

The Sentinel

Volume 9, No. 09

UUP - Oneonta

June 2009

It shall be done.

- Bill Peck

Visions of Excellence: Alex Thomas' University of the Catskills and Rob Compton on College-Community Relations

By Bill Simons, Chapter President



This issue of *The Sentinel* features two articles notable for their visions of excellence. ***Next Steps: Granola University?*** and ***Meaningful Dialogues: Future of College and Community Relations***, by Alex Thomas and Rob Compton respectively, offer bold, thoughtful, and expansive ideas for the College at Oneonta. Alex and Rob rank amongst the finest of their generation in terms of scholarship, teaching, and service. Former Chair and Associate Professor of Sociology, prolific author, recipient of the Susan Sutton Smith award, and senior UUP representative to the Labor-Management Grants Committee, Alex's outstanding work on cultural tourism, revitalizing upstate New York, and links between localism and globalism elicit respect. Associate Professor of Political Science, Fulbright Scholar, former Presiding Officer of the College Senate, Advisor to SUNY

Oneonta's award-winning Model UN delegation, and UUP Oneonta Vice President for Academics, Rob possesses a rare intellectual breadth, reflected in diverse and incisive articles, papers, and courses on African and Asian politics and government.

As you read the articles by Rob and Alex, keep in mind that they do not purport to reveal immutable truth, etched in stone. Rather they are meant to promote meaningful discussion, debate, and thought about the future of our College. A summary that reduces important proposals to a few phrases lacks the depth, information, analysis, and passion to promote meaningful dialogue. UUP encourages *Sentinel* readers to put forth their own proposals. The economic crisis that we face provides opportunities as well as challenges. As a student of history and part of the same generation as Alex, Rob, and so many other UUPers, President Barack Obama reminds us that through the New Deal innovative institutions and infrastructure emerged during the hard times of the Great Depression. Share your ideas, and out of spirited exchange will come authentic visions of excellence. Let the audacity of hope animate our endeavors.

Clearly there is nothing tepid in the ambitious future that Alex envisions:

As the University of the Catskills, Oneonta can sell its location for outdoor activities as well as its status of arts community and college town. This involves the encouragement of outdoor activities, such as hiking and canoeing, that students and faculty would enjoy. For instance, a council composed of our own institution and representatives from Hartwick College and the community at large could investigate the short and long term feasibility of such an infrastructure. Perhaps the combined land holdings of the city and both colleges could become part of a trail system circling the city, including the Susquehanna Greenway trail. Perhaps bike trails extending to Cooperstown could also be added. At the end of the day, a healthy downtown area with restaurants and entertainment would further enhance the community. Perhaps the colleges could work with the city to build off-campus housing in areas in need of redevelopment, such as the urban renewal lot, or participate in a program that

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locates an art gallery or a theater downtown. Or even a hockey arena in which both colleges could hold games and graduation. The college could consider other community partnerships that could enhance the region's quality of life and attract a diversity of tourists, such as a Children's Museum or a regional history (or, dare I say, sociology) museum. There are many options, and the council noted above can sift through them.

Likewise, Rob's commentary on UUP's inaugural forum on College and Community summons us to new frontiers of achievement:

*On April 15, 2009, UUP Oneonta sponsored its inaugural forum to promote College and Community dialogue... UUP statewide took the initiative to trumpet "SUNY is the \$olution" and UUP Oneonta will build on that movement through dialogue and partnership with key community leaders. An engaged audience of more than fifty attendees listened intently and then participated in a question and answer forum.. The panel...included **Dr. John Nader**, Mayor, City of Oneonta and incoming Provost SUNY Delhi; **Peter Livshin**, Board Chair, Otsego County Chamber of Commerce and Superintendent of Schools, Milford; **Jim Kevlin**, General Manager, Hometown Oneonta; and **Andrew Weber**, General Manager, Oneonta Tigers.*

The common theme of panel speakers and audience questions is that the College continues to play an important role in the community but that a lot more can be done. It was clear from the panel that we need to think about improving and enhancing the synergies between town and gown and among college students and employees and the community as we move forward in the 21st century. The call for social and economic entrepreneurialism is at the heart of UUP's message to its members. Cultural, economic, athletic, and intellectual dynamism requires constant and vigorous re-invention. The College at Oneonta is on the cusp of transforming the community and the entire region!

What do you think?

Next Steps: Granola University?

*By Alex Thomas, Associate Professor, Sociology,
and UUP Representative, Labor-Management Grants Committee*

Our campus is at an important juncture in its development. Look to the past and we see a tradition of excellence in higher education; look to the future and the bubbly exhilaration of potential yet unmet beckons. Yet where does the College at Oneonta go? Is the future a continuation of SUCO as we know it? Or will we be some other entity waiting to be created by a largely newly hired faculty and a new president? Such questions deserve whole hearted debate, and let us consider two principles for conceptualizing our future. Let us call the first, for now, "Regional University," and the second the "Granola Strategy."

Despite great gains over the past ten years, we need to be careful about believing our own hype. It is good that many students now see Oneonta as more than a party school, but to what extent has the College flexed its muscle? On the statewide stage the major universities dominate the landscape, and in a state like New York that presents a daunting challenge. But even regionally, have we asserted our excellence? The local newspaper until recently, despite years of college policy asking faculty not to refer to ourselves as SUCO (really; see <http://www.oneonta.edu/technology/compserv/referring.asp>), referred to us as SUCO. The organizer of Glimmerglass University made sure to feature speakers from Colgate, Hamilton, and Hartwick, but the public SUCO, or O-state, or Stoneonta, was not on the program. But before blaming others, first ask: what has the College done to enhance our own academic reputation? Obviously, whatever it was, it has been working. So, what's next? Do we expect to compete against the glorious privates with their bagel budgets and upper class clientele and 27 percent acceptance rates? Or against the big universities to our east and west with (curiously) higher acceptance rates but the name recognition to make it not matter? Perhaps, we should aim to achieve greatness by utilizing our place, our community, and our region to our advantage. This is the idea behind pursuing a "Regional University" model in the future.

Let the big schools try to become another Harvard, and let the little schools wallow in their traditions. What concept can guide a renewed Oneonta? A very wise man put it thus:

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...modern institutions of higher education — if they are to survive — must rediscover some very old principles regarding the “public” role of the university.

I believe Achim Koeddermann has it right: Oneonta can seek greatness by serving our community and our region. To our south are the Catskill Mountains, the spine of the Appalachians facing increasing development pressures from one of the great megacities in the world. To the north is the Upper Susquehanna Basin and the industrial landscape of the Mohawk Valley. There are ten colleges in this region stretching from the Mohawk to the Delaware, four of which are two-year or formerly two-year colleges; four of which are small, private liberal arts colleges; one of which is a specialized SUNY college and, of course, us. Oneonta is twice as large as the next largest college, and although our acceptance rate is higher than Hamilton and Colgate, we don't carry a price tag higher than many Assistant Professors' salaries. In other words, within our region we can take the lead in studying the issues of importance to our region.

Regional issues can guide our quest for new programs. For instance, we are in the northeastern most corner of the Appalachian Mountains and the Chesapeake Bay watershed; might there be partnerships, or even money, available? Our region deals in the south with an encroaching major city and in the north with years of industrial decline. Tourism seems to be the popular answer to both. There are issues of sprawl and natural resource management. There is a unique literature and, if I may be so gauche, a unique northern Appalachian Culture worthy of study. There used to be more farms here. Such issues not only beg for more community involvement, but provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. They also plead for graduate programs in such areas as sustainability, rural studies, and community development. In other words, such issues as found in our own region demand a regional university willing to adopt them as its own. But this institution needs to be a university, not another institution seeking to promote job training but one that focuses on the local in order to understand global processes and, in turn, bring knowledge of the world to bear on our local situation. It is at heart a liberal arts university, and Oneonta is the natural college to take such a step. As for Albany and Binghamton: they have their own regions.

As a regional university, Oneonta would lay claim to the wider region. The university would attract students interested in our programs based in the local community but applicable to a wide variety of settings. But if we already do our academics well, what else can we do? As a regional university actively engaged in the local community, the College can play a pivotal role in shaping community and economic development in such a way as to enhance local neighborhoods and the surrounding area to be attractive to students and faculty alike. This would not only help us attract a more diverse faculty and staff, but would enhance the lives of people who already live here, whether lifelong residents or more recent arrivals. Around the world, many colleges and universities are selling themselves in part on the quality of life found in their communities. Most examples are based in urban areas, such as the transformation of New York University, but a small town can also be appealing – but we are not going to attract the students looking for the big city life. What does Oneonta have to offer? What type of student might appreciate Oneonta? For this, we turn to the Granola Strategy.

As the University of the Catskills, Oneonta can sell its location for outdoor activities as well as its status of arts community and college town. This involves the encouragement of outdoor activities, such as hiking and canoeing, that students and faculty would enjoy. For instance, a council composed of our own institution and representatives from Hartwick College and the community at large could investigate the short and long term feasibility of such an infrastructure. Perhaps the combined land holdings of the city and both colleges could become part of a trail system circling the city, including the Susquehanna Greenway trail. Perhaps bike trails extending to Cooperstown could also be added. At the end of the day, a healthy downtown area with restaurants and entertainment would further enhance the community. Perhaps the colleges could work with the city to build off-campus housing in areas in need of redevelopment, such as the urban renewal lot, or participate in a program that locates an art gallery or a theater downtown. Or even a hockey arena in which both colleges could hold games and graduation. The college could consider other community partnerships that could enhance the region's quality of life and attract a diversity of tourists, such as a Children's Museum or a regional history (or, dare I say, sociology) museum. There are many options, and the council noted above can sift through them.

Times are tough today, and they may continue to be tough for quite some time. It is important that the college make sensible decisions in the present, but it is also important that the proper visioning and planning for the future be conducted so that we can emerge from the present crisis stronger than when it began. Crisis can bring about great changes, and we cannot predict the political and economic circumstances that may emerge from tough times today. Successful institutions plan for any contingency – there may be new opportunities in five years for which most colleges will not be prepared. We should be. Even without changes at the state or federal level, there are challenges we can address today. An expansive trail system can be started in the next few years; downtown development may take longer. Fully implementing a “regional university” model can begin now, but will likely take years for its potential to be fully realized. It is important that we think of what Oneonta will be in five, ten, and even twenty years. For now, UUP is pleased to encourage such discussions as they should come from the faculty, but we look forward to the time when administration joins in our campus conversation to build a better Oneonta University.

Now say it again, everybody...Oh, you!

Meaningful Dialogues: Future of College and Community Relations

By Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics

On April 15, 2009, UUP Oneonta sponsored its inaugural forum to promote College and Community dialogue. UUP is committed to strengthening College-Community ties by exploring venues of cooperation and partnership. These tough economic times call for all members of the community to work to strengthen the role of SUNY in their communities. UUP statewide took the initiative to trumpet “SUNY is the Solution” and UUP Oneonta will build on that movement through dialogue and partnership with key community leaders. An engaged audience of more than fifty attendees listened intently and then participated in a question and answer forum at noon. The panel, moderated by Dr. Gina Keel, included **Dr. John Nader**, Mayor, City of Oneonta and incoming Provost SUNY Delhi; **Peter Livshin**, Board Chair, Otsego County Chamber of Commerce and Superintendent of Schools, Milford; **Jim Kevlin**, General Manager, *Hometown Oneonta*; and **Andrew Weber**, General Manager, Oneonta Tigers.



SUNY Oneonta as Community Lifeline

John Nader noted that the College at Oneonta is a “cultural lifeline” and economic pivot for many surrounding villages and towns. The local restaurants and other businesses depend on the college students and employees to sustain their businesses, he said. Peter Livshin also noted that in the “hinterlands”, the College provides people with “economic, cultural, and social opportunities.” He said that SUNY Oneonta is critical for his Milford students to “experience diversity.” Jim Kevlin summarized this point well when he noted that the SUNY campuses are “knowledge centers.”

Oneonta’s summer programs, its proximity to Cooperstown, a regional hub of cultural and sports activities places our college in a unique environment. The College’s summer programs and S.T.E.M. educational enrichment activities provide educational, cultural, and athletic opportunities for families and school age children from throughout New York state. In addition to the tremendous recreational activities available in the upstate New York regions, these kinds of cultural attract people to live in this area, noted Andrew Weber. Kevlin noted that the troubles of the upstate economy require talented individuals who want to start small businesses that cater to the artistic and cultural strengths of this community. So far, we have not realized that potential. Why is that Oneonta has “600 music industry majors but Oneonta lacks a music industry,” he asked. “Fashion industry for Oneonta, why not?”

John Nader noted that much more can be done to strengthen the linkages between the College and the community. Nader noted that he would like to see greater engagement of the city with students, something that Weber also noted.

SUNY Oneonta as Education Hub

Andrew Weber recently visited Professor William Simons’ class and noted that there was a strong intellectual climate here on the Oneonta campus. Weber looks forward to interacting with students, faculty, and staff at O-Tigers games and the exploration of internship programs for our students. In fact, many of our students work for business and provide community service through the Center for Social Responsibility and Community, weaving together many of the mutual experiences between college and community. Many of the graduates from SUNY Oneonta, not only come from the region, but many who discover Oneonta, want to remain after graduation. Nader noted that many people from the area want to come back after being away for some time. That attests to the appeal of upstate New York, in general, and Oneonta specifically.

Graduates who remain in the region was another theme echoed by Peter Livshin in his position as Superintendent of Milford Schools. He said that an astonishing “70% of the teaching staff in the Milford Schools have either an undergraduate or graduate experience from Oneonta.” The SUNY Oneonta education programs provide a supply of much needed and well-qualified teachers to all schools in the region. The Division of Education also provides

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the area schools with curricular advising and planning. Livshin noted that with increased demand for “special education” teachers, the presence of SUNY makes it possible to find qualified teachers with such specialties.

Kevlin noted that the historic cinema on Chestnut Street, currently in a state of neglect, is ripe for a new ownership partnership between the College and the city. Why not have a venue for the community to host smaller venue productions including those that provide training for college students to enter into this field? Nader noted that the Oneonta Main Street Organization (MSO) provides “great opportunities” for student, faculty, and staff involvement for the redevelopment of Main Street. With the Bresee building plans moving forward Nader noted that the College is welcome to rent space to establish a downtown center. This could also include housing, in addition to classroom or office space. It certainly would contribute to lessening the parking problem on campus, which a couple of the panel presenters noted.

The involvement of the College in the community goes far beyond the City of Oneonta. Tim Hayes of the Center for Economic Development and Community provides “low cost strategic planning” for nearby schools and villages. For example, the Center was responsible for the creation of a strategic plan for Sidney.

SUNY Oneonta as Economic Catalyst

Without a doubt, the economic impact of the College on the city and its vicinity cannot be understated. The contribution of the College to the City through consumer spending accounts for a significant portion of the city’s revenue, Nader stated. However, during this recession, it’s necessary to stem the loss of tax revenues. Kevlin noted that its critical to identify the capital for entrepreneurial start-ups and to learn the “best practices” of one to two dozen college towns and see what works in these places. Livshin noted that entrepreneurialism of the young will be necessary for Oneonta to excel. Young people may complain that there are “no jobs for college grads” but this is a nationwide situation. Undergraduates need to make themselves unique and take charge- acquire skills and S.T.E.M. knowledge to participate in a global economy.

Nader noted that city revitalization is already taking place and that there is a concerted effort to attract businesses to the area. Currently, 52% of the properties in the City are off the tax rolls and a sustained effort to change this is necessary. He said that the city identified problematic properties and now wants to make sure that they are in the right hands. There is a thriving service industry in Oneonta, especially in the area of tourism and medical industry which the city can build on, but it requires coordination among all stakeholders. While these industries employ College students and graduates, harnessing the knowledge centers of higher education by developing synergies could go a long way to create more opportunities for our students. College students also play an important role in State Aid funding formula in a way that it advantages the City so they are valued from a municipal planning perspective.

Moving Forward: A Vision for the Future

Severe economic crisis, such the one we are currently experiencing is not a time for conservative thinking. The College and its stakeholders, including UUP need to envision a stronger College by creating and seizing opportunities for partnerships with the local community. Historical experience during the Great Depression attest to the enduring legacy of proactive thinking and action. Many of the achievements of government economic involvement and community action including the investments into community infrastructure and the cultural arts can still be seen today. UUP strongly urges the College to develop a Strategic Plan in partnership with the larger community and make its larger presence known in the entire Catskills and central New York region. Whether through academic program expansion, partnerships with non-profit and community groups or businesses in the cultural or culinary arts, sports, or high-technology jobs, the State University of the Catskills at Oneonta should take the lead.

The common theme of panel speakers and audience questions is that the College continues to play an important role in the community but that a lot more can be done. It was clear from the panel that we need to think about improving and enhancing the synergies between town and gown and among college students and employees and the community as we move forward in the 21st century. The call for social and economic entrepreneurialism is at the heart of UUP’s message to its members. Cultural, economic, athletic, and intellectual dynamism requires constant and vigorous re-invention. The College at Oneonta is on the cusp of transforming the community and the entire region!

United University Professions Official 2009 Election Report: Oneonta Chapter

Election results are listed in descending order of votes received. Winners are designated by an "X" except for delegates. Delegates are listed in order of votes received; tie votes are in rank order as determined by lottery. The statewide UUP Elections and Credentials Committee, Chaired by David H. Kreh, certified that the election was conducted in accordance with UUP election procedure and that his constitutes the official election results. The term of office for each position is from June 1, 2009, thorough May 31, 2011. Statewide UUP election procedures require the publication of these results in their entirety for the membership.

President and Delegate

William M. Simons	148	X
Robert W. Compton	2	

Vice President for Academics and Delegate

Robert W. Compton	87	X
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Vice President for Professionals and Delegate

Norman E. Payne	51	X
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Secretary

Thomas G. Horvath	139	X
William G. Harcleroad	1	
Frivolous-Ineligible	1	

Treasurer

Michael R. McAvoy	145	X
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Membership Director

Hafu Mi	146	X
Gina Keel	1	

Part-Time Concerns Representative

Karina L. Cespedes	141	X
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Academic Delegate

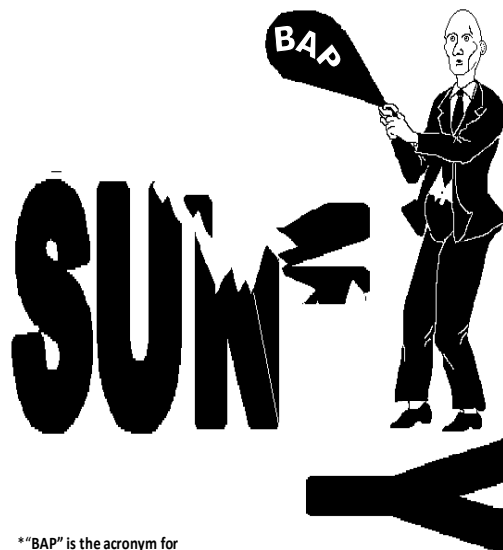
Renee B. Walker	70	1
Thomas G. Horvath	62	2
Fred R. Miller	56	3
Christine E. Bulson	55	4
Gina L. Keel	54	5
Hanfu Mi	51	6
John J. Carney Jr.	50	7
Karina L. Cespedes	48	8
Michael R. McAvoy	44	9
Joseph C. Baldwin	41	10
Michael Flinton	2	11
Nithya Iyer	1	12
Nancy S. Cannon	1	13
Scott Barton-Ineligible	1	

Professional Delegate

Janet L. Frankl	42	1
Thomas A. DeMeo	42	2
Kyle Britton	28	3
Janie L. Forrest-Glotzer	24	4
Jeri Anne Jerminario	23	5

A Fred Miller Cartoon Commentary

A SUNY executive demonstrating the effectiveness of BAP* on the State University Of New York



**BAP" is the acronym for Budget Allocation Process, the technique for deciding which college gets what money.

Sentinel Honored for Excellence

The Sentinel, the newsletter of UUP Oneonta, received the Award of Merit for outstanding achievement in the category of General Excellence at the April 24, 2009, UUP Spring Delegate Assembly in Albany. The award specifically cited the November 2008, December 2008, and January 2009 issues of *The Sentinel*. The editor of *The Sentinel* is Jill Attanasio. *Sentinel* columnists include the UUP Oneonta Executive Board and membership.

Membership – Have a say, become a member today!

By Hanfu Mi, Membership Director

As we bring another semester and another academic year to a close, we are hoping that more UUP members will plan to participate in the “Food for Thought,” picnics, and other UUP-sponsored events in the next semester and next academic year. It is certainly an excellent chance to meet other faculty and professionals in and outside of your department!

Here presented is information on several major benefits of being a UUP member. UUP negotiates with New York State on behalf of all SUNY academic and professional faculty. UUP also provides benefits to all members of the bargaining unit (such as Dental and Vision, Free Group Life Insurance, etc.). Our Chapter here at Oneonta is currently working on several labor management issues, including part-time faculty concerns. As you know, there is strength in numbers.

Whether you are part-time or full time, even if you think you are a member – please check out your pay stub. If you have dues taken out under “membership,” then you are a member. If you have dues take out under “agency fee,” then you are not a member yet. If you are interested in becoming a UUP member, please contact the Oneonta Chapter Membership Director, Hanfu Mi, at x3000 or email mih@oneonta.edu. Please remember, you can’t vote on our contract unless you are a member – so have a say, become a member today!

BENEFITS MEMBERS MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT!

By Mona Hughes, Benefits Officer

UUP offers many wonderful benefit programs for it’s members in addition to health, eye and dental benefits, and it is easy to take advantage of the savings that are offered by these programs.

Need a new wireless phone or plan? Sprint/Nextel and Verizon wireless, offer 19% off their service fees each month, and currently, Verizon wireless is offering their LG VX8350 Red phone for free with a 2 year agreement on a Nationwide Family Share Plan or Nationwide Single Line Calling Plan. This is a savings of \$249.99 on a phone that offers Bluetooth, camera, text/email, voice dialing and speakerphone. AT&T currently has the LG CE110 phone free with a two-year agreement, waives the start-of-service fee, and offers a 20% monthly discount on qualified charges.

Not interested in a wireless plan? How about a discount on a BJ’s Club membership plus a couple of additional months added to the normal 12 month membership for free? Each year our Oneonta Chapter UUP Office has hosted a BJ representative who will schedule time to enroll or renew members for the BJ membership that will give you the UUP benefits that go along with it. You can not take advantage of the UUP discounts if you enroll or renew your membership at a BJ’s store, so watch for a UUP announcement each year to inform you of the BJ representative’s campus date.

Need a new set of tires for your vehicle or some maintenance or repairs? UUP offers an exclusive Goodyear VIP program for its members. Up to December 31, 2009, Goodyear is offering 10% off any of the above with the letter that you can download from the UUP website.

There are many other discounts offered to UUP members that are well worth looking into. To familiarize yourself with these offers please go to the UUP website at: uup.info.org Choose the “Benefits” line at the top of the Home Page and then choose “Special Offers” from the pull down menu.

Reflections on Grievance and Solving Problems through the Union

By Renee B. Walker, Grievance Chair

I wanted to make some comments on getting UUP's help on a variety of issues. As you may or may not be aware, as grievance chair, I try to help UUP members that have problems resulting from violations of the contract (*2007-2011 Agreement between the State of New York and United University Professions*). Sometimes, we are able to resolve a dispute resulting from a contract violation. Many times, however, issues arise that are not direct violations of the contract but may be resolvable through other avenues.

Let me advise everyone who thinks they may have a contractual issue (even if you are not sure whether it is contractual or not) to contact myself or a member of the UUP Oneonta Executive Board. This should be done as soon as a problem is detected because there are often time restraints on when something can be acted upon. If it is determined that there is no contractual violation, however, there are other steps to take.

First, if the issue has to do with possible discrimination, then the Affirmative Action Office can be contacted. We are protected from discrimination under the New York State Division of Human Rights and the United States Equal Opportunity Commission. However, remember that discrimination complaints must be filed within 90 days.

Second, issues and complaints can also be checked against Department bylaws or other operating procedures (*such as the Policies of the Board of Trustees*). The *Policies of the Board of the Trustees* is available online on the Faculty/Staff homepage.

Finally, issues can also be brought up as Labor/Management concerns and can be discussed in meetings between the two parties. This is a provision under Article 8 of the Agreement between the State of New York and UUP.

In short, there are multiple avenues to pursue if difficulties arise in your workplace and the Union is here to help. I am always happy to meet with anyone and get information on the problem.

Parking Feedback from UUP Membership

(Bill Simons' note: I receive many e-mails from UUPers about parking. A few of those appear below. Aside from the deletion of names, the responses appear as received.)

1. *Parking thoughts.* My experience is that you better get to campus by 10 to get parking in the field hours lot. Otherwise you must park by Bacon hall. Trudging up to Fitzelle is a pain especially in bad weather. Scarcity of parking after 9 am in upper and mid campus is tough for those of us who come to campus most days but at variable hours and it hurts adjunct lecturers in particular, some of whom sit double parked for 15-20 min in hopes of someone leaving. I have been ticketed for parking in the visitor area by the ball fields, even though there are plenty of visitor spaces open. Members have also expressed anger at the number of spaces reserved for construction workers next to the field house. There are many open spaces, but we can't use them.

2. *It has been very hard to park on this campus especially since they fenced off more spaces for the Fine Arts renovations.* Sometimes after lunch it takes me more than 15 minutes to find a space. Lots are full and it is just the luck of the draw if someone is leaving that a space becomes available. If I didn't have a dog at home that I had to let out in the afternoon, I would never leave my space. When workmen are doing renovations in the IRC, they park in all the faculty spaces here by the building. Sometimes there are as many as 6 or 7 spaces being used by them. I don't understand why they can't park across the street in the visitors parking area. They have been issued permits to park where ever. It is difficult to have paid for a permit and not have a space available.

Lots of complaints here in the Center about parking now. Not enough spaces for the cars permitted up here.

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3. *I just drove around for 20 minutes looking for a parking place.* I passed ... in the lot and she had been driving around for 45 minutes looking. At the same time there are visitor parking spaces at Hunt Union that are never used. There were at least 20 this morning.

4. *Parking has always been a problem but the loss of spaces across from the Fine Arts Building, the closing of the walkway between Fine Arts and the parking lots by the Field House as well as the weather have created serious problems for faculty who teach in the late afternoon or early evening.* For the last two Mondays, I arrived on campus at 9:15 to 9:30 a.m. in order to get a parking place closer than Morris. I had meetings at 11; my first class is at 3 p.m. and my second one from 5 to 7:30 p.m. It is usually closer to 8 p.m. when I leave campus... so, in order to find a place to park within reasonable walking distance, I am putting in close to a 12 hour day... and on both Mondays, there were no parking places available in the upper Fitzelle lot, the Hunt Union lot, or the first level of parking across from fine arts... While the fine arts and field house parking are usually a reasonable walk, with the construction and ice, snow, and late evening return, these are not convenient or safe. Being over 60, I am concerned about slipping and falling on ice, particularly at night when the lighting is dim and the sidewalks and roads are not recently cleared. Both Mondays, there were at least two and a half or three aisles in commuter parking by Hunt Union that were empty. Is it possible to for the semester or permanently reassign some of this area for faculty parking? I also drove around campus both days and the closest parking slots were near Morris Hall... and there were only 1 or 2... so, after wasting about 40 to 45 minutes circling campus and waiting in the upper Fitzelle parking lot, one person left and at 10 am, I did get the last parking space in the Fitzelle lot... there were still none available in Hunt Union lot or in the parking spaces behind the library and Schumacher. There were still at least two rows of commuter parking in front of Hunt Union still open... Hope this brings the problem and a possible solution as a point of serious discussion about working conditions. Thank you for your concerns and support.

5. *Regarding my experience with parking, and experiences other colleagues have shared with me, not only are there not enough parking spaces but if after contributing to global warming and driving around campus for 20 minutes or more a faculty member in desperation is forced to park in a visitor designated parking spot, a ticket is given to that faculty member.* If the creation of new parking spots is not an option then at the very least faculty should be allowed to park without penalty in both visitor spaces, as well as temporary parking spots (for example in front of Sherman Hall/across from Schumacher).

6. *Bill, many, many times in the past two semesters I have arrived at 9am at campus on Monday or Tuesday, and found zero spots available for faculty/staff, save for those near the tennis courts.* However, I frequently find spaces available for commuter students (as there should be). I don't want to necessarily take away parking from students, but there seems to be very little available for faculty in particular (if you watch the parking patterns, those staff who work at certain times get spots, but many of the faculty work irregular hours, and thus cannot find parking).

Frankly, I would encourage splitting the faculty/staff spots into dedicated faculty spots, and dedicated staff spots. This may not be acceptable to all, but it distinguishes the differences in hours worked and gives concessions for those of us who come later in the day and work into the evenings.

The Sentinel Websites and Disclaimer

Editor's Note:

Statements Made in *The Sentinel* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of UUP or any of its statewide representatives.

To read past issues — as well as the current edition — of *The Sentinel* on-line, go to www.uuphost.org/oneonta.

This site also includes other material concerning UUP Oneonta.

The statewide UUP website is located at www.uupinfo.org. It contains information about members benefits and many other important topics.

Defining Ourselves as Professionals

By Joanna Sanchez, UUP Leader

[Bill Simons' note: This article is reprinted by special permission of Joanna Sanchez, Editor of Unity, the newsletter of UUP Cobleskill. Joanna is the editor of the Unity. Joanna's incisive commentary speaks as much to the College at Oneonta as it does to the SUNY Cobleskill campus.]

We find ourselves at a moment of profound culture change at Cobleskill and beyond, its effects felt perhaps nowhere more acutely than by academic professionals swept into a confluence of opposed forces as our vision of education collides with a new paradigm. Where we see education as a learning process, and our role as promoting the critical and practical skills of future generations, decades of economic excess have brought about a transformation in the way our mission is being defined. To prepare ourselves realistically for what lies ahead, we must accept change as a natural process and examine its underlying dynamics at this moment.

As we witness socio-economic circumstances run their inevitable course, the demand for accountability surges as social actors forge their way forward in tough times. To do so they draw on the prevailing system of ideas, centered in this case by belief in "free market" principles. Consumerist rhetoric has thus begun to permeate public discourses, even in the political arena as parties must be 'rebranded,' and citizens are labeled 'consumers of government services.'

In assimilating the market model into conceptual and practical orientations to higher learning, education is being redefined as a *tangible* commodity, a 'thing' of value that can be bought and sold. Once objectified, constituents become 'consumers of knowledge services' while institutions reinvent themselves as purveyors of educational 'product'. It now becomes possible to imagine that product quality can be empirically assessed as an 'effectiveness of learning outcomes,' the drive to do so fortified by a will to survive in a competitive market environment.

As the formerly self-engaged learner is recast as privileged 'customer', the role of teaching professionals is converted to managed labor, with growing productivity ratios to meet as the number of paying customers swells. A tier of highly paid administrative positions is entrenched as it shifts dwindling resources are shifted to marketing efforts. Educators experience increased workload, bans on instructional purchasing, and frozen professional development. A chill pervades the environment, made ironically manifest in lowered thermostats. As students become consumers of this new knowledge 'product' we can expect to find ourselves performing in the ever-narrowing interstice between social constituent and institution.

Yet even while teaching professionals are increasingly regarded as point-of-contact knowledge service providers, the market view of education will prove unsustainable as things go from bad to worse in the coming months and years; the very call for accountability that spurred current trends will bring the education-as-commodity movement to its tipping point when society feels the impact of disproportionate allocation strategies as they erode the integrity of real-world outcomes. Society will recognize that cogs in an ungreased free-market machine cannot kindle the interactive learning process, and it will rediscover education as a means of unlocking the limitless treasure of the mind. In so doing, society will recall the essential role of teachers and purge itself of self-preserving excess.

While culture change is inevitable, it is not monolithic but driven by an unceasing dialectic between prevailing and countervailing forces. And while its processes are natural, they can have enduring negative effects. We should not look on passively as its forces exert themselves but must instead mitigate them by being proactive, recalling that the course of history has been shaped by individuals with the strength to stand up for what they believe are the enduring truths of all human societies. Our strength lies in our commitment to the mission of education and our unique appreciation for what that mission entails. And only by defining ourselves through what we do can we prevent definition from being thrust upon us from without.

Key to our success at this moment is remaining firm, resolving to act in unity, and avoiding finger-pointing and contention, especially among ourselves. We can and will make a difference for the decision makers of future generations, both in our encounters with students and in the arenas of activism and shared governance. As society desperately seeks its way out of this anti-intellectual and unproductive dead end, we may stand on its last line of defense.

“You’ve Got to Retire to Something:” Life After SUNY Oneonta

By Armand LaPotin, UUP Retired Member and Professor Emeritus, History

Carolyn Haessig La Potin and I had worked at the College collectively for 52 years, when I retired from the History Department in 2002 and Carolyn from the Department of Human Ecology in 2006. Retirement can be a **gift of time** and **opportunity**, the “dessert” of Life’s “meal.” The following are some strategies that worked for us:



Find Your Special Place-If you can, use your final working years to explore different places that you think you would like to live and prioritize what is important to you. For us, it was weather, health care facilities, cultural endeavors and a community of like-minded souls. If weather is one of your major considerations, explore the area at different times of the year, to see if you can live in the region when it is at its’ least idyllic time. Even if you enjoy living in Oneonta, a visit to other places may confirm your decision to retire here.

For us, it was the warm sunshine and majestic terrain of the Southwest. We decided to live in a Del Webb retirement community just north of Tucson, Arizona, surrounded by four mountain ranges, 350 days of sunshine and relatively low humidity. Four major health care facilities, the University of Arizona and an array of museums and other cultural activities were definite “pluses.” We visited Tucson in the summer during the “monsoon” season, when 110 degree temperatures and 40 % humidity makes the region less than ideal. We deliberately selected an age-restricted community for the interests and activities we could share with people who were going through the same life-stages as ourselves. Our friends and neighbors include people who are from the mid and north west as well as California. Forty percent are snowbirds who return to their homes during the summer months, but most remain to enjoy the year round activities that our community has to offer.

Significantly too, although some of our new friends were educators before retirement, many were bankers, shopkeepers, engineers, miners and truck drivers. Their diverse backgrounds provide us a perspective we wanted.

Transition Through the Familiar-Find the activities that you enjoyed in Oneonta, whether it was square-dancing, attending concerts and dramatic presentations, or volunteering in the community. Carolyn continues to advise program directors in accreditation processes as she did as a dietetics educator and administrator at the College. I formed a discussion group for men in the community who have an interest in intellectual activities. The volunteer work that I did at Habitat for Humanity and my job as a museum interpreter at the Fenimore Art Museum were useful “introductions” in Tucson. I currently serve on the board of and volunteer at the food bank in my town of Marana.

Be willing to explore new avenues of interest-We, in the field of education have an advantage here because we are life-long learners. Don’t be afraid to try new activities that you never dreamed of when you were employed at the College. Carolyn began playing bocce with a group of men and women, and was part of two medaled teams at the Senior Olympics in Southern Arizona. She also enjoys new ventures in quilting, singing in a chorale, volunteering at a botanical garden and directing a community dinner theatre. I began working part-time as a sales clerk in one of shops at Tucson International Airport, where I have the opportunity to interact with my fellow workers from an entirely different background that I had at the College, and to meet and greet customers who are literally from all over the world. Together we enjoy hiking in the Saguaro National Monument and several of our state’s parks in Southern Arizona.

Although the current economic situation may constrain some of our options in retirement, challenges provide opportunities for growth. There is a whole new world to explore in retirement. **Enjoy the feast!**

Eunice Kennedy Shriver and the Special Olympics: A Venue for UUP Volunteerism

By Jo Ann Simons, President/CEO, St. Coletta & Cardinal Cushing Schools of Massachusetts

(Editor's Note: As part of our on-going commitment to community service, this article shares a personal account of the impact that the Special Olympics and its founder, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, have had on the lives of participants and their families. UUPers offer service through many forms of volunteerism; the Special Olympics provide an important venue for such endeavors.)

She changed my life even before I had the privilege to meet her. I am writing about *Sport Illustrated's* first Sportsman of the Year Legacy Award winner, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the founder of Special Olympics, Inc.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver changed the world. One person, one concept. She dared to question medical and educational professionals when she decided that persons with intellectual disabilities could be coached and trained as competitive athletes. From her home she ran Camp Shriver and along with other family members and volunteers taught children and adults with mental retardation, who were shunned from community programs, to swim, to run and to compete. In 1968, in Chicago, at the first Special Olympic Games, the world was forever changed as 1,000 athletes from around the world competed and a movement was born. I was 16 years old and I took notice.

And so, eleven years later, in the early hours of a day I can't remember the weather or what was going on in the world, my first child was born. I only remember the numbing crushing, hurt and disappointment of being told that my son had Down syndrome and four life threatening heart defects. My dreams for my new baby were dashed. The next day, when I first saw my son, he was hooked up to more life support machines and wires that I had ever seen and when I reached into his isolate, I stroked his leg and bent down and whispered, "Who may never be in the Olympics, but maybe you will be in the Special Olympics."

One person. One concept. It changed my life and it changed my life and Jonathan's life. By count she has changed the 3 million lives of Special Olympic athletes in 164 countries, 7 million family members of athletes, and millions and millions of lives of the coaches, officials and volunteers of Special Olympics. All because one woman used her intellect, energy, family connections and grit to see the opportunities for what she has often called "our special friends".

Because of Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Special Olympics and the belief that she holds for athletes with mental retardation, my son is an accomplished athlete and Special Olympian. Because she challenged the world's attitudes about mental retardation, Jonathan was allowed to challenge his world about his abilities. In addition to his accomplishments as a Special Olympian which includes being third in the world in 18 hole golf competition-an honor won after playing 5 consecutive 18 hole rounds of golf on the notoriously difficult Yale golf course and following PGA rules which mandated he walk each round, Jon lettered on his high school golf team. In addition, he has competed in swimming, track and field, bowling, baseball, soccer and basketball. He has skied, biked, snorkeled, kayaked, hiked and fished. He graduated high school, went to a community college and became a home owner. He works, has friends, maintains a home and in his words, "loves my life".

He owes this to a woman with the courage and tenacity to who knew this to be possible.

My story about this remarkable woman does not end with Jonathan. In 1989, I was invited to become a member of the Board of Directors of Special Olympics, Inc. My first meeting was preceded by dinner at the Shriver home. There I was awed by the memorabilia of members of her family who have shaped our country's history. It reminded me of Jack's presidency and Bobby's almost and of her devoted husband, R. Sargent Shriver own accomplishments.

You can be forgiven if you know Sarge, as he is affectionately known, as the man beside the woman because I think it is a role he has always cherished. Whenever I think of what love means, I remember listening to Mrs. Shriver giving a speech and looking over to Sarge, who was sitting nearby. After decades of marriage and 5 wonderful children and several grandchildren, he sat in what I could only call rapture and awe as he listened to his wife. And when she was finished, he stood up and turned to the crowd and asked, "Isn't she wonderful?" The smile that covered his face and the pride and delight in his eyes made me realize I was in the presence of something so unusual that few of us will ever experience it-real and enduring love and devotion.

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Mr. Shriver has stood by Mrs. Shriver and supported her in everything she did and he shared her passion, but this article would not be complete without the readers knowing that he founded Head Start, VISTA, Job Corps, Community Action, Upward Bound, Foster Grandparents, the National Center on Poverty Law, Legal Services, Indian and Migrant Opportunities and he directed the Peace Corps. Shriver also ran the War on Poverty. He also served as Ambassador to France.

Thank you Mr. and Mrs. Shriver for the light you provided in what I mistakenly thought was darkness And I wouldn't change anything about that day almost 30 years ago when I was put on a path to be part of the change that Eunice Kennedy Shriver started. I take that back, I would change the hurt and disappointment I felt and replace it with love, happiness and joy. Those are the gifts I receive everyday from Jonathan and I can't imagine my world without him.



A Chronicle of the History Department: 1960-2009

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

(Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of essays about the history of the College at Oneonta. At this time of campus transition, the past may provide perspective on our future,)

There is a plaque on the wall of the History Department office with the following inscription: "Department of History SUNY Oneonta In Honor of 20 or More Years of Service to the Department." Compact metal plates are screwed to the plaque, the first fourteen, each bearing a single name, are arranged alphabetically. Different in temperament and talents, those fourteen individuals — William Barber, Ronald Berger, Carey Brush, William Fink, J. Gerrit Gantvoort, Albert Horton, Joan Iversen, Armand LaPotin, William Morgan, Jay Pawa, Maynard Redfield, Stephen Ryan, Richard Schadt, and Ralph Watkins — each, in their own way, made a significant impact on the Department.



A two-term Chair of the Department, Bill Barber provided ballast to courses on Jeffersonian democracy, the age of Jackson, and the frontier; for years, he alone taught the historiography offering required of all majors. In addition to introducing a course on witchcraft, Ron Berger imbued several offerings on British history with an economic and class perspective; his signature publications examined the mercers of Coventry. During his many years of service as College Vice President for Academics, Carey Brush continued to teach a Civil War seminar for the Department; he authored a two-volume history of SUNY Oneonta. Chair of committees, conferences, and summer-travel courses.

History emerged as a department noted for its teaching and service strengths in the 1970s. Despite recurrent austerity budgets in the 1980s, the department remained vital and well regarded. The History Department domiciled several of the most popular, heavily enrolled, and well regarded courses and instructors. Although the historians were read widely in their fields and committed to quality classroom instruction, regular article-length publication did not encompass all members of the department. Still significant publications in New York, women's, African-American, sport, and other fields of history emerged.

There were bumps as the department grew. *In Honor and Good Faith: Completing the First*

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Century, the official history of the college, Brush observed, “The History Department always seemed enmeshed in controversy.” (p.151). These episodes reflected the department’s activism and commitment to fairness.

Time and funding began to undermine the department’s strengths. Lines lost to retirement and death were not replaced. From 1977 to 1994, there were no new hires. The department aged. By the end of the 1990s, the “roll call” at department meetings had dwindled to six. New mandates increased the need for survey courses. Soon the majority of introductory courses were taught by adjuncts, who came to outnumber the fulltime historians. Upper-division courses were no longer offered in a number of important areas. The master’s program died. The number of majors shrunk. The department’s decline was evident and disturbing.

Fortunately, a period of regeneration followed. There were two new hires in 2000, three in 2001, one in 2005, and three in 2007. A current of youth and talent now runs through the department. The number and quality of majors rose substantially with the restoration and growth of course offerings. The History Club provides students the opportunity to travel to sites that shaped the past. Nonetheless, vital lines remain unfilled, and due to general education requirements and funding restraints, adjuncts are still relied upon heavily. Moreover, workload has increased. Fulltime faculty hired since 1994 are still typically teaching four courses per semester—although redress is expected to begin in the next academic year. Furthermore, faculty participation in assessment activities has grown exponentially.

However, the History Department has, for the last several years, experienced a renaissance. Its members have been recipients of campus and SUNY-wide awards. Innovative courses and approaches to teaching animate instruction. Allowing for their heavy teaching loads, the historians of today show promise as scholars, reflected in their publications. History faculty figure prominently on committees and as club advisors. Most importantly, recently hired faculty, like their veteran colleagues, recognize the primacy of good teaching, a constant that has permeated the History Department from the 1960s to the present. Present fulltime members of History Department include Bill Ashbaugh (Chair), Thomas Beal, Dora Dumont, Jeff Fortin, April Harper, Matthew Hendley, Miguel Leon, Yuriy Malikov, Kathleen O’Mara, Bill Simons, and our newest addition, Ibram Rogers. Provost Dan Larkin and Associate Dean Julie Freeman continue to teach on a part-time basis. A large and talented group of adjuncts render important contributions. As of this writing, the following adjuncts are scheduled to teach in the Spring 2009 semester: Randall Angiel, Dave Forbes, James Friery, Joe Ingrassia, John Kincheloe, Thomas Pullyblank, Matthew Rodriguez, Matt Shea, Mike Shea, and Ann Traitor.



History Chair Bill Ashbaugh



Jeff Fortin

The last time that I stopped by to see Dick Schadt we were able to retrieve common memories about the History Department. It brought to mind a hundred kindnesses, large and small. As I stood in the doorway, ready to leave, Dick said, “I know you still walk at night. I was trained in nocturnal reconnaissance, able to sneak up without someone knowing it. You don’t realize it, but I’m with you. Maybe sometime I’ll say ‘boo’ just to let you know that I am there.” Even without the plaque or the ‘boo,’ I know that.

Solidarity: Lessons from Bloomfield

By Bill Simons, Chapter President



Three of Pittsburgh's finest died in the early morning of Saturday, April 4, 2009. Responding to a domestic dispute in the Stanton Heights section of Pittsburgh, police officers Eric Kelly, Stephen J. Mayhle, and Paul J. Sciuolo II encountered a deadly ambush. Wearing a bullet-proof vest and drawing from an arsenal that included an assault-style rifle, Richard Poplawski, fueled by bigoted conspiracy paranoia, gunned them down. Both the shooter and one of the fallen had links to nearby Bloomfield, Pittsburgh's Little Italy.

Officer Scullio, 36 years old, and the assailant had both attended Catholic grammar school in Bloomfield. From birth to death, Scullio, lived in Bloomfield. Ravines, hallows, hills, bridges, and ethnicity make Pittsburgh a city of neighborhoods, and Bloomfield still retains qualities of an Italian-American urban village. Brave, athletic, and modest, Scullio and his family had deep roots in the neighborhood. With word of his passing, black ribbons soon dotted Bloomfield. Flags were lowered to half-mast. Shock and sorrow and other emotions punctuated conversations in Bloomfield's streets, homes, shops, and churches.

For Bloomfield and much of Christianity, Palm Sunday came on April 5th, the day after the shooting, giving special resonance to the self-sacrifice of lives given in the service of others. On Palm Sunday services in Bloomfield, Father John Dinello evoked the fallen, "In life you are never completely safe. Many of you are their neighbors. Let us remember them today in our prayers."

I attended evening Mass at St. Joseph Church on Palm Sunday. A native of Greater Boston and a Jew, I had returned again to Bloomfield as a respectful observer. The vagaries of the College calendar determined renewed field work at this particular juncture. Sadly, on Monday, April 6th, news came of a deadly earthquake in the Abruzzi region of Italy, ancestral homeland of many of the immigrant forbearers of Bloomfield residents. For over a third of a century, I have studied Bloomfield and have developed an attachment to the neighborhood. Cognizant of demographic changes and the passing of my original correspondents, I planned to chronicle recent trends, particularly indigenous neighborhood initiatives to preserve Bloomfield's past. That is still my intent, but the recent tragedies and the neighborhood's reaction to them now color perspective.

The Bloomfield that I first encountered in the 1970s appeared notable for the strength of its Italian-American working-class culture. Approximately one square mile, Bloomfield was home to about 13,000 residents, of whom over two-thirds traced their ancestry to the Abruzzi region of Italy. Street-corner peer groups then served as community bulletin boards and made Bloomfield one of Pittsburgh's safest neighborhoods. Chipped paint, graffiti, and broken windows were virtually unknown, and neat, compact, single-family frame houses, crowding together on narrow streets, remained within the same family through multiple generations. Small yards domiciled statues of the Madonna and well-kept gardens. Although a form of tribalism dominated the residential areas, patrons from outside Bloomfield were welcome at the Italian restaurants, bars, barber shops, and groceries on Liberty Avenue, the core of the neighborhood's business district.

When I returned to Bloomfield in the mid-1990s, litter and chipped pain appeared in certain areas once well tended. Gang graffiti had defaced Immaculate Conception Church. The neighborhood's two Catholic Churches, St. Joseph and Immaculate Conception, the former German in origin and the latter Italian, were in the process of forming a common parish with a single pastor, Father Thomas Harvey, an Irish American whose ethnic antecedents differed from most of his parishioners. Former president of Catholic Charities, USA, Father Harvey believed, at that time, that Bloomfield faced a challenge of balancing ethnic norms with participation in the larger society: "The parish should be pulling people together to be creative... (and) be a place of sufficient intimacy to help people deal with global issues."

Returning to Bloomfield in April 2009 at the time of the police murders and Abruzzi earthquake heightened a sense of loss. Graffiti blighted additional public and private places. Several "For Sale" signs marked residential properties that would no longer descend through families. A few denizens of the street carried on conversations with the unseen. A residential alarm system signaled a concern with crime. At the other end of the spectrum, construction of a few town houses suggested potential gentrification. Church planners recommended further reconfiguration of Catholic infrastructure in the neighborhood — and beyond — with proposed consequences for Bloomfield's Immaculate Conception/St. Joseph Parish.

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Change was evident, but so too was continuity. African-Americans, medical personnel, gays, college students, and bohemians live in Bloomfield today, but Italian-Americans are still the dominant group. Some storefronts are boarded up, but marketing Bloomfield as “Pittsburgh’s Little Italy” contributes to the continuing vitality of a number of landmark family-owned businesses on Liberty Avenue. At the Groceria Italiana, a first-time customer, encountering the special cheeses, pastas, sausages, and pastries, exults, “How happy am I!” Emerging from the Pleasure Bar and Restaurant on a mild night, a young man, taking in the café-style sidewalk tables, observes, “This is like Italy.”

Dan Cercone’s barbershop, is named for its late founder. As Bloomfield’s unofficial mayor, Cercone exerted a powerful influence in the neighborhood. A large photograph, memorabilia, and a cement tribute cut into the sidewalk approach honor Cercone’s legacy. Dan’s grandson, Dennis Scullion, notes that he last cut Paul Sciuullo’s hair a week ago. Paul, states Scullion, was well-known and beloved in Bloomfield, and his death has shaken the neighborhood.

Janet Cercone Scullion, Dan’s daughter and Dennis’ mother, has devoted considerable time and energy to preserving Bloomfield’s history through a community newspaper, a local historical society, and forthcoming book about the neighborhood. Her office is to the left of the first-floor entrance of the Cercone Village on the Park building. The Cercones and Sciuillos families are related, and Janet assisted Paul’s family in the difficult days following his death.

Although the city of Pittsburgh had a large joint viewing and memorial for the three fallen police officers, Paul Sciuullo’s wake and funeral were in Bloomfield. On the evening of Monday, April 6th, I joined those attending a dramatization of the Stations of the Cross, presented by the eighth grade at Immaculate Conception, in the Church sanctuary centered by an altar carved from stone from the Abruzzi. The children chronicled a journey from betrayal, suffering, and death to enduring hope. After the program, a short distance from the Church, long lines of people still waited in the dark of night, as they had all day and would the next, in unseasonable weather — cold and windy with snow flurries — to enter the Winter Funeral Home. Tough cops, the elderly, and others cried and embraced.

Cultural Commentary from the Membership

By H. A. Holden, Reference Librarian (and former English major)

(Editor’s Note: UUPers are invited to share a favorite book and comment about why the book is worth reading. The book can be fiction or non-fiction, academic or popular, contemporary or from the past.)

Hye Seung Chung’s Hollywood Asian : Philip Ahn and the politics of cross-ethnic performance

Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 2006.

PN1995.9.A78 C58 2006 in the Milne Library

Subject: The actor, Philip Ahn (1905-1978)

If you are at all into old films - old enough to perhaps be in black & white, or if you are just old enough yourself to have had, at one time, few choices on the tele before cable, then, I wager, that you will have in some recess of your skull, a file of images of screen actors past, and, within this, a rogues gallery of faces that belonged to a small army of character actors. They weren’t the stars, though a few had been such or would become such. And, for most of us, they will all be American faces, that is, faces of European descent.

And if Asian features were needed, there was almost never a felt “need” to find a Korean to play a Korean, or a Chinese to play a Chinese, etc. As a Taiwanese-American acquaintance once said to me, “We all look alike to you, and vice versa.”

Philip Ahn benefited from that. His first name withstanding, Ahn was as Korean as a Korean could get. But to Hollywood, he would do for a Chinese doctor, a blood-thirsty Japanese officer (circa World War II), or even a Vietnamese guerrilla. It was all work to him at a time when any work in theaters, motion pictures, and TV was, for A-As, scarce at best.

But, if you happen to speak Korean, you would know, to watch him, that Ahn spoke fluent, grammatically perfect Korean. And if you are an Ahn fan or a scholar of the “Hollywood Asian” such as the author, Hye Seung Chung, you will know that Ahn, when required to “say whatever” in a role, would often speak Korean rather than the ostensible Chinese (or whatever). And you might laugh to hear what he actually said, though in a tone that to blind ears would sound like subservient patter. Ahn was not just a bit-part actor in Hollywood’s periodic, spasmodic forays into the Inscrutable East, he was both a star and the son of Tosan An Ch’ang-ho, the revered teacher and patriot of the repeatedly subjugated Korean people, a man martyred by the imperialist Japanese. (Ahn was frustrated in his attempt to produce a film of his father’s life.)

But who among us monolinguals would have known that as we watched “just another Asian extra” play a peasant

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farmer spitting anger at the U.S. Army in an episode of MASH, or the infinitely wise Master Kan (of an undefined Shaolin sect somewhere in China), instructing the very un-Asian boy who would become the equally un-Asian wondering monk (David Carradine) in the TV series, “Kung Fu”? Philip Ahn was one of many very noteworthy Korean-Americans whom the greater film-watching world does not know by name.

A note on the text: If you are not a student of the postmodern/deconstructionist rhetoric that has long been de rigueur (more than some would say, *de rigor mortis*) for scholars seeking publication by a university press, the beginning of Chung’s book may read to you like the owner’s manual for a Klingon warship. Skip through or leap over it (feeling no shame as you do). Get into the bio itself and enjoy.

Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture: June 3-5

The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, a scholarly conference co-sponsored by two great institutions, SUNY College at Oneonta and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, will take place on June 3-5.

Symposium papers employ baseball as a vantage point to illuminate the American culture, defined broadly, to embrace diverse aspects of the nation’s social and cultural life, including, history, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, economics, business, music, art, architecture, literature, cinema, medicine, government, diplomacy, law, technology, war, and more.

The setting contributes to the Symposium experience. Participants discover that Cooperstown, New York, set on the shores of Lake Otsego, retains a small town charm. The area is rich in history and myth; it provided inspiration to novelist James Fenimore Cooper, creator of the Leatherstocking saga. Cooperstown is also the fictive site of baseball’s creation, and even scholars cannot resist the appeal of Doubleday Field. And, of course, there is no better venue for a baseball conference than the Hall of Fame.

The distinctive coupling of scholarly excellence and baseball fraternalism is the prime reason for the enduring appeal of the Symposium. Attendance continues to grow and broaden. While longtime participants provide important continuity, women, minorities, and young scholars have increased their numbers over the past few symposia. College and university professors find common ground with free lance writers, high school teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, attorneys, army officers, businessmen, physicians, former ballplayers, and other celebrants of the game.

The conference creates special ties between participants, rendering it unique amongst academic gatherings. Most attendees were devotees of baseball before acquiring academic credentials; thus, the content of the conference, proximity to the mythic birthplace of baseball, and meeting at the Hall of Fame burnish the Symposium’s emotional rewards. The conference, by tradition, begins on a Wednesday, with a memorable keynote address; keynoters have included filmmaker Ken Burns, novelist W.P. Kinsella, scholar Stephen Jay Gould, and Marvin Miller, former director of the Major League Baseball Players Association. Pitching great Bob Feller showed up one year, and, decades after the end of his major league career, still had his “stuff.” An “open mike,” hospitable to baseball short stories, poetry, drama, music, reminisces, and miscellany, often lends a populist tone to Wednesday evenings. On Thursday night, the second evening of the Symposium, baseball scholars play townball, a mid-nineteenth-century ancestor to today’s game; then, gather to eat barbecued food; and listen to the game’s song and poetry, including the traditional recitation of baseball’s most famous verse by the Hall of Fame’s Tim Wiles, uniformed appropriately as the mighty Casey.

Despite the fellowship and good times, sessions featuring scholarly presentations on baseball and American Culture are at the core of the Symposium and pervade the three days of the conference. Presentations at the Symposium, notable for the quality of their research and analysis, are eclectic, interesting, and significant; lively questions, critiques, and discussions are part of each session. Presentations at the 2009 Symposium will include *Baseball in the American Hinterlands: Barnstorming the Graphic Novel* by Bill Simons, SUNY College at Oneonta Professor, History. Several of the most outstanding conference contributions are published by McFaland & Company in a biennial anthology series named for the conference.

The conference remains vital and compelling. The Twenty-First Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture will take place on June 3-5, 2009, and it will continue a legacy of first-rate scholarship — and camaraderie. Send Symposium Director Bill Simons an email at SimonsWM@Oneonta.Edu for registration details, and attend the Symposium. You need not have a paper to present in order to attend, just an enthusiasm for serious discussion about America’s game.

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Other Delegates & Alternates



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