

BOLLI Banner

A Brandeis University Program
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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis

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EXPLORING THE IDEA OF A BOLLI ADMISSIONS POLICY

by Ron Levy



BOLLI's fall registration set another record, underscoring the positive reputation BOLLI has among the Boston-area LLIs. In this Fall's course offerings, we introduced the pilot four-course schedule with 36 courses, generally capped classes at 25 students, and experienced more lottery courses than ever before.

The new schedule and record number of lotteries have upset some members. Therefore I have asked Nancy Rawson, chair of our Membership Committee, to lead a task force to evaluate the new course schedule and its impact on registration patterns, course selection, and our membership. The task force has representatives from our four standing committees and is analyzing data and collecting anecdotal evidence to assess the situation. The Council expects a report by the end of the year.

It is understandable that some members have been frustrated by being shut out of lottery courses and by the overcrowding in Napoli for Lunch and Learn and in the Gathering Place. We have been working to alleviate the overcrowding by exploring the use of closed-circuit TV for L&L overflows and by using rectangular tables in the Gathering Place. Brandeis has also ordered new furniture for the balcony overlooking the arena, and hopefully this will have been installed by the time you read this.

However, these are "low-hanging fruit" solutions.

We need to think through very carefully the need for an admissions policy for the future, which would be appropriate given our cherished conviviality and sense of community. We are almost at our practical limit for classroom space in a two-day program, but our seasonal registration pattern allows us to take time to decide what we should do. We do not want to rush into adopting approaches, even if used elsewhere, if they are incompatible with our culture. There are many questions for our Membership Committee and Council to consider:

- First and foremost, do we even need to change our current open admissions policy?
- What has been our admissions and attritions history?
- What do other similar programs do when up against capacity?
- Shall we admit new members by lottery?
- If we become selective, who'll get preference: spouses/partners, retired Brandeis professors or alums, those committing to being an SGL, others?
- Shall we eliminate the Associate Member category, which allows admission to L&L without taking classes?
- And other questions yet to come!

The current expectation is for the Membership Committee to report to the Council by the start of the Spring semester. Members will have an opportunity to hear its recommendations at the Open Forum scheduled for early March, before the Council makes its final decision. Whatever we decide, we must then bring our recommendations to Brandeis for its approval. Stay tuned!

DEAR BOLLI, ...

Two Approaches to Member Selection

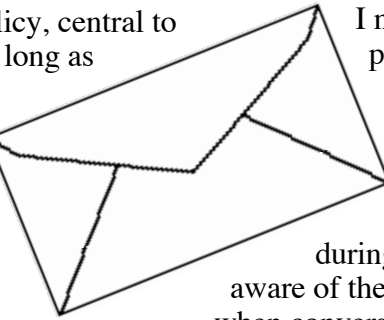
BOLLI uses an Open Admissions policy, central to our democratic, non-elitist values. So long as space is available and you pay on time, you can be a member; no need for admissions committee to evaluate applicants, for interviews, bios, or essays. A contrasting policy is one based on evaluating, managing and continually increasing member quality.

Brandeis University does not have an open policy and clearly uses a quality approach. Open admissions are more typically used in the lower end of academic excellence, such as Adult Education and Community College classes.

Open versus *Quality* has implications that reach beyond applications and selection, and speaks to improving classroom discussions, SGL leadership, volunteerism, sense of community, and many other aspects of BOLLI life.

There's an inherent contradiction between an open admissions policy and a core value of quality. The challenge is to improve quality without becoming elitist.

Both approaches have positive and negative aspects; each has supporters and detractors. As we continue to grow and improve, it becomes increasingly difficult to avoid addressing whether we should shift our policy or not. Whichever path we choose, it is better to do so with intention and through open discussion, not through committee elites.



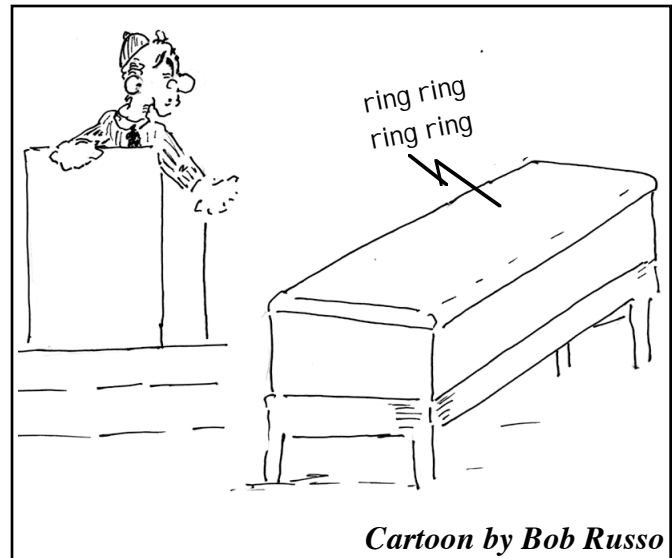
Cell Phones Annoying

I never thought I'd miss old fashioned phone booths but ...

As BOLLI's membership grows and the number of sessions increases to four each day, it becomes harder to find a quiet place to read or write during a break between classes. Please be aware of the folks around you trying to work when conversing on a cell phone.

Thank you.

-- **Kenneth Rosenfield**



"Would anyone like to say a few words about our dearly departed?"

-- **Stan Davis**

The BOLLI Banner is published by the Banner Editorial Committee:

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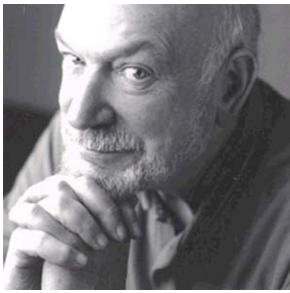
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FOREIGN ADVENTURE

by *Richard Glantz*



One of the joys of having children is seeing the world anew through their eyes. Remember those questions? Some knocked you off balance with their fresh perspective. Some were embarrassing. Some revealed your own ignorance.

Why doesn't the moon fall from the sky? Why don't you like Uncle Harry? Why do boys have nipples? Why do you serve soup first? Remember how your answers were treated with such respect?

One joy of mentoring foreign graduate students as part of the BOLLI International Friends Program is answering their thought-provoking questions:

- *How did the founders of your country devise the American form of government, since there was no model like that in existence from which to copy?*
- *I never met a Jew until I came here to study. Jews seem intelligent, friendly, and peace-loving. Why does the world hate you so?*
- *Since everything my parents have done for me up to now has been wise, why shouldn't I marry the woman they select?*

How would you answer these questions?

Let me shake your worldview even more by sharing with you this fascinating true story. Twelve students from the “-stan” countries rented a van and drove to Niagara Falls for Spring break. On the return leg of their journey, around 1 A.M., the driver had a craving for a cigarette. None of his fellow passengers smoked. Desperate, the driver—a dark-skinned, tall Muslim with a perpetual 5 o'clock shadow and a wide grin that even makes me nervous—spotted a convenience store. The store was empty of customers, with a lone woman clerk behind the counter. She asked to see a driver's license. His international driver's license proved he was of age, but the clerk insisted upon carding each passenger, “How do I know you aren't buying cigarettes for one of your under-age passengers?” Ten of the students produced satisfactory identification; but the

last student came up short: her college i.d. did not list her age. The clerk refused to sell the cigarettes.

What is your reaction to this story?

Every American to whom I've told this story has been adamant that this is an outrageous case of racial discrimination, with perhaps a touch of small-minded bureaucracy thrown into the mix.

But not to the twelve people in the van, as one of them later explained to me, “Now I know why America is such a great country!” The students saw this event as ordinary people enforcing the law, with no police present. In each of their own countries, law is arbitrary—made up on the spot—but in America, even the lowest clerk keeps society stable by adhering to the written law.

A second joy of being with foreign students is sharing their delight of discovery. At the first snowfall in November, I hurried over to an apartment housing several students; and I coaxed them outside. They reluctantly ventured forth, and soon there were squeals of excitement as they pelted each other with snowballs. All but one student—from Africa—who took one look at the white flakes drifting down from heaven, ran back into her room, and hid under her blankets.

Of course, one of the downsides of having children is their self-centeredness. By contrast, many foreign students revere elders. At a student party given for Sharon Sokoloff, my wife, my cousin, and me, I witnessed a little five-year-old Pakistani girl, unprompted by her parents, get up off her chair, walk across the room to my 93-year old cousin, and escort the woman back to her own seat.

After nine months of eye-opening experiences like these, I remarked to my wife, “We made a mistake having American children. We should have had Pakistani children!”

There are only a few students remaining without BOLLI hosts. You too can have a most rewarding experience. [*Contact Lyn Weiner*]

THE SOCIAL WORK HOT LINE

by Sophie Freud



photo by Dania Jekel

A number of professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, and indeed, social workers, in part depend for their earnings, their career aspirations, and their emotional satisfaction on the troubles and miseries of their patients and clients. These relationships thus involve fiduciary obligations in

which special provisions are necessary to protect patients or clients in psychological, financial, legal, or physical distress from exploitation. These professionals thus have to abide by carefully spelled-out ethical obligations that form the backdrop to any interactions between them and the vulnerable people they serve. Codes of ethics are not only guides to professional behavior but they are also a risk management tool in cases of malpractice suits.

Social Workers must abide by their Code of Ethics which has expanded with each new edition. The Code starts out enumerating the core values of the profession: Service, Social Justice, Dignity and Worth of the Person, Importance of Human Relationships, Integrity, and Competence. Each of these values is connected to ethical principles. It is an idealistic conception of the profession. The National Association of Social Workers of Massachusetts has created an Ethics Call-Line, or Hotline, which can be used by any social worker in need of advice and support.

Most ethical problems seem to deal with such issues as: conflicts of interest (an old person with-

out family wants to leave money to her cherished social worker), sexual behavior (can you date someone who had been a client five years ago), dual relationships (can your child's teacher become a client), barter (can you exchange family counseling with having your house painted), etc. Although The Code of Ethics keeps expanding, becoming ever more explicit, it does not begin to cover the many ethical issues social workers are continually facing, given that all of clinical practice involves ethical implications. An ethical dilemma arises when two important values clash with each other, such as *confidentiality* and *duty to warn or to protect*, which may arise when a client contemplates aggressive actions against someone else. Does the wife of an AIDS patient have to be informed of her husband's condition? Confidentiality is, moreover, covered by legal protection, highlighting the constant interconnection between ethical, legal, and clinical issues which are often at odds with each

other and with social work values.

Social workers are also mandated to report any kind of child abuse they encounter in their professional or even private lives, which can create many ethical dilemmas. Making important ethical decisions can be frightening and lonely.

After I retired from being a social work professor, I had the privilege of joining this interesting standing committee of seven experienced social workers. We take turns responding to incoming calls, meet every other week to reach a group decision, keeping names anonymous, and return the call with suggestions. Although the responsibility for action always rests with the caller, many social workers have found this service very useful.

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Kudos

BOLLI Director Sharon Sokoloff and Curriculum Committee Chair Myrna Cohen's article "Learn and Lead: Developing Course Leaders and Curricula in a Lifelong Learning Institute" is featured in *The LLI Review*, Fall 2006, Volume 1. *The LLI Review* is the annual journal of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes.

FRUIT OF THE VINE

by Sandy Traiger

The last meeting of the BOLLI course *The Culture of Wine in the U.S.* took place at Ed Caldwell's house in Concord, which includes a very extensive wine cellar. There we consumed great food, tasted many, many wines, and laughed and talked our way through the afternoon. We were definitely 13 of the luckiest people at BOLLI to have Ed as our Study Group Leader for this interesting course.

Ed clearly appreciates and loves good wine and has extensive knowledge of the various wine producing areas of the U.S and abroad. He really enjoys imparting this knowledge. As part of our course-work each of us was assigned an area of the country to research and report on in class. Virtually every state in the country produces wine.

Our homework consisted of tasting two different wines per week. While in conversation with a friend, I loved to remark, "Excuse me, but I must go home and do my homework." My husband and I took the course together, so we got to share and compare.

After just a couple of weeks of discussions of our homework, and wine tastings in class, we wine mavens had built up quite a camaraderie. We studied the history of wine, visited wine stores,

attended wine tastings, and had a great deal of fun in class. Ed introduced us to *The Wine Spectator* and other wine digests. And we began to trust our own taste in wine. We learned about red and white wine, grapes, bouquets, aftertaste, clarity, color, oaked and unoaked, dry and sweet, aperitifs, and dessert wines. We learned how to recognize a *good* wine and to never, ever be a wine snob.

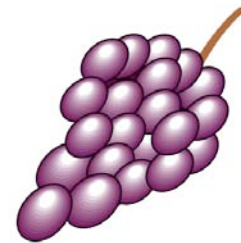


photo by Charles Raskin

Ed Caldwell

Ed Caldwell was raised in Arizona and moved to California in the 70s, a time when the wine industry in the U.S. began to heat up and Americans' interest in good wines developed. Trained in physics, he worked in the computer industry by profession and became a wine lover by avocation. He and his wife Jan began to visit wineries, tasting, and buying and collecting, and above all, learning.

When the Caldwells came to the Boston area in the early 90s, Ed knew wine. By the time he retired, he had become a wine expert; and he went on to teach us, his lucky neophytes, to appreciate the fascinating culture of wine in the U.S.

A very tasty course with a long finish. Try it, you'll like it.

Current Topics in Medicine

A new open affinity group, *Current Topics in Medicine*, has been meeting this semester on Wednesdays from 1:30 to 2:30 P.M. in The Gathering Place.

Ed Goldberg leads the discussions, geared for the general public, of articles from the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Recent topics have included resistance to antibiotics, diabetes, and dementia.

Member Open Forums

November 15th & 28th, noon to 1:15 P.M.
(in place of Lunch and Learn)
Napoli Room, Gosman Building

These forums will provide you an opportunity to ask questions of the Council, Standing Committee Chairs, and the Director. Please come, say what is on your mind, hear others do so as well, and participate in constructive dialogue about the topics important to you.

SAILING INTO UNCHARTED WATERS

by Joan Kleinman

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

“I brought a few pictures of my work,” Irving Erlichman quietly mentioned as we talked about his forays into the world of the visual arts. He opened an envelope and laid in front of me an artistic buffet. There are oil paintings, one a brightly colored triptych, like a stained glass window, of sailboats in a harbor. There are Picasso paintings rendered into three dimensions, each part of the original picture formed into wood then reassembled and painted. There are clay sculptures, heads and full-bodied figures in a multitude of poses and sculptures in other materials made from Irving’s own plaster molds. There are models of World War I fighting planes and finely detailed models of ships including a model of the actual 14-foot sailboat that Irving had built himself and sailed for many years before donating it to a camp for underprivileged children.

A mechanical engineer by profession, Irving retired from the Polaroid Corporation where he had worked on the instant camera. He claims 70 patents and was awarded a Fellowship from the Society for Imaging Science and Technology for outstanding achievement. “I loved my job,” he said. “How can anyone stop doing what they love?” Now Irving consults part-time, applying his particular skill of translating clients’ ideas into three-dimensional sketches.

Looking back, Irving reflected that his real passion has been sailing, an activity he pursued for a quarter century. Looking ahead, he isn’t sure what his next venue will be. But, blessed with a keen curiosity and desire to “learn about what I don’t understand,” he is confident that “the idea will just come.”



photo by Irving Erlichman

TWENTIETH CENTURY TIMELINE

by Tamara Chernow

Are you planning a birthday or anniversary party for friends or relatives? Would you like to surprise them with music from the decade they were born or impress them with your knowledge of everything from the cost of milk in the Thirties (14¢ a quart) to the date Congress designated *The Star Spangled Banner* as the national anthem (1931)?

headings of Art & Architecture, Music, Events, People & Personalities, and more. The strong point of this site is that it is full of links to more comprehensive sites about the items it mentions.

If you are interested in radio programs, you can read the script of Orson Welles’s October 30, 1938 broadcast of *War of the Worlds* and read all the newspaper accounts of the panic that followed.

<http://kclibrary.nhmccd.edu/decades.html> is a Website produced by librarians at Kingwood College Library in Texas that lists information from the decades of the 20th Century under

In addition to these links there are titles of reference books found in most libraries that provide time-line information.

MOVIN' ON UP

by Sharon Sokoloff



The BOLLI offices have moved! This may not seem like a big deal to some, but that would only include those of you who haven't been to our office space in the trailer (*modular office unit*) for the past six-plus years. True enough, it is a nice trailer and we each had an office with a window and a door, but it is a trailer nonetheless.

We are now comfortably ensconced in our new office space on Old South Street. You have all walked or driven past the street, coming up the hill from the railroad tracks and heading toward Gosman. On the Gosman side of the street, you pass Old South Street, where the old yellow house is now gray.

The house was built in the 1700s and is known to be one of the oldest houses (if not the oldest) in Waltham. In the late spring of 2006, Brandeis unexpectedly purchased it. For many years the owners of the house did not want to sell to Brandeis. When the time came for the family to let it go, they sold it to a developer with a plan to create condominiums. The developer constructed an addition. He then learned, because the house is an historic landmark overseen by the Waltham Historical Society, that he was unable to develop the building according to his plans. He sold it to Brandeis.



President Reinharz determined the Rabb School of Continuing Studies, of which we are a part, would move to the new old house. As always, there was plenty of competition for the space; and it is a testament to the President's support of the Rabb School and BOLLI that we are moving.

The house has been renovated inside while preserving the historic details. For the past five months, a team of Rabb School staff, Associate Provost of Academic Affairs Michael Whelan, Facilities Management, and a terrific contractor have worked to design and create our new space.

BOLLI shares the new part of the building with the Summer School. There are two offices downstairs for Carol and volunteer-student workers, and the director's office is upstairs. The house has two nicely appointed conference rooms with AV equipment. The parking situation is still in process with details to be worked out with the City of Waltham regarding ownership and responsibility for the street. For now, there are several short-term parking places by the house and a number of spaces for people with disabilities. The staff will be parking in the railroad parking lot (which Brandeis owns), only a two-minute walk.

BOLLI members Nancy Rawson and Carol Shedd have volunteered to research the history of the landmark house, and their findings will be published in the Banner.

Please visit our community's new home soon.

CALENDAR OF CAMPUS EVENTS

compiled by Charles Raskin

SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER

Nov. 4 (8 P.M.)

Brandeis University Chorus and Chamber Choir

Music and poetry on the myth of Orpheus drawn from ancient and modern works

Admission: \$5 for BOLLI members

Nov. 19 (7 P.M.)

Brandeis Jazz Ensemble

Bob Nieske, director

Music of Thelonius Monk

Admission: \$5 for BOLLI members

Nov. 18 (3 P.M.)

Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra

Neal Hampton, conductor

• Shostakovich *Symphony No. 5*

• Ekhardt-Gramatté *Basson Concerto*, Isabele Plaster, soloist

Admission: \$5 for BOLLI members

SPINGOLD THEATER

Laurie Theater

781-736-3400, option 5

The Physician of His Honor

by Pedro Calderon de la Barca

Nov. 9-18 (8 P.M.) and Nov. 11 & 19 (2 P.M.)

One of the most intellectually and emotionally engaging of the Spanish Golden Age (17th century) plays, as well as the most controversial. Taking place during the reign of King Pedro of Castile (1350-1369), it is one of the spectacular "honour dramas," in which the main characters confront compelling yet conflicting imperatives. *The Physician of His Honor* is beautiful in its poetry and unsettling in its resolution. For more than 350 years the play and its author have been as fiercely reviled as they have been enthusiastically acclaimed by audiences and readers.

Admission: \$8-\$10 for BOLLI members

ROSE ART MUSEUM

Nov. 4 (2 P.M.)

Gallery Talk

Featured artist Kevin Hamilton in dialogue with curator Michael Rush

Nov. 13 (7:30 P.M.)

Unveiling of Warhol's Louis Brandeis

The newly acquired Andy Warhol portrait is unveiled, in celebration of the 150th birthday of Justice Louis Brandeis

Nov. 15 (11 A.M.)

Tour of the Clare Rojas: Hope Springs

Eternal exhibit, followed by lunch
Admission: \$12 for members; \$15 for non-members