Last year, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Professor Gaudino's death, the college honored his "living" legacy by devoting Convocation to the man and what he stood for. In addition to the traditional Convocation speech, delivered by Gaudino Scholar Mark Reinhardt, there were numerous seminars and round table discussions involving alumni, current Williams students and visiting experts. Barnaby Feder, a New York Times reporter and Williams alumnus, wrote the following in the Times to describe what turned out to be a magical weekend. For more on Convocation Weekend, including the complete Barnaby Feder article, see page 3.

"As much as what he taught, it was Mr. Gaudino's skill and single-minded devotion to teaching that was celebrated by those who came, a group that included lawyers and bankers, psychologists, a college president and an architect. No matter what the intellectual environment, we all realized, such teachers are rare treasures."

Gaudino Scholar's Report
by Mark Reinhardt

As was the case last year, Gaudino activities started even before the fall semester. Continuing a program developed the previous year by my predecessor Sam Fleischacker, Bill Darrow, another former Gaudino Scholar, led a retreat in which sophomores and juniors discussed and reflected upon their fundamental aims in life.

**CONVOCATION**

Soon afterward, the academic year began with the Gaudino Fund playing an unusually prominent role on campus. The College gave its annual Convocation program over to a commemoration of Bob Gaudino and his legacy.

On the day before Convocation, former Gaudino students gathered at Mt. Hope to pursue questions and conversations in the Gaudino spirit, in seminars led by emeritus Professor of Political Science Kurt Tauber and former Professor of Political Science Craig Brown. Later that afternoon, alumni joined students and community members in the audience as feminist reporter and Williams alumnus, wrote the following in the New York Times discussing involving alumni, current Williams students and visiting experts. Barnaby Feder, a New York Times reporter and Williams alumnus, wrote the following in the Times to describe what turned out to be a magical weekend. For more on Convocation Weekend, including the complete Barnaby Feder article, see page 3.

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**GAUDINO FORUM**

The Gaudino Forum, which provides a weekly occasion to discuss and debate issues that arise both on and off campus, continues to flourish, thanks in part to the help of my co-moderator and political science colleague James McAllister and our student assistants Elissa Shevinsky (01) and Kristina Gehman (00). The Forum is now an integral part of campus life. This year, for instance, President Vogt sometimes arrived, unannounced, to listen from the audience. I am most struck, however, by how often people now come to me with proposals for an event: if students want to start discussion of an issue, the Forum is the obvious place to go.

We have also experimented with new formats, bringing in some speakers from off campus and trying "open mike" Forums without official speakers. We do not think the latter experiment worked well, but the former has been very successful: for instance, a presentation on the fate of civil rights and liberties under the current Supreme Court, by federal Judge Stephen Reinhardt (9th Circuit Court of Appeals) drew about 80 people for one of the liveliest forums of the year.

**Sitting Here in Williamstown, I think of My Friends in San Luis...**
by Mike Levien, '01

As part of Professor Reinhardt's activities as Gaudino Scholar, seven students participated in a Winter Study program called "Among Strangers." One student, Mike Levien, wrote about his experience.

My first approach to San Luis, Costa Rica, was a memorable one, walking down the steep trocha (hill) with my mochila (backpack), and seeing the long valley capped by cloud forest to the east and opening up into the coastal plain in the west where the Gulf of Nicoya and the Nicoyan Peninsula lay majestically at the horizon. Way down below, snuggled between the large green mountains, were the fields of San Luis, where the pastoral had been seemingly carved out of the sublime. I rambled down the meandering path into the pueblo in absolute awe of my surroundings and complete ignorance of the life I would be living for the next month.

I arrived at the house of William Leiton, with whom I would be staying, in the late afternoon of December 31st, and was greeted with a friendly (con't on page 2)
moments of anger and fear; no project went entirely as planned. Yet all participants said this however, that this is an innovation that should be institutionalized in the Williams curriculum, and I am seeking to find a more enduring home for the course.

"WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?"

Another major initiative this year was the remarkably full calendar of events and activities organized in the month of April under the heading, "Whose Responsibility Is It?" Building on the inspiration of Biniam Gebre (‘00), an impressively large and energetic number of students conceived and organized the program as a way of making students confront and consider their place in the world and their responsibility for addressing its problems. I helped with the planning and funding, steering activities toward concerns that I thought were particularly important to the Fund's mission.

Here are a few of the events: a forum on life choices with Chuck Matthie, director of the Equity Land Trust; a seminar with Nobel Peace Prize winner Jody Williams; a lecture on the persistence of slavery in Mauritania, and the ways Americans can address the problem; by escaped slave Moctar Teyeb. More striking and perhaps more valuable than any of these events, however, was the explosion of dialog on campus about local and global affairs, all triggered by the project's activities. In Sawyer library, for instance, students plastered the stairwell with paper and pens for writing and with photos conveying the project's activities. In Sawyer library, for instance, students plastered the stairwell with paper and pens for writing and with photos conveying disturbing images of poverty, launching a month of heated disputes over the global economy and our place within it. In conjunction with the Economics Department, we also worked on a debate on how the College invests its endowment; we are hoping this will take place in the fall.

Other, smaller initiatives pursued this year included the following:

(1) In a memo to the Administration, I proposed that the College fully fund the costs of Winter Study travel courses for those students in financial need. Some students simply cannot afford to take these courses, yet, like Williams-in-India and Williams-at-Home, these classes are potentially transformative ventures in experiential learning. I argued that offering courses that only some members of the community can afford is a betrayal of our basic commitment to educational equity. Others have raised this issue, too, and the College is now evaluating its policy. I hope to be able to inform you next year that the College has made progress on this front.

(2) I provided the seed money for the first two issues of The Real Deal, a new newspaper. The paper was formed in an attempt to broaden public discourse. It is something of an experiment, organized largely by students without much previous journalism experience. I told them that after two issues they would have to arouse enough interest on campus to attract their funding from other sources. So far, they have, and it looks like Williams will continue to be a two paper campus next year.

(3) Recently, I have been exploring ways in which experiential learning, both at home and abroad, can be more fully integrated into the Williams curriculum. Here, too, I hope to be able to announce the institutionalization of some new programs next year.

I am very pleased with how all of these efforts unfolded. None of them, however, was centrally aimed at what I had expected to be my major focus as a Scholar—careerism and career choice. In recent years, I have been increasingly concerned both with the degree to which career concerns constrain classroom dynamics and student course selection and the number of seniors who appear to pursue a relatively narrow range of career possibilities without reflecting much on the reasons for and implications of their choices. Upon becoming Gaudino Scholar, I decided that the position offered me the license and the resources to organize programs that push students to confront and articulate the grounds of their choices. So far, my steps have been modest and preliminary. I took up the theme in my Convocation address. I organized a workshop on "Making a Life and Making a Living," and a Gaudino Forum on working for non-profits. I funded work on a video about how Williams students go through the recruiting process at the Office of Career Counseling. Mostly, though, I talked with and listened to students—sometimes when I brought up the topic, sometimes because they had heard of my interest and sought me out. I have learned a bit about how complex the issues are. I am now less certain that this is a matter to address through large programmatic initiatives. I am working on a number of modest events for the fall.

As my first year draws to an end, I can say that the experience of being the Gaudino Scholar has so far been stimulating, draining and rewarding. Many of the rewards are what I expected, such as my satisfaction in seeing the Fund contribute substantially to campus life outside of the classroom. Most rewarding of all, however, have been the surprises. Serving in this position has challenged me pedagogically, drawing me toward experiential learning in ways I never anticipated. I look forward to telling you more next year about the fruits of this new concern, and I am excited that I do not-cannot yet know what all of these fruits will be.
Before traveling in Bolivia, I had the preconception that spending time in rural, non-tourist parts of a place would provide a more accurate view of native life. This idea was accompanied by a romanticized view of rural living. I imagined people living simply and close to the earth, but recognized that I might end up living in a house with television and electricity. As city sprawl expands and contact with urban spaces increases with trade and transportation, the boundaries of rural spaces seem much more tenuous. While I had asked to be placed in a rural area, I had no idea what that would mean to a Bolivian finding me a homestay. My first few days were spent in La Paz, getting acclimated to the altitude. I stayed with my friend's wealthy aunt and uncle in the southern part of the city. My quest had landed me in a large house with servants who did all of the cleaning, cooking and serving. This proved to be a valuable contrast. In a world of cellular phones and Sony Play Stations, the disparity between Bolivian lifestyles was evident.

The wealth of a few is dispersed among the masses in national statistics. Bolivia is one of the poorest nations in South America, third after Haiti and Guyana. Norman, the head of the household where I was staying, admitted that Bolivians make a very clear class distinction, and consequently, they are like strangers in their own country. As far as the countryside, he told me that I must come back and tell him about this other life that he had never closely encountered.

So from the colonial architecture of upper class La Paz, I headed to the adobe huts with thatched roofs of the altiplano. I went to Kaloyu, a small Aymara farming community two hours west of La Paz. We drove up, out of the basin of La Paz, through the densely packed buildings of El Alto into vast space. Adobe houses dot the dry grass plain that extends to the sharp mountain peaks. I stayed with Eusevia and her five year old grandson, Jonathan. Her husband, Luis, stayed in El Alto where they had another house. In addition to daily chores of tending to the animals and cooking, our main project was to make an ayawu, a woven piece of cloth used as a blanket, and constructed the loom for weaving, our tools were more like those found in buried archaeological sites than in weaving studios. I had expected to find a fairly simple mechanism for weaving, but I was astounded when the loom that we constructed was little more than two wooden poles and a metal bar. I quickly became the incompetent foreigner and watched in amazement at Eusevia and the other women in the family. I had expected that a physical process would allow me to access a culture where language failed. The community in which I was staying was entirely Aymara, the indigenous group that preceded the Quechua speaking Incas.

Bolivia's population is composed of more than fifty percent indigenous people. Those speaking Aymara and Quechua are the two dominant groups, but there are many others. The Aymara are known for being a more insular community and not very open to outsiders. The sounds of their language are nearly impossible for one accustomed to English. Many of the younger people speak Spanish, while the older people in the community seem to be the last generation speaking only Aymara. Eusevia, in her mid-sixties, spoke Spanish, but because it was as broken as mine, we had no pure line of communication. Spinning the wool gave us something to do in common. It gave us an alternate language of sorts, filling awkward gaps where conversation might have taken place. We spun all of the brightly colored yarn several times. Because our language was broken, I really had no idea as to what or how the weaving would be. The only information I could obtain was through sight, which limited me to the activity in which we were engaged. As we walked across the wind swept plain, herding cows and twirling our drop spindles, I questioned whether my romanticized view of rural areas was entirely unjustified. I am not discounting the limitations of life in a mud hut without electricity, plumbing or running water. I do not want to glamorize poverty. It seems presumptuous, though, to assume that these "limitations" negate any possible beauty or glory in such a life. So why were all of the kids my age in the community trying to find jobs in the city and speaking Spanish in response to their parents' Aymara?

From an outsider's perspective, it is easy to want to preserve traditional cultures. It seems quite complicated. I too want to travel to foreign places and see people herding their sheep and wearing beautiful woven garments, to see physical proof that global capitalism has not obliterated all other forms of life. I worry about the contagious mentality of progress and efficiency. But I know that it can be dangerous to judge one form of living over the other. If indigenous communities harken back to a previous era, perhaps I am a victim of cultural nostalgia, imagining a past that never was. As a tourist or traveler, there always seems to be the project of finding this historical purity, some evidence of authenticity.

From my travels, I came to understand how deeply I am marked by privilege. It is not an escapable condition. It is bound to the receipt for my plane ticket. Because I was physically in Bolivia and had a period of leisure time, there was an assumption of wealth. Although I sometimes tried to undermine my economic position by explaining that my travel was funded by my college, I made no difference. This manifested itself in very tangible ways. Luis asked me if my family had money to buy a tractor for them. A relative of theirs asked me if I could help his wife find money to travel to the United States. Merchants constantly hike up prices. While I do not blame them for trying, I felt as though I was more of a symbol than a human being at times. I try to think of how this frustration could be avoided, if I could travel in some different way, but I concluded that it is not entirely possible or desirable.

While I can articulate this tension, I also did not experience complete alienation. I spent time in this community and participated in these people's lives. Just as one could argue that my experience may be inaccurate because they were treating me as a guest or because I was paying them, one could also argue that these interactions were no less real than any other part of their lives. When I boil all of the theory away, I had a lot of fun with these people. I peeled their potatoes and played with their kids. Even if we cannot become native, certainly not in two weeks, I think it is valuable to try and get into communities beyond the overt tourist track. By leaving what is familiar, a lot of cultural expectations are also removed that allow people to relate in new ways and allow travelers to find parts of themselves that have been washed away by their own cultural systems. Being in Bolivia demanded that I experience another place without the pretense of understanding. While this may have been possible in any part of the country, the cultural and physical geography of the Andes confronted me with endless questions.
HONORING A GIFTED
AND DEDICATED TEACHER

By Barnaby Feder, New York Times, Nov. 3, 1999

WILLIAMSTOWN, MA — A woman who lives on an island needs to join her fiancé on the mainland so they can marry. The boatman, seeing she is desperate, doubles the charge for the trip. She does not have the money, but a stranger offers to pay the fare if she sleeps with him. The deal is consummated. The woman and her fiancé marry. Three years later, a friend of the fiancé, not the husband, learns of the deal and tells him. The outraged husband divorces the woman.

Who is the best person in this story, and who is the worst?

Well, that depends. A group of us who had returned to Williams College in September for a reunion of students of Robert L. Gaudino a quarter-century after his death wrestled with the possibilities for two hours. Occasionally, we lapsed into supplying unstated facts that made it easier to answer. Suppose the woman had been desperate to marry because her fiancé was rich, not because she loved him.

But we knew that Gaudino—we still called him that—would have been scornful of such flimsy dodges. And so, goaded by our recollections of the slight, quiet-mannered professor who died on Thanksgiving 1974 at the age of 49 after a long neurological illness, we would quickly back away from easy assumptions.

What values do you apply to the story? How do they affect what you see and accept as fact in it? Do we apply such critical thinking to our daily lives?

Those were always the Gaudino questions, whether it was a word problem like this, the passage from Plato we had discussed that morning, or the group's reaction to "Lean on Me," Hollywood's highly fictionalized version of an autocratic principal's battle to turn around an ailing high school in Patterson, N.J.

Underlying all of it—the seminar, the Gaudino exhibit in the college library, the convocation where visiting scholars discussed Gaudino's view that learning had to be "uncomfortable"—lay yet another question. Is there a place on today's campuses for a professor like Gaudino?
philosophy course from Gaudino. In it, Gaudino leans across the table with his disproportionately large head, his round and probing eyes, and asks a question. As Linsky answers, Gaudino leans in closer: "But why, Mr. Linsky, but why?"

"It was the most intense academic experience I ever had," Linsky said. "It had this very deep impact, which was the realization that all this going-to-school stuff had something to do with me as a person, as opposed to getting good grades, absorbing information -- the stuff I had been used to as a typical, ambitious, middle-class high school student."

"It was that next step that I think has made it significant, which is bringing it back to you. It's more than you have a responsibility as an educated person to know the great works; it's, also, you have a responsibility as a human being to connect what you learn to your own life."

Discussing career plans as he prepared to graduate in 1960, Lewis mentioned that he might like to be a college administrator, even a college president. "But Mr. Lewis," Gaudino replied, "I thought you were interested in education!"

And in the late '60s, he began two programs, first Williams-in-India, then Williams-at-Home, both designed to put students face to face with the unfamiliar, either in a foreign country or in this one -- in Appalachia, the farming Midwest, the segregated South. Students would live with families and work on farms, on assembly lines, in stores. He wanted the programs to be more than semesters abroad; students had to take courses on the history and culture of the area before they left, and when they returned had to spend another course reflecting on what they had seen, learned, and experienced, for there could be no education, he believed, without reflection.

Gaudino continued to teach and run the programs in India and the United States until his death on Thanksgiving Day 1974, of a rare neurological disorder. The Fund was begun soon after.

By 1981, a Board of Trustees gathered to try to decide how best it could spend the money it raised, about $62,000, to keep alive Gaudino's vision of education. It based its decisions on a 54-page memo written by attorney Richard Herzog, a 1960 graduate. In the years since, the Fund has helped support programs at Williams, including a study program in China, an Urban Studies program in New York City, a Gaudino scholar who runs Gaudino Forums every Monday night on campus, and an intensive freshman residential seminar.

As they gathered here over the weekend to mark the official opening of classes, more than 100 alumni took part in panels and discussion groups. Inevitably discussion turned to what their mission should be.

"Higher education in certain ways is getting the message that what it ought to be about is student learning," Lewis, the Carleton College president, said. "What Gaudino did, what great teaching is about, is making the student the active partner, not a passive vessel into which you pour knowledge. It's about what students learn, not about what I say as a teacher."

1999

of Robert Gaudino

Gaudino's view that learning must be a confrontation with one's self eventually led him to take students not just to intellectually foreign terrain, but also on semester-long trips. One group went to India. Later, his "Williams-at-Home" program took students to live with auto workers, poor residents of Appalachia and other Americans whom the typical Williams student had never encountered. Such ventures and his gladly views frequently troubled administrators and colleagues.

They seem even more ill-suited to campus conditions today. After all, universities and colleges like Williams charge upwards of $120,000 for an undergraduate education. Administrators often speak of students as customers whom they must please with cozy dormitories, free Internet access and lavish athletic facilities.

Those of us who returned to Williams for the Gaudino weekend wanted to bear witness to different values from an earlier era. At my freshman orientation in 1968, we were implored to consider taking a year off and to enroll in a course we thought we might fail. And Williams, by making Gaudino's views the theme of this year's convocation weekend, seemed eager to stir some on-campus introspection, too.

Nonetheless, the gathering was as much about the missing messenger as the thorny message. As much as what he taught, it was Gaudino's skill and single-minded devotion to teaching that was celebrated by those who came, a group that included lawyers and bankers, psychologists, a college president and an architect. No matter what the intellectual environment, we all realized, such teachers are rare treasures.

We got an unmistakable reminder from the visiting scholars at the convocation seminar titled "Is Liberal Arts Education Too Comfortable?" Two of the three speakers - Professor Noel Ignatiev, author of "How the Irish Became White," and Professor Jane Gallop, a feminist scholar -- conceded during the question period that they viewed their work with undergraduates as "day jobs" that merely supported their outside interests. I couldn't help wondering what Gaudino's question to them would have been.
smile, a hearty handshake, and a flurry of incomprehensible (to me) Spanish. William told me that we would soon be heading to church to celebrate el milenio. Before I knew it, I had spent six hours in church, listening to members of the small pueblo of around 400 farmers speak about faith and community. The parts I could understand (my Spanish took a few days to come back) were very moving, yet sitting there on my first day as a gringo stranger was extremely alienating, and on the eve of the Millennium I understood for the first time what it felt like to be the “other.”

This feeling of alienation quickly subsided, however. After the first few days of living with the Leitones, working in the coffee fields, and playing with their kids, I rarely felt as though I was “among strangers.” After my Spanish came back and I could have decent conversations, I almost felt like one of the familia. Every morning we’d wake up at sunrise, eat a big plate of arroz y frijoles and head out to pick coffee on the small farm of one of William’s friends. The sun (and rain) would beat down on us as we harvested the coffee, bean by never-ending bean. We’d sing, tell lewd jokes, and eat our lunches (arroz y frijoles) in the shade of the coffee trees. We’d walk home at the end of a long day, and I’d play with William’s kids, Freisel and Fredi, in the front yard. Then we’d come in to supper (arroz y frijoles) and tuck into bed at 8:30 for a long night’s rest.

I mustn’t mislead you into thinking that my trip was somehow uneventful. On the contrary, it was filled with new and exciting experiences. Among these were a number of firsts: I milked my first goat, plucked my first still-warm chicken (I’m a vegetarian), got stung by my first scorpion, dug up my first potato, picked up my first poisonous snake (stupid gringo that I am), planted my first onion, and, of course, picked my first coffee bean. I would take long walks in the cloud forest and up the beautiful hills of San Luis, spotting tropical birds like motmots and parakeets, and watching the white-faced monkeys swing from tree to tree. I often thought this was what Thoreau meant by “sucking the marrow out of life” and what the Ticos mean when they say pura vida or pure life.

Of course, life isn’t as easy in San Luis as my anecdotes suggest. What seemed to me to be the pura vida was, in fact, a very hard way to live. Coffee harvesting is tough work and pays poorly. William owns a small plot of land, but can’t afford to develop it, or move his house onto it. Currently, William and his wife, Demaris, worry every day as their kids cross a flash-flood-prone stream on their way to school. Meanwhile, the cost of his backpack and plane ticket would have been enough to eliminate both of these hardships.

An article I read this fall by Peter Singer began to resonate in my head while I was in San Luis. Singer states that with a $200 donation to UNICEF you can save a child’s life by providing for basic health services. Therefore, Singer reasons, for every $200 you spend on something other than UNICEF, you are killing a child. Whether you agree or disagree with Singer, he raises the point that there are consequences for all of our actions. Although I helped the Leitones by paying for board and picking coffee, I also spent $200 traveling around Costa Rica after I left their house—money that could have gone to help them or better yet, save a child. Was I responsible? To what extent? Should I have stayed home and sent a check? These are difficult questions and sitting back here at my desk in Williamstown, I still don’t have the answers. However, just because there are no easy answers, doesn’t mean we shouldn’t ask the questions.

UPCOMING GAUDINO FORUMS

Gaudino forums will continue this year - some upcoming topics include new visions of American military policy, genetic testing and a visit from President Morty Shapiro

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