry Temple '74

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SUMMER 2012, VOLUME 41, NUMBER 2

# NOTRE DAME MAGAZINE

## FEATURES

### 20. In a League of Its Own,

BY MALCOLM MORAN

Notre Dame has always played by its own rules. Have the tidal shifts in college football finally doomed the independent Irish?

### 26. More Than a Game,

BY MICHAEL RODIO '12 WITH ANDY PANELLI '77, '83MBA

Leahy's Lads — many of whom had seen combat in World War II — saw their gridiron mission as a battle for survival, duty and honor, finding glory as a team for the ages.

### 31. Wintry Rooms of Love,

BY MEL LIVATINO

We have only so long to ask the questions we need to ask, have the conversations we need to have, spend the time we need to spend and heal whatever hurt our hearts are holding.

### 36. This Fish May Save Your Eyesight,

BY JOHN MONCZUNSKI

David Hyde's visionary work.

### 40. The Danger of Our Convictions,

BY JOHN I. JENKINS, CSC, '76, '78M.A.

Notre Dame's president asks the graduating class at Wesley Theological Seminary to use their calling and their faith to reduce the hatred that divides us.

### 41. Of What Spirit We Are,

BY MICHAEL GARVEY '74

### 42. Witness to the Persecution,

BY BEN GIAMO

William Kennedy, one of the foremost Catholic novelists of our time, has turned his light on injustice and racism, the powerful and oppressed, and on the redemptive power of love, family and our essential humanity.

### 46. Atlas Unplugged,

BY JAY WALLJASPER

A Minnesota pilgrim seeks enlightenment by biking the river road.

## DEPARTMENTS

### Notre Dame Avenue

6. Notre Dame, mon amour  
14. Echoes: Village people

### Café Arts

52. Romance writer  
54. Café Choice

### Alumni

55. The art of the brew  
59. The rescuer  
61. Class columns

### CrossCurrents

90. The ride of a lifetime  
92. Beyond the silence  
94. Tattered saints  
96. Beware the *laundryosaurus*

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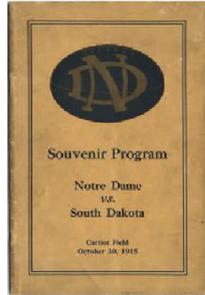
Dan Cosgrove

### BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

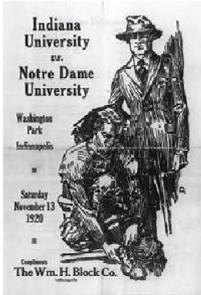
Matt Cashore '94



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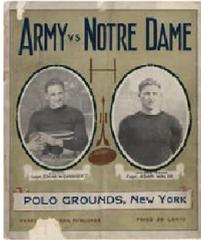
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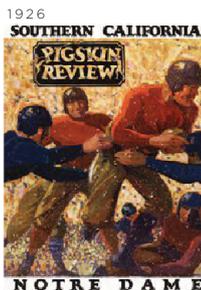
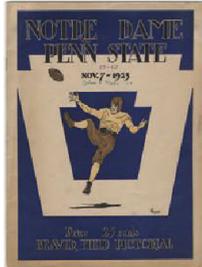
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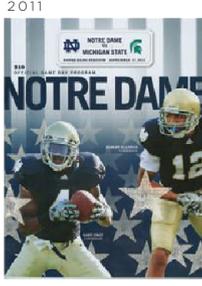
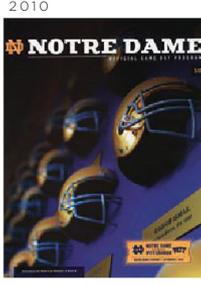
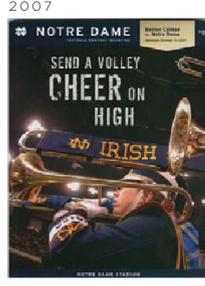
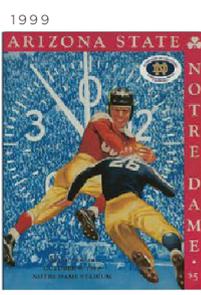
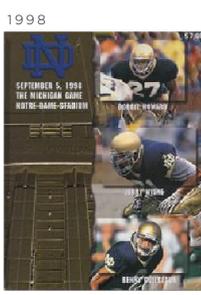
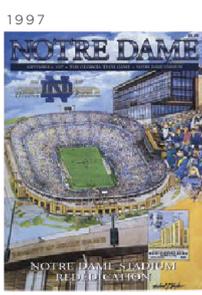
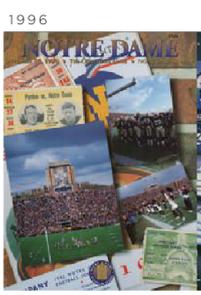
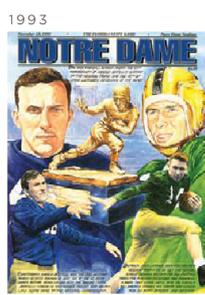
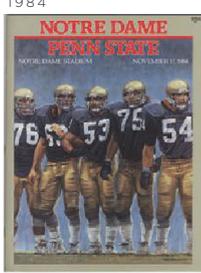
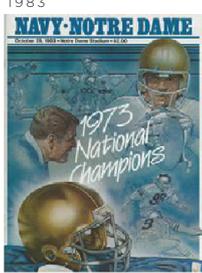
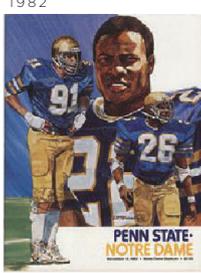
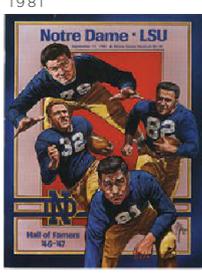
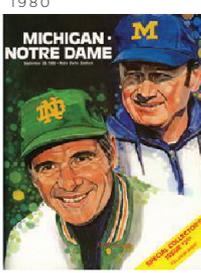
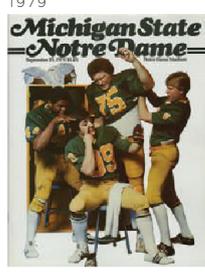
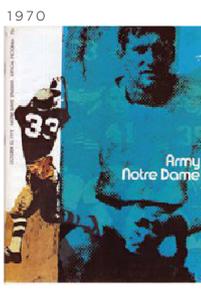
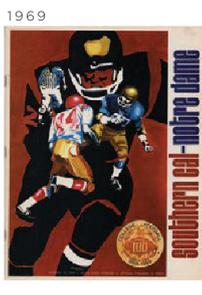
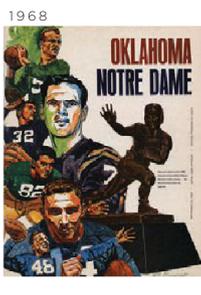
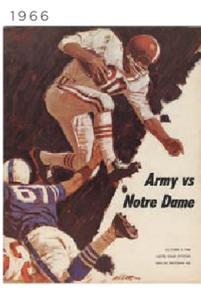
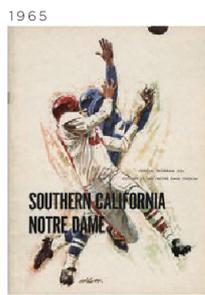
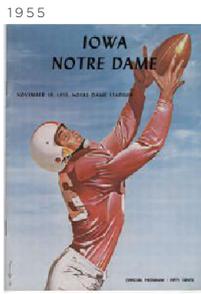
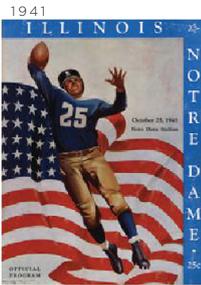
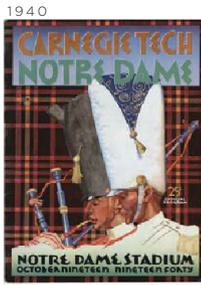
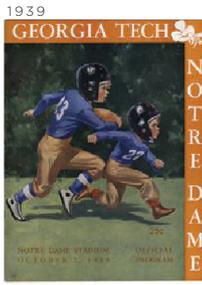
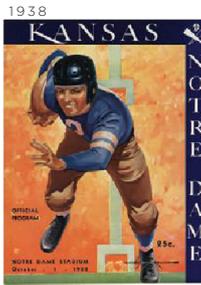
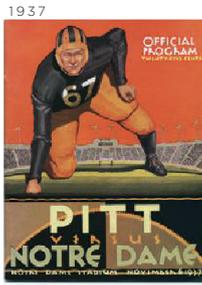
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**PROGRAMS. GET YOUR PROGRAMS** and replay an athletic tradition that began with a game in 1887 that pitted Notre Dame students against a football team from the University of Michigan, launching an extracurricular activity that brought the Indiana school national attention and planted its gridiron greats in the cultural imagination. Now in its 125th season Notre Dame football is celebrating its "Strong and True" tradition with a year of special events, recognitions, products, publications and media activities.

STILLPOINT



image, but I never knew it to be one that identified with fashion and lifestyle, as if fashion and lifestyle could define a Notre Dame person. That is not the element of personhood that Notre Dame has been about. I have watched over the years and have, anecdotally for sure, witnessed a drift in the Notre Dame ethos rightward and toward materialism. The mix of creeping conservatism with the growing wealth of the University topped off by a style issue in the alumni magazine prompts me to cancel my subscription.

MICHAEL COFFEY '76  
NEW YORK CITY

The spring issue is a radical departure from past editions where significant topics were discussed, described and questioned. If articles about fashion and how to dress are the new norm, perhaps the magazine could best be sold at grocery store checkout counters.

JAMES P. BURKE '69  
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

While I generally love and respect your magazine for the ways it approaches the world with grace, balance and soul, the spring issue left me feeling empty. For the past two years I served as a volunteer at a small Catholic children's home in rural Honduras, and I cannot echo the words on your cover — "You Are What You Wear" — to students who show up for school in a broken pair of hand-me-down, plastic flip-flops, or the teenage girls who receive their clothing from donations and constantly struggle with having "less." I cannot say this to my fellow community members, many of whom wear clothes that are bleached, stretched or even torn after long months of being hand-washed on a rock and hung out to dry in the powerful, strong sun. "You are what you wear" is certainly not a lesson I learned at Notre Dame.

What Notre Dame did teach me is that you are part of a rich, broken, beautiful human family. Your appearance, social status, college degree, material possessions and clothing do not define you. You are more than the sum of your parts. You have the infinite, mysterious blessing of being a member of the human race, for all its wonder and messiness and beauty and pain.

ERIN RAMSEY '09  
WINTER SPRINGS, FLORIDA

Love that fashion issue. The magazine is always great but this lighthearted departure is fun and unexpected. Thanks for a fresh and unique reading experience.

ARIANNE CAKARNIS '97, '03MBA  
LAKE OSWEGO, OREGON

Henry James said that the criteria to judge art and literature is that the piece should reflect the divinity of man. Your style issue does not. Shame on you.

MARY ANNE FRANKLIN '88MSA  
TAOS, NEW MEXICO

I've had the pleasure of reading 70-some issues of ND magazine. And then there's the new style issue. Blech! This is the first time I've ever finished an issue in less than a week. I was done in about 30 minutes. It's awful.

REX REMPEL '93  
KIRKLAND, WASHINGTON

In a word: narcissistic.

WILLIAM S. HANLEY '61  
BROOKLIN, MAINE

The next time you feel the need to "loosen up and have some fun," do it at the expense of something other than the reputation and image of the truly fine magazine you have edited these many years. I look to the magazine to bring me articles on serious issues such as the ones you mention in your editor's column. In these times that objective is more important than ever. In the baseless frivolity of the so-called "style issue" you demean Notre Dame, its serious commitment to academic excellence, the professors and students who are able to keep their focus on serious academic work, the alumni who put academic achievement above all other distractions (including football and the latest style of hoodie) and the many people around the world who look to Notre Dame to set the standard for universities that strive for academic excellence.

THOMAS F. CONNEELY '61, '64J.D.  
MILL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

I'm cool with the style issue idea. It's not really my thing, but I respect the editorial imperative to go in new directions from time to time. But I have to note my disappointment that the issue gave no mention of the very human efforts of the tens of millions of workers who produce all the fashionable and stylish clothing that adorns our nattily dressed undergrads and helps fuel the creativity of our ND-laureate industry innovators.

I realize the idea was to be fun, but in the future you might consider the role of universities like Notre Dame in shaping the debate on worker rights and sustainable economic development in the textile and apparel industry. This industry has long been looked at as the way forward for developing countries, but it has a poor track record in

terms of both economic sustainability and human rights. Efforts to improve labor conditions have been around for decades, and it's important to remember that it was actually college students who gave these efforts a huge boost in the 1990s by demanding their universities pay attention to the conditions in which their officially licensed products are made.

JOHN A. HOSINSKI '96  
FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA

Loved the style issue . . . so fun and clever . . . loved the cover photo — and copying those Ralph Lauren/Tommy Hilfiger ads. Keep up the good work.

COLLEEN MCCARTHY '77  
ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

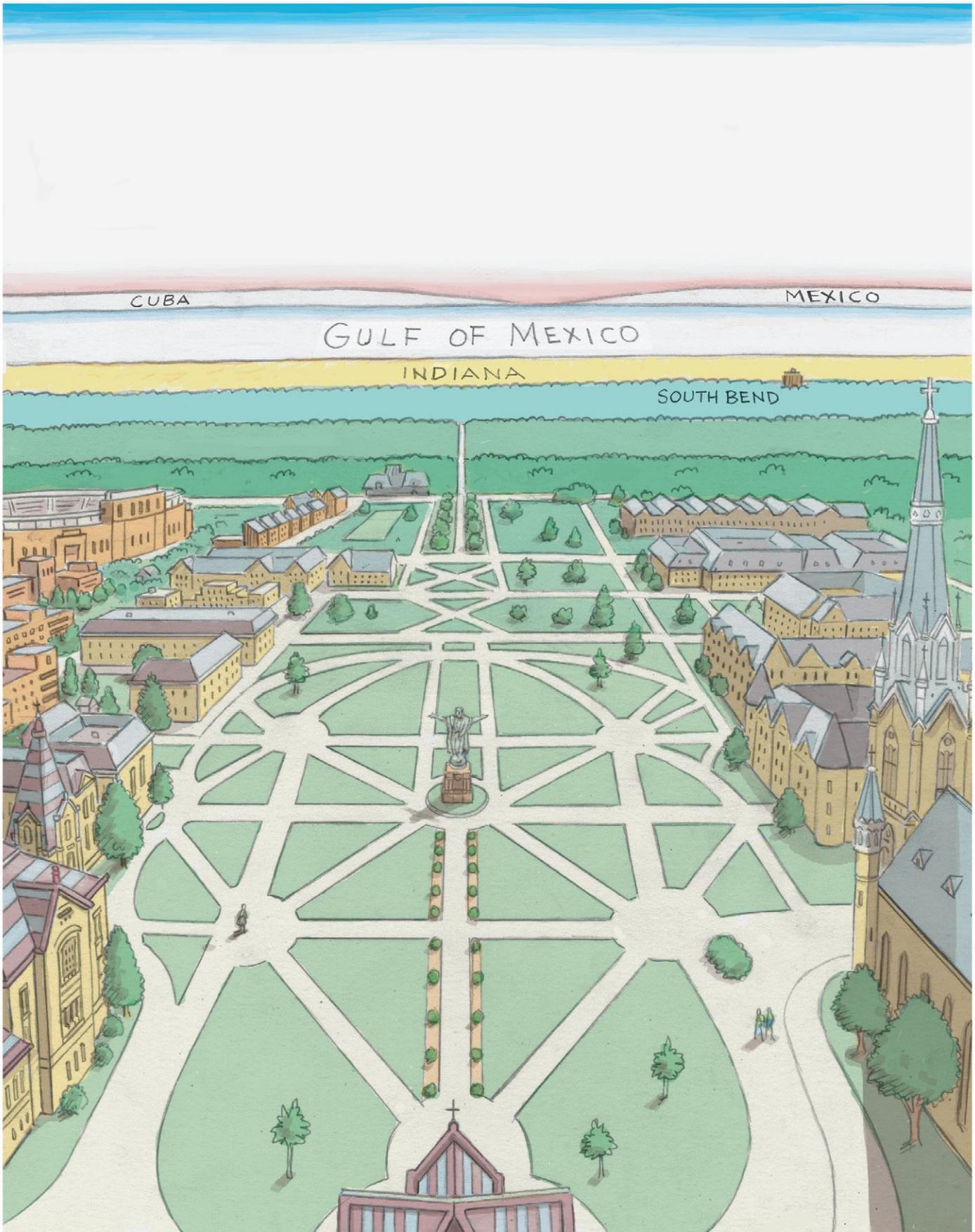
I was very disheartened when I saw "You Are What You Wear" on the cover of *Notre Dame Magazine*. I realize this silly comment was not to be taken seriously, but I feel that it and this issue sent the wrong message. The idea that we are defined by the clothes we wear is fundamentally at odds with the core values of Our Lady's university. In the face of an increasingly superficial, material world Notre Dame is supposed to stand for something larger, something more important.

I was also concerned by the series of Tommy Hilfiger-like photos that obviously evoked a sense of elitism reminiscent of an Ivy League prep school. I feel that we are slowly slipping away from what made Notre Dame great: the fact that it was a place which championed a hard-working, blue-collar mentality, representing the average person and standing up for the dignity of the downtrodden. It was because of this identity that millions of people (like my grandparents, who never attended college) felt like they were part of Notre Dame. If those people saw this issue of the magazine, I doubt they would feel the same way.

ANDY MULLEN '12  
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA

The issue on style is really fun, especially those zanies assembled in "Look of the Irish," shuffled and reshuffled in chic and mock-chic. I would like to sit in that red leather chair dressed in my roaring Gatsby ascot, while the young women, in their transformed short-skirted version, climbed around the chair.

JOSEPH RYAN '59  
NOTRE DAME, INDIANA



R.J. MATSON

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# Where do you stand?

In a love letter to Notre Dame, a professor contemplates the change of space and the change of place.

BY JOHN O'CALLAGHAN '96PH.D.

Last year on the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, the patronal feast of the priests of Holy Cross who founded Notre Dame, I walked over to the Grotto to pray for the University and myself as a scholar and teacher here. It was a beautiful September afternoon — technically still summer, but cool and sunny, giving a foretaste of approaching fall.

It may surprise some, but I often go to the Grotto to work as well as pray. It's a little known fact that Notre Dame's wireless network functions down there if you sit on the bench next to the statue of Tom Dooley. So visitors will sometimes observe a middle-aged professor, iPad open, Fourbucks in hand, working away under Mary's gentle gaze.

I used to smoke a cigar as I sipped my coffee and read or typed. But a colleague, a cigarette smoker, thought it was offensive of me to do so. I'm not sure of that, as any good cigar smoker knows the honor we do another by smoking a fine cigar in his or her company. I should have reminded him of the old Jesuit who responded to his penitent, "No, you may not smoke while you pray. . . . Of course, you may pray while you smoke." Still, out of deference to the feelings of those who don't understand the beauty of a good cigar, I no longer do that.

Another reason to work at the Grotto is the opportunity it affords to stroll there and back through God Quad, particularly in the spring when the lilacs are in bloom and the atmosphere is filled with their scent. It has perhaps been noticed by some passersby that a professor can upon occasion be seen head buried in a lilac bush, inhaling as if he cannot catch his breath.

I remember one such afternoon coming across a tour setting out from the Dome. The student guide was standing in the square in front of the Dome, the Basilica to her left, Washington Hall to her right. The tourists gathered around her had their backs to the

Dome and were looking toward the statue of the Sacred Heart 50 yards away, with Christ's arms outstretched and the inscription, *Venite ad me omnes* — Come to me, all.

The guide did not tell the usual joke about Jesus yelling up to Mary, "Jump, Mama, jump!" In fact, she didn't mention or even indicate the statue of Christ behind her at all. Her back to Christ the entire time, she explained that God Quad got its name "because of the statue of Mary up on the Dome." Her spiel over, the guide hurried her tour on toward the library.

It's a small thing, this turning of the back to a statue of Christ. But potentially it carries great symbolic weight for the University. For in taking the time to stand and look, we see things in that quad which tell us about our

With the growth of the University's physical plant, much of the symbolic character of God Quad is lost to us today.

University, remind us of those who founded it, suggest to us what we may be and what we may fail to be.

One day in class I discussed with my students a passage in which Nietzsche, the 19th-century German atheist, remarks that in our time, "our noisy, time-consuming, proud and stupidly proud industriousness educates and prepares precisely for 'unbelief' more than anything else does." He goes on to point out that modern times have reduced all of life to a business or a pleasure,

and the problem is that we can't figure out whether prayer is a business, a pleasure, or both. One of the most interesting features of the class discussion was students' use of the phrase "make time," as in "I want to make time for my family" or "I want to make time for prayer." With Nietzsche in mind, I asked them why no one ever speaks of "making time for work" or "making time for the football game."

I also asked the students what it would be like not to see oneself as a kind of lord of time, one who "makes time," but instead as one who receives time as a kind of gift. And I asked them to reflect upon how the way they speak about these issues may make Nietzsche's point. What Nietzsche wants us to recognize is that we have lost the notion of leisure — genuine leisure. Not the leisure that is merely a rest from our business designed to "recharge our batteries" so we can resume being industrious, and not leisure for the pursuit of pleasure, but what he calls "leisure with a good conscience." This is a kind of leisure that allows for contemplation.

At Notre Dame this could mean the contemplation of a woman clothed with the sun at the Grotto, a leisure that does not feel the demands of time moving the tour along but the gift of time that allows one to stand at Christ's feet contemplating what *venite ad me omnes* requires of one.

That's why I work at the Grotto and stroll God Quad. In the leisure of my work, I pray more.

## God Quad

Talking with the students about Nietzsche's astounding claim about prayer, I began to describe God Quad for them, taking them on a more leisurely tour than the one visitors often get. I reminded them of "Jump, Mama, jump!" since being prayerful does not exclude having a sense of humor. But I pointed out that with the growth of the University's physical plant, much of the symbolic character of God Quad is lost to us today.

This loss of symbolic meaning illustrates Nietzsche's argument that the modern Christian continues to employ a vocabulary

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John O'Callaghan is an associate professor of philosophy and the director of the Jacques Maritain Center at Notre Dame.

that in reality has lost its original meaning. This is one way of understanding what Nietzsche meant by proclaiming the “death of God”: Christians themselves no longer really believe in God, although they don’t quite recognize their practical atheism yet because they continue to employ a Christian vocabulary that is a mere ghostly remnant of the past and fails to embody its original meaning and claim upon their lives.

I explained to the students that if they had been on campus 80 or so years ago, what they would have seen from God Quad was how the University had been laid out in a cross. South Quad forms the horizontal of the cross, while God Quad, heading south from the Dome to the Main Circle, forms the vertical. Visually, Mary on the Dome stands at the foot of the cross.

Nowadays a more modern statue of Mary stands in the Main Circle — at the head of the cross. Since there is nothing intrinsically wrong with the modern, this too works as a symbolic representation of time and place. If Mary upon the Dome stands at the foot of the Cross as on Good Friday, at its head she welcomes campus visitors and directs them to her son, the Christ who stands in the middle of the cross. Come to me, all *per Mariam* — through Mary. It is an unmistakably Catholic welcome to the campus and what we do here.

The symbolism does not stop there. The statue of Christ is the image of the Sacred Heart, a campus devotion best known in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, where Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross is made truly present each day. And the curved sidewalks that proceed and bend outward from the square in front of the Dome and around the statue of Christ come together again at a point above South Quad. From the air these pathways form a heart, the Sacred Heart, with the statue of Christ in the center.

As I explained all of this to the students, I was gratified to hear a few oohs and ahs and even a soft, “That’s cool.”

All of this, however, is now obscured by the expansion of the campus. This is not a

rant against the growth of the University. It had to grow, both in terms of its physical plant and its aspirations for scholarship and teaching, if it was to fulfill the promise that Father Sorin discerned in founding it. Still, even to many who know the campus well, that plan of the Cross and the Sacred Heart is gone.

### Pursuing truth

The loss of the visual meaning of the heart of the campus can be instructive in thinking about the University. The essential character of any university is to be a place of scholarship and teaching, studying the world that God created in the beginning, redeemed through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and calls back to Him in the end. Like Mary’s wel-

truth that God created all things, or are even just agnostic about it, are not absolved from pursuing the possibility of its being true, any more than someone who denies that the world is spherical is absolved from finding out the truth.

So, to the extent that any university cuts itself off from that truth, it fails by the standard of what it claims is its essential mission, to pursue truth wherever it may lead. Nietzsche, for all his atheism, might say that in shrinking away from God such a university fears being great — it does not have a “good conscience.”

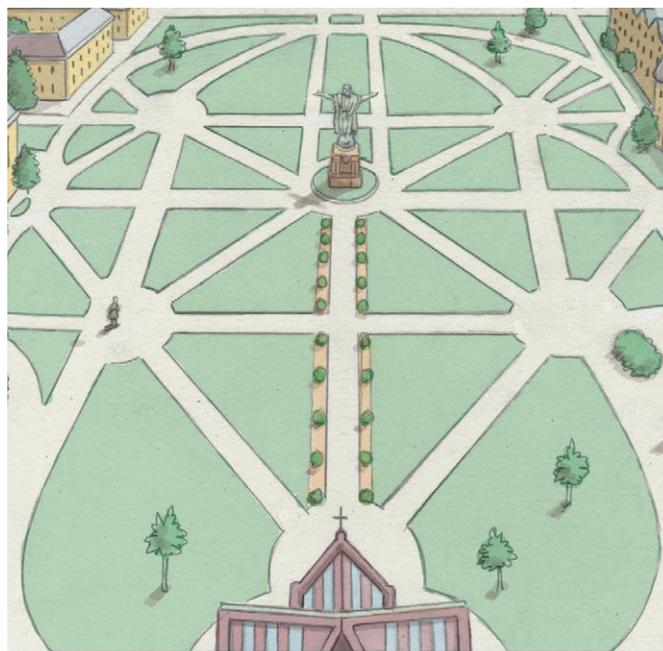
The truth of Christ, creator and redeemer, gathers all other truths and the disciplines that study them within its scope.

Thus the reason the University had to grow is not so we could be like everyone else, but so we could be true to the promise within Notre Dame to embody the genuine character of a university. Notre Dame had to grow in order to show the world what a truly great university could be. It had to grow in order to be a gift of the Church, from the University’s heart in the center of the campus, to a world badly in need of it.

It matters a great deal whether one is looking to become great, or whether one is already great and looking to enrich that greatness. Being committed to Christ and the Church is no guarantee of excellence in the pursuit of truth, so to be true to itself, Notre Dame has had and must continue to draw within itself those who are best at pursuing truth in the various disciplines, even those who are not committed to Christ and his Church. She cannot live up to her greatness without beckoning them all to the Christ who says, *venite ad me omnes*.

And yet, will the intellectual growth of the University obscure from it the truth that makes it truly great, the truth that sets it free from subservience to what are often no more than ephemeral academic fashions? Will Notre Dame, like the tour guide, turn its back to Christ?

For all its need to draw academic excellence within itself to fulfill its promise, Notre



come in the Main Circle, this description of the task of a university is decidedly Catholic and Christian, premised as it is upon the truth of Catholic Christian faith.

Nearly everyone, believer and unbeliever alike, will agree that the task of any university is to pursue truth wherever it may lead. But since God created all things, redeemed them through his death and resurrection and calls them back to Himself in the end, how can any university claim authenticity if it does not pursue that truth? Indeed, even those people or institutions that deny the

Dame is great because of its commitment to Christ, who is the beginning and end of all things. This is an institutional commitment to a truth that engages the intellect and cries out to be explored and understood in relation to all other truths. The mistake is to think such a commitment is opposed to or stands apart from academic excellence. On the contrary, it is integral to it. Drawing within itself those aspects of greatness found in other universities does not make Notre Dame great; rather, it fulfills and enriches the greatness Notre Dame already embodies because of the University's foundational love of Christ and His Cross. So, to be truly great, to pursue truth *wherever* it may be found, the University must also be animated by those who think it is in fact true that God created, redeemed and calls all things and everyone back to Himself.

Some fashions in academic life, however, find talk of truth and the pursuit of truth to be threatening, and they fear it. They think the word "truth" does nothing other than mark out a favored position of the powerful for controlling and doing damage to others. We ought to acknowledge the grain of truth in the fear that quite often claims to truth can be like clubs for beating others with whom one disagrees, and not invitations to a kind of life of inquiry together. And that is why the university cannot simply be animated by those who think it is true that God created and redeemed the world. With Saint Augustine we must live "in omnibus caritas" — live in all things the love of God. And so at the center of the cross in God Quad we find, if we stand and look, that we are beckoned by Him to His Sacred Heart.

#### **A different kind of difference**

University President Rev. John Jenkins, CSC, '76, '78M.A. said in his 2005 inaugural speech that we cannot make a difference unless we dare to be different. At present the University, marketing itself to the world, is emphasizing the difference we are trying to make. Consider the football halftime commercials, which tend to concentrate upon the good Notre Dame achieves in the world through the efforts of its faculty, staff and students to improve the lives of the less fortunate, the sick and those who suffer from war, famine and natural disaster.

These activities are all very good, and

they ought to be pursued. They are what the Church used to call corporal works of mercy. Yet in our emphasis upon how we are making a difference, might we forget the conditional character of Father Jenkins' claim? He did not simply dare us to make a difference. He dared us to be different in making that difference.

And what might that being different be? Are we to believe other universities do not engage in good works? That only Notre Dame makes an effort to alleviate suffering? If that is so, then why do the commercials for the schools we compete against look so much like ours?

Those we help by  
good works are our  
friends, not to be left  
alone when we have  
completed our work  
but to be lived among  
as fellow images of the  
Christ who calls us to  
Himself.

I believe our difference comes not so much from what we do, however good, but from where we stand — like John with Mary at the foot of the cross. Faith lived in *caritas*, the love of God and the love of one's neighbor in God, makes us different, and it is precisely that faith, that truth, that makes Notre Dame greater than other "great" universities, that faith that says to believer and unbeliever alike — and all of us sinners — Come to me, all. That is our hope.

We are united by that faith in a kind of friendship. My students also read a work by Josef Pieper, a German very different

from Nietzsche, on the nature of happiness. Pieper asks what would happen if we succeed in alleviating all human suffering. Would we then say our job is done and leave people as healthier strangers? G.K. Chesterton called this "the humanitarian ideal" and joked that it is akin to those who love mankind and hate their next-door neighbor.

Pieper's answer is that we do these things in order that we may enjoy friendship with those we help. "Good works" are insufficient without friendship — and not just any friendship. Pieper cites Thomas Aquinas in calling it a "companion in future beatitude." This kind of friendship means we are all John, Christ's beloved friend, told by Christ that Mary is our mother, that we are all brothers and sisters of and in Christ. Those we help by good works are our friends, not to be left alone when we have completed our work but to be lived among as fellow images of the Christ who calls us to Himself.

That is why our good works, our difference, is different.

That is why we stand where we do. Where we stand changes everything, and everyone. There is no truth left untouched by its truth, and no pursuit of truth in good conscience without it. As we tell the world how we go out to make a difference, we need to remind ourselves of how we are different, of where we stand. Otherwise we run the risk of being "proud, stupidly proud," engaged in nothing other than an education in unbelief. As a community of inquiry into truth wherever it leads, a companionship in beatitude, we participate in one another's achievements, both the achievements of those who go out into the world to make a difference and the achievements of those who stand still to inquire into how we are different and what difference that makes to all that we do.

Perhaps we ought to have one commercial that doesn't ask "What would you fight for?" but instead, "Where do you stand?" If you'd like to talk about it, I'll treat at Fourbucks, and we can walk to the Grotto. On the way we'll stop in the middle of the Sacred Heart to look around and maybe smoke a fine cigar, contemplating Christ, who invites us here. □

# The professor of rock

BY MICHAEL RODIO '12

**L**ike any good rock musician, Don Savoie looks like a mechanic. His graying hair is messy, his flannel shirt is wrinkled and his black jeans are faded. His black boots have a few holes, but he wears them anyway. He talks just like he sings, with a gravelly tenor somewhere between a hoarse whisper and a throaty six-cylinder. He is constantly smiling, mostly with his eyes.

He has Bruce Springsteen's blue-collar appeal, as if he should be installing sheet-rock or working at a car wash when he's not playing onstage. He also bears a resemblance to an older, leaner Robert Redford, if Robert Redford were a rock musician who got his licks in Detroit. Savoie has the square jaw and sparky blue eyes, but he's weathered, scruffy, more Motor City.

But Savoie isn't a mechanic or even your average rock 'n' roll musician. He's a professor at Notre Dame.

## Soul man

As an adjunct professor, Savoie doesn't teach any heavy theoretical classes. Instead, he teaches guitar and piano lessons. His specialties, honed over years of playing around America and even abroad, are blues and rock 'n' roll. The sign-up sheet for his lessons says Jazz Piano, but Savoie's version of jazz piano is what he likes to call "blue-eyed soul."

He plays foot-stompin' music full of chunky blues chords and an effortless, rapid-fire repertory of right-hand riffs. He plays Jerry Lee Lewis and Stevie Wonder. He also plays guitar, a battered black Fender that he's had for decades: It wails, weeps, rumbles and roars. As he plays, his slouch tightens into muscular focus, his gnarled hands — blues hands — suddenly energetic and precise.

In Crowley Hall of Music, where professors are experts in Schubert's music or in Schenkerian analysis, Savoie is something of an oddity.

He doesn't have a Ph.D. He is not a Beethoven scholar. He doesn't need to be.

He has only about 15 students. Some of them are music performance majors. Some

of them play football for the Irish. Savoie teaches music like Beatles songs and Motown hits, so his lessons fit his students' abilities. But make no mistake: He knows his half-diminished seventh chords from his augmented ninths.

He is permanently casual and that carries over into his teaching. He never accuses a student of not practicing. He likes to play along with students, rather than put them on the spot. And he makes no judgments of taste. If every one of his female students



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARBARA JOHNSTON

*Michael Rodio was this magazine's spring intern. He graduated in May with a degree in music and a minor in the Gollivan program for Journalism, Ethics and Democracy.*

wants to learn Adele, then he teaches them Adele, no questions asked. He's happy to spell out every note in a chord, letter by letter, if a student needs it.

Most music students don't even know who he is — never mind the average Notre Dame student. But Savoie doesn't seem bothered by his anonymity. As he sees it, his teaching is just an extension of his lifelong musical career.

"I can't even imagine coming home from work and not picking up an instrument," he says.

### Workin' on the night moves

Savoie is a Chicago native with some South Bend roots — his father, Leonard M. Savoie, an accountant, taught at Notre Dame in the 1980s. But Don Savoie got his start as a student at the University of Michigan, home to a thriving rock 'n' roll scene in the early '70s. "Bob Seger played in Ann Arbor," he points out. "So did Ted Nugent." Savoie had been writing songs and playing in bands since high school, so playing for frat parties was, in hindsight, just the next step in his formal education.

"I got pulled onto the music scene in a really good way," he says. "I was on Michigan's campus for about five minutes before someone grabbed me and said, 'Hey, you wanna play in a band?' 'Sure!' So I played all throughout college, writing songs. Back then there was no disco, so that meant a lot of opportunities to play. You name it, we played it — frat parties, bars. I was really lucky to do so. And it was good money. Back then, \$100 a week was good.

"Heck, for a college band, \$100 a week is good now!"

Savoie graduated and started playing in Detroit, where he continued his rock 'n' roll education. Call it post-graduate research.

"I found some really old blues guys in Detroit," Savoie says with a grin. "These guys are maybe 50, 60 years old, just playing blues in dive bars all day. So here I was, a 23-year-old white kid straight out of college, and I was listening to these old black blues cats play in really nasty bars in Detroit. Really scary."

So he didn't exactly matriculate into a formal program.

"I played with this one old guy in Ann Arbor, and if I bought him a beer he'd give me a lesson. What was beer back then, 50 cents? So for 50 cents I'd go over to this guy. He'd play, and then we'd get four hands on the piano, and then he would just go drink in a dark corner and let me play. There'd be

maybe 10 people in the bar — they didn't care. That's where I really learned.

"That was my master's degree, man. These guys were my professors."

### Rock 'n' roll fantasy

By 1978, Savoie and his five-man band, Vantage Point!, were touring across America from their base in Detroit. Savoie played piano, guitar and harmonica and sang. Vantage Point! played alongside Joe Cocker and Patti Smith. Then they went abroad, playing the Montreaux Festival (now the Montreaux Jazz Festival) in 1979, where they met Weather Report and warmed up for Jackson Browne. They opened for Stevie Ray Vaughan in 1982.

"Of course we dreamed of hitting it big," Savoie says. "Back then, we had to build a fan base the old-fashioned way: standing on the corner handing out flyers, getting people to come to our shows, playing shows all the time."

Throughout the '80s, Savoie and Vantage Point! played around Detroit. But the band couldn't cobble together the media push they needed to "bust out," as Savoie says. Soon he was playing solo gigs, recording his original music when he could.

Then Savoie met his future wife. At a gig. "There I was, playing away onstage, and I see this girl in the audience." Savoie's eyes widen. "I knew she was the right one, right then. It hit me — it was scary." He winks. "I caution all young men about that moment, because you never know when it will happen."

Savoie started to shift gears to a different dream. He and Sandra Kay married in 1991. They moved to Nashville so he could get some more exposure, but with the birth of their son, Donny Jr., in 1992, Savoie's gigging time was limited. He tried playing showcases, concerts featuring up-and-coming musicians who need the publicity, but nothing came of it. Money was tight.

"If I hadn't started a family, I definitely would have kept playing," Savoie says, and for the first time in our conversation, a cloud passes over his eyes. "But I was almost 35 at

the time, and when you get to that age, you start thinking, maybe now would be a good time. If I had gone somewhere, maybe — maybe I could have busted out. But it's hard to say."

As the stage lights faded, Savoie re-focused on his family. "I played solo," he says, "because I couldn't spend much time rehearsing." He gives a wry nod. "And it's hard to rehearse when you have to change diapers."

In 1998, Savoie packed up his suitcase and moved his family — now with an addition of two daughters — to South Bend. He started teaching at Southwestern Michigan College, which was less glamorous than playing in Nashville but "definitely better for putting bread on the table." He switched to Indiana University South Bend and taught at Purdue for a year before settling in at Holy Cross College.

In 2001, Savoie called over to Professor Paul Johnson, who was then the chair of Notre Dame's Department of Music. Savoie offered to teach guitar, and Johnson, recognizing the potential for interested students, signed him on.

"Kinda funny when you think about it," Savoie says. "I've been teaching here for 10 years."

### Reason to believe

In one way, Savoie's story is one of dreaming against the hard realities of supply and demand. It takes guts to learn the blues in dive bars in Detroit. It takes soul to write your own songs, to support a family as a one-man show in Nashville.

But somewhere along the line, it takes even more guts to let go of that dream and to live another one. To prioritize family over that chance — that infinitely tiny spark of hope — of making it big. But as he sees it, Savoie still pursues both dreams.

"I have been a dad for 21 years," he says. "It's been the greatest thing that could happen to me."

He plays rock 'n' roll gigs, but he saves time for his family. His laid-back and entertaining teaching style brings music to life in his students' hands.

Don Savoie might be the best Notre Dame professor you've never heard of. □



# Matt Swinton's declaration of independence

BY BETH GRISOLI '87, '90M.A.

One day in May, the videographer in the Multimedia Department at Notre Dame affixed a GoPro camera to the wheelchair of Matt Swinton '12, a finance major from Dallas. The GoPro is the Navy Seal of cameras. It's designed to ride on surfboards, motocross helmets and extreme skiers.

Riding a wheelchair across campus may not seem adventurous, but when Matt moved to Notre Dame as a freshman, it was the bungee jump of his life. The camera was a window to campus most of us never peer through — a view from three feet off the ground, moving up and down ramps and through handicapped-accessible doors. In our video about Matt and the campus community that has embraced him the past four years, the University looked the same but felt different.

Doctors diagnosed Matt with spinal muscular atrophy when he was a baby and gave him a year to live. Later, when a company in New England offered his father, Mike, an

never assumed and tasks as small as using a water fountain don't seem attainable, how could college be realistic? But Matt excelled in school. He was accepted at a number of top-ranked universities. Naturally DeAnn pushed for the ones in warmer climates. She feared the frosty months in South Bend might isolate him because he'd have to stay inside so much.

Spinal muscular atrophy affects the voluntary muscles, leaving Matt extraordinarily weak. While he can use his hands, he cannot raise his arms; he cannot roll over so must be turned periodically. Because respiratory muscles are also voluntary, Matt cannot take a full breath, cough or clear his lungs — so any infection becomes life-threatening. South Bend didn't seem like the place for him.

But Matt loved Notre Dame, where he had attended some football games. And he wasn't the only one who persuaded his parents. "Notre Dame did the majority of the convincing," he says. Before he even wheeled onto campus, the University architect's office had devised a plan to renovate a dorm room to meet his needs.

Roommates were one of the aspects of college Matt wanted most. Stand-up comedy is his hobby, and he needed people to critique his jokes. Other schools had offered single rooms and couldn't promise the same residence hall each year. But just off the second-floor lounge of O'Neill Hall, architects created a suite of rooms that connects to a private bath. Matt had one bedroom for himself; his two roommates shared the other. Instant community.

After Matt arrived on campus, the health attendants hired to assist him proved unreliable. Overruling his parents' concerns, he convinced them the students he'd met at Notre Dame were far more capable than the professionals. He circulated an ad in the dorm, and 11 students in O'Neill stepped up that day. So for the past four years, several young men have helped Matt with every daily task imaginable — washing, dressing, compassionately carrying him from wheelchair to sofa to bed. Every night, including weekends, they took turns sleeping on the cot beside his bed and waking four to five

times to turn him to keep him comfortable and prevent pressure sores.

Members of this humble group have become Matt's dearest friends. Interviewing them one day, I thought of a priest who once asked me, "When is the last time you saw the face of Christ?" In my head I was shouting, "Right now! Right now!"

Matt found academic support through Notre Dame's Office of Disability Services. It provided note-takers for his classes. The Swintons were amazed at the accessibility of all the buildings. "There's really nowhere on campus I've wanted to go that I haven't been able to," Matt says. Even after the deepest snow, the grounds crews cleared the sidewalks before dawn. The only time he wasn't able to make it to class was when a friend forgot to plug in the charger to his power chair the night before. Matt called the professor and said, "I'll bet you've never heard this excuse for missing a class before. . . ."

At football games, the University assigned him two seats in the handicapped section so a friend could sit with him. At pep rallies, the men of O'Neill would announce their arrival with the giant hall flag attached to Matt's wheelchair. After every game, Matt joined the students in the alma mater, swaying his chair side to side. Win or lose, a community.

As Matt's family gathered for commencement, they spoke of the Notre Dame family as something real, not just as a trite metaphor. Countless people had supported and mentored him — Mendoza faculty like Bill Brennan and Carl Ackermann, rector Ed Mack, Scott Howland of Disability Services and roommates like Nathan Albertson, Michael Landron, Eric Vaughn and Manan Dhingra.

Matt is now employed as a financial analyst in Dallas with Sabre Holdings, a global travel-technology company. He says of his ND experience, "Before coming here, I had a very big definition of what independence was. I thought it was doing everything by myself. Notre Dame taught me you can achieve what you want and be independent, but you can ask for help. That's not a bad thing, and there are people willing to help. I learned you don't have to go it alone." □



MATT CASHORE '94

executive position, he turned it down because young Matt was too fragile to survive in a cold climate. The company arranged for Mike to remain in Texas and commute every week. So Matt grew up in Dallas, visiting doctors, undergoing hours of therapy and going to school.

Mike and DeAnn Swinton now confess that when their son was little, one of their private jokes was about saving for college. When adding a candle to a cake each year is

*Beth Grisoli is the director of multimedia services at Notre Dame.*

# Understanding the HHS lawsuits

BY RICHARD W. GARNETT

On May 20, at the 167<sup>th</sup> Commencement ceremony, Notre Dame awarded an honorary degree to Kevin J. “Seamus” Hasson ’79, ’82M.A., ’85J.D., the founder of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a public-interest law firm that defends the rights of institutions and individuals “from Anglicans to Zoroastrians.” The next day, the University’s president, Rev. John I. Jenkins, CSC, ’76, ’78M.A., announced that, “neither lightly nor gladly,” the University had filed a religious-liberty lawsuit of its own, challenging the legality of a federal rule requiring most religious employers to provide coverage for “preventive services,” including FDA-approved contraceptives, sterilization procedures and abortion-causing drugs.

Another 42 Catholic institutions brought similar cases the same day in federal courts across the country. This group of universities, dioceses, health-care providers, schools and social-welfare agencies argue, among other things, that the preventive-services mandate requires them to act inconsistently with their Catholic mission, character and commitments, and therefore violates federal law and the First Amendment.

As background, recall that President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law in March of 2010. The Act requires, among other things, that most employers’ group health plans cover women’s “preventive care.” However, Congress did not define this term, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) took more than a year to decide which “preventive services” to include in the mandate.

HHS also announced that some “religious employers” would be exempt from the requirement. This unusually stingy provision covers only those entities whose purpose is “the inculcation of religious values” and that hire and serve primarily people of the same religious faith. A house of worship or a seminary could meet this definition, but many religious charities, schools and hospitals would not.

*Richard Garnett is an associate dean and professor in the Notre Dame Law School.*



The mandate and the “religious employer” definition came under sharp criticism from a diverse array of individuals and institutions and from across the political spectrum. In response, the president endorsed last February what some characterized as a “compromise,” and proposed that, in cases where religious institutions that don’t qualify for the narrow exemption object to providing the coverage, the insurance companies will be required to do so instead. It is not clear, however, that this proposal would provide any relief for religious employers, like Notre Dame, that have self-insured employee health plans and therefore are, in effect, “the insurance companies.” Other details remain to be worked out and questions need to be answered in the course of the administrative-rulemaking process. In meantime, the mandate is the law, and it is the target of the University’s lawsuit.

American legal doctrines and precedents dealing with religious liberty are complicated. So, to understand the University’s lawsuit, and some of the criticisms of it — for example, that it doesn’t reflect prevailing views of contraception among the Catholic laity or that it brushes aside the economic concerns of employees who do not share the University’s religious objections — it’s important to appreciate what is, and is not, being argued. Notre Dame is not objecting to health-care reform, nor is it seeking to regulate contraception. The lawsuit has no merely partisan, electoral or political aims and — as Father Jenkins has said — was filed only after “much deliberation, discussion, and efforts to find a solution.”

The University respects fully its employees’ liberty and privacy and is not seeking to impose or coerce religious orthodoxy. It does insist, however, that a mandate requiring it to provide preventive services to its employees is not in keeping with Notre Dame’s character as a Catholic university, with the institutional diversity in civil society that we celebrate, or with federal law.

What’s more, the current exemption both reflects and imposes a confined understanding of what it means to be a “religious”

institution, one that is engaged and active in the world, one that aspires not only to pray and worship, but also — as Notre Dame does — to discover, teach and transform; to make God known, loved and served; and, as Father Jenkins says, “to heal, unify and enlighten.”

“This filing is about the freedom of a religious organization to live its mission, and its significance goes well beyond any debate about contraceptives,” Jenkins wrote in a May 21 open message explaining the University’s decision to sue. “For if we concede that the Government can decide which religious organizations are sufficiently religious to be awarded the freedom to follow the principles that define their mission, then we have begun to walk down a path that ultimately leads to the undermining of those institutions.”

ND president emeritus Father Theodore Hesburgh, CSC, stated succinctly, in a recent interview, the lawsuit’s central claim: The government has “overreached” and “has to be brought up short.”

In a pluralistic society governed by the rule of law, religious liberty is not absolute. And the responsibility of public authorities to the common good and public order means that balancing, trade-offs and compromise are unavoidable. At the same time, a political community like ours, with laws and a Constitution like ours, should respect and cherish religious freedom and should accommodate distinctive religious claims and obligations generously, not reluctantly.

In this case, a policy that better respects the religious mission, character and integrity of institutions like Notre Dame was and is available. For example, the government could use and expand existing federal programs, like Medicaid, to provide employees of the relatively few objecting religious institutions with preventive-services coverage. Such an approach would avoid most of the religious-freedom issues without sacrificing what the Obama Administration regards as the policy’s benefits.

Of course, to cherish religious freedom is not necessarily to welcome federal litigation. It would have been wrong for Catholic institutions to sue unnecessarily, prematurely, “for show” or to score political points. In this case, though, it would have been risky and unreasonable to delay. Political operatives of all stripes will, no doubt, try to use both the mandate and the challenges to it for their own purposes, but the decision to sue was both principled and prudent, because religious freedom is both foundational and vulnerable. □



... a look back at campus past ...

## It takes a University Village

Twenty years ago, a young couple settled into marriage, parenthood and grad-student housing

BY JENNIFER KACZOR

In the spring of 1992, when the acceptance letter from Notre Dame's graduate school arrived for my husband, Chris looked at me and said: "Well, what do you think?" I executed a silly little cheer along the lines of "Go Irish!" and sat down, overcome with relief. Before the letter arrived, the alternative had been the University of Toronto. While Toronto may be a vibrant city, it is an expensive vibrant city. "If I have to endure harsh winters while my husband earns his degree," I told my mother, "I'd like at least to be able to buy a coat."

For each school to which my husband applied, I made it my business to know how and where we would live. Notre Dame, I discovered, offered the cheapest accommodations for students who were married with children. Our monthly rent for the first year was to be \$190. This seemed like excellent news. But, of course, though people like to joke about graduate school being a time of suspended reality, the principles of economics are never suspended. In grad school, as in life, you get what you pay for. We soon discovered that our money secured us a mere 500 square-feet of real estate, all of which, to my horror, was subterranean. It was both appalling and, considering we had no money whatsoever, appealing.

Even if we could have afforded Toronto, the thought of surviving in a big city was frightening. In those early days of marriage, when we barely knew each other and every moment was infused with equal parts fear and adventure, Notre Dame's University Village, with 103 apartments housing about as many young families, seemed to offer the emotional security of a close-knit community.

*Jennifer Kaczor, her husband, Chris, and their seven children live in Los Angeles. Chris completed his doctoral degree in philosophy in 1996.*

We arrived on a scorching August day to take up residence in Building A. We brought with us our dishes, our newborn daughter and the realization that this was it. With an intensity similar to that of our wedding day, moving day felt like a beginning, so we did what everyone does when they begin a new life: We bought furniture — a futon, two small dressers and a table. I made shelves out of cinder blocks and plywood. Chris found a nook into which he could build a desk. And I happily discovered that I could vacuum our entire apartment from one outlet.

Eager to meet people, I wandered the corridors and shared this news with other new families. Within a week, we had made friends and were somewhat settled. We soon learned that the men of University Village talked mostly about football, dissertations and the job market, while the women traded stories of pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. This was interesting, because at least half the women I knew were also pursuing advanced degrees. They could have conversed thoughtfully on their education. But when we were together nothing seemed more fascinating or, perhaps, more precarious, than our families. We were young, healthy, arrogant and terrified. As a sort of comfort against such overwhelming potential, we huddled together and tried to figure out what the hell we were doing.

Had we been smart, we would have looked to the international students and their families for instruction. The Latino families seemed to be having an absolute lark. They played soccer on Sundays and held elaborate picnics. The fathers threw their toddlers into the air with such vigor that I winced, while the mothers simply flung back their heads and laughed — balancing themselves on 5-inch heels. Some Chinese students seemed equally resourceful, taking

"family housing" literally and squeezing three generations into their tiny apartments. These families never complained, but instead quietly cultivated bountiful gardens in the field next to the parking lot.

The "alternative/progressive" American families also appeared to be faring better than we. They supported the local farmers' market, eager to find organic foods for their children before the rest of us knew what that meant. They exuded a confidence that all would be well — that life was a great joy and a great mystery. They didn't seem to waste even a passing concern on disciplining their children, instead viewing childhood as a fascinating psychological process not to be disturbed.

It was only us uptight, white, middle-class Catholics who were beside ourselves with worry. In general, we seemed to fall into two camps. Some of us wives fought with our husbands, pouted, moaned about finances, yelled at the kids and made a general nuisance of ourselves. But those of us who chose that route also kept tidy homes, subscribed to *Bon Appétit*, wore flattering clothes, and, when we weren't complaining, made our husbands laugh with our quick wit. Our husbands, afraid to come home without evidence of having accomplished something every day, worked hard and finished their degrees on time or sooner.

Other women were models of feminine virtue, attended daily Mass, spoke in whispers and could breastfeed a newborn and a toddler while homeschooling a 5-year-old. But, as wholesome and devoted as they were, they kept cluttered homes and wore special "nursing tops." Sackcloth and ashes could not have been more penitential to me than those loose-fitting tops with their "subtle" vents. Also, their husbands, made comfortable by so much nurturing, tended



*Some things haven't changed at University Village since the author and her family moved away in 1996, as these photos from the community's 2011 photo contest show. Donna Benvenuti air-dries diapers; Connor Cook waves goodbye to his father, Cameron, an MBA student; and Jacob Haley and Lukas Thames navigate their way through that most universal of Notre Dame experiences.*



to linger in their homey apartments and neglect their dissertations.

We were all deeply insecure. We confessed everything, often wildly inappropriate things, to each other in the hope that someone would second our concerns or admit to the same sins. The progress of dissertations and pregnancies was common knowledge. Failing out of school was a real possibility — many did — and failing as a parent was an everyday occurrence. To guard against both, we took extreme measures. When told to “redouble” his efforts in order to pass the Latin exam, my husband flew to Rome to study under the pope’s own Latinist. And when my daughter still wasn’t speaking at age 2, I simply lied and told people she was.

Everything had the potential to undo our carefully planned lives. One mother was so fearful that her children might go astray, she literally carried a wooden paddle with her everywhere she went. It was bright yellow and hung by a tether from her waist. “It’s a visible reminder for the children to obey,” she told us. And they pretty much did, those children. I thought she was nuts. But I also understood her desperation — and her need for experimentation. Eventually the paddle was replaced with verbal commands, and if she turned out to be anything like me, those commands eventually gave way to sighs of resignation and smiles of recognition.

Of course, the stress often overflowed into our young marriages. Fights were common

— and sometimes unwittingly public. One winter day, in an effort to show how mature we were, my husband and I offered to babysit for our next-door neighbors. “Go out!” we encouraged. “Enjoy some time together,” we said, feeling terribly magnanimous.

I don’t remember how it started, or what it was about, but less than an hour before we were to be entrusted with this couple’s children, Chris and I had one of the biggest, loudest, most grievous fights we’d ever had. We stood toe-to-toe in our kitchen screaming at each other until the phone rang. “Hi,” began Mark from next door, in a voice that clearly said: “Don’t mind me. Your marriage is your business, but these walls are terribly thin.”

“Listen,” he actually said, “Claire and I have decided to stay in tonight, but, hey, thanks for the offer.” We didn’t leave the apartment for a week.

By coincidence — or maybe because we’d been louder than we realized — Notre Dame organized a talk on the stress graduate school imposes on marriage. It helped simply to have it confirmed. We learned how to alleviate stress by exercising and making time for each other. We role-played. We prayed. We were given the numbers of counselors and encouraged to seek help if we should need it. “This will pass,” they told us. “You won’t always be living on 10 dollars a day in 10-degree weather.”

Parenting classes were also offered, as

was a Sunday Mass in our community center. At those Masses, babies could nurse, toddlers could roam, pregnant mothers could sit, and fathers, so young and with so much responsibility, could feel brave enough to face one more week of classes, dirty diapers and bills.

When Chris and I finally did re-enter society, we were determined to never publicly humiliate ourselves again, but we were also the tiniest bit more patient with each other. We were a fraction more loving. The classes helped, but so had talking to friends.

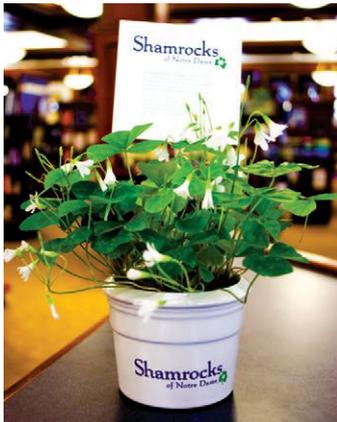
And that was the real gift of the Village — simply that it existed. With so many of us living in such close quarters, it was something of a hothouse. If your family was struggling, there was always another just a little bit stronger planted nearby. In time, we grew taller and stronger, too. All the while we were safe. Our greenhouse protected us from the harsher elements of the world, like stressful commutes and the depressing isolation new mothers often face, and allowed us to flourish in relative peace.

We did grow — up and out of the Village. The children who were babies then are in college now. For most of us, our fears were unfounded. Our children are pretty much okay. Some of them attend Notre Dame. We were neither as good nor as bad as we thought. I imagine the families who now inhabit the Village will someday discover the same thing. □

PHOTOS COURTESY PETER AND ANGELA CAMPBELL; SARAH COOK; DANIELLE HALEY

*seen & heard...*

**GREEN THUMBS ENVIUS** of Notre Dame's botanical splendor no longer need a five-fingered discount when they're tempted to take a plant or two home with them. The "Shamrocks of Notre Dame" are now available at the Hammes Notre Dame Bookstore during special event weekends, and at Varner's Nursery in Niles, Michigan, where they are cultivated for sale and for transplant



TRAVIS MATHER

into Notre Dame soil. In May, ND landscape services crews planted 500 of the lush, floppy, three-leaf clovers around the Main Building and the statue of the Sacred Heart, near the Eck Visitors Center and in front of McKenna Hall. "Anything that's Notre Dame, people want," notes manager Patrick McCauslin, who in his 29 years of making campus beautiful says he's witnessed guerrilla gardeners reach

out of car windows to swipe tulips from Morris Inn flower boxes and seen freshly planted geraniums disappear overnight. That's a no-no, but McCauslin says he's happy just to see the University finally selling something it's growing. The white-flowered shamrocks, annuals that will not survive a frost, grow happily indoors year-round and are available for \$15 in plastic or \$30 in a ceramic ND pot. See shamrocks.nd.edu to learn more. . . .

**KEEP AN EYE OUT** for past, present and future Notre Dame athletes at the 2012 Olympic Games this summer in London, especially in the fencing events. Former Irish fencer Mariel Zagunis will defend her back-to-back gold medals in women's individual sabre as one of five swash-bucklers with ND ties to represent the United States. Kelley Hurley '10 (women's epee) and Gerek Meinhardt (men's foil) will compete as reserves in the team competition in their events. Like Meinhardt, Kelley's sister Courtney Hurley took her senior year off from collegiate fencing to train. (That's Kelley thrusting at her sister at last year's Pan American Games, below.) She will compete in women's individual epee. Meanwhile, incoming freshman Lee Kiefer, the top-ranked American in women's foil, will seek Olympic success before



API IMAGES

heading to South Bend this fall. In cycling, former Irish hockey defenseman T.J. Mathieson '04 was named to the track long team in December. Soccer midfielder Shannon Boxx '98 will compete for the United States in her third summer games, and at press time junior forward Natalie Achonwa, who scored 7 points in 27 minutes against Baylor in the 2012 NCAA women's basketball tournament final, had just secured her spot on the Canadian squad. . . .

**"HIRE ME" IS A FAMILIAR MESSAGE** written in masking tape on many a graduate's mortarboard on Commencement Day. This year Amanda Jonovski '12 distinguished herself by adding a QR — quick response — code for good measure (above right). The graphic design major's version of the increasingly ubiquitous, scannable black-and-white square took curious smart-phone users to her on-line portfolio. Jonovski told ABC News she hopes to find a job in Boston or Chicago, which, given her quickness, she's probably done already. . . .



AMANDA JONOVSKI

**FOURTEEN FORTUNE 500 CEOS** hold Notre Dame degrees — 10 undergraduate and four graduate — according to a U.S. News & World Report analysis of the annual, revenue-based Fortune ranking of American corporations. The figure ties Notre Dame with the universities of Michigan and Virginia for fifth place. . . .

**ALLIANCE'S APPLICATION** for student club status was deferred until the autumn semester, pending the conclusions of a review this summer of University policies and provisions for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning students that administrators said would be conducted in the context of ongoing conversations with student leaders. The Student Activities Office said it was the first time in at least 15 years that any would-be club's

application was deferred, rather than simply approved or denied. Campus gay-rights activists viewed the deferral as a positive step after months of renewed efforts that were endorsed for the first time this year by resolutions from both the student and faculty senates. The club decision came one week after the University announced in April that it would maintain the wording of its nondiscrimination policy while reaffirming the welcoming precepts of the University's 1997 "Spirit of Inclusion" statement, strengthening awareness of existing procedures for reporting perceived acts of harassment and discrimination, and improving training for first-year orientation commissioners and residence hall staff. The current nondiscrimination policy, written mindful of distinctions made in Catholic teaching between sexual orientation and sexual conduct, which might not be recognized in civil courts, does not include specific language protecting students, staff or faculty from discrimination based on sexual orientation. University officials maintain that harassment and discrimination are inconsistent with the University's Catholic character and will not be tolerated at Notre Dame. "We think it is important for our faculty and staff and students to not only feel just comfortable here but to know that if the need were to arise, that they have access to a full range of remedies, including legal remedies, if they were wronged in any way because of sexual orientation," University spokesman Dennis Brown told *The Observer* in May. . . .



*Having coffee with...*

## Jessica Hellmann

Beyond climate change

BY JOHN MONCZUNSKI

My gaze wanders past Jessica Hellmann and out the window of Grace Hall's Café de Grasta as she and I chat. A flash of orange, a robin that has just fluttered past, catches my eye. It's a beautiful day in early March, a week before St. Patrick's Day, a picture-perfect blue sky, temperatures in the low 60s, trees thick with buds on the Notre Dame campus. This is a day as all days should be.

It is nothing like the typical March South Bend day I have grown to expect. You know the ones: all frigid rain, wind-swept bluster and heartache. Now *that* is South Bend in late winter. So has paradise come too soon this year? And if *this* is March, what is July going to be like, I wonder. Then my mind snaps back to the conversation at hand.

"So, Jessica, are there aspects of the climate change debate that frustrate you?"

"Huhhhhhhhhhffffhh," comes a protracted sigh.

"Ahh, I've hit a nerve."

"Well, yes and no," says the Notre Dame associate professor of biological sciences, who is on sabbatical writing a book about what should, or could, be done to help species transition to a warmer world.

First of all, Hellmann says she thinks it is unfortunate that climate change has become politicized. Regardless of political orientation, we all inhabit the same planet. Further, she thinks the *actual* debate among climate scientists is often misunderstood by the general public and misrepresented in the popular press.

All scientists are trained to be skeptics, the biologist who analyzes butterfly migration to study climate points out. However, skepticism — namely wanting more proof before reaching a conclusion — is not the same as saying no problem exists. Such a head-in-the-sand attitude is not scientific skepticism but denial, she contends.

Climate scientists argue all the time, Hellmann points out, but it's not about what the public thinks. "There are huge fights over what kinds of clouds will form in a warmer world and what effect they might have. There are huge fights over hurricanes, and the severity of weather patterns." But,

she adds, there are not many scientists who would say greenhouse gases do not increase the average global temperature.

There is no question, Hellmann says, that carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have risen precipitously in the past 100 years, and that this surge continues at ever faster rates.

To emphasize the point, she draws a graph of undulating squiggles on a slip of paper. "This, she says, "is atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> plotted through time. You can see the levels go up-down, up-down, up-down, depending on whether the Earth is in an ice age. So here we are now," she gestures to a straight-up line shooting off the page. CO<sub>2</sub> quite literally is blasting into the stratosphere, and there is no sign of re-entry.

"We already have 40 percent more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere than any time in the last 650,000 years. And it's going up and up, with larger increases in emissions each year. Most people have no idea how drastically different this increase is. It is astronomical. If we don't slow and eventually stop emissions, climate scientists tell us that within 100 years the climate could become as different from today as today is from the end of the last ice age."

The greenhouse gas data are so compelling that Hellmann says she doesn't believe the "Is climate change real?" debate will continue much longer. "Pretty soon we won't be arguing whether it's happening. But we'll likely be arguing who is responsible for how much and what is the right path forward. I think it's much more reasonable to have substantive disagreements about what to do about climate change, rather than arguing about if it exists or not."

As far as her upcoming book is concerned, the Notre Dame biologist says she takes climate change as a given. "It's not a book about what you should do to eliminate climate change. It's what you do in response."

If the projections from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are correct, especially the "business as usual" scenarios in which climate change is largely ignored and denied, she says the human race and every other creature on the planet is likely in for a wild ride. "Those scenarios are really scary. I mean *really different* than we are used to today. Imagine species that we think of in the southeast living in Indiana, or heat waves every summer in the Midwest with temperatures well over 100 degrees [Fahrenheit]."



MATT CASHORE '94

With that as a backdrop, the ecologist argues it is imperative to prepare for that future. For her book, she's examining a variety of proposals scientists have advanced to help species cope with a warmer world. Those strategies include managed relocation, in which species might be transported to new habitats. Another scheme is setting up ecological "corridors" that would make it easier for threatened species to move on their own to more favorable places. Then there's the "Noah's Ark" approach in which representative specimens might be put in

zoos, or fertilized eggs are frozen, with the species eventually to be re-introduced to the wild.

"A lot of what we're talking about is manipulating nature. Some of the more drastic ideas involve putting species in new places. Implicit in all of this is that the human race has some culpability for where we've taken the planet. Namely, we've altered the fundamental underpinnings of what makes things live where and how well they do there. We are a major force of nature in our own right.

"So the question is: Do we just stand by

and let things run their course? Or are there some values we might want to preserve?"

Hellmann doesn't pretend to have all the answers. "I'm not telling people what to do, or what's right or wrong. Essentially my argument is that all these things are in play. And it's not just all about what the scientists say. But we can and should lay these issues out, and when rational people come together and discuss things maybe we will find there are some instances when pro-active measures should be taken."

There's a lot at stake. □

## DEATHS IN THE FAMILY

**Jaime Juan Jose Bellalta**, a professor emeritus of architecture revered as a mentor, collaborator and friend by a generation of Notre Dame students who took his design studios and courses in sacred architecture, died in March at his home in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was 89.

Bellalta and his wife, the late landscape architect and emerita Professor Esmée Bellalta, joined the faculty in 1976 after leaving his native Chile under duress, bringing with them a lively family of 10 children and a spirit of hospitality that would be much enjoyed by their colleagues and students. Hired in his prime from a distinguished career in professional practice, public service, teaching and academic administration — most recently in Chile, where his designs for the Benedictine monastery at Las Condes contributed to its designation as a National Historic Architectural Monument — Jaime Bellalta made the most of his years at Notre Dame. A modernist and Christian humanist, Bellalta trained his students in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, emphasizing designs for churches, chapels and other sacred spaces that encouraged active participation among the laity. He and his students put many ideas into practice through renovation projects on campus and in nearby parishes.

Bellalta's Catholic faith and commitment to social justice were equally evident in his work on affordable and low-income housing, another gift he shared with his adopted community in South Bend. "He enlightened our vision, raised our aspirations and taught us to search for the sacred," a former student wrote. Added another, "My sense of what is beautiful and what is just would be impoverished if not for Jaime."

**C. Lincoln Johnson**, an associate professor emeritus of sociology remembered by colleagues as much for his heart as for his devotion to his discipline and who in 1971 was among the first non-Catholics hired to Notre Dame's sociology faculty, died in March. He was 70.

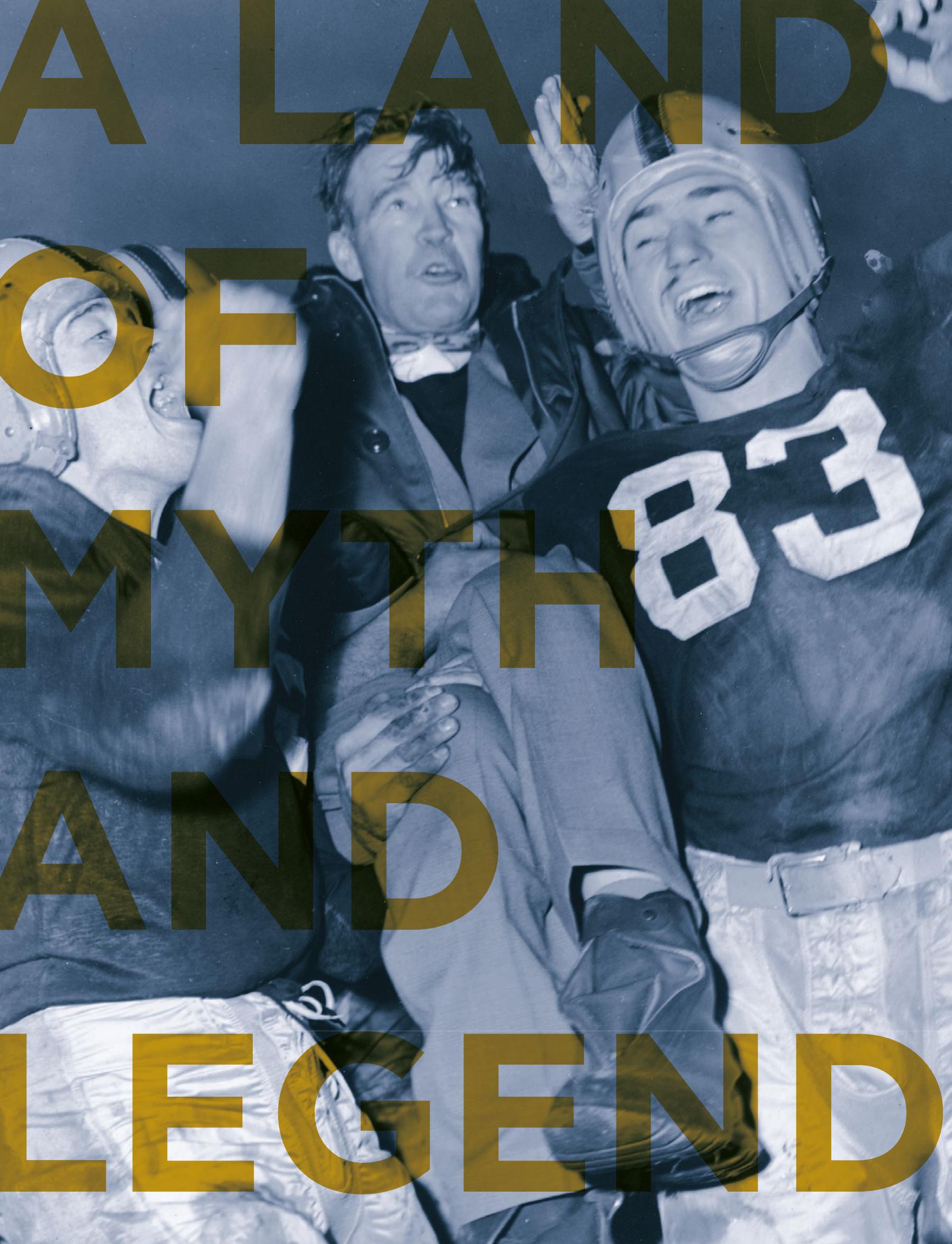
"Linc" brought needed strength in statistical methods and became a treasured resource for fellow scholars who sought his help with data analysis and management. He was soon tapped to lead what then was called the Social Science Training and Research Laboratory and would later direct the Computer Applications Program for Arts and Letters students.

An ordained Methodist minister and social theorist known for experimental pedagogical techniques — such as once asking his students to take their shoes off in the classroom — Johnson taught at least 16 different courses that reflected his wide-ranging interests in what he called "that interesting intersection between self and society." His Sociology of Sport class became a department staple. More recently, he converted his interest in the impact of globalization on food systems, a reportedly favorite topic of conversation with dinner guests, into another popular course on the sociology of food. His concern for the hunger extended into his service on the board of South Bend's Northeast Neighborhood Center Food Pantry. "He was always more than an academic sociologist," said Professor Andrew Weigert, who taught courses with Johnson and collaborated with him on research in the sociology of religion. "I never heard him say no to any request or idea. He was so easy to work with."

**James H. "Jay" Walton '59**, a professor emeritus of English who taught British literature and the novel for 40 years at his alma mater and who once wryly described himself to a *Scholastic* writer as "the college professor they warned you about in high school," died in April at age 74.

Walton swiftly completed his doctoral dissertation on Joseph Conrad at Northwestern and returned to Notre Dame as an instructor in 1963, where he developed a reputation as a demanding but highly approachable professor who made time for all of his students. Long-time colleagues like emeritus Professor Donald Sniegowski admired Walton's "marvelous range" as a scholar and teacher. His courses covered the works of novelists and poets from Daniel Defoe to Doris Lessing, while his published works spanned an edition of Anglo-Irish political correspondence; a critical study of the Irish romanticist and Gothic storyteller Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu; a novel, *Margaret's Book*, set in his native Blue Island, Illinois; and a delightful anthology of Notre Dame poets of the late 20th century entitled *The Space Between*.

Walton rarely missed an opportunity to downplay such contributions, but his students would have none of it. In the spring of 1971 a *Scholastic* reviewer offered this enviable assessment of his class on The English Novel to 1845: "Mr. Walton's impeccably organized and professionally delivered lectures make this course one of the truly outstanding educational experiences of one's undergraduate career. . . . Consider it a blessing to have James Walton at Notre Dame." □



A LAND

OF

MYTH

AND

LEGEND



STRONG AND TRUE

### THE LEGACY IS A LAND OF MYTH AND LEGEND.

Eleven national championships. Seven Heisman trophies. Win one for the Gipper. Ara, stop the rain. Here come the Irish. Catholics vs. convicts. Play like a champion today. The tunnel. The Shirt. Touchdown Jesus. Fair Catch Corby. No. 1 Moses. The Golden Boy and the Comeback Kid. Red Salmon to Rocket. Curly Lambeau, Jesse Harper and Hunk Anderson. The Four Horsemen. The Seven Mules. Harry Oliver's field goal and Bob Crable's block. The Bush Push. Sergeant Tim McCarthy. Rudy. Lamonica and Buoniconti. Hart, Hardy, McCoy, Patulski, Alan Page, Zorich, Browner and Fry, Golic, Young and Tuck. The litany of the saints. Dorais to Rockne, Huarte to Snow, Hanratty to Seymour. Theismann to Gatewood. Clements to Weber. Quinn to Samardzija. Tony Rice. Allen Pinkett. Ricky Watters. Nick Eddy. Tim Brown. Bettis and Bleier. Dave Casper. Each name brings a highlight film of memories. Stuhldreher, Crowley, Miller and Layden outlined against a blue, gray October sky. Leahy and Lujack, Lattner and Lynch. Clarence Ellis and Luther Bradley. Duerson and Zbikowski. Motts Tonelli and Ziggy Czarowski. Kuechenberg and DiNardo. Golden Tate and Te'o. The Ice Bowl. The Snow Bowl. The Irish Guard. The Victory March. Helmets spray-painted gold. The alma mater, arms on shoulders, postgame rite of communal celebration. Or communal pain. The NBC contract. The zebra with the one red arm. Tailgating. The

band on the steps of Bond Hall. Trumpets in the Dome. Drum circle, pep rally, Mass 30 minutes after the conclusion of today's game. Brats and dogs and steak sandwiches at the K of C. The Meat Squad. The leprechaun. Gerry Faust. Lou Holtz. Bowl trips, bowl games. Subway Alumni. The first-ever Game of the Century: 1935, Notre Dame upsets Ohio State 18-13. Or 1966: 10-10. Or the '46 Army game: 0-0 at Yankee Stadium. 1988: Notre Dame 31, Miami 30. 1993: Notre Dame 31, Florida State 24. Or 1957 when the Irish drop the Sooners 7-0 to end Oklahoma's 47-game win streak. Or 1913 when Notre Dame springs the forward pass on Army to lash the Cadets 35-13 and put the precocious Indiana school on the national map. Or 1928 when Rockne pulls out the Gipper speech — "This is the day, and you are the team" — to defeat Army 12-6. The lore, the heroics. Montana's chicken soup. Dan Devine and the green jerseys to swamp USC. Johnny Lujack's game-saving tackle. Coley O'Brien. Emil "Six-yard" Sitko. Storied tradition. Institutional identity. Prayers at the Grotto and in Catholic schools across the land. Proud Catholics battling into the American mainstream, and gathering other ethnic and minority underdogs along for the ride. One hundred and twenty-five years in the making. A game, a sport, a ritual, the ceremonies and common language that unifies an international family. And so much more. □

PHOTOS UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES





# IN A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN

BY MALCOLM MORAN

**NOTRE DAME HAS ALWAYS PLAYED BY ITS OWN RULES. HAVE THE TIDAL SHIFTS IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL FINALLY DOOMED THE INDEPENDENT IRISH?**



In a clear, crisp Friday afternoon in early February of 1999, 39 members of the Notre Dame Board of Trustees silently departed from a building off Trafalgar Square in London, having declared their independence.

Several hours earlier, at the end of a 90-minute discussion preceded by weeks of intense speculation and debate throughout the Notre Dame community and beyond, a voice vote determined whether the University would pursue membership in the Big Ten conference and its unique academic consortium, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation. The issue had been compared to a pair of decisions that had altered the University's identity: The establishment

*Malcolm Moran, the Knight Chair in Sports Journalism and Society, is director of the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism at Penn State University.*

of a lay Board of Trustees in 1967, and the admission of women in 1972.

This time, however, an identity traced to the 19<sup>th</sup> century was preserved. "Notre Dame always will be Catholic and always will be private," Rev. Edward A. Malloy, CSC, the University president, said at a press conference. "Even in terms of size, we will not become appreciably larger. Given these realities, we have had to ask ourselves the fundamental question: Does this core identity of Notre Dame as Catholic, private and independent seem a match for an association of universities — even a splendid association of great universities — that are uniformly secular, predominantly state institutions and with a long heritage of conference affiliation?"

"Our answer to that question, in the final analysis, is no."

The emotional link between the nature of a football program and the University had been settled, it seemed, for another generation. Most of the athletic teams had established their home in the Big East conference,

but the national identity of football, which had given the University its unique place during the Rockne era, remained intact.

The preservation of that status had been built upon a premise recently articulated by Gene Corrigan, the former Atlantic Coast Conference commissioner who, as Notre Dame athletic director in 1985, became The Man Who Hired Lou Holtz.

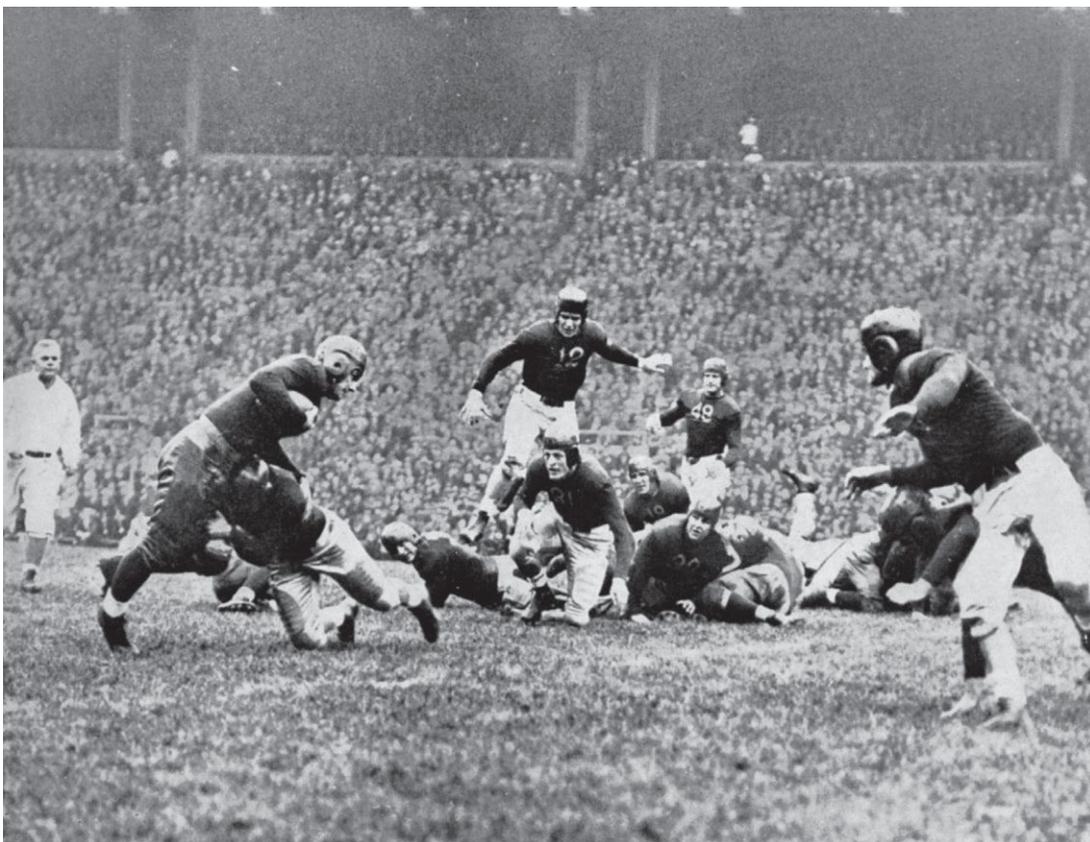
"There are not many people that don't want to play Notre Dame," Corrigan said.

More than a decade after Notre Dame's football status was defined that day in London, the questions linger: Can that premise remain part of a successful strategy? Is football independence a quaint, outdated tradition or a sustainable approach in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

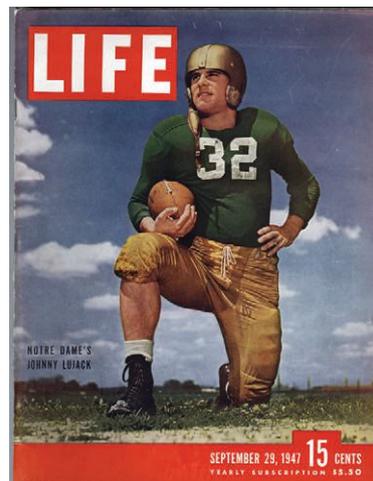
"They're like the only self-inflicted independent in football," Corrigan said. "Everybody else is either in a conference or wanting to be in one."

As the institution of Notre Dame football marks its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary this autumn, the

PHOTOS UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES



*Clockwise: Notre Dame upsets Ohio State in 1935, Johnny Lujack appears on the cover of Life, Rocket outruns Michigan, and Jeff Burris scores against FSU in 1993.*



direction of its future can appear as challenging and complex as the place it occupies in the national landscape. Some of the most successful programs in the nation, including Ohio State and Southern California, have been found to have committed violations so damaging to the credibility of college sports that NCAA President Mark Emmert convened a summit meeting of university presidents during the summer of 2011. That discussion took place nearly three months before the child-abuse scandal at Penn State and the allegations against former defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky that led to the departure of Hall of Fame coach Joe Paterno and university president Graham Spanier, became a dominant national topic of conversation.

A series of shifts in conference affiliation, elevating revenues to once-unimaginable levels for some leagues and placing the future of others in jeopardy, has led critics to maintain that universities have become more interested in leveraging unpaid athletes to gain access to additional millions in television revenue than they are in providing a meaningful education and the chance to earn a degree. The Big East, which had faced the possibility of a breakup as long ago as the winter of 1994, before Notre Dame's arrival, is dealing with the latest round of defections and the search for a commissioner at a critical time.

The changes have become as complicated as the negotiated future of the Bowl

Championship Series and as clear as the more modest anticipation of an excited, incoming freshman.

In the late 1990s, when football independence was preserved, first-year Domers would approach the ticket windows on the east side of the stadium, off Juniper Road, and pick up their tickets in late summer with the expectation that at some point in their four-year experience they would look to the roof of Grace Hall and see the 8-foot-high No. 1 sign, lit up to signify a national championship.

When the Class of 2016 arrives near the end of this summer, the inconsistencies of recent seasons and the shifting priorities of the national post-season structure have combined to revise that hope.

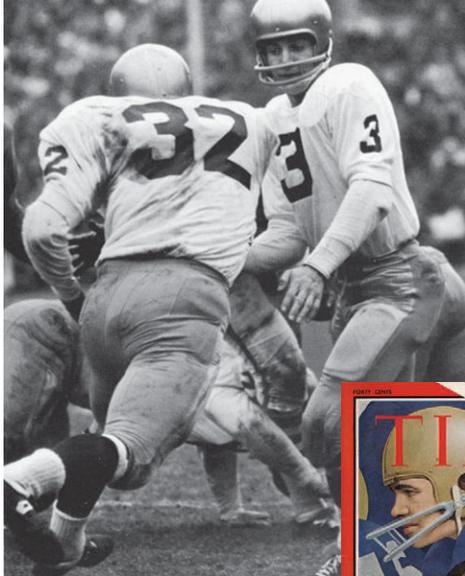
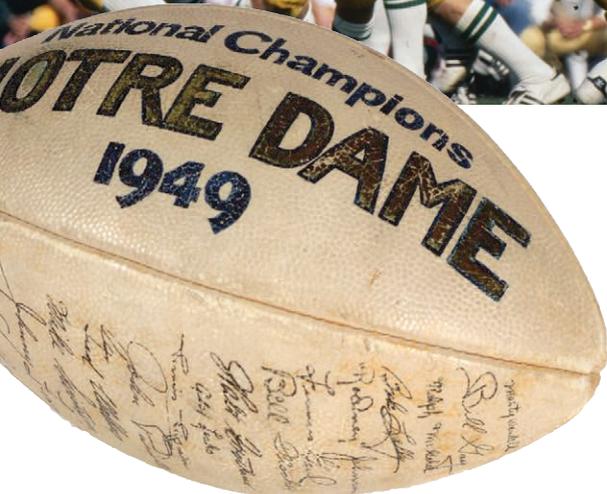
In 1993, the year the Fighting Irish defeated Florida State in an epic No. 1 vs. No. 2 game — remember the bed sheet that read **NOBODY LEAVES #1?** — the Bowl Coalition determined that Notre Dame would be included in a seven-victory season, or a six-victory season if mutually agreed upon by the bowls and the University. That is how the 1994 Irish, with a regular-season record of 6-4-1, received a bid to the Fiesta Bowl. As 1988 national champions and consistent title contenders, Notre Dame was considered such an essential part of the landscape that the post-season structure all but guaranteed its inclusion. A one-sided loss to Colorado in the bowl game led to a change in the system.

As contending status became a more distant memory, something happened. Decision-makers appeared to determine that a thriving post-season was no longer dependent upon the presence of Notre Dame, whose decision to end its absence of four-and-a-half decades had immediately made the bowl structure more relevant in the early 1970s. The minimum standard for Notre Dame's inclusion in the best publicized and most lucrative post-season games gradually rose. Now, an automatic berth in the Bowl Championship Series is guaranteed if the Irish are in the top eight positions of the final BCS standings. That's a long way from a Fiesta Bowl slot for a team not much above .500.

That difference helps explain the renewed questions about potential conference affiliation as the Big East struggles for survival and leaders of colleges and universities attempt to anticipate the next seismic shift in the landscape. Reports have confirmed that since that Friday afternoon declaration in 1999, Notre Dame representatives have conducted conversations — directly or indirectly — with multiple leagues, including the Big Ten and Big 12. That uncertain landscape, and the place Notre Dame occupies in it, can be traced to discussions which took place as the Rockne era had reached an elite level.

In his book, *Shake Down The Thunder*, Murray Sperber described the outcome of the 1926 discussions with the Big Ten:

*In the end, the Big Ten's failure to admit Notre Dame was based on misperception, not reality. The conference adamantly refused*



Montana and the green-wearing Irish beat USC en route to the national championship in 1977. Coley O'Brien (3) filled in for coverboy Hanratty against Michigan State in a game that ended 10-10. The following game O'Brien led the Irish in a 51-0 route of USC, helping ND claim the national championship.



similar celebration would happen in their time.

*N.D.'s request "to appoint a committee to visit" the Catholic school and "conduct an investigation of all conditions, both academic and athletic." Instead, the faculty reps chose to believe the rumors about Notre Dame, especially those spread by [Michigan coach Fielding] Yost and [University of Chicago coach Amos Alonzo] Stagg. For "Academic Men," representing universities that considered themselves on the cutting edge of the scholarly research of the day, their acceptance of anti-Notre Dame gossip was reprehensible.*"

Sperber's analysis of the breakdown described two missed opportunities for reform. With Big Ten schools making a greater investment in football and presenting coaches with higher levels of influence, Sperber reasoned that conference members would have benefited from Notre Dame's effort to see that a power coach such as Rockne was working within the interests of the university. And Notre Dame, Sperber wrote, would have been aligned with a conference membership publicly committed to reform efforts during a period when there was greater concern over the excesses of college sports.

Nearly 75 years later, as that 1999 discussion triggered emotional responses, decision-makers received thoughtful letters with variations on the same theme: *They turned us down in 1926. How dare you talk to them again?*

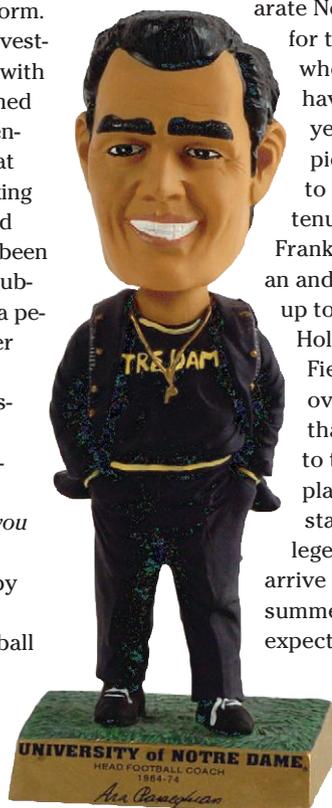
As that response became validated by the vote of the trustees, something else was happening to the nature of the football program and its place in the national

landscape. Notre Dame's success, all the way back to the Knute Rockne era and the mythology created by the New York press, had been built upon national championships that could be secured without having to play in a bowl game. Eight of the 11 championships — as recent as the 1966 title under Ara Parseghian that was secured with the emotionally charged 10-10 tie with Michigan State — were won before the Associated Press permanently established a poll that followed the bowls.

Post-season football was considered more of a curtain call, a chance to see the team once more in a warm, comfortable place, and Notre Dame's absence from that process from the mid-1920s through the end of the 1960s did not hurt its chances. Even at the end of the 1977 season, on one of the most gripping bowl days in the history of the sport, the Irish could wake up on Jan. 2 with a No. 5 ranking, defeat No. 1 Texas in the Cotton Bowl, and anticipate a national championship vote by the time they went to bed.

That was the backdrop that created the 20<sup>th</sup> century measurement which would separate Notre Dame coaches

for the ages from others who were perceived to have failed. The third-year national championship had come to define a successful tenure under coaches Frank Leahy, Parseghian and Dan Devine, right up to the 1988 season, Holtz's third, and the Fiesta Bowl victory over West Virginia that sent him up on to the shoulders of his players and into the status of Notre Dame legend. Freshmen could arrive on campus each summer with the realistic expectation — or even the demand — that a



Ara



The Irish rolled over 'Bama in the 1973 Sugar Bowl to capture this trophy and another national title.



Force, Navy, SMU, Penn State, LSU and USC.”

The room was silent as Holtz paused just long enough.

“He said, ‘Would you like the job?’”

Already, the coach knew his audience.

“You aren’t interested in how rocky the sea is,” Holtz said. “You are interested in seeing the ship come in.”

The frustration of the Gerry Faust era, for all the conversation it inspired in the early 1980s, only lasted five seasons. From a distance, a perception had grown that the performance of the program had evolved into its own cycle. Extended success would lead to a period of self-consciousness, which would lead to adjustments that created disappointment, which would lead to greater resolve and a return to success.

For decades now, the reality has been far more complex.

In his autobiography, *God, Country, Notre Dame*, Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, CSC, addressed the speculation that developed during his presidency in the 1950s.

*It was during [Coach Frank] Leahy’s time, or just afterward, that there were some stories going around that I was de-emphasizing football at Notre Dame. Not true. I never deliberately did anything to cut back on football. My belief is, and always has been, that the university ought to do everything — academics, athletics, you name it — in a first-rate manner. That means doing everything not only well, but honestly, too. . . .*

*With our checks and balances, we set up an honest system in our athletics a long time ago and we have kept it that way. We expect no less from our coaches. In my day, before officially signing on a football or basketball coach, I would sit down with him privately and ask if he had read our rules and was prepared to keep to them carefully. The response almost always was that our system for integrity was what attracted him to Notre Dame in the first place.*

Despite all the changes taking place nationally, the Holtz era did not feel threatened by change until the end. The balance of a demanding academic structure and elite-level competition appeared to be met. The opportunity for a teenager named Chris Zorich, whose arrival could only take place after he attended a vocational high school in Chicago from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in his final high school semester, demonstrated the value of the system as he overcame academic self-doubt and became a leader on the field.

During the summer that followed the most recent national championship season,

Zorich ’91, ’02J.D. admitted to developing an ulcer during his freshman year, and he told a story on himself. He remembered having a conversation with a female student soon after his arrival on campus, when students awkwardly search for common interests and experiences. They were talking about college board scores when the woman mentioned that her score had been 800. Zorich, whose overall score had been 740, was buoyed by the discovery, until the student became more specific.

“She said, ‘That was in math,’” Zorich remembered. “I thought, ‘Whoa.’”

The Holtz era inspired a stunning rise in hotel rates, the required two-night minimum, and mandatory attendance at the Quarterback Club lunches and pep rallies. It all seemed to work until the very end, when the University’s concern about preserving its high graduation rates introduced another discussion about the price of success. Holtz’s cryptic remarks in a press conference before his final home game in 1996, when he repeated the words “the right thing” without additional explanation for his departure, created more questions than they answered.

The coaches to follow have come from a variety of prototypes. Bob Davie was a highly regarded assistant who would likely have gotten away had he not been hired to succeed Holtz. Tyrone Willingham had taken Stanford to the Rose Bowl, and his presence as the first African-American head coach at Notre Dame placed the University in a leadership role in an industry defined by an absence of opportunities for qualified minority candidates.

When Willingham was fired at the end of the 2004 season, a new and more damaging perception was created. Dave Anderson, the Pulitzer-Prize-winning sports columnist from *The New York Times*, wrote: “In dismissing Tyrone Willingham after three quick seasons as football coach, Notre Dame, without realizing it, turned pro.

“And maybe it’s finally time for every college with a big-time football program — or big-time basketball program for that matter — to turn pro.

“Stop pretending that big-time college sports are all about ‘the kids’ and academics and graduation rates. It is really all about what should be known as campus pro sports — the big money from television, the football bowl games, the basketball tournament that evolves into the Final Four, the big money from alumni contributions when a college has a hot team.”

The following summer, with the campus community anticipating a new era under Charlie Weis ’78, with his memories from days in the student section and his Super Bowl championship credentials, a reporter paid a visit to a faculty member to tweak him about Charliemania.

“Charlie Weis cannot fail,” the faculty member said.

“What do you mean?” the reporter asked.

“If we keep firing head football coaches every four or five years, a decade from now we could be closer to Vanderbilt than where we think we belong.”

The thread of the Davie-Willingham-Weis years became a continuation of academic success plus athletic achievement that, in the end, did not meet the standard established in another world nearly a century ago. As the University made an unprecedented investment in its football program — with the \$50 million expansion of Notre Dame Stadium, the creation of the Guglielmino Athletics Complex, and the dramatic increases in coaching salaries and the size of the athletic administrative staff — the old standard has appeared more and more difficult to meet.

As Brian Kelly starts his third season, the one that established the perception of greatness or failure as recently as a decade ago, that dated measure has received significantly less attention in media reports and analysis. As the status of the Bowl Championship Series was redefined this summer, Corrigan said he believes Notre Dame will be able to preserve its independent status in football and maintain its access to the biggest post-season games.

“Can they keep it there?” he said of football independence. “Yes, they can. But it’s going to be more difficult.”

The mindset of this year’s freshmen, without anything close to a championship season in their lifetimes, is harder to figure out.

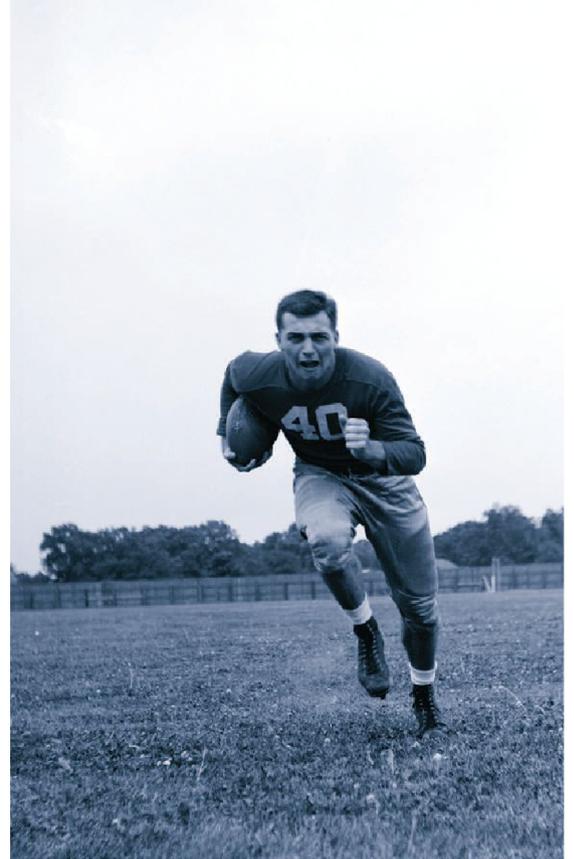
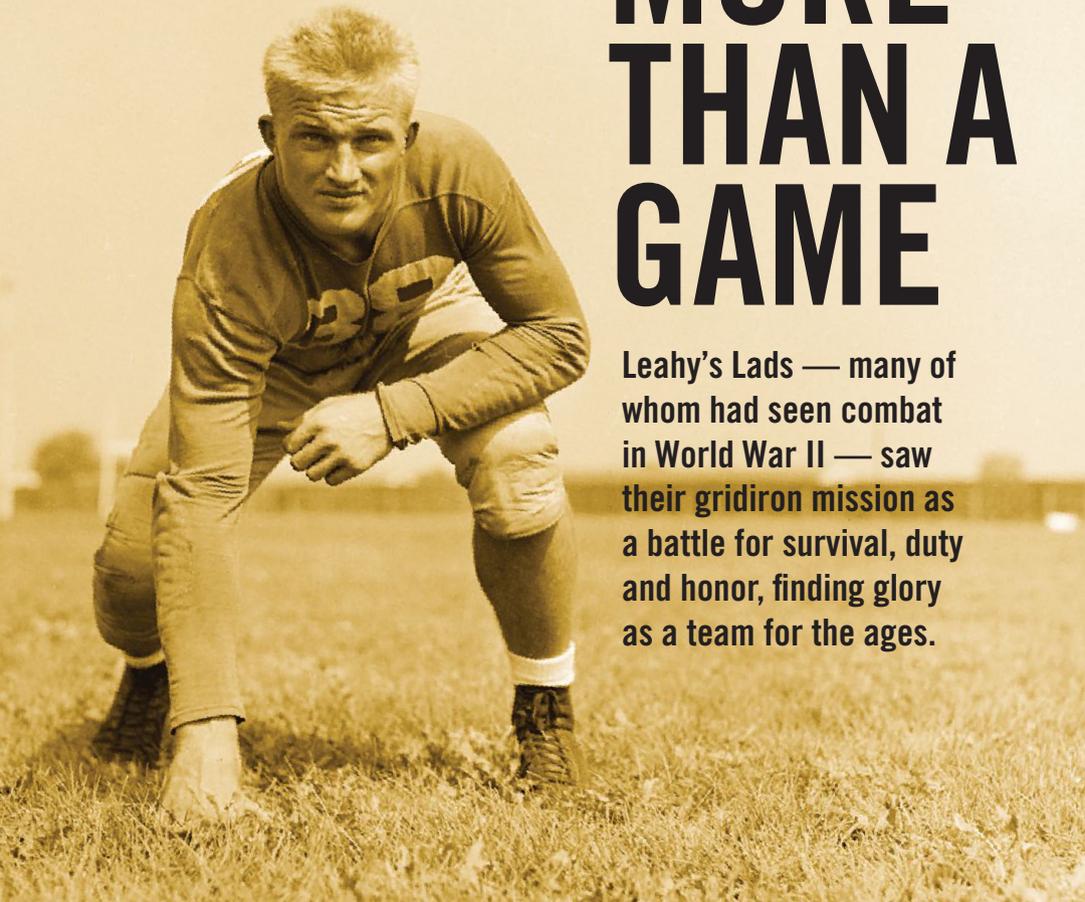
Before Lou Holtz’s first season, as he stood in that ballroom in New York, he was asked to define a successful season at Notre Dame. More than a quarter century later, Holtz’s answer still applies.

“Having the opportunity to coach here again,” he said. □



# MORE THAN A GAME

**Leahy's Lads — many of whom had seen combat in World War II — saw their gridiron mission as a battle for survival, duty and honor, finding glory as a team for the ages.**



Jim Martin (left) and Bob Livingstone (above).

BY MICHAEL RODIO '12 WITH RESEARCH FROM ANDY PANELLI '77, '83MBA

**A**s Bob Livingstone waded alone toward the beach of the Philippine island of Luzon, he heard a quiet splash in the murky water behind him. He swiveled, his cumbersome Army pack slowing his motion as he struggled to find the source of the sound.

He heard another splash. Sweat smothered his face in the tropical jungle heat. His eyes darted over the water.

Then he saw them: sea snakes. Swimming toward him.

Luzon has one of the highest concentrations of sea snakes in the world. Most are as passive as they are venomous.

Livingstone churned the water, desperately maneuvering away from the snakes as they swam toward him. He had always been fast, but in the shallows of Luzon the soldier was no longer the predator.

Finally, as he staggered up the beach, he thought to himself: *What the hell am I getting into here?*

In 1941 and 1942, Livingstone distinguished himself on the football field for Notre Dame. But with the military draft looming, the speedy halfback enlisted so he could finish his sophomore year. By the summer of 1943, while his fellow players were preparing for a run at the national championship,

he traveled from his home in Merrillville, Indiana, to Army boot camp in central Texas. When the Army sent him to Fort Ord in Monterey Bay, California, Livingstone knew he was bound for the South Pacific: He sailed to the Philippines.

By January 1945, the Army readied for its final push through the Philippines. General Douglas MacArthur had already retaken Leyte and Mindoro. Luzon awaited.

As dawn broke on January 9, nearly 70 Allied warships sailed into Luzon's Lingayan Gulf. Soldiers from the 6<sup>th</sup> Army and two corps of Marines watched from their landing boats as American battleships and heavy cruisers sent artillery volleys on high. Thunder shook down from the sky.

Livingstone arrived on Luzon after the main invasion force, when the primary shoreline combatants were sea snakes. He and other reinforcements had to clear out remaining Japanese soldiers, who still launched daring nighttime raids against American camps.

Once he was on the beach, a guide took him to his tent. Exhausted, Livingstone set his rifle against the tent wall and peeled off his sodden gear. As Livingstone was lying down on his cot, the guide popped his head back in the tent.

"Where's your rifle?" the guide asked.

"It's over there," a tired Livingstone replied, gesturing to the side of his tent.

"You'll want to keep that loaded and at your side," the guide said. "The Japanese like to sneak into the tents and kill the soldiers in their sleep."

*Michael Rodio was this magazine's spring intern. He graduated in May with a degree in music and a minor in the Gulligan program for Journalism, Ethics and Democracy.*

*Andrew Panelli is a marketing executive from Homer Glen, Illinois, and the son of John "Pep" Panelli '49, a starting fullback on the 1946-48 Irish football teams. In 2007, the younger Panelli took the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the 1947 championship to interview players, coaches and sportswriters from that era "to investigate whether the '46 and '47 teams may have been the best college football teams ever fielded." He is at work on a documentary on that subject, expected to be released later this year.*

Livingstone grabbed his rifle and slipped a bullet in the chamber.

He didn't get much sleep that night.

Over his two-and-a-half years in the South Pacific, Livingstone survived hand-to-hand combat with Japanese soldiers. He fought in New Guinea, where Japanese soldiers frightened the Allies as much as the local head-hunters.

He returned home in time for Notre Dame's 1946 football season. When he got home, his father made a phone call.

It was to Frank Leahy.

\* \* \*

In the summer of 1946, Indiana's warm zephyr winds carried more than the peals of bells from Sacred Heart Church across the verdant quadrangles of Notre Dame. They brought joy.

The war was over. The GIs were coming home.

Across the nation, war-weary Americans rejoiced as their spirited young men returned, some from the battlefields to the playing fields. With the GI Bill returning GI Joe to campus, the nation's football fans and coaches readied for the greatest influx of talent the college game had ever seen.

"With three thousand rahs and a tiger the old-time banners climbed the pole again, and no autumn's winds have whipped them braver or brighter," sang Wilton Hazzard in the 1946 *All-American Gridiron Preview*.

But some fans of the game feared that veterans, shell-shocked from the brutality of the war, could not — would not — readjust to college life. Some grizzled men, they dreaded, would bring their "gouging, rock 'em-sock 'em carnage" from the battlefield, wrote John DaGrosa in *The Official NCAA Football Guide, 1947*. Other coaches feared the ex-GIs' "unwillingness to accept — after military regimentation — necessary football discipline."

But for 53 ex-servicemen who stayed in South Bend in that halcyon summer, there were no such concerns. They came to an all-male campus, strictly minded by the watchful eyes of the Holy Cross brothers and priests, who enforced lights-out at 10 and thrice-weekly morning Mass at 6:30. Some priests, seeing the ex-soldiers' unseen battle scars, loosened their grips. A little.

Most important, the 53 ex-servicemen were now serving a tour of duty under a former Navy lieutenant who commanded with a steely gaze, a soft voice and an obsession with winning: Frank Leahy.

Leahy arrived at Notre Dame from Boston College in 1941. By 1943, the taciturn Irish Catholic steered the Irish to a nine-win record and Notre Dame's first national championship since Knute Rockne. Soon after, he had been "drafted" right off the football field: The government made him a first lieutenant in the Navy as a celebrity-soldier and placed him in charge of recreational activities for submarine crews in the Pacific.

Even during the war, Leahy scouted

*Leahy in the Navy (below) and as coach, surrounded by, clockwise from upper left, Bob Williams, Jim Martin, Leon Hart and Emil Sitko.*



and recruited the most talented stars in the service. He pursued monster tackle George Connor in Pearl Harbor. Livingstone, fresh off a boat from the Pacific, had returned at halfback. Halfback Emil "Red" Sitko and center George Strohmeier came from stellar careers on football teams at military bases.

And at left end was a new face: a 22-year old ex-Marine Leahy recruited in the jungles of Iwo Jima. In an era before players lifted weights, the 6-foot 2-inch Bronze Star winner packed 204 pounds of lean muscle and a granite jaw. His calves measured 17 inches. One of his brawny arms bore an imposing tattoo of a sword cutting through a dragon. "Death Before Dishonor," it said.

His name was Jim Martin. They called him Jungle Jim.

\* \* \*

The moon had not yet risen on the night of July 10, 1944, when Jim Martin and his fellow Marines set their paddles in their rubber boats and slipped into the inky black South Pacific.

Smoothly, quietly, they swam toward the shoreline of Tinian, a Japanese-held island in the Marianas. Clad only in black swim trunks, flippers and dive masks, Martin and his fellow soldiers started the 500-yard swim to the sand designated Yellow Beach. They did not know what they would find.

As Martin swam closer to the beach, he could see below him outlines of urchin-like spiked balls chained to the ocean bottom.

Sea mines. Many of them. Floating less than an arm's length below.

He kept swimming.

In the summer of 1944, American military forces were in the thick of jungle fighting as they island-hopped their way across the Pacific. By July 3, Marine Lieutenant General Holland Smith, the commander of the Expeditionary Troops, had nearly secured the island of Saipan, a crucial foothold in the Mariana island chain that offered airfields for super-long-range bomber strikes against Japan. With victory in Saipan assured, the Fifth Amphibious Corps turned their sights to Tinian, a plateau island less than five miles from Saipan's southwest coast. Flatter than Saipan and already home to several bomber-ready airfields, Tinian was the obvious next hop toward Japan.

But before American forces could attack the entrenched 9,000-strong Japanese garrison, commanders needed to find cliff-ringed Tinian's weak spot. In the early island battles of the Pacific campaign, U.S. generals had



Lujack (below) and the 1946 Fighting Irish.



watched helplessly as their landing forces foundered on coral reefs and Japanese minefields. Some Marines, forced to abandon landing crafts while wearing 60-pound packs, drowned before they could set their boots on sand.

So on July 9, when the Army and the Marines officially wrested Saipan from the Japanese, Lieutenant General Smith alerted Captain James L. Jones that Jones' Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion would be scouting Tinian's beaches to find weak points where American troops could land and be supplied.

Jones assembled a veteran force of expert swimmers: Marine Companies A and B and two of the Navy's elite Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs). These men, predecessors of the modern Navy SEALs, were the first wartime experts in amphibious reconnaissance and demolition. By the end of the war, they had perfected the delicate art of swimming underneath enemy ships, planting explosives and swimming away quickly enough to watch the explosion from a safe distance.

**SURROUNDED BY THE SOUND AND FURY WAS LEAHY, A HARDENED AND OBSESSIVE SOURCE OF ORDER. NEVER ONE TO SHOUT AT PLAYERS, LEAHY INSTEAD RULED WITH A POLITE LILT AND A FEROCIOUS STARE.**

Martin had been a championship football player and swimmer during his high school days in Cleveland, but swimming over sea mines and under warships in the South Pacific was a far cry from the local pool.

On July 10, Martin boarded the destroyer transport *USS Gilmer* with 19 fellow Company A Marines and eight UDT swimmers. Under cover of night, they sailed from Saipan's Magicienne Bay toward Yellow Beach. At 20:30, Martin climbed into a rubber boat with Olie Kelson and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Donald Neff and paddled toward Tinian's southwest coast.

Martin, Kelson and Neff reached the shoreline. The beach, flanked by imposing cliffs, was thick with double-apron barbed wire fences. Martin saw spotlights dance across the beach approaches. Then: *gunshots*. The men tensed.

Leaving Martin and Kelson at the high-water mark, Neff stalked 30 yards inland. He saw three Japanese sentries on a cliff overlooking the beach. Gunshots again — but not from the sentries. Neff heard Japanese work crews talking as they built pillboxes and trenches. The “gunshots” were blasting charges.

The Navy divers and Marines had seen enough of Yellow Beach. Treading softly through the sand, they slipped once more into the Pacific's briny blackness and swam back to their rafts as silently as they had left.

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The veterans of Notre Dame's 1946 team were steely men, born in the Depression's hungry mold and hardened by some of the war's most hellish blast furnaces. They had survived those battles.

But before they could truly trade in their olive drab for Kelly green, deep blue and burnished gold, they had to survive Frank Leahy's practices.

The great coach imposed his sheer determination to win as he recast the soldiers into a glinting mechanical beast like South Bend's magnificent chrome Studebakers. Everyone knew Notre Dame would be good, but even the fiercest fans acknowledged that the Irish schedule brought Leahy's troops against the

nation's finest squads: Illinois. Army. Southern California.

With almost 200 men trying out and all 11 starters playing both offense and defense, Leahy and his assistants ground their men through hellish practices in pursuit of the fiercest 11 the Fighting Irish could field. The assistant coaches, often former Irish players themselves, frequently joined the fray.

Leahy's practices were brutal, born of his experience as a tackle during his playing days under Rockne and his boyhood in Winner, South Dakota, where his father, a freight handler, taught boxing and wrestling to young Francis and his three brothers.

One such drill, the “Murderer's Row,” pitted backs against vicious hits from all 14 tackles, then all 14 guards and finally the centers. In the “Box drill,” players stood in a marked square on the field while another player ran full speed into him: if the runner crossed the opposite line of the square, the tackler had failed. Leon Hart, then a 17-year-old freshman, once bulled into a tackler so hard he knocked the man unconscious and sent him flying. Leahy couldn't help himself: “God bless you, Leon!” he blurted.

There was no drinking water. With leather helmets, thin shoulder pads and minimal thigh and knee protection, injuries were frequent and disregarded: The best men could play through injuries, or at least ignore them, in the face of such competition. John “Pep” Panelli, a fullback on the team, broke his nose seven times in practice over his career. He learned how to re-set it without coming off the field. The uninjured players who survived Thursday scrimmages would make it to the traveling team.

“Practice was tough on the older service vets,” Martin said later. “They'd had enough of war, of guys beating the hell out of each other, but that's what practice was every day — a war.”

Surrounded by the sound and fury was

Leahy, a hardened and obsessive source of order. Never one to shout at players, Leahy instead ruled with a polite lilt and a ferocious stare. He avoided profanity, even though the results often sounded silly: Jack Landry, a fullback on Leahy's 1949 team, remembers Leahy urging his players to "hit them so hard you make them feel ill!"

Leahy always used a player's full first and last names, even when he found tackle and clown prince Ziggy Czarowski showering *before* practice: "Zygmunt Czarowski, what in the world are you doing?"

"Coach," Ziggy quipped, "it just gets too crowded afterward."

Leahy's 1946 squad was widely regarded as a formidable football force in season previews. ("The tackles," noted Francis J. Powers, "are five-deep in thunderosity.") But Leahy was famously pessimistic toward his team's prospects, and perhaps rightfully so. The first game of the 1946 season pitted the favored Irish on the road against the vaunted "Leatherneck line" of Illinois, which featured seven ex-Marines. Illinois also had one of the first black collegiate football stars in Chicago's Claude "Buddy" Young, a running back that Hazzard called "the nearest approach to a cleatshod bolt of lightning the game has known." Illinois had demolished Pittsburgh 40-0 the week before. Writers called for an upset of the Irish. Leahy fretted.

But Leahy's lads crushed Illinois to the tune of 26-6, bottling up the lightning bolt and flashing through the Leatherneck line. Then they steamrolled Pittsburgh 33-0, as Johnny Lujack and George Ratterman passed for 257 yards.

Leahy was furious. He complained about player after player to Jim Costin, the *South Bend Tribune* beat reporter. (He may have been pessimistic, but this was also a classic Leahy tactic: rip the players when they're riding high, but leave 'em when they're down.)

"Didn't anyone play well?" a surprised Costin asked Leahy.

"Yes," the dour coach replied, thinking of a third-string guard. "Bob McBride."

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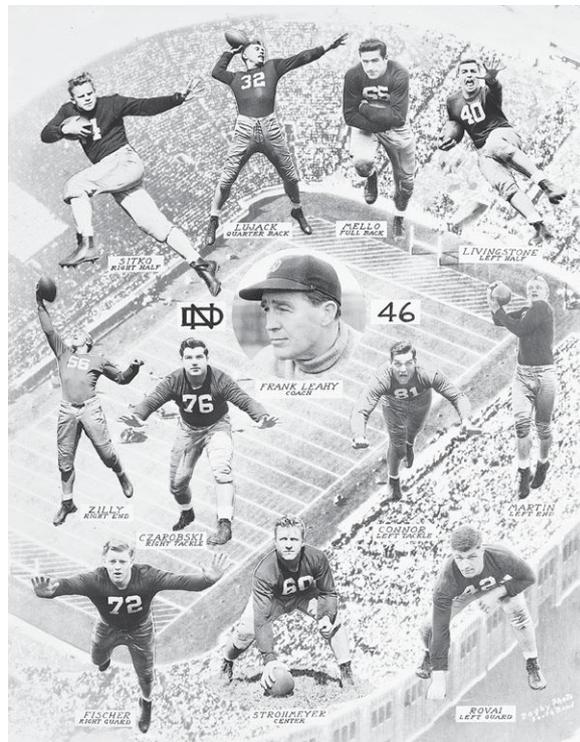
On frozen feet Bob McBride marched.

Through the snows of the nightmare Ardennes Forest the Army soldiers trudged, prodded by German rifles on the long march to a prisoner of war camp.

McBride and his fellow soldiers of the



Bob McBride served with the 106th Infantry Division, nicknamed the "Golden Lions," and was captured by German soldiers at the Battle of the Bulge.



106<sup>th</sup> Division had not expected such a sudden and ferocious attack from German forces. Allied forces scrambled for defense against a thunderous German offensive as snows dusted the bleak Belgian forests.

The Germans called it Operation "Watch on the Rhine." When the Americans realized what hit them, they called it The Battle of the Bulge.

McBride had only arrived on the western front in October 1944. After three standout seasons at right guard, including two seasons under Frank Leahy, he joined the Army in the spring of 1943.

McBride's 106<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, nicknamed the "Golden Lions" for their blue-and-gold lion's head insignia, had relieved the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division on the Belgian Front on

December 11, 1944. Only five days later, German regiments bombarded the 106<sup>th</sup> with a last-ditch offensive. With overcast skies grounding the dominant Allied air forces, McBride's unit was woefully unprepared. In two days, the Iron Cross encircled the 422<sup>nd</sup> and 423<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiments near Schonberg, forcing them to surrender on December 19.

McBride and the rest of the 106<sup>th</sup> withdrew over the Our River to the strategically important rail and road junction at Saint Vith. For five days, the vastly outgunned and outmanned Americans stubbornly clung to Saint Vith against thousands of veteran German troops. McBride, a machine gun commander, held a thin ridgeline with the rest of the 106<sup>th</sup> for five days. On December 21, the

106<sup>th</sup> finally retreated under a curtain of enemy fire. They didn't know it then, but their defense had ruined the German timetable, dooming the Axis counteroffensive.

During the retreat, German soldiers captured Bob McBride. Like thousands of men from the 106<sup>th</sup>, he became a prisoner of war.

For 13 days, German soldiers guarded McBride and his fellow soldiers as they slogged through snow and mud to German prisoner camps. Once the German offensive "bulge" collapsed, the prisoners again marched, this time for 50 days, alongside the German retreat.

*Most of the German soldiers are civil people, McBride thought. They're like neighbors of ours back in the United States. But a few are mean and rotten to the core. If you just fall down while you're out walking, there are*



Leahy's teams won national championships in 1943, 1946, 1947 and 1949.

*Hitlerites who will come up, put a rifle to your head and blow your brains out.*

With a starvation diet of only one-seventh of a loaf of bread per day, the burly McBride, whose Notre Dame jersey had snugly fit around his muscular 210 pounds, started to shrivel. He languished in captivity for 123 days.

On April 23, 1945, he heard voices shouting in English: American troops had arrived. The first doctor to find McBride introduced himself as Dr. Schneider. He had studied premed at Notre Dame.

"Are you related in any way to the Bob McBride who played football at Notre Dame?" the doctor asked.

"Yes, I am," McBride said.

"What relation?"

"I'm him," he croaked. "I'm Bob McBride."

Dr. Schneider surveyed the spindly figure before him. *He can't weigh more than 100 pounds*, he thought. *Closer to 90.*

The doctor delivered his analysis with one word.

"Bullsh\_\_."

\* \* \*

They called it the Game of the Century.

Many of Notre Dame's men had vanquished the Axis powers and some of the nation's best football squads. But in the season of 1946, Leahy and his lads had one final battle to fight before they could prove their football dominance. They had to defeat the No. 1 team in America: the Army Black Knights.

After Illinois and Pitt, Notre Dame scored victories over Purdue, 17<sup>th</sup>-ranked Iowa and Navy. But Army's team had pulverized the war-depleted Irish in 1944 and 1945, running up the score over the Leahy-less squads for a combined score of 107-0.

The Irish wanted victory. They wanted revenge. On November 9, 1946, they got their chance on the biggest stage in college football: Yankee Stadium.

Never before had a game so captivated

and seriously contending for its third national championship in a row.

Tickets sold at astronomical prices. On the morning of the game, one man sold a \$3.30 ticket for \$200, worth roughly \$2,200 today. Jim Martin's girlfriend in Cleveland asked for two tickets. He made her pay \$50 each. He never saw her again. ("Can't be lucky all the time," he later mused.)

Both Leahy and Army coach Colonel Earl "Red" Blaik had prepared for the game with utmost secrecy. Leahy had sent managers into the trees overlooking the practice field. When planes flew overhead, he only called conservative run plays. "Oh, there go those Army scouts," he would say.

Back and forth the green and black lines warred, each rumbling tackle eliciting cheers from the wool-clad thousands under the blue-gray November sky. Martin roared all over the field, stonewalling the Touchdown Twins again and again. The ex-soldiers again fought a trench battle — but this time they launched their aerial attacks and driving assaults on a gridiron. Some said the generals tightened up, perhaps out of pride or out of spite: Neither Leahy nor Blaik even considered kicking a field goal. The game ended in a spectacular 0-0 tie.

It didn't matter that Notre Dame tied Army. As far as the press and the fans were concerned, the Fighting Irish had vanquished the Black Knights. Notre Dame went on to win each successive game and was awarded the National Championship. Grantland Rice, legendary sportswriter of "The Four Horsemen" fame, picked Lujack, Connor and guard John Mastrangelo for his All-America team.

One storyline avoided notice but at the end of the season, Notre Dame's Department of Sports Publicity released its official Recapitulation of the 1946 Notre Dame Football season.

After he had returned home from a prisoner of war camp, doctors told him he'd

America. The stories played out in the papers and on the radio. Army had its Heisman-Trophy-winning "twin atomizers": Felix "Doc" Blanchard and Glenn Davis. Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside. The Touchdown Twins, rulers of the gridiron with impunity. Army was riding a 25-game win streak

probably never play again — or have children. Over the summer of 1946, he worked construction and ate nonstop. At 180 pounds, he was still too light to start. He had already been awarded three battle stars, a purple heart and the presidential unit citation. But when the monogram list was published with its neat rows of typewritten ink, Assistant Director Charlie Callahan made sure to include a third-string guard from Lancaster, Ohio.

Bob McBride.

\* \* \*

Although he was relegated to a backup role, McBride was an inspiration for his teammates, who admired his unyielding determination to succeed, what though the odds be great or small. He had a brief career coaching high school football before returning to Notre Dame as one of Leahy's most trusted assistant coaches. Although his players remembered him for his demanding coaching, they held him in high esteem, and he coached several All-Americans on Notre Dame's line, including Jim Martin.

"Jungle Jim" Martin was awarded a Bronze Star for courageously swimming through fields of sea mines in advance of American forces in the Pacific. He never lost a game at Notre Dame and won three national championships with the Irish. His teammates regarded him as a leader, and he often reciprocated their admiration by taking them to dances at South Bend's American Legion Hall. (His teammates danced with their dates, and he danced with their dates' mothers.) He won All-American honors at both end and tackle positions before his 14-season professional career as a linebacker and a placekicker, including a 1961 Pro Bowl selection.

Bob Livingstone was drafted by the Chicago Bears after the 1946 season but returned to Notre Dame in 1947 to finish his degree. During the championship 1947 season, he scored a touchdown on a 92-yard run against Southern California, a Notre Dame record that still stands.

Leahy's teams won national championships in 1943, 1946, 1947 and 1949, with the 1948 powerhouse unbeaten until it finished its season with a surprising tie against USC, leaving Michigan with the national title. But no team so encapsulated the fighting spirit of Notre Dame's teams like the 1946 Fighting Irish: a ferociously competitive squad, united by its will to win, forged into greatness by a demanding coach for the glory of Notre Dame. □



# WINTERY ROOMS *of* LOVE

LOSING A PARENT IS SOMETHING LIKE DRIVING THROUGH A PLATE-GLASS WINDOW. YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS THERE UNTIL IT SHATTERED, AND THEN FOR YEARS TO COME YOU'RE PICKING UP THE PIECES.

SAUL BELLOW: LETTERS

**I**t was only after my mother and father were gone that I realized the finality of their deaths. I would never hear their voices again, I would never be able to ask them the questions I never thought to ask while they were still here, I would never have another chance to show them love. They were gone. In their place now were only silence and photographs and their appearance in unpredictable dreams.

I wrote the preceding paragraph at a dark hour of the morning halfway through a fitful night of sleep next to a woman I call my wife. Seven years ago Kathy was diagnosed with dementia and had no choice but to retire from her job because she could no longer remember how to do it.

In the years since, the disease has continued its relentless robbery; her pockets

are now largely picked. She lies sleeping and breathing next to me, as she does every night. Some mornings she wakes and asks if I slept here last night. Several times she has thought a stranger was in bed with her. She remembers the names of her children but not what they look like or where they live and seldom thinks of them. She sometimes remembers her grandchildren but not their names, faces or anything about them. She keeps a slip of paper with my name on it in her purse because she no longer knows it. Her mind has trudged its lonely way deep into winter. She is disappearing into a blizzard of white.

But even as she is disappearing, she will come to me throughout the day and night and look at me with gratitude and pleading in her eyes and tell me what a wonderful man I am and tell me how much she needs

*We have only so long to ask the questions we need to ask, have the conversations we need to have, spend the time we need to spend and heal whatever hurt our hearts are holding.*

BY MEL LIVATINO

me aware, as does the appearance of my mother and father in my dreams, that the souls we love are with us only so long — in cosmological time, it is but the blinking of an eye. We had better make the best of our time with them.

I have lightly, almost in passing, tried to tell this to my sons — that they have only so long to ask me the questions they need to ask, that we have only so long to have the conversations we need to have, spend the

me and tell me how grateful she is that God sent me to her. I am not at all wonderful, but such words, even from a woman slipping into a winter of forgetfulness, are balm to my soul. They let me know that I still bring summer into her wintry world.

And they make

time we need to spend and heal whatever hurts our hearts are holding. My suggestions — which I have kept as glancing as possible because one cannot order up curiosity or love — have fallen largely on ears plugged with cotton. Not deaf, but not quite hearing either.

They are good sons of whom I am very proud. All three graduated from college in four years, got good jobs, married good women, live nearby, and have given me nine grandchildren, with a 10th on the way. Nonetheless, meaningful conversation with real presence of heart and mind are often missing, and with one son even basic courtesy is usually absent.

My youngest son, Chris, age 39, tries to arrange a time for me to visit. As a high-school athletic director, he works 12, 14 and 16 hours a day, so I come over for an hour or two a couple Sundays a month. I appreciate his efforts, but when I am there his voice and manner sometimes speak more of duty than desire. Perhaps it is selfish of me, but at such times I find myself wishing for the company of the boy who knew affection more than duty.

My middle son, John, 41, I see much less often. He too works long hours and lives farther away, but when he occasionally drops by on a Saturday morning our conversations are genuine, far-ranging, open and intimate. They are honest and we do not hold back. They are answered prayers — but we seldom pray them.

My oldest, Tom, 42, is the son who never comes to greet me at the door when I visit. He is usually in the basement family room watching sports on TV, nearly always with a computer on his lap. His hello is leaden, the same hello he gives me on the phone when I call. My heart sinks every time I hear this wintry hello, and it does not recover the rest of the time I'm in his presence. It leaves me barely able to talk. He does not talk either. He watches the game without looking at me. If he says something, it is in a flat voice aimed at the TV.

Though his mother and I divorced when he was 6, he displayed none of this attitude until he was 12. Only then did disdain begin to creep in. Almost every day I wonder why. Am I not masculine enough? He is a coach and a jock, and most of his friends are of the same ilk, while I am a reader, a writer and interested in the arts. Am I too frugal? I grew up under severe financial restraint and early on got into the habit of stretching nickels and dimes into dollars. The habit has not left me, for which, after I die, he will be grateful.

He, on the other hand, has made a career of spending money with abandon. Am I not cool enough, an embarrassment even? I deplore cool, shaped as it is by clichés of other people's making, while he has made a life out of being cool. Or has my son simply been steeped too long in his mother's lifelong unadulterated adoration? I write him letters from the wintry room to which he has confined me, but I seldom deliver them.

Because their interest is less than rapt, I have stopped giving my sons most things I write, even things I publish, and I long ago stopped telling them what I read — the two areas of my life that most reveal an interior which cannot otherwise be seen. Perhaps my sons and I are typical of parents and children in this era. My friends, I have noticed, are much more interested in their children than their children are interested in them. Perhaps it is inevitable that parents become back issues, while the young are current issues just out on the newsstands. The young do not yet know that most inflexible rule of the world: one day we are all back issues. The truth of *King Lear* and *Sunset Boulevard* has not yet come into their ken.

So that I might give my sons and their children and their children's children something of their ancestors — their genetic back issues, as it were — and something of myself before I go, a few years ago I undertook to scan into my computer photographs of my mother and father and their mothers and fathers and their mothers and fathers, a line that ends in tintypes of the late 19th century. The photos are all black-and-white, some so radiant and composed they are works of art fit for a museum. Each conjures a time and place different from our own. These images of picnics and road trips, visits of relatives, and hours spent in living rooms and on back porches speak of a slower time and more intimate communication, of conversations gradually percolating up in speakers and seeping into listeners rather than the instant messages of the Internet and cell phones.

Three of these images have become favorites. The earliest is a 120-year-old tintype of my mother's mother's mother. A black halo borders the photograph. In the center stands a young woman with perfect posture wearing a billowing dark dress that goes to the floor. Her right hand is resting on a wicker chair; her gaze is past my left shoulder. She is a beautiful woman with clear eyes and a tiny waist. But I know only two things about her: She died at age 30 and her husband was an alcoholic unable to care well for my grandmother and her brothers. Though

she stands alive and stunning in this photo, the story of her life disappeared with her and my grandmother, in part because I did not think to ask about her.

The next image was taken in the early 1930s. In the center foreground my father, about age 20, is seated beside his father. My father's arms are wrapped loosely but lovingly around my grandfather. Both are looking straight at the camera. A cigarette



dangles from my father's mouth; a cigar from my grandfather's. Behind them we see the passenger side of an automobile. An unidentified woman stands on the car's running board, her arm around a woman standing on the ground. A man sits on the car's right front fender. His legs are crossed. All three are looking directly into the camera.

At the right of the photo is something I never before paid attention to, a picnic table laid with food and white napkins. The table's setting is so artfully casual it could be in a painting by Cézanne.

Any artist with a camera — Robert Frank and Lee Friedlander come to mind — would be thrilled to have this photograph in his portfolio, yet it was taken with the simplest of cameras on the spur of the moment. The moment speaks of a son's love for his father, an unembarrassed intimacy between them, and a long-ago idyllic summer afternoon that would be lost to time but for this photograph.

Yet what do I know of this grandfather? That he came with his parents from Sicily when he was about 13, that he earned his living as a barber, that he died at 63 of a heart attack outside his barbershop door, and that when my father quit high school in 1930 or '31 and did not look for a job for several

weeks, one night over dinner he told my father that his plate was cracked and that the next day it would be broken if he did not get a job. Without a job, he would have no more meals in that house. That is all I know of my grandfather — because I did not ask questions when I could.

The last image was taken in the summer of 1952, the summer my father bought

Notice how it is my mother and I in this photo, but it is mostly my father who commands my thoughts and words. Thus was our house all the days I knew it. My mother was a ghost living in wintry rooms of silence, and we did not know how to open windows onto summer for her. So she passed her days watching TV, reading magazines, drifting from one room to another, speechless.



his first boat, a Chris-Craft from the 1930s, for \$500. Over the following winter he overhauled the engine, refinished the hull, reupholstered the cockpits and replaced dry-rotted bottom planks.

But my father does not appear in this photo. Just my mother and I are seated on the deck of the boat, our legs dangling down into the front cockpit. The boat is at dock, pointed toward the beach of Ed Mirabella's resort on Diamond Lake, where our family spent every weekend that and the following summer. My mother is looking at me and I am looking directly into the camera, squinting slightly from the sun. My mother is in her mid-30s, still a beautiful woman with fine features. I am only 12 and would never look better in a photograph the rest of my life. My hair, which my father cut until I was 15 or 16, is just beyond a crew-cut and shines blonde in the sun.

At that beach that summer my father taught me how to float. We went out to where the water was chest-deep and he said, "Just lie on the water." I was terrified, so he put his arms under me. After a while I surrendered, he removed his arms, and I felt the glory of knowing I would never have to fear water again. That summer I learned how to swim.

She was the quietest person my sister and I ever knew. In the whole of our lives we never heard her put three sentences in a row.

Decades later my mother developed Bell's palsy, which left the skin below one eye sagging deeply and her face hideous for the last three years of her life. The disease became the physical mark of her loneliness. When she died of emphysema at age 63, she could no longer speak, only stare at the ceiling and gasp for air under the white sheets of a hospital bed. She died alone, still a mystery. I was 39. For years I had been old enough to bring her summer — but I never did.

In the last photographs my father took of her — on a beach in Hawaii, at an amusement park in Florida, standing in front of their house in Chicago wearing a winter coat — she looks utterly alone and abandoned. Her eyes are blank and haunted. They are the saddest photographs I've ever seen. Would her eyes be blank if I had paid attention, if I had asked her to tell me who she was, if I had been a real presence in her life and made her a real presence in mine? I do not know, nor do I know how I will face the day I have to scan these photos into my computer and arrange them for the memory book I am planning. What I do know is that

#### Years After

Years after he is gone  
you see a man on the street  
walking with your father's gait,  
the one he grew into long after you were gone  
from the house in a life of your own.

You want to stop the car and look  
to be sure it's not him  
but you only drive slow  
watching in the rear-view mirror.

Hours later you see your father  
with memory's eye and feel your right foot  
press the brake to the floor  
of the living room  
in a house he never lived to see.

*Mel Livatino*

these photos put a period sadder than any I can imagine at the end of a life and a mother I never really knew.

Unlike my mother, my father was always willing to tell stories from his life, stories I treasure to this day. The problem wasn't a lack of stories; the problem was my hardness of heart. The hardening was the result of the "old country" behavior he had learned as the son of an immigrant. He was the head of the family, the sole wage earner, and so only his wishes mattered in our household. Summer evenings, for example, he would send me to buy two pints of ice cream. My mother, sister and I would share one pint; he would recline in a lounge with his stocking feet propped up and eat the other.

In my senior year of high school, when I told him I wanted to go to college, he ignored my wish, got me a job working in the printing plant where he worked, and took three-quarters of my pay for room and

What I have sadly learned in the years since my father's death is that while it is easy to harden a heart, it is nearly impossible to soften it.

board. I worked in that printing plant for the next five years, all the time ardently wanting to go to college and nurturing that desire by taking night courses at the local junior college. I eventually figured out that what my father wanted was to be paid back the cost of raising me. At 24, when he was paid back, I finally got my wish and became a full-time student at a four-year school. By then, however, the center of my heart had hardened toward my father.

By the time my own children came along, my father no longer behaved in the selfish ways he did when I was younger and he had power. Long out of his house and a father myself, I came to realize what I could not when I lived in his house: Despite his selfishness, he had sacrificed much. He had not left my mother when mere selfishness would have dictated he should have. He always worked as hard as he could to provide for our family. And he was forever fixing our house — electrical wiring, cracked plaster, dilapidated gutters, clogged plumbing, a new

porch, a new rock garden, a new garage — work that brought out frightening red rages when the house did not cooperate with his pliers, hammer and screw driver. Work for which no one ever thanked him.

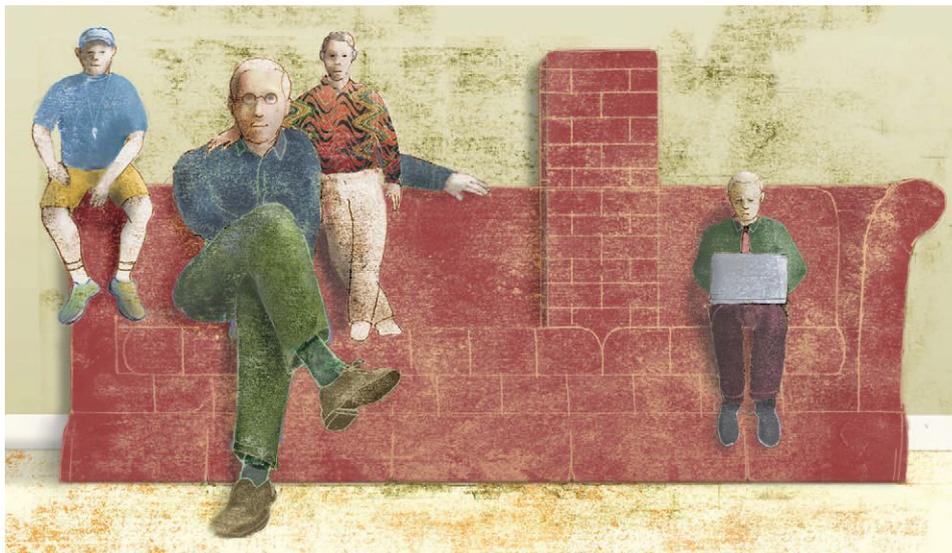
When I think of my father in this way, as I nearly always do now that he's gone, I am reminded of the tasks the father performs without acknowledgement in Robert Hayden's poignant poem "Those Winter Sundays." "What did I know, what did I know," the narrator son, remembering his father, keens at the end of the poem, "of love's austere and lonely offices?"

What I have sadly learned in the years since my father's death is that while it is easy to harden a heart, it is nearly impossible to soften it. Sometimes death is the only hammer that can break the stone at the cen-

sunroom of my home, set up a video camera, and for the next hour, with the camera running, I asked him to tell me again the stories of his life, stories I had heard him tell many times before but wanted to hear one more time, stories I wanted to keep with me for the rest of my life, as I wanted to keep the image of him telling them.

I did not know it then, but that would be the last time my father would be in my house. The next summer he did not return to Chicago for a visit, the first summer of his life that he would not be in Chicago. On July 29 a stroke put him in the hospital for a month. He spent the next seven and a half months shuttling between a nursing home and the hospital.

I visited him in August, October and December. Several days during the October



ter of a heart. While he was alive, however, I kept the periphery of my heart soft enough that I could spend time with him, talk with him, do things with him. It was only in the depths of my heart that I could not truly be with him.

But I always *wanted* to be with him. To that end, one day a year or two after my mother died, I suggested to my father that we visit every place he had ever lived, going all the way back to infancy, and that at each place he tell me who he was when he lived there. I brought along a tape recorder, and at each place I turned it on and listened as he told me the stories of his life when he was a boy and a young man. I shall never forget the joy in his eyes as he talked.

On a September afternoon in 1991, his last day in Chicago before he returned to his home in Florida, I brought him into the

visit I took him out of the nursing home in a wheelchair. On one of those days I took some photographs of him with a throwaway panoramic camera. I haven't looked at those photos in years, but I can still see them in my mind's eye. Alone amid a seemingly endless expanse of grass, palm trees and sky, he sits slumped in the wheelchair looking directly into the camera. On his face is only a stare of bleak isolation, a stare that knows the hard center of my heart.

It has been 20 years since I made the videotape of my father and 30 years since I tape-recorded his stories. I have never once listened to the tape we made or watched the video, nor have I looked again at those photos of my mother utterly alone and abandoned or the photos of my father sitting alone in his wheelchair in that wide and indifferent landscape. Whenever the mood

comes over me to revisit those items, I find something else to do. I look away because I am standing before an abyss of grief I do not know how to enter and return from with any less grief. I look away because I cannot bear to remember my mother's wintry life or the winter my father's life became. I look away because I cannot bear to remember that I might have brought them summer — and didn't.

I believe many of us, especially in our later years, live in wintry rooms of love, or so all those blank stares on the faces of the aged tell me. Sometimes our interiors remain unseen because no one cares to look: We are indeed unloved. Sometimes it is because love is tangled up in brambles of anger and can find no way out. Sometimes it is because love is burdened by busy lives with little time. Sometimes it is because, like my wife, we ourselves have disappeared. And sometimes it is simply because we fear intimacy.

Some months ago, my sons and their families were gathered at our summer home for our annual week together. My oldest son, Tom, had invited his brother-in-law and his wife and children to join us for three days. On the second day I discovered a pool of water under some baby bottles beside the microwave. Without quite noticing the baby bottles, I exclaimed, "What's this!" I feared something had broken in the microwave. A few minutes later, when others were out of earshot, Tom upbraided me for making his guests feel unwelcome. I sat at the kitchen table listening to his accusing voice in a black rage, a rage sitting atop 30 years of silently bearing his rude disdain. Without saying a word, I left the room to brush my teeth.

Running the floss furiously between my teeth, I seethed at the mirror. Then Tom's large body was in the doorway beside me, his hand on my shoulder, his voice gently trying to explain and apologize — and my rage melted. I told him to have a seat on the bed. When I emerged from the bathroom I had no idea what to say, but I knew I had been waiting for this moment for 30 years.

For the next 15 or 20 minutes I paced the floor in front of him and spoke from my heart. I told him about the first time I experienced his rudeness on our first long-distance vacation to New England when he was 12. I remembered for him my tears of sadness and rage one morning while I was out jogging. I told him the same thing happened on our vacation to Wyoming the next year. From the age of 12, I said, he had been disdainful of me. Perhaps I had been the wrong father for him; perhaps he had wanted a jock/coach

father like himself with lots of jock/coach friends. No, he said firmly, he had never wanted another father.

I told him he seldom made me feel welcome or loved. Trying to soften the blow, I told him how I, too, had become hard-hearted toward my own father. I was trying to say I understood his own hard-heartedness, but I was also pleading to understand the cause of his disdain. My father had stolen my dream of college for five years and forced me to turn in my earnings to him during those years; I had stolen nothing from my son. Perhaps he blamed me for the divorce from his mother. I simply couldn't understand the genesis of his anger, his distance, his rudeness. I said all this that morning, and more. I was a little incoherent.

I told my son that I still thought of my father often, though he had been gone for 18 years. Despite harboring anger at him while he was alive for stealing my dream and driving my youth into extreme penny-pinching to get the money for college, I missed him and my mother and still thought of them nearly every day. I remembered how they had given up their bedroom and slept on a sleeper-sofa in the living room for four years so my sister and I could have separate bedrooms in a two-bedroom house. I told him how I had come to deeply regret not bringing summer to his and my mother's lives when I had become a man and it was in my power to do so. Then tears came to my eyes and I could no longer speak. My son rose from the bed and we hugged each other for a long time.

I do not know what difference that moment of pouring out my heart will make. But I do know my son loves me, though that love may be nettled up in brambles of hidden anger. Did we open a door on summer or only inch a window up in spring? If the latter, will summer ever come? What I know for sure is that time for all of us is more limited than we can know; love is our most precious gift, both the giving and receiving of it; and the only way out of our wintry rooms is to face our lives and each other in love. If we don't speak our hearts to each other, and often, we may be picking up shattered glass the rest of our lives.

A month after writing the previous paragraph, I went to watch my son John's 8-year-old son playing in his first season of tackle football. It was a warm day in early October, the sun brilliant, the sky blue. My youngest son, Chris, the athletic director at the high school where the game was being played, came up to us with his 4-year-old son and began talking to his brother. Only after 10

minutes did he think to say hello to me. For the next 20 minutes he talked animatedly with his brother. Though I was sitting next to them, neither said a word to me. After 20 minutes Kathy and I moved to a location closer to the field and farther from this winter of neglect.

Several weeks before that I was at my computer when on a whim I clicked on some music. Kathy came and stood in the doorway of my office listening to the closing strains of the song. Dementia has robbed her of her own activities, so she likes to watch mine. When the song ended, iTunes automatically cued up the next song in the playlist, Johnny Mathis' "Twelfth of Never." I was so taken by the song that I stopped working and just sat there listening and remembering the boy I had been when I was 17 and that song was popular. Before we knew it, we were both singing along.

One of the oddities of Kathy's dementia is that while she may not remember my name or where we live, she remembers the lyrics to songs from long ago better than I. So we sang along looking at each other:

*You ask how much I need you.  
Must I explain?  
I need you, oh my darling,  
Like roses need rain.*

As the song went on, I motioned for her to sit on my lap. We held each other and rocked in the chair and continued singing:

*I'll love you till the bluebells forget  
to bloom.  
I'll love you till the clover has lost  
its perfume.  
I'll love you till the poets run out of rhyme.  
Until the twelfth of never, and that's  
a long long time.  
Until the twelfth of never, and that's  
a long long time.*

The twelfth of never may have been a long, long time away when I was 17, but now, as we rocked in the chair and sang, I realized it was just around the corner for Kathy. It made me love her all the more and want to protect her from the winter into which her mind is irrevocably drifting. But I cannot. No one can. All she and I can do — and all my sons and I can do — is show our love for each other while we yet have time.

All *any* of us can do is show our love for each other — while we yet have time. □

**THIS  
FISH  
MAY  
SAVE  
YOUR  
EYESIGHT**



**DAVID HYDE'S VISIONARY WORK**

BY JOHN MONCZUNSKI



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT CASHORE '94

**W**ith little warning, two years ago Bob Kerby's world dropped out of focus. It was as if someone had smeared Vaseline on the center of his glasses. Everywhere he looked was a blurred bull's-eye. Reading, in particular, became a challenge. When he opened a book, words danced across the page in unpredictable patterns.

"I can see letters, but looking through the periphery you can't interpret them," the retired ND history professor says. "What you see is black squiggles on white. It drives you crazy, just crazy."

Back in his teaching days, the military historian was legendary for the intricate battle maps he would draw on his classroom blackboard, marching armies across multicolor-chalked terrain, all rendered in detail. Today that would be a challenge.

Along with an estimated 5 to 10 million older Americans, including the novelist Stephen King and Notre Dame's president emeritus Father Theodore Hesburgh, CSC, Kerby suffers from macular degeneration, an age-related eye condition that manifests as blurriness in the center of his field of vision.

The macula is a person's "eye for detail," that part of the retina responsible for visual acuity. Therefore, looking at a grid, someone suffering from macular degeneration would see a bunch of random wavy lines, possibly with sections blank or in shadow, explains Chicago ophthalmologist Dr. E. Michael Cassidy '87. Those who suffer the condition also are likely to have trouble distinguishing colors, especially dark from light.

Some 10 percent of people ages 66 to 74 show signs of macular degeneration. The rate jumps to 30 percent for those 75 and above. Risk factors include smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, high dietary fat and heredity. If a relative has been diagnosed, you have a 50-50 chance of getting it; the odds fall to one-in-eight if no one in your family has the condition.

"I'm one of the lucky ones," Kerby says with a twist of gallows humor but no self-pity.

Macular degeneration damages the eyes of the unfortunate "lucky ones" in one of two ways. In the more slowly developing form, known as "dry" macular degeneration, cellular debris collects between the retina and the choroid, an area of the eye containing blood supply. Over time, the vision cells (known as

the "rod" and "cone" photoreceptors) in the center of the macula essentially disintegrate, blurring the center of a person's field of vision.

In the more aggressive "wet" version of the disease, abnormal blood vessels growing up from the choroid begin bleeding, causing irreversible scarring damage. The onset of "wet" macular degeneration usually is rapid and dramatic.

Kerby, in fact, has suffered from both forms of the disease, first being diagnosed with the dry form, which was controlled for many years. Then three years ago, he suffered a bout of "wet" macular degeneration. "It took about four weeks. It just got worse and worse over a short period," he recalls. "By the time I got in to see a doctor my sight was pretty well gone. By then I had lost the capacity to read or drive."

Today not a lot can be done to help those with the condition. Dry macular degeneration is treated most commonly with a vitamin/mineral regimen, consisting of such supplements as vitamins E and C, beta-carotene, copper, zinc and others that have been shown to aid in retarding the condition. The standard treatment for wet macular degeneration is to inject into the eye certain chemotherapy-type drugs that bind to the abnormal, leaking blood vessels, destroying them, thus stopping the leaking and swelling.

"Unfortunately, all of this is mostly damage control, nipping something before it gets too extreme," Cassidy says.

Clearly something more needs to be done.

\* \* \*

Swimming in a small tank of water, in a tiny Galvin Life Sciences basement room so brightly lit that it hurts your eyes, so brightly lit that a floor fan runs 24/7 to keep the lamp heat from cooking the occupants, are some remarkable fish whose fate, believe it or not, is connected to Bob Kerby's.

"Swimming" may be an overstatement. These tiny, striped tropical fish, native to the streams of eastern India, are remarkable for what they are *not* doing. The zebrafish are not darting back and forth in the tank as one might expect. Instead, they hover in the water, nearly motionless. Bring your hand close to the glass and . . . nothing happens. They don't scatter in panic. They stand their ground (stand their water?) because they don't know any better. They are fearless because they, like Bob Kerby, are blind.

*John Monczunski is a freelance writer and a former associate editor of this magazine.*

In the name of science, the fish got that way after an extended stay in total darkness followed by several days in the intensely lit room. Unlike Kerby, however, they will soon see again. Their eyes will naturally, spontaneously and mysteriously repair themselves. Within a month, the rod and cone photoreceptor cells will miraculously regenerate and the fish will be good as new, darting back and forth in full panic whenever anything moves anywhere near their tank.

Their eye-repair ability is of intense interest to Notre Dame's David Hyde, a professor of biological sciences and the Kenna Director of the Center for Zebrafish Research. In one form or other, Hyde has been studying eye problems throughout his 30-plus-year career, first using the lowly fruit fly as a model system, then switching over to zebrafish 17 years ago.

Zebrafish offer several research advantages, Hyde says. First, they are vertebrates, a higher level organism than the fruit fly, and therefore their eye is more like the human eye. Zebrafish also develop fairly quickly, taking about three months to reach maturity. Since their eggs are fertilized outside of the female, genetic manipulation is easy.

"On top of that, their embryos are transparent, so you can easily see the development of the internal organs. When you manipulate genes you can easily see how it perturbs their development," Hyde says.

The Notre Dame biologist has long been

intrigued by "what if" questions. The most interesting research questions, he has found, often are those that begin "What if . . ." and end in "Why not?" Those are the great ones, the questions that unlock hope and open the door to possibility. They are the ones that drive progress.

A seminal experiment 15 years ago that ended with one such "what if/why not?" question has set the course for Hyde's work ever since and is largely the reason the tank of blind zebrafish described previously, as well as 2,000 other tanks holding 80,000 of their "cousins," now rest in the basement of Galvin.

"Not long after we set up our lab with zebrafish as a model system, we decided to study retinal damage using genetic means," the biologist recalls. In one of their first experiments the ND researchers employed the "bright light" method to damage the zebrafish retinas, but they couldn't do it. When they checked, the researchers were stunned to see the little striped fish flitting around normally with no visual impairment. That could mean one of two things: Either they had super zebrafish with preternatural powers, or they were doing something wrong.

Actually, there was a third possibility: The fish were only temporarily blind. That's precisely what Hyde and his crew found when they examined the fish earlier in the experiment timeline: The zebrafish had been regenerating so fast that the researchers

were missing the changes.

"We knew that some regeneration would go on," Hyde says, "but we thought it would be extremely slow, as others had shown with goldfish." (Goldfish take six to nine months to repair their retinas, whereas Hyde's group had just discovered zebrafish fixing their eyes in less than a month.)

On further analysis, Hyde and his associates concluded that a band of cells in the eye known as Müller glia were responsible for

regenerating the eye's rod and cone photoreceptor cells. Subsequently, the cells were identified as adult stem cells, namely cells that have the uncanny ability to change from an undifferentiated cell into a specialized cell, such as bone, nerve or muscle.

The ND biologists found that when the fish eye senses retinal damage, the Müller cells, which normally support cells within the eye, are triggered to divide and migrate to the retina, where they are transformed into photoreceptor cells, replacing the damaged ones.

The finding led Hyde to wonder if people could repair their eyes like zebrafish. And why not? Precisely what are the biochemical reactions that trigger the repair? If someone could figure out how the zebrafish manages the trick, the key genes involved and the biochemical pathways, that information might lead to cures for macular degeneration as well as a host of other retinal diseases.

"I'm fairly convinced that what we see when the human retina gets damaged is similar with what we see in the fish retina, up to a point," Hyde says. "But there is some reason why the human retina won't regenerate. It's as if it wants to. It recognizes that there is damage. The [human] Müller glial cells start to proliferate, but then the next step, which is to determine precisely which cells are missing, that doesn't happen."

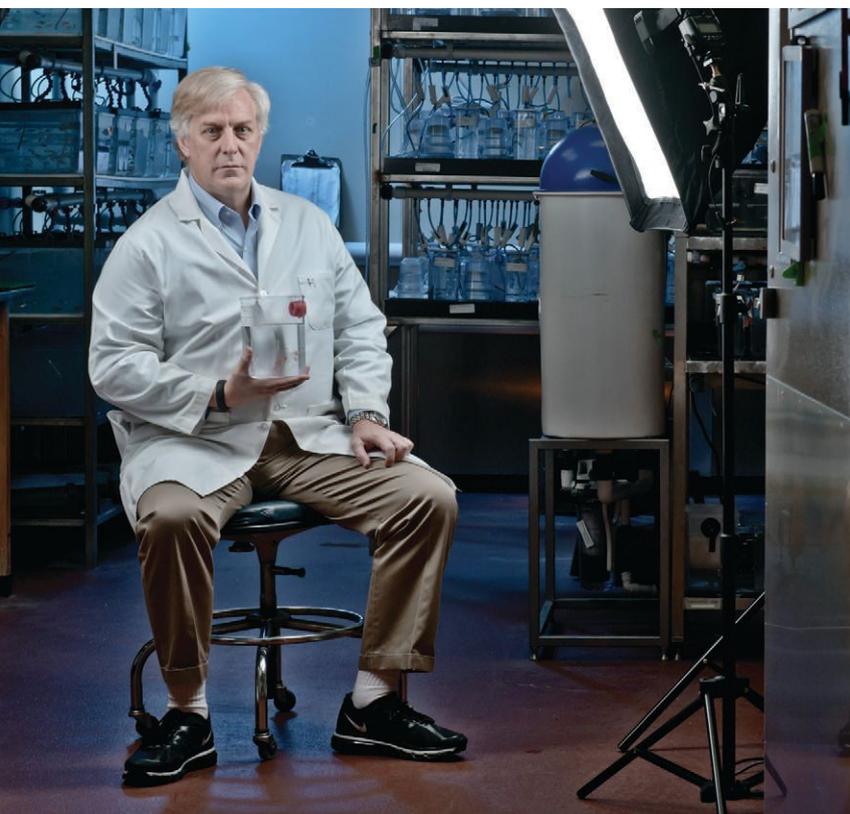
In fact, what happens is the last thing anyone would want: Human glial cells start migrating to abnormal places in the retina. Instead of fixing the eye, the migrating cells cause more damage, known as "glial scarring." They make a bad situation worse.

Precisely why the fish eye responds to retinal damage by regenerating a functional retina while the human eye creates more damage remains a mystery for Hyde and others to solve.

Like most things in nature, the mystery is mind-numbingly complex. You don't just directly tweak the rods and cones and immediately see again, Hyde says. To regain clear, sharp sight requires fixing a host of complicated, multilayered, interlocking, intermediate processes that eventually effect the cure.

After identifying the Müller glia as the source of adult stem cells that repair the zebrafish retina, Hyde and his colleagues ratcheted up their work to identify the molecules which are important in the process. To do that, they began looking at "gene expression" changes.

Using a technique known as "microarray analysis," Hyde's lab, which in essence is a little company with 20 employees, has identified several thousand zebrafish genes involved in repairing retinal damage. When



an injury occurs, genes, which are templates for the production of proteins, the building blocks of the body, are activated, causing the eye to produce the specific proteins charged with repairing the eye.

Working on another track at about the same time, the ND biologists found that when they selectively killed certain zebrafish eye cells, only those specific types would regenerate. They concluded that each dying cell, therefore, must produce a cell-specific chemical cue that triggers its replacement. These chemical cues “tell” the eye an injury has occurred as well as which types of cells are injured and where they are located.

“We realized then and there that just looking at dying photoreceptors isn’t going to give us the whole story,” Hyde says. “So we started developing additional zebrafish model systems, which we could use to do comparisons that subsequently have proven to be very important.”

The comparison studies allowed Hyde and his colleagues to determine which of the triggers are specific and which are more broadly based.

“And then we did an experiment which I’d been hinting to the lab for a year that we should try,” Hyde says. Essentially the experiment involved damaging a fish’s retina and isolating all the proteins from that retina, which subsequently would be injected into a healthy fish eye. “The thinking was if we do that, we should induce a regeneration response in the healthy retina.

“That was a key experiment. It allowed us to identify molecules, such as Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha (TNF-alpha) and others, that appear very early in the whole response but weren’t showing up in the gene microarray study.”

Hyde and his colleagues found that TNF-alpha is a cell-specific protein produced in the dying photoreceptor cells. Therefore, they concluded it must play some critical role in initiating the repair response. The dying rods and cones release the protein, then the Müller cells chemically “recognize” it and start the retina repair process.

Currently, Hyde’s group is focusing on several of these regeneration proteins, some of which, like TNF-alpha, are produced only in response to the injury of a specific cell type. Others, such as a protein called STAT3, are triggered more broadly and elicit a broader response.

Hyde has found that STAT3 exists in glial cells at very low levels before injury. Once the retina is damaged, however, the level of STAT3 shoots way up. “It responds very quickly to injury. It binds with DNA, regulating gene expression. It is broad-based, a

molecule that can affect anywhere from 10 to 100 different genes.”

It also is a prime example of just how complicated and interlocking the retinal repair process is. For instance, to become activated it requires another molecule in the cell membrane, and that molecule requires an outside protein to bind to it. Hyde and his colleagues suspect the “outside protein” that unlocks the process is none other than TNF-alpha, which the dying photoreceptors produce.

The ND professor likens his retinal research to solving a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. “First you have to find the piece and then you have to find where it fits. You might look at all those pieces and feel overwhelmed. But if you can find a couple of the edges, then you can build off those.

“Once you get a handle on some of these molecules then you can make certain predictions, hypothesize how they fit into the process. You can see broadly what the pattern is. So, for instance, if you see ‘a’ and ‘b,’ then you might conclude that ‘c,’ which is related to both of these, also may be important, [such as the relationship between TNF-alpha and STAT3]. Working like that, you can begin to deduce components in the process.

“We may have 5 percent of the picture today — it’s hard to say,” he says. “But compared to where we were two or three years ago, it’s fantastic. Then it was next to nothing. We’ve learned so much in such a short span of time.”

This past spring Hyde added an exciting new line of inquiry that he believes has an excellent chance of helping people sooner rather than later.

“We aren’t dropping the zebrafish work,” he says. “The potential for regenerating neurons, which could result in a total cure, is still high — although perhaps 10 to 15 years away.”

Hyde’s new direction, aimed at the near term, is born in part from his frustration at not yet having any help for those currently suffering from retinal disease. “Every week I receive emails from people all over the country who say they suffer from macular degeneration and ask to volunteer for a clinical trial, and I have to write back and say there’s nothing we can do just yet,” he laments.

That soon may change.

Not long ago, after reading about an English research team that had successfully coaxed embryonic stem cells into becoming retinal pigment epithelial (RPE) cells, Hyde saw a promising new avenue for his lab. The specialized RPE cells are crucial to the life of photoreceptors; if they die, the rods and cones die as well. He understood that if you



can restore RPE cells, you have the basis for a treatment for macular degeneration as well as several other diseases.

When Hyde learned that the English researchers had begun a clinical trial last summer using their cultured RPE cells injected into the diseased eyes of volunteers with macular degeneration, he decided to explore the technique, but using adult stem cells instead of embryonic ones.

That slight but significant change will, he believes, solve two vexing problems. First, the use of adult stem cells means all ethical objections to the therapy are removed.

The second problem relates to the tiny percentage of cells produced from the embryonic stem cells that are not RPE cells. “It’s unclear what these cells are,” Hyde says, “but if they remain as embryonic stem cells, they may proliferate and cause a tumor, and that would be devastating.”

The ND biologist hopes to circumvent this problem by using adult stem cells. Hyde explains that unlike embryonic stem cells, which are unlimited in the type they may become, adult stem cells are confined to a few forms. Therefore, it’s believed their limited nature makes them less likely to produce a tumor. In fact, in countless experiments using adult stem cells, no tumor has ever been reported forming.

Hyde’s team now is ramping up work on the project, gathering stem cells from bone marrow, fat tissue and umbilical-cord blood to see if any of these sources may yield viable RPE cells.

“It seems to me this is something that can move very quickly from first demonstrating that we can produce RPE cells from adult stem cells, then moving to clinical trial,” he says. “This may not restore vision, but it likely can block further loss of vision and would be a huge advance in therapy, offering hope where there has been none.” □

Learn more about Professor Hyde’s research at [nd.edu/~hydelab/](http://nd.edu/~hydelab/).  
For more on Notre Dame’s Initiative on Adult Stem Cell Research and Ethics, see [adultstemcell.nd.edu/](http://adultstemcell.nd.edu/).

# THE DANGER OF OUR CONVICTIONS

Notre Dame's president asks the graduating class at Wesley Theological Seminary to use their calling and their faith to reduce the hatred that divides us.

BY JOHN I. JENKINS, CSC, '76, '78M.A.

Commencement is always a joyful time, and today I find your graduation from Wesley Theological Seminary especially inspiring. Even if the Spirit called you here, the world did not make it easy to arrive. You fought your way here out of conviction born of faith.

Conviction. It is indispensable to every good deed. It defies the forces of inertia — the prevailing winds that fight to keep everything the way it is, or worse. Conviction, however, is not all good. It can easily be corrupted by pride and greed. It can lead to hatred and division.

Last year, here in Washington, D.C., our elected officials nearly defaulted on the debt in August, nearly shut down the government over disaster relief in September, failed to reach an accord for debt reduction in November and forced another showdown over the payroll tax in December.

These stalemates proved that our political leaders don't suffer from a lack of conviction. But they often expressed their conviction as would a bitter couple seeking a divorce, using all manner of coercion to get the best deal — dismissive of the misery their hatred would create in their own lives and the injury it would cause in the lives of the children.

Yet the hostility expressed by politicians did not originate with them. We in this country are in the midst of a social crisis, a harsh and deepening split between groups that are all too ready to see evil in each other. We cannot pretend to stand outside this. We are woven into it.

We the people are exhibiting the human tendency that James Madison warned of in 1787: "A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points ... [has] ... divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than

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*Father Jenkins, Notre Dame's president since 2005, gave a longer version of this address to the graduating class of Wesley Theological Seminary at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., in May 2012.*

to co-operate for their common good."

Two centuries later we are like actors following the how-to script for creating factions: Develop strong convictions. Group up with like-minded people. Shun the others. Play the victim. Blame the enemy. Stoke grievance. Never compromise.

So of all the questions posed in this campaign season, the most important one is rarely asked. Now, when the country is increasingly diverse, when the number of disputed moral questions is rising, when citizens have opposing passions that neither side will give up for the sake of civility — can citizens of the United States learn to express their convictions in more skillful, more respectful ways?

We need an answer. And a country whose citizens treat one another with scorn does not have a bright future.

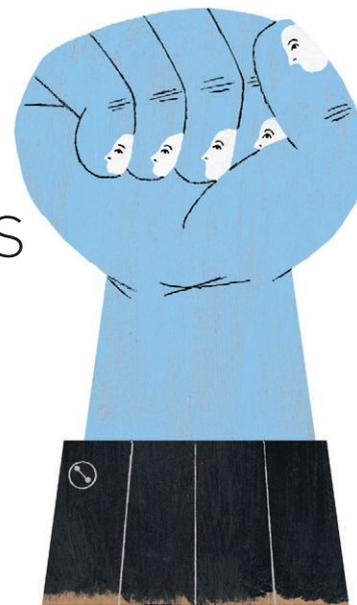
Of all the graduates entering the wider world this spring, you here today, more than others, have the responsibility, and the training and the commitment to address the most urgent, most strategic challenge in the country today — the challenge of reducing hatred and promoting love.

"For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: love one another," says the *First Letter of John*. Love is the greatest commandment — and hatred is at the heart of the greatest sins. Hatred is more dangerous to us than any other threat, because it attacks the immune system of our society — our ability to see danger, come together and take action.

Hatred poisons everything. Yet we seem not to see the danger. As Augustine wrote in his *Confessions*, "It is strange that we should not realize that no enemy could be more dangerous to us than the hatred with which we hate him."

If we can help solve the problem of hatred, we have a chance to come together and solve all the others.

Now I would like to say that I am familiar with hatred only from hearing confessions and reading books. I must confess, however, that much of what I know of hatred comes from examining the temptations in my own



heart. So here are some personal observations.

First, we cannot directly reduce anyone else's hatred. If we were capable of that, we would already have done it. Most everyone would prefer there were less hatred in the world, yet there seems to be more — indirect proof that no one apparently wants to give up any of their own.

Second, if we're going to do battle with hatred, we have to accept that hatred is not out there. It is in here — ready to rise in disguise inside of us, posing as virtue, sowing destruction.

Third, to avail itself of the most effective disguise, hatred often hides in self-righteous conviction. It can hide from our conscience by entangling itself in our most noble beliefs.

Let me offer an illustration.

In 2009, a member of the Armed Forces was charged in a plot to commit murder. He had created a plan he called "Operation Patriot." In papers recovered by law enforcement, he had written that — because he had taken an oath to protect the country against all enemies foreign and domestic — he was obliged to honor that oath by killing the president of the United States.

That young man fell prey to self-deception. He believed he was driven by a noble desire to protect the country, when in fact he was driven by deep hatred in the guise of patriotism.

To spare ourselves the same form of deceit, we have to call on our conscience to explore our convictions and how we express them. Even in the case of my most noble belief, I must ask myself: Am I trying to advance this belief through persuasion or coercion, with respect or contempt, by accepting sacrifice or imposing sacrifice? When I refuse to compromise, is it because I love a principle or because I hate the people on the other side?

In 1749, after a series of riots in Ireland that included attacks on Methodists, John

Wesley published an essay he titled *Letter to a Roman Catholic*. He wrote: “Are you not fully convinced that malice, hatred, revenge, bitterness, whether in us or in you, in our hearts or yours, are an abomination to the Lord? Be our opinions right, or be they wrong, these tempers are undeniably wrong. They are the broad road that leads to destruction.”

This Roman Catholic, speaking to you today, is fully convinced of the manifest truth grounded in the Gospel that John Wesley’s letter proclaims.

If we are committed to reducing hatred in the world, then the way we engage one another in public debate is not a means to an end; the means *are* the ends.

And if we are determined to keep our convictions free of malice, then I propose that we strive to meet one simple test for public discourse: Our attempts to express our convictions should take the form of an effort to persuade.

If I am confident in my beliefs, and I have love and good will for the other side, then it would be my duty to try to persuade them. Once I venture into tone and language that is unlikely to persuade, my odds plunge of winning over another, and the chances rise that I am expressing hatred — which will lead to factions and fracture the common good.

The danger is all around us now. Hatred is rising, yet all sides feel more virtuous. We’re asleep to the threat. We can have the

most sophisticated Constitution, a brilliant system of checks and balances and a Bill of Rights to safeguard against the tyranny of the majority — yet none of it can stand against the power of hatred.

As you set out in your ministry, I ask you to affirm again the noble beliefs that led you here and advance those beliefs in ways that strike a moral contrast with the dominant culture of discourse in the country today. If you do this, you will set a new standard for moral conviction in the 21<sup>st</sup> century — one that will offer hope for reconciling two great human needs: our longing to give full expression to our most passionate convictions and the need for a national unity that can survive the diversity of our views. □

## Of What Spirit We Are

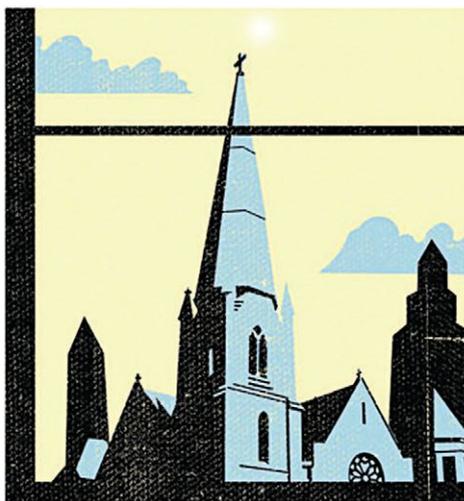
BY MICHAEL GARVEY '74

“Of all hostilities,” Dorothy Day once wrote, “one of the saddest is the war between clergy and laity.” This was in her newspaper column during the summer of 1964 as some controversy, long since forgotten, roiled the Catholic Church in America.

As a founder of the pacifist, anarchist and activist Catholic Worker movement, Day was no stranger to controversy. Although she never hesitated to describe herself as “a daughter of the Church,” she occasionally found herself in vigorous public disagreement with such hierarchs as New York’s archbishop, Cardinal Francis Spellman. But even amid the most fiery of those disagreements — including Spellman’s enthusiastic support for the war in Vietnam — she kept in mind and wrote about Jesus’ rebuke to his disciples when they suggested a sort of divine drone missile strike on some inhospitable Samaritans: “You do not know of what spirit you are” (*Luke 9:55*).

True, a war in Southeast Asia was raging, she wrote then, “but as for the hostilities in our midst, the note of violence and conflict in all our dealings with others — everyone seems to contribute to it. There is no room for righteous wrath today.”

The plainspoken, outspoken and occasionally law-breaking Dorothy Day may even have indulged in righteous wrath a time or two herself, but it scared the hell out of her.



I wonder what she would have to say about the controversies swirling within and around the Church today. Even a cursory tour of airwaves, web and blogosphere reveal a perfect storm of righteous wrath brewing. Its inflowing currents have included the endlessly festering clergy sexual abuse scandal, the Health and Human Services mandates, the Vatican’s takeover of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, the president’s endorsement of same-sex marriage, the U.S. bishops’ investigation of the Girl Scouts and the fact that (insert here the controversialist of your choice) has been invited to speak at a Catholic institution of higher learning.

And from time to time it may be unavoidable to take “a side” in such disputes. Faith is not some private hobby after all. It is an election year; the 2013 Girl Scouts’ cookie drive likely will be under way as the bishops deliberate and proclaim; commencements happen yearly.

Those lacerating hostilities in our midst that Dorothy Day noticed half a century ago are back in full force, too, and now, as then, “everyone seems to contribute to it.” Even at weekday Mass here at Notre Dame, an occasional public prayer may be heard from the pews that seems directed less to God than to the rest of us and which includes more than a hint of partisan slant, as if Our Lord is being

encouraged to twist a few arms. We all seem to contribute to it.

But those of us, like me, who don’t mind finding fault with the leaders of church, state and opinion, ought to remember that the need to be right can become idolatrous, that the savor of high dudgeon can become every bit as poisonous as any heresy arousing it, and that, well, we do not know of what spirit we are. This summer of the year of Our Lord 2012 is a good time to be reminded of that.

Dorothy Day, pray for us. □

Michael Garvey is Notre Dame’s assistant director of public relations. Email him at [garvey.2@nd.edu](mailto:garvey.2@nd.edu). A version of this essay was published as an alumni blog at the magazine’s website, [magazine.nd.edu](http://magazine.nd.edu).



# Witness to the Persecution

William Kennedy, one of the foremost Catholic novelists of our time, has turned his light on injustice and racism, the powerful and oppressed, and on the redemptive power of love, family and our essential humanity.

BY BEN GIAMO

“Now think of Havana as a suburb of Albany,” William Kennedy told me during an interview last October when his newest novel, *Changó’s Beads and Two-Tone Shoes*, first appeared.

The novel is the latest installment of the 84-year-old author’s much celebrated “Albany cycle,” begun in 1975 with *Legs*, which told the story of real-life gangster Legs Diamond. The eight-novel series, including the 1983 Pulitzer Prize-winning *Ironweed* as well as *Billy Phelan’s Greatest Game* (1978), *Quinn’s Book* (1988) and *Roscoe* (2002), takes place in New York’s gritty capital city and wisely weaves character and place, politics and family into the austere realities of a single city and the broader truths about our American landscape.

Kennedy, who attended Notre Dame’s Sophomore Literary Festival in 2000 and received an honorary degree from the University in 2001, will return to campus this fall to give a reading and series of talks.

The author’s newest novel follows journalist Daniel Quinn to Cuba, where he covers the insurrection against the dictator Fulgencio Batista and the Castro revolution — just as Kennedy did as a young journalist. And it, too, grafts fictional characters onto real people and entangles them in real events. Early on, for example, Kennedy takes the

reader back to 1957 and into a Havana nightclub — El Floridita, famous as the bar Ernest Hemingway patronized. Quinn talks with the then-fading author after Hemingway slugs a tourist whose singing he doesn’t like.

That same evening the book’s protagonist falls for the beautiful and seditious Cuban woman, Renata Suarez Otero, who will lead Quinn to Castro for an interview and eventually become his wife. The relationship between the Irish-American realist and Cuban idealist provides a stylistic tension to the book’s storyline that moves between Albany and Havana. Kennedy’s abiding interest in the tyranny of the political machine resonates from one place to the other in order to map out the common terrain of revolution, love (romantic and spiritual), and racial conflict.

Cuba (“March 12, 1957”) represents about a third of the story. It comes between a brief first section (“Albany, August 1936”), setting the tone and introducing most of the principals, and the lengthy final section (“Albany, Wednesday, June 5, 1968”). The latter date coincides with Robert Kennedy’s assassination, providing a backdrop for the author to examine themes of racism and oppression with his characteristic humor, drama and pathos. Moving deftly across time and place, incident and consequence, William Kennedy unites the social struggles in Havana and Albany by virtue of fully drawn and interrelated characters, intricate plotlines and sustained themes.

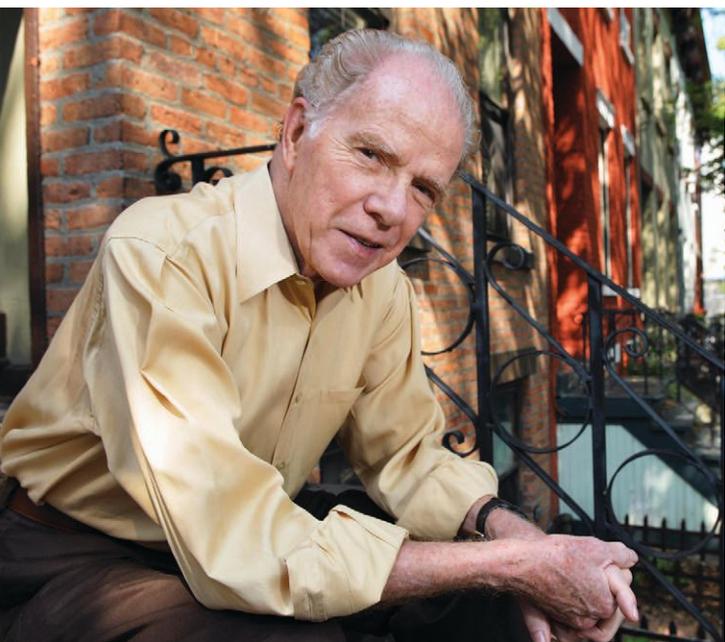
As always, the author tests the limits of the writer’s role as witness to history, witness to the warriors who emerge to wage the battles and put their lives on the line, witness to the trajectory of the arc of justice. Does the arc bend toward justice, Kennedy seems to ask, or does it flatten into a straight line? The result is a *tour de force*, Kennedy’s most ambitious and complex novel to date, marking him as one of the pre-eminent novelists of our time.

*Changó’s Beads and Two-Tone Shoes* took Kennedy nine years to complete. His original intention was to write a nonfiction book on Cuba, a place that had fascinated him since his early stints as a journalist from 1956 to 1962 for the *Puerto Rico World Journal*, the *San Juan Star* and the *Miami Herald*, where he was assigned the Cuba beat. In a way, he did fulfill that intention by writing the introduction to *Cuba on the Verge: An Island in Transition*, a collection of essays and photographs by Cuban and American writers about the island published in 2003.

Realizing he wanted to return to fiction, Kennedy later admitted that this was a difficult decision for a writer in his 70s because of the lengthy research required. In the beginning, the working title for the novel was simply “Pop’s novel, and the Cuba novel,” he explained when we spoke last fall. “I would always come back to my father, Cuba and the civil rights movement. . . . How to do it was the key.” As with *Legs*, the first in the “Albany cycle,” Kennedy mulled it over, ran

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*Ben Giamo is an associate professor in the Department of American Studies at Notre Dame.*



TIMES UNION, ALBANY, NY

The parallel characters in Kennedy's Cuba are Castro; members of the rebellious Directorio; and Quinn's namesake grandfather, who had chronicled Cuba's Ten Years' War (begun in 1868) and who had covered the island's slave revolt and Mambí rebels a century ago. The key figure, however, is the bewitching Renata. Much of the book's appeal derives from Quinn's tempestuous relationship with this wealthy, connected, wild-eyed activist whom he impulsively marries during the revolution.

Overlooking all of these worthy fighters is the specter of Changó, the warrior deity of Santería, the religious myths inherited from the Yoruba after they arrived as slaves in Cuba. These myths often mix Catholic and indigenous beliefs. An animistic divinity of fire, lightning and thunder, Changó becomes a powerful spiritual force in the novel, particularly when set in Cuba.

In the novel, for instance, when Quinn meets an old seer on his way to interview Castro in the Sierra Maestra, he is christened by an artifact placed around his neck: "He wears the dead like the beads of Changó." This simply goes with the territory of bearing witness to the broken world, so often torn asunder by the brutal relations between the powerful and powerless.

The blend of faith and love is richly expressed by Renata, who defies all expectations by being both haute bourgeois and a gunrunner for the revolution. Alluding to the redemptive power of spiritual love, she says, "Love will save us and remake us. Love will do what parents and doctors and spouses cannot do. Love will do it all if you take it into your soul and caress it."

Then, explaining romantic love to Quinn, Renata continues, "Nobody can know what love means, or how it arrives or how it lasts, or even if it exists, because we are never free from doubt. . . . I create love by making it, by believing in it even when it doesn't exist. Love can make love exist, but love cannot make itself last. All I can do is try to make love exist, and sometimes I succeed."

In this fashion, Kennedy brings us right into the heart of the matter, weaving together the essential elements of belief, love and liberation. As readers, we soon become engaged onlookers to the witness, oppressors, warriors and healers alike. We see the unrelenting cruelty of political regimes and machines in dramatic style, but we also see — especially through Santería drum-beat

rituals — the ongoing celebration of life even as it is being threatened or extinguished.

In Albany, the character of George Quinn — Pop — is the perfect vehicle with which to strike up the band once the novel heads north: unbound by dementia, lost in the city and drawing all the dramatic (and some romantic) action toward him, he is a wondrous embodiment of an altered state of song and dance, bridging old and new Albany by virtue of his lapses, lyrics and stories.

Kennedy becomes a center of consciousness in the novel, creating volatile and quotidian moments of life pushed to the margins in vivid and credible ways. Given his Irish-American Catholic upbringing and his Franciscan educational background at Siena College, he projects an active social conscience into his warrior characters. And Quinn, the journalist who "keep[s] track of stuff," conveys a measure of maturity and detachment that keeps the witness to time and place, political events and family history from becoming didactic and sentimental.

In the novel, Kennedy identifies Quinn's motives for being a writer and a witness: "He has a strong impulse to salvage history, which is so fragile, so prismatic, so easily twisted, so often lost and forgotten." And why is it necessary for Kennedy himself to be a writer/witness who salvages history? "I think that it's an invented reason — because we're here to record it for the sake of posterity. We're here, and we are the witness, and we are the only witness to *now* and to our ancestors just a little before us. . . . It's a natural thing, and this becomes valuable because it's so ephemeral. And somebody has to say that. It's what we do."

The projection of Kennedy's social consciousness into the subjects of revolution in Cuba and racial tension and uprising in Albany, filtered through humane characters and authentic dialogue, would be a daunting task for any writer. But what gives this novel an added dimension is his incorporation of song into the story — ranging from popular standards to jazz, soul and even what was known pejoratively as "coon songs."

The tone is set at the novel's very beginning when Quinn, as a boy, happens upon Bing Crosby and Cody Mason performing "Shine." The young Quinn is both moved and mystified, for he doesn't know what the word means. Crosby offers a glimpse into the complexities of the word and racial stereotyping: "It's an insult. A bad word but a great song. The song turns the insult inside out."

Kennedy develops this ambiguity throughout the novel, placing the song in the hybrid social context of black minstrelsy and theater and the rise of black performers. In the

conversations through his mind and wrote notes that ended up longer than the novel itself. It was a "chaotic process," he said; evidently he got it right.

Although Kennedy never traveled as a young journalist to Cuba while working for the *Miami Herald*, he had the good fortune of Cuba coming to him — political exiles, mainly University of Havana students who belonged to the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil and survivors of the Palace attack of March 1957, during which some 40 student revolutionaries died in the failed attempt to assassinate President Batista.

Faure Chomón, the second-in-command, was wounded in the attack and fled to Miami. Kennedy had a long interview with him and befriended other exiles as well. It was "a very rich time with a lot of good stories," he recalled, and he quickly found himself inside the rebel group. From then on, he knew he would someday write about the insurrection — and about Cuba — more broadly. Later trips he made to Cuba — in 1987, when he met with fellow writer Gabriel Garcia Márquez and Fidel Castro, and in 2001 and 2003 — only reinforced his desire to appropriate Cuba into his expanding literary imagination, to make Havana a suburb of Albany.

Throughout the novel, the narrator remains a steadfast witness to those "fighting the ongoing war" against oppression and injustice. Quinn, Kennedy clarified, is "not a warrior as such, but a witness to the warriors carrying on." In Albany such warriors include Tremont Van Ort, a homeless black wino who wears the two-tone shoes and easily travels between the city's diverse and warring communities to become an unlikely yet valiant hero; Roy Mason, head of the black power movement; and Matt Daugherty, a renegade Franciscan priest whose mission to transform an unjust world is centered in The Gut, the old night town that has become an Albany slum.

Albany section, “Shine” becomes contested terrain, aggravating the generation gap between African-American fathers and sons who grew up worlds apart. Accordingly, the song becomes the measure of our progress as well as a reminder of the way we were.

The song “Shine” is central to the novel, “one of the reasons I wrote the book the way I wrote it,” Kennedy said. “I’ve been listening to that song for 70 years. . . . I never knew how I was going to use ‘Shine.’ I just knew ‘Shine’ was going to be in the book. It’s a song that’s driven me crazy over the years. I love it so much.”

Did he have any hesitation in exploring the terrain of the “coon song”? “Are you kidding?” Kennedy said. “I’ve been walking on eggs with those songs. I read everything I could find on ‘coon songs.’ I listened to them. . . . And I read all the books about the history of black theater and minstrelsy, and white minstrelsy, and how white minstrelsy began as an imitation of black life, and then black minstrelsy continued as a sendup of white minstrelsy. They were stereotyping the whites, and then they moved forward into the 20th century with the ‘coon songs.’”

### In the Albany section, “Shine” becomes contested terrain, aggravating the generation gap between African-American fathers and sons who grew up worlds apart.

Kennedy’s keen interest in the color-coded genre became a cultural force that propelled him onward creatively. “What I discovered was that ‘coon songs’ created an extreme form of popularity for black performers, and this was an incredibly forward motion for black theater and black life . . . into a new level of consciousness in the larger white world.”

He added, “They were denigrating, yes, yes, they were indeed. . . . [But] this was progress of a kind in theater, and black performers were getting bigger than ever.” Kennedy points to Bert Williams as an example. “He was one of the richest performers in the world, bar none. . . . And he is this quintessential ‘coon’ and suddenly he makes the leap into the Ziegfeld Follies in the teens — the first black man in the Follies . . . the first black man on Broadway in a white show.”

Kennedy mines the ambivalence surrounding “coon songs” in the novel. From a contemporary perspective, the homeless Tremont expresses his distaste for them: “That stuff . . . suckin’ us into the lowdown — coon funny, coon foolish, wind him up and he smile, he shuffle.” But Tremont also

reflects on the viewpoint of his deceased father, Big Jimmy Van, who moved from side-show minstrel to singing a reprise of “Shine” in S. H. Dudley’s African-American road show hit *His Honor the Barber*. In reality, that early form of Broadway musical featured Ada Walker and had a 16-day run at the Majestic Theatre in May 1911.

In the novel, as Big Jimmy’s reputation grew among black audiences, he switched to vaudeville, traveling the circuit to both black and white venues, and soon everyone across the country came to know his talent. With the money he made, Jimmy opened a nightclub in Albany and became a political force to reckon with — the most famous African-American resident and proprietor in town. For Tremont, this is reason for pause, reason to understand the movement of a cultural dialectic arcing across time.

Kennedy views this rising of black performers as a critical form of racial positioning. “They raved about these shows,” he told me. “This was definitely a moment of progress. And if it wasn’t, I wanted it to be and I made it so, because I think this is what some of those songs did, turning everything inside

out, however horrible they were and degrading. There was substance to what happened because of them, and

even the worst of them made everything so popular for black music and black entertainers. And, of course, entertainers were one of the ways that the black race moved up in the world.”

One might see this as a prequel to the civil rights movement on the cultural stage. It is part and parcel of the broader social struggle, “striving to get beyond,” as Kennedy put it, in order to surmount those “obstacles of your rise into significance of self.” He clarified the process: “This is the first phase of the battle. And then what you also encounter is formidable opposition . . . that comes with oppression, whether it’s racial or ethnic. For example, blacks rising out of the incredible, unbelievable hell of slavery . . . to become something better, something above the pain, above the punishment, and into a kind of clear moment of self-revelation that you are somebody. And now that you are somebody, how do you get to be something, somewhere, and so on? The idea is the rise of everybody into a plane of significance, a plane of achievement. . . . [This] is the kernel of growth that made me want to write a book like this.”

The novel that emerged from Kennedy’s

astute literary gift for transforming fact into fiction is a significant accomplishment in itself. In his quest to document the dramatic events in Cuba and Albany, it is clear that Kennedy’s main protagonist, Daniel Quinn, stands with the victims as he tirelessly reports on their revolutionary mission to alter the order of existence.

This call to witness the just cause and its vicissitudes is animated by the character’s grandfather, who threw himself into “losing causes and war all his life” during the second half of the 19th century. Quinn inherits this vocation from his ancestor, whose quixotic take on revolt amounts to a notion of constant struggle against negative forces: “Great losers never lose and revolutions never fail; they evolve heroically, with the memory of martyred multitudes and the survivors’ imaginations perpetually breeding a counterforce, and new heroes to drive it.”

“We shall overcome,” Martin Luther King, Jr., assured his followers, “because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” No doubt, Quinn’s invincible grandfather would heartily agree. But Quinn the grandson is created out of our own time and registers a note of skepticism. For despite his tireless efforts to see clear to the bottom of the social conflict and uncover the source of a treacherous plot, thereby bending that arc toward the good of society, Quinn concludes that he is a failed witness to history. Victim of a power play by the machine and the press, his voice is silenced.

In the surrealistic codas to the Cuba and Albany sections, Kennedy places Quinn the younger in the lecture hall of the dead. Even they lose their appetite for his resolute discourse, leaving their seats one by one. Unfazed, Quinn speaks about political duplicity as the necessary trigger for action. No matter that he has lost his audience. He goes on, picking up steam:

*“Ours is a cosmos in motion . . . moving relentlessly in an arc of justice.” He smiled, fully aware his remarks were menacing. The room was now empty. . . .*

*“In an arc of justice,” he said again. Always leave ’em laughing.*

Quinn ends up talking to himself. The ironic chuckle — and challenge — is pointed. If we do not want that arc to flatline, then we need citizens to pay attention, we need an informed and receptive audience to keep the witness and his testimony from falling on deaf ears. Truth is meant to be told, and the call to justice shared with a broader community of potential witnesses and activists. Maybe then we’ll have a chance to make the whole world shine. □



# A Minnesota pilgrim seeks enlightenment by biking the river road.

BY JAY WALLJASPER

A

wakening from a dream, I jump out of a strange bed — “Where am I? What am I doing here?”

Scanning the room, I detect no imminent threats. It looks like a cross between your grandmother’s cozy guest quarters and an unexpectedly tidy college dorm. In a moment, everything becomes clear.

This is the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin, housed in a wing of the Saint Rose Convent, and I’m here to embark on a pilgrimage following the Mississippi River 150 miles northwest to Minneapolis.

That explains my dream, which was disconcertingly literal. In it, I am supposed to be setting out on a journey somewhere in the mountains of Europe, but I can’t get started because of a series of bizarre obstacles worthy of a Three Stooges movie. Instead of being relieved it’s only a dream, I am anxious, recalling in minute detail the doubts that accompanied me to bed the night before.

This trip represents a longed-for adventure, which I squeezed into a crowded autumn schedule in the hope that four days away from my desk exploring spiritual questions will instill me with the inspiration I need to meet a deluge of deadlines waiting back home. Right now, as my wristwatch on the nightstand reads 4:45 a.m., that seems crazy.

For one thing, I’ve neglected to make proper preparations for a pilgrimage — both logistically and mentally. After buying a one-way Amtrak ticket and booking lodging for the ride, I got caught up in other things and gave little thought to the pilgrimage until yesterday. Indeed, I had no idea of where to find the Saint Rose Convent when I landed at the La Crosse depot. Luckily, a guy I met on the train offered to drive me, which I accepted even though my goal was to travel only by foot and bicycle all the way home to Minneapolis.

That raises another concern — can you legitimately make a pilgrimage on a bike? You never hear of spiritual explorers pedaling their way to Mecca, the Holy Land or the Ganges. But I have only four days, not six months like pilgrims of the Middle Ages who

walked hundreds of miles to holy destinations all across Europe.

I’m not even sure anymore what I hope to discover. I feel guilty about leaving my wife and teenage son when I have no clear purpose in mind.

By now I am wide awake, and it’s only 5:05. Two hours and 55 minutes until first call for breakfast. I remember spotting the Catholic Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman on the edge of downtown last night as I looked for a restaurant open late. They must offer an early Mass, I figure, so after a shower I hop on my bike in pursuit of spiritual revelation.

T

he idea of taking a pilgrimage has gripped me for some time. Time to think — away from the demands of email, voicemail and my overstuffed calendar — sounds luxurious and restorative. I have particular problems to sort out, too — notably how I can finish all the projects ahead of me without sacrificing everything else in my life. In truth, I’ve always found it difficult to balance family and community with the demands of work.

For several years now I’ve dreamed of walking the Camino de Santiago, a 500-mile route stretching from Southern France across the north of Spain to Santiago de Compostela, where the remains of Saint James the Apostle are said to rest in the local cathedral. As many as 500,000 pilgrims a year visited during the Middle Ages, including Francis of Assisi, but the tradition of pilgrimages began to fade in the 16<sup>th</sup> century under attacks from Protestant reformers, who deemed the practice corrupt and pagan.

In 1974, Linda Kay Davidson and David Gitlitz, authors of *Pilgrimage: From the Ganges to Graceland*, reported seeing no other pilgrims when they traveled the entire length of the trail. Yet by 2011, the number of pilgrims visiting the Santiago de Compostela cathedral for the ceremonial end of the journey rose to 179,919, according to church records.

The Camino de Santiago, restored as a pedestrian path in the late 1980s after several pilgrims walking along the highway were hit by trucks, is being rediscovered by people of all spiritual inclinations.

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It's the setting of a recent Hollywood film, *The Way*, directed by actor Emilio Estevez and starring his father, Martin Sheen, as a gruff, agnostic ophthalmologist from California who walks the trail after his son dies there during an unexpected snowstorm in a mountain pass.

Santiago is not the only medieval pilgrim route attracting new interest. Saint Olav's Way, a 400-mile Norwegian trek from Oslo to Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, draws visitors from around the world. "Like a necklace, it links ancient churches, chapels, shrines, sacred springs and monasteries along the way," enthused American travel writer Julie Whipple.

The renewed interest in spiritual journeys represents a universal human instinct, according to Leonard Biallas '61, author of *Pilgrim: A Spirituality of Travel* and distinguished professor of theology at Quincy University in Illinois. "Our hearts are restless. It's the archetype of leaving home and returning home, transformed," he says, noting that pilgrimages are central to nearly all religions, and have remained a Christian tradition — but usually taken by car, train or plane, not on foot. "People are becoming interested in walking again," he says, "because they want to get in touch with the earth."

The Catholic element of pilgrimage holds considerable appeal to me. Wavering between lapsed and observant, I find myself drawn to

*Doubts increase with each turn of the pedal, making me recognize that a lot of time to think is not always a positive experience.*

the customs and practices of Catholicism even as I bristle at some of the doctrines. Following the footsteps of Catholic seekers going back centuries feels like an honest expression of my faith.

But I can't afford the time or money to walk across Spain right now, so I decide to find a pilgrimage closer to home that I can travel on bike — a two-wheeled mini-Midwestern version of the Way of Saint James. I don't have to look far. The Mississippi River, which flows just a few miles from my house, has always felt sacred to me.

Indeed, the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto must have felt the same when he named it Rio de Espíritu Santo (River of the Holy Spirit) in 1541. So also must have the Native Americans who've lived here for centuries, erecting impressive earthwork mounds up and down the river.

A distinctly Catholic flavor permeates many communities along the upper Mississippi. Just a few hundred yards downstream from the headwaters at Lake Itasca, miles from the nearest town, sits tiny Saint Catherine Church, which appears to stake a Catholic claim to the river from the very start. A succession of river cities — Saint Cloud, Saint Paul, Winona, La Crosse and Dubuque — are all Catholic strongholds, along with smaller communities such as Fort Madison, Iowa, which when my father grew up there boasted three sizable Catholic churches and two Catholic high schools in a town of 14,000.

And now the creation of the Mississippi River Trail, a bike route under development along the river from Louisiana to Minnesota, makes it easier for middle-age pilgrims like me to consider such a journey.

I'm not the only one thinking about how Americans can become pilgrims without flying to Spain or India. Ron Briery, a retired music teacher who's done the Santiago de Compostela four times, charted an 800-mile walking route from San Diego to Sonoma, visiting the 21

California missions established in the 1700s. He made the trek over 54 days in the spring of 2011 and is now writing a guidebook. "I'm not a religious person," he admits, "but hiking gives you the time to relax and think about where you are in the world. That's spiritual for me."

So this is why I find myself in La Crosse, Wisconsin, riding my bicycle toward the Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman as the first glimmer of dawn lightens the sky.



he Cathedral itself stands as a challenge to one of my most fervent beliefs: that modernist church architecture is an abomination. Finished in 1962, it is simply beautiful — a minimalist masterpiece that achieves Gothic grandeur out of stone, glass, steel and wood. I'm so enraptured looking around that I mostly tune out the message of the Mass.

As worshippers file out of the church heading for jobs and daily duties, I stay behind to study the building. I spend a long time in the chapel at the back of the church where six windows depict sites of Marian devotion around the world: Fatima, Lourdes, Guadalupe, Czestochowa and the revelation of the Miraculous Medal in Paris. In the pews, I find a prayer card quoting Pope John XXIII: "Permit me to work in peace, patience and moderation." That seems a direct answer to my prayers.

When I am finally ready to head back to the Franciscan Spirituality Center for breakfast, the 8 o'clock Mass begins and I sit back down. Morning light shines through the stained glass windows, projecting lovely splotches of red and blue onto the stone walls. I feel at peace.

There's a refrain in the service I completely missed the first time: "God delights in his people." That strikes right at the heart of my quibbles with the Church and struggles in my own soul. Religion to me often feels like a scolding litany of all my sins, my faults, my unworthiness. The essential message of love and forgiveness seems to take a backseat. Perhaps this is a reflection of my own perfectionism — the inner drive that pushes me to work too hard and then judge myself harshly about it. I find joy in the thought that someone on high takes delight in me.



tuffing two small suitcases into the saddlebags of my bike and saying goodbye to the generous staff at the Franciscan Spirituality Center, I decide that if the Mississippi River ever becomes a popular pilgrimage route then this comfortable spot on the campus of Viterbo University would be well-suited as a stopover, like the monasteries and auberges (hostels) serving pilgrims along the Camino de Santiago.

On this unseasonably cold September morning, I'm wearing practically all the clothing I packed. The forecast predicts rain, and I fret that I paid more attention to choosing which books to bring than what gear. But I can't worry about that right now. The first order of business is finding the best way out of town. I pop into the local bike

shop for guidance, and they point me toward the Great River Trail, a biking-and-walking path along an old rail line that takes me almost all the way to my day's destination — Winona, Minnesota.

At last, I've got an open road in front of me and lots of space to think. Nothing matches the sensuous satisfaction of swooshing under my own power, feeling connected to everything around — the breeze, the sunshine, the muscles in my legs, the landscape, the people passing by. A good spin on a bike is one part sightseeing tour, one part meditation session and one part joy ride.

In a short while the river appears, and my spirits soar even higher. I am reminded of lines from poet T.S. Eliot, who grew up on the Mississippi in Saint Louis, "I don't know much about gods; but I think that the river is a strong, brown god."

When the Mississippi curves out of view, I content myself with woods, wildflowers, prairie grasses and the fact that it's not raining yet. The gravel trail is dotted with walnuts still encased in green

for a nerve-wracking four-mile ride toward the bridge that will carry me across the river to Winona. It's about 5 o'clock and the traffic on the road is thick with drivers hurrying home. To make matters worse, my bike is making funny noises.

A new worry gnaws at me: What if I don't make it all the way to Minneapolis? Although I bike almost every day, I've never undertaken a long journey like this. It seems the height of hubris for a guy in his 50s — who can't fix a flat and hasn't done a lick of training — to undertake a 160-mile journey on a cheap, beat-up bike with little thought of steep river bluffs, busy highways and other perils along the way. And now my knee is starting to hurt.

Doubts increase with each turn of the pedal, making me recognize that a lot of time to think is not always a positive experience. One hopeful scenario, however, pops into my head. It's likely the bike will break down before I do. Then I can blame the bike, not myself, when people ask why I did not finish my pilgrimage.



hulls. When I stop for lunch at the Trempealeau Hotel, which has been in business since the 1880s, I order the "famous walnut burger," which is scrumptious washed down by a Spotted Cow Ale from the nearby New Glarus Brewing Company — the Wisconsin equivalent, I decide, of dining on local lamb and red wine in northern Spain.

Back on the bike, I pedal into the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, one of many nature preserves that line the river. It's a reminder of how wild the river still is. Forty percent of all migrating waterfowl in North America pass through here on their journeys north and south. I've always known how important wetlands are to the ecological balance but never before considered how beautiful they are in their own right. I ride a long loop through the refuge, adding probably five miles to my journey, to see more of the birds, the marshes and the river itself.

Unfortunately, the Great River Trail ends at the wildlife refuge, and I am deposited onto the narrow shoulder of State Highway 35

My bike rattles and the back wheel wobbles as I cross the river bridge and turn off onto Winona's Main Street. Luckily I spot a bike shop and roll in. The diagnosis: broken spokes. The cause: too much weight in my luggage. The cure: two new spokes for \$17. The prognosis: more broken spokes.



Sitting in a local tavern, I tell Reggie McLeod, editor of *Big River* magazine — which chronicles the attractions, culture and ecology of the upper Mississippi — about my plans for a riverside pilgrimage. He considers the idea. "Well, we meet a lot of people every summer who take a journey on the river as a vision quest, going from Itasca to the gulf as a transformative

experience. Most of them travel by boat. . . .” He takes another sip of pale ale. “But I guess you could do it on a bike.”

The next morning I wake up early at my bed-and-breakfast, a stately, turn-of-the-19<sup>th</sup>-century mansion in a neighborhood that seems to sport handsome homes as far as the eye can see. I decide to attend early Mass at Saint Stanislaus Kostka, a red brick palace with a white dome resembling a state capitol, built in 1895 to serve Winona’s burgeoning Polish population.

Architecturally, its Victorian exuberance is as moving as Saint Joseph the Workman’s mid-century restraint. I stay in the pew after the closing hymn and wonder if an idea I’ve associated with Buddhism flows just below the surface in Catholicism, too: the power of the

U.S. city. My harrowing experience on the state highway yesterday makes me anxious about traveling the much busier U.S. 61 on the Minnesota side of the Mississippi today. Yet this shoulder turns out to be quite wide, and once I get accustomed to the sudden whoosh of trucks speeding past, it’s not scary or unpleasant. The terrain is hillier than yesterday, but the heights afford sweeping vistas of the river valley dotted with wooded islands.

Something about the Mississippi always thrills my soul. It’s not just the size and the scenery but the sheer awe it inspires — bending and rolling just as it pleases through the middle of America. After declaring the river “a strong brown god,” T.S. Eliot describes it as “untamed and intractable.” That sounds right.

The Mississippi goes back a long way in my family. My Walljasper ancestors arrived in New Orleans from Westphalia, Germany, on Christmas Eve 1846, and headed upriver to Iowa before it was even a state. My grandparents lived three blocks from the river, and my dad, brother and

*I assume the bluffs I just conquered would be the biggest challenge of the trip, but crossing the river back into Minnesota I uncover a bigger one.*

I walked over there every time we were in town. Dad was a champion rock skipper, side-arming flat stones across the surface of the water that bounced seven or eight times before they sank.

I turn off on a side road winding down to the water’s edge and toss a few rocks myself. I am missing my dad as much right now as when he died 17 years ago.

My dad always stressed the virtue of doing your very best. Indeed, when I was in college and heard about sociologist Max Weber’s theory of the Protestant work ethic, my response was: “Max Weber never met my dad. The Protestants have nothing over him when it comes to getting things done.”

He worked long hours as a teacher, coach and school principal but at home was always available to play with my brother and me and to enjoy what he loved most — talking about history, sports and politics. For me, too many evenings and weekends are spent putting the finishing touches on projects or answering emails.

I cross the river again at Wabasha, Minnesota, a town of 2,500 that is home to the National Eagle Center and Saint Felix Catholic Church, which looks large enough to serve a city 10 times this size.

present moment. What attracts me most about Catholic practices — candles, chants, bells, statues, architecture, music, stories, bread and wine — shifts my attention from thinking about what needs to be done next and focuses me instead on what’s happening right now. It dawns on me that the point of this pilgrimage is not finding time to think but taking time to experience.

I vow to explore this feeling further — as soon as I visit the post office to mail home the books and other heavy objects in my luggage. I don’t want to break any more spokes. A long line is in front of me, but for once I don’t mind because the sun is streaming through the post office windows and the woman behind the counter is quite pretty. I realize the magic of the present moment doesn’t happen just in churches.

I pedal through the neighborhoods of Winona toward the big box stores and strip malls that infect the outskirts of almost every



Back in Wisconsin, I'm nervous about returning to Highway 35 but the shoulder is comfortably wide here. I pass through the town of Stockholm, and a few miles up the road witness one of the most luscious sunsets of my life over Lake Pepin, a 22-mile-long natural reservoir (caused by sediment entering the Mississippi from the Chippewa River) that marks the widest natural point in the river's 2,500-mile journey: two-and-a-half miles. In the sunlight, the bluffs on the far bank glow like golden embers in a dying campfire. I feel blessed to enjoy it from the vantage point of my bicycle seat.

Then all of a sudden, I'm ambushed by a swarm of tiny bugs. It feels like the scene from *Star Wars* when spacecraft from the Rebel Alliance attack the Death Star. I am the Death Star. I pedal with one hand waving and down in front of my face so that I can see the way. It's a technique I learned biking through snowstorms in Minneapolis.

I arrive in Maiden Rock (population: 119) in one piece and quickly locate the old schoolhouse that a couple has been fixing up as an inn for 15 years. I describe the insect infestation I just escaped, and they both shake their heads, saying they've never heard of anything like it.



he next morning I get an early start. It's a good thing, because this is the longest day of my pilgrimage (70 miles) with the steepest bluffs. And I am really eager to see my wife and son.

The road grows dauntingly steep north of Maiden Rock. It takes me a half-hour to reach the top of one hill, standing up on the pedals to pump more power. That's when it strikes me — savoring the present moment is essential to a pilgrimage. Otherwise you'll go bonkers counting down the minutes to the top of the hill, the hours until dinnertime, the days to your destination. The giddy rush I feel descending this bluff teaches me another lesson about living in the moment. Hold on for dear life and enjoy the ride. Whee!

By the time I hit Prescott, Wisconsin, where the Saint Croix River joins the Mississippi, I'm famished. It's Saturday and I walk into one of the Main Street bars, finding everyone engrossed in the Notre Dame game on television. I savor a greasy sandwich and an Irish touchdown against Pitt.

I assume the bluffs I just conquered would be the biggest challenge of the trip, but crossing the river back into Minnesota I uncover a bigger one. As it nears the Twin Cities suburbs, the Mississippi River Trail abandons increasingly busy Highway 61 for a series of back roads and bike trails. I photocopied these directions out of a guidebook before mailing it home from Winona. Now I can't find them. I think I remember the way, so I climb back on the bike. All goes well for about 15 miles, until I find myself hopelessly lost in an exurban wasteland surrounded by busy roads.

I stop, take a deep breath and look for a sign — either a bike-trail marker or one from the heavens. Finding neither, I decide to head down a street that looks less important than the others. After taking a curve at the bottom of a hill, the skyscrapers of downtown Saint Paul come into sight, with the cathedral of Saint Paul on the bluffs in the background. Hallelujah! It's still miles away, but I know I'll make

it in time for the 7 p.m. Mass. And from there, it's a mere 60 minutes home to Minneapolis.

I pick up a bike trail that cuts through the woods, emerging right on the doorstep of downtown. Most of the riverfront land in the Twin Cities is managed by the National Park Service and offers city dwellers remarkably easy access to wild nature. I stop to watch a Somali family fishing together on the embankment then notice — what? — a gondola gliding along the far bank.

I look again. It's definitely a gondola, complete with gondolier, and I can hear a band belting out a Dean Martin song in the distance. Must be some kind of Italian festival at the park across the river. A look at my watch reassures me there's time to head over there before Mass, but first I want to call my wife, Julie, to tell her I'll be home soon.

Julie's got an idea. One of our favorite restaurants is just a few blocks from the cathedral. She proposes to meet me there after Mass for a celebration, and afterward she'll drive the bike and me back home. I must be really tired, she says. Actually I'm not tired, and this means I won't achieve my aspiration of biking all the way from La Crosse to Minneapolis. Without hesitation, I answer "yes!" happily realizing this makes a perfect ending to my pilgrimage, not a perfectionist one.



My biggest revelation on the road to Saint Paul is that the joys right in front of me count for more than the abstract goals I often try to impose on the world.

In the months since the Mississippi bike ride, I am applying this lesson — however imperfectly — in many ways in my own life. It helped pull me through my frantic autumn schedule without becoming a stranger to friends and family, and continues to enrich my experiences every day. I now enjoy, at least part of the time, a closer connection to what's going on around me, from church bells and bird songs to children's laughter and impromptu conversations.

I'm not a totally changed man. I still work too many weekends and feel frustrated when things don't turn out as planned. But when I lose sight of the present moment, sometimes it's because I'm busy plotting further pilgrimages — biking the Mississippi from Fort Madison to La Crosse . . . or walking the North Shore Trail along Lake Superior . . . or hiking along the Saint Lawrence River through Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula, which I read about an Iowa family doing . . . or someday trekking the Camino de Santiago. □

# Racing up the best-seller list

BY TAMARA LYTLE

**M**ike MacKenzie wrote his college application essay on mortification. One minute his mom was a Cub Scout leader and car-pool driver. The next, she was a published romance novelist and his friends were calling him from bookstores reading racy passages before he could disconnect.

Sally Stanton MacKenzie '76 is as surprised as anyone to see she now has eight historical romances written and has hit *USA Today's* best-seller list. The books have prospered even in a bad economy for publishing.

"Think of me as a Catholic mother of four boys, and that gives you a better sense of me than the books I write," says MacKenzie, a trim 58-year-old with a bob of thick brown hair and metal-rimmed glasses.

*Meg swallowed. She felt as if she'd been kicked in the stomach, but Emma was right. Her behavior had been shocking. Completely scandalous.*

So how did a Rockville, Maryland, housewife who had never had a boyfriend before meeting her husband end up writing tales of scandal, sex and relationships in early 1800s England?

MacKenzie grew up in suburban Washington, D.C., the daughter of a homemaker and

a congressional lawyer, and began reading Regency romances in middle school. Regencies — one of the most popular versions of romance novels — are set in the English period when the man who would become King George IV was governing as regent for his crazy father, King George III.

The genre was so ingrained for her after all those hours curled up with paperbacks that she would accidentally drop words from

classes left her worried that writing needed to be fraught with meaning. "I thought, 'I can't be a writer because I can't type and I didn't have a terrible childhood,'" says MacKenzie.

MacKenzie headed to Cornell Law School after Notre Dame.

"What was an English major going to do? You can't just sign up to be a novelist."

She met her husband in the sort of



Sally MacKenzie: "You can't just sign up to be a novelist."

BILL DENISON

that era into conversations.

*"I want no part of all the social torture. Can you see me standing in some stupid ballroom? I'd die of boredom listening to all those fat-pated frumps prose on and on about other society nodcocks."*

MacKenzie has described herself as a "dreamy writer-wannabe from an all-girls Catholic high school" in the nation's capital. She chose Notre Dame because she wanted a Catholic college that wasn't in a city — not because she wanted to be in the trailblazing class that turned Notre Dame co-ed.

The novelty of being one of just 325 female undergrads was more overwhelming than exciting to her.

"I wasn't there to co-educate the place. I just wanted to go to school," she says.

She worked her way up to become the first female editor of the literary magazine *Scholastic*. Kurt Vonnegut and some of the other reading material from her English

thrown-together stroke of luck her characters might encounter. But instead of being seated together at a duke's grand party, she shared a kitchen and a dinner table with him in student housing.

After a year and a half of law school, she surprised some of her friends by dropping out. Loretta Castaldi '76, her Notre Dame dorm-mate, says MacKenzie was so goal-oriented she usually finished what she set out to do. But with law school, "She had the strength of character to realize this wasn't what she wanted to do," says Castaldi, an education industry professional in Washington, D.C.

MacKenzie didn't see the point of having two lawyers in the family when she wanted to raise kids, admitting she was something of a "throwback to the 1950s" while her friends were off making their careers.

Soon she was writing. Writing regulations that appeared not in a bookstore but in the

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Excerpts quoted here are from Sally MacKenzie's *The Naked Gentleman* (Zebra Books, 2008).

deadly serious Federal Register. MacKenzie enjoyed the puzzle-like nature of fitting new regulations into old ones for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She got her first 15 minutes of fame by writing a regulation declaring ketchup a vegetable — for school lunch purposes. The rule earned President Reagan years of abuse on the comedy circuit.

Four boys arrived within seven years. (Mike is the youngest at 22.) As they got involved in swimming, she was soon writing regulations again — this time as a swim team volunteer. She says with a smile that her swim-team manual is her real best-seller.

*Lord Manders chose this moment to let out a very ominous noise. The sound did not emanate from his mouth.*

*Meg wrinkled her nose and looked down in horror at the smelly little creature sitting on one of her favorite dresses. The creature grinned back.*

*“Those are my sentiments exactly, Bobby,” Lizzie said, picking up her son. “Auntie Meg is indeed full of . . .”*

*Lizzie rolled her eyes and went to change her baby.*

One of her close friends, Mary Jean Schmitt '81, says MacKenzie truly prized the everyday work of raising children, whether it was writing those swim-team regulations or heading out of town for a big meet. She helped others understand that value too, says Schmitt, who lives near her friend and works in technology sales.

MacKenzie made people feel the volunteer work was “as important as writing a novel,” Schmitt says. “That’s one reason I really value her friendship.”

MacKenzie wrote school newsletters, regulations and even some children’s picture books she never sold. Then she had the sort of epiphany her characters might have from seeing a suitor in a new light. Just as MacKenzie’s eldest was heading off to college, a friend asked her to pen an essay on family that got her thinking about writing.

“I thought, ‘This is one of the things I wanted to do when I grow up. Now I’m grown up. Pretty soon I wouldn’t need to run kids around.’”

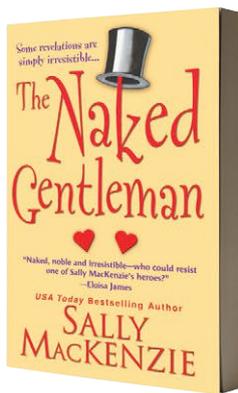
She figured she would write what she liked to read — Regencies. Her first book was a finalist in a contest in 2005, and one of the judges called and offered her a contract. *The Naked Duke* was the first of the seven *Naked* books — followed by other disrobed nobility like earls and barons. *The Naked King* was rated one of the top 10 romances of 2011 by the American Library Association.

J. Robert Baker '76, a fellow English major

and now professor, got the first opportunity to read her book when she asked for a critique of her draft. Baker, chairman of the Department of Language and Literature at Fairmont State University in West Virginia, doesn’t usually read romance novels. But

he loved that the book didn’t take itself too seriously. “I thought it was a romp.”

The mark of good fiction in any genre, he points out, is sparkling dialogue. MacKenzie has the diction down and a liveliness to her dialogue that is like



real speech, he says.

“It’s amazing a Notre Dame grad can make so much money off of naked men,” he jokes.

*“Well, the younger men were equally revolting. Cabbage heads all of them — and that’s insulting the cabbage.”*

The *Naked* series features a set of interconnected characters sorting through the strict social mores of the era, the vicissitudes of fortune and love. They have more “heat” — as MacKenzie puts it — than the beloved Georgette Heyer books she grew up on.

Writing the sex scenes is a natural part of the process of describing the “emotional growth” of her characters. She compares it to her studio art class at Notre Dame, where her main concern with the naked man posing at the front of the room was how to portray him in three dimensions.

Writers don’t need to have experienced rape or murder or other things they are writing about, she points out. Just be able to imagine it.

MacKenzie works hard to bring humor into the books — situational humor, word play and repartee between her characters. The first book in her new series, *Bedding Lord Ned*, which was released last month from Kensington Zebra, is about the Valentine family, whose members were all born on Feb. 14. It’s a trick not to push the humor too far, she says.

Schmitt says the humor is in keeping with her friend’s own personality — an intellectual with a fun streak.

“Her humor in her books is so spot on,” says her agent, Jessica Faust. “It makes me laugh out loud.”

*“I have yet to extend my condolences on the death of your father last year. I am so sorry for his passing. Was he sick long?”*

*“No, not sick at all. Hunting accident, don’t you know. Horse refused a fence. Pater went flying. Landed on his head. Broke his neck. Nothing to be done about it.”*

*“What a tragedy. Hunting is such a dangerous sport.”*

*“What?” Lord Frampton examined her as if she had suddenly sprouted a second head. “Not dangerous. Bad luck. He’d have been up on his horse in a trice if he hadn’t been dead.”*

Faust bristles at the knocks against romance authors and readers. The readers are mostly educated women, she says, who “just want to be swept away by a book.”

After writing a book a year since her first came out in 2005, MacKenzie says her publisher wants her to step up the pace, which will cut into the time she uses between books to recharge her writing batteries and market her latest publication. Historical romance fans are voracious readers — a small miracle in an era of 140-character reading habits.

On a simple wood coffee table in her home, MacKenzie spreads out her books that have been translated into Czech, Russian, Spanish, Norwegian and Portuguese. Some covers are racier than others. One even has a downright comical long-haired shirtless man in period-inappropriate blue jeans.

Her books have sold about half a million print copies. And opened a new world for her.

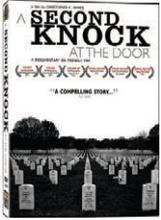
She started her new career as a naïve traveler who actually asked for a nonsmoking seat on her first flight to a conference, unaware that smoking on planes had long been banned. Now she regularly travels to conferences to hang out with author friends from around the world and promote her books.

That’s a stretch for someone who considers herself an introvert. Friends describe her as a sensitive, warm person who is eager to help others, grounded and dedicated to being good at and finding value in whatever she does.

MacKenzie cringes a little at the fact her youngest son called her work “trashy novels” in his college essay. But she appreciates that he has inherited some of her humor — and that he got in to every school where he applied using his essay about her. She figures there’s at least a touch of pride mixed in with his mortification.

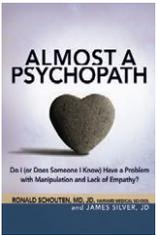
“I turned 50 and I had the empty nest coming on, and here I have this whole new thing,” she says. □

CAFÉ CHOICE



**A Second Knock at the Door**, Christopher Grimes, director and writer; Leigh Cavich-Grimes '01MBA, executive producer

(5414 Productions). This award-winning documentary focuses on four military families who lost a loved one to friendly fire in Iraq and Afghanistan. Using interviews and investigative reports, the 92-minute movie explores their quest for the truth after the Army attempted to bury it within the “fog of war.” View a trailer and learn where to purchase the CD at [asecondknockatthedoor.com](http://asecondknockatthedoor.com).



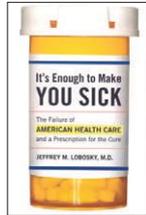
**Almost a Psychopath: Do I (or Does Someone I Know) Have a Problem with Manipulation and Lack of Empathy?** Ronald Schouten, M.D., and James Silver '85

(Hazelton Publishing/ Harvard Health Publications). Perhaps one person in 100 is a true psychopath, but one in seven may exhibit less intense psychopathic behavior that still affects those around them. Schouten, a former attorney who now specializes in forensic psychiatry, and Silver, a criminal defense attorney, offer tools to help those who are dealing with (or who may be exhibiting) antisocial behavior.



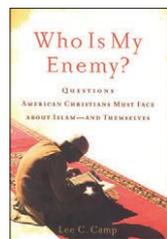
**Dating Vegans: Recipes for Relationships**, Anne Dinshah '91 (American Vegan Society). Can a vegan and non-vegan be friends? Can the relationship survive a meal? The author, a lifelong vegan, serves up lighthearted stories, advice and recipes for those entering a friendship that can too easily get burned by philosophical differences over food. She shares dating success stories from couples

in “mixed eating” friendships and offers shopping and cooking tips for novice cooks. The 51 recipes included here cover main and side dishes and desserts.



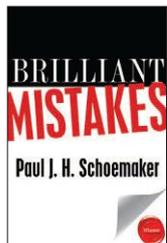
**It's Enough to Make You Sick: The Failure of American Health Care and a Prescription for the Cure**, Jeffrey M. Lobosky, M.D., '73

(Rowman & Littlefield). How, the author asks, did the U.S. health care system devolve to its present state of high costs and mediocre quality care? Can it be fixed? Here he sorts through what he sees as the systemic causes of the health care crisis and offers solutions, from making insurance regulations federal and not state-based to a reform of medical malpractice rules that is fair to both patients and doctors.



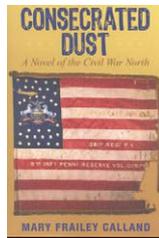
**Who Is My Enemy? Questions American Christians Must Face About Islam — And Themselves**, Lee C. Camp '97M.A., '99Ph.D. (Brazos Press).

What are the Christian and Muslim views of war? Of peacemaking? The author discusses the political views present in the New Testament and the Qur'an and shares misconceptions about religious violence. Father David Burrell, CSC, '54 says, “Read this book at your peril, for you will surely discover how entering into another faith tradition can enliven your own.”



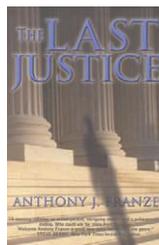
**Brilliant Mistakes: Finding Success on the Far Side of Failure**, Paul J. H. Schoemaker '72 (Wharton Digital Press). Efficiency and order are fine guiding principles,

the author argues, but such a system can also undercut the value of accidental learning. He offers examples of innovations that resulted from “a flash or two of brilliant insight, and many, many years of wrong answers, dead ends, and missteps,” and discusses how one can separate destructive from constructive mistakes. The book is available in both e-book and paperback format.



**Consecrated Dust: A Novel of the Civil War North**, Mary Frailey Calland '76, '79J.D. (Dog Ear Publishing). As the bloody Battle

of Antietam raged, a tragic event also occurred that same day: The Allegheny Arsenal in Pittsburgh exploded, killing 78 girls and young women. The author here weaves fact and fiction to tell of four young northerners — feminist Clara Ambrose; law student-turned-soldier Garrett Cameron; industrialist Edgar Gliddon; and Irish immigrant Annie Burke — whose choices lead to their presence at the battlefield and the arsenal.

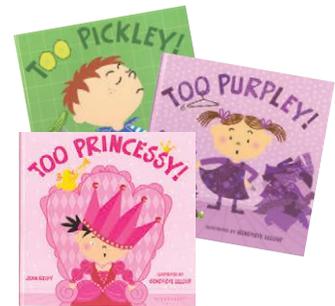


**The Last Justice**, Anthony J. Franze '95J.D. (Sterling & Ross). After an assassin guns down six Supreme Court

justices, Solicitor General Jefferson McKenna, the man appointed to a commission investigating the murders, learns he is the prime suspect. As Congress debates who will replace the slain justices, McKenna, on the run with his deputy, Kate Porter, begins a frantic search for the shadowy enemy who planned the massacre. The author's debut novel has won praise for its “breakneck pace,” “fascinating inside details” and “emotional truth.”



**Dream of the Echoes: Notre Dame Beats Miami!** Brandon Crouch '96, Frank Corrigan '97, illustrated by Nicolette Capuano (Limerick Publishing). A follow-up to *Dream of the Echoes: The Four Horsemen of Notre Dame*, this book for young readers follows Theo and his dog, Eddie J, on another magical trip to the past. This time they land in 1988, where they meet up with Coach Lou Holtz and a fairy named Elsie McFaley, who introduces them to the Notre Dame spirit. Available through the Hammes Notre Dame Bookstore, [ndcatalog.com](http://ndcatalog.com) or [dreamoftheechoes.com/](http://dreamoftheechoes.com/).



**Too Princessy!** Jean Reidy '81, illustrated by Genevieve Leloup (Bloomsbury). What do you do when it's raining and you're stuck inside? This colorful story of imagination “for cooped up kids everywhere” follows an adventurous girl as she searches for the answer to her dilemma of what to do when the toy box doesn't hold the right answer. The oversized book follows *Too Pickley!* and *Too Purple!* in the author's series for preschoolers.

Compiled by Carol Schaal '91M.A. Visit [magazine.nd.edu](http://magazine.nd.edu) for *Choices in Brief*.

# A tall, tasty glass of art

A revolution against boring beer has turned the microbrew movement into a boom industry. These Domers have joined in the fun.



JONATHAN TIMMES

*Ben Savage '99 with recent hire Holly Manthei '00 at Flying Dog Brewery: 'We're nothing without world-class beer, but our brand is more than that.'*

BY JOHN NAGY '00M.A.

**B**en Savage '99 first told me “the Flying Dog story” over the phone from his mother-in-law’s beach house on the Maryland seashore.

It begins like this. Back in 1983, before there was a brewery, before there was even a Flying Dog beer, a thrill-seeking Colorado landowner named George Stranahan, heir to the Champion spark plug fortune, took on K2 with a dangerously inexperienced group of mountaineers. Resting in a Pakistan hotel bar after the climb, Stranahan marveled at the painting of a winged canine that appeared to be a local artist’s misinterpretation of the English-language notion of a bird dog. “They just thought no one ever told this painter that dogs can’t fly,” Savage had said. “And it resonated with them because no one

*John Nagy is an associate editor of this magazine.*

ever told them that they couldn’t climb K2.”

It’s resonating with me, too, as I drive up Wedgewood Boulevard, straining to distinguish Flying Dog Brewery from the masonry contractors and seamless gutter manufacturers in this nondescript Frederick, Maryland, industrial park. Why? Because no one told me I couldn’t drop by a brewery for a visit at 8 o’clock on a Monday morning in January with my three young sons. Not even Savage, the company’s vice president of brand development, who, very last minute, after arrangements I made by late-night email while visiting family in Virginia, is expecting us.

At last I spot a Winnebago wrapped in the bat-winged, spattered Flying Dog logo. Savage will tell me the vehicle finally died last year, a souvenir from the founding era in Aspen, Colorado, that moved here with the rest of the company a few years ago. For now

he’s waiting patiently inside to tell us the rest of the story and talk about things that make him happy.

### A good beer was hard to find

Once upon a time, Savage was a Natty Light drinker who met his first craft beer, a Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, at a “high-end keg party.” As a lacrosse player studying marketing and film at Notre Dame, he sought out Goose Island brews whenever he traveled to Chicago. Then he strapped on a backpack and flew to Europe. “Once you go to Belgium, your whole perspective on beer changes,” he says. “Their beer is phenomenal and so different.”





So to understand the smile on the face of this barrel-chested man with the close-cropped hair and the untucked gray brewery shirt as he begins his tour spiel, it helps to remember some things about beer that the average American drinker has forgotten, having reduced it to a mere social lubricant or an ice-cold refreshment for grown-ups after yard work.

Beer is as old as civilization. It's made water potable and given the people an affordable alternative to aristocratic wine for some 12,000 years. Modern brewers work in more than 60 different styles enumerated by *Tasting Beer* author Randy Mosher, from classic English bitter to American pumpkin ale.

The right beer can pair with nearly any food, including many that have foiled the most imaginative wine enthusiasts. Malted barley, hops, water and

yeast are the basics, but there are dozens of varieties of hops alone, so there's more to be made from it all than the American lager we typically reach for at the grocery store. When brewers select and blend their ingredients, boiling the malt and hops into a banquet of fermentable sugar for the yeast, the possibilities are wide-ranging, and that's without substituting other grains for the barley, like oats, rye or wheat, or experimenting with the flavors added by virtually anything



COURTESY FLYING DOG BREWERY

from sage to peppercorns to chocolate to oysters.

The marbled handles I spy over Savage's shoulder in the brewery's taproom speak to this experimental spirit. Kujo Imperial Coffee Stout is in season, and though it's a little early in the year for the heavier, higher-alcohol Horn Dog Barley Wine with its hints of caramel and spice, it's out there, too, along with more than a dozen other ales for, uh, older visitors to try.

"We honestly feel that making beer is an art form," Savage says. He talks about a front-porch ethic to match craft brewing's aesthetics. "Support local creativity" is a company mantra. Within the last year Flying Dog partnered with acclaimed chef Bryan Voltaggio to explore smoked malt and create the "perfect barbecue beer," and with local chocolatier Randy Olmstead to pair the brewery's popular Raging Bitch India Pale Ale with Olmstead's blood-orange truffles.

It's all good for the Maryland economy, Savage says, and that matters to the brewery's fans. "You can actually have a conversation with the guy that makes our beer, shake his hand, give him a hug," he adds. That is what sets craft brewing apart.

#### All for one

Research and development in this industry means sampling the competition. It's one of Savage's favorite parts of the job. The little guys stick together as they run through the legs of the big corporate brewers with a camaraderie and mutual respect that's key to the industry's success. And business is

good. Brewers Association data for 2010 show 11 percent volume growth and 12 percent sales growth for the small, independent, American-owned breweries and brewpubs the trade group represents, more than 1,700 at last count. Meanwhile the overall U.S. beer market declined 1 percent, to say nothing of the stale economy as a whole.

Finding your niche is important in craft brewing, notes Bill Brennan '01MBA, an industry veteran who helped build brands like Brooklyn Brewery and now directs the MBA initiatives program at Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business. Regional pride and appeal are important, he says, but in the end, "you gotta make a darn good product, too. Make it something that is not readily found."

While Brennan was learning those lessons in the field, Savage was just another Baltimore-area kid twirling a lacrosse stick. Oscar Wong '63, '65M.S., on the other hand, was a mid-career entrepreneur who'd sold his engineering business and was looking for a fresh challenge. He found it in renewing an old love from his student days at Notre Dame.

One afternoon at Cushing Hall, Wong and classmate Dan Castellani '63, '65M.S. spotted a custodian pulling from his lunch sack a Pepsi bottle that didn't have Pepsi in it. "That's my beer," the man explained to the thunderstruck young men, who asked for his recipe and hustled to Sears to buy a 10-gallon garbage pail, malt sugar, a thermometer, a manometer. "The works," Wong says.

They began in the basement of the house Wong shared with friends on Washington Street. The first batch, they forgot the hops. Then they decided not to bother with them at all. One night after a party, someone checked the brew at 1 o'clock and woke up the house to bottle it before the beer went flat. "We loved it," Wong recalls. "We called it Tiger Paws. If you had too much, it would tear you up."

Wong gave up home brewing for a time, satisfying his thirst for good beer with tastings and beer dinners, a story undoubtedly familiar to many whose entrepreneurship built the industry. When he met an award-winning brewer in North Carolina, he saw his chance. Together they established the first legal brewery in Asheville since Prohibition.

Today, Wong says, his Highland Brewing Company has tapped thematically into the community's Scottish heritage to become the fourth largest brewer in the southeastern United States. Its 23,000 barrels (one barrel equals 31 gallons) last year represented a 30 percent jump in production over the

year before, but Highland is still not quite a third the size of Flying Dog, which is itself still a relatively modest player. By comparison, the first-in-the-world Anheuser-Busch portfolio, now a segment of a Belgium-headquartered multinational beverage corporation, dropped below 100 million barrels in total shipments for the first time in more than 10 years.

Size doesn't matter to Jeffrey Stuffings '02, whose Jester King Craft Brewery managed a wee 930 barrels in 2011, its first full year of operation, and looks to top out around 4,000. The name is a play on Budweiser's famous

nickname, but interprets "king" in terms of what Stuffings says the spirit of beer really is: "diverse and interesting, and not a one-size-fits-all kind of thing." Artisan brewers taking risks on wild yeasts and harvested rainwater to rediscover forgotten flavors or prospect for new ones are the jesters and true kings of the beer world, he says.

Stuffings now does professionally what kept him up often until 4 a.m. as a young attorney in Austin: obsessing over recipes and trying them out. Making the jump to full-time brewing, he won the support of some Irish Angels, a venture capital network affiliated

with Mendoza.

His company crafts farmhouse ales and other tradition-soaked beers in wine-size bottles for about \$8 to \$10 apiece. Several contain high levels of organic ingredients — like yeasts that float in from the neighboring cidery and wineries in Texas' Hill Country to settle on shallow, open-air cooling vessels. Das Wunderkind! is one beer Stuffings brews using this kind of slow, inefficient, old-world practice, which includes aging in oak barrels. "It'll throw people for a loop," he says. "We're quite proud of it."

## AN IRISH FOUR-PACK

"He was a wise man who invented beer." High praise, coming from the likes of Plato. The drink is as old as civilization, and among its qualities, beer folk say, is the fact that the right one can go with just about any food. Domers in the craft brewing industry hereby make their "case."

### Exhibit A: Wildeman Farmhouse IPA

**Genius behind it:** Flying Dog Brewery, Frederick, Maryland  
**Irish connection:** Ben Savage '99, VP of brand development, and Holly Manthei '00, director of noise  
**Description:** "A beast of a Farmhouse IPA [India Pale Ale] with citrus, spice, earthy funk and extreme hop bitterness."

**Recommended food pairing:** "This complex Farmhouse IPA is best paired with equally complex foods that can stand up to the monster," says Savage. "Rich, buttery cheeses, pungent and earthy truffle flavors, or bold, spicy cuisines like Szechuan and Thai go beautifully with Wildeman. And, like most beasts, it can be tamed with rich, dark chocolate, preferably with citrus or chili notes."



### Exhibit B: Gaelic Ale

**Genius behind it:** Highland Brewing Company, Asheville, North Carolina  
**Irish connection:** Oscar Wong '63, '65M.S., founder, owner, president, chief peddler, schmoozing and cleanup guy  
**Description:** "A deep, amber-colored American ale . . . exceptionally balanced between malty sweetness and delicate hop bitterness."

**Recommended food pairing:** Malt-glazed pork belly with mini pork ravioli and Gaelic-braised kimchi. Says Wong, "Our Gaelic Ale has been paired with dishes like cheddar soup and braised beef ribs that complement the flavors. It also contrasts well with spicy Jamaican jerk pork, seared scallops and mild-vinaigrette seafood salads. The selected pairing is more of a complement of tastes — even with the full-flavored kimchi."



### Exhibit C: Das Wunderkind! Sour Saison

**Genius behind it:** Jester King Craft Brewery, Austin, Texas  
**Irish connection:** Jeff Stuffings '02, owner, brewer  
**Description:** "Traditional, sour, low-gravity saison aged in oak wine barrels with naturally occurring wild yeast and bacteria from the Texas Hill Country."

**Recommended food pairing:** Randy Mosher, author of *Tasting Beer*, offers substantial salads, chicken and richer seafood dishes as the way to go with saisons, but Stuffings isn't ready to make a pronouncement. "We take food and beer pairings seriously, so we don't want to just throw out some conjecture. We also believe that food pairing recommendations should include a recipe, since a particular dish may have a range of flavor profiles." Well said, Jeff, and this magazine is ready when you are.



### Exhibit D: Double Bag Strong Ale

**Genius behind it:** Long Trail Brewing Company, Bridgewater Corners, Vermont  
**Irish connection:** Brian Walsh '77, president and CEO  
**Description:** This malty, full-bodied double-alt was first offered only in Long Trail's taproom as a special treat to visitors.  
**Recommended food pairing:** Tracing its inspiration to the strong ales and altbiers of Düsseldorf, Germany, Double Bag pairs well with most German foods, such as grilled or smoked meats, roast pork and sausages, or with salmon.



## GOOD BEER, NO CENSORSHIP

All this creativity isn't as easy as it may look. Stuffings toils for years to produce the beers he likes to drink. Wong talks about physical labor: schlepping sacks of grain, buckets, hoses, not to mention the bottling and kegging. Though he's older than the parents of

The fight-for-your rights attitude is part of the brand. Apart from the legislative memento, stepping into Flying Dog's taproom is like falling into a Hunter S. Thompson story in *Rolling Stone* circa 1972. That's no accident. The walls are covered with the framed work of Thompson's chief collabora-

eventually bought the defunct Frederick Brewing Company to brew out of this facility for its burgeoning customer base east of the Mississippi. In 2008, Flying Dog shifted the entire business to Maryland. They lost friends in the unusual move, Savage says, but they kept others, along with the Winnebago and the equipment from their Blake Street brewery in Denver. Next door in the beer cellar, where funky indie folk music echoes off long rows of gleaming fermentation tanks, Savage explains how they painted the legs of the Denver tanks red to remind them of their roots.

Not long after, the company hired Savage, trusting his marketing expertise and outsider's perspective to help it build its fan base through experiential marketing: events, social media, brewery tours, targeted philanthropy, an exclusive beer club. The strategy is to pull out of faraway places and fortify the brand in the Mid-Atlantic. The challenge, he says, is "transcending beer geekdom" to get the unconverted to give your beer a try like he once did. Imagine a down-and-dirty tavern in Anytown, Maryland, with three draft lines, one for Bud, another for Miller Lite. "That third one, if it's you? In craft beer, that's the goal," he says.

Making our way out of the cellar, "a Rubik's cube of logistics" where brewers balance varying fermentation times with tank cleanings and production schedules, we pass the lab where technicians test the beer and taste it every morning before packaging begins. Back in the bottling area, the children gravitate to machines that fill and cap some 230 bottles a minute. A passing forklift driver honks as Savage walks me over to a freestanding tank with a tap and a board that announces what's on the line. "This is the freshest beer you can possibly get," he says with a grin. "So we fill our growlers off these."

That's the tour. It takes a minute to peel the boys away from quality control, where Savage has promised a little boot will shoot defective bottles off the conveyor belt and into a garbage can. No luck. It seems Flying Dog is on a roll. We have a long drive back to Indiana and Savage is late for a marketing team retreat in the nearby Catoctin Mountains. No on-site samples for me, but he suggests I take a few six-packs home to share with friends. I ask what he'd recommend. But, waving goodbye to my entourage, the beer man who has three kids of his own at home won't advise me. "I like all my children the same." □



JONATHAN TIMMES

most of his employees, now and then he'll even pick up a broom and sweep.

Then there's the legal work. Flying Dog's penchant for corporate pottymouth — Raging Bitch, its biggest seller, didn't go over well with the Michigan Liquor Control Commission — has twice led it to court. Lately in their fight for brewing rights, Savage and CEO Jim Caruso found themselves poring over state legislation, too. They consulted with distributors and retailers and worked with their state senator to rewrite part of Maryland's restrictive post-Prohibition beer law, which had pronounced unfavorably on virtually every aspect of microbrewing from the amount of beer they could sell to visitors or pour on tours to the kind of events they could host.

Wong and Stuffings say similar laws cramp craft beer's style in their states. "We're pioneers," says Wong, "and pioneers tend to get shot at a lot." At Flying Dog, a copy of Maryland's new law hangs behind the bar to mark the breakthrough, but Savage says there's still more work to do. For instance, out-of-state breweries may open brewpubs in Maryland, but license restrictions block his company from doing the same. "It's kind of a weird law," he says. "It doesn't seem like you're promoting in-state success."

tor, the British artist Ralph Steadman, whose gritty, grotesque style once lampooned the depraved side of American culture alongside Thompson's wild, rambling prose. Murals leading back to the brewhouse feature more of Steadman's art and once more tell that Flying Dog story from beginning to end. Steadman still designs every label and is as responsible for the brand's irreverent persona as anyone.

Thompson himself introduced Steadman to Flying Dog founder George Stranahan, Thompson's Aspen neighbor and pal. Steadman delivered his first label design for an England-inspired beer, Road Dog Porter, in 1994. Naturally, as the brewpub's poet laureate, Thompson, the late inventor of "gonzo" journalism, delivered the toast.

"There is an ancient Celtic axiom," he began, raising a goblet of the ruby-dark ale, "that says, 'Good people drink good beer.' Which is true, then as now."

My boys don their goggles so we can go see where the beer is made. We climb a flight of metal stairs while Savage talks over the noise emerging from the stainless-steel brewkettle and ductwork in the brewhouse.

Growth happened fast, he says. Flying Dog found its way to barrooms and beer shelves in 43 states and 26 countries and

# The Rescuer

Medevac pilot Hayden Piscal Howell '08 flies her Blackhawk to save lives in Afghanistan.

BY TAMARA LYTLE

**H**ayden Piscal Howell is cut from the same Army-green cloth as her father. Howell '08 moved among seven states during her “Army brat” childhood. At each stop she brought along a horse named Pebbles, a fascination with the camaraderie of military life and a deep respect for her father, Army Colonel Richard Piscal.

Retired First Sergeant Kurt Wood, who was the senior ROTC military instructor at Notre Dame during Howell's college years, says she and her father are both the type to be in charge and make things happen. “I would imagine everything she did she looked back to see if it was good enough for her daddy,” and therefore good enough for her, says Wood, who watched the colonel swear in his daughter as an officer at the Grotto.

“He's always the voice in the back of my head,” Howell says. “I don't know anyone who has a more straight-and-narrow moral compass.”

Now Howell is taking what she has learned from her father, ROTC and flight school and applying it as a medevac pilot in Afghanistan, scanning the mountains and desert from the cockpit of a Blackhawk helicopter, looking for enemies who might bring her mission crashing to the ground.

“I get to serve my country being in the Army, but even more so I get to serve my fellow soldiers as a medevac pilot,” Captain Howell said during a Skype conversation from her spare bunk bed in Afghanistan.

After being deployed for the first time in January, one of her earliest missions brought her face-to-face with wartime reality when she had to pick up a U.S. soldier whose legs had been destroyed. “I hadn't planned to look back there because I'm not big on blood and guts,” she says of her patient. But as she scanned the area for threats before takeoff, she caught a glimpse of the legless man. “It was heart-wrenching.”

*Tamara Lytle is a freelance writer in the Washington, D.C., area who has written for U.S. News & World Report, AARP Bulletin and various alumni publications.*

Howell, 26, says she doesn't worry much in the middle of a mission because she's so focused on getting the patient delivered to the hospital. At other times, however, she does worry about her husband, Army Captain Andrew Howell, a Kiowa pilot she met in flight school. He's on his second deployment and is at the same Kandahar Province location as his wife. Armed helicopters accompany Hayden Howell's chopper when there's a chance of enemy fire. Her husband piloted



*Hayden Piscal Howell in Afghanistan with Sergeant 1st Class Zeke, a combat stress dog.*

one of the Kiowas alongside her helicopter on one of her missions.

She shares a room with her college mentor, Captain Margaret Larson '06, who also is a pilot in the medevac company attached to the 25<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade. The base is not set up for Howell to share a room with her husband, but she tries to eat lunch or dinner with him.

“We may not get a lot of time together, but we get to see each other every day and

that makes a big difference in my morale,” says Howell.

Larson says Howell has learned a lot during the deployment but had a head start because she came already knowing she wanted to be “a leader just like her dad, who got her hands dirty, endured challenges alongside her soldiers and gained their respect.”

Her job involves 50-hour shifts waiting for emergency calls. She fills in the waiting time working as a platoon leader in charge of about 25 troops — from pilots to medics to crew chiefs.

Leadership is her favorite part of the job, which surprises no one who knows her. Family and friends describe her as strong-willed, competitive, focused on the well-being of the people around her, and so self-confident that she told her first-grade teacher she wasn't answering questions in class because she knew all the answers and wanted to give other kids the chance.

Howell was self-assured enough as a high school senior to apply to only one school — Notre Dame. Her mother, Theresa Piscal, says her husband wasn't so sure about Howell following him into the Army, but warmed to the idea. Their daughter took less time. “It was an automatic, ‘This is what I want to do with my life,’” she says of joining ROTC.

And Piscal knew her oldest child had made the right choice when Howell came across a rope bridge at the start of ROTC orientation wearing her new uniform and a gigantic grin. “She was absolutely hooked.”

Notre Dame provided Howell with her first chance to live in the same place for four years. And to nourish her love of animals as part of the Equestrian Team.

Howell had fallen in love with horses during a visit to the farm of family friends in Louisiana. When the grade school girl burst into tears of delight on meeting the eight horses, the friends bought her Pebbles. Howell baled hay and worked around the farm to pay the family back, building up her physical strength and courage, her mother says.

The ND equestrians called Howell — 5-foot-5 and 125 pounds — the team bodyguard because of her strength, says her best friend and fellow equestrian Katie Baron '07. But Baron says she's also the little angel girl in childhood pictures with Pebbles.

“Hayden is both of those things, and that's what makes her so special,” says Baron, who is in Chicago working on a master's degree in social work. “She's the big tough military person, braver than any of my other friends. But she's also so kind and would do anything for you.” □

*Dublin Friday Night Lights*, a celebration of American football featuring 12 top U.S. high school and NCAA division III college teams, will showcase doubleheaders in three Dublin, Ireland, area stadiums on August 31. The event, which precedes the Notre Dame-Navy football game on September 1, is produced by Global Football, Inc., whose president is former ND quarterback **Patrick Steenberge '73**. In 2009, Steenberge produced the Notre Dame Japan Bowl played in Tokyo, featuring former ND head coach Lou Holtz and a team of ND alumni football players against a Japanese national team. **Jeff Curran '75**, a college football referee, will be part of the Dublin officiating crew. . . . **Ed Ricciuti '59** is not taking his retirement lying down. A science writer and former curator of the New York Zoological Society who holds a second-degree black belt in combat hapkido, he was featured in a news story about his class for children at Green Hill Martial Arts in Killingworth, Connecticut. He is co-president of the martial arts school. . . . **Robert C. Helmer '82**, president of Lourdes University in Sylvania, Ohio, has been named president of Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio. He will assume office in July. . . . The board of directors of Indiana University Health Goshen has named **Randal Christophel '99MBA** president and chief executive officer. . . . **Joe Muto '04** has reportedly signed a book deal with Dutton, an imprint of Penguin, to write about his time working at Fox News. Muto gained notoriety this year after penning columns as the anonymous, and quickly outed, "Fox Mole" for the website Gawker. . . . **Frank Tripucka '49** played a role in the recent NFL saga that resulted in Peyton Manning going to the Denver Broncos and Tim Tebow heading to the New York Jets. Tripucka's No. 18 was retired following his tenure as the first quarterback in Bronco history, but the former Irish QB was on board if Manning wants to wear the number this season: "He should have it. Let's give it to him." . . . **John Arlotta '71** earned the 2012 General Manager of the Year Award from the National Lacrosse League for his efforts stewarding the Minnesota Swarm. . . . **William O'Brien '92** and **Bryan Harkins '98** are the CEO and COO for Direct Edge, the world's fourth-largest stock exchange. The company was recognized as the best overall exchange operator in the Wall Street Letter 2012 Institutional Trading Awards. . . . **Tim Rogers '92**, the editor of *D Magazine*, won a National Magazine Award for his profile of a member of the online collective Anonymous. . . . **John Hibey '05** was a screenwriter for *Fishing Without Nets*, a movie about Somali pirates that won the Jury Prize in Short Filmmaking at Sundance. . . . **Mike Lee '09** is continuing to build his professional boxing career and had a June Las Vegas

bout scheduled for ESPN. The Subway pitchman has another fight slated for Cowboys Stadium in July that will be broadcast on HBO. . . . **Charlie Ebersol '05** is helping launch reality shows on TNT and USA. He was named as one of the 50 most powerful people in reality television by The Hollywood Reporter. . . . **Hanjuan Jin '98M.S.**, a Chinese-born U.S. citizen, was convicted in February of stealing trade secrets from the electronics firm Motorola. Jin was apprehended at Chicago's O'Hare Airport as she prepared to board a one-way flight to China, carrying \$31,000 and a flash drive with 1,000 Motorola documents, including information on a cellphone walkie-talkie feature. Her attorney had argued that the technology was "far from cutting edge" and would have been of little use to the Chinese military. . . . New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has named **Jeff Chiesa '87** attorney general. Chiesa previously served as chief counsel to the governor and had worked for him in the Newark office of the U.S. Attorney. . . . **William H. Rooney '80**, a partner in the Manhattan law firm Willkie Farr & Gallagher, was named chair of the New York State Bar Association's Antitrust Law Section. . . . Professor **Cheryl B. Schrader '87M.S., '91Ph.D.**, associate vice president for strategic research initiatives and former engineering dean at Boise State University, has been named chancellor of the Missouri University of Science and Technology. . . . President Barack Obama named **Joseph E. Macmanus '75** as the U.S. representative to the Vienna Office of the United Nations and to the International Atomic Energy Agency. He holds the rank of ambassador for each post. . . . Braintree, an online payments provider for businesses, has named **David Corken '94, '99MBA** chief operating officer. . . . At the behest of **Harry Durkin '53**, a former board member of Fort Lauderdale's Holy Cross Hospital, and Dr. **Patrick Taylor '80**, president and CEO of the hospital, TV personality **Regis Philbin '53** has become the medical center's spokesman in a series of print ads and radio and TV commercials. . . . **Sean Cocchia '96** was promoted to the new role of senior vice president business operations and general manager of Disney Channels Worldwide. . . . **Danielle Hermann '07, '11J.D.** has been named executive assistant to the president of the University of Portland, **Rev. E. William Beauchamp, CSC, '75J.D., '81M.Div.** . . . **Brigadier General Terence Hildner '84** died in Kabul, Afghanistan, of apparent natural causes in February. Hildner, who was commander of the 13<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Fort Hood, Texas, is the highest-ranking U.S. officer to die in Afghanistan. Previously, he served in Iraq and in the last U.S. patrol along the East-West German border before German reunification. □

## The ride of a lifetime

BY BRUCE LAWRIE

“FASTER, DADDY,” my daughter calls from the back seat, “faster!” But we’re already going too fast. The back wheel of my mountain bike snakes through a patch of gravel on the rutted road dropping into a deep valley, Emily trailing me on the extension bike, a one-wheeled contraption with its own seat and pedals which, when attached to a regular bike, creates a bicycle-built-for-two.

“Hold on,” I call back.

“Wheee, Daddy, we’re sliding,” she squeals, oblivious to the danger. I get the bike back under control as we blast through the cold wall of air resting on the valley floor. This drainage cut into the steep hills eons ago was preserved before the loggers could get their cross-cut saws into any of it, a narrow chasm filled with ferns and shaggy moss glowing with an iridescent green. Virgin coast redwoods lean from its walls, heavy drops of water falling from the fog-shrouded canopy, the trail smelling of damp earth. The uphill is grueling. I stand and start pumping in the lowest gear, towing my daughter up the steep incline.

“Faster, Daddy,” Emily says again. “Go faster.”

“I can’t,” I gasp between breaths, “we’re on a hill.”

“But go faster, Daddy.”

“This . . . is . . . as . . . fast,” I huff and puff like *The Little Engine That Could*, “. . . as . . . I . . . can . . . go.” She quits asking, but I can tell she doesn’t believe me; she’s convinced I can do anything.

The Santa Cruz Mountains aren’t the most awe-inspiring mountains in the West, but on this particular Sunday it would be impossible for me to feel more awe. It is Valentine’s Day,

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the ninth anniversary of my stem-cell transplant at Stanford. I’m supposed to be dead, written off long before this little creature on the back of my bike even existed. And yet here I am, two fatal diseases later, alive to tell the tale.

The sun has broken through the fog at this higher elevation, pouring through the gaps in the trees like shafts of light in a cathedral. Drops of condensed fog fall through the beams of light, glittering crystals raining down in the shadow of the massive redwoods. We stop at a picnic table to unwrap the sandwiches made together earlier — peanut-butter-and-honey for her and peanut-butter-and-jelly for me.

“Cheers,” she says, raising her sandwich toward mine.

“Cheers,” I acknowledge, gently bumping my crust against hers. She smiles conspiratorially and takes a bite. We eat hungrily. After wolfing down two sandwiches I get up from the table to lie down in a sunny spot on the far side of the meadow, the warmth of the sun a welcome relief.

“Why don’t you come over in the sun with me, honey?” I ask.

“No,” she responds. “I like it here at the table.”

“I know, but aren’t you cold?”

“No,” she lies, suddenly turning stubborn. Her lips are quivering.

“OK,” I say, knowing that if I force the issue she’ll stay shivering in the dense shade. I look up at the treetops against the sky, a startling blue as if it has just come into being. The leaves rustle in the wind, turning their pale undersides up for a moment and then falling back.

I feel her settling against my side; she’s snuck over to the sunny patch of grass, her nibbled-on sandwich in one hand and a water bottle in the other. Coming out of the

damp chill was apparently a smart idea after all.

“Hi, Em,” I say.

She turns her head to get my eyes. “Hi, Daddy.” Her brown eyes are unmasked in that way only children’s can be. She puts her sandwich down on the ground and lays her head on my chest. I want to ask her to pick the sandwich up out of the dirt but decide to just enjoy the feel of her head rising and falling with my breathing, her reedy arm slung across me. She’s been working hard on the back of the bike.

“Could you feel me pedaling, Daddy?” she asks.

“Oh yes,” I say, and I *could* feel the difference those pipe-cleaner, 5-year-old legs made. “You’re a great pedaler.”

*Thank you, Lord* — I float up an inadequate, silent prayer, lying on my back with my daughter resting on me — *Thank you for this moment. For the sun. For my breath. For the tiny piece of Your creation who’s lying with her head on my chest.*

I hear a squirrel trilling somewhere and a Steller’s Jay squawking angrily. I lift my head and spy them under the picnic table, fighting over an orange rind. I close my eyes and feel the warm sun on my face. Emily is twitchy, drifting off to sleep. I stroke her hair and am filled with — what? Gratitude? Yes. And wonder. Maybe it’s just the date that has me stirred up; maybe it’s this beautiful creature who could wring emotion from a stone. And the fact that I have become an easy touch, no longer able to protect myself from the arrows these stolen moments aim for my heart.

On the way back home she demands more speed.

“Faster, Daddy,” she yells, “go . . . FASTER!”

So we launch ourselves over the edge of the big hill, eyes watering, legs churning, screaming down into the chill of the valley



floor. Then it's straight up the far side where we have to get off and walk the last bit of trail to the rim of the valley.

I watch her mount up again at the top, ready for more, and it occurs to me, this is the picture of what my life could be — a wild ride with a loving Father. As long as she knows I'm here, she has no cares whether we're skidding in some gravel along the edge of a cliff, rushing through the thick cold of the valleys or grinding uphill in the hot sun. She takes it all in with the freedom of her fresh years, secure in the knowledge that her daddy is watching out for her.

Watching her settle back onto the seat, blissfully present in the simple joy of riding a bike with her dad, I remember a hint of that freedom I once tasted. It was during

the early days after I was first cured, when the yellow light angling through the trees glowed with a heavenly aurora, when the face of my wife overseeing my oldest daughter's efforts at saddling a horse was precious to behold, when even the shrubs in the median of the highways were verdant and bursting with life. But over the years, I realize as I gaze at my daughter, I have slipped back into my old ways, giving in to the worries and regrets, listening to the yapping fears echoing in my skull.

She waits, straddling the bike, fastening those pristine eyes on me. If only I could love that way again.

*Let me be like that, Lord — I am silently praying again — Let me have the faith in You that she has in me. Let me see with her eyes.*

I swing my leg over my seat.

"You ready?" I ask.

"Ready!" comes the answer.

*And Lord — I append to my previous prayer, knowing that what I'm going to ask for will take a miracle — let me live up to the trust she has in me.*

"Daddy?" she asks.

"Yeah."

"Are we going home?"

"Um hm."

"Can I have some hot chocolate when we get there?"

"Sure," I answer.

"Yippee!" she yells.

"Yahoo!" I yell back, picking up the pace now that we're on the flats again and racing for home. □

## Beyond the silence

BY THOMAS O'GRADY '85PH.D.

NOT LONG AGO, a friend emailed me from Dublin with an unusual request. He and his siblings were finalizing a two-sided bookmark-sized memorial card for their parents, who had passed away within several years of each other, and wanted to include a couple of poems on the card to express their loss. They hoped to go to the printer the next morning but were not quite satisfied with the poems they had chosen. So my friend asked me if, on obviously short notice, I could make a recommendation . . . or two.

I had met my friend's mother once, briefly, but his father never. With little of a personal nature to guide me, and with no time to spare, I almost gave up the assignment before I had even begun. What sort of poem would fit an occasion that I imagined as neither strictly "religious" nor strictly "secular"?

The open-ended answer to that question came to me quickly, in the form of a recollection by Irish poet (and Nobel laureate) Seamus Heaney, in Section XI of his *Station Island* sequence, of the penance once assigned to him by a confessor: "Read poems as prayers," the monk instructed him.

That prompted me to recall an observation made about Shakespeare's sonnets by Harvard professor Helen Vendler: "The act of the lyric is to offer its reader a script to say." This is equally applicable to a poet like Heaney with his inclination toward lyric poetry — poems both precise and evocative in their use of language to reflect or refract the poet's personal experience or personal observations.

With that principle in mind, I suddenly had a starting point. And with Heaney also in mind, I had a direction to follow. I knew he had written an emotive sequence of eight sonnets after his mother died in 1984, so his volume *The Haw Lantern* is where I looked first. I was tempted to send to my friend the last of those sonnets, a poem in which the poet recounts how his departed mother's absence becomes in his imagination a paradoxical presence, like the space, "Utterly empty, utterly a source," left after a decades-old chestnut tree had been cut from the hedge of the Heaney family farm in Northern Ireland: "Its heft and hush became a bright nowhere, / A soul ramifying and forever / Silent, beyond silence listened for."

Heaney has admitted that the death of his parents sparked in him a particular alertness to the metaphysical dimension of human experience — the marvelous, the mysterious — and I knew from having lost my own mother not long before my friend lost his that this poem spoke to that potent mixture of ending and beginning, of void and possibility, which new bereavement can generate.

Ultimately, though, I decided that poem was too grounded in the specific terrain of Heaney's boyhood and thus not quite right for the

occasion. So I turned the page. Literally. And then one more page. And what I came upon was a poem by Heaney that transported me back to the summer of 1998 when my wife and I took our three daughters on "the grand tour" of Ireland, which included a stop in northern County Donegal, in the vicinity of legendary Doon Rock, the inauguration site during the Middle Ages for chieftains of the powerful O'Donnell clan. There, in an isolated vale, we found ourselves standing in silent wonder before what is known as a "wishing tree."

A solitary weather-gnarled hawthorn, its knuckly tangle of black branches raking at the wind like razor-tipped fingers, this tree — like others spotted throughout Ireland — was obviously a long-standing site of supplication. Associated with "the little people" (the fairies) in Irish folklore, the hawthorn is also linked by some believers with Christ's crown of thorns. Reflecting the essential nature of folk belief in Ireland — equal parts religious and superstitious, Christian and pagan — certain of these trees have become invested with a vague power that leads visitors to leave behind some token of their having stopped to implore divine intercession on some personal matter: health, wealth, marriage, fertility.

Adorned with coins and medallions wedged or hammered into the bark, and with badges and devotional scapulars, ticket stubs, photographs, prayer cards and handwritten notes pinned to its trunk and limbs, the wishing tree we visited was a living emblem of the very small gap between hope and despair that can exist in the human spirit.

How apt, then, that in the wake of his mother's death, Seamus Heaney should inscribe her nurturing figure in terms of such a homey marker in both the physical landscape of the Irish countryside and the emotional landscape of loss and longing. As soon as I turned the page to "The Wishing Tree," I knew it was the perfect choice to send to my friend to help memorialize his mother. Outside the home, Irish society is traditionally patriarchal, but in the domestic sphere the mother is the centripetal force that holds the world together. Heaney's poem registers just that force in transforming the image of a literal tree which had died recently into the idea of a maternal spirit whose transcendence is cast in terms of the Ascension of Christ's mother.

And it does so with relative simplicity, both formal and stylistic. Heaney has coined, famously, the phrase "the music of what happens" to describe what lyric poetry attempts to capture and express. He has also said: "One of the first functions of a poem, after all, is to satisfy a need in the poet. The achievement of a sufficient form and the release of a self-given music have a justifying effect within his life." And "The Wishing Tree" is clearly the sort of poem that can "offer its reader a script to say":

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### The Wishing Tree

I thought of her as the wishing tree that died  
 And saw it lifted, root and branch, to heaven,  
 Trailing a shower of all that had been driven

Need by need into its hale  
 Sap-wood and bark: coin and pin and nail  
 Came streaming from it like a comet-tail

New-minted and dissolved. I had a vision  
 Of an airy branch-head rising through damp cloud,  
 Of turned-up faces where the tree had stood.

But did it offer even more? I have never asked my friend exactly how he and his family engaged with this poem individually or collectively. Did someone read the poem aloud? Did they read it aloud together? Which leaves me to wonder: Might they have read “The Wishing Tree” in the spirit instructed by Heaney’s long-ago confessor — might they have read it as a prayer?

Obviously the poem is not a prayer in the conventional sense. Yet, while neither a supplication nor an invocation, it still evokes those conventions through the vaguely religious potency of the wishing tree. Also, as a poem experienced communally by my friend’s family, it corresponds inherently with a central notion expressed by American poet Mary Karr in her essay “Facing Altars: Poetry and Prayer.” Describing the “Eucharistic qualities” of poems she associates with her midlife conversion to Catholicism, Karr explains: “In memorizing the poems I loved, I ‘ate’ them in a way. I

breathed as the poet breathed to recite the words: someone else’s suffering and passion enters your body to transform you, partly by joining you to others in a saving circle.”

In the end, however, the prayerful aspect of “The Wishing Tree” may reside in its intrinsic nature as a lyric poem — that is, in its capacity to record what William Wordsworth referred to as “emotion recollected in tranquility.” Releasing its reader-as-speaker from the immediate emotional tumult of personal loss just as conventional prayer does — through the intermediating agency of elevated feeling and refined expression — the poem-as-prayer has the capacity as well to afford what Robert Frost once described as “a momentary stay against confusion.”

In that regard, did even the very different sort of poem I proposed to commemorate my friend’s father hold similar promise? Also written by Seamus Heaney, this poem registering the death of his father in 1986 was published in his volume *Seeing Things*. The poem is easily identifiable as a *haiku*, among the simplest of poetic forms:

#### 1.1.87

Dangerous pavements.  
 But I face the ice this year  
 With my father’s stick.

Here Heaney nods toward the convention associated with Japanese *haiku* of incorporating a seasonal reference. In fact, that reference is crucial to this poem’s potential as “prayer,” as its title, signaling a new year, also signifies a new beginning, and the father’s walking stick may thus be recognized by the reader not just as a token of remembrance but also as a totem of fortitude in the aftermath of irreversible loss.

Promoting the “Imagist” movement in Anglo-American poetry during the second decade of the 20th century, Ezra Pound explained: “An ‘Image’ is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.” In the case of *haiku*, this “complex” involves what is known as *satori*, an epiphany of sorts — a showing-forth of a resonant truth that the reader absorbs instantaneously with both the mind and the heart. That may describe precisely not only the double-edged symbolism of the walking stick but also the way such symbolism crystallizes into the same sort of salvific release that a more expansive lyric poem might afford.

When I emailed the poems to my friend, I had no conscious notion that I was sending him prayers. But at least by the evidence of how the poems appeared on the memorial card, an 8-by-3-inch slip of pasteboard my friend sent to me a month or so later, I believe they did afford some sort of prayerlike uplift. Incongruously, I thought at first, the side with a photograph of their father included the poem associated with their mother, and vice versa. Initially, I interpreted this design as a Möbius strip — a touching emblem of union and permanence if the card were given a half-twist and the ends fastened together. Eventually, I realized that the more immediate effect is that of the parents speaking to their children on each other’s behalf: the father reminding them of their mother’s enduring embodiment of hope in the face of sorrow, the mother offering them their father as an image of steadfastness and resilience.

For my part, having attended in recent years countless wakes of elderly relatives and neighbors and the parents of friends, I have accumulated a collection of conventional laminated prayer cards that I use as bookmarks. Now I have a bookmark that just may double as a prayer card. □

# Tattered saints

BY ROBERT MORTENSEN '52

MY CURRENT UNDERSTANDING of the Divine Mystery goes back to 1994 with a sleepless night in a Japanese hospital where I was recovering from a near-fatal illness. I had been transferred from the ICU to an

eight-person ward where a patient in his mid-30s with advanced lung cancer periodically pierced the night calm with agonizing moans of pain. At first I felt something close to resentment for this intrusion into the relative silence, but I soon realized what the phrase “arrogance of good health” meant. I was going to live; he was going to die.

As the night moved slowly on, my upset turned to compassion, and I found myself recalling all the people I knew who had died — starting with Mrs. Clash, our next-door neighbor who died on Thanksgiving morning when I was 8. As my list progressed, it led to a startling awareness: This is my “Communion of Saints.” They are, I believe, with God.

After leaving my teaching job in Japan, retiring and working as a hospice volunteer for 12 years, my “Communion” has grown considerably. It’s a group that is certainly eclectic and hardly meritorious by Church standards, but I have no doubt about its members’ “salvation” or concern about a “hierarchy in heaven.”

Let me share a small but representative sample.

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Isaac and Katy, a Jew and an Irish Catholic in their early 90s, had recently celebrated 20 years of marriage. They had been high

school sweethearts in Nova Scotia, but parental prejudice on each side severed the relationship. They had each enjoyed good lives and successful marriages — until the deaths of their respective spouses. Their serendipi-

could tell by his tone this was not merely a polite conversation question, so I mentally raced through my list before settling on Oscar Peterson. I could tell by Isaac’s and Katy’s responses that I clearly fell a bit short.

Among other life pursuits, Isaac had played jazz piano professionally, as had Katy’s first husband, and there was only one acceptable answer — Art Tatum.

Our subsequent visits entailed many Tatum anecdotes and the disclosure that Isaac had donated to a local university his “complete” collection of Tatum’s recordings. I was able to bring CDs of more current artists from my collection, and Isaac paid me a genuine compliment by inquiring with interest, “Where did you get this stuff?” He clearly had not kept pace with the field, but we agreed if there ever was a stopping place, Tatum was the right one.

With Katy’s decline, Isaac’s duties included grocery shopping, which provided treats equal to enjoying good jazz. Isaac proclaimed to be an “abjured Jew,” but — other than in a theological sense — this was impossible to perceive. Most of his working life was in the dry goods business, and that success permeated his demeanor. At the

tous reunion in Seattle brought them into my life. I met them in a retirement facility, where Katy was on hospice care with multiple health issues.

In our first meeting my preference for piano jazz surfaced, and Isaac immediately wanted to know my favorite performer. I

supermarket he would caution me to “get to know the manager of the meat department,” whom he always sought out and who always gave him preferential treatment. He couldn’t buy anything without first checking the expiration dates.

I’m not a shopper, but with Isaac it was



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an adventure . . . and fun. One day in the deli section, as he carefully perused the packaged bacon, I asked, "Isaac, what are you doing?" He replied wide-eyed with a hint of a smile, "It's kosher!" and put it in the cart.

Much later, after Katy had died and Isaac was also on hospice care, his sense of humor didn't fade. One day, while he struggled to get to the bathroom from his bed, I was walking by his side and he came up with, "Now I know why they call this the last mile." Near his last days, however, the real Isaac was absent, given to delusions and "wanting to go home." I believe he meant it in the literal sense rather than metaphorically, as is often the case with patients. It was not an exit he would have scripted, but choice was not an option, and I was told by his caregivers that he was truly at peace when he died.

Katy never lost her Irish grace and charm, though among her many ailments was a loss of peripheral vision and fading eyesight in general. I never heard a complaint, even though her hobby had been designing and sewing incredible creations for her Barbie doll collection. She often spoke of her brother, a Jesuit in Africa who wanted to stay there for life. Later, when bedridden, Katy was not able to go to Mass, but her Catholicism was like a second skin.

Once she asked me to pray a rosary with her on my next visit. When I showed up with my rosary and confessed that it had been years since I last prayed one, she immediately slapped my hand — not gently — and told me, "You ought to be ashamed!" I couldn't resist replying, "Yes, Mother Superior," which produced a forgiving smile.

Another highlight occurred on a Good Friday when she asked me to read her the Passion of our Lord. Even as a lector in our parish I don't recall reading a Scripture with such a depth of feeling or receiving such an appreciation as she showered on me. Much earlier, Katy's aside about the merits of papal celibacy would require a context that cannot be replicated, so it shall remain "our secret." I doubt its relevance to her sainthood!

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Not all hospice experiences have such a positive ring, but the complexity of Alex and his family deserve telling. Alex was born in Jerusalem, raised in Jordan and adopted by a Catholic couple in the United States, where he was enrolled in high school. He became involved with a girl who was a Presbyterian. This ultimately led to a complete break with his adoptive parents, but love found its way to the state university where Alex proceeded

to graduate at the top of his pharmacy class and marry his high school sweetheart. They soon had a baby girl, and all was fine until their 4-month-old daughter acquired spinal meningitis.

I met Alex and his family when he became a hospice patient with advanced cancer of the tongue. His wife, now a Jehovah's Witness, needed respite care for Alex while she and their now 40-year-old daughter attended services at the Kingdom Hall. The daughter could not speak, was not toilet-trained and had made minimal mental progress. It took a while before the magnitude of this family's trauma registered with me because of the grace with which Alex and his wife handled it.

My visits with Alex in his home generally were spent watching baseball on TV and simply getting to know each other. Talking was not easy for him, but he was eager to converse with a man, and his pain meds made conversation possible. His wife insisted on providing dessert for us. They were most gracious and appreciative hosts.

As Alex's condition deteriorated, the family stress increased. Differences over the care and treatment of their daughter were evident, but Alex's inconsistent and sometime irrational behavior contributed also. One evening Alex vented his frustration with his cancer and sense of aloneness. My response was something I regretted as soon as my words became sound. "God loves you, Alex." His look and the question that followed remain a searing memory. "If he loves me, WHY. . . ?"

Fortunately, we had better moments before Alex's decline led to his being first hospitalized and then placed in a nursing home. Neither option was acceptable to him. Violence and escape attempts became a normal pattern. Alex was taken off hospice care, but I was able to locate him at a nursing home and went to see him. He was sitting alone, constrained in a wheelchair in a hallway. I was pleased and surprised that he even recognized me, as he looked in considerable pain and was unable to speak with any clarity. However, we did "connect," for which I am most grateful as I could feel his desperation and loneliness.

As I left the secured ward, I spoke with the nurse who had just come on duty and who had no idea who Alex was, but knew he was being moved to a private room. I poured out a brief history of Alex that brought surprise and wonder, and which I hoped would lead to more caring attention.

I found out that Alex died that night, so the "rescue" he seemed to want from me was realized from a more able source. His gracious and strong wife, his forever-baby daughter and his incredible journey are the stuff of sainthood in my book. And my "judgment" of Jehovah's Witnesses has become softly muted.

\* \* \*

Unlike many of my patients over the past 12 years, Ralph and I had little, if anything, in common. He was raised on a farm and had no time for sports or education beyond high school. His only musical taste favored country-western. He was in combat in Vietnam; I was a noncombatant in Korea. He became a successful one-man roofing contractor whose life was being cut short by advanced lung cancer. I was healthy and a dad whose children took broken toys to their mother for repair.

It's funny how the externals can fool you, though. Our weekly visits showed what really matters between humans starts with respect. And that blossomed in our first meeting and grew as naturally as a tomato ripens with sunshine. Friendship may be too strong to describe what existed, but the connection was real and rewarding.

Ralph eventually left hospice care for treatment at the Veterans Affairs hospital. I only visited him once, as the hospital was quite a distance away, and he seemed to be almost comatose. I didn't think he had long to live. He once had told me he had no real fear of death but had some concerns about knowing "when." I'm not sure if he ever knew the "when," but I found out he hung on to life for a couple more months. I wasn't surprised at the will and strength he must have exerted. Our final conversation took place beside the urn at his funeral Mass. The connection felt as real as ever, and I never even knew he was a Catholic.

\* \* \*

Whenever I recall such hospice experiences and consider my personal Communion of Saints, I think of a word from a book by Heather Lende, *Take Good Care of the Garden and the Dogs*. The word is "namaste" (NAH-mahs-stay), and the brilliant and insightful Joan Chittister, a Benedictine nun, defines it as, "The divine in me greets the divine in you. The Holy Spirit in me touches the Holy Spirit in you." That captures the hospice experience perfectly and provides a cornerstone for my litany of saints. So . . . namaste. □

## Beware the laundryosaurus

BY MARAYA GOYER STEADMAN '89, '90MBA

A MONSTER SLEEPS IN MY BASEMENT. Curled up on the secondhand couch in the playroom is a living, breathing, snorting, snuffling, growing pile of washed but unfolded laundry. The pile is poised to roll over the edge of the couch and start devouring all the toys in its path as it makes its way up the stairs and on to the floor in my children's bedrooms, where it will envelop the dog and dance on the Legos and dolls.

After rolling around the bedroom floors, the creature will make its way down the laundry chute, repeating the gruesome cycle over and over and over again. Nothing short of an army of servants I can't afford could beat this monster down, keep it living in my children's dresser drawers, folded neatly where it belongs, instead of doing as it pleases and taking over the entire house.

The laundry monster moved in after my children were born and started to grow as we did. First it was mostly itty-bitty baby clothes, then it was princess dresses, and now we've added hockey jerseys to the mix. Some days I almost get it off the couch and into the children's drawers where it's supposed to live, but then my kids come home from school. They take off their chocolate-milk-splashed uniforms, put on their play clothes and step in things they shouldn't, change into soccer gear which gets muddy, then put on pajamas and

princess nightgowns that get covered in, not their own, but their siblings' toothpaste spit. All of it goes in the laundry chute, and then nothing is put away anymore. It's just in a big pile of dirty laundry I washed yesterday.

Once, the monster managed to kill the washing machine. During the days we waited for repair, the monster grew to a prehistoric size, a colossal *laundryosaurus* covering the back half of the basement floor. The stink of all that monster drool, toothpaste spit and hockey stuff was shocking.

In the midst of getting the washer fixed, I could no longer walk across the basement or deal with the stench, so I loaded the laundry into the minivan and we went to a Laundromat together. We sat there together on a Sunday night, by ourselves, reading outdated magazines, enjoying the quiet hum of an industrial-sized washer, drinking a Diet Coke. And it was kind of nice, being there, the laundry and me.

Eventually the repair guy managed to fix the washing machine. I went back to washing the laundry at home, where it still ends up on the playroom couch, mocking me and covering up the TV remote with its bulk.

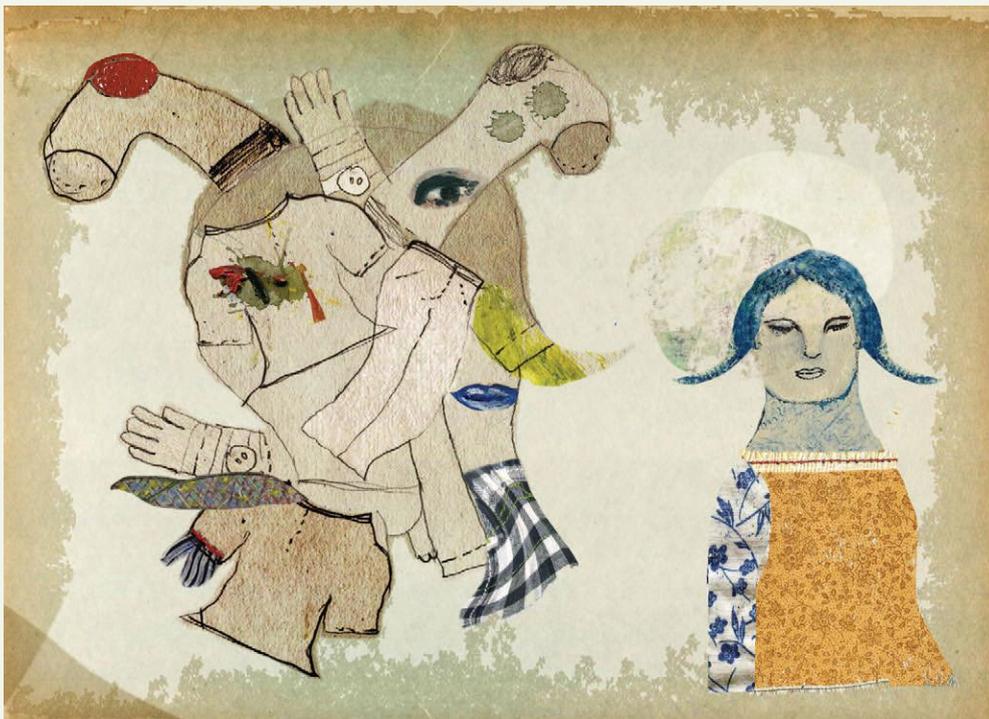
I know that when my children are teenagers I'll get exasperated and start flinging phrases, trying to beat back the colossus a bit: "You know, you should be doing your own laundry!" "Soon enough you'll be out of here, and you'll have to do this for yourself!" And I know my anger won't accomplish anything but make me sound more like the mother they want to get away from.

Sometimes when the laundry monster is there sleeping quietly on the couch, I'll poke at it and mouth off. "Well I live here, too, you know, and sometimes I want to sit on the couch, so you can just move over." Then I'll move it around a bit and throw some of its extremities on the floor, just so I can sit down.

If it's fluffy things like duvets I've washed from a little girl's accident the night before, I'll just snuggle down into all that clean laundry. I'll put my head on a tutu or a teddy bear that needed dog slobber washed out of it. Sometimes if I'm lying on top of the clean laundry and the kids and I are watching a movie for movie night, I'll think about how once I've managed to find the TV remote and the beastly is asleep, snoring peacefully, I don't really mind having a laundry monster in my basement.

As long as I don't get uptight about having the children's laundry cleaned and folded and put neatly in their drawers, the laundry monster and I do just fine, curled up here together on the couch in the playroom. Maybe that's just what laundry monsters do: They move in when the children do, and eventually, when there is no more dirty laundry to feed it, the monster will leave.

I'll be here in my house with all the clean clothes folded and put away in the dresser drawers and all the towels and linens in the closet, where they belong. I won't have anyone to go with me to the Laundromat on Sunday nights and there won't be any more tutus to snuggle on the playroom couch. □



Maraya Steadman, who lives in a Chicago suburb, is a stay-at-home mother of three children. See her biweekly "The Playroom" column at [magazine.nd.edu](http://magazine.nd.edu) and at her website, [marayasteadman.com](http://marayasteadman.com). She can be reached at [maraya@steadmans.org](mailto:maraya@steadmans.org).



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# NOTRE DAME MAGAZINE



BARBARA JOHNSTON

1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9
15	10	12	13
	11	14	16
	17	18	19
23	21	26	20
	24	22	27
28	25	31	33
	29	32	30
	34	35	36

1. Holy Cross Hall (demolished) 2. Bond Hall 3. Biochini Hall of Law 4. Pangborn Hall 5. O'Shaughnessy Hall 6. Nieuwland Hall 7. Ryan Hall 8. Haggard Hall 9. Walsh Hall 10. Flanner Hall 11. Carole Sandner Hall 12. Ricci Band Rehearsal Hall 13. Hammes Notre Dame Bookstore 14. Rockne Memorial 15. Howard Hall 16. Jordan Hall of Art and Design 17. Riley Hall of Art and Design 18. Coleman-Morse Hall 19. Keenan-Stanford Hall 20. Sacred Heart Parish Center 21. Lewis Hall 22. Hesburgh Library 23. Cushing Hall of Engineering 24. Pasquerilla West Hall 25. Old Fieldhouse (demolished) 26. Carroll Hall 27. Our Lady of Fatima House 28. Hurley Hall 29. Badin Hall 30. Biochini Hall of Law 31. Joyce Center 32. Purcell Pavillion 33. Dillion Hall 34. Basilica of the Sacred Heart 35. Rolfs Aquatic Center 36. Welsh Family Hall



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