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The 2006 Nora and Edward Ryerson Lecture "Chicago's Netherworld: An Ethnography of Psychosis on the Street"

By Tanya Luhmann

April 6, 2006

Let me begin by introducing you to Zaney. (That's her real name.) She is a white woman in her middle forties. She is well-spoken, clean, and neatly dressed. This is notable because about half of every month she sleeps on the El, Chicago's elevated train. It is neither safe nor easy to fall asleep on the train, but it is warm. She came here from Wisconsin in her late twenties when she began to be taunted by an angry but non-existent crowd. They shove her on the street, they shout "slut" and "whore" at her, and they bang on the walls when she tries to sleep. When she arrived in Chicago, the police picked her up and brought her to a hospital where she stayed for a few days, undoubtedly diagnosed with schizophrenia. She was given a referral to a caseworker in a community mental health center, and she kept the appointment. The caseworker helped her find housing and, eventually, a monthly social security check of about \$579 a month. Both the housing and the check were available to her only because of her psychiatric diagnosis. Zaney stayed in the housing for about eight years, and then she lost it, either because she left or because she got evicted. Then she stayed in shelters for several years. She said that she was doing a routine chore at the shelter when someone rudely told her that she wasn't doing it well, and of course, she says, she stuck up for herself and they threw her out. The shelter director remembers that Zaney left the shelter of her own accord. But Zaney remembers that the shelter was full of aggressive, rowdy women who were always fighting and picking on her, and she was relieved to be free of them.

Zaney desperately wants not to be homeless. Two weeks a month she stays at a fleabag hotel, for about \$160 a week, but she can't afford more than that. She comes into the drop-in center every day with the classified ads, looking for apartments and work. She knows that she could get housing again based on a psychiatric diagnosis. Everybody on the street knows how you get housing. One woman even ticked off the options for me on her fingers. "You can get housing if you're crazy, you're addicted, or you got a job. I ain't crazy and I don't have a job, so I'm working on being addicted." Zaney won't accept that housing now because she denies that she is ill. She is very clear that she is not "crazy," as she puts it. I've suggested to her that she just lie, that she "pretend" to hear voices, just to get a safer place to sleep. She always shakes her head. "I'm not that kind of person," she says.

Zaney's refusal to accept help is one of the great puzzles of our urban landscape. She exemplifies one of the saddest features of modern psychiatric care in this country, which is that many if not most of all Americans who can be diagnosed with schizophrenia become homeless at some point and spend much of their lives cycling between hospitalization, supported housing, jail, and the street—a relentless, nomadic spiral that the anthropologist Kim Hopper has dubbed "the institutional circuit."

Perhaps they do get housed—but then they become too disorganized to pay the rent, or their harassed family loses patience with their chaos. Eventually they end up back on the street, evicted or by choice,

living in the homeless shelter, ties broken with their families, hospitalized or jailed when their behavior gets out of hand, occasionally getting housed, then leaving or losing housing, and returning to the street again. It is a grim social cycle. These are the people you think of when you imagine the homeless, although they are often cleaner and more organized than you imagine them to be. They aren't, in fact, representative of the average person who loses housing. As many as 80 percent of all people who become homeless regain housing within a few months, depending on the city and the study. We've known for a while that at any one time about a third of those on the street can be diagnosed with serious mental illness. What is shocking about more recent data is that they suggest that the street is where many, if not most, of the Americans with schizophrenia end up for some time. One recent study demonstrated that over the course of a single year in San Diego, one in five of the people with schizophrenia who made contact with the mental health system was homeless. Another study looked at the first two years after a person's first contact with the hospital in New York; more than one in six of those with schizophrenia were homeless at least once. Both studies undoubtedly underestimate the risk of periodic homelessness over the thirty- or forty-year course of the illness. And as Law School Professor Mark Heyrman has pointed out, as the number of inpatient psychiatric beds has declined our jails have become our largest psychiatric hospitals. A long-time advocate sighed to me, "Look at the figures and weep."

One temptation is to assume that we do not spend enough money to help those in need. Certainly you can argue that the system needs more money. In Illinois the mental health budget is in the bottom third to bottom tenth, per capita, depending on the way you count, of any in the nation. But many people with schizophrenia end up on the street even when housing is available. In Chicago, the wait for non-disability-related low-income housing (Section 8 housing) is currently seven years. I know people who have been told that if they were willing to see a caseworker, they could get housing in two weeks. Yet many who are eligible repeatedly refuse offers of such housing, in many cases offered by decent, caring people. And they refuse many other offers: of medication, or counseling, or employment, not always consistently and not unambivalently, but often and for years at a time.

This refusal to accept care is probably the most poorly understood dimension of the nomadic psychiatric circuit. The second temptation is to attribute their refusal to the illness, as if people don't understand that they need housing and psychiatric care. And certainly schizophrenia is a terrible illness that batters thought like a trash can tossed in a storm. We call the most dramatic symptoms of the illness "psychosis," by which we mean that someone's judgment is so impaired that they no longer seem within the boundary of human reason. (Figure 1 is a representation of psychosis by someone diagnosed with schizophrenia.) They may speak incoherently, giggle when they talk about something sad, speak furiously to the voices they hear in the



Figure 1. John Hood III, artist

empty air. As many as one in a hundred Americans struggle with schizophrenia, the most debilitating and difficult of all the psychiatric illnesses.

But few people with schizophrenia, or for that matter with any of the other psychotic disorders, are psychotic always and in all areas of their lives. Psychosis often comes and goes, flares and dies down, both over the course of a day and over the course of many months. And if you actually enter this netherworld and come to know it as it is experienced by its inhabitants, you realize that they are making choices. They may not be the choices that we would make, but they have a coherent logic in the culture in which these people find themselves.

This is where ethnography can make a critical contribution because it is probably the best method for understanding the complex, shared, but only partially articulated categories and meanings through which members of a social world come to make sense of their daily lives. In their attempt to grasp these meanings, ethnographers immerse themselves in the world they have come to study. Then they pull back to write down, in systematic, regular ways, what they have observed and to look for social patterns. And then after pulling back, ethnographers immerse themselves again to explore those patterns. They go back and forth between immersion and abstraction, between their own data and other scholarship and data, trying to corroborate or disconfirm their hunches, again and again and again. It is a skilled method but not a fast method. The rule of thumb in anthropology is that you should do fieldwork for a year before you begin to draw conclusions. And it is not an easy method, because you are constantly stumbling over your own expectations and unintentionally making mistakes. Precisely because of that, it is a very good method for teaching you about what people in that world hold to be meaningful.

This is important, because there is increasing evidence that even the most apparently organic of psychiatric illnesses may change their appearance as they cross cultural boundaries. The way that mental illness is identified and treated in the social world of those who suffer from it will certainly affect the patient's experience of the illness. More profoundly, it may affect

the illness's symptoms, course, and outcome. To track the way people experience mental illness in different social settings, you need a genuinely interdisciplinary approach which combines an anthropological attention to local culture and a psychological attention to psychiatric science. In the Department of Comparative Human Development we call this approach "clinical ethnography."

And so the National Institutes of Health funded me to do ethnographic fieldwork to understand why psychotic homeless women didn't seem to want the help they were being offered. For much of the last three years, I have spent afternoons in a drop-in center and evenings at a shelter. I have hung out in single-room occupancy hotels, and I have drunk coffee at the local coffee shops that tolerate the clients. When I started out, no one ever confused me for a client. By the end of last autumn, when I'd been on the street most afternoons for months at a time, they weren't so sure.

Since the autumn of 2004, I have been joined in this effort by a team of students—Johanne Eliacin, Barnaby Riedel, Amy Cooper, Kim Walters, and Jim Goss.

What we have learned—and this is our principal insight—is that if you actually enter this world and come to know it as its inhabitants do at least to some extent, you realize that the refusal to seek help is also a self-affirming refusal to accept that the street has destroyed you. Clinicians see psychiatric diagnosis as an olive branch of hope, as a sign that the patient has an illness they can treat. Those on the street see that diagnosis as a sign that they have been permanently defeated by the street they have tried to escape.

But first let me introduce you to the neighborhood. Uptown is the general area here, but the focus of the work is around the area carved out by Lawrence, Sheridan, Wilson, and Broadway. It was Richard Taub, the Chair of Comparative Human Development, who first drove me to Uptown when I arrived at the University of Chicago, showing me its crazy quilt of gracious mansions, tree-lined streets, and urban abandonment. In the 1920s, Uptown was the entertainment center for the city of Chicago. Although that has changed, it still has some of the finest architecture in the city. Traces of that era still remain in the theaters and a swing dance lounge, the Green Mill, made famous by the patronage of Al Capone and his men. By their sides loom the big hotels built to house the movie stars and the musicians. By the 1940s, the entertainment industry shifted out west or downtown, and the hotels were filled by white-collar workers who commuted into the city from what was then the last stop on the electric train. By the 1950s, white-collar workers wanted the American dream of the house in the suburbs. The old hotels emptied out. The architecture decayed. When the poor moved to Chicago, they moved here.

Then in 1963, John F. Kennedy proclaimed the Community Mental Health Centers Act. That act transformed the American mental health care system by shifting the primary burden of care from the hospital to the community. In 1955, there were 339 psychiatric beds for every 100,000 Americans, and half of them held

people diagnosed with schizophrenia who stayed for months or years at a time. With the new act, psychiatric hospitals slowly became places for acute, short-term care. These days there are only 22 psychiatric beds for every 100,000 Americans, and the modal length of stay is about three days. We use the word “deinstitutionalization” to describe this transformation. It has an optimistic ring, as if we were removing people from Goffmanesque settings that forced their minds into institutional straitjackets.

Many people who live in Uptown would tell you that the better word is “re-institutionalization.” By the early 1970s, over 40 percent of all psychiatric patients discharged to supportive housing in the entire city of Chicago were discharged to some facility in Uptown. We know that because that was when the *Chicago Sun-Times* ran a series of sensational exposés on the squalid, rat-infested conditions of the old hotels turned into holding pens for discharged patients. “The Making of a Psychiatric Ghetto,” screamed one headline. The city responded by radically upgrading the conditions, but not by moving anyone out of the neighborhood. The hotels were renovated, a process which continues today. There was much more money, much more oversight. Services for refugees and immigrants were added. Now, the neighborhood is home to Vietnamese, Cambodians, Thai, West Africans, Guatemalans, South Asians, Russian Jews, Bosnians, and members of many other nationalities.

And still the neighborhood has the densest concentration of persons with serious mental illness not only in the city but in the state. The area is packed with supported housing, drop-in centers, substance abuse programs, mental health programs, housing programs, and other social services, funded by a bewildering range of charities and public monies. Each agency has different eligibility requirements and different goals, and there is little overarching organization. Because of this, we do not know the total number of beds allocated to those with serious psychiatric illness, but we know that the beds number in the thousands. You can stand on a single street corner, where Sheridan meets Argyle, one big, old hotel in front of you and another at your back, and see housing for near a thousand psychiatric patients. This is what sociologists call a “service ghetto.” The investment in real estate alone is enormous. Moving the system to some other, poorer neighborhood would be a gargantuan task.

But these days, many people are pushing hard for the move. Uptown is the only Chicago lakefront neighborhood north of downtown that has not been yet redeveloped. Over the past five years—over the past six months—the neighborhood has shifted dramatically. These days you can walk out of supported housing around the corner from Wilson and Broadway, out of a conversation with a woman about how she used to turn \$10 tricks for crack, and cross the street to an upmarket store called Soggy Paws, where you can buy artisan doggie water bowls for \$100.

In the fight between the gentrifiers and the service providers, the service providers

will say that they are there to serve people who are already present; the gentrifiers say that people only come because the services are there. Both are right. There is no conspiracy to send mentally ill ex-inmates and former patients to Uptown, but case-workers at the jails and hospitals do seem to refer clients there. But the homeless and mentally ill also come to Uptown without referrals. The local park is relatively safe. The reported rate of violent crime is among the lowest in the city. And the residents are tolerant, or at least historically have been so. Three organizations have homeless shelters here, with beds for hundreds of single men, single women, and families. People come here from jail. They come from the hospitals. They eat at the soup kitchens. They get help at the local social services. If they get housed, they often get housed in the neighborhood. When they lose their housing because they get jailed or hospitalized, they return because they know the neighborhood. Most of these people are poor. Many drink. Many use drugs. Many have some experience with prostitution. The most active corner is probably Wilson and Broadway, at the only Chicago train station designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

The setting for much of our research has been Sarah’s Circle, a drop-in center on the corner of Lawrence and Sheridan. Anyone can come here, as long as they are female. Students collected structured interviews from over sixty women here, pretty much most of the women there on the days we came by. These interviews do indeed tell us that this is the world of the institutional circuit.

- Over 40 percent of the women report six months or more in shelters.
- Over 55 percent report psychiatric hospitalization.
- Over 55 percent have been arrested.
- 43 percent are currently in shelters.
- 29 percent sleep in single room hotels (SROs).
- 11 percent stay on the street. 32 percent are white; 45 percent are African American; 10 percent are Latina; 10 percent are “other”; 3 percent are Asian.

Back in the days when anthropologists studied African villages and parsed their data like intrepid explorers mapping a new domain, they began with the problem of subsistence. The first chapter in those thick, early ethnographies was always about the way people found food and shelter. Later chapters explained the way people organized their social lives to enable themselves to eat and reproduce. Then came the chapters on culture, on the concepts with which people molded their lives. One of the great insights of that early generation was that culture could emerge from the tensions and contradictions in the social world. And if we lay out the analytic story that way here, for those who live on the street whether or not they are psychotic, it will help us to see why certain cultural concepts emerge for these women and why those concepts have such bite for those who struggle with psychosis.

From the perspective of the basic task of getting enough to eat and finding a place

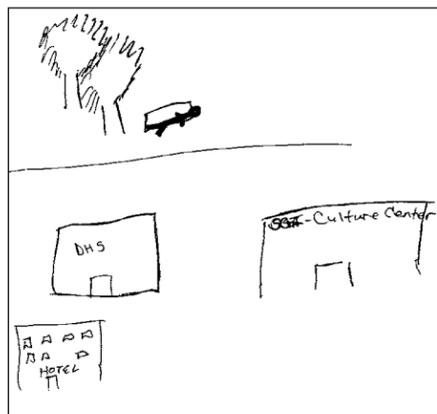


Figure 2. Zaney’s social world

to sleep, one of the most striking facts is that Uptown is radically different from the desperate world of poverty George Orwell described in *Down and Out in Paris and London* in 1933. No one need starve today in Uptown. On most days, the women have easy access to four or five meals within a few blocks. It’s pretty good food, too. The food at the drop-in center is cooked by a graduate of the Chicago Culinary Institute. It is easy to get free clothes in the neighborhood, free shampoo, free tampons, and other free toiletries. The largest shelter admittedly looks like an abandoned warehouse. It’s attached to the Wilson Avenue train station, and it shakes with the arrival and departure of each train. More than eighty-five women will spend the night during the cold winter months. There is one shower and three toilet stalls, only two of which have doors. Yet the shelter has considerable charm. There are tables with doilies and potted plants. The fifty permanent beds in the back are piled with comforters and teddy bears. The place feels homier than summer camp.

But it is a stunningly lonely social world. This is hard to see at first because women sit together in more or less predictable patterns, and they talk and joke and clearly enjoy each other’s company. But those patterns are often fragile, particularly for those with psychosis. They change abruptly and often from month to month. Women refer to friends they meet on the street as “shelter friends,” rather than real friends.

Part of this denial of social relationship may be the illness. We asked our structured sample to “draw their social world:” here is Zaney’s (see figure 2).

But part of the denial is that this is a world in which social dependency is replaced by institutional dependency. A woman does not need social relationships with other people like her in order to eat, shower, sleep, and get around. Peers at the shelter hinder her, rather than help her—they are the ones who use the shower when she needs it, or hold up the line for food. Of all the people we interviewed in our structured sample at Sarah’s, over 40 percent said that they did not feel connected to other women there—even though we see them sitting together every day—and 66 percent couldn’t name a single person they regarded as a friend there.

Moreover, a woman in this neighborhood is committed to the view that her time on the street is temporary—even if she has been homeless for years. In this drab world, almost everyone tells you that homelessness is a temporary condition, a matter of months, a period out of normal time. Fully

84 percent of our structured sample said that it was very true that “for them, homeless is a temporary condition.”

They need to believe this, because homelessness is awful. Our second major insight is that to be homeless—whether or not you are psychotic—is to confront what we have come to call “social defeat” daily and on many dimensions. The term is an old one in ethology, the kind of term that is familiar to my colleague Martha McClintock; it is used to describe the actual physical defeat of one animal by another. We use it because it captures a central social interaction on the street, which is the repeated experience of failure in social encounter—failure in an actual social interaction in which one person physically or symbolically loses to another.

The first defeat is simply in being homeless. To be homeless, you must have lost the place you call home, and to end up in a shelter, all your social resources must have failed. The women’s lives are often unbearably painful tales of drugs, prostitution, and violence. The women around them hold up a mirror to their lives they cannot stand, and such people are always present. If you live in a shelter, people are around you all the time. You sleep in public, you shower in public, and you often pee in public. There is little privacy and little control over which people share your space. The very idea of homelessness evokes for these women a crushing sense of shame and failure. Women depict people like themselves with sneering, venomous phrases. One woman said, “You can’t get away from the homeless in Uptown . . . you just can’t get rid of them. You just trip over them when you walk out the door here.” As another woman told me, “Homelessness is hell. You ever wondered what hell is like? This is it.”

The second defeat is daily vulnerability to always simmering violence. Those shelter rooms hold as many as fifty people, with sleeping mats as close together as possible. It is hard to trust your neighbor. Many women are psychotic; many have been jailed. You cannot predict a stranger’s behavior. Even in shelter rooms where the clients earn the right to return day after day, petty squabbles are common and outright fights are not rare. One woman explained:

At the shelter . . . it’s a different experience and everything. They put the mental patients in the shelter and the penitentiary ones in the shelter, and then—you gotta just pray every night that you’re gonna be okay. . . . Last night we had an experience, I mean we had excitement at the shelter. One of the women, she jumped on one of the girls, and then she jumped on another girl, and then she pulled out a knife. . . . I got out of the shower, me and the girl. One of the women said, “Stay in the bathroom because she got a knife. . . .”

That simmering violence is considerably exacerbated by a quick readiness to fight, which the sociologist Elijah Anderson called, in a different context, “the code of the street.” In the inner city, among

nomadic pastoralists, even among ranchers and perhaps their descendants, in social settings where police are unreliable and the law is weak, survival may depend upon an ability to overreact, to defend your turf so aggressively at the first hint of trouble that the trouble slinks away. On the street the women flare quickly, and they flare to protect goods or status that a middle-class housed person might quickly cede. We think that the best way to understand this is as an honor code. In a world in which you have little but your dignity, protecting your dignity becomes paramount. Here is one woman: "I am *never* going to put myself in a position where [someone] can disrespect me. . . . Just hearing her speak, I was like, 'You want to make me whup your butt.'"

If the conflict were only between those on the street, one would assume that the women were as often victors as losers in these encounters. But the women spend their days moving between institutional settings in which they are supplicants to staff who set the rules and determine the outcome of any encounter. The third form of defeat, then, is between the honor code, the toughness demanded by the street, and what one might call a "middle-class morality," or what Anderson's subjects called the code of "decent people." In this encounter, women on the street always lose. The women sleep at the shelter. They have their morning meal at Salvation Army with many others, coming up in a long line to get the meal. They may stay there for lunch or move on to the library or McDonald's. After lunch they are at Sarah's. By nightfall, they are back at another soup kitchen—maybe St. Thomas's, maybe Ezra's—and eventually they wend their way back to the shelter by curfew. In each of these settings lie untold possibilities for intended or accidental insults. Over all of this hover the watchful eyes of the staff. If two women fight, even only with words, they are "barred"—dismissed and told not to return for a day, a week, a month, forever if the infraction is severe.

The staff's goals are eminently laudable. The point of a drop-in center, or a shelter, is to provide safety for clients within their doors. But those same rules can humiliate the women they are set in place to protect. Kathy sat at the drop-in center one afternoon so angry she was nearly in tears. She'd gone to a job fair hosted by one of the agencies. You weren't allowed to bring a purse into the washroom there; they'd had problems with drugs. Kathy knew the rules. She understood why they were there. But all she'd wanted to do was to brush her hair in private so she would look decent to an employer. They wouldn't let her take in the bag. Something snapped in her, she said, and she fled.

In this context, one of the most important cultural concepts for the women in the neighborhood is "being strong." As Zaney explained, "You have to get strong here, really strong." Once I assembled a group of women over donuts and coffee in the shelter and asked them what "being strong" meant. That morning they were all African American. I suspect that for them, the concept of being strong on the street resonated with the idea of the strong black woman. Melissa Harris-Lacewell

reminds us that this is the myth that black women can handle anything life throws at them—that they are independent, self-reliant, and never in need of help. Here on the street, "strong" is used by blacks and whites alike, and vividly expresses a frontier-style commitment to survival. Strong was good. The catch was that you had to be strong in contradictory ways.

In the discussion over coffee and donuts, one meaning of "strong" was being "tough": standing up for yourself, being able to protect yourself, not letting other people take advantage. As one woman said, "If you are going to survive, you have to smack somebody down."

And yet the women also said that "strong" was being able to resist the temptation to be tough. As one woman remarked, "Being strong is walking away, you know. We get into it. Little things a person says can set you off. And it's hard just to stand there." Here strong has a moral quality. It is about resisting the urge to snap, to hit, to stand up for yourself, to protect your honor—even when honor gets insulted. And being strong also means resisting the lure of the street, and its drugs and drink and freedom from demands. A woman said, "So I was in this facility. . . . Everyone was getting high, they were drinking, they were doing drugs. And at first it didn't bother me. It didn't bother me for five to six months. I was real strong."

"Strong" also meant coming to terms with what you had been, and accepting that you were going to learn to be different. Another woman said ruefully, "When you really seek help, you gonna reveal to the people that you are seeking out who you really are. . . . I had to talk to these case-workers and reveal the grimy things I did, and I didn't feel real good. I wanted to fold inside, I wanted to lash out, but I was the author of everything that was done. And I had to be strong and come in here and say, 'Okay, but that was then.'"

The women talked about this other world—this street world, with its drugs and partying and violent toughness—as if it had claws that could reach out and pull you down. One woman said,

You on the top of the world, you get things done, you're making appointments, then all of a sudden, out of nowhere, out of the blue when you thought it was safe to step into the water here come sharks. You can walk down the street. Someone says, "Hey, how you doing?" The next day, "Hey, how you doing? Want some coffee?" "No thanks." I mean each day going on, you constantly see this person. Then one day you got time to talk to this person, you thinking this person nice. And then you let them into your life. Then the next thing you know, you start doing things again, you start prostituting again. Then the next thing you know, your rent ain't paid.

And strong also meant just being able to survive in the face of the shame, the doubt, the sheer difficulty of making it through each day. As one woman put it,

One time I got raped, and I had nowhere to go. I had to get right back on the street and make some money so I could have a room for the night. I couldn't call the police. I called my mom in Minneapolis. I said "Momma, I'm gonna do something I don't want to do." She said, "What's that?" I said, "Prostitution." She said, "God bless you, be careful. I'll pray for you." That's what my momma told me. A few minutes later I had to wash up, so I washed up and I had to get right back out there and make some money. And that's part of being strong too.

Sometimes, in the middle-class world, we have the idea that people end up on the street because they want to be independent, as if urban cowboys. We have not met a single woman who describes herself as choosing to be homeless. These women do not want to be here. They do not want the apparent freedom, and they repeatedly and consistently blame the economy for stripping them of resources. One woman described this, in a way we have heard again and again, as "social cruelty. . . . There's corporate cruelty going on, and it's very unreasonable." Here in Uptown, all the women seem to want to get off the street, to get housed, to get a job, and they consistently say that to do that, you have to be strong.

This is where the culture has its bite, because in the world of this neighborhood, when women use the word "crazy," they mean the opposite of "strong." The word "crazy," of course, is rarely a compliment in middle-class society. But in safer settings, people with serious psychotic disorder can embrace the term with an ironic, grudging familiarity. People with schizophrenia may describe times when they have been delusional by saying, "Yeh, that's when I was crazy." My favorite political button was distributed by clients with psychosis at a national meeting: "I'm crazy, and I vote."

But in Uptown, "crazy" has a meaning more caustic than I have encountered elsewhere. In all our collective fieldnotes and transcripts, there are over a hundred instances where women use the word "crazy" to describe mental illness. In all but two of those occasions, the term is used for other people, and it is used to demean. And if you model the features associated with the word, the data are clear and consistent, suggesting a high degree of local cultural consensus.

The prototype of "crazy" is the flagrantly psychotic person, a woman talking visibly and audibly to people no one else can see. (Figure 3 is a representation of such a woman, drawn by someone with intermittent psychosis.) When you ask people what they mean by being crazy, they point to these women gesticulating to the empty air. And unlike in the safe, healthy world of an upper-middle-class university, you always have such a woman to point to. If you are in a shelter or a drop-in center or a soup kitchen, the flagrantly psychotic are always present. The last time I was in Uptown, I was on Wilson and Broadway, and a woman walked into the middle of



Figure 3. Sharon Pena, artist

traffic and started screaming at the cars. She actually knelt down in front of a van. Then she got up and walked away.

There are clearly three features of what we might call the cognitive model, or the local cultural schema, for being crazy. The first is weakness. To be strong is to be not crazy. A woman whose husband had shot himself in front of her some months previously said, "I didn't think anything was wrong with his head because he was a strong man. I just thought he was this strong man, that that wouldn't ever happen to him, you know, he would never be crazy, he would never be actually crazy because he was a strong-minded person, strong-minded man, strong, so it wouldn't happen to him. But I was wrong because it did." To be crazy is to be someone who is unable to negotiate the demands of this world: unable to care for herself, unable to handle the isolation, unable either to defend herself on the street or conform to the rules of the service setting. Another woman told me, "You know they can't protect themselves. . . . They are obviously physically vulnerable."

This is an accurate claim. We know from systematic sociological data that people with serious psychotic disorders are more at risk of assault than other people. Indeed, in the shelters and at the drop-in centers I have seen psychotic women jeered at, teased, and verbally attacked. And that is, in part, because they are genuinely a problem. When you sleep in two rooms with eighty-five people, the woman who talks out loud to herself when others are sleeping is an object for contempt, not for compassion. One woman described such women to me as "time bombs." They are going to go off, she said; you don't know when or where, and it just happens. You say "hi" one day and everything is fine, you say "hi" four hours later and they just explode in your face.

The second feature of the model is that those who are crazy are permanently crippled, struggling with what one woman called "something that would never be fixed." As another woman explained, "It's something you absolutely cannot control. And a lot of them don't even take medication. They have retardation, and there's nothing you can do about it. Alcoholism you can do something about. You can stop drinking. Smoking, you can stop smoking.

You can do those things and thereby reverse your situation, but someone who appears mentally ill can't do that." Women often speak about mental illness as retardation. As one woman put it, "Half of these people slow up here, you know what I'm saying, half of them got a little problem. They don't think that well."

This is a less accurate claim, but not an unreasonable one. The most flagrantly psychotic women on the street are very sick, and change, when it comes, seems to come slowly. Few of the very psychotic women I know in Uptown look much better three years on. That empirical experience seems to impact the decision not to take medication. As one woman caustically remarked, "From what I've seen, people who are on medication are worse, not better."

The third feature of the model is that the street will drive you crazy. Women talk about being crazy as if it is something that happens to those that cannot handle the strain of being on the street. "She's been on the street too long," women would say to me about someone else, twirling their fingers or rolling their eyes to show that the person that they were talking about was crazy. "Reality is so overwhelming for them," one woman explained, "it is like a powerful explosion, they have to go within themselves, they have to create a safer ground. They can't understand what's happening, and it's the only way they can exist because they would otherwise just wither and die." Another woman whispered, "Some people can't handle the pressure. . . . They break and become mentally ill."

The kicker is that this part of the model is probably right. The street may well drive you crazy.

Let me pause on this point. Schizophrenia is famous as the site of the most notorious misuse of psychoanalytic theory in American psychiatry. When psychoanalysis dominated American psychiatry, back before the biomedical revolution, the dominant American perspective on schizophrenia held that the condition was the result of the patient's own emotional conflict. Often, clinicians blamed the mother. She was "schizophrenogenic," her own conflicts paralyzed her child. When psychiatry shifted to a biomedical model of mental illness, clinicians began to emphasize the biomedical, organic nature of schizophrenia to parents—as if it were caused by a genetic lightning bolt that swept out of the sky to strike a child.

And certainly there is good evidence for biological causation in schizophrenia. What is striking is that now there is epidemiological evidence, mostly from Europe, that there are specific paths for social causation as well. It's been known for a long time that schizophrenia is associated with poverty, but until recently, most people thought that this meant that people who developed schizophrenia became poor because they couldn't hold their jobs. But a recent study, which tracked down father's job and mother's address from the birth certificate of the person with schizophrenia, demonstrated that if you are born poor, your risk for schizophrenia increases. If you live in an urban area, your risk for schizophrenia increases. And if you have dark skin, your risk for schizophrenia

increases as your neighborhood whitens—a remarkable, disturbing finding called the "ethnic density" effect.

Most strikingly, when dark-skinned people emigrate to the United Kingdom or to the Netherlands (the only places where the studies have been done), their risk of schizophrenia rises sharply. This effect has now been shown in so many papers by so many researchers with such methodological care that it cannot be explained away by clinicians' racial bias. Those who arrive in England from the Caribbean have around seven times the incidence of schizophrenia and of other psychotic disorders than whites, even after adjusting for social class and age.

Meanwhile, one of the most interesting puzzles in culture and mental health today is the difference in the outcome of schizophrenia in developing and developed countries. In an old World Health Organization study, researchers had found that two years after an initial diagnosis of schizophrenia, patients looked better in Africa and India than they did in sites scattered throughout the West. The study was redone and done more carefully, and the results still held. No matter whether you look at symptoms, disability, clinical profile, or the ability to do productive work, roughly 50 percent more people do well after a diagnosis of schizophrenia in the developing world (really, in India) than they do in the developed world. So in some sense the causal account of schizophrenia has at long last circled back to the old psychoanalytic explanation. Much is different. The mother is no longer the villain. Complex ideas about unconscious motivation and defense are no longer to blame. But the fundamental insight seems right: individuals are caught in webs of human relationship that can strangle the biologically vulnerable. To read this new epidemiology is to confront the social dimension of our bodily experience in a manner as arresting as when Freud first suggested that illness was intrapsychic and interpersonal.

Many people look at this data and wonder what India is doing right. They speculate that it is because in India, there is more single-episode psychosis; the family remains fully involved in the treatment; patients often live in joint families; entry-level work may be less stressful; fewer families are critical and emotionally intense than in America; and so forth.

I look at these data, and I see Uptown. If I am right that the nomadic psychiatric circuit is common in the lives of those who struggle with schizophrenia, the explanation of this outcome data may be that in the richest country in the world we subject people with psychosis repeatedly to a culture of consistent social defeat, in which they face failure in social encounters again and again and again.

The paradox that I am describing today is that I think these women see this too, and their very attempt to escape it may damn them to greater illness through their reluctance to accept care.

These women live in a world in which to be "crazy" is a sign of absolute failure, a sign of weakness, an admission that you are not strong enough to escape the world you loath. Their decision to refuse any help they associate with "being crazy" is not

an arbitrary symptom of their illness, but a coherent decision that is appropriate in their culture. They see flagrant psychosis as the consequence of being defeated by the street, and their judgment is not only shared by other people like them but is also probably accurate. They see little value, in the social world in which they find themselves, in taking medication. They see that people who are flagrantly psychotic are vulnerable and at risk. And they are terrified that the street might in fact drive them crazy, and they will be caught—permanently crippled in a world they regard as damnation. As my colleague Rick Shweder points out, this is an instance where what looks like stigma is in fact good sense. Here, for example, is an exchange with a woman who has just announced that dignity is all she has left, and that she's certainly not accepting housing offered on the condition that she accept a psychiatric diagnosis.

"Just the fact that they even wanted me to go to [mental health services] made me like . . ." (her voice trails off)

Interviewer: "Why were they saying you should go there?"

"To qualify for the housing. [But] whatever it was, I didn't want it. Why should I say I'm not competent?"

It is not the case that women like this always refuse services. Certainly when they get sick enough, they have no choice. But many of those who refuse are, like Zaney, among the smartest and most competent women with psychosis on the street. They have to be, almost by definition. They wouldn't survive otherwise.

Yet when they refuse that help, they put themselves at risk. To sleep on the El is probably more stressful, and certainly less safe, than to sleep behind your own locked door. To sleep in the shelter is probably more stressful, and probably offers more opportunity for social defeat, than to sleep in your own place. To refuse antipsychotic medications may bring you closer to flamboyant psychosis, and clinically speaking, to go in and out of hospitalization, and on and off of medication, probably makes your psychosis worse. I don't have any romantic illusions about Zaney's freedom. The more she sleeps out, the worse she looks, and the greater her chance of getting raped, getting beaten, and getting really, really sick.

So this is a decision in which if you choose what you know to be morally right—in this case, to be strong—you may bring yourself closer to what you morally condemn and profoundly fear. For these women, psychosis is not an abstract fear. It stares them in the face every day. They are like Leonard Bast, in E. M. Forster's *Howards End*, a poor clerk perched on the edge of poverty, desperately clinging to respectability and with each reasonable judgment sliding closer to the edge of the abyss. They are like those in the 1930s who refused public assistance because to do so would be to admit that they were poor—and because they knew what poverty looked like. Some of those people did, with sheer luck and determination, scramble back into the middle class. Many of them did not. Zaney may be lucky. But

the last time I saw her, I thought that she would be dead or hospitalized within the month.

A woman like Zaney is willing to take a terrible risk to protect her dignity, her identity, and her sense of what it is to be a decent person. We ought to respect that. Intellectuals like to think that we can talk someone out of what we think are bad ideas by giving them better ones. I don't see that working here. I don't see holding an anti-stigma campaign for these women and expecting them to change their minds about accepting a psychiatric diagnosis. They hold these ideas about being crazy because those ideas spring directly from their social experience. If we want to help them solve their problems, we need to grasp how that social experience has led them to think, and we need to reach out to them in their terms, not in ours. All our technical skills in biomedicine and pharmaceuticals avail us nothing if we ignore the social context in which people make their fundamental choices. At the least, in this case, we should stop making help contingent on an explicit psychiatric diagnosis, because to them the very concept of being crazy evokes a visceral moral disgust. And this, to end on a University of Chicago note, reminds us that Emile Durkheim taught us that an image that arises out of social experience can acquire a moral quality which can feel more real than reality itself. If we ignore the moral vision of women like Zaney, those women will continue to suffer and die on the street. As a woman remarked one afternoon, shaking her head, "To be mentally ill and homeless . . . you really can't get much worse off than that."

About the Lecturer

Tanya Luhrmann is the Max Palevsky Professor in the Department of Comparative Human Development and the College, and Associate Member in the Department of Anthropology.

She received a B.A. in folklore and mythology from Harvard University in 1981 summa cum laude, and an M.Phil. in 1982 and a Ph.D. in 1986 in social anthropology from Cambridge University. Luhrmann was a research fellow at Cambridge from 1985 to 1989. She then taught at the University of California, San Diego, for eleven years before joining the University of Chicago faculty in 2000.

A social anthropologist, Luhrmann studies the social construction of psychological experience and the ways that social practice may affect psychological mechanism. Her specific research interests include witchcraft, religion, trauma, and people with serious mental illness.

Her *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (1989) is a detailed study of how apparently reasonable people come to believe apparently unreasonable beliefs. In *The Good Parsi: The Fate of a Colonial Elite in a Postcolonial Society* (1996), Luhrmann explores the seemingly irrational self-criticism of a postcolonial Indian elite, the result of colonial identification with the colonizers. *Of Two Minds: The Growing Disorder in American Psychiatry* (2000) analyzes the contrasting cultural logic implicit in the biomedical and psychodynamic models of mental illness.

Of Two Minds won the Victor Turner Prize for Ethnographic Writing, the Bryce Boyer Prize for Psychological Anthropology, and the Gradiva Award from the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis.

Luhrmann was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2003. Her numerous grants for fieldwork include a 1990 Fulbright Senior Research award for work in India. Her 1989 essay “The Magic of Secrecy” received the Stirling Prize from the American Anthropological Association.

The Nora and Edward Ryerson Lectures

The Nora and Edward Ryerson Lectures were established by the Trustees of the University in December 1972. They are intended to give a member of the faculty the opportunity each year to lecture to an audience from the entire University on a significant aspect of his or her research or study. The President of the University appoints the lecturer on the recommendation of a faculty committee, which solicits individual nominations from each member of the faculty during the Winter Quarter preceding the academic year for which the appointment is made.

Previous Ryerson Lecturers

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Subrahmanyam Chandrasekhar
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“The Private I: Some Reflections on Privacy and the Constitution”

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Robert E. Streeter
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1977–78
Albert Dorfman, M.D.
“Answers without Questions and Questions without Answers”

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Stephen Toulmin
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1979–80
Erica Reiner
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1980–81
James M. Gustafson
“Say Something Theological!”

1981–82
Saunders Mac Lane
“Proof, Truth, and Confusion”

1982–83
George J. Stigler
“Laissez faire l'état”

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Karl J. Weintraub
“. . . with a long sense of time . . .”

1984–85
James S. Coleman
“Schools, Families, and Children”

1985–86
John A. Simpson
“To Explore and Discover”

1986–87
Wayne C. Booth
“The Idea of a *University* as Seen by a Rhetorician”

1987–88
Janet D. Rowley
“Finding Order in Chaos”

1988–89
Gary S. Becker
“Human Capital Revisited”

1989–90
James W. Cronin
“What Does a High-Energy Physicist Really Do?”

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Stuart M. Tave
“Words, Universities, and Other Odd Mixtures”

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Marshall Sahlins
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Philip Gossett
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William Julius Wilson
“Crisis and Challenge: Race and the New Urban Poverty”

1994–95
Wendy Doniger
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“Constitutional Myth-Making: Lessons from the *Dred Scott* Case”

1996–97
Eugene N. Parker
“Probing Space through Measurements and Meditations on Your Porch”

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“Herpes Simplex Viruses: Our Lifetime Unwanted Guests and a String of Pearls”

1998–99
David Bevington
“Shakespeare Faces Retirement”

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Leo P. Kadanoff
“Making a Splash, Breaking a Neck: The Development of Complexity in Physical Systems”

2000–01
Martha K. McClintock
“Scents and Sensibility: Pheromones, Social Dynamics, and the Control of Fertility and Disease”

2001–02
Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and Lloyd I. Rudolph
“Engaging Subjective Knowledge: Narratives of and by the Self in Amar Singh Diary”

2002–03
Stephen M. Stigler
“Casanova’s Lottery”

2003–04
Robert B. Pippin
“Bourgeois Philosophy? On the Problem of Leading a Free Life”

2004–05
Robert J. Richards
“The Narrative Structure of Moral Judgments in History: Evolution and Nazi Biology”

University Memorial Service Address

By Henry S. Webber

November 2, 2005

Today is a bittersweet day. It is a day of sorrow, a day when we remember those whom we have lost in the past year and, for those of us who return to this event annually, lost before the past year. It is a day of memories, memories of the friends and family members whom we have lost, a day when we are forced to confront the tragic truth that to love and care is to feel loss and pain. But today is also a day of celebration, a day when we remember the joy of being with our loved ones, of glorious summer warmth and winter's bright days, and of warm embraces. Today we remember how much our loved ones, friends, and colleagues enriched our own lives.

I cannot pretend to know exactly what you are thinking about as you sit in this magnificent chapel. But my guess is that many of your thoughts are of the times you spent with those whose names are written in today's program. Of birthday parties and summer vacations; of great art viewed or music heard, or silly comedies on television watched. Of days at Comiskey Park, or whatever it is now called, never dreaming of the White Sox October deliverance; of the immense joy and challenges of raising a family; of caring for young children and aging parents; of the many, many ways that our loved ones made this world a better place.

Some of us are here to remember those whose contributions were to the teaching and research that is so much at the heart of this institution. Their legacy is a generation of students trained and knowledge created. Some of us are here to remember the staff of the University, of which I am proud to be a member. Their legacy is helping to create an environment that allows learning to occur and healing to begin. Others are here to remember the enthusiasm and promise of our students who tragically have left us well before their time. It is they who represented the promise of the future, and their loss seems most unjust. We all remember

those Trustees who wisely shepherded the University through times of change. Faculty, students, alumni, loved ones, staff, or Trustees; they were our friends and colleagues.

We in this chapel today are a community; a community brought together by sorrow and remembrance. As a community, we define diversity. We share no common race or beliefs, no common creed or religion. We are Jews, Christians, Muslims, and people of other faiths. Some of us staunchly assert the absence of any theology. There are no words or prayers that resonate deeply with all of us or that can bring the same measure of comfort to all. What we have is our own memories and remembrances, our own sense of what we have had and treasured and lost.

There is, however, one commonality that we do share. And that is our dedication to and love of this institution, the University of Chicago, an institution whose very best is represented by this chapel and its programs. This university, like many universities, celebrates its stars—those whose words and thoughts changed a field of study, solved a mystery, inspired a generation of students, cured a disease, or changed an economy. And we should celebrate those whose contributions will be publicly acknowledged far beyond their lives. But in fact the work of those who shine in the public spotlight is possible only through the contributions of many others: those who type the papers, maintain the walls, the library, and the network, and balance the accounts. We are one community, and without the contributions of all of us we will not meet the great mission of the University of Chicago—the alleviation of ignorance and suffering.

Let me tell a story. About fifteen years ago, the University of Chicago Hospitals chose in its annual report to tell a story of a stunning lifesaving liver transplant that saved the life of a child. The story they told was in part the story of a very brave little

child and an enormously skilled surgeon. But it was even more a story of a team of nurses and technicians and orderlies and finance staff and architects and transportation aides who together achieved a miracle. That is how we achieve many of our miracles, not alone but as a community united for good.

When I think of loss and of death, I inevitably turn to my own tradition, liberal Judaism, a tradition I was born into and have chosen as an adult. It is not a tradition that provides great comfort to grievers, as I know well. Reform Jews do not know if there is another life after this one or what happens when we leave this life. But it is a tradition that acknowledges how fragile human life is and what a blessing life is to all of us. And it is a religious tradition, like many religious traditions, that challenges us to do our very best. It also provides, at least for me, each year a bit of comfort through a prayer that comes in the middle of a service that occurs late in the day on Yom Kippur, the most holy of the days in the Jewish year, our one day of fast. The prayer is part of something called a memorial service, a communal service which acknowledges the contributions of those members of our congregation who have passed on in that year. In that way, it is much like today.

The prayer may be a bit hard to follow since it is actually read responsively between the rabbi and the congregation, but I believe the message will be clear. It begins with a question:

If some messenger were to come to us with the offer that death should be overtaken, but with the one inseparable condition that birth should also cease; if the existing generation were given the chance to live forever, but on the clear understanding that never again would there be a child, or a youth, or first

love, never again new persons with new hopes and new ideas, new achievements; ourselves for always and never any others—could the answer be in doubt?

We shall not fear the summons of death; we shall remember those who have gone before us, and those who will come after us!

'Alas for those who cannot sing, but die with all their music in them.' Let us treasure the time we have, and resolve to use it well, counting each moment precious—a chance to apprehend some truth, to experience some beauty, to conquer some evil, to relieve some suffering, to love and be loved, to achieve something of lasting worth.

Help us, then, to fulfill the promise that is in each of us, and so to conduct ourselves so that, generations hence, it will be true to say of us: The world is better because, for a brief space, they lived in it.*

Each person we honor today has had a part in making our university and world a better place. To each we owe our heartfelt thanks. Those whom we remember today live on. They live on in the acts of goodness and kindness they did on this earth. And they live on in the inspiration they provide to all of us to make this world gentler, kinder, and more just.

**Gates of Repentance: The New Union Prayer Book for the Days of Awe* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1996).

Henry S. Webber is Vice-President for Community & Government Affairs and Senior Lecturer in the School of Social Service Administration.

Memorial Roll 2005

The following list contains the names of those whose deaths have been recorded with Rockefeller Memorial Chapel between September 15, 2004, and September 15, 2005. Please direct any comments regarding the names listed here to Lorraine Brochu, Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, 773-702-7059.

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 Frank Charles Besic
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 Hiram Henderson
 Cheryl Hill
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 Ann A. Hubbard
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 Gloria J. Leavell
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 Antoinette R. Manno
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 Shirley Alice Nyden
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 Bertha A. Paulmeister

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Merry Bistrican	Jessie C. Cunningham	Jack R. Greenfield	Harriet D. Kay	Janet E. McAuley	George C. Petterson
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David W. Boisseau	George M. Davies	John Clement Hamil	Irving M. Klotz	Neil McKay	Isadore Pitesky
Billie Bongiovanni	Samuel Kemper Davis	Ruth F. Hanke	Carol K. Knudson	Priscilla Charlotte McLeod	Louise Pittman
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Adeline C. Boshes	Robert F. Dehaan	Donald S. Harrington	Dale E. Koepke	Don H. Mergler	Albert C. Pryor, Jr.
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Jane B. Brady	Albert William Demmler, Jr.	Arietta Evoline Hastings	Karl K. Koos	Richard G. Mershon	Helen Quisenberry Ratzert
Mary W. Brady	Helen K. Denton	Amalia Marie Hauswald	Robert H. Kotrba	Herbert Mertz, Jr.	Lucy B. Reum
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Lois E. Brown	Cathlin Donnell	Donald E. Herdeck	Stephanie Lynn Lake	J. Bruce Mitchell	Jack F. Robinson
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Sydney Taylor Brown	Isaiah S. Dorfman	Robert K. Hilton	Charlotte S. Langley	Carol Mongerson	Catherine A. Rockwood
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R. Barry Brugman	Harold H. Dubner	Elizabeth Coit Hoague	Ronald E. Larson	Cathy Marie Moore	Eileen Fitzpatrick Ronan
Francis K. Bull	Joseph DuCoeur	Louis H. Hofmann	Elisabeth Lassers	Oakley D. Moreen	Alexander Ropchan
Frank K. Burgess	Otis Dudley Duncan	Irene S. Holoway	Donald Lastreto	Adele M. Morel	Gordon H. Roper
Martha E. Burton	Harry H. Dunn	Clara Holton	Robert Denis Laurent	Frederick A. Morgan, Jr.	Eugene J. Rosenbaum
John W. Busby	Howard B. Durbin	Barry W. Homer	Joan B. Leavelle	James R. Morris	Irving J. Rosenbaum
Albert E. Busch	Carlene R. Eads	Mary Adalene Hope	George A. Lehner	Jane Constance Motz	Ralph A. Rosenberg
Craig M. Cameron	Andrew J. Eaton	Raymond J. Hornstra	Rado L. Lencek	G. Arthur Mulder	Warren L. Rosenbloom
John R. Cameron	Marshall Edelson	Irving Horwitz	James A. Lennertz	Edward R. Munnell	Martin G. Rosenfield
Hoyle D. Carpenter	Oscar R. Eggers	Donald H. Howard	Sylvia M. Lerner	William E. Murphy	Geraldine H. Rosenthal
Thomas A. Carpenter	Earl E. Elliott	Peter J. Hoy	Rose S. Levenson	Francis A. Murray	Michael Roskin
Willis T. Carpenter, Jr.	Susan S. Eng	Henry J. Hoying	Audrey L. Levin	Harry E. Nagle	Charles A. Rovetta
Janet N. Carsten	Jerome L. Ettelson	Howard Penn Hudson	Samuel M. Levine	Penny Podolsky Nasatir	Sydelle E. Rovnick
Ann Marie Carter	Robert G. Ettelson	Ruth L. Huenemann	Lila Levit	Sydney J. Neal	Dorothy L. Rowe
Ellin E. Carter	Margaret E. Faithe	James L. Hufford	Julia E. Lewis	Franklin Newhall	James L. Rowe
J. Michael Carter	Winifred V. Farbman	Hazel Huggins	Marilyn M. Lichten	Mary R. Newman	David Rubinien
Teresa S. Carterette	Donald W. Feddersen	Marcia G. Hughes	Marie E. Lindner	Theodore R. Newman	Robert H. Runkle
Clifford N. Cassidy	Laura Kramer Fisher	Harry H. Hull	Samuel Litvachuck	Jane E. Newton	Charles I. Rutenberg
Edna Rose Chamberlain	Richard J. Fitzgerald	C. Dickson Humphreys	Francis Liu	Robert W. Nordan	Leonard D. Rutstein
William A. Chapin	Warren Fitzgibbon	Edmund C. Hunt	David J. Lochman	Terrance John Nykiel	Robert H. Sager
Dorothea C. Chickering	Janet Flagg	Joanne Yvonne Hunt	Sarane S. Loeb	Herbert D. Odom	Alan Saks
William L. Chrisler	Andre Gunder Frank	John G. Husa	John V. Long	Arthur J. Okinaka	William Salkind
Dorothy B. Christelow	John C. Freeman, Jr.	Clyde A. Hutchison, Jr.	Richard L. Longini	James Karge Olsen	David A. Salzberg
Paul B. Christoff	J. W. Fretz	George P. Ignasiak	James Hirsch Lorie	William G. Olson	Mary Sanders
Duane W. Christy	Harold L. Friedman	Marjorie M. Irvine	Vanna M. Lorie	Adrienne M. Olzak	Fay H. Sawyier
Virginia Clark	Irving Friedman	Rhoda A. Iyoya	Neuree C. Love	Arthur M. Oppenheimer	A. Robert Sbarge
Mary Dean Clement	Stanley T. Gabis	Karen Louise Jackson	William H. Lovell	Norbert H. Opyd	Barbara Carol Schaaf
Dorothy Gertrude Cohen	Veronica Palandech	Richard L. James	William H. Ludlow	Kenneth D. Orr	Willis Carlton Schaefer
Stanley H. Cohn	Gallagher	Curtis J. Janzen	Victor P. Lundemo	Marian J. Orr	Esther B. Schaeffer
Robert A. Colby	Albert J. Galvani	Elizabeth Jarz	Mary-Mable H. Luning	Mitchell J. Overgaard	Adalbert U. Scharpf
Bruce M. Cole	C. J. Gauthier	John C. Jensen	Marshall H. Lykins	Thomas W. Overholt	Mary L. Scheid
Gordon E. Cole	Joanne P. Gealy	Wayne Jervis, Jr.	Redmond E. Lyons-Keefe	John Edward Page	Ben T. Schiek
Muriel T. Collier	Wilbur R. Gemmel	Betty Bryant Jewell	Saunders Mac Lane	James H. Parker	Rozella M. Schlotfeldt
Edward E. Collins, Jr.	John M. Gent	Jeanne Jewett	Miriam Maderer	William G. Parsch	Dora Susan Schocken
Russell Richard Connett	Elizabeth Gentry	Doris R. Johnson	Nurcholish Madjid	Margaret Parsons	Paul Schreiber
John R. Conrad	Nelson P. Germanos	Earl P. Johnson	H. Stephen Madsen	Theodore Hall Partrick	Alfred Schwartz
Robert E. Cook	Elizabeth B. Gezon	John Alvin Johnson	Bruce Allan Mahon	Morton H. Pastor	Joel Schwartz
George Joseph Cooper	Horace M. Gezon	John H. Johnson	John J. Malkind	Hugh M. Patinkin	Gilbert Scriven, Jr.
Lenore F. Coral	Duke P. Gibbon	Elizabeth Orton Jones	Gayle E. Maloney	Ellmore C. Patterson	Daniel M. Seifer

Lester G. Seligman	Susan Sontag	Richard H. Strauss	Ronald B. Thompson	William T. Vesprini	Ned B. Williams
Raymond M. Sergio	Anthony V. Sorrentino	Walter J. Strauss	Warren E. Thompson	Robert F. Von Gillern	Phillip Gaines Williams
Roger T. Shanahan	Jonathan Harris Spanbock	Darrell John Stremmer	Norman R. Tice	Helen C. Waara	Joseph E. Wilson
Robert Lee Shapiro	Richard S. Spangler	Theodore A. Stroud	M. Gordon Tiger	Robert L. Walker	Catherine Hazel
Hisham B. Sharabi	Sidney Speigman	Reece Stuart III	Julian A. Tishler	Henry M. Wallbrunn	Winterburn
Keith C. Shumway	Bernard R. Spillman	Mary Louise Stubbins	Carl Tjerandsen	Albert H. Walters	Clifford L. Winters, Jr.
Raymond Siever	William Costelloe Spohn	Eleanore A. Stuchlik	Kenneth R. Todd, Jr.	Henry M. Walton	Prescott B. Wintersteen
Robert W. Simpson	Willard R. Sprowls	Edwin W. Suderow	C. F. Joseph Tom	Paul G. Wassenich	Merle E. Wittenberg
Morris Singer	George Squillacote	Hiroshi Sugiyama	Rosalia A. Torrence	Edward M. Wasserman	Joseph J. Wolff
Frances Skipworth	Hubert L. St. Onge	John M. Summerfield	Lola Fennig Townsend	Sherry Goodman Watt	Walter E. Wolff
Edith B. Slayton	Elsie Stampfli	Albina Y. Surbis	John C. Tracey, Jr.	Craig Thomas Weber	David Wolpin
Frank W. Slobetz	Dorothy C. Stark	Joel R. Sural	Merton J. Trast	Frederick S. Webster	Michael T. Woo
Irving E. Slott	Violet J. Stark	George W. Swain, Jr.	Katherine G. Trezevant	Philip Wehner	Charles Bernard Francis
Esther P. Slowakiewicz	Carol Dragstedt Stauffer	Helen Virginia Swift	Sarah Skinner Trice	Lorraine L. Westerberg	Wordell
Philip L. Small	Helen K. Steinkopf	Lois Hay Swisher	John A. Tripp	Mark Kirkland Wheeler	G. Scott Wright, Jr.
Joan M. Smith	Mayer K. Stern	George S. Swope	Tung Tsang	John F. White	C. Robert Youngquist
Kenneth Edward Smith	John W. Stettner	Duane W. Taebel	Hariette L. Turner	James B. Whitlow	Warren Leigh Ziegler
William J. Smith	William Thomas Stevens	Mitchell H. Taibleson	Helen Hibben Turner	Helen B. Wicher	Naoma G. Zimmerman
John M. Smothers	Donald E. Stewart	Frank W. Tate	Gloria Auerbach Turoff	Ronald G. Wiegand	Elsa H. Zion
Howard L. Solomon	Elizabeth H. Stewart	Stanley Tennenbaum	Edward Rimas Tuskenis	Eugene A. Wiege	
Max E. Sonderby	Charlotte F. Stiglitz	Evelyn (Talmadge) Tenner	Flora Eleanor Tworsey	Carol B. Willeke	
Joseph Sondheimer	Joseph H. Stomper	Louis B. Thomas	Roger H. Van Bolt	Carl D. Williams	
David Yong Song	Robert C. Stone	Randall L. Thompson	Iris van Ooijen	John Risca Williams	

Faculty Appointments and Promotions

Appointments

January 2, 2005, through January 1, 2006

Professor

Francisco Bezanilla, Pediatrics
 Michael C. Dawson, Political Science and the College
 Jean Decety, Psychology and the College
 Joe G. N. Garcia, Medicine
 Christopher M. Gomez, Neurology
 Robert J. Gooding-Williams, Political Science and the College
 Mark B. N. Hansen, English Language & Literature, Committee on Cinema & Media Studies, and the College
 John List, Economics and the College
 Viswanathan Natarajan, Medicine
 Eduardo Perozo, Pediatrics
 Stephen Raudenbush, Sociology and the College
 Benoit Roux, Pediatrics
 Wilhelm Schlag, Mathematics and the College
 Michael A. Sells, Divinity School
 Douglas Skinner, Graduate School of Business
 Mark Slouka, English Language & Literature and the College

Associate Professor

Fausto Cattaneo, Mathematics and the College
 Alexander V. Chervonsky, Pathology
 Nathan A. Ellis, Medicine
 Michael A. Glotzer, Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology and the College
 Nikolay Gnedin, Astronomy & Astrophysics
 Tatyana Golovkina, Microbiology
 Christopher Kennedy, Microbiology
 Franklin D. Lewis, Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations
 Giuliano Testa, Surgery
 Alexander Verin, Medicine

Assistant Professor

Umut Acar, Computer Science and the College
 Erin J. Adams, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and the College
 Kenneth Alexander, Pediatrics
 Jason W. Beckfield, Sociology and the College
 Sian L. Beilock, Psychology and the College
 Persis Berlekamp, Art History and the College
 Konstantin Birukov, Medicine
 C. Hoyt Bleakley, Graduate School of Business
 Mattias Blume, Computer Science and the College
 David Boone, Medicine
 Christian Broda, Graduate School of Business
 Yigal Bronner, South Asian Languages & Civilizations and the College
 Thomas Chaney, Economics and the College
 Hsiao-Wen Chen, Astronomy & Astrophysics and the College
 Cheng Chin, Physics, James Franck Institute, and the College
 Joshua Correll, Psychology and the College
 Sean D. Crosson, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and the College
 Kevin Davey, Philosophy and the College
 Aiyasha Dey, Graduate School of Business
 Derek Dreyer, Computer Science and the College
 Mathias Drton, Statistics and the College
 Steven Dudek, Medicine
 Stephanie C. Dulawa, Psychiatry
 Sascha Ebeling, South Asian Languages & Civilizations and the College
 Andrea Frazzini, Graduate School of Business
 Christiane Frey, Germanic Studies and the College
 William Fuchs, Economics and the College

David Gallo, Psychology and the College
 Jacob Gersen, Law School
 Yoav Gilad, Human Genetics and the College
 Ryan Giles, Romance Languages & Literatures and the College
 Manami Hara, Medicine
 Seenu M. Hariprasad, Ophthalmology & Visual Science
 Rebecca Hasselbach, Oriental Institute, Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, and the College
 Yuming He, East Asian Languages & Civilizations and the College
 M. Todd Henderson, Law School
 Karen Sarah Hoehn, Pediatrics
 Eric S. Hungness, Surgery
 Matthew Jackson, Art History, Visual Arts, and the College
 Jeffrey Jacobson, Medicine
 Kristen Jacobson, Psychiatry
 Alison James, Romance Languages & Literatures and the College
 Idolly M. Keels, Comparative Human Development and the College
 Robert J. Keenan, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and the College
 David R. Kovar, Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, and the College
 Oren Lakser, Pediatrics
 Ryon Lancaster, Sociology and the College
 Chun-Yu Liu, Psychiatry
 Juan J. Martinez, Microbiology and Committee on Microbiology
 Ernst Emanuel Mayer, Classics and the College
 Yitzhak Melamed, Philosophy and the College
 Thomas Miles, Law School
 Marcelo A. Nobrega, Human Genetics
 Abraham A. Palmer, Human Genetics
 Marcin Peski, Economics and the College
 Mihnea Popa, Mathematics and the College
 Molly F. Przeworski, Human Genetics
 Jay E. Purdy, Medicine

Harald Ræcke, Computer Science
 Glenn C. Randall, Microbiology and Committee on Microbiology
 Srikanth Chicu Reddy, English Language & Literature and the College
 Jason Riggle, Linguistics and the College
 Kevin K. Roggin, Surgery
 Brian B. Roman, Radiology
 Ilya Ruvinsky, Ecology & Evolution and the College
 Sean Safford, Graduate School of Business
 Boris Shor, Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies
 Dorothy A. Sipkins, Medicine
 Christopher L. Skelly, Surgery
 Daniel Slater, Political Science and the College
 Juan Souto, Mathematics and the College
 Ulrike Stark, South Asian Languages & Civilizations and the College
 Amir Sufi, Graduate School of Business
 Yang Yang, Sociology and the College
 Kamil M. Yenice, Radiation & Cellular Oncology
 Wesley E. Yin, Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies

Collegiate Assistant Professor

Naomi Beck, College
 Charly Coleman, College
 Sarah Kareem, College
 Nomi Claire Lazar, College
 Nancy Luxon, College
 Liesl Olson, College
 Tara A. Schwegler, College
 Olga Sezneva, College
 Brian Robert Soucek, College
 Erik M. Thompson, College

Instructor

Bulent Aydogan, Radiation & Cellular Oncology
 Ruba K. Azzam, Pediatrics
 Alexander I. Bufetov, Mathematics and the College
 Eunice Chen, Psychiatry
 Kevin Costello, Mathematics and the College

Chad M. Cyrenne, Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences
 Hongjie Dong, Mathematics and the College
 Thomas M. Fiore, Mathematics and the College
 Julie Fitzgerald, Pediatrics
 Gregory Friberg, Medicine
 Laura Harrell, Medicine
 Tara O. Henderson, Pediatrics
 Anne S. Henly, Social Sciences Collegiate Division
 Soomi Lee, Pediatrics
 Sebastian Ludmer, Economics and the College
 Andy J. Minn, Radiation & Cellular Oncology
 Antonio Montalban, Mathematics and the College
 Rita Nanda, Medicine
 Kurtis Noblett, Psychiatry
 Edwin Posadas, Medicine
 Allen Romano, Classics and the College
 Aaron Roussell, Physical Education & Athletics and the College
 Emmanuel N. Saadia, Center for International Studies
 Rebecca Shilling, Medicine
 Esra Fatma Tasali, Medicine
 Allison Tothy, Pediatrics
 Jesenko Vukadinovic, Mathematics and the College
 Anna Wienhard, Mathematics

Promotions

January 2, 2005, through January 1, 2006

Associate Professor to Professor

Daniel Adelman, Graduate School of Business
 Edward C. Blucher, Physics, Enrico Fermi Institute, and the College
 Carles Boix, Political Science and the College

Mark E. Courtney, School of Social Service Administration
 David A. Ehrmann, Medicine
 Elizabeth Grove, Neurobiology, Pharmacology & Physiology; Organismal Biology & Anatomy; Committees on Developmental Biology, Cancer Biology, and Neurobiology; and the College
 Gregory S. Karczmar, Radiology
 Laura L. Letinsky, Visual Arts, Committee on Cinema & Media Studies, and the College
 Peggy Mason, Neurobiology, Pharmacology & Physiology, Committee on Neurobiology, and the College
 Elizabeth M. McNally, Medicine
 Stephen C. Meredith, Pathology and Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
 Margaret M. Mitchell, Divinity School and New Testament & Early Christian Literature
 Tobias Moskowitz, Graduate School of Business
 Xiaochuan Pan, Radiology
 Robert Pape, Political Science and the College
 Lubos Pastor, Graduate School of Business
 Melissa Roderick, School of Social Science Administration
 Jeffrey R. Russell, Graduate School of Business
 Steven L. Small, Neurology and Psychology
 Koen van Besien, Medicine
 Pietro Veronesi, Graduate School of Business
 Carlos E. M. Wagner, Physics
 Bernd Wittenbrink, Graduate School of Business
 Timothy Wootton, Ecology & Evolution, Committee on Evolutionary Biology, and the College
 George Wu, Graduate School of Business

Assistant Professor to Professor

Yang-Xin Fu, Pathology
 Mark Kisin, Mathematics and the College
 Jonathan K. Pritchard, Human Genetics and the College

Assistant Professor to Associate Professor

Mark K. Abe, Pediatrics
 Kenneth Alexander, Pediatrics
 Kyeong-Hee Choi, East Asian Languages & Civilizations and the College
 Jennifer Cole, Comparative Human Development, Committee on African & African-American Studies, and the College
 Suzanne D. Conzen, Medicine
 Wouter Dessein, Graduate School of Business
 Andreas Glaeser, Sociology and the College
 Jacqueline D. Goldsby, English Language & Literature and the College
 Patrick Heuveline, Sociology
 Denis Hirschfeldt, Mathematics and the College
 Guenter Hitsch, Graduate School of Business
 Rustem F. Ismagilov, Chemistry and the College
 Bana Jabri, Pathology
 Kathryn Keenan, Psychiatry
 Hedy L. Kindler, Medicine
 Daniel le Grange, Psychiatry
 Yan Chun Li, Medicine, Committee on Molecular Metabolism & Nutrition
 James Mastrianni, Neurology
 Omar M. McRoberts, Sociology and the College
 Jason Merchant, Linguistics and the College
 Atif Mian, Graduate School of Business
 Mae Ngai, History and the College
 Monika Piazzesi, Graduate School of Business

John Romalis, Graduate School of Business
 Adam T. Smith, Anthropology and the College
 Anne I. Sperling, Medicine

Collegiate Assistant Professor to Assistant Professor

Rochona Majumdar, South Asian Languages & Civilizations and the College

Instructor to Assistant Professor

Caleb Alexander, Medicine
 Kelly Austin, Romance Languages & Literatures and the College
 David G. Beiser, Medicine
 Daniel Biss, Mathematics and the College
 Colleen Buggs, Pediatrics
 Farr A. Curlin, Medicine
 Laura DeMarco, Mathematics and the College
 Christopher J. Lowe, Organismal Biology & Anatomy and the College
 Patrick Ma, Medicine
 Michael S. McCloskey, Psychiatry
 Neil Mehta, Radiation & Cellular Oncology
 Martin Perry, Physical Education & Athletics and the College
 Jonathan Rogers, Graduate School of Business
 Morten Sorensen, Graduate School of Business
 Hans Bjarne Thomsen, Art History and the College
 Andrew Van Buskirk, Graduate School of Business

Report of the Student Ombudsperson for 2004–05

by Phil Venticinque

The Ombudsperson and the Associate Ombudsperson are appointed by the President of the University and are charged with offering support to students and guiding them towards appropriate resources available to help meet their needs, to investigate complaints that students may have, and to help students find equitable solutions to problems they may have encountered. As an independent office, we serve as an objective third party with the goals of helping to open lines of communication, re-open communication when normal channels have failed, or simply to coordinate communication across division or department lines at the request of and on behalf of a student. Our focus is assisting students in their interactions with fellow students, faculty, and staff. It must be said, however, that although we often find ourselves involved once a student has exhausted the usual avenues of recourse available, it is the right of any student, at any time, to seek advice and assistance from the Ombudsperson as they go through the normal channels of communication at the department, division, or University levels.

That being said, to provide a complete picture of the day-to-day operations of the Office of the Student Ombudsperson is a difficult task. In addition to supplying the customary statistical analysis in this year-end report, I intend to discuss a select number of cases that involve specific complaints that we received regarding three general areas of life at the University: graduate student housing, academic affairs, and administrative policies. More than the summarizing of events, although that may be necessary for context, I hope to focus on specific policy and procedural questions that call for further comment and offer suggestions for future consideration based on our discussions and experiences throughout the year.

In figures 1 and 2 I have provided a numerical breakdown of the complaints our office has received over the past three years. Complaints in the “other” category typically come from alumni, postdoctoral researchers, or faculty members.

2004–05 Case Analysis

The number of students coming to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson was the highest since 2000–01 and 2002–03, when our office handled 89 and 73 complaints respectively. It was a dramatic increase from last year’s total of 52 complaints. More interesting perhaps than this increase is the distribution of undergraduate and graduate students who came to our office; there were more than twice as many graduate students as undergraduate students. The increase in graduate traffic in our office seems less surprising, however, when we take into account the fact that graduate students significantly outnumber undergraduate students on this campus. It is possible that we should have expected a larger number of graduate students to reach our door in years past. This increase may also be explained by recent efforts to publicize our office that were aimed at graduate students in particular.

Compared to recent years, there was an unusually large amount of student traffic in Spring Quarter 2005. In the weeks leading up to Spring Convocation, we spent more

Figure 1. Case Totals

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Summer	16	12	17
Fall	14	16	16
Winter	31	10	16
Spring	12	14	30
Graduate Total	33	28	51
Undergraduate Total	31	22	24
Other Total	9	2	4
FULL	73	52	79

Figure 2. Case Analysis

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Academic	19	17	25
Grades	4	6	7
Other	15	11	18
Housing	17	8	17
Undergraduate	4	3	1
Graduate	9	4	11
Off Campus	4	1	5
Administrative/Financial	16	4	11
Health	5	9	8
Employment	4	1	1
Student Services	5	2	3
Facilities	1	7	2
Library	1	1	1
Miscellaneous	5	5	11
TOTALS	73	54*	79

*One case appears in three categories.

time than last year meeting with undergraduate and graduate students, as well as fielding calls from concerned parents. We helped work through any number of issues, including being restricted by the bursar, failing to fill out a graduation application, and last-minute academic concerns that may or may not have kept a student from graduating. I am happy to say that most, if not all, of these concerns were resolved in a timely fashion, thanks to the efforts of various administrative offices. Academic and housing concerns, however, once again proved to be the largest areas of complaint (42 out of 79 complaints, or 53 percent of our workload). Several of these academic and housing complaints touch on issues of communication and equity across divisional boundaries and call for more detailed discussion.

Graduate Housing

Vacancy Notices

Miscommunication was the one consistent thread running through many of the complaints regarding Real Estate Operations (REO) and its Neighborhood Student Apartments staff this past year. This was particularly problematic in cases dealing with vacancy notices—situations in which timely communication and accurate exchange of information between students and staff is vital, and a lapse may result in loss of money or property. In two cases, for example, students who changed plans after filing a notice did not have new documentation on file. When they returned to campus after a prolonged absence, they found that their apartments had been cleaned out and their belongings had been removed. One

student claimed that when he notified the area office prior to leaving the country that he had changed his plans and would not be vacating he was told that no new forms needed to be filed. The REO and the area office had no record of any conversation with this student, and no documentation was in his file other than the initial vacancy notice. Although loss of property is especially distressing for the students involved, little could be done without written records or other documentations. Efforts were made by the REO and the Offices of Deans of Students in the students’ areas of study to help them replace important documentation and other forms that were lost. Due to stipulations of the lease, there is little that our office can do for these students besides help them navigate the grievance process.

In another case involving vacancy notices, a property manager referred a student not to the main office of the REO for an appeal of his decision but to the Office of Undergraduate Student Housing—where the appeal, which should never have been brought to this office, was denied. Although an aberration, the involvement of the undergraduate housing office in a graduate housing dispute further complicated matters and added to the student’s frustration. Here we have an example of miscommunication not so much between students and the administration, but within administrative offices themselves. The student should have been directed to the REO as part of the grievance process, and then to a representative of the Office of the Vice-President and Dean of Students in the University.

Lease Renewal

Several students approached our office during the lease renewal period with concerns over changes to the lease that would affect students in two-bedroom units. The addition states that the “lease may only be renewed if the apartment remains fully occupied for the next lease term. That is, both residents must remain for the new lease term, or, if only one resident remains, he or she must find an eligible roommate for the full term of the new lease.” The students who came to our office simply wanted to remain in their current unit and avoid additional expenses that they would incur by having to move or to make alternative arrangements for the summer months. The REO and the area office informed these students that, although they would be unable to remain in their current apartment, they had the option of being reassigned to a studio or one-bedroom unit in graduate student housing. If they wished to remain in a two-bedroom unit, they would need to reapply and be assigned a new roommate in September.

The REO was very receptive to working with the students who found themselves affected by the terms of the new lease, and an equitable solution was reached. We were able to negotiate a compromise with the REO that would allow these students to renew their lease and remain in the same unit. The REO agreed to randomly assign a roommate for the coming year. There were a number of issues to consider on both sides of the argument. The modifications to the lease were made because the REO is concerned about being able to rent two-bedroom apartments when one student chooses to not renew the lease. The REO’s concerns include being able to properly prepare the unit for occupancy, concerns about the condition of common areas, and concerns about potential awkwardness between the incoming student and the remaining student. On the other hand, it seems unfair to attempt to enforce policies not originally specified in the lease signed by the residents in September 2004. Several students communicated to us that members of the staff had told them that this had always been the policy and procedure, but its omission from the lease they had reviewed and signed only led to further confusion. Each roommate in a two-bedroom apartment is asked to sign an individual lease, which led the students who came to our office to believe that they would be able to renew the lease for that unit regardless of their roommate’s plans. Requiring students to find their own qualifying roommate at the end of the academic year (when they and their roommates had themselves been randomly assigned by the REO)—with no prior indication that they would indeed have to undertake such a search—made enforcement of the unwritten provisions more problematic.

Students unable to find a roommate would have had to relocate temporarily either to another unit in the system or elsewhere, only to move back in the fall and possibly be reassigned to the same building or even the original unit. If this new policy were to be enforced, current students would run the risk of incurring added costs, monetary or otherwise, related to additional moves and relocation. It is a policy that privileges those students

who have yet to matriculate or enter the REO's Neighborhood Student Apartments system at the expense of students who have already been—and have stated a desire to remain—paying customers. The REO's concerns over damage to the unit by the remaining occupant in the interim and the resulting costs possibly to be incurred on the part of the REO could be partially addressed by one walkthrough and assessment of damage immediately after one roommate vacates and then another immediately prior to the arrival of another occupant. According to the terms of the lease, the remaining occupant is already prohibited from occupying or using the second bedroom. In the event that a student is misusing the facilities (particularly if it leads to an intended roommate refusing the assignment), it would seem that other avenues could be pursued at that time.

The new provision will be added to the lease for the term beginning in September 2005. It is not unlikely that similar complaints and concerns will arise again next spring during the renewal period, despite the fact that the policy at least will have been written into the new lease. We suggest that some effort be made during the renewal period, or immediately prior to it, to more explicitly notify current residents of the REO's policies regarding two-bedroom apartments. If such disputes continue to arise, we hope that they are handled on a case-by-case basis, as was done this spring.

Academic Affairs

Academic Honesty

We received a variety of academic complaints throughout the year, but three students came to our office with concerns that either directly resulted in a hearing related to academic honesty or in substantial discussions between students, professors, and Deans of Students regarding their fears over possible violations. This office rarely finds itself involved in these matters because they are typically handled by the individual divisions, Deans of Students, and faculty committees charged with the review of such allegations. The policies and procedures that are detailed in the student handbook, provided that they are followed, are more than adequate to handle these issues as they arise. As a result, in cases in which we do find ourselves involved at the request of a student, our interest lies not in assessing whether a violation occurred but rather in questions of process. Our concerns are that the policies and procedures as described in the student handbook are followed; that students are offered a chance to answer allegations; and that an instance in which one person alleges, investigates, and proscribes academic sanctions is avoided.

In two of the three instances, our role was fairly limited. However this office played an unusually large role in the third case, which culminated in a divisional disciplinary hearing. A student approached our office after receiving notification that the director of a program intended to place the student on academic probation for violations of the University's policies on academic honesty. Several factors complicated this case, including the way in which University and divisional policies and procedures for handling these violations

were being applied at the departmental level. According to University policies, a hearing is necessary prior to imposing academic sanctions. The program director had been seeking to enforce departmental policies that allowed academic sanctions to be imposed for such violations without convening a formal committee hearing. Additionally, past allegations of academic dishonesty against this particular student made by the program director as an instructor of a course, which had been handled at a departmental level in a more informal way without a hearing, surfaced prior to and were included in the hearing on the new charge of dishonesty. Because the program director was alleging the plagiarism as a faculty member, the possibility arose that the same person making allegations of plagiarism would also be investigating the allegations internally and then prescribing a punishment.

In this case, our office worked with and on behalf of the student in an attempt to defuse a situation that quickly escalated prior to and leading up to the hearing. When we felt that there were some inconsistencies in the application of procedures and that some contradictory information was being given to the student, we helped coordinate with a number of offices to get the proceedings back on track.

We encourage active communication between and participation of academic, advising, and administrative staff throughout the University in order to assure some sense of uniformity across the academic units. Informal handling of cases on the part of faculty members, although it remains their prerogative, can lead to inconsistency and inequity. This applies in particular to students who face stiff penalties, including suspension and expulsion, for what could be lesser infractions than those handled in an informal manner.

Dismissal from Academic Programs

In the past two quarters, we received two complaints from graduate students who had been asked to leave their programs prior to their qualifying exams because they had not made adequate academic progress during their course work. One student voiced particular frustration with the faculty's decision not to renew his fellowship support for the coming year despite the fact that he had been receiving high marks, mostly A's, in his course work. The decision of the faculty had more to do with a stated lack of affinity and concerns over the student's ability to produce a quality dissertation. This case is very similar to another complaint our office received during the 2003–04 academic year, which was discussed in last year's report, from a student who had been repeatedly placed on academic probation by his faculty despite receiving satisfactory grades in his course work.

Discussions with faculty and administrators touched on a number of themes, including the topic of grade inflation and inconsistencies within and across divisions. Grades remain an important and effective means of communicating to students their progress in courses and in their academic programs on the graduate and undergraduate levels. In this particular case, the student did receive several letters from

the department chair highlighting what needed to be done prior to the eventual decision not to renew fellowship support. It was the faculty's decision that, regardless of the grades, feedback in these letters and in personal interactions with the student should have been enough to communicate progress being made or lack thereof. The inconsistency between written feedback, formal letters, informal discussions, and the grades the student actually received proved understandably confusing and misleading. It is not possible to overemphasize the need for clear and consistent communication of progress and articulation of expectations and goals in individual courses and academic programs as a whole, which may alleviate such problems. Although in both cases our office could do little to impact the decision of the faculty, this should force us to examine questions surrounding not only policies on probation and renewal of student aid but grading policies, particularly the meaning behind grades; if an A no longer means that a student's performance in a given course was exceptional or that a student is making more-than-adequate progress towards a degree, what value does it have as an indication of progress or performance?

Students in the Military

A student who had spent a significant portion of the last academic year on active duty in Iraq came to our office after being asked to leave a graduate program. For various reasons, the number of University of Chicago students who are members of the armed forces is lower than that of other institutions such as public universities. However, because of recent events, many students who are in the National Guard or reserve divisions have a higher-than-usual chance of being called to active duty. If this happens, it can result in a severe disruption of the student's academic progress. Although the University has instituted no explicit regulations on this matter, it has consistently made an effort to accommodate the needs of its student-recruits in accordance with applicable law and in keeping with its concern for the student's progress. We are worried, however, that student-recruits may not be fully aware of the University's policies or of what the students themselves may need to do to mitigate the impact that a call to duty may have on their academic career. Measures that we have suggested to the administration would help to identify student-recruits. These measures would then help make student-recruits more aware of those University policies that may benefit them (e.g., help them make the necessary preparations with their academic programs so they are not placed in the awkward position of attempting to continue their studies while on duty).

Administrative Policies

This past academic year, a student in Advanced Residence who was confronted with the illness of a close family member was unable to take a leave of absence to attend to the relative. The University responded very well to the unexpected financial constraints that the student faced relating to changes in the student's residence status. However, the issue of the conditions under

which leaves of absence may be granted remains a concern for us. University policies allow students in Advanced Residence to "apply for a leave of absence only if temporarily incapacitated by major illness or injury." This policy was instituted for the benefit of both students and the University; it discourages students from unduly extending their period of residence to the detriment of their research, and it helps the University maintain effective contact with its students during the period that it takes to complete a dissertation.

When crafting the policy, the University was concerned that too flexible a policy—one that allowed for leaves of absence in case of illness of any family member—would result in students taking too long to complete their program of study. We share this concern, but worry that the University may have erred too much on the side of caution. Surely a difference can be identified between family members in general and a spouse, domestic partner, or child of a student. The serious illness of a spouse or domestic partner may represent a serious financial constraint for a graduate student who is dependent on the partner's support throughout graduate work. Likewise, a student should not be expected to choose between cutting valuable time from research or caring for a seriously ill child. We encourage the University to take another look at the policy on leaves of absence for students in Advanced Residence with these concerns in mind.

Conclusion

I would like to thank every one of the students, faculty, and staff with whom I have worked these last two years in the Office of the Student Ombudsperson. In addition, I would like to add a special note of thanks to my graduate student colleagues and the faculty of my own department in particular, who have indulged me as I constantly switched hats between student, staff, and teaching assistant for several years. Hopefully the experience has made me a better student and a better teacher. I would like to thank my predecessor, Urmi Sengupta, from whom I learned much about what it means to be an Ombudsperson, and Victor Muñoz-Fraticelli, my successor, whose tireless devotion to the students and their concerns and detailed attention to the issues will make him a tremendous Ombudsperson and an asset to the community. I also especially thank Roberta Cohen, who for the past two years gave sound advice and provided a patient ear, and Sheila Yarbrough and Martina Munsters, who this past year spent countless hours working with us on any number of issues. Thanks also go to Steve Klass who, despite a busy schedule, always made time to offer support and listen to the friendly neighborhood Ombudsperson. Finally, I would also like to thank President Randel who encouraged Victor and me to use this office to benefit students and the University as a whole, to ask difficult questions, and to continue an ongoing dialogue between students, faculty, and staff on matters of student life at this University.

Phil Venticinque was the Student Ombudsperson for the 2004–05 academic year.

The 483rd Convocation

Address: "Some Truths about Lies"

By Susan Gal

December 9, 2005

Sincerest congratulations to all of you on the completion of your studies, as you receive your diplomas and degrees. The ceremonial recital of names on this happy occasion, the reading of prayers, speeches by the faculty and President, even my greeting to you are more than mere talk. They are among the actions that officially make each of you a graduate of the University of Chicago. Just like the words recited at christenings and in wedding vows, what we say today is highly consequential. The words do more than describe what is happening. When enunciated by those the institution assigns to this task, they are the ritual acts that create and officially recognize this momentous, hard-won, and irreversible change in your lives.

The transformative power of words is no surprise. Your education has transformed you through a tidal wave of words. For several years, each of you has been immersed in the tasks of reading texts, reading texts about texts, discussing images, writing up experiments, listening to lectures, and holding discussions. Indeed, education is well described as a multilayered tradition that continues centuries-old discussions, thereby inevitably changing them. It is a precious continuity that contributes our own generation's perspectives and discoveries to current debates about earlier debates. Amidst this deluge of commentary and metacommentary, everyone has yearnings for a life raft: Whom should we believe? Which statements are authoritative? Scholarship itself is organized around this quest.

Usually, we respond to the uncertainties in science and philosophy with meditations on the search for truth. Instead I want to talk about *lies*. I will not belabor the old academic chestnut that truth is relative. Nor am I interested in the white lies we take to be social necessities; nor in merciful lies told to avoid inflicting harm. Instead, my topic today is the lying that we understand to be consequential, hurtful, reprehensible. The matter is made urgent by the epidemic of lies in our public life. Trust in government is at a perilously low level; investigative reports reveal prevarications that have contributed to disastrous military decisions. It is too easy to respond by impugning the ethics of particular individuals or by dismissing all of politics as a dirty business of mere propaganda. The morality of talk is indeed at issue. We recognize the force of such ethical judgments and their source in our own culturally specific ideas about the nature of language. Yet I am convinced we need a more sophisticated analytical approach than the simple condemnation of lies. For lying is part of the sociocultural process we call human communication. The attempt to avoid lies altogether is futile. Rather, it is by understanding how lies work that we act as responsible citizens, learn to create authority for our own knowledge as experts and leaders, and challenge the authorities we think are wrong.

About a decade ago, when I came to teach at the University of Chicago, a student in my Core course came to discuss material she had read for class. Was it true, she asked, that lies are statements that do not correspond to the way the world is and are told to deceive? I was in a rush; I could have

answered with a yes or no. But the student was smart and serious; the answer mattered to me, too. So, I sat down, prepared for a longer talk, and said: "Well, it is actually a lot more complicated than that . . ." She started to laugh, saying: "That is just what the professors here always say when you ask a question . . ." I knew then that I had come to the right place. So had she, and so did you. Now as graduates you are better equipped to recognize the complexity of social life, not least through the exploration of communicative practices.

Consider three examples: *First*, the national scene, where every day brings indictments for perjury among our highest officials, and more evidence of lies told by the government to motivate the current war and to justify the flouting of international agreements about the treatment of prisoners. *Second*, the academy, where plagiarism is a form of lying about authorship. Students participate in this practice when they use the Internet to download or cobble together research reports from unverified sources. *Third*, ordinary rumor, often of dubious veracity. In any small group, we are dependent for our credibility and good name on the opinions and evaluations of others. These are sometimes expressed in whispered conversations, or more formally in academic grades and in confidential letters of recommendation. In matters of romance, friendship, and judgments of professional competence, circulating reports determine our reputations and thereby our futures.

My student had understood well the commonsense cultural definition of lying: its core is the relationship between a speaker's words and the condition of the world. If there is a correspondence between world and word, then we have truth; if not, and the speaker knows it, then a lie. This definition is venerable; it is as old as Aristotle. Yet it narrows our field of vision. It fools us into considering only two aspects of utterances—the speaker's intent and the statement's representation of the world. I suggest we take a broader, sociocultural view and analyze lying, its results and repercussions, as aspects of communication.

Rumor is a good place to start. Suppose my friend Sharon is seen with a new man, which I report to her boyfriend, John. Obviously, I influence Sharon's reputation and influence John's opinion of Sharon. Less obvious is the fact that I also create and define *myself* as someone who would tell such a tale, thereby transforming my own relation to John. I can start a friendship with John through the intimacy created by such a revelation; or destroy our friendship and my own reputation in his eyes. Sophocles warned against blaming the messenger who brings bad news, but in sociological terms we do well to remember that the relation of the gossip or news source to the recipient of gossip is as important as the gossip's relation to the target, and often more important than the news itself. There is a three-way linkage between Sharon, John, and me—a circle with a social effect that reverberates as the news circulates.

Common sense—which in this case agrees with Aristotle—would have us pay special attention to the content of the message as it represents the world: was

Sharon really with a new man? What does "with" mean in this story? Alas, we can only know through some further description, and we cannot describe any scene at all without taking a stance towards it, and thereby evaluating the world we describe. Language provides no neutral corners in which to hide. Charged with making distorted drawings, Vincent van Gogh famously remarked: ". . . I want to . . . make these incorrectnesses of reality something that may be untrue but is at the same time more true than literal truth." He was developing a style through which to picture the world. Even if we are not artists, our news must be delivered in one style or another. Was Sharon chatting with that new man, or gabbing, giggling, debating, shooting the breeze, having a discussion, flirting, haranguing, arguing, lolling about? Or several of these at once? With their often unconscious choice of words, speakers evaluate the events they recount; they thereby shape and construct the world they describe.

Evaluations can be much more subtle than word choice: Suppose I throw back my hair and bat my eyes, providing what can be taken as an imitation of Sharon saying hello to the man. Did I *say* she was flirting? Within our commonsense view of language, not exactly. To ask whether or not Sharon really threw back her head is to miss the more important point that I can make John suspicious and perhaps jealous without taking direct responsibility. Even more powerfully, one could tell John: "I heard Sharon was with a new man." Attributing a comment to someone else in this way is a very common conversational device. As the literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin explained: "Our mouths are filled with the words of others." When phrased as an anonymous quote, the news about Sharon becomes even more impermeable to questions of truth. It gains the authority of an invisible social world. It seems to be objective, an impersonal voice from everywhere and nowhere.

Given the possibility of such quotations, who exactly is a speaker? The commonsense view assumes a unified personality who is either sincere or has deceitful intentions. Yet notice that in a mere five minutes I have already spoken in the voice of van Gogh and Aristotle, the voice of commonsense, of a former student, of a fictional creature called Sharon, and on behalf of the entire University of Chicago faculty. When I ventriloquated these figures, or myself at an earlier age, I could do so seriously, or with parody and contempt. In each case, the speaker can be distant from the quoted words or take credit for their cleverness.

Such a multiplicity of voices emanating from a single biographical individual is not unusual. We can distinguish within a single speaker the role of animator who merely says or writes the words, but does not compose them; the role of composer who makes up the words, but is not the one who says them; and the principal who is committed to what the words say, but neither says them nor composes the text. These roles can be played by one person or different people; they carry different kinds and levels of social responsibility. We hardly notice these roles in everyday talk, but their conflation has serious consequences and their

differences are clear in politics: The ghostwriter of speeches is responsible for the words, but not for the policies expressed in the speech nor for the charisma in delivery that the candidate brings to the campaign. In exceptional cases, the roles are unified: We are impressed that Abraham Lincoln actually wrote the words of the Gettysburg Address, and smile knowingly to discover that Franklin Roosevelt, a great speaker, recopied his speeches in his own hand so as to convince posterity that he had written them himself.

If the ordinary speaker is not unitary, the scientific or scholarly author is even less so. In the academic world, common sense again betrays us. We honor the image of heroic, individual artists and thinkers as owners of their own ideas, produced in magic moments of inspiration. Copyright and patent law support this view. But this image of the author is a relatively new contribution to European thought made by Romantic poets and philosophers. Before the eighteenth century, it was more booksellers than writers who determined authorship; an excerpt from a published book could count as a new creation. It was legal to use the names of famous writers to sell texts they had no part in writing. The relation to creativity was also different: Isaac Newton argued that in writing about optics he was "merely recovering what God had given to mankind," and thus he could rightly claim that he was "not its author." Newton was not known for his personal modesty. Rather, in his time, such apparent self-deprecation was one way to gain the appearance of disinterested authority for discoveries about nature.

Today, the unity of individual authorship is again unraveling. Single articles in biomedicine and high-energy physics often rely on collaborations involving hundreds of people, each bringing different expertise to the project. Unlike Newton, modern scholars claim credit for innovation. But in contrast to the expectations of Romantic literati, the novelty of current research cannot be *too* new. Creativity is recognized when the innovations are seen as part of a community of discourse that includes intellectual ancestors, allies, and competitors. This community creates creativity by evaluating it; new formulations emerge not from individual speakers but from conversations *between them*. Scholars must use the terms defined by others, even if only to refute and redefine them. Without such a community, and the rules of discourse upon which it depends, people cannot make what is later recognized as new knowledge. In scholarship as in ordinary talk, our mouths are filled with the words of others.

If individual authorship is only a legal fiction, why should we care when students copy term papers or use unverified Internet sources? We care because their actions subvert the social organization that creates, assesses, and corrects knowledge. As William James said: "Truth happens to an idea." This momentous transmutation from idea to truth and hence knowledge happens through a set of organizational practices that are collaborative, cooperative, and also combative. It is the social process of scholarly apprenticeship, debate, review, publication, recognition, citation, and further debate. It happens in seminars,

libraries, and laboratories, through books and other publications where scholars—in the course of building careers—are made responsible for the web of ideas they propose and for their methods of providing evidence. By indiscriminately relying on Internet sources, students mistake mere information for knowledge. This threatens to destroy knowledge by undermining its peculiar, fragile, yet powerful organizational form. The student is duped, and we are all impoverished.

Finally, how does this view of lying help us understand political discourse? When a high official tells us we are in immediate danger from foreign weapons of mass destruction and no such weapons exist, the discrepancy between the world and the word is surely a lie. And it is just as surely a grave moral offense. But if we stop our analysis with this ethical judgment, then common sense once again betrays us, blinding us to the sociocultural work that lying accomplishes. Accusations of lying make for easy political fireworks in American public life. Truth is like apple pie and mother. All political positions decry individuals who lie; all sides purport to find liars among their enemies; every political group promises to eliminate their own “bad apples.” By narrowing our perspective, this “discourse of truth” works as canny stagecraft. It invites us to imagine politics as a personalistic search for individuals who seem to be truthful, because they can present moral images of themselves. It invites us to see politics as a battle to get rid of those who are immoral. As in a magic show, while we are busy lamenting the sins of liars, current political decisions that are made possible or plausible by the lie often escape our attention. Political statements, like cases of gossip, should be evaluated not only for truth value but just

as much for the alliances that they set up among disparate social actors, and for the credit and blame they implicitly distribute. Lies, like all utterances, are simultaneously descriptions of the world, while also—and less obviously—consequential acts that realign the players within the world they describe.

A cultural perspective on language makes us more knowledgeable consumers of mass media, more cynical yet more realistic analysts of spin. It shows how ordinary aspects of human communication are used for political purposes, making more acceptable the kinds of political decisions with which we disagree. Beware the choices of words that create a persuasive yet deceptive social reality. Instead of a single, indicted liar, we should look for circles of relations in which reputations are created between those who report the rumor and those who are willing to listen and pass it on. Messengers are not free of motives: One should always ask why we are hearing one news story now and not another. Why the story is presented in the particular form in which it now appears. Who is implicitly blamed or exonerated by what appear to be self-evident facts. We should ask why news sources and *their* sources want us to believe this particular fact at this particular time—regardless of its veracity.

The multiplicity of speaking roles ensures that the quoting of others can create authority, or deflect responsibility from the speaker. Rather than single culprits who have lied, we can see a process of ventriloquation that strategically points to some as culprits while protecting others. The interactional process—whether in broadcast form or in face-to-face communication—mediates between speakers and listeners, who are never in immediate contact, contrary to what our common-

sense ideas about language would suggest. Instead, scholars and politicians are involved in large-scale social processes that are not under singular control. In politics, as in academia, our attention should not be focused narrowly on truth vs. falsehood, but on that delicate political process of image-making and decision-making that can be subverted to underwrite actions we deplore, or can be made to serve the values of justice and fairness in which we believe.

Your education here has prepared you for the assessment of texts and talk; it has given you the chance to study the subtle uses of language that create or undermine authority—whether your genre is philosophical and mathematical argument, aesthetic valuation, social scientific theorizing, or inference from laboratory results. In all of these, argument, persuasion, and belief are constructed through intertextual echoes. The quotation and transposition of others’ speech are always in play when people create knowledge. The political process is no less dependent on these everyday devices of language. As you become responsible citizens, knowledgeable experts, and leaders in the world, taking a sophisticated stance towards communication is an indispensable task. It is not a simple nor a commonsensical recipe for moving through life. But then, as graduates of the University of Chicago, you are not surprised to find that the really important matters turn out to be *much more complicated*. Congratulations to you all.

Susan Gal is the Mae and Sidney G. Metzl Distinguished Service Professor in the Departments of Anthropology and Linguistics, and the College.

Summary

The 483rd convocation was held on Friday, December 9, 2005, in Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. Don Michael Randel, President of the University, presided.

A total of 381 degrees were awarded: 33 Bachelor of Arts in the College, 2 Bachelor of Science in the College and the Division of the Physical Sciences, 7 Master of Science in the Division of the Biological Sciences and the Pritzker School of Medicine, 19 Master of Arts in the Division of the Humanities, 30 Master of Science in the Division of the Physical Sciences, 57 Master of Arts in the Division of the Social Sciences, 127 Master of Business Administration in the Graduate School of Business, 3 Master of Arts in the Divinity School, 2 Master of Liberal Arts in the William B. and Catherine V. Graham School of General Studies, 5 Master of Public Policy in the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, 6 Master of Arts in the School of Social Service Administration, 12 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Biological Sciences and the Pritzker School of Medicine, 14 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Humanities, 24 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Physical Sciences, 29 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Social Sciences, 4 Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Business, 5 Doctor of Philosophy in the Divinity School, 2 Doctor of Law in the Law School.

Susan Gal, the Mae and Sidney G. Metzl Distinguished Service Professor in the Departments of Anthropology and Linguistics, and the College, delivered the convocation address, “Some Truths about Lies.”

The 484th Convocation

Address: "World Opportunities"

By Susan E. Mayer

March 17, 2006

Congratulations to those of you graduating from the University of Chicago. And to your family and friends who supported you.

It is the custom of this University to select a faculty member to deliver the convocation address. I do not know the origin of this tradition, but if it is true as the cartoonist Garry Trudeau has said that "commencement speeches were invented largely in the belief that outgoing college students should never be released into the world until they have been properly sedated," then through this tradition the University of Chicago has in typical fashion outdone its peer institutions.

Nonetheless, it is an honor to address you today. Your accomplishment that we are celebrating here is profound. By earning a degree from the University of Chicago, you have joined the ranks of the world's educational elite.

About a fifth of the four billion or so adults in the world have had no formal schooling at all. Only about 6 percent have the equivalent of four years of college. Many fewer receive any postgraduate training, and fewer still have graduated from a university with as much to offer as the University of Chicago.

Thus the degree that you have earned today puts you in something like the top 1 percent of the world's educational distribution. Even in the United States, which is among the most highly educated nations, you are a member of the educational elite.

Being part of the educational elite puts you in a very good position to be in the financial elite, as well. In the United States for each additional year of schooling, earnings increase by, on average, 8 to 10 percent. Over a lifetime, as you might imagine, this is a considerable amount of money.

And there is more. Because you are in the educational elite and likely to join the financial elite, you will also be among the political elite. In democracies, the well educated and wealthy are more likely than others to vote and to participate in other forms of political expression.

And perhaps most importantly, research also shows that by virtue of your education and income advantage you are likely to be healthier and happier than those who get less schooling and have less income.

You and your family can celebrate today feeling confident that the cost of your schooling will come back to you in higher wages and in greater well-being over your lifetime. So you have much to celebrate.

But celebrations of important milestones inevitably lead to the question of what comes next and, in particular, what you will do with the great advantage that you now possess.

It is customary in a convocation address to urge you to aspire to virtue, and to remind you that because of your advantage, you have a special responsibility to fight against all the plagues of our world such as inequality, injustice, and ignorance.

And of course this is true, and you already knew it.

You should use your advantage to work for good not evil; and, because everyone everywhere agrees that equality, justice, and knowledge are good, you should work on their behalf.

But if everyone agrees about this, an important question arises: why do we still witness everywhere injustice, inequality, and ignorance?

To answer that question, let me talk specifically about one of these problems, namely inequality and, more specifically, economic inequality.

Among rich nations, the United States is exceptionally economically unequal. The richest 5 percent of Americans have over 50 percent of all the income in the nation; the bottom 20 percent has less than 4 percent of the nation's income. If we counted wealth along with income, the difference would be even greater.

Inequality is nearly universally denounced. I actually searched for a pithy quote in favor of inequality. But I could find none. I did, however, find one that is close.

John D. Rockefeller, the founder of the University of Chicago and the man for whom this chapel is named, argued, "When a man has accumulated a sum of money within the law, that is to say, in the legally correct way, the people no longer have any right to share in the earnings resulting from the accumulation." And Mr. Rockefeller was prodigious in his ability to accumulate money and, fortunately, in his generosity in giving it away.

Nonetheless, his philanthropy was to a large extent made possible by the even greater level of income inequality that existed in the United States at the turn of the last century. The accumulation of great fortunes that results from inequality also makes possible the endowed professorships and student fellowships from which many of us have benefited. And, let me remind you that I have just congratulated you on your educational and probable economic success or, to put it another way, on your being positioned to be the great beneficiary of economic inequality.

But enough with irony. If inequality is universally denounced, its denouncement is also ancient. Plutarch, a priest of the Delphic oracle, observed, "An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all republics." And Plato before him observed in his *Republic*, "Any city, however small, is in fact divided into two, one the city of the poor, the other of the rich; these are at war with one another."

Economic inequality is more or less persistently and universally denounced. But if inequality is really so bad, don't you think it is curious that nearly every society on earth is characterized by inequality of economic resources?

On the other hand, while almost all societies are characterized by income inequality, they also almost all redistribute resources from those with much to those with less. Does this not suggest that redistribution is good? And if a little is good, is not a lot better?

Well maybe. Among more or less contemporary societies the most egalitarian are hunter-gatherer groups found currently or recently in Africa, South America, and other parts of the world. What anthropologists have learned about these societies gives us insight into what it takes to maintain equality of economic resources.

To put it briefly, it takes highly developed rules that govern sharing and extreme sanctions for violating those rules. It also requires that ostentation and bragging of all sorts be forbidden and punished. Finally, it requires social conventions that obscure and denigrate any individual success.

Bragging is so threatening to the hunter-gatherer group that individuals considered boastful are ostracized from the band, or even worse. Social conventions assure that all meat caught by hunters is shared with everyone, and that virtually all possessions of the group are circulated among all the members.

For example, in one hunter-gatherer group men play a particular game of chance, betting tools, beads, and nearly everything else. Because winning is purely a matter of luck, nearly all possessions of the band are circulated among members over time. The concept of ownership is thereby diminished.

The complex rules and strong sanctions that it takes to maintain equality suggest that human nature does not naturally lead to equality. It also suggests that redistribution must provide a benefit to the group even when it imposes large costs on individuals. Otherwise individuals would naturally share, which they do not.

One group benefit of sharing is that it provides a kind of social insurance. When resources like food come irregularly to a family, sharing across many families can smooth consumption over the group. On the day that your family is not successful in hunting, another successful family will share with you. This is the same principle on which modern social insurance policies work.

Sharing also prevents conflict. When the hunter consumes his meat the first few bites will be very tasty. But after several bites he will no longer be hungry. Band members who have no meat that day will still be hungry, so they will want the meat a lot—perhaps enough to fight for it. The hunter shares meat to avoid jealousy and conflict. A similar principle leads governments even in poor countries to help their most impoverished obtain food and shelter.

But clearly extreme egalitarianism comes at a high cost. Otherwise these groups would not be rapidly disappearing.

The benefit of inequality is that it promotes two things necessary for the economic resources of a society to grow, namely accumulation and efficiency. Hunter-gatherers have little need for efficiency. Indeed low work effort is required to prevent depleting the natural resources that they depend on for food and other necessities in their limited foraging and hunting areas.

When a social goal is to expand resources, efficiency and hard work become important. One of the most common ways to promote these is to reward accomplishment and punish shirking. This leads to competition and inequality.

Because people work more when work is rewarded, inequality is related to high work effort and low levels of leisure.

To make rewards for productivity meaningful, a society must value accumulation. This promotes ostentation. Mark Twain was right when he said, "The offspring

of riches: Pride, vanity, ostentation, arrogance, tyranny."

A society that wishes to increase resources must also assure that its members must work to maintain their material well-being, so it will provide little social insurance and few public goods.

The United States is relatively unequal because as a society we value expanding resources to maximize goods and services. Our social institutions encourage competition, punish shirking, and minimize public goods and social transfers.

These same social institutions foster economic growth, high work effort, material surplus, a high living standard, and inequality. They make the poor better off materially, but not relatively.

From this we see that economic inequality does not persist because of the failure of political will, oppression by the rich, or the depravity of human nature.

It is not a problem to be solved by the virtuous, but rather a characteristic of society to be managed. The political process for managing it should not depend on claims to the moral superiority of equality, but rather on consensus building regarding the trade-offs we are willing to make, which in turn leads to the question of what kind of world we want to live in.

By now you have perhaps lost track of what this discourse on inequality has to do with you. To me, it has everything to do with the value of your University of Chicago education.

As Dean of the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, I have had the opportunity to talk to people all around the world about the University of Chicago.

I have learned that what people value most in the University's graduates is not your ability to answer questions better than others, but your ability to ask the right question in a way that yields a new perspective.

They value University of Chicago graduates not because you are well-connected, well-polished, and well-heeled, but because you are well-educated.

Not because your ideas are fashionable, but because you challenge fashionable ideas.

And finally not because you are more virtuous, but because you are not hoodwinked into thinking that virtue can be found in platitudes and false dichotomies, such as that between equality and inequality.

As you leave here today, you *do* carry with you a disproportionate share of the burden for making the world a better place. Don't despair that this is a daunting task. No one is better prepared for this challenge than you.

Susan E. Mayer is the Dean of and Professor in the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies.

Summary

The 484th convocation was held on Friday, March 17, 2006, in Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. Don Michael Randel, President of the University, presided.

A total of 526 degrees were awarded: 38 Bachelor of Arts in the College, 1 Bachelor of Science in the College and the Division of the Physical Sciences, 3 Master of Science in

the Division of the Biological Sciences and the Pritzker School of Medicine, 30 Master of Arts in the Division of the Humanities, 17 Master of Science in the Division of the Physical Sciences, 32 Master of Arts in the Division of the Social Sciences, 346 Master of Business Administration in the Graduate School of Business, 2 International Master of Business Administration in the Graduate School of Business, 1 Master of Arts in the Divinity School, 1 Master of Divinity in the Divinity School, 3 Master of Liberal Arts in the William B. and Catherine V. Graham School of General Studies, 3 Master of Arts in the School of Social Service Administration, 2 Master of Public Policy in the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, 3 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Biological Sciences and the Pritzker School of Medicine, 14 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Humanities, 12 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Physical Sciences, 6 Doctor of Philosophy in the Division of the Social Sciences, 4 Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Business, 3 Doctor of Philosophy in the Divinity School, 1 Doctor of Philosophy in the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, and 4 Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Social Service Administration.

Susan E. Mayer, Dean of and Professor in the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, delivered the convocation address, "World Opportunities."

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