POSITIONING BRANDEIS IN THE MARKETPLACE

by Richard Mansfield

Ellen de Graffenreid is Brandeis’s new Senior Vice President of Communications. She reports directly to President Lawrence and oversees four groups within the university:

- **News and Communications** (media relations and news on the Brandeis website)
- **Web Communications** (overseeing and supporting University websites)
- **Creative Services** (editorial, design, production, and marketing support across the university)
- **Brandeis Magazine**

Ellen comes to Brandeis from the University of North Carolina’s Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, where for four years she was Director of Communications and Marketing. She has worked in communications at the University of Louisville and Washington State University, in technology at Hewlett Packard, and as a consultant.

When I asked Ellen what she would like to accomplish over the next two to three years, she began by saying that Brandeis is a jewel of an academic institution, but that it has a low public profile. She would like to elevate Brandeis’s image but to do this carefully, using research to guide the process. Too often, she said, she has seen experts offer confident opinions about what kind of marketing messages will be effective, only to find that focus groups or other research proves them wrong.

She is undertaking a major benchmarking effort to explore how institutions that are Brandeis peers are marketing themselves. Through this effort, she hopes to identify best practices and determine which ones to adopt at Brandeis. She plans to conduct additional research to identify which of the distinctive aspects of Brandeis (e.g., the heritage of social justice, the values of Justice Brandeis) to emphasize in marketing messages.

When asked about some of the key formative experiences in her professional life, Ellen noted the breadth of her academic background. With a Master’s degree in Russian history and an MBA, she appreciates the value of both liberal arts and professional education. Working in a technology company taught her how to express complex ideas simply and clearly for the media and the public. From her mentors she learned the value of seeing people in their work environment and the wisdom of hiring bright, caring people.

Ellen herself likes to mentor and coach, and she is gratified when her students later achieve professional success. In addition, she has done extensive pro bono work, offering her skills to non-profit organizations, including one for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy.

Ellen wanted to share with us that she is a runner, and she and her husband, a retired foreign service officer, have two Pembroke Welsh corgis.

Ellen de Graffenreid

In this issue ▶ Ilana’s feats ▬ BOLLI sisters ▬ Sex & Aging ▬ Helpful course evals
Council Report
by Bonnie Alpert

BOLLI Business Cards Our new, easy-to-carry informational card about BOLLI is a great marketing piece you can hand to people who ask about our program. Look for the BOLLI business card holder near the gathering space entrance, and keep some cards with you always to help spread the word about BOLLI!

Classroom and Gathering Space Improvements Ongoing improvements are helping to create more usable and inviting spaces for BOLLI classes and activities. Some of the latest ones:

- All classrooms—new dedicated laptops permanently connected to projectors and Internet
- Purple and Blue Rooms—cabinets removed, creating more classroom space
- Gathering Space
  - cabinets (from above) redeployed in new snack serving area
  - snack table eliminated from kitchen
  - two seating tables added so more members can enjoy lunch together
- Cleanliness
  - checklist for student workers to ensure that all areas are consistently clean and tidy
  - cordless vacuum available for spot cleaning
- Gold Room
  - plans to install sound leakage reducing panels like those in the Orange Room
  - Brandeis Facilities staff studying solutions to temperature fluctuation problem

Emergency Procedures BOLLI’s preparations for the unforeseen now are enhanced by SGLs and Classroom Assistants having instructions on:

- handling emergencies during class
- fire drills
- coordination with Brandeis Emergency Medical Corps (BEMCo).

Mark Your Calendar
Fall registration opens July 2, 2103
Fall registration closes August 2, 2013
First day of classes: September 17, 2013
Last day of classes: November 21, 2013

The BOLLI Banner is published by the Banner Committee:
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Screaming All the Way Down

by Joan Kleinman

On Ilana Levine’s calendar, May 20 is boldly marked Brandeis graduation. Receiving her Master’s Degree in sociology with a focus in aging will complete an endeavor she began three years ago, just after accepting her current position as BOLLI’s Program Administrator.

Ilana is pleased to have had BOLLI as a resource for her Master’s coursework. A scrapbook compiled by BOLLI member Judy Cohen proved “incredibly useful” when Ilana was investigating Brandeis’s early years. She wrote a paper about Bernard Osher and his foundation, and she is conducting in-depth interviews of a few BOLLI members to understand why some individuals assume leadership roles in retirement.

For Ilana, her role at BOLLI is a “perfect fit”; she thinks the job was made for her, allowing her to combine her considerable organizational skills with her interests in higher education and gerontology. Ilana describes herself as a “can do” person who likes to “run programs, accomplish goals, create, and implement.”

From BOLLI members, Ilana has learned many “life lessons,” including “perspective on what’s important, realistic expectations for other people, and not judging others’ life choices.” She’s impressed with the talent and intelligence of BOLLI folks, their generosity, and their engagement in lifelong learning. Especially, though, she admires their energy and their “can do attitude—where they see a need and go for it.”

Ilana grew up in New Haven. Her dad is a social worker and her mom an elder-law attorney who works with parents of disabled children. Her parents’ discussions concerning elder issues caught her attention and led to a BA in sociology, also from Brandeis, with concentrations in social justice and social policy. Ilana has two siblings: Josh works with a sustainable real estate developer in Las Vegas and Sarah is an elementary school teacher in New York City—and the parent of Ilana’s niece Maya, “the light of my life.”

Ilana has traveled to Costa Rica and Holland and spent two-and-a-half months in Australia and New Zealand, where she did something “totally out of character, just because I was not able to resist a bargain.” Learning that New Zealand offered the least expensive place to do skydiving, she purchased for $125 her claim-to-fame moment. Pushed out of a tiny plane at 12,000 feet, she free-fell for 60 seconds, screaming so loudly that bystanders on the ground could hear her. The flight crew said no one had ever screamed that loud before!

While she insists she’ll never do that again, Ilana remains active. She plays competitive league kickball, noting that, although she is “not a good kicker,” she is a very fast runner. She enjoys Zumba® and has been a ropes course instructor, which entails “putting campers into harnesses and belaying them as they climb about 50 feet in the air and then come back down, tethered by my rope.”

WANTED—YOUR WRITING and PHOTOGRAPHY

Submissions for the next edition of the BOLLI Journal will be accepted until the end of the summer. Send your stories, poems, essays, memoirs, or photographs to Joan Kleinman at joankleinman@rcn.com

Volume 13 Issue 6 - 3 - May 2013
I recently attended a number of wonderful discussions among SGLs and veteran BOLLI members. I left with a lot to think about, including the following insights, which I’m calling two paradoxes of a BOLLI education.

We teach each other at BOLLI, and yet we do not even call our BOLLI SGLs “teachers.”

Some SGLs see themselves as facilitators, not as teachers. Others teach, and express surprise when anyone raises doubts that teaching is their primary responsibility. Both types of SGLs often get high marks at BOLLI. Most importantly, neither, at their best, exercises a domineering presence—both are democratic in inspiration; both are devoted to empowering their students to find their own voice.

We love learning from each other at BOLLI, and yet not all of us are satisfied learning only from each other at 60 Turner Street.

Many members relish the fact that BOLLI is peer-led, since perhaps no one knows how to teach older adults better than other older adults. Others remark that BOLLI is the only school at Brandeis that lacks its own professional faculty. They bemoan this absence at BOLLI and perhaps even resent it, since in effect the university receives SGL labor at little or no cost. Should not BOLLI have its own dedicated faculty just like the Heller School or Arts & Sciences?

The truth of the first paradox: an SGL at BOLLI, whether “facilitating” or “teaching,” practices a recognizable adult learning craft. A BOLLI-style classroom cherishes shared questions and careful listening. From this perspective, little is at stake in actual BOLLI nomenclature. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

The truth of the second paradox: BOLLI is BOLLI because of peer-led learning. It is our sine qua non; and yet, if we do not advocate for more Brandeis faculty presence at 60 Turner Street, we will not be getting our money’s worth from being on the campus of a world-class university.

Interpreting what I heard about teaching and learning at BOLLI these past weeks as the expression of paradox—apparent contradictions that are nevertheless true—helps me to see, “through a glass, darkly,” some of what a BOLLI education is about, and how we might continue to build on the rich foundation it already has.

June Brandeis Faculty Seminars now open for registration
- June 3-7, 9:30-12:30. Dan Breen: Divided Power: US Federalism from Slavery to Same Sex Marriage
- June 10-14, 9:30-12:30. Jared Redmond: Music after the War

August Seminars not yet open for registration, but dates and times have been announced
- Aug. 5-9, 1:15-4:15. Billy Flesch: Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers: Top Hat and Swing Time
Two Sisters

[The Banner profiled each of these two remarkable BOLLI members years ago. It was only recently that we realized they were sisters! –Ed.]

by Brenda Gleckman

I recently interviewed two sisters who have given generously of their time, effort, and creativity to BOLLI since its inception. They live three miles apart in Newton. Barbara Shapiro is a little older; Lyn Weiner is a little taller. They share a slight family resemblance but their more evident likeness is their devotion to each other, to their families, to improving people’s lives, and, since their retirement, to BOLLI. Asked for an interview, each deferred to the other saying, in almost identical words, “No, no. You don’t want to write about me. My sister has accomplished much more than I have.”

I met with Barbara first, in her sunlit apartment in Chestnut Hill. She was widowed for the second time several years ago. Her first husband died when she was a young woman with young children. Lyn was an anchor for her during this stressful time. Barbara’s second husband was a widower with three children. Together they forged a blended family that included his parents.

When her children were grown, Barbara brought her energy and passion into the public sector “to try to make a difference in people’s lives.” For many years she worked concurrently with (1) an activist group that investigated, reported, and monitored health and safety violations in Department of Mental Health hospitals throughout Massachusetts, and (2) the Call For Action Program, an information and referral service at WBZ, where she continues to volunteer.

Barbara’s eyes sparkled when she talked about receiving the UN Children’s Rights Award¹ in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2008. She was recommended for the award by a loving and grateful graduate student whom she had hosted through the BOLLI International Friends Program, conceived and developed by none other than her sister, Lyn Weiner.

Lyn, mother of three daughters, lives with her husband in their family home in Newton Centre. She was the first Chair of BOLLI’s Membership Committee and co-Chair for the last eight years of the highly regarded International Friends Program. In that role, she has seen more than 700 international students benefit from their involvement with BOLLI host families and, in turn, BOLLI members’ lives enriched by their students.

Lyn devoted most of her professional life to the daunting public health issue of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome—children born with alcohol-related defects.² As a faculty member at Boston University School of Medicine, she co-authored a book, Alcohol and the Fetus. Since FAS is dose-related, Lyn was passionate about getting actively drinking mothers into supportive treatment to help them reduce their alcohol consumption. The Lyn Weiner Award is given annually to a health care provider for commitment to addicted women and their children.

Barbara and Lyn credit their parents with providing a loving, warm, non-competitive, safe environment for their daughters. It seems that what their parents provided for their daughters the two sisters, in turn, took out into the world to provide for others.

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¹See related article on page 5 of the Summer 2003 issue.
²See related article on page 3 of the April 2009 issue.
Back issues are viewable on the BOLLI Web site.
FEMALE SEXUALITY AND AGING

by Brenda Gleckman

For age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress.
And as the evening twilight fades away
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day. – Longfellow

At a recent Lunch and Learn, Anita Hoffer, Ph.D., Ed.D., addressed a mixed audience on the subject of female sexuality and aging. Anita is an expert in the field of human sexuality. She believes that sexuality is a life force and a healthy component of everyone’s well being throughout the life cycle. Safe and satisfying sex is good for our physical and mental health, even in our golden years.

Anita came equipped with impressive statistics, explicit diagrams of the anatomy of female pleasure, and sample tubes of lubricant. Humor gave some relief to the sensitivity of the subject. When she showed the hilarious clip from the film *When Harry Met Sally*—“I’ll have what she’s having”—the audience roared with recognition and laughter. For those women who have not been assertive enough about their own sexual needs, she delivered a message of empowerment. A survey of women 60 to 75 showed that 75% wanted to improve their sex lives. “Just because there’s snow on the roof doesn’t mean there’s no fire in the furnace!”

Aging brings natural physical and emotional changes that can impact a woman’s sexuality, including changes in patterns of desire and arousal, vaginal dryness, decreases or other changes in tactile sensations, and changes in the intensity or duration of orgasms. Decrease in desire can be tied to changing perceptions of physical attractiveness—women are more self-critical than men. Other factors affecting desire may include depression, fatigue, illnesses and the medications taken to combat them, and the fear of incontinence during sexual activity.

Anita discussed strategies to deal with all of these changes. She noted that women talk to each other about everything in the world except these changes, and she encouraged women to reframe their definition of sexuality and their sense of femininity so that they can fully recapture their sexuality.
HELPFUL COURSE EVALUATIONS NEEDED

by Joyce Hollman

Those forms again! Why are you asked to write them? How can you write them easily and make them useful?

SGLs emerge from varied backgrounds. Some have previous teaching experience; some don’t. All want to be effective. Your feedback can validate what they do well and can help them teach more effectively in the future.

Honest feedback gives an SGL useful information. Positive comments are always welcome. Even effective SGLs want to know what class members find helpful. “Great course!” sounds good but doesn’t give information.

Here are some possible positive comments:

• The SGL sought and used class members’ comments.
• The SGL summarized the class each week and reminded us about the reading and the next session.
• The SGL changed the reading assignments because…
• The SGL reminded us that the “reading questions” help us follow the reading. S/he used different questions to focus class discussion.
• Class presentations were well organized. When discussion moved off topic, the SGL brought it back. Or, when a discussion moved off topic, the SGL let it continue when the discussion was interesting and relevant.
• The SGL respected people’s opinions even if s/he didn’t agree with them.
• The SGL had thoughtful questions that helped us get more deeply into the material.
• The reading and class discussion stimulated my thinking. I’m viewing this subject differently than I did before.

If the course did not go as well as you would have liked, your feedback can help the SGL modify the course or his/her teaching for future presentations. Describe what you found problematic, without negative labeling. “I” statements (“I wish the course stayed on the subject”) are one way of giving information without being negative. Sample statements:

• There was too much content for the time period.
• I spent a lot of time doing the reading, but it wasn’t discussed in class.
• I found the class discussions disorganized. Or, class discussions wandered off the topic. (Describes what happened. Avoids a negative statement, e.g., that the SGL didn’t manage class discussions.)
• Sometimes I wasn’t sure what the key points were. An outline or list at the beginning of class would have helped.
• Class reports were too long, giving irrelevant information. (Or - they were unfocused, boring, or irrelevant. SGL could have suggested …)
• I would have liked…more discussion…less discussion…class to move slower…class to move faster…more attention to (or information about) this particular topic (name it)….
• I would have liked more basic information about x before discussion.
• Too much PowerPoint — use it as an outline, not to present all content.

SGLs put a lot of time and effort into creating and presenting their courses. If the course went well, they want to know what made it work. If it isn’t quite what you expected, you can help them figure out how to improve it or design their next course more effectively. Will you try?
SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER
(all concerts in this venue are part of the Summer School Music Workshop)

Thur., Jun. 13 (8 P.M.)
**The Art of the Chalumeau**
Eric Hoeprich
Stephen Hammer
Kristen Watson, soprano
Music of Vivaldi, Conti, Hasse, and Fasch

Fri., Jun. 14 (morning)
**Workshop Participants Informal Concert**

Thur., Jun. 20 (8 P.M.)
**J. S. Bach: The Six Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord**
Daniel Stepner, baroque violin
Peter Sykes, harpsichord

Fri., Jun. 21 (morning)
**Workshop Participants Informal Concert**

Thur., Jun. 27 (8 P.M.)
**Music of Marais and Bach**
Laura Jeppesen, viola da gamba
Dominique Labelle, soprano

Thur., Jul. 4 (8 P.M.)
**Madrigals of de Wert and Monteverdi**

Thur., Jul. 11 (8 P.M.)
**Music from the Library of Thomas Jefferson**

WOMEN’S STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER

Apr. 30–Jun. 14

**COMING HOME: Portraits of Jewish Women**
by Yishay Garbasz

Berlin-based, Israeli artist Yishay Garbasz has been selected as the fifth annual Hadassah-Brandeis Institute Artist-in-Residence. Her month-long residency at the Women’s Studies Research Center will culminate in a multimedia exhibition of photographs, video and text celebrating Jewish women who identify as transgender. Through interviews and portraits, Garbasz will give voice to a segment of the Jewish population that has been little discussed, showing her subjects with their loved ones and families, at their jobs, or in their homes. The artist says that “by showing that these individuals are part of relationships that are familiar to us, it is the first step toward [creating] a larger, more diverse Jewish community.”

While her Brandeis installation will explore the intersection between Jewishness and gender, it will also tackle larger issues of identity, agency, and human rights, topics that have recurred in Garbasz’s work for several years.

In her flip book *Becoming*, Garbasz courageously documents her own two-year transformation from male to female, photographing her body every week to chronicle its gradual transformation.