Teacher as Actor

by Elaine Dohan

“It is sheer pleasure to teach, and having people respond is my life’s blood. I love it.”

Within five minutes of walking into one of Marc Schwarz’s history classes we experience that enthusiasm and dedication. Marc describes himself as a serious, somewhat shy person who, when teaching, is “freer and less inhibited than in normal conversation.” He maintains that teaching is a bit like acting. He uses humor and self-deprecation as tone setters, to break the ice. He wants his classes to be open and comfortable so that he and his students are participating together in the same adventure.

After studying at Brookline High School, Bates College, Harvard, and UCLA, Dr. Schwarz taught history at UNH for more than 40 years. Among other courses, he taught Tudor-Stewart England to advanced students and Plato to NATO, a course on western civilization, to undergraduates. One year after retiring he found BOLLI. Ten courses later he still loves teaching here. He finds his students respectful and appreciative. He maintains that older people are more interested in history, take the classes more seriously, and have more life experiences to bring with them to class than do younger students. Often they have visited the places about which he is talking and have their own stories to share. He concedes, with a twinkle in his eye, that “BOLLI students can be a rough crowd.”

Marc believes that history is not just the study of kings and queens—it is a humanities course. He portrays history as a fascinating account of people making moral decisions in conflicting situations that are not always black or white. Sometimes choices must be made between two bad alternatives. He uses stories and anecdotes to humanize his subject.

"Everyone loves an execution," Marc maintains. His juicy tidbits fascinate us. For example, when Mary, Queen of Scots was executed she brought her dog, tucked under her skirts, to be with her to the end. And Queen Elizabeth I becomes a real person to us when we learn that, in addition to knowing that her father had beheaded her mother and one of his other wives, she herself was the repeated victim of a sexual predator who was her stepmother's husband. No wonder Elizabeth remained “the virgin queen” throughout her life.

Marc is teaching the second of his Trials in History course this semester. Most of his BOLLI courses, however, deal with England during the times of Elizabeth I and Winston Churchill, two of his favorite historical characters.
ADVISORY COUNCIL SETS GOALS

by Bonnie Alpert

The winter retreat for Advisory Council members and BOLLI staff provided an opportunity to explore ways to enhance our already strong program. The group identified several important goals, and Advisory Council members’ recommendations for achieving these goals will be implemented. Some examples include:

**Goal:** Increase volunteer participation as committee members, SGLs, and classroom assistants

**Implementation:** Do an interests and skills survey of the membership; appoint a BOLLI member as Volunteer Coordinator to help others find opportunities that match their interests and skills

**Goal:** Make clear to our membership what BOLLI’s strategic alignment with Brandeis means

**Implementation:** Schedule forums featuring presentations about and discussion of this topic

**Goal:** Increase opportunities for social activities

**Implementation during spring term:** Gourmet Tasting Party (March); Halfway Café (April); continue Annual Meeting tradition (May)

Over 125 BOLLI members attended our Gourmet Tasting Party on March 10th. Members mixed and mingled while partaking of the huge spread of eye-catching delectable delicacies prepared specially for us and donated by Whole Foods Newtonville. [See pictorial spread on pages 4 and 5 – Ed.]

The Advisory Council fulfilled another important charge this winter. Per its new Charter, the Advisory Council nominates candidates for elected liaison roles. Vacancies for the March election were for two liaisons to the membership-at-large. We assessed the qualifications needed for the role and nominated two highly qualified candidates.

Advisory Council members include:

Bonnie Alpert            Communications Working Group liaison
Diane Becker             Lunch & Learn co-chair
Myrna Cohen              Enhancement Committee chair
Ed Finerty               Inter-generational Groups liaison
Joyce Hollman            Study Group Support Committee chair
Charlie Raskin           Membership Committee co-chair
Naomi Schmidt            Curriculum Committee chair
Myra Snyder              Gift Funds Committee chair
Arlene Weintraub         Affinity Groups liaison

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

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Brenda Gleckman, *Special Projects*  Phil Radoff, *Co-editor*
Jane Kays, *Co-editor*               Andy Thurnauer, *Secretary*

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REFLECTIONS ON FULFILLING THE PROMISE
by Avi Bernstein

This is the second installment of reflections on the relation between BOLLI and Fulfilling the Promise: The Brandeis University Strategic Plan, adopted by the University in May of 2013. (The first installment appeared in the November 2012 issue of the BOLLI Banner.)

We are a special community, as you are probably aware if you have spent any time at all in our precincts. But did you know that BOLLI is also a strategic asset for a world-class research university?

As Brandeis University begins to implement its Strategic Plan in the coming months, we should recognize, celebrate, and continue to enhance our standing.

Four features of the Brandeis Strategic Plan relate directly to our strengths and light the way to our future path.

① We create rich and challenging opportunities for remarkable Brandeis graduate students to teach on campus.

Through BOLLI lectureships and the BOLLI scholars program, BOLLI offers graduate students opportunities to develop their own curricula—with supervision and support—and to teach in demanding and stimulating adult learning environments, serving BOLLI members and other adult learners.

② We regularly enhance inter-generational community spirit on campus.

Through our path-breaking pilot program, Sages and Seekers, our fledgling BOLLI Student Ambassadors Program, the International Friends Program, the Mentoring Program at the International Business School, and BOLLI co-sponsored campus events like Ari Shavit’s recent lecture, BOLLI brings Brandeis undergraduates into personal and meaningful contact with experienced, accomplished, and caring BOLLI members and launches conversations that touch hearts and minds.

③ We deepen the sense of a broad and deep connection among the University, its mission, and the larger community of Greater Boston.

BOLLI and associated Lifelong Learning Programs, including Brandeis Faculty Seminars, JustBrandeis Seminars, and Rapaporte Seminars, invite the larger community to pursue a high caliber of humanistic learning and even periodically to reflect on the meaning of Louis D. Brandeis’s legacy for the University community.

④ We exemplify the power of liberal learning.

Every day, what happens in our quarters underscores personal creativity, peer-driven curricular innovation, and collective classroom discovery through learning and exploration. A June 2013 Wall Street Journal article reports a steep decline in the number of students pursuing the humanities in the United States in the course of the last fifty years. As elite universities like Brandeis swim against the cultural tide, forced to advocate for curricular priorities that sometimes appear to lack resonance in the larger American culture, our community eloquently demonstrates the power of the liberal learning tradition. How? Not by administrative proclamations or admissions pamphlets, but by virtue of what we do and what it means to all of us. BOLLI, as many a member will tell you, is a fount of meaning and a beacon of hope because the learning and sociability here are liberating. Can you imagine a more powerful exemplar of the meaning-conferring, life-transforming power of liberal learning than what happens in our community?
Gourmet Tasting Party
photos by Ashley Daubenmire and Harris Traiger

Sophisticated samplings, courtesy of Whole Foods Market of Newtonville

Lining up for name badges

Embracing old friends

Lois Silver

Richard Glantz

Sally Mechur and Sandy Sherizen

Mimi Dohan

Judy Cohen and Susan Bradford

Gert and Gerry Silverstein

Bonnie Alpert and Sandy Phillips

Marion Kenneally

Avi Bernstein

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Gourmet Tasting Party—second course
photos by Ashley Daubenmire and Harris Traiger

About 125 people came to this party in March

Noteworthy Study Group Leaders

Welcome to these new SGLs who joined us this term:

- Girma Belay
- Herman Blumberg
- Amy Bracken
- Ed Dean

Congratulations to these SGLs who have led at least ten courses:

- Len Aberbach
- Myrna Cohen
- Robert Cohen
- Sophie Freud
- Ed Goldberg
- Len Heier
- Harriet Kahn
- Richard Kahn
- Joel Kamer
- Michael Kaufman
- Gene Kupsferschmid
- Sandra Levy
- Ron Levy
- Eileen Mitchell
- David Moskowitz
- Phil Radoff
- Nancy Rawson
- Elaine Reisman
- Naomi Schmidt
- Peter Schmidt
- Marc Schwarz
- Carol Shedd
- Lois Sockol
- Harriet Starrett
- Lois Ziegelman

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WANT A MATZO BALL WITH THAT?
by Carole Grossman

If you have time between classes or before an evening event, consider eating at the new kosher deli on Brandeis’s upper campus. Enter Usdan Hall through the door on the right, closest to the Brandeis Library, and you will find yourself in Louis’, named after Louis Brandeis, a name chosen with the help of the students on the dining committee. With its high translucent ceiling and large windows, it is at the light and airy end of the Usdan food court.

Take a look at the offerings and check your choices. There’s matzo ball soup, fifteen varieties of sandwiches including pastrami, corned beef, brisket, tongue, schnitzel, turkey, salami, roast beef, chicken salad, and egg white salad with basil. There are five kinds of hot dogs; the Justice Dog is vegan!

Choose among a variety of breads, toppings, condiments, salads, sides, and drinks.

Louis’ is open Sunday through Thursday from 11 A.M. to midnight and Fridays until 3:30 P.M. The public is welcome, and there are plans to start a catering service.

Friday Talks
(These Enhancement Committee programs will take place in Turner St. from 10:30 A.M.-noon)

- April 14: BOLLI member John Rudy will discuss “Advanced Computer Searching—You Can Do More Than You Think”
- April 25: BOLLI member Phil Radoff will talk about Mozart’s “Così Fan Tutte”
- May 2: BOLLI member Don Kendall will speak on the Philippines

■ May 2: 1:00-3:00 P.M.: Play Reading-tba  ■ May 16: 1:00-3:30 P.M: Scene-iors Reprise

Please see weekly BOLLI Bulletin for further information

NEW YORKER FICTION SALON
The New Yorker Fiction Salon meets weekly on Thursdays at 3:20 P.M. (4th period) in the Purple Room during BOLLI’S Spring term.
Join us for unique literature, fascinating discussions, and delicious fun.
New members are always welcome.

See the weekly BOLLI Bulletin for story details.

CLEAR AT LAST
BOLLI now has a splendid new digital projector, an Epson PowerLite 430. It is especially suited to accurate color images for photography and fine art classes. As an added bonus, the fan noise is almost imperceptible. Thanks are due to Arthur Sharenow, who identified this model as the ideal one for these classes.
WHO ARE THEY?

by Brenda Gleckman

In good fun, the BOLLI Banner is continuing the photo recognition contest we ran last year. This time, the photos are of couples in their early years. How many of your BOLLI friends can you identify from their old photos? The contestant who is able to identify the greatest number of BOLLI couples will be invited to join the Banner Staff at lunch at the Brandeis Faculty Club.

Our staff lawyer made us write this: (1) In case of a tie, the winning entry will be selected at random and (2) Banner staff and those whose photos are shown below (and their families) are ineligible.

Members whose photos appear below will be identified, along with the contest winner, in next month’s Banner. Please write your guesses in the box below each photo, print your name here, tear off this page, and stuff it in the box in the Gathering Place by April 18th.
SLOSBERG MUSIC CENTER
(except where noted, all concerts in this venue are free to BOLLI members)

Sat., Apr. 12 (8 P.M.)
Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra:
Catch a Rising Star
Neil Hampton, conductor

Sat., Apr. 12 (8 P.M.)
Fafali: Music and Dance from Ghana
Faith Conant, conductor

Sun., Apr. 13 (3 P.M.)
Brandeis Early Music Ensemble:
Timepieces

Tue., Apr. 29 (7 P.M.)
Brandeis Improv Collective:
Unexpected Pathways
Tom Hall, director

Sun., Apr. 27 (7 P.M.)
Aston Magna Scholarship Fund Benefit Concert
Daniel Stepner, violin
Frank Glazer, classical piano
Tickets $25/$15/$5

SPINGOLD THEATER CENTER
Presented by the Brandeis Theater Company

Sat., Apr. 26 (2 P.M.)—Part 1
Sat., Apr. 26 (6 P.M.)—Part 2
Sun., Apr. 27 (2 P.M.)—Part 2
Sun., Apr. 27 (6 P.M.)—Part 1

Ten by Ten

Ten actors create ten original solo pieces that celebrate the fusion of craft and diverse personal perspectives. In this their third and final year, the MFA Acting students produce pieces to highlight their work and take them into the next stage of their careers. Performed in two parts; attend both to see pieces that are bound to be engaging, fanciful, raw and real, a little radical, and a little renegade. Free.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN FESTIVAL OF THE CREATIVE ARTS

Thur., Apr. 24—Sun., Apr. 27

The festival was founded in 1952 by composer and Brandeis faculty member Leonard Bernstein. Today, the festival brings the Brandeis campus together to celebrate creativity and community, with innovative performances and exhibitions by our faculty, staff, alumni, and students, along with national and regional artists. Most events are free and open to the public.

Highlights of the 2014 festival will include Alloy Orchestra, the brilliant three-man musical ensemble that accompanies classic silent films with live accompaniment on an outrageous assemblage of peculiar objects; Ten by Ten, captivating original plays by the resident actors of the Brandeis Theater Company; and exhibitions at the Rose Art Museum that the Boston Globe's Sebastian Smee describes as "first rate."

For a complete schedule go to brandeis.edu/arts/festival/schedule

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