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The City

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS
Convocation, 2007

Ron Suskind

Bestselling author and former senior national affairs writer for the Wall Street Journal, Ron Suskind, delivered the Convocation address at New Jersey City University on September 5, 2007. The speech, excerpted below, is based on Suskind's research for his 1998 book, A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League. *Suskind is also the author of* The One Percent Solution, *an investigation into America's war on terror, and* The Price of Loyalty, George W. Bush, the White House and the Education of Paul O'Neil, *a close look into the inner workings of the Bush presidency. On behalf of* The Academic Forum, *we express our gratitude to Mr. Suskind for granting permission to publish his remarks.*

It's just so moving to be here. I go to quite a few of these ceremonies these days, but I'll tell you, you've got something here [at NJCU] that is not common, that has extraordinary American power. You know, when Kate just sang the national anthem so beautifully, I felt emotions that surprised me. I have been travelling around the world on this last book tour a lot. The book [*The One Percent Solution*] is about trying to get my arms around this global hearts and minds struggle. What is it? It's not even a term we can frame. And it's certainly not one America has done a very good job at engaging productively. When I hear that part in the anthem about the flag waving, I feel like crying actually because I've gone around the world and I see how people are reacting to our flag. It's just horrific. And I want to yell out to them—it's not about that! There is a reason why this flag has waved around the world for so long and brought hope to people. And frankly, in some ways I'm ill suited to do what I do now, which is to spend so much time with senior officials of the government, or foreign leaders and hear them dispense "their messages," their spin, their careful phrases that don't say very much, and certainly don't say certain things we all know are true about the way the world actually is.

You know people are much empowered on that last part [knowing how the world actually is]. It's not like it was when I was a kid or when many of you were growing up. We have this amazing information invention, this internet. The explosion, the democratizing power of it is just breathtaking. Thirty years ago every dusty village was not armed with a cable hook up and the internet. Now they are. Click—all the world's knowledge—there it is. And what's happening is that they're not buying any more the idea that it's okay to lie in public. They're not buying the idea that I'm saying this, but maybe I mean that. I go around the world and feel that I'm sitting with that character from *Catcher in the Rye*, Holden Caulfield, because every time I talk with people in Pakistan or London, they say, "You guys are phonies." You say this, but you don't mean it, really. If you were just true to your oath, that would make a difference. That would help. You know we've hoped for so much for so long from all of you. We knew we might not make it soon or even in our lifetime, but we stuck it up on the wall, that flag and those ideals of America, and that some day we'd get there. But now we hear *you* don't even believe in that stuff.

I find myself resolving [all the fragmentation in my life] by going back to things that I've learned over the last decade that seem a little improbable. I wrote a book before these last two noisy best sellers called *A Hope in the Unseen*. That's a book about an inner city African American kid from the worst high school in America who ends up going to Brown University. The only kid in a decade from his high school to make it. It comes from a series I wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* back when, but I find that the lessons I learned from writing that book are ever more applicable. That book is essentially a hearts and minds book about America. It's a story that fits in with every breath that people take in a place like this [NJCU]. Cedric is a kid like many of the kids who

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Cities

Steve Haber, Editor, The Academic Forum

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Dr. Steven Haber

I remember as an undergraduate reading a very slim novella called *Cities* by the poet and writer, Robert Kelly. The premise of the book was that hidden within every great city, there lives another secret city existing coextensively in the same time and space as the city we know and recognize. So for example, hidden within Paris is the secret city called Lyonesse with its own landmarks, streets, museums, and restaurants, but they are all hidden from view as far as ordinary Parisians are concerned. Yet people of a certain sensitivity, sometimes small children, can, from time to time, perceive the hidden city, and even enter it, as sometimes in a dream we discover and explore a hidden room in our house or apartment we never knew was there.

That book, or rather that concept of a concealed separate reality, has stayed with me for many years, and it has changed the way I look at cities and at the world in general. Without trying to get too metaphysical, I feel that the history of a place somehow remains and is always there, no matter what comes later. So the spirits of English, Dutch and Native American lives, culture, architecture, and language continue to live within the contemporary cities of New York and Jersey City and other places where these groups settled. The names Passaic, Communipaw, Hackensack, and Manhattan; Bergen, Hudson, Vroom, Stuyvesant, and Van Reipen; Tonnele, Newark, Essex, and Duncan are still with us, as markers of inhabitants long gone, but who left their signatures on the contemporary landscape like indelible graffiti tags that cannot be washed away.

And similarly, not only have the landscapes of the cities been physically altered by their previous inhabitants, but also the consciousness of those who followed has changed as they learned from, interacted with, conquered, or survived those who came before. It is through knowledge of history that we can begin to decipher these signs and realize that each new generation did not create the cities we live in single handedly nor did the present landscape always exist, no matter how permanent its streets and buildings might seem. We do live among the foundation walls, fortresses, villages, encampments, farmland, cattle paths, and burial mounds of those who lived here before us. And their voices, ideas, writing, music, and ways of life still find their way into our modern consciousness.

The University, like the museum, library or concert hall, is a nexus of such cultural transformations. It is in the University we learn from those who came before us, interact with those around us, and at the same time leave a legacy for those who will follow. The University is like the window or door through which we can discover or encounter the hidden cities that exist both here and elsewhere, and in so doing, enjoy a richer more fulfilling appreciation of whatever landscape is set before us. Similarly, as educators, we cultivate within our students the talents, skills, and sensibilities that will enable them to become more fully realized and accomplished people.

In this issue of *The Academic Forum*, we celebrate the role of the University in the life of the City. Bestselling author and former senior national affairs writer for the *Wall Street Journal*, Ron Suskind, delivered the 2007 Convocation address at New Jersey City University. The speech, excerpted in this issue, is based on research for the book, *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. Laura Wadenpfuhl delivers a moving account of the destruction and resurrection of her adopted home town, New Orleans. Ruddys Andrade, director of the Office of Grants and Special Programs reports on some new projects highlighting the University's engagement with its urban environment. Mark Tursi explores the risks and benefits of technology in engaging nontraditional urban students. Rubina Vohra writes on the impact globalization is having on the United States economy and future prospects for employment of the urban population. Latisha Forster Scott comments on the role of the University in promoting health and wellness in the urban population. Finally, Basanti Chakraborty, Sheila Kirvin, George Li, Maria Lynn, and Tim Torre link the urban university to its global mission.

As always, we express our deepest appreciation to all of our contributors for their efforts in producing an outstanding collection of articles. Special thanks to Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Jo Bruno for her continuing support of the publication, organizational help, and assistance with citations. Ellen Quinn did an outstanding job of layout and design. Thanks to Laura Wadenpfuhl for her careful and thoughtful proofreading. Thanks also to the editorial board for their com-

ments and helpful suggestions: Joan Bailey, Ron Bogusz, Ellen Quinn, and Laura Wadenpfuhl.

Looking forward to the fall, the next issue of *The Academic Forum* is devoted to the topic of critical thinking. A teacher, Nancy Rehm, recently wrote in a letter to *The New York Times*, "Students today can Google [factual and historical] information in seconds. What is more important is that they can't identify claims and evidence and evaluate them. Those skills are what constitute "critical thinking" and what our students need to learn in order to succeed in college and beyond." As we approach our Middle States review, it is both timely and appropriate for *The Academic Forum* to re-examine the role of critical thinking on the NJCU campus and beyond. We are seeking articles on critical thinking related to classroom pedagogy, research, theory, best practices, and assessment. Articles written in a style that is accessible to non-experts in the field are especially welcome.

On behalf of the editorial board, we wish the NJCU community a restful and productive summer.

RECOVERY OF AN AMERICAN CITY

Laura Wadenpfuhl, Assistant Professor of English

For those of us who lived in southeast Louisiana before Katrina and who stayed for and/or returned after the storm, our lives are divided into Pre-K and Post-K—they always will be. Two years and five months later, when I find myself remembering the time before the storm, the time when despite all of its problems, New Orleans was truly paradise, a place like no other. I am compromised by the realization that it will be different. New Orleans will be better, but its magic will be darker as it, at least for a generation, practices under Katrina's shadow. Perhaps it was the same after Betsy in 1956 or after Camille in 1969. But I don't think so. I know folks who lived through Betsy and Camille and who lived through Katrina. There is no comparison.

In order to talk about recovery, and there is a great deal of recovery, the citizens of New Orleans, must remind the nation that it was not the storm that flooded the city; the broken levees flooded New Orleans and forever changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of its citizens and the way the world looks at the United States. New Orleanians were told year after year, when the storm comes, the levees will protect them. Over-topping was expected, but that is what the pumping system would address. The names are now so familiar to us: the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO), the Industrial Canal, the 17th Street Canal, and the London Avenue Canal, not to mention scores of smaller breaches throughout the levee system. The United States government left a major American city, one of the most active seaports in the world, and a national treasure in harm's way. It continues to do so.

About to begin a sabbatical after completing my first term of office as English Department chairperson, sitting at the bar outside the security line for American Airlines on Saturday, August 27, 2005 I was excited about beginning a new chapter of my career, about the time off to think and to write. The weather channel was on most of the television screens. The storm seemed to be leaning away from New Orleans. The flight, filled with students returning to Tulane for the fall semester, was not canceled. No need to worry. But as soon as we touched down and the cell phones began ringing, word spread throughout the plane that Tulane was evacuating. Walking through the waiting area, I paused and wondered if I should immediately return to New York. The pause was short. I was home and would not have to leave for more than four months.

Most people cannot understand the prospect of not having to fly weekly for roughly twenty weeks; no storm, no matter how threatening would have made me believe that beginning October 2005, I would be flying twice a week and that thinking and writing would be replaced with the struggle to survive and playing my part in rebuilding a city. At the very beginning of the recovery, after Mayor Nagin allowed residents to return based upon zip code, recovery meant the return of as many residents as possible, residents who could support those businesses able to open, residents who could lay the foundation of a tax base that had entirely disappeared. An acquaintance, Vance (who would become a life-long friend over the course of the days, weeks, and months following the storm), picked me up from the airport on August 27. His first words to me were "There's panic in the streets." I asked, "Are you leaving?" His reply, "Hell no!" "Then take me home," I said.

Ever since moving to Southeast Louisiana come May 1, of each year I am hurricane ready. That is, I have about a three-month supply of water, enough food to last at least a month, batteries, and other necessary supplies, far more than the three-day supply of essentials that had been dictated in every pre-storm hurricane survival or evacuation plan. Having

always been told the French Quarter would never flood, I felt safe. But for locals and tourists alike, there was one topic of conversation on August 27, 2005—the storm and evacuation.

Katrina was impressive, striking in daylight. Until the electricity went out, I sat in the living room of my ground floor apartment watching the television coverage. Power went out. The winds picked up, and the locked shutters (I did not believe they would hold—they did) shook continuously. The roar of the wind repeatedly drove me into the interior room. Later I would stand in front of the effects of many tornado-damaged structures. The sound of that wind was too close to that of a freight train. I had lived in the South long enough to fear nothing except tornadoes.

…the only time I felt sick with fear was when I realized that the levees had broken….

Now and then my neighbors and I ventured into the hallway and watched the debris flying down the street. The sound of objects crashing into each other was relentless. Another neighbor braved the wind, rain, and flying debris, going out onto the third floor balcony to secure a shutter door that had come loose. We took turns venturing onto the patio to clear the drains of leaves in a successful effort to keep the drains from clogging and the hallway free of water. The memory of Dan Rather hanging onto a pole (or was it a tree) while reporting on a hurricane came to mind.

Finally, the winds quieted down, the rain stopped, and we began the cleanup. The peacefulness and relief of that short period of time, before word of the breached levees and massive flooding spread is, to remember it, surreal. The sun was shining, we had running water, the gas worked, and my telephone worked. We had survived. As New Orleans had so many times, we believed it had once again "dodged a bullet." It was not long before we knew better.

My first shock was Jackson Square. Although beautiful today, if you had not seen it before the storm, with its full-grown trees (now gone), and inspired landscaping, no pre-storm picture could do it justice. After Katrina, it looked as if it had suffered through the Blitz—all of the Blitz. Twisted and fallen trees, shrubbery decimated, the most serene and beautiful oasis in the French Quarter was all but destroyed. Jackson Square is around the block from my apartment. Looking at it and the destruction that had happened all around me, that my neighbors and I survived, I was never so proud to be a New Orleanian.

Unlike so much of the city, the post-storm French Quarter was a sanctuary. Water reached Iberville (one block into the Quarter), but in the Lower Quarter, we were dry. Without power, none of the CNN images reached us. On August 30, we did not fully understand why some of the shops had not begun to open where the city was dry. The Quarter's 24-hour *A&P* was closed. *Sidney*'s (the local liquor/convenience store) was closed. Batteries provided access to a call-in talk radio station. That Monday afternoon and night folks were calling in, trying to learn why the water was rising when the storm had passed hours ago. No one had to tell any of us the levees had broken. The questions about rising water were followed by the frantic calls for help to the radio station. Before long my neighbors and I understood that although dry, we were surrounded by a flooded city with a single way out: the Crescent City Connection.

Now I sometimes cross the street simply to stand by the Mississippi River and look over at the two bridges that are the Crescent City Connection connecting downtown New Orleans to the West Bank. It is a beautiful sight with the sun reflecting off the river, or when the bridges are partially veiled in fog, or when the clouds are low and the grayness of the sky serves as a backdrop to the gray steel of the bridges. Until the water was pumped out of the city, those bridges brought in personnel and supplies. They offered an evacuation route for those with vehicles. But like so much in New Orleans before and since the storm, opportunity is often tainted with controversy. Citizens trying to get away from the Superdome and Convention Center after the storm were not permitted to enter the West Bank by foot and were turned away by law enforcement. It is impossible not to understand the desperation of both sides, neither right nor wrong in their desires.

When the locals of the Quarter walked around during the days following the storm, the police would roll down their patrol car windows and yell out that if we did not evacuate we were all going to die. Yes, we could hear gunfire in the night, but the only time I felt sick with fear was when I realized that the levees had broken. Even then I had not feared for my own safety, but for the survival of my beloved city.

Thirty years earlier I had read the following passage by Hemingway and the words have remained with me ever since:

> He knew too what it was to live through a hurricane with the other people […] and the bond that the hurricane made between all people who had been through it. He also knew that hurricanes could be so bad that nothing could live through them [… .] If there was ever one that bad he would like to be there for it [… .] (Hemingway 1970).

In *One Dead in Attic* Chris Rose (2006) writes that the people of Southeast Louisiana love it with a "ferocity that borders on the pathological." He is right. That ferocious love and the bond created between those who lived through the storm whether in person or evacuated and fearing for their homes, the ones who stayed behind, and the prospect of always living in "that place we call Elsewhere" (Rose, 2006) are the factors that drove and drive New Orleans' and the entire Gulf Coast's recovery.

A working local government is part of that recovery. The postponed mayoral election finally took place in April 2006.

A friend and I trained to be and served as election commissioners for both the primary and run-off races that re-elected Mayor Ray Nagin. We watched democracy struggle as the city officials groped for ways to ensure fair voting for displaced citizens, citizens whose New Orleans addresses existed only as lots or buildings so damaged they were beyond the hope of recovery, or whose livelihoods had been taken away because their places of employment had been destroyed.

Busses came to the super polling centers (many of the local polling centers had been flooded and severely damaged) from the surrounding parishes, and from nearby and not so nearby states. For twelve hours while checking voter registration, I witnessed New Orleanians who had not seen each other since the storm (more than seven months) cry and hug, speak of their plans to return, and ask of others about whom they had not yet heard. The citizens, those then residing in New Orleans, those who would return, those who only hoped to return, and those who knew they could never return, ultimately chose Ray Nagin over Mitch Landrieu.

It was both a painful moment for democracy and a hopeful moment. The effort to reach displaced citizens allowing them to vote by fax, by mail, in early voting, and in person was Herculean and a significant step forward in the city's recovery. I reconciled my ethical dilemma of voters who participated even though they knew in their hearts they would never return by coming to understand that casting these votes was a step in the process of their own recovery. They had not left their city by choice; these were folks without options, with no say in their relocation.

I understood their need to vote, to maintain some connection to their home because even though my own evacuation was voluntary,[1] evacuating New Orleans was the hardest thing I have ever done. When my neighbor's son pulled up in the car he rented in Houston after flying to Houston from his home in Los Angeles (I have no idea how he got through the roadblocks and into the city), I had to force myself into the car. The four weeks between leaving and the first opportunity to return (during which Hurricane Rita hit, delaying my first trip back) consisted of a single concentrated effort to return.

With every free moment I monitored the city's progress: the resumption of commercial flights; the return of car rental companies; the projected reopening dates of hotels, the anticipated date of the restoration of electricity in the French Quarter. (I didn't need electricity or running water to return; I needed a flight and transportation from the airport.) I recall arguing with Delta Airlines who refused to change my flight as Hurricane Rita approached. Delta insisted the airport was open; I countered with the fact that it was an open airport in a city whose evacuation order had not been lifted and a city in complete lockdown. Delta relented.

Although Rita set us back a little, it was not as much a delay as I at first feared, and New Orleans' recovery finally began with the return of its residents, but it is the return of its residents that has caused great controversy. Throughout fall 2007, but particularly during December the nation witnessed the City Council's struggle to demolish some public housing complexes, to be replaced with mixed income housing. The City Council's meetings led to protests and demonstrations, the most heated of which were broadcast nationally. The loudest protesters were from out of town, such as the four individuals who had never lived in New Orleans, but who chained themselves to the door of HUD's office in Gentilly on December 14, 2007. Their objection was to the demolition of four housing complexes that had been virtually destroyed by the storm (Democker, 2007). The actions of these protestors created a national perception that New Orleans did not want all of its citizens to return. This was not true. The city wanted, and still wants, its citizens to return to housing that is livable and that offers the fresh start that reflects the opportunity enjoyed by all who have rebuilt. Those who objected to the demolition of the housing projects wanted nothing more than to return citizens to the substandard living conditions from which they fled rather than working to provide them with the fresh start they deserve. An overwhelming number of New Orleans citizens want the projects demolished, particularly those who had lived in them.

And, of course, the homeless living in tents across the street from City Hall, have commanded the nation's attention. Many of these citizens have refused housing assistance in shelter-type situations. They prefer to live on the street for the reasons many homeless in every city prefer the streets to the shelters. I know what it is like to struggle to be back in New Orleans. But the city, at this point, does not have the housing, does not have jobs that will support the housing we do have, and we do not have the medical resources for the indigent. This sounds cruel, but it is true. For now, everyone who lives in New Orleans must contribute to its rebuilding by working, by spending, by volunteering.

Four weeks had made a difference. The electricity was back on. After roughly seven weeks I was able to have gas service. In that first week a small number of shop owners who had come home opened the doors to their establishments. There were not enough residents to make it a money-making move, but as one said to me, "What's the alternative, stay at home and think about all of this?" And, of course, they knew that as word leaked out that shops selling supplies and food were open, those who could would be encouraged to come back.

But little was open those first weeks. The Jackson Square restaurant *Muriel*'s was cleaning up. Mark, one of the managers who subsequently left New Orleans, was the first person I saw after Vance and my neighbors. He took me through the restaurant.

Food that had been rotting for more than four weeks in 90 degree temperatures had a stench that is indescribable. My tour of *Muriel*'s was the first exposure to what would become a familiar aroma throughout the city. Eventually dead refrigerators lined all the streets of the city. They were beyond cleaning,

and when not properly sealed, they reeked. As more and more restaurant owners returned and the doors to their establishments opened, those cleaning the restaurants wore masks. Pedestrians were left to detour around the block or cover their noses and mouths hoping to get by it before the inevitable vomiting ensued. Today much is different. The city has hired SDT Waste Disposal. The Quarter has never been cleaner, and I believe that their trucks which spray (in the minds of some) a pleasant scent in the streets of the Quarter were inspired by the stench we lived with for so long. It is less stressful to run from a deodorizing scent than it is from a rotting stench.

I am forever grateful to the shopkeepers who provided me with food and drink during those early trips back, saving me from existing on canned peaches or roaming the Quarter in the hope of locating the corners on which pizza and other food were being given away. Strangers shared information about where one could acquire basic supplies and which restaurants had opened their doors: *Bacco* (a Brennan Group restaurant) stands out. Dining in this wonderful restaurant with plastic knives and forks, disposable plates, and plastic cups, we knew the city would survive. I remember the point when the restaurant switched over to real glasses. A red-letter day!

My eyes witnessed the rapid recovery in the French Quarter in the month following the city's reopening, at least it seemed rapid for someone who knew the point from which the recovery began. When my fiancé, Richard, got back from Japan, I was thrilled because the *A&P* was open a few hours each day: fresh bread, meat, toilet paper. But Richard's eyes, a native New Orleanian, told a different story. The shock and sadness in those eyes reflected the unimaginable destruction. New Orleans is my adopted home; but for Richard, it is the place he has known since birth. Seeing his expression, made me rethink the pace of the recovery. Richard had not been an eye-witness to what I had seen. Miniscule steps meant nothing to him who remembered the Quarter as he had left it in early August 2005. The world he had left behind was one I struggled to remember and when successful recoiled from; the transformation was too great to bear. He had not seen it at its worst. As I saw the city through his eyes, I was thankful he had not seen it as I had. For Richard, the destruction was fresh. From that day, I measured progress differently. Modest gains were only that, modest.

Increasingly the neighbors returned to Madison Street, every empty apartment was inhabited by contractors, and some degree of normalcy, what we refer to now as the "new normal" returned. In Metairie (a suburb of New Orleans in Jefferson Parish) shopping malls reopened, movie theaters offered an escape from the daily struggles, residents began rebuilding. Although the supermarkets were stocked rather sparsely, they were open.

Despite the return of Mardi Gras in 2006; Jazz Fest in 2006; the reopening of Harrah's Casino, the Audubon Zoo, and the Aquarium of the Americas, the recovery has been criticized. The outcry on local newscasts from displaced New Orleanians was that citizens wanting to return needed housing, and that they should come first. But these citizens did not have employment, there was little housing to rent, and what was available was expensive. A major American city had been completely shut down for a month. For a month New Orleans had not had any revenue, and the comeback was slow—business by business, shop by shop, home by home. Those of us who were there had to rebuild a city that would offer employment, housing, and recreation. For some it is difficult to understand why "tourist attractions" came back first. Tourism brings in revenue—that is the bottom line—and it is New Orleans number one industry.

When I say I live in New Orleans, people ask me what they can do now for the city. The answer is visit. When you visit, leave Bourbon Street. Go to the Museum of Art, the Ogden Museum, the World War II Museum. Do not miss the Audubon Zoo or the Aquarium of the Americas. New Orleans' residents risked their lives to save those animals and fish—the National Guard fed the alligators in the zoo. Take a ride on the St. Charles Street Car and visit Tulane's campus. The street car's service has just recently been restored to all of St. Charles Avenue. Visit the unique shops on Magazine Street, and when you are in the French Quarter, walk through the residential section of the lower Quarter. There is nothing else like it.

One obstacle to the recovery has been the press's coverage of the city. On January 28, 2008 on the Long Island Railroad returning from JFK and my most recent trip home, I picked up a copy of *Newsday*. In the "At Home" section I read "Carnival season in New Orleans is the prime time to see all the crazy people. Just add their dogs to the mix, as they did yesterday and it becomes the annual Krewe of Barkus parade. Hundreds of dogs and their owners paraded in the French Quarter." Most visitors do not realize that Mardi Gras, once you are away from Bourbon Street and the French Quarter, is actually a family celebration.

The Krewe of Barkus is one of two parades permitted in the French Quarter and the Quarter's only true family event during the Mardi Gras season. Yes, people do dress up their dogs, but they parade with their children. Locals and tourists alike, along with their children and their dogs, line the parade route catching throws while the parading children give treats to the canine spectators. There is room for the "crazies" on Bourbon Street and on other days of Mardi Gras, but the word for Barkus is *sweet*.

Jefferson Parish began Family Gras last year. Neutral grounds are the grass-covered divisions separating the direction of traffic on boulevards. One location of Family Gras is the neutral ground on Veterans Blvd opposite the Lakeside Mall in Metairie. There are concerts, food, costuming; most of all it is an opportunity to create family traditions, just as attending parades Uptown, in Mandeville, in Algiers, in Houma, and scores of other communities provide an opportunity for the citizens to come together year after year with spectators vying

for the best throws and saving them year after year.

The attics of New Orleans are filled with plastic beads, doubloons, and other trinkets. The city shuts down for Mardi Gras. Banks, schools, businesses, government—all are closed for this annual celebration. Virtually every restaurant in the French Quarter is closed on Fat Tuesday. Mardi Gras 2006 was crucial to the city's recovery as was every other festival, museum opening, and restaurant opening. In July 2007 the Essence Festival returned for its yearly July 4th weekend conference. The Saints are in the Superdome, the Hornets and the Voodoo are back in the New Orleans Arena. All have brought jobs and revenue. All gave the tourists a reason to come. Each of these events along with the reopening of every supermarket, the ground-breaking and construction of a new Macy's in Metairie, and every sale made by every shop owner and business have brought the promise of a future.

A continuing struggle has been the result of the shortage of workers, a shortage caused at least in part by the lack of housing. There have been so many volunteers helping to gut houses, helping to build new ones or to renovate damaged houses. Two close friends of mine are just getting back into their homes after two and a half years. They have lived with friends, struggling day after day to find the contractors to renovate severely damaged properties. Both were lucky, having jobs and friends supporting them and putting roofs over their heads during this period. There are thousands like them, all trying to get back.

I worry about the houses being built, no matter how good the intentions. I know what category-four winds feel like. I never hear any discussion regarding the strength of these structures, only about how many can be built in a short period of time. New Orleans does not need a temporary fix that will be wiped out by the next strong storm. It needs solid buildings that can withstand high winds, buildings that are raised to a reasonable height protecting them from the flooding that will come. New Orleans will flood again; we know that. We ask the government to build us levees that will not break, to build (and they are) pumping stations that do not have to be evacuated no matter what the category of the storm, so that when the water tops the levees, it can begin to be pumped as soon as the storm is over.[2]

A friend whose house in Waveland, Mississippi was knocked off its foundation and half of it blown away asked me a few months after the storm if I was angry about the levees. She explained that in Waveland they have no barrier between their homes and the water. They were at the complete mercy of the storm and not subject to the feelings of government betrayal we experienced. I had left anger behind much earlier. It had been replaced with moments of sadness so profound that even tears would not come offering relief. There were moments when I envied those able to rebuild a structure. Putting up dry wall, painting walls, killing mold, is tangible; it is measurable. How does one dry wall one's soul? I told my friend that the mistakes of the past do not make me angry; what would and does make me angry are the mistakes of the present.

I am so proud of the people of New Orleans, of all of Southeast Louisiana, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Their bravery and resilience in rebuilding this region is a marvel, and they have done so out of love for the region they call their home. Despite the slow progress of rebuilding and strengthening the levees, the corrupt politicians (both local and national), the challenges to restoring homes and businesses, the citizens are succeeding. I am blessed to be one of them.

Notes

1 Although evacuation was mandatory and many citizens were forced from their homes by police and the National Guard, if one kept a low profile, had supplies, and appeared self-sufficient, he or she was left alone.

2 I know I have not discussed the restoration of the wetlands. The topic is so important and too large to approach in an essay of this length. Suffice it to say, that without a concurrent effort to restore the wetlands and build adequate levee protection, New Orleans will remain in great danger.

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THE BENEFIT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO URBAN UNIVERSITIES

Community Partnerships as a Means to Improve Image, Benefit Students, and Provide New Sources of Revenue

Ruddys Andrade, Director of the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs

The second sentence of New Jersey City University's mission statement is a striking pledge of commitment to community engagement. It states, "The University is committed to the improvement of the educational, intellectual, cultural, socio-economic, and physical environment of the surrounding urban region and beyond." The nobility of this statement is remarkable, and we should be proud to hold this as a shared goal. However, we should not overlook the practical benefits that derive from a greater level of community engagement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A SOLUTION TO PRESSING PROBLEMS

Three of the major problems faced today by institutions of urban public higher education in New Jersey are declining community trust, changing student needs, and the need for new sources of revenue. A concerted effort by New Jersey City University (NJCU) to undertake more community engagement projects will not solve all of these problems, but it can have a significant impact on each of them. As universities around the country are discovering, increased local involvement strengthens ties between the university and its community, creates opportunities for students, and helps to provide schools with new sources of income.

STRONGER LOCAL TIES

The first of these problems—community trust—has been under the microscope lately amid the ongoing scandals at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. The consequences of an unhealthy relationship between a university and its surrounding urban community are now on display, practically in our backyard.

Civic contribution has been seen as a component of the mission of higher education in the U.S. since at least land-grant days (Alperovitz & Howard, 2005). Whether or not colleges and universities have been successful in this mission is a subject of some debate. However, Americans as a whole believe that one of the functions of higher education is to benefit society (Sandmann & Weertz, 2006). Urban schools in economically challenged environments have a greater need—and more opportunities—to fulfill their social missions.

The faculty and administration at urban institutions can be a valuable source of leadership in communities that too often lack strong non-political leadership. Also, public universities are attended primarily by local students in touch with local needs. These students can act as a bridge between school and environment via community engagement projects. Through these efforts an urban university can increase its visibility, enhance its image, and attract students. Ties with local government can also be strengthened. As Gar Alperovitz and Ted Howard state in *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, "Programs that not only meet the educational needs of the state, but also demonstrate the university's pos-

itive impact on local economic, educational, and social development, are popular with elected officials." (2005)

ADVANTAGES TO STUDENTS

The second problem—the need for universities to keep pace with the changing needs of today's students—is a widely discussed issue faced by all universities (Moody's, 2007). However, urban universities face additional challenges, having student populations that are more diverse, more dynamic, and more prone to non-academic pressures, such as work and family.

Urban students increasingly demand from their schools opportunities for learning outside of the classroom, early introductions to the job market, and more sources of financial assistance. All three of these needs can be met via community engagement projects. By taking part in them, students gain extra learning time outside the classroom, often in conjunction with their peers. They receive hands-on training in their fields and gain early experience and contacts. This is especially valuable for the many students who enter the workforce in the immediate area. In addition, community partnerships often entail direct financial assistance to the students taking part. Students also reap an indirect benefit when their professors get involved in local projects and incorporate their experience into their lessons.

NEW REVENUE SOURCES

Finally, concern over funding for public higher education in our state has returned to the forefront as this past year New Jersey was one of only three states to cut its higher education budget (Cole, 2007). This leaves New Jersey public colleges and universities searching for new funding streams and adopting a more businesslike approach to revenue. However, unlike businesses, educational institutions have to keep one eye on their bottom line without taking the other off of academic integrity.

As state universities seek new sources of income, community oriented grant and contract initiatives take on a new importance. Even in a climate of uncertainty regarding direct state funding, there are myriad sources of federal, state, local, and private funds via community partnership grants and contracts. These sources provide revenue to an institution via salary relief and indirect cost recovery. Perhaps more importantly, raising more money by acquiring these grants increases a school's visibility, thus making it more attractive to future funders. These opportunities can be sought on the institutional level, but also by individual faculty members who can benefit the university as well as their own careers by seeking community grants on their own.

A NATIONAL TREND

Several colleges and universities around the country are reaffirming their commitment to their surrounding communities. The University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) realized the consequences of community disengagement as the environment around its West Philadelphia campus deteriorated in the 1970s and 1980s. UPenn has recently refocused its mission, putting an urban agenda at its center. The early results have been mutually beneficial for UPenn and for Philadelphia (Benson, Harkavy, & Puckett, 2000). Similarly, the University of Maryland began its "Engaged University Initiative" in 2003 (Alperovitz & Howard, 2005). Yale University has partnered with New Haven schools to provide tutoring, internships, and college advisement (Romano, 2006). Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, fearing a decrease in enrollment due to a distressed environment, opened a grades 7-12 high school (U.S.DOE, 2005). These initiatives, along with many like them all over the U.S., comprise an exciting trend and warrant optimism about the future of relationships between schools and their communities and the future of higher education in general. As an institution with a core urban mission, NJCU can help to lead and shape this trend.

The faculty and administration at urban institutions can be a valuable source of leadership….

NJCU'S RECENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

NJCU's efforts to undertake partnerships in New Jersey are ongoing. Over the past two years we have entered partnerships with the Jersey City Municipal Utility Authority and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to undertake major mapping projects. Both projects provide an opportunity for a faculty member, Dr. Bill Montgomery, to lead a team of students in a professional project that serves the public good. The projects also entail financial assistance for the students, as well as administrative cost recovery for NJCU. This past year NJCU partnered with Jersey City Public Schools, via Dr. William Wattenmaker of Psychology, to assist with their psychological testing programs and facilities. The University Academy Charter High School (UACHS), one of NJCU's most ambitious community partnerships, will graduate its third class in June, 2009. UACHS was conceived of and founded by NJCU faculty and administration members in direct response to community concerns about Jersey City public schools, and it was financed with grant funding. It also continues to employ our graduates on its teaching staff and some of its alumni are now among the NJCU student body.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT NJCU

In order to secure our place as a premier urban state university, NJCU must continue its fine work in the field of community engagement. Our faculty and students should be made aware of the benefits of community partnerships and be exposed to more opportunities. Local projects can be an important facet of a more businesslike approach on the part of NJCU to increase customer satisfaction and revenue, while at the same time helping us keep sight of our academic goals,

urban mission, and social responsibility. They can and should be integrated into our curriculum development, job placement, fundraising, and public relations efforts.

As we continue to reach out to our urban environment, we will not only help to improve it but ourselves as well. A more engaged NJCU will be more prosperous, more prestigious, and more effective. We will also serve as a model for other institutions that are just now realizing the benefits of an urban mission, and we will take our place as a leader in this budding national movement.

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CYBORGS & VYBORGS

Technology, Pedagogy, and the New Palimpsest of Identity

Mark Tursi, Assistant Professor of English

How are we, our minds, going to change with the new internet, which has seduced a whole generation into its inanities so that even quite reasonable people will confess that once they are hooked, it is hard to cut free, and they may find a whole day has passed in blogging and blugging etc. (Lessing, 2007).

This scathing rebuke from novelist Doris Lessing in her recent Nobel acceptance speech seems somehow both prescient and archaic. Does her attack on the web and recent technology simply reveal her age and her lack of understanding regarding the web? Is this a new kind of neo-Luddite resurgence that advocates, in her words, "a connection to the Great Tradition" and rejection of new media technologies? Or is Lessing's point truly prophetic? Does her concern reveal a significant trend toward literary and intellectual decadence and decay?

The divide that Lessing underscores is particularly significant on college campuses and in the college classroom. Professors are forced to contend with these issues on a day-to-day basis, whether from a declining "bank" of literary references that students will recognize or a student population more comfortable with a phrase like "LOL" (Laughing Out Loud), "LEMENO" (Let me know), or "YGTBKM" (You've got to be kidding me), than "analyze this passage." Lessing is, I think, legitimately concerned about the "dumbing-down" effect of the internet and the lack of actual books being read. Language is being consumed in greater amounts by more people than ever before, but how are these particular new kinds of digital discourses affecting our minds, learning behaviors, and consciousness? Millions of text messages, emails and blogs crisscross continents and national boundaries everyday. However, does this reading—the language being consumed—contribute to understanding, intelligence, and knowledge? Lessing continues,

> We think of the old adage, 'Reading maketh a full man' – and forgetting about jokes to do with over-eating – reading makes a woman and a man full of information, of history, of all kinds of knowledge. (Lessing, 2007)

She goes on to wonder whether internet reading provides the same kind of fullness.

These expanding technologies—from PowerPoint lectures in the classroom to text messaging on cell phones to the influx of new research databases—must be reckoned with in one way or another. This seems especially true at urban universities where faculty and students are constantly assaulted by jingling cell phones, advertisements in-motion, and the new "smart classrooms." Last semester, students in my composition courses wrote papers on the impact of social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace, and the influence of the "new languages" of text messaging and emailing on education and learning. Over 90% of the students argued that both social networking sites and text messaging have a negative impact on writing skills, learning, and education, more generally. Yet, none of these students was willing to discontinue the use of any of these new technologies. In fact, social networking sites and text messaging continue to grow unabated. Interestingly, students used the word "addiction" in almost every paper. Lessing's quip connecting (or disconnecting) reading and eating may not be that far off, after all.

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The facts are out… and, appropriately, easily available on the internet. The NEA reports a steep decline in reading skills for American children, adolescents and adults. The percentage of 18-20 years olds reading literature has declined from 60% in 1982 to 43% in 2002. This is disconcerting in itself, but as Matt Burriesci of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs suggests, the real concern in this trend seems to be the potential negative impact on the very foundations that sustain an educated community:

> Employers now rank reading and writing as top deficiencies in new hires. But [. . .] the most troubling finding of the report is the link between reading proficiency and a healthy, culturally vibrant, and informed citizenry. Good readers play a crucial role in enriching the nation's cultural and civic life. They are more than three times as likely to patronize cultural institutions. They are more likely to play sports, and they exercise on a more regular basis. They are also much more likely to vote, and they are more inclined to volunteer for charitable work. (Burriesci, 2008)

As educators, this is something we already know—reading doesn't simply enrich a citizenry, it shapes and sustains it.

As an English professor and poet, I am profoundly interested in the way in which language changes and evolves, as well as how pedagogy and teaching strategies necessarily follow these linguistic transformations. It seems today, web-based technology is the dominant transformative force in both the classroom and on the page (or, screen, as it were). I must confess, I use PowerPoint lectures, Web-CT, and SmartBoard. I have even begun designing my own web pages. I also edit an exclusively online literary journal, and I have taught courses that were exclusively online. So, I am no neo-Luddite.

…reading doesn't simply enrich a citizenry, it shapes and sustains it.

Partly what brings me to use these new technologies is that students expect it. It's what they are used to and it's what they know. Another reason is, undeniably, its potential for enhanced learning; web-based technology provides almost limitless resources and possibilities for research, scholarship, and teaching. From multiple research databases to PowerPoint lectures to You Tube's "on demand" library of videos with readings, lectures, and film clips, the possibility of enriching the classroom via technology is endless. But, a third and disconcerting reason involves students' attention spans.

It seems, almost inarguably, that the ability of average college students to maintain attention, concentration, and focus either in the classroom or at their desks, has diminished as a result of various new communication technologies (Facebook, texting, blogging, etc.). As a result, it has become increasingly difficult to keep them engaged with the material. (Bugeja , 2006) [1] As a result, I have found it increasingly necessary to provide a "pedagogical stage" that incorporates multi-media strategies, including digital, voice, and visual technology in order to keep the class interested and engaged. As educators, it seems, we can no longer count on our "mere words," class discussions, and the material itself to provide the catalyst for engagement with a text. Therefore, we find ourselves in the position—sometimes uncomfortably—of relying on the dynamism provided by technology.

Like Doris Lessing, I am anxious about the way recent technological innovations have propelled students into what seems like a quagmire of an inane and largely valueless techno-digital swamp. Students are reading all right, but what they're reading is small chunks of language that have more to do with a new commodification of identity—a marketing of the self and the ego—than with critical or even imaginative thinking.

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Michael Bugeja, professor and director of the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Iowa, argues that students today "view technology largely as a means of delivering entertainment"(Bugeja, 2006) and not, as educators and university administrators would like to think, as a way to learn and challenge their minds. Bugeja further suggests that recent information technologies teach multi-tasking rather than critical thinking. Young people today jump from site to site, consuming snack-sized bits and bytes of language, often never reading the complete text.

Christine Rosen, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, calls this new commodification of self, *egocasting*:

> […] the thoroughly personalized and extremely narrow pursuit of one's personal taste [. . .] [Facebook] encourages egocasting even though it claims to further 'social networking' and build communities. People who use networks like Facebook have a tendency to describe themselves like products. (Bugeja , 2006)

This creates classic textbook Marxist and Weberian alienation. But, it goes one step further—an even more complete and fully realized alienation—whereby we create ourselves as products, self-fashioned as Foucault would suggest, but entirely separated and estranged from our own identities. It's as if Lacan's mirror stage has reappeared as a second fragmented break from the "Real." The image reflected this time is a falsely imagined self, reflected in another falsely imagined production of the self, which is re-imagined and severed by a falsely—and perhaps idealistically—imagined virtual self. The virtual self is image and text: pictures and digitally coded language that create a kind of palimpsest of a palimpsest, but the palimpsests are screens and codes. If anyone wonders just what the negative implications of "Postmodern condition" might be, look no further.

Jean Baudrillard famously (or infamously) suggests that computers and other "intelligent machines" were created to release us from responsibility:

> If men create intelligent machines, or fantasize about them, it is either because they secretly despair of their own intelligence or because they are in danger of succumbing to the weight of a monstrous and useless intelligence which they seek to exorcize by transferring it to machines, where they

> can play with it and make fun of it. By entrusting this burdensome intelligence to machines we are released from any responsibility to knowledge [. . .] It is not for nothing that they are described as 'virtual,' for they put thought on hold indefinitely, tying its emergence to the achievement of a complete knowledge. The act of thinking itself is put off for ever. (Baudrillard, 1993)

In his characteristically hyperbolic manner, Baudrillard explores the way in which machines and computers actually serve to free us of any real intelligence. He argues that these new technologies are not alienating, as I suggest above, but that they "form an integrated circuit" with subjects. They are like transparent prostheses, "integrated into the body to the point of being almost part of its genetic make-up" (Baudrillard , 1993).

Donna Haraway's Cyborg seems to be an ever increasing reality (Haraway , 1991) .[2] We are attached, inescapably to our physical technologies: from contact lenses and glasses to Bluetooths and iPods. These are part of our very being. Admittedly, the very way I see the world, literally, is contingent upon wearing my glasses. My glasses are part of my existence, my being, as it were. So, is it too much of a stretch to see that these other devices will (or already are) a fundamental and inextricable part of our bodies?

Returning to Doris Lessing for a moment, she seems to ask that we slow down and think about the direction in which these new technologies are taking us, as individuals and as a society:

> What has happened to us is an amazing invention—computers and the internet and TV. It is a revolution. This is not the first revolution the human race has dealt with. The printing revolution, which did not take place in a matter of a few decades, but took much longer, transformed our minds and ways of thinking. A foolhardy lot, we accepted it all, as we always do, never asked, What is going to happen to us now [. . .]? (Lessing, 2007)

Indeed, what will happen to us with the invention, creation, and dissemination of our new virtual identities? How will these mediums impact pedagogy, epistemology, and consciousness?

In *Image, Music, Text*, Roland Barthes (1978) explores the fundamental link between teaching and speech. He points out that the connection is a very old one—think rhetoric, think Socratic method—but he suggests a more recent crisis in the opposition between speech and writing (also exhaustively explored by Jacques Derrida) that impacts the very structure of learning and knowledge acquisition. The teacher-student relationship, according to Barthes, is a psychoanalytic one:

> […as] the teacher speaks to his audience, the Other is always there, *puncturing* his discourse[…]. The very act of teaching brings us right to the analytic couch. Knowledge is what is left over from the ego: "the 'good' teacher, the 'good' student are those who accept philosophically the plurality of their determinations, perhaps because they know that the truth of a relationship of speech is elsewhere."(Barthes, 1978)

For philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, human interaction and understanding is more visual than verbal. It is the face of the Other that summons us to acknowledge, apprehend and understand; human understanding is made possible via the gaze of the other. He means it both literally and metaphorically. Ethics precedes ontology. The face, according to Levinas, is "the site of the sensible." The engagement with expression is what creates ethical behavior. In other words, the face "teaches" us or instructs us to act ethically, or at least be aware of what ethical behavior is. True understanding necessarily involves face-to-face confrontation. A question demands a response and requires a certain focus of attention. The face beckons this forth. Alphonso Lingis, Levinas's primary translator, explains this type of engagement:

> A face faces to express meanings. A face faces to express subjective feelings. More than "express"—there are no meanings without a blank wall on which signs are inscribed and effaced; there is no self-conscious consciousness without black holes where its states of pleasure and displeasure turn [. . .]. A face is a field that accepts some expressions and connections and neutralizes others. It is a screen and a framework. To be confronted with a face is to envision a certain range of things that could be expressed on it and to have available a certain range of things one could address to it. One sees what one might say, what one should not have said. (Lingis, 2000)

The argument here is not as reductive as it seems "at face value," so to speak. It's not as if Levinas or Lingis suggest that visually impaired people are incapable of true apprehension and identification with other people or that someone's gaze necessarily results in an authentic ethical behavior. But, both philosophers do suggest that apprehension, understanding, and knowledge necessarily involve presence, interaction.

The face is the site of visual—or for some—tactile understanding. The self is manifested as face and the face-to-face interaction becomes a presentation of oneself "in a mode irreducible to manifestation" (Levinas, 1991). There is no intermediary of an image. Or as Levinas (1991) suggests, the "whole of reality bears on its face its own allegory." When language is added to the equation, we see that it is inextricably linked to the face—it reveals, announces, and brings about the expression of the other; it guarantees presence.

Writing becomes a kind of "mute sign" for Levinas, whereas speech guarantees the face of the other and therefore an ethical interaction. So, for both Barthes and Levinas, human understanding is a fundamentally verbal-visual enterprise; it requires real human interaction not mediated by or filtered through writing or, nowadays, the digital field.

I am not debunking Derrida's critique of metaphysics and his argument that writing exists prior to speech (something I essentially agree with), but the importance of the face-to-face interaction between teacher and student supported by Barthes and Levinas needs closer consideration. No, that seems rather soft; it needs to be reapplied. The fact is, these issues have been explored and examined, again and again, yet nothing seems to be happening, except a wholesale increase in social networking

sites, text messaging, online learning, and digital discourse. I certainly do not advocate putting a stop to these communication technologies all together (or even partially). However, should we continue willy-nilly incorporating new technologies simply because they are, just that, new technologies?

Based almost entirely on personal experience, I have found that more learning occurs in the classroom, the face-to-face, verbal encounter than via the digital, online medium. I don't mean to suggest that students and professors don't work hard in these courses—in fact, I've heard just the opposite—and I myself work tremendously long and hard while teaching online courses. This is largely because these courses necessitate the creation of a written text of a written text of a written text, rather than verbal discussions and dialogue. Everything produced—from the teachers and the students—is a written text, so the actual labor is more intensive. But, that doesn't automatically translate into increased learning.

In these courses, students are denied the type of interaction that Barthes and Levinas argue is quintessential for apprehension and learning. I am NOT suggesting that online courses should be discontinued; I think they are profoundly interesting and beneficial, and I will continue to teach them. However, like Lessing, I worry about the cumulative effect of all these digital and virtual technologies on the university campus and the wider community.

A short stroll around campus at NJCU, or virtually anywhere in the greater New York area, will likely mean a "run-in" with people chatting loudly on Bluetooths or headsets and/or texting frantically on their Blackberries or cell phones. The majority of my students seem hard pressed—very hard pressed—to make it through class without sending a text message (except perhaps with Draconian methods of punishment in place). The campus seems overrun by Cyborgs connected to their electronic devices and scurrying to their computer pods to check their profiles and number of "hits" from their virtual friends.

When I see this, I must admit that I am reminded of E.M. Forster's chilling 1909 short story, "The Machine Stops," a story I first read as an undergraduate in a political science course in the early 1990's. In this fictional tale, all human beings live in a computerized cell controlled by a global machine that provides for all their "needs." People hardly ever leave their own compartments and almost never interact with others in a face-to-face encounter. All stimuli are virtual. One of the characters, Kuno, finally rebels, and in a plea to his mother says:

> The Machine is much, but it is not everything. I see something like you in this plate, but I do not see you. I hear something like you through this telephone, but I do not hear you. That is why I want you to come. Pay me a visit, so that we can meet face to face, and talk about the hopes that are in my mind. (Forster, 2008)

Admittedly, this is an exaggerated and bleak image. Thankfully, the Student Center is still brimming with the chatter of students, staff, and teachers. The coffee shops on campus are often full and laughter abounds, even on cold wintry evenings. But Forster's story seems increasingly realistic—the mark, perhaps, of great science fiction.

It may appear that I am simply resisting the so called progress of technology, but, that is not the case. A return to Haraway's metaphor of the Cyborg, might better illustrate my point. Haraway's Cyborg is a being who resists conventional dualities and linear thinking, a being who accepts multiple ways of knowing and alternative conceptions of reality. But this Cyborg has morphed somehow. Or, perhaps a mutant counterpart has emerged: a proto-Vyborg. That is, a Cyborg so stuck in the virtual that its thought processes seem to occur in rapidly moving thumbs and hyper-tasking vision.

The Vyborg does not bring us closer to understanding human experience through the virtual, but rather, pushes us further into that inane virtual-digital quagmire where we drown in bit sized pieces of idiotic language or spin-out layer after layer of falsified palimpsests that pose as our identities. This is a movement further and further away from what Haraway calls "the originally literate mother who teaches survival."

This reference to mothers, literate, well-read mothers, is one that Lessing also makes. In the final paragraphs of her speech, Lessing describes a young African mother standing in line for hours waiting for her water ration with a baby on her hip, reading *Anna Karenina*; a striking juxtaposition of poverty and literacy, despair and enlightenment. It is an image that may serve to shake us, and hopefully our students, loose, even if momentarily, from our cell phones, iPods, and Blackberries, and toward classroom discussions, lectures, readings, face-to-face intellectual debate, and, just maybe, the printed page.

In the final paragraphs of her speech Lessing emphasizes the importance of the imagination in shaping our identities and our communities:

> The storyteller is deep inside every one of us. The story-maker is always with us. Let us suppose our world is ravaged by war, by the horrors that we all of us easily imagine. Let us suppose floods wash through our cities, the seas rise. But the storyteller will be there, for it is our imaginations which shape us, keep us, create us -for good and for ill. It is our stories that will recreate us, when we are torn, hurt, even destroyed. It is the storyteller, the dream-maker, the myth-maker, that is our phoenix, that represents us at our best, and at our most creative.
>
> That poor girl trudging through the dust, dreaming of an education for her children, do we think that we are better than she is—we, stuffed full of food, our cupboards full of clothes, stifling in our superfluities?
>
> I think it is that girl, and the women who were talking about books and an education when they had not eaten for three days, that may yet define us. (Lessing, 2007)

So, it seems I must conclude as might be expected from an English professor. That is, it is in our literature and in our own imaginations where we find the most profound lessons for understanding each other. Or, perhaps as Lessing seems to suggest, we might find this deeper understanding in our face-to-face encounters, talking about books, talking about ideas.

Notes

1 This concern with the decreasing attention span of students as a result of new media technology has been a discussion for, at least, the last 10 years. The evidence isn't entirely conclusive, but most educators tend to agree that the ability of students to concentrate in the classroom has diminished. See for example, Bill Schackner's article, "Education Online: Bit by Bit, Computers Alter How We Read (Pittsburgh Post Gazette, 16 Oct. 2007) for just one recent summary of the debate.

2 Haraway's "Cyborg Theory" is a metaphor for a Postmodern Feminism that suggest the traditional binaries of natural and artificial, machine and organism are simplistic and erroneous dualities like the traditional gender distinctions. She writes: "Cyborg politics is the struggle for language and the struggle against perfect communication, against the one code that translates all meaning perfectly, the central dogma of phallogocentrism. That is why cyborg politics insist on noise and advocate pollution, rejoicing in the illegitimate fusions of animal and machine. These are the couplings which make Man and Woman so problematic, subverting the structure of desire, the force imagined to generate language and gender, and so subverting the structure and modes of reproduction of 'Western' identity, of nature and culture, of mirror and eye, slave and master, body and mind. 'We' did not originally choose to be cyborgs, but choice grounds a liberal politics and epistemology that imagines the reproduction of individuals before the wider replications of 'texts'."(176)

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Is Outsourcing Hurting the Economy of the United States?

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Outsourcing means relocation of production from a home country to foreign countries. It is an effective cost-saving strategy whereby a company purchases products or services from an outside source at a lower cost due to cheaper labor.

Outsourcing is not something new. Some companies have chosen cheap labor from around the globe for decades, making cars in Mexico, toys in Taiwan, micro-processors and shirts in Malaysia. However, now even United States workers in the service sector are losing their jobs to overseas workers in fields such as accounting, engineering, technical support, and many other professions. Other companies view outsourcing as an opportunity to start trade relations. Take the example of Boeing, which is actively engaged in contracting labor in South Africa, Italy, China, Russia, and other parts of the globe. Boeing claims it isn't just hunting for cheap labor. Rather, it outsources work in countries where it is also trying to sell planes. More importantly, it must build planes with fewer and more productive workers in order to stay competitive because it has no other choice.

Many companies have outsourced jobs in software engineering, data processing, and medical technology services to emerging economies like China, Brazil, and India, where they can reduce payrolls by 50 percent without reducing the quality of services. Others have moved call centers and telemarketing jobs outside of the U.S. Credit card companies and technical support for software companies and financial services are also moving to countries where labor can be acquired for as little as one-tenth of its cost in the United States.

WHAT IS THE DEBATE OVER OUTSOURCING?

The debate over outsourcing does not have much to do with globalization, but, instead, with how nations allocate the benefits of economic integration. Trade in labor services, like any other international trade in goods, benefits the U.S. Outsourcing jobs abroad keeps companies profitable due to cost savings, which, in turn, allows companies to keep their prices low and to provide better consumer services in the U.S. In addition, it allows for the retention of other kinds of jobs in the U.S. It also enables companies to invest more in new technologies that can possibly create more jobs at home. The U.S., being the world's most innovative, creative, and flexible economy, is accordingly positioned to benefit most from this opportunity.

In order to reduce operating costs, many U.S. businesses are increasingly shifting jobs to lower-wage countries—a form of offshore outsourcing; but such outsourcing causes dramatically contrasting effects. While it benefits the U.S. economy, outsourcing can also lead to layoffs and the dislocation of U.S. workers. And while some believe it will strengthen the U.S. economy in the long-run, off-shoring is often also blamed for the agonizingly slow pace of job growth and the increased pace of job loss in the U.S. For example, due to the revolution in information technology, the cost of international telecommunications has fallen dramatically, benefiting businesses and consumers, while at the same time resulting in the loss of jobs in those sectors that can be performed offshore for lower wages.

WHY DO MANY ECONOMISTS BELIEVE OUTSOURCING IS GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY?

Many economists argue that outsourcing is just another form of free trade which benefits the economy. With outsourcing, U.S. companies are employing workers offshore at lower cost to become more efficient and productive. Companies usually pass on this lower cost in the form of lower prices for the goods they

sell in the U.S. which benefits consumers. Without outsourcing, these goods would be too expensive to produce in the U.S., and the companies could no longer be competitive. Furthermore, some believe that certain sectors of the economy would lose jobs anyway as soon as these countries to which they are outsourced start producing these products and services on their own without any foreign investment from U.S. companies.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO THE UNITED STATES FROM OUTSOURCING?

Off-shoring is not really a zero-sum game; rather, off-shoring involves mutual gain. The receiving country (say India or China) gains a third of each dollar in the form of wages paid to local workers, profits earned by local suppliers, and taxes collected from second-tier suppliers to the outsourcing companies. However, the gain to the U.S. economy is much larger and includes hefty cost savings by U.S. companies. These savings can be reinvested in new business opportunities or can be used to pay additional dividends to shareholders, or both.

Additionally, some companies have found that offshore workers are highly motivated and that they perform better, particularly in low-skill jobs which suffer from high turnover at home. Consumers benefit as well when companies pass on savings in the form of lower prices, which is similar to benefits received from free trade in goods.

Proponents defend outsourcing because it offers the U.S. a tremendous opportunity. It helps the U.S. develop trade relations with those nations to which it is outsourcing that can promote new exports as well as long-term trading opportunities. Detractors, however, point to the example of Japan after the Second World War when the U.S. developed trade relations and found its markets were flooded with cheap exports. By the 1980s, there was widespread fear that Japan's economic development was going to threaten the U.S. economy. There are now similar fears that economic development in China and India will threaten U.S. jobs and the broader economy.

However, proponents argue that if it was not for offshore outsourcing, new export opportunities would not exist for the U.S. to expand into the prime overseas markets such as India and China. These new markets offer the U.S. more business, cheap labor, and a tremendous opportunity for economic growth and expansion in the long-run. Supporters of offshore outsourcing further argue that such outsourcing increases our exports and saves companies money—anywhere from 40% to 80%—some of which is passed on to consumers and shareholders.

Gregory Mankiw, President Bush's chief economic advisor, praises the off-shoring of U.S. jobs as a "good thing." To him, it is a new way of doing international trade that leads to gains for both countries. The Mckinsey Global Institute, a think tank, predicts that white-collar off-shoring will increase by 30% to 40% by 2010.

On the downside, however, there are short-run job losses due to offshore outsourcing. Boston-based Forrester Consultancy estimates the job-loss rate to be 12,000 to 15,000 per month and concludes that by 2015 roughly 3.3 million service jobs will move offshore, including payroll processing, accounting, and information technology.

Currently the U.S. economy employs approximately 130 million non-farm workers, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Based on the Mckinsey analysis, in the last 10 years the economy created an average of 3.5 million new private-sector jobs a year. Thus, even if the economy continues to generate new jobs in the long run, the current wave of outsourcing will shift the types of jobs created in the U.S. economy and cause layoffs and difficulties among thousands of white-collar service workers when they lose their jobs due to off- shoring.

OTHER BENEFITS

On the upside, in contrast, off-shoring yields more benefits than problems for the U.S. economy. First, the receiving country that sells these services will also import goods and services from the U.S., including telecommunications equipment, legal and financial expertise, cars and clothes, etc. In addition, many foreign outsourcing firms are owned in whole or in part by U.S. companies, including Microsoft, IBM, and General Electric, all of which repatriate their earnings. All together, the direct benefits to the U.S. from corporate savings, additional exports, and repatriated profits total 67 percent of every dollar, which is twice the benefit to the receiving country. If corporations invest their savings in new businesses in the U.S., then domestically more jobs will be created.

The manufacturing sector has experienced similar ups and downs since 1979. The U.S. has lost more than 2 million manufacturing jobs in the last 25 years, but it has also created increased employment by creating 43 million jobs in other areas, such as education and health services, professional and business services, trade and transportation, leisure and hospitality, and financial services. Also, even though it has lost manufacturing jobs, the U.S. has continued to increase manufacturing output due to higher productivity as a result of advances in technology.

Lastly, outsourcing has allowed companies—Intel, Microsoft, and pharmaceutical firms—to bring more money back into the economy to invest in research and development, thus creating more jobs, and this appears to be the wave of the future.

WHAT DO CRITICS SAY ABOUT OUTSOURCING?

Many argue that the kinds of jobs that are vulnerable to offshore outsourcing have increased dramatically over the past five years due to advances in technology and low-cost telecommunication services. Critics find it hard to believe that the economy will create new and better jobs if we outsource the current ones. When manufacturing jobs were lost to other countries during 1979-99, workers had to be retrained to find new positions. Some went back to school/college to complete degrees and sought white-collar jobs. This worked well in the expanding economy of the 1990s. But now, critics argue about

the type of training our current workers should seek given the new wave of high-tech outsourcing. Critics ask what engineers, IT programmers, accountants, architects or CPAs are supposed to do next if their jobs are outsourced.

Some 30 percent of the U.S. workforce is vulnerable to off shoring. The other 70 percent working in the services sector such as retail, tourism, restaurants and hotels, healthcare, etc., are not vulnerable because these jobs must take place locally. However, these 30 percent may not be fully re-employed. Some of them may have to take pay cuts as has happened in the manufacturing industries in the last twenty years or so.

Critics argue that even though outsourcing frees up labor that can be employed in other jobs, it creates hardships for those who are laid off. Furthermore, off-shoring is not only taking away low-wage jobs but also making it harder for more and more college graduates to keep their jobs.

…new markets offer the U.S. … a tremendous opportunity for economic growth and expansion…

More than two decades ago, the loss of high-paying automobile and manufacturing jobs ignited fears of the destruction of the U.S. economy. However, the strong economic growth and innovations of the 1990s created far more and better jobs to replace them. Now the same scenario is being repeated in the IT service sector as so many educated programmers and engineers lose jobs to Chinese, Indian, and Philippine programmers and engineers who can perform the same job for less. Some hopefuls are speculating that as the U.S. economy evolves, innovation will create high-paying jobs. Others argue that the outsourcing of highly skilled service jobs is risky to the U.S. economy. It is not a two-way street as in the trade of goods. Countries with a huge untapped pool of educated and skilled low-wage workers combined with the absence of many regulatory bureaucracies such as the IRS, EPA, OSHA, EEOC, etc., are bound to benefit greatly due to globally mobile capital and technology. Critics are also concerned about the recent improvement in output but the less than proportionate increase in job growth, especially good-paying jobs. Even the new jobs that are created are threatened by future outsourcing.

The skeptics of outsourcing argue that in the manufacturing era, a firm's assets, such as plant, equipment, machines etc. were tangible. In the current information-based economy, however, the bulk of a firm's assets include creativity, brain power, human capital, and knowledge, which are worth more to the firm. Those who recognize that the knowledge assets of workers are vital assets usually have an advantage. New strategies, ideas, and concepts give a competitive edge over their rivals to companies by providing the companies with a new identity and value in the market place. Critics ask how we could allow these knowledge assets to be transferred overseas and expect no adverse impact on our economy.

Starting in early 2007, baby boomers started retiring in large numbers, which suggests a surge in demand for workers to replace them. But why should we automatically assume that U.S. workers will replace them? Isn't it possible that these jobs could also be outsourced offshore? Finally, as there is continued improvement in technology and telecommunications, there will be continued incentives for even more firms to off-shore jobs.

SOME SUGGESTIONS TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF OUTSOURCING

Critics of off-shoring suggest giving tax incentives to American companies to keep jobs in the U.S. Some even propose barring the outsourcing of taxpayer-funded work, such as the processing of welfare checks or other work done for the Federal Government. However, many economists believe that these steps are a form of economic protectionism that will slow the U.S. economic recovery.

Even former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank, Alan Greenspan, warns the U.S. not to increase trade barriers to keep jobs in the U.S., suggesting, as in the past, that our economy is resilient enough to generate new jobs to replace old ones. The offshore efficiencies will help fuel the U.S. economy by sparking more innovation. If we build barriers against countries that are snatching U.S. jobs, we risk a backlash whereby our trading partners can create their own barriers. We would be violating global trade laws if we impose tariffs on imports. Our concern should be to help workers who are disproportionately hit by off-shoring; but we should not stop off-shoring since offshore outsourcing increases wealth in the U.S. economy.

A capitalist economy is based on the assumption that competition is good because it avoids the wastage of resources. In contrast, firms in a knowledge-based economy, due to the relentless competition that global outsourcing has imposed on workers, have taken us to a level we have never before experienced. In an information-based economy, workers need to be engaged in cooperative relationships and in the exchange of ideas over a long period of time. Short-term gains from outsourcing jobs are argued to be counter-productive and destructive to the promotion of sophisticated creative-thinking and problem-solving skills. Some firms, in order to survive competition in this global market, are trading off long-term interests for immediate returns. By doing so, firms are not wisely looking for better alternatives to protect the knowledge assets and talent of workers. Instead, their short-term solution is to settle for the next wave of low-wage workers to combat competition with other firms. The real strategic gain lies in optimizing knowledge and leveraging ideas over the long haul. Also to be considered is danger to both personal and national security when firms outsource high-tech jobs. Thus, our economy needs some sort of government intervention not only to protect domestic jobs but also domestic companies.

The U.S. IT industry will continue to thrive because our strength lies in innovation and quality. We may not win the battle over lower wages, but we are well equipped to win the battle over innovation and development because United States IT workers are still the best in the world. With baby boomers getting closer to retirement, the economy should have a shortage of skilled workers in the next ten to twenty years. Efforts to prohibit government contracts from being fulfilled by foreign workers will, in the long run, hurt the U.S. economy by driving up the cost of these contracts, and, additionally, it will create a negative effect in other countries, causing a sharp downturn in the buying of U.S. products.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR U.S. WORKERS WHO LOSE THEIR JOBS

Even staunch advocates of free trade acknowledge that outsourcing is painful. It leads to layoffs and the dislocation of workers. Most people recommend training and relocation assistance to laid off workers. In addition, many analysts call for improving unemployment benefits and health insurance for those who are in between jobs until they find new jobs, provided that the cost be absorbed by those companies that benefit from off-shoring. Still others recommend improving our educational system and preparing workers for skilled jobs of the 21st century to help U.S. develop new inventions, which is the strength of our country. It may hurt now, but more complex and better paying positions could replace disappearing jobs in the future. Thus, instead of trying to pass laws against off shoring, the U.S. government should encourage the growth of the IT sector by employing it to improve the country's transportation, criminal justice, education and health-care systems.

Of course, outsourcing is not good for the whole economy. It will cost some workers their jobs. By providing job-training opportunities as well as mandated severance packages and portable health and pension benefits, we can reduce the pain and, at the same time, enjoy the benefits of free trade. The government should find ways to accommodate service-sector workers who lost jobs due to outsourcing by allowing them to benefit from retraining and income assistance, which are currently available for displaced manufacturing-sector workers. Protectionist policies would only damage our economy.

The cost advantage of outsourcing has been the most crucial factor for many corporate executives. Many companies are following in the foot-steps of Boeing to remain competitive in today's global economy. They have no choice but to outsource jobs. Whereas car manufacturing has already shifted to Japan, now financial analysis, telemarketing, and software development jobs are heading to India, China, and elsewhere. Outsourcing may be an unavoidable chapter in the economic history of the 21st century, which could begin an era of the makeover of the U.S. workforce, whereby employers will be connected to the global workforce through networks.

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The Urban University's Role in Health & Wellness Education and Preventing Obesity

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As an educator in the field of kinesiology (the study of human movement) and a fitness instructor for over 20 years, I believe that the urban institution has a responsibility to educate people about the significance of living a physically active life. It is not enough to espouse the values of developing well rounded and educated individuals without providing them with the necessary tools to develop effective ways of establishing a life of wellness that includes a focus on physical, emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual health. It does not matter what GPA, degree, or occupation a person may have if he or she is not healthy enough to really enjoy it.

The current state of the general population's health is alarming when you look at the statistics for obesity and related diseases. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC, 2007), it is estimated that 33% of the total adult population over the age of 20 is obese. The statistics are even more alarming when looking at the rates of obesity for ethnic minorities. Approximately 45% of Blacks and 36.8% of Mexican American adults are obese compared to 30% of White adults (NCHS, 2007). The prevalence of obesity for Latino females is 33%, and African American females 36%, with the highest rate of morbid obesity in African American females at 15% (Crespo & Arbesman, 2003). If you include the number of individuals considered overweight, then the rates climb even higher: 66% of the population is either overweight or obese, and one out of seven children is overweight or obese (Brown, 2005). If these same statistics were reported for illiteracy or some other cognitive deficiency, universities across the country would make it a priority to educate the public and improve that condition. So why hasn't this happened with health and wellness education at our colleges and universities? We are in a crisis if you look at the rates of obesity and diseases that are related to physical inactivity and poor nutrition. Many serious or even fatal diseases can be prevented, or their risks reduced, if people simply exercise more and develop healthier eating habits. Heart disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, particular forms of cancer, stroke, and depression are all conditions that can be positively modified through exercise and good nutrition.

Many school districts and physical educators in grades K-12 have recognized this crisis and have taken steps to modify this condition by improving the quality of physical education, requiring students to participate, and holding schools more accountable by getting students to develop healthier physical activity and eating habits. In a recent report published by the *New York Times* (Sack, 2007), it was noted that schools offer healthier lunches, allow less junk food to be sold at bake sales and from vending machines, and require more physical education classes. It was also noted that school districts across the country require more undergraduate training for their physical education teachers and that schools which require physical education for students increased to 93%. This same effort should be happening at the college level. College is a time when most adults will develop lifelong habits. This is a great opportunity to positively influence adults to become more active, teach and improve motor skills, provide accurate information on nutri-

The current state of the general population's health is alarming…

tion and exercise, and teach them how to effectively incorporate a lifestyle of wellness into their daily living.

In the case of NJCU, which serves a very diverse student body and exists in a multicultural environment, I believe we have an even greater responsibility to educate individuals on the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This is because our student body is predominantly made up of ethnic minorities and females, those who are most affected by obesity and related diseases. Based on data collected by NJCU Institutional Research, our full-time undergraduate enrollment is 4,302; of this, Hispanics make up 34.3%, Blacks 18.9%, and females 62.3%. The rates are similar for part-time undergraduates. While participating in a course that focuses on issues of exercise and nutrition can benefit everyone, it can be especially important for those who are at greater risk for obesity and disease. Many of our students do not exercise regularly or participate in regular physical activities that help to improve health and quality of life. Based on self-reports from students at NJCU, many of them suffer from health conditions that can be improved through regular physical activity and better nutrition, and they are ill informed about basic principles of exercise, health, and wellness.

Based on a survey conducted within the Fitness, Exercise and Sports Department (FES), it appears that students at NJCU may be willing to accept a fitness course requirement. Students who have participated in an FES course usually report positive gains from their participation. Information gathered from a study conducted within the FES Department, which collected responses from 200 students, strongly supports the positive impact the FES Department is having on students, the students' desire to have an FES course fill a general education requirement, and the need for additional offerings related to physical activity and exercise science. A basic summary of the results concludes that 78.5% of the students support an FES course as a general education requirement; 84.5% believed the FES course met their expectations, 90% believed the FES course was valuable to his/her personal development; 54.5% would be interested in a fitness major; and 48.5% would be interested if additional fitness certifications were offered. Students routinely comment that they are happy to take a class that allows them to focus on themselves while still learning a set of skills and knowledge that they can apply to their everyday efforts to live healthy lifestyles.

Colleges and universities are often the last chance to make lasting impressions in terms of a formal education for adults. In the battle against obesity and physical inactivity, colleges can be a powerful force to educate students, provide fitness resources for the surrounding community, and to teach the principles of exercise and fundamentals of energy balance and good nutrition. College is a time when many students develop lifelong connections and lifetime habits. We should be able to positively influence students to adopt a lifestyle of health and wellness. Sparling (2003) suggests that college is an unrecognized agent of change in combating inactivity related diseases, that the trend of eliminating and reducing college physical education requirements needs to be re-examined based on the general health of our population, and that colleges are in a unique position to influence the long-term physical activity habits of adults. Many would argue that fitness related courses should not be required for college students because most of them get enough exercise on their own; however, research indicates that is not true at all. The CDC (2007) reports that only 40% of college students and 32% of 18-24 year olds in the general public engage in regular fitness activities.

As a professional in higher education and the fitness industry, it has been my experience that most adults do not know the basic principles of exercise or the components of fitness; many lack effective motor skill coordination and the knowledge of fundamental nutrition. Therefore, to expect people to be able to effectively establish healthy exercise habits and nutrition on their own is unrealistic without providing some type of formal education in these areas and the opportunity to put them into practice through actual physical activity that is monitored by a professional.

NJCU can do this by requiring students to take a class in the FES Department, or at the very least, including courses from this department to satisfy general education requirements for graduation. This second option will encourage more students to take a course in fitness, which will in turn expose them to learning more about exercise, fitness, and a lifestyle of health and wellness. New Jersey is one of the states that require high school students to have daily health and physical education, and some of our public universities also require students to take a health and fitness related course in order to meet graduation requirements. NJCU can join the ranks of schools and universities that have taken a stand to promote personal health and wellness by placing a greater focus on physical education and fitness requirements.

Healthy People 2010 (2007) is a federal initiative set forth to improve the health of the nation, similar to that of NJCU's Vision 2010 set forth to improve the quality of education. Key components of Healthy People 2010 are to focus on disease prevention and increase levels of physical activity within the general public. Regular exercise and fitness related activities for college students satisfy the goals of both programs; however, the university has to take a stronger stand on promoting health and wellness in its course requirements. It is from this viewpoint that students will truly be better equipped to fight obesity and related diseases that affect so many, and that the university is educating students to truly

practice "responsible citizenship" by addressing personal health and well-being.

In short, physical education is not what it used to be years ago. Physical education has moved away from a model that was heavily based on teaching sports and hiring athletic coaches without teacher training to teach students about the importance of being active. Today's approach is based more on fitness, health and wellness, exposure to a greater variety of recreational activities, thus providing students with more options for staying physically active. Health is a state of being physically and psychologically well and not simply the absence of disease. Wellness is the ongoing pursuit of achieving balance in the physical, psychological, spiritual, emotional, and social contexts of life. We have a responsibility to help students achieve this as they study to graduate and become productive citizens of society.

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SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS THROUGH *GoGLOBAL*

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We have inherited a large house, a great "world house" in which we have to live together—black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu—a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace… we cannot ignore the larger world in which we are also dwellers.—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., 1964 NOBEL PRIZE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

The GoGlobal Committee was formed and charged by Dr. Joanne Z. Bruno, Vice President for Academic Affairs, in order to support and expand international activities across campus. The committee consists of Alberto Barugel, Modern Languages; Basanti Chakraborty, Early Childhood Education; Sheila Kirven, Library; Grisel Lopez-Diaz, Modern Languages; Maria Lynn, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs; George Li, Business Administration; Tom Liu, Computer Science; and Timothy Torre, International Students and Study Abroad Programs. GoGlobal's mission is dedicated to "[…]advancing global literacy and enhancing international and multicultural perspectives of the larger NJCU community."

As the committee members work collaboratively to pursue the internationalization agenda at the university, they are reminded of the very nature and potential of NJCU which makes it a fertile ground to fulfill the dream envisaged in the University's strategic plan, Vision 2010. Strategy 3 of the document, Institutionalize Distinguishing Themes, states: "NJCU will distinguish itself by its emphasis on positive urbanism, multiculturalism, and experiential learning, and by its assurance of sound baseline quality in each academic program."

New Jersey City University by virtue of its geographical location within Jersey City is situated within several communities. Its main campus is located in Greenville, an increasingly middle and upper middle class section, with its proximity to Society Hill, the condominiums on West Side Avenue, and the soon to be developed tract near Route 440. Yet, it is across the boulevard from a large urban high school in a neighborhood that is a mixture of working and middle class residences. In addition, the University has recently established a campus on the waterfront, a part of the city that is increasingly becoming financially and ethnically separate from the rest of Jersey City. We are at a juncture of many communities, many classes of people and many different ethnicities with many different linguistic, religious, and national affiliations. How does a university serve all of theses various constituencies, and how do we provide our diverse students with an excellent university education?

The physical location of our campuses in Jersey City provides a meeting place for all these constituencies (as long as we provide equal access to all the citizens of our community).The mission of GoGlobal in advancing global literacy and multicultural perspectives reminds us that it is our duty and our responsibility as educators to provide opportunities for our students to learn about each other and themselves. Our students studying an internationalized curriculum have an opportunity to learn about the connection between themselves and events abroad. What is the connection between a demonstration of Buddhist priests in Myanmar and the demonstrations for the Jena 6 in Louisiana? What is the connection for an Italian-American on a study abroad semester in Italy? How will reading a children's book about La Cucaracha Martina, a Latin-American folk hero provide a connection to a Latino

…we recognize the abundance of talent and human potential at our university can have an impact on the community…

neighbor's child? In this world, the global is local and our locality is global. If we can begin to make connections, however slight and tenuous, we can provide an understanding that our campus, our students, and our community sorely need.

As we reflect on our goal to distinguish our university as a leader in urban education, we recognize that the abundance of talent and human potential at our university can have an impact on on the community and bring about desirable changes in the lives of the people around us. Our students, faculty and administrators in their respective roles not only have served the institution well, but also have brought the message of our mission to the community in various ways. Our students represent NJCU as performers, artists, international students, and employees,impacting on the level of the consciousness of people they interact with. Our faculty, through research, writing, media appearances, art exhibitions, community activism, and mentorship have not only brought a good name to our university, but have also exposed the community to a different level of awareness through their work.

The International Students Study Abroad (ISSA) Program at NJCU is serving over 70 international students in the 2007/08 academic year. Through productive collaboration between the GoGlobal committee and ISSA, our University is poised to forge an extensive networking opportunity for our students and faculty. The internationalization initiative is working on strategies to involve international students with various student organizations at the university. The intention is to create a medium for dialog and interaction between diverse students and other potential constituents of the university. The GoGlobal Committee and ISSA program invite the university community to strengthen our role as an urban university.

Our international students have brought the message loud and clear to the New Jersey educators and to institutions of higher education about NJCU's internationalization program. For the first time in the history of New Jersey Global Educator's Forum (NJGE), our international students presented their thoughts about the role of international students as a resource. The international student presenters were Lech Paul Jean-Baptiste and Ioana Hordoan of NJCU. As a result, the NJGE committee members have proposed to hold the "International Student Conference" with the Global Educator's Conference starting in 2008. We believe that our international students will act as a key force to network with international programs at other institutions of higher education. NJCU's GoGlobal initiative welcomes ideas from the larger university community to support the university's dual role at home and beyond: strengthening the local community and reaching out to the global community through extended exchange initiatives on education and service.

Whether working in a soup kitchen, fighting for community justice, raising consciousness about the value of art and music in our lives, or volunteering as mentors to local children, our students, faculty, staff, and administrators have brought our business to the people in the community. But it is still not enough. There is a need to spearhead our efforts in a systematic, objective manner to improve the community around us. There is a greater need to organize and engage in activities at our university that address the specific needs of our neighboring community first and then forge beyond our comfort zone to the larger world. As Alexandr Solzhenitsyn said, "[...]mankind's sole salvation lies in everyone making everything his business: in the people of the East vitally concerned with what is thought in the West, the people of the West vitally concerned with what goes on in the East" (Solzhenitsyn 1970).

The GoGlobal committee invites any faculty or staff interested in joining to help accomplish the above stated mission. Please contact Dr. Basanti Chakraborty at extension 4118 or via email at bchakraborty@njcu.edu.

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come to NJCU. First in his family to go to college. His dad spent most of his life in jail. His mother is a single mom who works for the government. She saves pennies. A missionary lady at the church. But Cedric dreams big and people help him along.

To set the scene, this is in the mid-nineties and I'm at the *Wall Street Journal* in a traditional place for a credentialed man in America. That ferocious little woman from Brooklyn [my mother] said, "Look. It's war out there. So cleave every ounce of credit you can to yourself. You'll need it. And don't look back. And kill or be killed." And I was doing that. I had a lot of graduate degrees. I was the senior national affairs writer for the *Wall Street Journal*. But I realized I wasn't growing. It's the same thing some academics realize at some point in their career. I had stopped asking big questions, ones that would disrupt my comfort.

So I go to the worst high school I can find in America. It happens to be in Washington D.C., conveniently, so I can go home for dinner a couple of nights a week. Frank Ballou Senior High School. 1400 kids, 400 a day are absent. Twelve kids a year are killed either in school or near school, almost all student on student. Virtually all are African American, some Latino American. There are metal detectors, ten security guards, and three uniformed cops in the halls at all times. And I'm there with my pad. Big neon sign, you know the sign, 'White guy. No friggin' clue' blinking over my head. The kids see it from 50 paces—the white guy.

I have a pitch. As a journalist these days you need a pitch. They see you coming and they don't want you there. "All right," the principal says, "Superintendent says I've got to talk to you. You tell me why." Richard Lawson was his name.

"I think it's a feat to learn in this war zone environment," I say. "I just want to meet those kids. I think they deserve credit for that."

"Um,um,um, a very elegant pitch," he says. "All right, under duress I'm telling you, you've got to sit in that room right next to my office. You don't leave that room and I'll send them in."

Kids with a B average or better, there are 79 of them. I have a printout with their names and averages. They have grade inflation at Princeton, but not at Ballou. They come in one at a time. The first one's name is Lawrence Abbot. And I start in.

"So Lawrence, you've got a B+ average here."

"Uh huh."

"Ok, you want to go to college?"

"Uh huh."

"You got some friends, a lot of friends?"

"Nuh uh."

"Well this has been good for me. I hope it's been fun for you too."

And then he goes. I might as well have been screaming across a chasm a hundred miles deep and wide. Us and them. Race and class. About a week later I am up to the M's and there's a kid named Manning. After about a half an hour of the monosyllables, he stops and says, "What are you, here to be my savior?"

"I'm Jewish. We don't do saviors."

That's the only laugh I get in a week. That's how bad it's going. So I go out of the office, out of my little cage, and the principal's there and I say, "This is not working."

"I could've told you that Suskind, but you wouldn't have listened to me. I didn't go to one of those fancy universities like you did. You would have to learn it yourself. You learn anything?"

"Yeah. They don't want to say anything to me."

"Let me explain it. The kids here, we have a name for them, we call them undercover honor students. You know, scholarship is not cool. Scholarship is no honor as it was at that lily white suburban high school I'm just guessing you went to."

"Uh huh."

"My honor students get answers wrong on tests [on purpose] so they don't get that paper stuck up on the board. Especially the boys, you see, because for the sixteen-year-old boys in my school, most of them can't imagine what nineteen looks like. If you say, 'I'm getting out of here. I'm getting straight A's,' then you're a target. You prick at their despair. So they keep their hands down, my honor students. They won't carry books. They keep their eyes on the floor. They're undercover, and you're here to uncover them. You're their worst nightmare."

"Ok," I say. "I guess I ought to be going."

"I guess you should!"

He's delighted.

I'm walking out the door and as I'm walking out, a kid's walking in and he bumps me. He doesn't even look at me. He points right at the principal and says, "My computer science teacher has a problem with me as a person, not with my work. I deserve an A+. He's giving me an A-. I've got my quizzes. I've got my tests. I'm fighting the grade!" And he walks out.

"Who's that?!"

"That's Cedric Jennings. Straight A's. Maybe our valedictorian."

"He wasn't on my list under the J's."

"I took him off."

"Really. Well as my kind of parting door prize, could you explain that to me?"

"Sure. Well, he's…a problem. He's got a quick tongue and he's always wearing those A's like a shining breastplate and kids descend on him in fights in classes and after school. It's not just that. He's not just quick tongued. He's too damned proud is his problem. Too proud."

"Really. Well it's a long drive back to my side of town. Can I stop at the Boy's Room?" And he fills me out a hall pass for use that day. I said, "Where would Cedric be now?"

"It's two o'clock. He'd be in chemistry."

So I happened to go up to the chemistry wing to that Boy's Room where I happened to meet the leader of the biggest gang at school. His office is the third stall over. He runs a very complex organization out of that stall. It's amaz-

ing, really. And then I go to the class and I see Cedric having a little push and shove with someone who's copying his homework. And Cedric's saying, "I didn't stay up half the night to have you copy my damn homework."

Interestingly, I see this and something dawns on me. Dogma. Cedric is the heretic here. A heretic to the dogma of lay low and keep your head down. Dogmas almost by definition create heretics. Often we burn them at the stake. In this case the heretic is put out of the class into the lab area. Beakers and Bunsen burners. And that's where he and I meet. Ten years ago, more, thirteen now.

I want to explain to him the way the world works. "Look. I'm here for the *Wall Street Journal*. I'm the senior national affairs writer and I'm not learning things anymore. I'm all credentialed and I'm afraid to learn too much that might disrupt that. And, you've got to help me. Just show me what your life looks like from your shoes for an hour or a day and I'll have something to write."

"Hold it. Hold it. I'm going to teach you what? I'm teaching you?"

"Yeah. You're teaching me."

"Ok. I've got questions for you. Where'd you go to college?"

"University of Virginia."

"Oh, Virginia. Good. Virginia. Graduate school?"

"Columbia."

"Oh, Columbia! You do any teaching? You guys do teaching sometimes. Isn't that the deal?"

"Up in Cambridge."

"Harvard Cambridge?"

"Yeah, yeah."

"Oh, so you teach at Harvard and I'm teaching you what? This is a scam. I'm not buying."

He gets up and walks out into the hall.

Now I've been there a week and a half and I've got nothing. I got editors from the *Wall Street Journal* calling me up saying, "Hey Suskind, are you ready to write?" I say, "Yes, gotta' go. I'll be back."

I chase him down the hall. I want to scream. These credentials—these Harvards, these Virginias, these Columbias, it's more complicated. It's not what you think, necessarily. These are brass plaques. They might reflect the light, but they're not the light itself of learning. It's too hard to explain. You see, he's a believer in this marketplace meritocracy, if you will. But he's marked for solitude because he's got no friends. He's a pariah here. And he cannot refuse my entreaties. So he and I set up a kind of deal. I can follow him around the halls, but not address him ever in public.

"Look, in case you haven't noticed, I have a problem with you, personally because you're a white man. I've got enough grief in these halls without you. So I can't ever know you in public."

"Fine. Good. No problem. I'll follow you at 20 paces so I can hear everything that's going on and at night I'll call you and you can explain it to me."

"Alright. Maybe."

"Can I call you tonight?"

"I got homework, a lot of homework."

"What time do you get done?"

"Eleven o'clock."

"How about 11:01, I'll call."

"I may answer. I may not."

That's our relationship. I call him at 11:01 and he picks up. It's a start.

You know there was a mom there, a single mom, like many of the students here have. About a month into the project Cedric says, "You've got to meet my mother before we do anything else."

"Is this a problem?"

"Oh, this could be a big problem."

"What can I do?"

"Well, you might want to bring dinner."

"What should I get?"

"Well, there's a place in Georgetown the pastor of my church has been to, we haven't been there, called Houston's."

"Ok."

"And apparently they've got really good ribs."

"Ribs. Ok. I'll bring ribs. Good."

So we talked about reaching across divides, about whether we could ever really understand each other with so much that separates us. Well, I'm experimenting with that. On this day, I'm in my Volvo station wagon with 20 pounds of pork ribs in the back driving to southeast Washington, reaching out. I hadn't eaten pork ribs until that night. I don't know how we [Jews] survived for 3000 years without the damn ribs. That is God's food! But I'm reaching out. A Jewish guy in a Volvo with 20 pounds of pork ribs. I'm reaching out. And we eat the ribs and they are good. Me, Cedric and Barbara in the worst neighborhood of southeast Washington in a teeny little apartment with a dinette set near the kitchen, and we eat the ribs and it is joy. And I'm feeling like this is going to work out. Then Cedric says, "I've got to go do my homework now. Bye." He's gone. And it's just me and Barbara sitting there looking over the pile of bones, and I realize our shared moment is about to end.

"Ron," she says, "That's your name, Ron?"

"Yeah."

"My son is telling you things, a real lot of things, and I can't seem to stop him. So I'm going to tell you this once. I will not tell you twice. If you use anything he tells you to hurt him, I will kill you!"

So I went home and my wife said, "Honey, how was work?"

"Great. A giant Black woman threatened to kill me. Other than that, terrific."

That's the start of our relationship. But ultimately relationships work out because they humble me. They make me understand that life is the only teacher worth trusting without question. They make me realize how much my book learning is worth, and maybe how much it's not worth.

Ultimately, Cedric goes to Brown University. And I'm in the car and it's lovely. It's an American moment. A big one. God to Abraham II, *lech lecha*, go forth. They go forth, from Washington to Providence. It's amazing. We get up to Brown, on this journey of the spirit. Cedric's nervous. Why is he nervous? He's got a 910 SAT score. The average here [at NJCU] is 925. Cedric is below your mean. He's 400 points below the Brown mean. He thinks that matters. He's a believer in the meritocracy. So he's crazy nervous while we're driving up I-95. Every time we pass a rest stop he says, "What was that? Molly Pitcher, who is she?"

"I think she's a nurse, I don't know. We'll stop and find out."

"No, no. Let's keep driving."

He's crunching sunflower seeds, a cheap snack and there are seeds all over my car. He's so nervous. At the Vince Lombardi rest stop he asks, "Is he someone?"

"He's the coach, the Packers coach."

"We didn't learn about him."

At the Eugene O'Neill rest stop at the Rhode Island line, he says, "He's someone."

"Yeah. He's someone. They don't teach him much anymore. He's an American playwright."

"Is that all I have to know?"

"That's pretty much it."

"Oh yeah, a playwright."

He's cramming.

Then we get to Brown. The next morning the sun rises. It's a sunny day. At $40,000 a year, they can hire the sun. And in the sun, the nerves melt for Cedric. Individualism. He's got the trunk up on his shoulder, saying hi to strangers. Yes, me, one kid in a decade to make it to the Ivy League from my high school. God bless him. He doesn't yet know what we all know here. He's about to learn some things. I turn to Barbara and say, "Victory, right? Victory?" She sacrificed her whole life for this moment. And she says, "Yeah, um hm."

But I've learned against my will, give up your knowingness, your omniscience, the thing I get paid for. Give it up. Listen. Bend in close. People do what they do for good enough reasons. They may not be yours or mine, but they're good enough that intent flows to action. Good enough. Know those reasons. It's not about you—it's about them. And I hear for an instant what Barbara is hearing. She hears all around her a jaunty melody of generational succession, of parents pushing their children into the familiar, 'Oh, when I went to Harvard…,' and 'My first day at Princeton…,' and 'You can always come home again…' and it's a big fabulous day, and they're in Lexuses and Infinitis and Volvo wagons just like mine. And it's a lovely song of uplift and hopefully earned rewards and probably one I will sing for much of my life. It's one I sang when my son went to college two weeks ago, the first out of the house. But it's not Barbara's song. Her song is a different one, and it's one everyone here knows. It's a harmony to that melody, flat and elemental…with a hard back beat. It's about sacrifice and denial and pushing a child to a place where a parent can't ever follow. And on this day, she's the only one singing it at Brown—a song that is sung every day here [at NJCU]. First in his family to go to college. And it's a song that really built all of this.

And through the course of the day, no one says a word to her, not one word. I hear somebody wondering if she's someone's maid. She's got a stain on her dress. It's the only dress that would work and she keeps brushing her hand over the stain to cover it. And she's worried about her diction. And it kills me. It breaks my heart, about that flag waving.

It's places like this university, NJCU, that I think are the antidote, the remedy. Years from now, the stories will say, that's where the American experiment was resting in this era. Not in further advantaging the advantaged. Not in creating great structures of privilege for the already privileged. But for the gates to be opened, not just here, but for this country, for all the world. You know we are challenged now, really challenged. The miracle of that information age—miraculous, democratized and empowering. It also means that small groups of people can carry the destructive power once reserved for nations. That's the angry cousin at the party. We've got to start getting this right. We have to start thinking about what they see when they look at us. Is this experiment moving forward, your American experiment? Or are you locked in stasis?

I'm just going to tell you one short story—something that I heard that changed me. Just a few months ago, I was living a traditional Washington insane moment. I was flying in on a flight that got in at 8:30 in the morning on a Sunday. And I had to catch another flight from a different airport at 11:30. A cab driver comes up to me as I'm calling a car service to find out how much the trip will cost to the other airport. The cab driver turns to me and says, "So how much do they charge to go to BWI?"

"A hundred and nine bucks."

"To BWI, a hundred and nine dollars! I'll do it for sixty."

"Sixty? Oh, come on."

"No, sixty."

"But it's like three hours from now, what are you going to do in the meantime?"

"I'll get breakfast. I'll be back"

He comes back. I'm surprised, but there he is. He's a Somalian. His name is Nuri. Now I stopped talking to cab drivers at some point. It was too much effort. You know people used to criticize we reporters, saying, "He didn't really report. He just talked to cab drivers and filed."

And to Nuri with his entrepreneurial zeal, I said, "So tell me Nuri why did you come here from Somalia." He was about 36 or 37.

"Oh, it's a story. What's your name, mister?"

"Ron."

"Mister Ron. Ok. I'll tell you a quick version of the story. I played soccer. As a junior soccer player on a national team, I got money from this. And I heard that in America you can get an education if you get there. And I said, an education, that's the thing. So I bribed people, as many as I could, and I ended up getting to America. And I'm at Kennedy Airport and it's

December and I'm walking around. I have no language. No language. But I know the alphabet, a little. So I wander for a few hours and I see two A's, and I think that A is the beginning of the alphabet, so I go to this desk [American Airlines]. So the person with the A's must know what I do now.

It's places like this university that are the antidote, the remedy.

I stand there and across the desk is a fat man, a big fat man. I reach into my pocket and pull out a piece of paper. It has only an address. There is one boy I know from Somalia in northern Virginia. I know one man in America and it's got his address and his name. I hold it up and the fat man looks at it and says, okay. Then he goes like this [rubbing his thumb and fingers together]. This is a universal sign. I know this one—money. I think, good. I don't know how the money works, and I pull out five dollars. And he goes, hmm hmm hmm. Then the fat man reaches into his pocket and pulls out a little square of some kind of plastic I think it is, and he sweeps it through a machine. And then he hands me a ticket. And I know this is not the usual way things are and I try to thank him with my eyes.

I go to northern Virginia, and the friend of mine that lives there works at the Pizza Hut. And he gives me a job at the Pizza Hut. And for the next three years, I eat nothing but pizza. Breakfast, lunch, dinner—pizza. And then a few more years pass and I'm good with math. This is the language of all the world, math, yes? And I go to George Mason University, and ultimately, I get a good life."

He marries. He's got kids. He works at Cisco. His wife's a nurse and he's staying home with the kids and driving a cab because her hours are longer than his, and Cisco says he can come back any time he wants.

Then he says to me, "I've looked for the New York man. I went to Kennedy airport two times to find him, to thank him, but I can not find him. Because if he had not helped me, it was December, I would have died. I am an African man and it was so cold, I would have died in New York.

But then, Mister Ron, an amazing thing happens to me. Just two months ago, I'm in the airport in Washington D.C. and I'm in the cab line and I get up front and there's a little teeny man waiting. And I get out of the cab and he's Vietnamese. He's a Vietnamese man. And I look at him and he looks at me and he reaches into his pocket and he has a piece of paper…with an address. I look at the paper. It's way into Virginia, a $200 ride. And so he has no language, of course, and I say—how much? [rubbing fingers together] He reaches into his pocket and he's got one dollar. I had five dollars. He had one dollar. I said [to myself] I had five times what he had. Then I said—get in. And we drive, way, way, way into Virginia. And we get to a little teeny house, way out, and a little Vietnamese woman runs out the door, his mother, I think, and then they hug. And then he turns to me and he has no language. But I think of the fat man, and I say, 'Now, it's your turn.'"

That's our country. That's your university. That's—what does Martin Luther King say? A lovely thing. I heard it on the radio while I was driving, an old grainy tape of King in a church from the early part of the movement. And King tells the people there, "We're going to sing a song and it's called 'We Shall Overcome.' It's the anthem of the movement that we're going to sing. And people were quizzical because in the old Baptist churches it was "I Shall Overcome," an individual testament. But King says, we should make it 'we' because we will have to stick together because we will be hated for some of the things we are believing that disrupt the status quo. We will be reviled and we will be spat upon, and some of us may have to suffer physical death, he says, so that others will not have to know the psychological death of bigotry and ignorance and racism. And you can hear even in this old grainy tape, the church get quiet, as though their champion has dropped his sword. And you can hear King lift it up again as he says, "No. You see. Be not deterred. The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

And we're in the car, my wife and two kids, and I start bawling. And the kids are terrified—'Why's dad crying? What's wrong?' Why? Because we are naturally a hopeful people. But then that echoes around in my head, that phrase from King. You know that arc doesn't bend on its own. It bends because people of shared purpose, of clarity, of energy, bend it with all their might and pull…and that's all of you. So I say God bless you in all you do. I wish you strength. I wish you constancy. And for all of you who are arriving at college today, for all of you who are already here, know this—they use the same books here they use at Harvard. I taught there. I know. And the fact is, if America is to survive as a country, it will be on the shoulders of the students in this place and on those who push them forward. Be strong, as only knowledge can make you strong. Be clear about what's truly, truly at the beating heart of this nation, and the world. Knowing what Nuri told me, before he told me, you knew it. It's about getting there, and now it's your turn. *Lech lecha*, go forth. Be strong. Welcome to college. And God bless all of you.

Separately Budgeted Research Projects Awards
2008–2009

Roddy Bogawa	*All Power to Pomp: A Film About Hipgnosis and the Art of Storm Thorgerson*
E. Shaskan Bumas	*Quixotic Pilgrims* (from Colonial Appropriations: The Role of Spain's Black Legend in the Image and Practice of English Colonization in North America.)
Bruce Chadwick	*The Body Snatchers: Grim Work Then and Now*
Deborah Freile	*Generation of a Long-term Record of Hurricane Strikes on the New Jersey Coast Using Sedimentary Core Data from Backbarrier Environments*
Andrew Getzfeld	*Beginning to Work on Ancillaries for "Abnormal Psychology" for McGraw-Hill's Higher Education Division*
Edvige Giunta	*Creating Italian American Archives: Scholarly and Creative Approaches to Public and Private Memory*
Jill Lewis	*DUAL VOICES: Classroom Teachers and Teacher Educators Discuss Essential Questions About Adolescent Literacy Instruction*
Thomas Jyh-Cheng Liu	*ALICE: A New Way to Teach Programming*
Leonard Nass	*Manufacturing Planning and Control*
Marcin Ramocki	*Brooklyn DIY* (feature documentary film)
Michael Rotenberg-Schwartz	*New Israelites in Old Israel?: Palimpsests of the Holy Land in Eighteenth-Century English Travel Narratives*
Lois Weiner	*Defending the Public Sphere: Talking Back to Neoliberalism*
Kenneth Yamaguchi	*Development of a Nanotechnology Research Project at NJCU*
Midori Yoshimoto	*Women in Fluxus* (exhibition, publication, and panel)

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Call for Papers

ACADEMIC FORUM

Fall 2008 Volume 16 Number 2

Deadline: September 22, 2008

A teacher, Nancy Rehm, recently wrote in a letter to *The New York Times*, "Students today can Google [factual and historical] information in seconds. What is more important is that they can't identify claims and evidence and evaluate them. Those skills are what constitute "critical thinking" and what our students need to learn in order to succeed in college and beyond." In Vision 2010, the University has identified critical thinking as one of the learning outcomes by which we will measure our success as an institution of higher learning. As we approach our Middle States review, it is timely and appropriate for *The Academic Forum* to re-examine the role of critical thinking on the NJCU campus and beyond. *The Academic Forum* is seeking articles on critical thinking related to classroom pedagogy, research, theory, best practices, and assessment. Articles that are accessible to non-experts in the field are especially welcome.

Submissions should be between 1,000 to 5,000 words in length, preferably typed on Microsoft Word or saved as an RTF file, and submitted via E-mail as attachments or on a PC formatted disc with a hard copy. All citations should be in APA style.

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THE ACADEMIC FORUM

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