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Faculty & Staff Newsletter

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American Studies Professor Dan Nathan has received two grants for research he'll pursue next year. [Story](#)



Colby College Professor Cheshire Calhoun will deliver the first Karen Levin Coburn '63 Lecture March 31. [Story](#)



Justin Sipher is Skidmore's new chief technology officer. [Story](#)

Welcome -- The Skidmore *Intercom* Faculty-Staff Newsletter is a production of the Office of College Relations. All members of the campus community are invited to submit story ideas or news items, using the contact information provided below. Department chairs and office directors are asked to please print a copy of this document to share with colleagues who do not have regular access to a computer.

We hope you enjoy this electronic newsletter and encourage you to share your impressions via email or telephone.

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American Studies Scholar Receives Research Grants

Award-winning author Daniel Nathan, an assistant professor of American Studies at Skidmore, has received two fellowships to support research projects during the 2005-06 academic year. The projects—on Finnish Olympian Paavo Nurmi, and the Baltimore Black Sox of the American Negro League—use sports to examine specific aspects of American culture and history. One fellowship is from the USA Track and Field organization for a project titled "The Flying Finn Comes to America: Paavo Nurmi and the Golden Age of Sports." The other is from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a study about the 1929 Baltimore Black Sox.

Both projects focus on events that happened in America during the 1920s. More important for Nathan, both allow him to use sports to explore aspects of American life. At the heart of his work is how people used such events to make meaning, to say or reveal something significant about the cultural moment.

Sports as a vehicle for cultural discovery is a method Nathan employed successfully in his book *Saying It's So: A Cultural History of the Black Sox Scandal* (University of Illinois, 2003). The book is an interdisciplinary examination of how a major event in baseball history—the reported fixing of the 1919 World Series—has been represented and remembered by journalists, historians, novelists, filmmakers, and fans over the past 80 years. In 2004, *Saying It's So* became the first book to win "Book of the Year" honors from both the North American Society for Sport History and the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport.

Although Nathan resists being identified as a baseball writer, he will again use the game as a springboard for his NEH-funded project: a study of the 1929 Baltimore Black Sox, the only pennant-winning team in the one-year history of American Negro League. He acknowledged the irony surrounding the baseball teams he has studied. "On the one hand, there's a major-league team, the so-called Black Sox, consisting of a bunch of guys who deliberately lost and are remembered. Then there's the Baltimore Black Sox, a group of brilliant baseball players who won a pennant, and almost no one remembers them. My book is about how an event is represented and remembered, and my new project is about how and why an event is forgotten. I see this new project as a companion piece to *Saying It's So*."

Nathan believes that baseball is a useful mechanism for his work. "To be a serious baseball fan is in some ways to be a historian," he said. "Baseball gives you an opportunity to talk about a lot of things. I'm trying to show how something ordinary and 'every day' can tell us a great deal about many things, when treated with respect and put into context."

At the heart of his work are historical concerns. Nathan said that whether he is working with students or on his own research, he's always looking for more information about the past. He shared the questions that guide him: "How do we know what we know, or think we know? And what is at stake if we forget?" In his view, a careful analysis of the commonplace can increase historical and cultural understanding.

For his research on Paavo Nurmi, Nathan was awarded the Ken Doherty Memorial Fellowship from USA Track and Field to help defray travel costs to and from the Amateur Athletic Foundation Sports Library in Los Angeles.

The fellowship, presented annually by USA Track and Field, is named for former decathlon champion, coach, track and field meet director and writer Ken Doherty, and promotes the study of track and field.

Nathan believes that a critical look at Nurmi, his achievements and Americans' responses to them during his 1925 exhibition tour of the U.S., will increase understanding of such topics as athletic training methods, racial and national identity formation, and amateurism and sportsmanship. Nathan became interested in Nurmi while in Finland as a Fulbright Scholar during 2001-02. Said Nathan, "Nurmi is a mythic, iconic figure in Finland—one of the most accomplished Finns in the history of the country—who helped to create a Finnish national identity." Nurmi remains the most famous athlete in Finnish history. He set dozens of world track records and won nine gold and three silver medals during an Olympic career that included all three Olympiads of the 1920s.

During the five months Nurmi was here in 1925, he won dozens of races—in some cases, he literally "lapped" the competition. Nathan's research shows that Nurmi's tour was "widely thought to be phenomenal, awe-inspiring."

He added, "When I read (about his tour), I began to wonder what Nurmi thought about America and what Americans thought of him." Through his research, Nathan hopes to learn more about how Americans articulated and argued over cultural values via sports heroes and athletic events.

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Report on the Meeting of the Board of Trustees - Winter 2005

The Skidmore College Board of Trustees came to campus Feb. 24-25 for the second board meeting of 2004-05. Below is a summary of the resolutions adopted by the board at this session.

Budget and Finance Committee

The board approved the five major budget parameters for developing the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2006. The final budget, to be approved in May, will be based on a net fiscal enrollment of 2,220 students; a comprehensive fee of \$41,460 (a 4.9 percent increase over FY '05); a financial aid budget of \$20,415,000; a compensation budget of \$63,183,000; and transfers to the capital budget of \$6,650,000 for facilities, equipment, and information technology.

Infrastructure Committee

The board authorized the Skidmore administration to execute contracts and carry out construction of the Northwoods Apartments, at a total project cost not to exceed \$24.5 million, including amounts already authorized by the board.

The trustees approved the early release of specific capital items that require longer lead time for planning, design, and procurement. The total estimated cost for these projects, which will be funded from the FY '06 Capital budget, is \$4.5 million.

Special Programs Committee

The board approved the awarding of two bachelor of arts degrees and four bachelor of science degrees by the University Without Walls.

The trustees approved the awarding of three master's degrees by the Master of Arts Program in Liberal Studies.

Academic Affairs Committee

The board adopted a motion creating a Department of Dance (formerly dance was part of the Department of Exercise Science, Dance, and Athletics).

The board adopted resolutions for faculty tenure, promotions, and sabbatical leaves as follows:

Tenure granted to Carolyn Forché, Professor of English.

Tenure and promotion to associate professor granted to Katherine (Kate) E. Graney, Assistant Professor of Government; Elzbieta M. Lepkowska-White, Assistant Professor of Management and Business; Lynda D. Vargha, Assistant Professor of Economics; and Mark A. Youndt, Assistant Professor of Management and Business.

Tenured sabbatical leaves were approved as follows:

* For the entire year 2005-06 - Betty Balevic, Professor of Management and Business; John Brueggemann, Associate Professor of Sociology; Grace M. Burton, Associate Professor of Spanish; Susan S. Lehr, Professor of Education; Ronald P. Seyb, Associate Professor of Government; Janet Sorensen, Associate Professor of Art.

* For fall 2005 - Denise Warner Limoli, Assistant Professor of Dance; Terence Diggory, Professor of English.

* For spring 2006 - John B. Anzalone, Professor of French; Ruth Copans, Librarian; Roy S. Meyers, Professor of Biology; David Vella, Associate Professor of Mathematics; Joanne Vella, Associate Professor of Art.

Untenured sabbatical leaves were approved as follows:

* For the entire year 2005-06 - Erica Bastress-Dukehart, Assistant Professor of History; Susannah B. Mintz, Associate Professor of English; Daniel A. Nathan, Assistant Professor of American Studies; Thomas C. O'Connell, Assistant Professor of Computer Science.

* For fall 2005 - William S. Lewis, Assistant Professor of Philosophy; John Nazarenko, Senior Artist-in-Residence, Music.

* For spring 2006 - Lenora de la Luna, Assistant Professor of Education; Kyle Nichols, Assistant Professor of Geosciences; Anne Z. Turner, Senior Artist-in-Residence, Music; Jan Vinci, Senior Artist-in-Residence, Music.

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Vol. 4, No. 4 - March 21, 2005**Colby College Scholar to Be First Karen Levin Coburn '63 Lecturer**

"Same-Sex Marriage and the Shadow of Polygamy" is the title of the first Karen Levin Coburn '63 Lecture in Women's Studies at Skidmore College, to be delivered Thursday, March 31, by Cheshire Calhoun of Colby College. Free and open to the public, the talk will begin at 8 p.m. in Gannett Auditorium of Palamountain Hall.

Calhoun is Charles A. Dana Professor of Philosophy at Colby College, and an expert on ethics and the areas of moral, feminist, and lesbian and gay philosophy. She is editor of *Setting the Moral Compass: Essays by Women Philosophers*, to be published by Oxford University Press; author of *Feminism, the Family, and the Politics of the Closet: Lesbian and Gay Displacement* (2000, Oxford University Press); co-editor (with Robert C. Solomon) of *What is an Emotion? Classic Readings in Philosophical Psychology* (1984, Oxford University Press); and author of *Leaving Home: Reflections on Lesbianism and Feminism* (1997, Fembooks, Taiwan). She also has written a number of articles and chapters for various academic and professional journals.

She earned a B.A. degree with honors at Northwestern University, and master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Texas at Austin.

In a feature story published in the winter 2003 edition of *Colby Magazine*, Calhoun talked about the importance of civility on campus and beyond, adding that discussions of civility must give serious consideration to social norms for appropriate behavior.

The Karen Levin Coburn '63 Lecture at Skidmore honors Coburn, an English major known for her student leadership while at Skidmore. She continued her education at Harvard, where she earned an M.A. T. degree in English, and at Washington University in St. Louis, where she earned an M.A. degree in counseling. Currently associate vice chancellor for students and dean of the freshman transition at Washington University in St. Louis, Coburn is co-author of the acclaimed book, *Letting Go: A Parent's Guide to Understanding the College Years*, which has sold nearly 300,000 copies and is now in its fourth printing.

Adrienne Zuerner, associate professor of French and director of Skidmore's Women's Studies Program, called Coburn "an accomplished and successful professional woman who will serve as a role model to our students." The Coburn Lecture, said Zuerner, "is an extraordinary opportunity that will enrich the Women's Studies curriculum, raise the level of conversations about gender on campus and contribute to the ongoing visibility and academic strength of our program."

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Sipher Named Chief Technology Officer

Justin D. Sipher has been appointed Skidmore's chief technology officer, following a national search. "I am very pleased to welcome Justin to Skidmore and to Saratoga Springs," said Michael West, vice president for finance and administration at Skidmore, in announcing Sipher's appointment. "I look forward to working with him as we continue to strengthen Skidmore's information technology services."

Sipher will be responsible for the Center for Information Technology Services, a staff of 35, and will oversee collaboration with all members of the college community to establish information technology strategies, future technology direction, and requirements. He will be responsible for the acquisition and implementation of new technology, and will communicate technological information to students, faculty, and staff. Sipher also will work with faculty to promote and support the use of technology in the classroom and in research projects.

Sipher comes to Skidmore from the State University of New York College at Potsdam, where he was assistant vice president for information technology. He started working there in 1994, responsible for providing desktop computer support, and was consistently promoted, being named director of computing and technology services in 2000, and later assistant vice president for information technology. In that capacity, he was Potsdam's senior technology officer, providing support to both administrative and academic technology users on that campus.

In addition, Sipher has been active throughout the SUNY system, most recently serving as vice-chair (2001-2003) and then chairperson (2003-2005) of the SUNY Council of Chief Information Officers. In addition he was the presentation coordinator (1997-2002) of the annual SUNY Technology Conference.

He also has been active in EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association that advances higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology. EDUCAUSE membership is open to institutions of higher education, corporations serving the higher education information technology market, and other related associations and organizations.

Sipher was a participant in the 2001 Frye Leadership institute, co-sponsored by EDUCASUE, CLIR, and Emory University. He served on the EDUCAUSE planning committee for the 2003 Seminars on Academic Computing in Snowmass, Colo., and is currently involved in the organization's 20-20 Project, whose goal is to help EDUCAUSE's current leadership understand the needs of today's younger IT professionals, who will eventually serve as the next generation of information technology leaders.

Sipher is a graduate of SUNY College at Potsdam, where he earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a master of science in education degree with distinction in instructional technology and media management.

"I am excited to join Skidmore College and appreciate its rich tradition and strong commitment to the liberal arts. I look forward to working with my colleagues across campus as we strive to further strengthen the technology services and resources of the institution," Sipher said.

Sipher and his wife Amy, both natives of Gouverneur, N.Y., are the parents of a four-year-old son, Cody, and one-year-old daughter, Camryn.

Conversation with Renowned Record Producer Announced

Phil Ramone, one of the most prolific and respected producers in the recording industry, will visit Skidmore Tuesday, March 22. "An Interview with Phil Ramone" is scheduled at 5 p.m. in Gannett Auditorium of Palamountain Hall on the Skidmore campus. Questions from the audience will be answered following the interview, which is to be conducted by a representative of Skidmore's Department of Music. Admission is free and open to the public.

Nominated for 30 Grammy Awards, Ramone has received 12. His three most recent Grammy Awards were presented just last month for his work on *Genius Loves Company*, by Ray Charles (Album of the Year and Best Surround Sound Album). He also received a Grammy for Outstanding Technical Significance to the Recording Field.

Ramone has been a pioneer in audio technology, supporting such innovations as the use of the compact disc, digital video disc, hi-definition recording, and surround sound. The first CD ever pressed - Billy Joel's *52nd Street* - was a Phil Ramone production, as was the first pop DVD release, *Dave Grusin Presents West Side Story*.

The list of artists with whom Ramone has collaborated includes such diverse musicians as Clay Aiken, Burt Bacharach, Tony Bennett, Chicago, Natalie Cole, Bob Dylan, Aretha Franklin, Elton John, Quincy Jones, Paul McCartney, Michael McDonald, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Billy Preston, Paul Simon, Frank Sinatra, Rod Stewart, Barbra Streisand, Brian Wilson, and Neil Young.

In addition, he has numerous concert, film, Broadway, and TV productions to his credit, including *A Star Is Born*, *Beyond the Sea*, *Flashdance*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Seussical*, and the *Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards*.

Ramone also is active in music and service-related organizations. He is the chairman emeritus of the board of trustees of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, and is a trustee of the MusiCares Foundation.

He is a champion of music programs in public schools to ensure that children have the opportunity to foster their music talents and serves on the boards of the National Mentoring Partnership and the Berklee College of Music.

Comix 101 to Be Spiegelman's Lecture Topic

Art Spiegelman, the critically acclaimed Pulitzer Prize-winning author, will lecture on "Comix 101" at 8 p.m. Monday, April 11. The Students Speakers Bureau will host Spiegelman's lecture, which will be in Gannett Auditorium, Palamountain Hall. Admission is free and open to the public.

Spiegelman has almost single-handedly brought comic books out of the toy closet and onto the literature shelves. In 1992 he won the Pulitzer Prize for his masterful Holocaust narrative *Maus*, which portrayed Jews as mice and Nazis as cats. *Maus II* continued the remarkable story of his parents' survival of the Nazi regime and their lives later in America. His comics are best known for their shifting graphic styles, their formal complexity, and their controversial content. In his lecture "Comix 101," Spiegelman will take the audience on a chronological tour of the evolution of comics to explain the value of the medium and why it should not be ignored.

A native of Stockholm, Sweden, Spiegelman grew up in Rego Park, N.Y. He studied art and philosophy at Harpur College, State University of New York at Binghamton, which awarded him an honorary degree in 1995.

As creative consultant for Topps Candy from 1965 to 1987, Spiegelman designed Wacky Packages, Garbage Pail Kids, and their novelty items. He taught history and aesthetics of comics at the School for Visual Arts in New York from 1979 to 1986. In 1980, Spiegelman founded *RAW*, the acclaimed avant-garde comics magazine, with his wife, Francoise Mouly. His work has since been published in many periodicals, including *The New Yorker*, where he was a staff artist and writer from 1993 to 2003. He has since published a children's book entitled *Open Me...I'm a Dog*, as well as the illustrations to accompany the 1928 book *The Wild Party*, by Joseph Moncure March.

Media Round-Up

Skidmore faculty recently quoted in the media include the following:

Sandy Baum, professor of economics, wrote "Priming the Pump for Student Aid," an essay that appeared in the March 4 edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* online, as well as in Vol. 51, Issue 26, of the print version of the publication. In addition, she was a source for "Change in Pell-Grant Formula Is Likely to Drive Up Loans and Work Hours," by Kelly Field, in the same editions of the *Chronicle*.

Greg Goodwin, assistant professor of psychology, is the author of "Periaqueductal gray is implicated as a modulator of infant separation responses," which appeared March 20 in *Cardiovascular Device Liability Week* and *Lab Business Week*; March 19 in *Mental Health Business Week* and *Obesity, Fitness and Wellness Week*; March 18 in *Health Business Week*; March 16 in *Physician Law Weekly*; March 15 in *Life Science Weekly*, *Science Letter*, and *Cardiovascular Business Week*; and March 14 in *Mental Health Weekly Digest* and *Pain and Central Nervous System Week*.

David Karp, associate professor of sociology, was a source for "Justice by the People," in the March 3-9 edition of *Metroland*, and for "Making Crime Hit Home for Offenders," in the Feb. 28 issue of *The Boston Globe*.

Sheldon Solomon, professor of psychology and Ross Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, was a source for "Over Our Dead Bodies," by Beth Kephart, published in *Science and Spirit*, March-April 2005.

Mary Zeiss Stange was featured in "Hunting Gets a Scholarly Spin," by Lee Coleman, published in the March 13 issue of *The Sunday Gazette*; she also delivered the Commonwealth Club Lecture, "Mother Nature's Daughters" broadcast Feb. 24 on WAMC-FM.

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Faculty/Staff Activities

Terry Diggory, professor and chair, Department of English, participated Feb. 27 in a panel at the Opalka Gallery of Sage College of Albany in connection with its exhibition, "New York School: Another view." The exhibition catalogue includes his essay, "The Arts Community and the Changing Avant-Garde in Postwar New York."

Francisco Gonzalez, associate professor of philosophy, has had a number of activities. Details are as follows:

Four invited presentations in January: "Taking the Measure of Knowledge: Dialogue and Dialectic in Plato's Theaetetus," Jan. 13 at the Università degli Studi di Firenze; "How is the Truth of Beings in the Soul? Interpreting Anamnesis in Plato's Meno," Jan. 11 at the Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata; "Tablettes de cire, pigeonniers ou grossesses imaginaires? Sur les puissances de l'âme de Théétète," Jan. 7 at the Université de Paris X-Nanterre; and "La dialectique est-elle dialogue chez Platon? Réflexions sur le Théétète," Jan. 5 at the Université de Provence (Aix-Marseille I), Aix-en-Provence.

On Dec. 10, he delivered an invited paper titled "An Abandoned Dialogue: Heidegger's Reading of Plato's Theaetetus 184-197" at Siena College. During Oct. 22-24, he attended the meeting of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy, held at Fordham University, where he presented "Socrates' Impious Piety in Plato's Apology."

He presented an invited paper titled "Whose Metaphysics of Presence? Heidegger's Interpretation of Energeia and Dunamis in Aristotle," at the New School in New York City. Last summer, he was at the VII Symposium Platonium in Würzburg, Germany, where he presented "The Truth of Beings in the Soul: Plato's Meno on Recollection."

Publications

Katharine A. Cartwright, lecturer, Department of Geosciences, has been selected for inclusion in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* for the second time in two consecutive years. Just two percent of the nation's teaching population receives this honor more than once.

Tom Davis, chaplain emeritus, is the author of *Planned Parenthood and Its Clergy Alliances* (2005, Rutgers University Press), with foreword by the Rev. Carlton W. Veazey. According to the publisher, the book brings to light the ways in which the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the clergy are not as incongruent as they often are construed to be. Although clergy supporters of choice are rarely, if ever, given attention in the media, Davis shows that they in fact play a major role in advancing women's rights, rebutting right-wing arguments, and helping to make (and keep) abortion legal nationwide.

Beginning with Margaret Sanger's efforts to include mainline clergy in the fight to provide information about contraceptives to the general public, Davis details the religious and historical dimensions of this long alliance up through current debates about the future of reproductive rights. He argues that Planned Parenthood, though a secular organization, is engaged in the "sacred work" of promoting social justice and that it is this work that continues to bring clergy into alliance with it.

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