Bowby: Perspective on parental stories in literature

Princeton University professor Rachel Bowby is intent on illuminating stories about parental identity — a focus she says has been neglected in the study of literature. In her book “A Child of One’s Own: Parental Stories,” Bowby unearths parental passions in major 19th-century novels and even in ancient Greek texts. Building from such literary examples, she draws connections to and contrasts with today’s real-life stories of parenthood, a topic rich with tales of cultural change. “A Child of One’s Own” was published earlier this year by Oxford University Press.

Bowby, who joined Princeton as a professor of comparative literature in September, has written on a wide range of cultural topics from shopping to commuting. She is bringing her interests in everyday life — and the forms of writing that represent it — into the classroom. This semester, she is teaching an undergraduate course on “The Diary” and a graduate seminar on novelists.

A native of England, Bowby earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Oxford and her Ph.D. in comparative literature at Yale University. She has taught at a number of universities in England, including the University of Sussex and most recently University College London. She has been a visiting professor at Cornell University, Rutgers University, Otago University in New Zealand and Paris 3 (the Sorbonne Nouvelle). She is a fellow of the British Academy.

Bowby has translated several works by contemporary French philosophers, including Jacques Derrida. Her books include “Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing and Zola” (1985); “Still Crazy After All These Years: Women, Writing and Psycho-analysis” (1992); “Shopping With Freud” (1993); “Feminist Destinations and Further Essays on Virginia Woolf” (1997); “Carried Away: The Invention of Modern Shopping” (2000); and “Freudian Mythologies: Greek Tragedy and Modern Identities” (2007).

Below, she details the genesis of “A Child of One’s Own.”

In “A Child of One’s Own,” you observe that parental stories in literature have been neglected — you largely focus on 19th-century novels such as Charles Dickens’ “Great Expectations” and Jane Austen’s “Mansfield Park.” Why did you decide to tackle this subject?

The underlying starting point was that the basic story of parenthood has been changing as never before in recent decades. Alongside the age-old standard of the married couple, parents have gone forth and multiplied into all sorts of new varieties. Gay parents, stepparents, post-menopausal mothers, single parents by choice — these are a few of the standout examples. And there are also those we might call non-parental parents, or proto-parents: egg and sperm donors, or surrogate mothers. This proliferation of possible parents or quasi-parents has generated many new parental stories (and sometimes extreme headlines — “Woman of 70 has triplets,” etc.).

Continued on page 8

Freshmen explore frontiers of science, technology and policy in Shapiro seminar

Princeton University freshmen are spending their first semester on campus exploring the frontiers of science and technology through the lens of public policy.

Their guide through “Science, Technology and Public Policy” is Harold T. Shapiro, president of the University emeritus and a professor of economics and public affairs. Recognized for his efforts to promote public understanding of scientific issues, in 2012 Shapiro received the Public Welfare Medal from the National Academy of Sciences for his ability to “distill, debate and resolve the complex aspects of controversial scientific issues.”

In the seminar, Shapiro brings important issues of the day to the table: human cloning, climate change, particle physics, and more.

The goal isn’t scientific expertise but an understanding of how these issues create broader questions for society. “Hopefully, the class teaches students that these developments along the scientific frontier not only raise science problems, but also raise social issues that need to be resolved, sometimes by federal policy, sometimes by state policies, sometimes by individual decisions,” Shapiro said.

Continued on page 8
University offers meningitis B vaccine to at-risk groups

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has officially recommended that all Princeton undergraduate students, and also graduate students living in undergraduate dormitories, the Graduate College and the student visitor, all of which are considered part of the University community, receive the MenB vaccine because young adults and people with certain medical conditions are at increased risk of meningococcal disease, identified meningitis, especially those who live in close quarters, such as dormitories.

Since March 2013 there have been eight cases of meningococcal disease contracted by Princeton University students and a student visitor, all of which were caused by meningococcal bacteria known as serogroup B, including the latest case reported on Nov. 21.

The first dose of the vaccine is available Dec. 9-12, noon to 8 p.m. at Frist Campus Center, Level B, Multiurpose Room.

The second dose will be made available in February. Two doses of the vaccine are needed for maximum protection. Students leaving for or returning from study abroad will be contacted to discuss an alternate schedule to allow them to receive both doses of the vaccine.

Emails with this information were sent to students, faculty, staff and parents of current undergraduate students.

The CDC recommends that all members of the University community who are not already vaccinated (including sickle cell disease) or complex pathway disorder (a specific type of inherited risk factor) be considered for vaccination. Those who have these conditions would be required to present documentation or a physician's note to University Health Services before receiving the vaccine.

The University is covering the cost of the vaccine.

The University's meningitis information website, http://web.princeton.edu/sites/emergency/ meningitis.html, has frequently asked questions about the vaccine clinics, including specific questions for students, faculty, staff and community members.

The CDC meningitis website, www.cdc.gov/ meningooccoccal/vaccine- serogroupB.html, has frequently asked questions about the meningitis B vaccine and bacterial meningitis. The CDC also has the email address meningvaccine@cdc.gov dedicated to answering questions about the vaccine.

The vaccine that is being recommended is licensed in Europe and Australia, but not the United States. The CDC and the Food and Drug Administration have allowed the use of this vaccine for this particular situation at Princeton. Students who already received a meningococcal vaccine are not currently protected against serogroup B. The vaccine recommended by the CDC will protect against the specific strain involved in the outbreak at Princeton.

Meningitis B vaccine is effective in preventing meningitis B, the second most common cause of meningococcal disease, and it is estimated that a meningitis B vaccine could prevent 60-90% of meningitis B cases accounted for by the disease's different types. The vaccine is widely used in the United States and is recommended for all college students, but is not currently part of the childhood immunization schedule in the U.S. The vaccine is also available for travelers to Africa and could be acquired at a travel clinic or a pharmacy.

The vaccine is expected to be available in February. Two doses of the vaccine are needed for maximum protection.

The vaccine is offered for free to students, faculty, staff and community members.

Students, including those who received the vaccine, and other members of the University community should continue to pay increased attention to personal hygiene practices and remember these important points about meningitis:

• Any student with a high fever should go to University Health Services, call 609-258-2780 or call 911.

• Students should go to University Health Services if they have any meningitis symptoms even if they have not been in contact with someone who is sick.

• You cannot prevent the spread of disease by increasing hygienic practices, and not sharing drinking glasses, eating utensils, smoking materials and other items.

The University will continue to provide updates about meningitis B vaccine and precautions to help limit the spread of bacterial meningitis.
Holiday outreach initiatives planned

Members of the University community will have the opportunity to share the holiday spirit through a series of community service initiatives and special events planned for December and January.

Organizers of a “Holiday Hoops” food drive will offer free admission to those who bring two nonperishable food items to the Princeton women’s basketball game versus Delaware on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 2 p.m., at Jadwin Gym. All donations support the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank.

Through Wednesday, Dec. 19, donations of nonperishable food items and personal hygiene products for the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank will be collected at several campus sites:

- New South A Level; C232 Engineering Quadrangle; Jadwin Gym; Helm Building; MacMillan Building; Robertson Hall; West College; Lewis Thomas Lab; 9 Nassau Hall; 200 Elm Drive; 185 Nassau St.; 22 Chambers St.; Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory; 701 Carnegie Hall; Lewis Library; two locations at 117 Broadmead (University Now Nursery School and Office of Information Technology); and the 100 level of Frist. The follow-
ing items are especially needed: canned protein (tuna, sardines, salmon and chicken); canned fruit (in light syrup or juice); canned vegetables; rice; pasta; tomato sauce; Parmalat or other shelf-stable milk; cereals, oatmeal and pancake mix (nonsugar); peanut butter; jelly; dish and laundry detergent; soap and body wash; deodorant; shampoo; conditioner; and feminine products.

University community members also may support the Send Hunger Packing Program, which provides school-aged children in need with nutritionally sound, easy-to-open meals to get them through the weekend. Items needed include shelf-stable 2 percent reduced-fat milk in an eight-ounce, single-serving size; cereal (individual bowls or boxes); ready-to-eat tuna with or without crackers; microwaveable entrees or bowls; peanut butter in jars or individual cups; grape jelly in plastic containers; yogurt smoothie drinks in shelf-stable brick packs; granola bars; and shelf-stable pudding cups.

Additionally, campus and local nonprofit groups are participating in initiatives to collect donations including books, games, gift certificates, food, personal care items, toys, winter jackets and sleepwear. Participating organizations are Crisis Ministry of Princeton and Trenton, Health Care Ministry of Princeton, HomeFront, One Simple Wish, Princeton Nursery School, Princeton Young Achievers, SAVE, the YWCA Princeton, St. Nicholas Project and Womanspace. For more information about these organizations and donations needed, visit the Community and Regional Affairs website at www.princeton.edu/community or contact Erin Metro at 609-258-5144 or emetro@princeton.edu.

Community members can also start saving men’s and women’s business attire for the annual gently used clothing drive planned for January. Details will be announced at a later date.

Earlier this fall, the University organized a campaign enabling campus community members to send special greetings to soldiers, which were included in care packages that were sent to soldiers overseas by the nonprofit organization Operation Gratitude. Student a cappella groups also performed at a holiday “A Cappella Jam and Toy Drive” on the Palmer Square Green, for toys to be donated to the YWCA Princeton St. Nicholas Project. The outreach initiatives are sponsored by the Office of Community and Regional Affairs, the Graduate School, the Department of Athletics, the Facilities Organization, Conference and Event Services, the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students, and Hoagie Haven.

More news on the Web

Visit the News at Princeton webpage at www.princeton.edu/main/news for recent stories, such as:

- Princeton University will present its top honors for alumni to Sonia Sotomayor, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and Hunter R. Rawlings III, president of the Association of American Universities and a former president of two universities. They will receive the awards and deliver addresses on campus during Alumni Day activities on Saturday, Feb. 22.

- Princeton University has received a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to lead an interdisciplinary project on urbanism in the Americas. The Princeton Mellon Architecture, Urbanism and Humanities Initiative will receive $1.98 million distributed over four years, and the project’s focus is “Cities of the Americas: Architecture, Society, Policy and Culture.”

- Princeton University senior Adam Mastroarmini and Class of 2013 graduate Timothy McGinnis have been awarded Rhodes Scholarships for graduate study at the University of Oxford. Princeton University senior Dean Li has been named a 2014 Marshall Scholar.

- Cristina Domnisoru, Sonika Johri, James Pickett and Emily Vasilikauskas have been named co-winners of the Porter Ogden Jacobus Fellowship, Princeton University’s top honor for graduate students. The fellowships support the final year of study at Princeton and are awarded to students whose work has exhibited the highest scholarly excellence.

- Narrow stripes of dirt and rock beneath massive Antarctic glaciers create friction zones that slow the flow of ice toward the sea, researchers at Princeton University and the British Antarctic Survey have found. Understanding how these high-friction regions form and survive could help researchers understand how the flow of these glaciers responds to a warming climate.

- Princeton University-led researchers report that the total deforestation of the Amazon could mean 20 percent less rain across the coastal Northwest and a 50 percent reduction in the Sierra Nevada snowpack, resulting in water and food shortages, and a greater risk of forest fires. The research highlights how the destruction of the Amazon rainforest could affect climate elsewhere.

- Advances in computer storage have created collections of data so huge that researchers often have trouble uncovering critical patterns in connections among individual items, making it difficult for them to realize fully the power of computing as a research tool. Now, computer scientists at Princeton University have developed a method that offers a solution to this data overload.

- Princeton University-led research suggests that even if carbon-dioxide emissions came to a sudden halt, the carbon dioxide already in Earth’s atmosphere could continue to warm our planet for centuries. Thus, it might take much less carbon than previously thought to reach the global temperatures that scientists deem unsafe.
Williams named Princeton’s executive vice president

EILEEN ADEE

Treby Williams, who has helped lead efforts at Princeton University to enhance campus life, modernize operations, strengthen safety planning and coordination, and augment campus services, has been named Princeton’s executive vice president, effective Nov. 18.

Williams has worked in the Office of the Executive Vice President since 2007. In June she was appointed acting executive vice president following the departure of former Executive Vice President Mark Burstein to become president of Lawrence University.

Following a search process to permanently fill the executive vice president position, the Princeton University board of trustees recommended by President Christopher L. Eisgruber and was approved by the board of trustees at their Nov. 16 meeting.

“I am thrilled that Treby Williams has been appointed to serve as our executive vice president,” said Eisgruber, to whom Williams will report. “People throughout our campus admire Treby’s intelligence, character and commitment to this University. During her time as acting executive vice president, she has won plaudits for her managerial skill, handled stressful circumstances with aplomb and contributed adeptly to discussions of strategic issues.”

Eisgruber added: “Treby distinguished herself in a search that produced an unusually strong field of candidates. She will be an exceptional leader for this University’s administrative units, and Provost David Lee and I could not find a better partner as we approach the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.”

As executive vice president, Williams will oversee the areas of audit and compliance, campus life, facilities, human resources, safety and administrative planning, and university services. Among many duties, she will begin planning for the University’s next long-term campus plan and capital construction program, as well as lead University committees focused on environmental safety, risk management, compliance, and increasing efficiencies across administrative and academic departments.

“I am honored to help advance Princeton’s mission in my role as executive vice president, and I look forward to partnering with President Eisgruber, Provost Lee and colleagues across campus on forthcoming University priorities,” said Williams, a Class of 1984 Princeton graduate. “The dual appointments that the executive vice president oversees have strong leadership and with those teams is a privilege.”

Williams previously served in the Office of the Executive Vice President as director of planning and administration, and as assistant vice president for safety and administrative planning. During her years in the office, Williams has worked on a number of University-wide initiatives, including:

• Managing the development of the Career Management Center at the Career Management Center.

• Helping to realign Facilities and University Services to strengthen the University’s ability to manage its facilities and provide critical services to students, faculty and staff;

• Strengthening the University’s audit and compliance and risk management efforts;

• Overseeing response and prevention efforts for major health and environmental safety events on campus, including the University’s response to the H1N1 virus in fall 2009 and its response to the meningitis outbreak this year;

• Coordinating the drafting of the Princeton Sustainability Plan and helping to create the High Meadows annual grant process for academic and student sustainability initiatives; and

• Co-leading the development of the course book discount program for students at Labyrinth Books.

Before joining the Office of the Executive Vice President, Williams was director of Princeton’s Office of Development Priorities for two years. Previously, Williams was an assistant U.S. attorney in the southern district of New York and the district of New Jersey from 1992 to 2004. She also worked for three years for Coeurter Brothers in London and New York.

Heather Williams has agreed to serve as Princeton’s executive vice president, following the departure of former Executive Vice President Mark Burstein to become president of Lawrence University, effective Dec. 1. The new position is intended to help broaden career planning, and coordination, and augment campus services, as lead University committees focused on environmental safety, risk management, and university services. Among many duties, she will begin planning for the University’s next long-term campus plan and capital construction program, as well as lead University committees focused on environmental safety, risk management, compliance, and increasing efficiencies across administrative and academic departments.

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Graduate alumni celebrate Princeton ties at ‘Many Minds, Many Stripes’ event

Representing a wide range of intellectual, geographic and demographic affiliations, Princeton University’s graduate alumni gathered on campus for the “Many Minds, Many Stripes” conference Oct. 17-19. It was the first University-sponsored gathering of its kind for all graduate alumni, timed to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Graduate College.

About 950 alumni and guests attended presentations by alumni, faculty, staff and students and enjoyed networking opportunities, campus tours and social gatherings.

The conference was organized by the Office of the Alumni Association in partnership with the Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni and the Graduate School.

People

Pulin Sanghvi, who led the Career Management Center at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, has been named executive director of Career Services at Princeton University, effective Dec. 1. The new position is intended to help broaden career exploration and opportunities for all students, and establish new relationships with employers and organizations representing continuing education and career fields.

Reporting to Vice President for Campus Life Cynthia cherry, Sanghvi will build on existing successful programs and further strengthen engagement with students interested in the arts, nonprofit organizations and the public sector. He will also help increase the opportunities available to students for internships and employment across the country and around the world.

“Pulin brings diverse and extensive experience with innovative and multidimensional approaches to personal and career development, relationship building and the client experience,” Cherry said. “His role will allow Career Services to place greater attention on external outreach to new partners, as well as earlier and more sustained engagement with students from every academic discipline and during each step of their career exploration process.”

Sanghvi said he was looking forward to promoting the values of a liberal arts education and helping students to think about a broad range of possible careers.

As executive director, Sanghvi will set the overall vision and goals for Career Services. He will work with the Career Services staff to develop strategies, programs and partnerships, including strengthening collaborations with other University departments and programs.

Career Services assists undergraduates, graduate students and alumni with all aspects of career planning. It offers resources and programs designed to support the integration of academic and career interests through one-on-one counseling, workshops, internship programs, panels and career fairs, online resources, on-campus recruiting and the Alumni Careers Network.

At Princeton, Sanghvi will be charged with overseeing key initiatives including:

• Developing and leading an advisory council that includes employers, alumni, faculty members, administrators and leaders in various employment sectors;

• Establishing a partnership with the University’s Career Development Center and the Alumni Careers Network;

• Expanding Career Services’ online resources for all career-related opportunities;

• Pursuing increased international career opportunities; and

• Expanding on- and off-campus learning opportunities in the areas of internships and community service.

As assistant dean and director of the Career Management Center at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, Sanghvi developed a Career and Life Vision Program to help students explore different opportunities and choose career paths consistent with what matters most to them. Before joining Stanford in 2009, Sanghvi founded and led a successful career advising practice, by Strategy, for nine years. Sanghvi began his career as an analyst with Morgan Stanley. He also worked at the consulting firm McKinsey & Company as an engagement manager, where he co-managed the firm’s employer recruitment at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, and later as a McKinsey alumni consultant. His work included developing an expansion strategy for the nonprofit organization Positive Coaching Alliance, which focuses on changing the culture around youth sports. He now sits on the organization’s National Board of Directors. Sanghvi earned a bachelor of arts in economics from Yale University and a master’s of business administration from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Cecilia House (far left), dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, mingles at a reception for Wilson School alumni, faculty and students.
**Board approves three faculty appointments**

The Princeton University Board of Trustees has approved the appointments of three faculty members, including one full professor and two assistant professors.

**Professor**

**Fernando Codá Marques**, in mathematics, will join the faculty on Sept. 1, 2014, on the Instituto Naciona de Matemática Pura e Aplicada (IMPA) in de Janeiro, where he has been since 2003. His fields of specialization are differential geometry, geometric partial differential equations and general relativity.

**Codá Marques** has a bachelor’s degree from Universidade Federal de Alagoas in Brazil, a master’s degree from IMPA and a Ph.D. from Cornell University.

**Assistant professors**

**Will Dobbie**, in economics and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, joined the faculty on July 1 after completing his Ph.D. at Harvard University. A graduate of Kalamazoo College, Dob- bie has a master’s degree from the University of Washington. Dobbie’s research interests lie in the fields of labor economics, including consumer bankruptcy and education.

**Jaime Xiang**, in computer science, joined the faculty on Sept. 1. After receiving his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, he earned a Ph.D. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Xiang’s specialty is computer vision, with a focus on data-driven scene understanding.
New faculty committee to review policies regarding assessment and grading, and explore their effectiveness

EMILY ARONSON

Princeton University President Christopher L. Eisgruber has established an Ad Hoc Committee to Review Policies Regarding Assessment and Grading and has asked them to examine whether the University’s grading policy continues to remain effective and appropriate. The committee will be chaired by Clarence Bowley, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, and expects to meet over the next year. The nine members include some current or past members of the Faculty Committee on Grading and the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing, as well as faculty who regularly teach large numbers of undergraduates.

“The University periodically reviews and revises policies so that Princeton can pursue its teaching and research mission as effectively as possible,” Eisgruber said. “Nearly 10 years have passed since the faculty enacted our current grading policy, and our experience with it may enable us to identify ways to improve how we evaluate student work and provide feedback about it.”

In April 2004, the faculty adopted a grading policy that aimed to provide common grading standards across academic departments and to give students clear signals from their teachers about the difference between good work and their very best work. The policy recommended that, over time, each department award no more than 35 percent of A-range grades for course work and no more than 55 percent of A-range grades for junior and senior independent work.

In his charge, Eisgruber has asked the committee to explore whether the grading policy’s objectives remain the appropriate ones against which to judge Princeton’s assessment practices. He has also asked them to examine whether the policy achieves the University’s pedagogical goals effectively, with as few negative consequences as possible, or if there are better ways to reach those goals.

“Since the implementation of the policy 10 years ago, the number of A-range grades awarded across departments has become much more consistent. Likewise, the grade inflation of the late ’90s and early 2000s has been halted,” Eisgruber wrote. “Yet concerns persist that the grading policy may have unintended impacts upon the undergraduate academic experience that are not consistent with our broader educational goals.”

The committee is being asked to consult broadly with the University community to consider issues such as:

• the effects that the current policy has on the levels of feedback students receive on academic work;
• the success of Princeton students with regard to employment and graduate school admissions;
• the attitude of students toward their academic work and peers; and
• if a grading policy “might achieve the University’s goals more effectively, and with fewer side effects, if it were to focus on clear standards, thoughtful rubrics and effective feedback, with less emphasis on numerical targets.”

The committee may recommend to the faculty changes to the grading policies to improve assessment practices, teaching methods and the University’s general learning environment.

“The evaluation of student work is a critical component of a liberal arts education,” Eisgruber wrote. “Faculty members expect students to submit their best work, and in turn, students expect faculty members to provide timely, thoughtful and fair feedback that will foster their intellectual growth.”

Other members of the committee are: Henry Farber, the Hughes-Rogers Professor of Economics and director of the Industrial Relations Section; Devin Fere, associate professor of German; Alison Gammie, senior lecturer in molecular biology; William Gleason, professor of English and chair of the Department of English; Joshua Katz, professor of classics; Brian Kernighan, professor of computer science; Hessa Ward, the William J. Sinclair Professor of Geosciences and chair of the Department of Geosciences; and Robert Wuthnow, the Gerhard R. Andlinger ’52 Professor of Social Sciences, professor of sociology and director of the Center for the Study of Religion. Associate Dean of the College Elizabeth Colagrossi will serve as staff to the committee.

“I am grateful to Professor Bowley for chairing this committee and to all the faculty members who have agreed to serve on it,” Eisgruber said.

Employee retirements

Effective Oct. 1: in the library, special collections assistant Cynthia Hunter, after 31 years; in atmospheric and oceanic sciences, senior research scholar Geoffrey Vallis, after 15 years; in public safety, security operations manager Albert Wise Jr., after 35 years. Effective Nov. 1: in the Lewis-Sigir Institute for Integrative Genomics, administrative assistant Faith Bahadurian, after 12 years.

Employee obituaries

Retired employees


creatures that migrate with the summer-to-winter seasonal shifts of Europe and North America will be affected by changes such as the severity and duration of summers and winters. For tropical migratory species such as the Christmas Island red crabs, or the wildebeests and gazelles of Africa, however, the regular quest for safety, food, and reproduction is driven by wet and dry seasons. Yet how the erratic rainfall experienced by the ocean and land areas will affect these animals is not well understood, Shaw said.

In the process of trying to ask this question about timing we were able — it demonstrated a connection between climate and migration through rainfall, which hadn’t been done for many species.”

The paper, “Linking El Niño, local rainfall and migration timing in a tropical migratory species,” was published in the November 2013 edition of Global Change Biology. This work was supported by grants from the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships program (grant number DGE-0646080), the National Geographic/Wattt Institute for Discovery, and NASA (grant number NNX08AR30G to the University of Washington).
Bowlby
Continued from page 1

That led to the thought that parental stories seemed to be oddly absent from older literature, in which parenthood tends to be just the predictable sequel — if not at all the “happily ever after” story of falling in love and marriage. Or when a story is about a young person, parental figures are generally only seen in relation to the child, supporting or thwarting: they don’t have their own stories.

But in re-reading some of these texts through this new lens, I often found that well-known works that we think of as being about growing up or the trials of romantic love often harbor significant parental stories that are easy to overlook. Also, the plots of novels and plays are often bound up with secret parental stories — typically, until recently, to do with the shame of illegitimacy.

Using one or two of the texts you analyzed as examples, what parental stories did you see?

One “hiding in plain sight” example that I found in the sequel, “Oedipus the King,” Freud said the Oedipus myth a new 20th-century notoriety by interpreting it as a universal story about the scandalous loves and hatreds of early childhood. This includes the way that Sophocles’ play is also about parental passions — both positive and negative. Oedipus’ adoptive parents were childless and longing for a child. But his original mother and father wanted desperately not to be parents: They abandoned their baby to die. Without the rejection on the part of the first parents, and the secrecy on the part of the adoptive parents, the tragic events — Oedipus unknowingly murdering his father and marrying his mother — would never have happened.

We remember “Great Expectations” as the story of young Pip. But the novel is also about parental desire and ambition on the part of two single people who each adopt a child. Magwitch makes himself into Pip’s “second father,” funding his transformation into a gentleman, and the famously eccentric Miss Havisham adopts Estella “to rear and love, and save from my fate”: a complex and explicit set of objectives that brings together what she herself hopes to get: new homes, and performance-hangs to bestow on her daughter. These two adoptions lie behind all the major events of the novel.

The first half of your book is about modern parenthood — including advances to re-examine their own views. clon- ing and stem-cell research. The reproductive technologies draw out a contemporary desire, at all costs, to have “a child of one’s own,” with that “own” imagined as a biological connection. It is coming more now that scientific and interpersonal — that is to say, biological — has come to suggest the most personal tie to a child.

More broadly, having children has become a modern lifestyle choice — a source of fulfillment that is potentially detachable from any connection with a co-parent. But while this perspective may be new, there are historical precedents for the notion of independent parental desire and fulfillment. The adoptive single parents of “Great Expectations” are one literal example. And the title character of George Eliot’s “Silas Marner” experiences single parenthood — through a toddler who appears on his doorstep — as an awakening of his own life.

Did anything jostle your own ideas about parenthood while researching the book?

I was struck by how often the most dedicated parents are not the orginal ones. That’s true of both “Great Expectations” and “Oedipus,” and numerous other narratives. One striking historical example I discuss in the book is the Foundling Hospital in London, set up in 1741 (eight years before Henry Fielding’s epic “The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling” was published) because of the numbers of babies being abandoned. The initiative came from a childless couple, Lord and Lady Abingdon, two of the institution’s patrons, the artist William Hogarth and the composer G.F. Handel, also had no children.

Something else that surprised me is how “hidden” parental stories — as in not documentary — the conversations about parenthood as evidenced in conversations that continue to emerge in new ways. For instance, there are lots of stories about the way that women were pressured to give up their babies for adoption in the 1950s and 1960s (the new film “Philomena” is one example). What’s striking here is partly the turnabout of moral stance — so that now it’s the repulsive culture, and not the woman, that is to blame.

One story I did include in the book was about a woman from South Dakota in her 90s meeting the daughter she’d had at 16. With appalling irony, the woman’s version of the story was “My baby came home … 77 years later!” The photograph showed two very old ladies, gaily beaming.

Faculty news

Shapiro
Continued from page 1

I wanted to experience a course in public policy.

“This course seemed like a wonderful option. Also, taking a class with Professor Shapiro seemed like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” said Jankowski, who is considering majoring in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and attending medical school.

In class, Shapiro frequently moves the conversation forward with provocative questions. Having students able to inherit money? Should vaccines be compulsory? Does it matter if the United States isn’t a world leader in particle physics — both positive and negative by interpreting it as a universal my and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, effective July 1, 2013.

To associate professor (with continuing tenure) effective Feb. 1, 2014.

The following faculty members have been named to endowed professorships:

Anna Stilz, in computer science and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs (WWS), was named the Robert E. Kahn Professor of Computer Science and Public Affairs, effective Sept. 1, 2013.

Esteban Rossi-Hansberg, in economics and WWS, will be named the Theodore A. Wells ’29 Professor of Economics and International Affairs, effective Feb. 1, 2014.

Resignations

Rahul Sagar, assistant professor of politics, has submitted his resignation to accept a position at Yale-NUS College in Singapore.

RACHEL BOWLBY

In “A Child of One’s Own,” published this year, Bowlby examines literature through a modern-day lens and explores “new” parental stories of adoption, single parenthood and “pro-toparents” such as egg and sperm donors and surrogate mothers.

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Here, too, Shapiro pushed the students to re-examine their own views.

“The seminar has an open environment that feels quite conducive to discussion and debate, and I’ve appreciated the process of exploring, refining, challenging and perhaps changing my and others’ ideas,” said Jonathan Liebman, who is from Wil- liamsville, Vt., and is considering majoring in the Wilson School.

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Something else that surprised me is how “hidden” parental stories — as in not documentary — the conversations about parenthood as evidenced in conversations that continue to emerge in new ways. For instance, there are lots of stories about the way that women were pressured to give up their babies for adoption in the 1950s and 1960s (the new film “Philomena” is one example). What’s striking here is partly the turnabout of moral stance — so that now it’s the repulsive culture, and not the woman, that is to blame.

One story I did include in the book was about a woman from South Dakota in her 90s meeting the daughter she’d had at 16. With appalling irony, the woman’s version of the story was “My baby came home … 77 years later!” The photograph showed two very old ladies, gaily beaming.

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President’s Award for Distinguished Teaching nominations sought

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