

BOLLI Banner



Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis

Vol. 8 Number 2 October 2007

WHAT WE DID LAST SUMMER

by Ron Levy



I hope you had a good summer, that your semester is going well, and that new and returning members have had a chance to meet one another. BOLLI, of course, did not take the summer off. The staff, committees, and Council kept working, two extremely well-received Brandeis@BOLLI Seminars took

place in June, and preparations were made for the course lotteries and the fall semester.

The Council's summer started with the elections of officers and the appointment of committee chairs (log in to www.brandeis.edu/programs/bolli/members/committees/). Esther Scharfman was elected to the Council following the resignation of Bill Rachlin.

We also debated a clarification of the privileges of Inactive Members; Arnold Messing formed a task force to research whether to apply for other grants and endowments; and we decided to encourage more resource conservation at BOLLI.

In early September we held a long-range planning session involving the entire Council and some committee members. These scenario-based discussions were fruitful in identifying key issues for which we must develop specific long-term plans.

A Planning Committee will be formed this semester to carry this forward.

Our Director, Sharon Sokoloff, hired Mary Ann Sliwa as a part-time Program Coordinator. Already Mary Ann has become a terrific asset to BOLLI.

The Membership Committee, working with Carol Allman-Morton, accomplished something long in the planning stage: computerizing the class lottery! This initially did *not* go smoothly but, after long hours put in by Carol and Chair Nancy Rawson in ironing out the glitches, we actually had a successful computer lottery within our deadline!

On a personal note, Sandi and I traveled with our family within New England and to other places. Sandi and our daughter Rachel successfully completed the three-day, 60-mile Susan G. Komen walk for breast cancer, in 90°+ heat!

Sandi and I thought about where best to make a difference in our charitable giving. We decided to fund a charitable gift annuity, using appreciated stock, to benefit the BOLLI Endowment Fund. This, and contributions from an eligible IRA, are terrific ways to support and benefit an institute many of us love and appreciate.

A final note: I hope to see you at the Member Open Forums scheduled for October 30 and 31. In the meantime, you can find me around Gosman any school day.

BOLLI CURRICULUM: THEN & NOW

by Sharon Sokoloff



I'd like to welcome new and returning BOLLI members and provide both groups with a brief look at how our offerings and resources have changed over the seven years of our existence.

The number of courses we offer at BOLLI has doubled since our first year from 36 to 72 this year (36 this semester plus an anticipated 36 next Spring).

The scope and variety of courses has increased as well. In the early years, a disproportionate number of our courses were literature, humanities, history, and government. The primary areas for which we had a large demand and little supply were art and science. Our offerings in both of these areas have grown but we'd still like to see more art. (That's a hint to those of you thinking of leading an art course—Chagall anyone?).

While we started with no “how to” courses, we now offer one or two computer courses and occasional art courses that combine academic content and “how to”, e.g., last year's watercolor class. Our curriculum is required by the University to be academic. One way we determine what “academic” means is to see if a course might be offered in the Brandeis curriculum.

In our first year, virtually all of our SGLs (Study Group Leaders) came from outside of our program with many from a similar program at Harvard coming to help us get started. For years, we sought SGLs from outside our program. Today, nearly all of our course leaders are BOLLI members and participants. In part, this has to do with the *Learn & Lead: How to Become a Study Group Leader* course, which has been offered for the past four semesters, from which over 15 course leaders have emerged. Some are leading classes closely related to their previous careers, but a large number are sharing their passion for a subject totally unrelated to their working lives. We continue to look for new courses and encourage you to think about your own interests and how you might like to share them with your peers.

Newcomers as well as returning members are encouraged to check out the BOLLI web page at www.brandeis.edu/programs/bali/, where you will find such useful and interesting information as a full membership list, catalogs of course offerings going back twelve semesters, an archive of all issues of the BOLLI Banner since September 2003, and a list of committees with their members. Some features require that a member log in; Carol Allman-Morton or Mary Ann Sliwa can tell you how to do that.

If you have ideas about improving our curriculum or a course you'd like to lead, please feel free to talk with me.

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

Richard Glantz, *Publisher*

Tamara Chernow, *Co-Editor*

Carole Grossman, *Co-Editor*

Carol Shedd, *Secretary*

Charles Raskin

Katherine Raskin

Naomi Schmidt

Len Heier, *Photographer*

Email us at:
BALIBanner@aol.com
Next deadline:
10/12/07

Banner archive: www.brandeis.edu/programs/bali/Banner%20Archive/index.html

SPIN DOCTOR

by David Grass, M.D.



Dizziness, an unpleasant sensation of imbalance or disorientation in space, is a common symptom. However, it is not helpful to tell your physician simply that you had a bout of dizziness. That term is too broad to allow the physician to reach a correct diagnosis. Instead, while you are experiencing dizziness, try to categorize it along these lines:

- *I felt I was spinning or falling.*
This is **vertigo**, the illusory sensation of motion, usually a rotational or spinning sensation, but occasionally a sensation of tilt, pull, or falling. It is due to a disorder of the vestibular system in the inner ear.
- *I felt I was about to faint.*
This is **presyncope**, a sensation of impending loss of consciousness, usually associated with feelings of generalized weakness, sweating, nausea, visual dimming, and pallor. It is primarily due to inadequate blood flow to the brain which, in turn, may be reflexive as in the common faint response or due to an underlying systemic disorder that jeopardizes circulation integrity.
- *I felt I was unbalanced, but not spinning or falling.*
This is **disequilibrium**, a state of postural imbalance unaccompanied by any vertiginous sensation. It is extremely nonspecific and may represent disorders of the central nervous system (brain or spinal cord), the peripheral nervous system (peripheral nerves), the visual system, or—especially in the elderly—the

musculoskeletal system.

- *I felt disoriented or giddy, plus I felt quite anxious.*

This is **psychogenic dizziness**, a very non-specific sensation of giddiness or ill-defined disorientation that is due to impaired brain integration of the multiple sensory inputs that we need for orientation in space. It is typically accompanied by high levels of anxiety.

Categorizing dizziness in such a fashion and relating that to your physician can be extremely helpful in arriving at a correct diagnosis. Of course, subtle cases are seldom textbook, and there may be considerable overlap in symptoms. The answer begins in the patient history—what you tell your doctor.

Don't forget to mention any medications you are taking. A comprehensive physical might be warranted, including a general examination, a

neurological assessment, and more specific tests directed to the vestibular system (inner ear and its central nervous system connections), visual processing and eye movement, and musculoskeletal

integrity. Additional testing may be necessary, including blood work, brain imaging, and electrophysiological testing of auditory and vestibular systems.

In the less than obvious case, the bottom line is to find a doctor who is specifically interested in dizziness. Unfortunately, this does not always mean an internist, ENT, or general neurologist. You may need to look for a specialist in neuro-otology or better yet, a professional member of the Vestibular Disorders Association. Their Web site is located at www.vestibular.org.

[The author is the brother of BOLLI member Judy Palmer – Ed.]

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Bathroom Break

Frustrated waiting in the bathroom line opposite the Gathering Place? There are substantially larger facilities downstairs. Take the stairway to the athletic court level, then down one more level to heaven.



BRANDEIS JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

by Sophie Freud



In April I attended every session of the 10th annual Film Festival of the National Center for Jewish Films at Brandeis, finding myself in turn informed, entertained, and saddened. Each film was followed by a discussion, usually with the director of the film visiting from Israel or Holland or Germany.

The Center has the country's largest archive of Jewish films. Indeed, Sharon Pucker Rivo, director of the archives, makes a plea before each performance for old movies that members of the audience may have in their attics. They show at least one restored piece of their collection at each festival. This year it was the 1937 Yiddish feature film *The Living Orphan* about a mother who leaves her family because she loves being a theater star.

Other films included:

- *First Basket* showed images of basketball games of the lower East Side of New York, explaining how the game helped to integrate the immigrant Jewish boys into American life. Other images were of the annual reunion of the game, in Florida, of old men who reminisced joyfully about the big names of their time.
- *My Mexican Shivah*, a comedy-drama from Mexico in Spanish, with English subtitles showed a typical family wheeling and dealing through their *shiva* week.
- *Dr. Mr. Waldman* was a sensitive lovely semi-autobiographical film by its director Hanan Peled who, as a little boy in the movie, desperately tried to help his Holocaust-tormented father.

- *Secret Courage* showed how Walter Suskind, as a member of the hated Dutch Jewish Council, secretly saved up to 900 children while appearing to collaborate with the Nazis. Tragically, he was killed in Auschwitz by his own people.
- *Three Mothers*, an engaging Israeli multi-lingual movie, dealt with the lifelong bonds between girl triplets, supporting each other through all the heartaches that life tends to bring. The spirited post-discussion led by Shula Reinharz enhanced our appreciation of the film.
- *2 or 3 Things I Know About Him* was a documentary by Malte Ludin about his prominent Nazi leader father, Hans Ludin, who had protested his innocence up to his death by execution, convincing his daughters that he had not known the fate of the deported Jews. It was a very strong film; but more familiar territory for me, since I had led a course about that subject.

The highlight of the whole festival, for me, was the movie *Fence, Wall, Border*, which dealt with the four-year construction of the wall around Israel's border to keep out suicide bombers and other terrorists and its political, economic, and social consequences. The filmmaker, Eli Cohen, tries to show the viewpoints of both sides with apparent objectivity, although I could not get over the whale mouths and huge dragon teeth of the cranes that tore down precious olive groves and Palestinian houses while old Palestinian farmers watched and cried. In a short private conversation with the director I expressed my indignation about Israel's actions that his film had evoked in me, but he rejected my reactions as unfair.

The festival included ten films. BOLLI members could buy tickets at a discount. I am sure you will not want to miss next year's Jewish film festival!

**The
Brandeis Pass**

\$32 gets BOLLI members 4 tickets valid all season long in any combination of Brandeis Theater plays—that's 60% off regular individually priced tickets! For details, click on www.brandeis.edu/btc/Subscriptions.html and then on [Brandeis Pass Order Form](#).

DOUBLE CULTURAL CONNECTION

by Elaine Dohan



I combined two satisfying activities last semester: interacting with Brandeis SID students from the Heller School and volunteering in a first grade class in Waltham. Connecting these two groups of students was a truly wonderful experience for all of us.

“Your class is just like my class,” exclaimed Richard Alombah. “Everybody is

from some place different.” The students he was addressing were children coming from homes where English is not the first language. Many of them speak Spanish; but some are from Sri Lanka, India, Uganda, Cameroon, and Italy as well as Guatemala, Columbia, and Mexico.

The social studies curriculum includes a unit on the examination of cultures. SID students provided a rich focus for these excited and curious children.

Shamila Dalawatte was their first SID guest. She wore a beautiful *sari*. The children wanted to touch the shimmering material. Shamila brought a video of a song and dance from Sri Lanka. Everyone jumped up to join in. Shamila told the class about the monkeys and elephants that live on her beautiful islands.

Felicidad Justiniana, herself the mother of five, arrived in Philippine dress. Examination of the world map showed that her home is far from our continent, so the children were surprised and delighted to learn that she too, speaks Spanish and, like them, eats rice three times a day.

Ai Morita dressed in a *yukata* (summer kimono). She taught each child how to bow and say “good morning” in Japanese. She demonstrated a Japanese dance, which the class learned quickly. She sang a frog song in Japanese and the class sang a frog song for her in English. Each child made an origami hat.

Oanh Bui arrived in an *ao dai*—a beautiful Vietnamese dress. She played a game with her audience and taught them a song and dance. They were interested in her demonstration of her language. The same letter makes so many sounds, and little squiggly marks placed “here and there” changed sound and meaning, too. Oanh assured the children that Vietnamese is much more difficult than English. She gave each child a paper crane she had folded.

The last guest was Richard. He wore a magnificent multicolored robe and hat. When the children had shaken his hand and were seated in front of him, he announced that what he wore on his head was not a hat but a crown. “Because,” he said, “in my Cameroon village I am a prince and my grandfather is the king.” No one in the room had ever met a prince before, and this prince sang a song that his mother had sung to him when he was a child. He told us his entire family lives together in a palace. Since his grandfather had forty wives, this is a big family. Richard himself has five children. He does not know how many grandchildren his grandfather has—there are too many to keep count. A physician, Richard is here studying to better help the children dying of malaria and other diseases in Cameroon.

Many of the SID guests had never been in an American public school before. Like their young hosts they will, no doubt, have stories to tell when they return to their homes.

Affinity Groups (open to all BOLLI members on a space-available basis)



The **Adventurers** arrange docent-led tours of places of interest such as museums, historical houses, gardens, and government institutions. Lunch follows at the venue or a nearby restaurant.

The **New Yorker Fiction** group meets every other Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss stories from the *New Yorker* magazine. These stories are available in the current issue or on the Internet.



LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE FREUD FAMILY

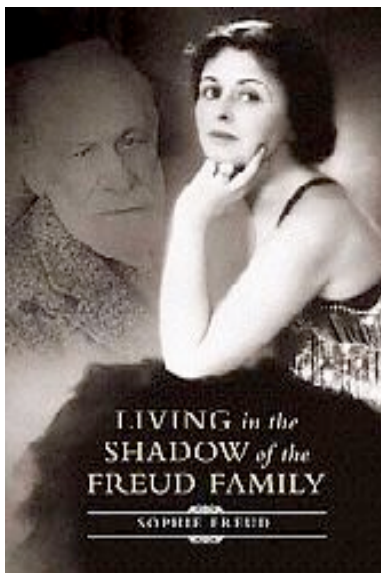
by Naomi Schmidt

Most BOLLI members are aware that our own Sophie Freud is the granddaughter of the famous Viennese psychoanalyst. Until the recent publication of her memoir, however, we knew little of the details of her earlier life or of the interesting inter-relationships between members of the Freud family. The central character of *Living in the Shadow of the Freud Family* (published by Praeger) is neither Sophie nor her famous grandfather, but instead is his daughter-in-law Esti, Sophie's mother.

The book is structured around passages from Esti's autobiography and Sophie's diary as a young girl, along with letters between individual family members, with the current Sophie looking back and commenting on their lives and their relationships. We learn how the two women left Vienna for Paris in 1938 when Sophie was 15 years old, and how a few years later escaped Paris on bicycles as

the Nazis were about to enter the city. Their path took them through Nice, Casablanca, and Lisbon before they landed in the U.S. in 1942; and

we can recognize in the young Sophie the person who will become the individual we now know, one who is unafraid to speak her mind or to walk briskly from Gosman to J Lot in the rain, while the rest of us wait for the shuttle bus.



A special treat is the inclusion of photographs of Sophie and other family members, which introduces us to the characters in ways that words alone cannot do. I found it difficult to put this book down, and I recommend it highly to those with an interest in life in Vienna before WWII, coping with and looking back on difficult family relationships, or the earlier years of a valued BOLLI

member and SGL.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

BOLLI Facebook About to Launch



You made a new acquaintance in class last week and promised to call her to make lunch plans. But where is that elusive slip of paper with the phone number? And, what *is* her last name? You only remember that her first name is Judy.

BOLLI Facebook to the rescue. Search by first name "Judy" and with one click you'll get a list with pictures of all the Judy's at BOLLI. Included, of course, is that phone number.

Now your car is in the repair shop and you need a ride to Brandeis. Who lives near you? Consult the Facebook! Search by city and find the members who live in your town.

Your good friend knows someone attending BOLLI and hopes you'll say hello. It would help to know exactly what this person looks like. Facebook time again! Enter a name and see a picture, contact information, and even the individual's personal statement.

The BOLLI Facebook makes its debut this Fall. A searchable online database of all BOLLI members, it is posted on a password-protected site. Live demonstrations will be held Oct. 9th and 10th outside the Gathering Place between 11:30 A.M. and noon.

POSTAGE HIKE RAISES INCENTIVE TO PAY BILLS ONLINE

by Frank Benjamin

The rise in first-class mail postage to 41¢, coupled with an increase in late payment penalties by major credit card issuers, may have been the tipping point for consumers.

The 2007 Consumer Bill Payment Survey, a national survey of those 82.5 million American households with Internet access, found that for the first time the total number of bill payments made online exceeded the total number of bill payments sent through the mail. Sponsored by CheckFree and conducted by Harris International and The Marketing World, the study tallied the bills *paid* online; it took no notice of whether the bills were *presented* to the customer via snailmail or via email. Furthermore, the study did not address bills paid by telephone (NSTAR, for example, will accept bill payment by Internet or by telephone, in either case debiting the amount from the customer's bank account).

E-payment provides better cash management for the consumer: same-day payment instead of five-

day early payment to allow for Postal Service delays. In addition, e-payment ensures timely payment: I signed up for automatic electronic payment of my health insurance premium when my carrier introduced a policy of canceling any policy that was even one day late in paying the monthly bill.

Caution: some mortgage companies, banks, and credit card companies charge \$5 to \$30 for e-payment. This is outrageous, since, according to a study by IBM, it costs about one cent for them to process a payment electronically, compared to 9¢ to 15¢ to process a paper check.

MONEY TALK

Follow-up to my article on earning higher interest by using Internet banks for FDIC-insured money market accounts and CDs [*BOLLI Banner*, Sep. 2005]: rates have risen substantially. Emigrant Bank now pays 5.05% instead of 3.5%, and Countrywide Bank now pays 5.5%. A new player, First National Bank of Omaha (www.fnbdirect.com), pays a whopping 6%.

A Record-Setting Semester!

Our membership this semester is our biggest ever. BOLLI has three types of membership. *Active* (taking classes), *Associate* (Lunch and Learn), and *Inactive* (holding a spot for the next semester). The BOLLI administration decided to close registration to new members at the beginning of September, but we continued to accept applications from returning members. Registration will open again for new members in the Spring. As of September 17, membership numbers are:

	Fall '06	Spring '07	Fall '07
Active	387	364	419
Associate	40	32	39
Inactive	23	74	24
Total	450	470	482

We have 48 new members this semester.

- Carol Allman-Morton

OFFICIAL BOLLI GREETER!



Sharon Sokoloff at the front door

CALENDAR OF CAMPUS EVENTS

compiled by Charles Raskin

SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER

Oct. 6 (8 P.M.)

Lydian String Quartet

- Haydn *Quartet in G Major*, Op. 76 #1
- Franghiz Ali-Zadeh "*Oasis*" for *Quartet and Tape* (1998)
- Schumann *Quartet in F Major*, Op. 41 #2

Pre-concert lecture at 7 P.M. by Daniel Stepner

\$10 for BOLLI members with i.d., in advance

\$15 for BOLLI members with i.d., day of show

Oct. 27 (7 P.M.)

All Brandeis Ensembles

Early Music Ensemble
Leonard Bernstein Quartet
University Chorus and Chamber Choir
Jazz Ensemble
Wind Ensemble
Brandeis Symphony Orchestra

Oct. 20 (8 P.M.)

Afro-Brazilian Music & Dance

Ologundê, 15-member dance ensemble

- *candomblé*, a mesmerizing synthesis of the Yoruba and Catholic religions
- *capoeira*, a breathtaking martial arts dance
- *maculêlê*, a dynamic warrior dance which utilizes sticks and machetes and was originally created in the sugar cane fields by slaves
- *samba de roda*, Brazil's exhilarating national music style

\$10 for BOLLI members with i.d., in advance

ACTING TOGETHER ON THE WORLD STAGE: SETTING THE SCENE FOR PEACE

Rosa Cushillo

Oct. 5 (noon) on the Great Lawn

repeated Oct. 6 (6 P.M.) in Shapiro Campus Center Theater

In Spanish with English translation provided. Performed by Ana Correa of Yuyachkani. Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani received Peru's 2000 National Human Rights Award. Followed by the showing of a video documentary on Yuyachkani's work with Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and discussion in the Shapiro Campus Center Multi-purpose Room.

SPINGOLD THEATER

Check with the box office (781-736-3400, option 5) for tickets
Remember, BOLLI members receive a substantial discount

The Threepenny Opera

Oct. 11-13, 18-20 (8 P.M.) and Oct. 13, 20, 21 (2 P.M.)

This German masterpiece of musical theater is a sardonic, seductive satire of the business of being bad, hosted by the notorious Mack the Knife. A startling new production proves it is more timely than ever.