

BALI Banner

A Brandeis University Program
www.brandeis.edu/bali
781-736-2992

Brandeis Adult Learning Institute

April 2004

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL

by Bud Elliott, Council Chairman



BALI is doing well. Courses are under way, Lunch & Learn has started out wonderfully, and everyone is back in the swing of the programs. Our new members have blended right in. The expanded website with its new comprehensive calendar is exciting and has been

well received. The eBoards that many of the Study Group Leaders are using are proving very efficient and beneficial. All of these items and activities are the result of the hard and creative work of our terrific committees including some new ones set up by the Council. But we don't want to rest on our laurels, so the Council is listening to our members and looking forward.

Following up on the positive response of the members, we are now in the process of putting together a woodwind concert to be organized and directed by our fellow member, Matt Ruggiero, a former member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We are attempting to obtain the use of a Brandeis concert hall, and we plan to have a reception in conjunction with the concert. We will be looking for help with this event.

We hope to have more classrooms in the future. Until then, in order to expand our programs within the facilities we now have, we have established a

task force to study the possibility of expanding our days. This might allow us to either add more classes or to allow more time for the existing ones.

Under consideration is the possibility of a members exhibit of art and crafts. Many of our members have wonderful talents in these areas. Another area of exploration is the possibility of off-campus or away-from-Gosman activities. These might include a day trip to one or more museums with instructors or docents making private presentations to our groups. We are also looking for a place properly equipped to have a hands-on computer program for those who want to become more familiar with the tremendous possibilities of the Internet. Volunteering to help with any of these activities is welcome.

Once again I would like to remind you all that participation of our members on Committees and on the Council are what makes BALI happen. Nominations for the Council are now under way, and Committees will be having space for new members. The Curriculum Committee is always seeking additional study group leaders, so they want to hear from you if you can potentially be one or if you know of others who can.

Please let us know your thoughts about these items, and feel free to share any ideas you have for improving our programs.

Contact Bud Elliott at belliox319@rcn.com. Council members are eager to speak with you.

BALI READERS BEAT WINTER BLAHS

by *Barbara Somers*



Undaunted by cold and the snow, BALI readers gathered every Wednesday morning at Gosman Hall during intercession to discuss the current fiction in the New Yorker. This reading group was the inspired idea of Lenore Goldstein, Eileen Mitchell, and Elaine Dohan. A similar group had met several times during the last semester and was so successful that readers continued to meet to discuss the magazine's contemporary fiction.

Gosman was eerie and silent in January and February. No groups of chatting people. No coffee. And no cookies. We were approximately fifteen readers with fifteen opinions, eager to share our views. Each session began with a volunteer presenting biographical material about the author which enhanced our appreciation of the stories.

We read stories by Andrea Lee, Chang-rae Lee, and George Saunders. One story by John Updike I did not like. But by the end of the session other readers helped me see the structure and brilliance of the story. I could then admire it. On our last day we turned to some classics by Hemingway and Woolf, and several of our members enriched our discussion with memories of their college encounters with these wonderful writers.

The hour and a half vanished too quickly. Surely we had just begun to explore, and it was time to leave. One of the benefits of group discussion is that in examining literature, each member of the group revealed him or herself, including prejudices and enthusiasms. It was easy to share; we felt a real respect for what each had to offer. When the last session ended, I felt I was leaving dear friends who had helped me hone my analytical skills, along with my empathy skills.

Do you feel envious that you weren't there? Don't worry. We are going to continue one Wednesday and one Thursday each month through the spring term. See you there.

The April New Yorker Discussion Groups will be held on Wednesday April 14th at 2:00 P.M. and on Thursday, April 22th at 9:30 A.M.

PAY BEFORE LEAVING

by *Joel Freedman*

<http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html> is an IRS site for selecting and downloading multiple tax forms and publications. It also provides online instructions for filling out IRS forms or applying for an extension. There is a link to state tax forms from this page.

<http://travel.state.gov/> is a U.S. Department of State site that provides foreign travel information on a myriad of subjects including obtaining passports and visas. There are links by country to doctors, dentist, medical facilities, and drug stores where English is spoken. A link to Travel Warnings lists countries the State Dept. recommends Americans avoid. It also discusses topics such as street crime, HIV, SARS, and avian flu. This site is highly useful for travelers to all areas of the world, particularly those not in the FirstWorld.

LOCATION!
LOCATION!
LOCATION!

DIALING FOR DOLLARS

by Sharon Sokoloff



Keeping the business of education on an even keel today is an uphill battle, no different than the health care industry or virtually every other sector of society. Only a portion of operating revenues at colleges and universities come from student tuition and fees. At Brandeis that figure is about 52%. Hence, fundraising is

integral to sustaining basic operations in academia.

BALI has been the catalyst for and beneficiary of fundraising. Broadly, there are two types of fundraising done on behalf of BALI:

- efforts we do ourselves, for and by BALI staff and members
- efforts President Reinharz and the Development Office do on our behalf.

100% of the money raised through our own efforts is restricted to use by and for the BALI Program. When BALI members donate to the Bernie Reisman BALI Fund or the BALI Operating Fund, all of this comes to BALI. In our almost four years of operations, BALI has raised approximately \$15,000.

In contrast, efforts by the President and the Development Office to raise funds for BALI also serve to support our home community, Brandeis, to make up some of the 48% of operating revenues not covered by tuition and fees. This is standard

practice in academia everywhere. Funds raised in these efforts are used in two ways:

- to relieve the Brandeis budget of fixed expenses
- to increase program or department budgets and enhance programming for BALI.

As most of you know, BALI received a gift from the Werner Dannheisser (WD) Trust in May 2003. I'll use it to illustrate the *budget relieving* and *budget enhancing* concepts. Half of the WD gift is used to support (part of) Carol Allman Morton's salary and benefits. This is *budget relief* since staff salaries are fixed expenses that the University must pay whether BALI brings in enough revenue to cover salaries or not. The fact that the WD funds cover the Assistant's position does not mean BALI isn't responsible for bringing in the revenue to cover that fixed expense. Rather, BALI revenue that would have covered Carol's position is given to the University, contributing to the 48% of operating expenses not covered by tuition and fees. This is *budget relief* for Brandeis.

Other funds from the WD gift are used by and for BALI to enhance our program. This means we are able to do things we otherwise would not be able to do. For example, the gift supports the BALI Scholar Program bringing graduate students into BALI classes. It also covered the expenses related to the Lester Thurow Lunch & Learn program, the first campus-wide event we sponsored. This is *budget enhancement* for BALI.

Stay tuned for more good news about fundraising on BALI's behalf.

Council Election
Ballots mailed April 7th



Remember to Vote!
Ballots counted April 20th

READING SHORT STORIES

by *Benje Freedman*



How long has it been since you've read works by Tolstoy? Chekhov? Joyce? Flannery O'Connor? Kafka? Updike? In other words, when is the last time you sat down and read a classic short story?

I had that opportunity this past semester because I was fortunate enough to take the

course "Short Stories" led by the very capable Harriet and Richard Kahn. Harriet has a teaching career ranging from pre-school through college and adults. Dick is a psychiatrist with a long interest in psychological aspects of literature. They are BALI's first "husband and wife" co-leader team. Together we read and discussed a broad range of gems from the classic Russian authors to contemporary American writers.

Each class started with the Kahns or a volunteer presenting some biographical and background material about the author and story, giving us a context to start from. Then the participants joined in a lively (and often heated) discussion, gently guided

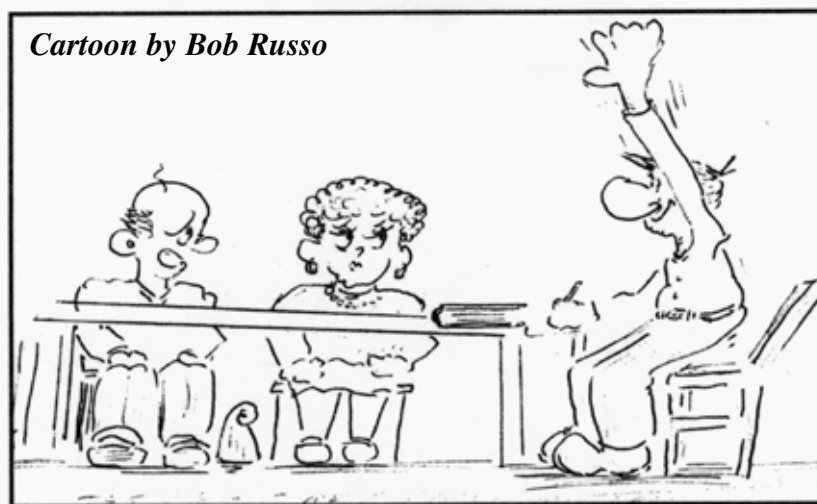
and prodded by our study group leaders. The stories did not share a theme. What they had in common was their tendency to be thought-provoking and timeless in their ability to evoke emotions. It was obvious that different stories touched participants in many diverse ways. Often, as the students, wandered into the hall after class, we were still discussing the stories of the day. Most of us were amazed at how much broader our understanding had become after hearing the other points of view expressed by our classmates. At the end of the semester, we had not only been intellectually stimulated, we acquired a much greater appreciation of this often overlooked literary form.

CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

An enjoyable semester was extended by one week beyond the end of the BALI term when the Kahns hosted the class at their Newton home for a viewing of the

film *The Dead* by James Joyce, based on one of the short stories we read. Everyone agreed that the final discussion (and the refreshments and hospitality) was the perfect note on which to end the term!

My experience was so positive, I've signed up again. This semester I am taking "More Short Stories" with the thoroughly prepared and excellent study group leaders Harriet and Richard Kahn.



Cartoon by Bob Russo

"The last time I raised my hand like that was because I had to leave the room!"

ON THE ROAD WITH EMAIL

by Sherm Okun and Len Heier

TECH TALK

Approximately 84% of registered members at BALI have an email address and, presumably, utilize the World Wide Web. Because so much information is exchanged via email these days, it is important to learn more about receiving email, particularly while away from home. (In next month's article, we will tell you how to slay the evil dragon that prevents you from opening email attachments.)

First, here's an overview of how all email systems work. When an email message is sent, it's deposited at the *outgoing* post office (a.k.a. SMTP server) of your Internet Service Provider (ISP). The post office automatically examines the delivery address and forwards the message to your recipient's *incoming* post office. When recipients collect email, they connect to their incoming post office (a.k.a. POP server) and the mail is "delivered". This entire process can be completed in a few seconds, or much longer.

From your perspective as an email user, there are three primary ways to send and receive email messages: ① install an email program (e.g., Outlook Express, Eudora, Netscape) which delivers mail to and collects it from your local post office; ② use a Web browser (e.g., Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator) that works directly with the email post office; or ③ use a program (typically AOL) to work directly with email at the post office and then download any attachments (e.g., photos, documents) to your computer upon request. For all practical purposes,



these three modes perform the same functions.

So, what happens when you are not working at home on your own computer? How do you contact your post office? Perhaps you are sitting in a cyber-café in Paris or standing near a computer kiosk at Brandeis.

The folks who employ option ② can access a mail service such as Yahoo or Hotmail by using any computer with a Web browser just as if they were at home. However, those using options ① or ③ must also access their post office via a Web browser. Most major ISPs provide comparable access. If you subscribe to Comcast, connect the browser to www.comcast.net/comcast.html; if you use RCN, go to webmail.rcn.com/. For AOL, go to www.aol.com/. In all cases, you will need to supply your email username and password to access your account.

For other ISPs, contact your provider for the proper Web address. If they do not support this feature, don't despair. Try using either of these two Web sites: www.mail2web.com/ or www.mailstart.com/. Both sites will guide you through the process of connecting to your email account. You may need to specify the address of your POP and SMTP post offices before trying this option.

Important: Test this process *before* leaving home to make sure it works smoothly! If it works from your home computer, it should work anywhere.

BALI Course Proposals

April 22, 2004 is the due date for course proposals for the Fall '04 BALI session. Contact Harry Veron (hveron@rcn.com) if you have any questions about preparing a proposal or if you seek guidance about leading a course at BALI.

NEARLY DEPARTED

by Lyn Weiner



The Membership Committee has many tasks — not simply to nag you to give three options for each class and to conduct the infamous lottery that puts you in a class or excludes you from it. We are also concerned with membership recruitment and retention. Therefore, we conducted a brief survey last fall to discover why people chose to be “Inactive Members” and why some chose not to return to BALI.

The same survey was sent to both groups, dropouts and inactive members, and included questions on course selection, parking, cost, personal health, schedules, travel plans, and whether they take classes elsewhere. Responses are not mutually exclusive and were not ranked. Because people answered affirmatively to more than one reason, the responses do not add up to 100%. Data from the dropouts and the inactive members were analyzed separately. The results, with limited commentary, are below.

Forty-five inactive people (about a third of the sample) responded to our survey of Inactive Members. Of these 50% were inactive because they were planning to be away from the Boston area. 37% took a term off because of problems with course selection. 18% did not get the course they wanted. Parking was cited as difficult by 18%. 13% thought that the cost was too high. And, 13% take classes elsewhere. Less than 10% cited family

illness, too much homework, or transportation problems. The data would support the rationale of having an “Inactive” status for people who want to retain affiliation with BALI.

We sent the surveys to 250 former BALI members, and 106 (42%) responded. The predominant reason for not returning to BALI was “Take classes elsewhere” (45%). Some (12) are going to other ILR’s. Most are taking courses that are different from those offered at BALI, courses with less of a commitment to study or specialized courses in religion or art. Eight people are enrolled in or are auditing college level courses.

Of the people who cite reasons related to the courses, 43% thought the selection was limited; 20% did not get their choice; 18% reported that the schedule did not fit their lifestyle; 13% thought there was too much homework.

Parking was also cited as problematic. High cost was a problem for 39%. About a third travel or spend winters away. A small group reported family illness.

The sample is small, but it is clear that course selection, parking, and cost were important for the group who decided not to return to BALI. Since the survey was completed we have solved the parking problem. Curriculum quality and variety continues to be the top priority for the curriculum committee. Costs, too, are reexamined regularly. We are grateful to all the people who responded to our survey. They have been helpful in furthering the growth of BALI.

Jewish Film Festival at Brandeis

April 15-25

Wasserman Cinematheque, Sachar International Center

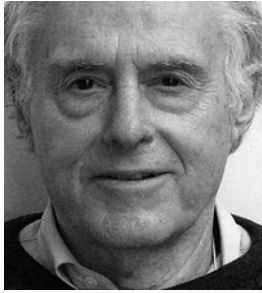
Reduced price for BALI members: \$6 each; \$50 full series

<http://www.jewishfilm.org>

ADVERSE DRUG REACTIONS

by *Martin Goldman*

More than 10% of hospital admissions are related to reactions to medications. For a variety of reasons, this becomes a greater problem as we age:



- We handle medicines differently due to disease or age-related changes in our kidneys and liver.
- Our body composition changes so that we have more fat and less water with the result that water-soluble drugs will have a greater effect and fat-soluble drugs will stay in the body longer. Examples of this are the higher blood levels from digoxin (Lanoxin) from the same oral dose as we age and the prolonged effect of Valium in the senior population.

■ Our organs may react differently to a given level of a drug compared to when we were younger. For example, we become less sensitive to beta-blockers.

■ We are more likely to be on multiple medicines which increases the chance for a reaction.

■ We are under the care of multiple physicians so that one doctor may inadvertently prescribe a medicine which will react to a prescription by another doctor.

■ Our ability to compensate for minor changes in total blood fluid may be impaired as we age so that on standing we could become quite dizzy. This could happen to people on diuretics (i.e., water pills) or sedatives. When getting out of bed at night, sit on the edge of the bed for a few seconds before walking to avoid becoming dizzy and falling.

Given these facts what can we do to prevent an adverse drug reaction?

■ Never take any new medicine, whether prescribed, over the counter, or an herbal remedy without telling your doctor first. Over-the-counter non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as Aleve and ibuprofen, can cause intestinal bleeding and salt-retention and potentially worsen congestive heart failure. St. John's Wort can increase the blood-thinning effect of aspirin and coumadin. Zantac—used to treat ulcers and heart burn—can cause confusion. Antihistamines can worsen prostate trouble. Aspirin taken regularly is not innocuous and should be mentioned to your doctor.

■ Always take the dosage prescribed by your doctor. If one pill helps, don't assume two will be better. And do not forget to take all your medicines. Set up a system that works for you to ensure you take your medications at the times and dosages prescribed.

■ If you make a major change in your diet, let your doctor know. Notify your doctor of any new symptoms. Minor changes in cognitive ability which often are first noticed by relatives or friends may well be a sign of an adverse reaction.

■ Always tell all the physicians you see what medicines you are taking. Do not assume that the specialists whom you see on rare occasions know all the meds you are taking.

■ Be an informed consumer. Many web sites are available for your guidance. A particularly good one is www.netdoctor.co.uk/medicines

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

The **BALI Banner** is published by the Banner Editorial Committee:

Richard Glantz, *Publisher*
Tamara Chernow, *Co-Editor*
Elaine Dohan, *Co-Editor*
Carole Grossman, *Secretary*

Charles Raskin
Katherine Raskin
Max Potter, *Council liaison*

Email us at:
BALIBanner@aol.com

Len Heier, *Photographer*

CALENDAR OF CAMPUS EVENTS

compiled by Charles Raskin

SLOSBERG RECITAL HALL

Apr. 18 (3 P.M.)

University Chorus

all-Britten concert under
Director Sarah Mead

- *Rejoice in the Lamb*
- *Noyes Fludde*

Admission: \$5; Seniors: \$2.50

Apr. 18 (8 P.M.)

Michael Weinstein-Reiman

Voice and piano recital
Free and open to the public

Apr. 23 (5 P.M.)

Chamber Choir & Solo Ensemble

Music of Franz Schubert
under Director James Olsen
Admission: \$5; Seniors: \$2.50

Apr. 23 (8 P.M.)

Evan Hirsch

Piano recital
Admission: \$5; Seniors: \$2.50

Apr. 24 (8 P.M.)

Brandeis Jazz Ensemble

under Director Bob Nieske
Admission: \$5; Seniors: \$2.50

Apr. 25 (3 P.M.)

Brandeis Early Music Ensemble

Music of the Italian renaissance
under Director Sarah Mead
Admission: \$5; Seniors: \$2.50

Apr. 25 (7 P.M.)

Concert by Lydian String Quartet
violinist Judy Eissenberg's
Chamber Music class
Free and open to the public

Apr. 26 (8 P.M.)

Brandeis Improvisation Collective

Expect the unexpected
Free and open to the public

Apr. 29 (8 P.M.)

SERP Ensemble

Chamber music by violinist Graham Patten, cellist Sidney Coren, and pianist Joshua Klein
Free and open to the public

SPINGOLD THEATER

(Laurie Theater)
781-736-3400

The Cherry Orchard

by Anton Chekhov
April 20-25 (8 P.M.)

Celebrating its 100th Anniversary, *The Cherry Orchard* is perhaps Anton Chekhov's most beloved play, a comic and tragic portrait of a world on the brink of destruction. Madame Renevskaya has chased her lover across Europe and returns to find that her beloved Russian estate, with its beautiful orchard, will soon be auctioned. Characters from her old world collide comically and then retreat into fantastic daydreams. But behind the laughter and dancing, her world slides inexorably toward its cataclysmic future.

WEDNESDAY CONCERTS AT NOON

Rapaporte Treasure Hall, Goldfarb Building

Apr. 14

A mini-concert by the **Lydian String Quartet**

Apr. 21

17th century music for voice and viola,
featuring Brandeis faculty members
Pamela Dellal and **Sarah Mead**