Clifford Geertz, an eminent scholar in the field of cultural anthropology known for his extensive research in Indonesia and Morocco, died on October 30, 2006, at the age of 80. Dr. Geertz was Professor Emeritus in the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study, where he had served on the Faculty since 1970. Professor Geertz's appointment was significant not only for the distinguished leadership it would bring to the Institute, but also because it marked the initiation of the School of Social Science, which in 1973 formally became the fourth School at the Institute.

Professor Geertz's landmark contributions to social and cultural theory have been influential not only among anthropologists, but also among geographers, ecologists, political scientists, humanists, and historians. He worked on religion, especially Islam; on bazaar trade; on economic development; on traditional political structures; and on village and family life. A prolific author since the 1950s, Geertz's many books include *The Religion of Java* (1960); *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (1968); *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (1973, 2000); *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali* (1980); and *The Politics of Culture, Asian Identities in a Splintered World* (2002). At the time of his death, Professor Geertz was working on the question of ethnic diversity and its implications in the modern world.

"Clifford Geertz was one of the major intellectual figures of the twentieth century whose presence at the Institute played a crucial role in its development and in determining its present shape," said Director Peter Goddard. "He remained a vital force, contributing to the life of the Institute right up to his death. We have all lost a much loved friend."

Joan Wallach Scott, Harold F. Linder Professor in the School of Social Science at the Institute, commented, "Cliff was the founder of the School of Social Science and its continuing inspiration. His influence on generations of scholars was powerful and lasting. He changed the direction of thinking in many fields by pointing to the importance and complexity of culture and the need for its interpretation. We will miss his critical intelligence, his great sense of irony, and his friendship."

Professor Geertz's deeply reflective and eloquent writings often provided profound and cogent insights on the scope of culture, the nature of anthropology, and on the understanding of the social sciences in general. Noting that human beings are "symbolizing, conceptualizing, meaning-seeking animals," Geertz acknowledged and explored the innate desire of humanity to "make sense out of experience, to give it form and order." In *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (1988), Geertz stated, "The next necessary thing ... is neither the construction of a universal Esperanto-like culture ... nor the invention of some vast technology of human management. It is to enlarge the possibility of intelligible discourse between people quite different from one another in interest, outlook, wealth, and power, and yet contained in a world where tumbled as they are into endless connection, it is increasingly difficult to get out of each other's way."

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The Institute will host “Remembering Clifford Geertz,” an event celebrating the life and work of Professor Geertz, on March 3. The program will include Javanese music performed by Gamelan Kusuma Laras under the direction of I. M. Harjito.

(Continued on page 5)
NEWS OF THE INSTITUTE COMMUNITY

E NRI CO BOMBIERI, IBM Von Neumann Professor in the School of Mathematics, has won the 2006 Premio Internazionale Pitagora, an international prize for mathematics sponsored by the European Union and administered by the city of Crotone in Southern Italy.

W onderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond, by CAROLINE WALKER BYNUM, Professor in the School of Historical Studies, was published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in December.

E nlightenment Contested. Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670-1752 by JONATHAN ISRAEL, Professor in the School of Historical Studies, was published by Oxford University Press in November.

J UAN MALDACENA, Professor in the School of Natural Sciences, has been awarded the 2007 Damme Heineaman Prize for Mathematical Physics by the American Institute of Physics and the American Physical Society. The award, which recognizes outstanding publications in the field of mathematical physics, acknowledges Professor Maldacena’s “profound developments in Mathematical Physics that have illuminated interconnections and launched major research areas in Quantum Field Theory, String Theory and Gravity.” He shares the award with Joseph G. Polchinski, a professor of physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

E RIC MASKIN, Albert O. Hirschman Professor in the School of Social Science, gave the Kenneth Arrow Lecture at the Eighth International Meeting of the Society for Social Choice and Welfare in Istanbul in July. In December he gave the Jacob Marschak Lecture at the South East Asian Meeting of the Econometric Society in Chennai, India.

T he Middle East Studies Association of North America presented JOAN WALLACH SCOTT, Professor in the School of Social Science, with their Academic Freedom Award in November. The Association cited Scott for her role as head of the American Association of University Professors’ Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure from 1993 to 2005, for being an extraordinarily articulate and vigilant defender of Academic Freedom in North America, and for putting the AAUP in the front lines of defending and promoting academic freedom in the United States.

T he International Association of Mathematical Physics has awarded the 2006 Henri Poincaré Prize for mathematical physics to EDWARD WITTEN, Charles Simonyi Professor in the School of Natural Sciences. Witten was honored for his work on string theory, which has also influenced geometry and topology.

T he Scientist as Rebel, a collection of 33 previously published book reviews, essays, and speeches, by FREEMAN J. DYSCON, Professor Emeritus in the School of Natural Sciences, was published in November by New York Review Books.

T he Social Science Research Council has established an annual prize in the name of ALBERT O. HIRSCHMAN, Professor Emeritus in the School of Social Science, for his lasting contribution to international, interdisciplinary social science. The Albert O. Hirschman Prize, which carries an award of $10,000, will be presented to a scholar who has made outstanding contributions to international, interdisciplinary social science, research, theory, and public communication. The recipient will deliver the annual Albert O. Hirschman Prize Lecture at a ceremony in New York.

A n annual series of distinguished lectures has been established in honor of JOHN BAHCALL, the late Richard Black Professor of Astrophysics in the School of Natural Sciences. The lectures will be held at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore and NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.

T rustee JAMES H. SIMONS, president of Renaissance Technologies Corp., has been named Financial Engineer of the Year by the International Association of Financial Engineers/SunGard. The award, established in 1993, recognizes individual contributions to the advancement of financial engineering technology.

F ormer School of Social Science Member CHARLES BOSK (2003-04) was awarded the University of Pennsylvania’s Provost’s Award for Distinguished Ph.D. Teaching and Mentoring.

T OD S. CHAMBERS, former Member in the School of Social Science (2003-04), who was a participant in the School’s thematic year focusing on bioethics, is president-elect of the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities.

T he Averaged American: Surveys, Citizens, and the Making of a Mass Public by SARAH E. IGO, former School of Social Science Member CHARLES BOSK (2003-04)-was awarded the University of Pennsylvania’s Provost’s Award for Distinguished Ph.D. Teaching and Mentoring.

W EBB KEANE, former Member in the School of Social Science (1997-98), now Professor at the University of Michigan, received a Guggenheim Fellowship and was a Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines Distinguished Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics.

Q UENTIN SKINNER, former Member in the School of Social Science (1976-79) and the School of Historical Studies (1974-75), was awarded a 2006 Balzan Prize in September. Skinner was cited “for his formulation of a distinctive methodology for the study of the history of ideas, his major contribution to the history of political thought and his acute reflections on the nature of liberty.” Awarded by the International Balzan Foundation, each Balzan Prize is worth one million Swiss francs, half of which must be allocated to research projects involving young researchers.

F ive Germans I Have Known by FRITZ STERN, Professor Emeritus of European History at Columbia University and former Member (1969-70) and Visitor (1985-86, 1988, 1990-91) in the School of Historical Studies, and Visitor (1996-97) in the School of Social Science, has been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

D EJAN VINKOVIC, a current Visitor in the Program in Interdisciplinary Studies and a former Member in the School of Natural Sciences (2003-06), has coauthored with ALAN KIRMAN, a former Member in the School of Social Science (2005), the article “A Physical Analogue of the Schelling Model,” which appeared in the December 19 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). In the study, the team presents a mathematical link between Schelling’s model and models used for solving the physical problem of surface tension force in liquids and solids.

O F HISTORICAL NOTE

T he following excerpt by Abraham Flexner, Founding Director of the Institute for Advanced Study, was published in The New York Times on April 17, 1932:

Civilization’s Advance

The world is not yet civilized. None the less it is a better world today than at any time in history. For the moment, however, the question arises as to whether society is able to carry out and to carry on the humane programs upon which it has embarked in education and in philanthropy. There are those whose hearts are weak and who cannot see the immediate present. I belong to a different school. All my life I have been a student of history. In some of the ups and downs of society I myself have lived. My memory goes back to the panic of 1873, and I vividly remember subsequent convulsions in which the faint-hearted lost all hope.

I entertain not the slightest doubt that a decade hence we will be stronger, as I hope we may also be wiser, than during the period preceding 1929, when we were living in a fool’s paradise.

Unquestionably adjustments must be made, but they are very often adjustments in feeling rather than in fact.

C HARLES SIMONYI IN SPACE

T rustee Charles Simonyi is scheduled to launch on April 9 onboard Soyuz TMA-10 en route to the International Space Station (ISS). During his eight-day stay aboard the ISS, he will complete 160 orbits of the Earth, cover 4 million miles, and assist several international space agencies in conducting experiments as part of his preparations for the mission. Dr. Simonyi has been training at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia. Photos and information about Dr. Simonyi’s training and upcoming flight can be found on his website www.charlesinspace.com.

Dr. Charles Simonyi will wear the IAS seal, pictured left, on his flight suit while aboard the ISS.

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Dr. Charles Simonyi will wear the IAS seal, pictured left, on his flight suit while aboard the ISS.
In the theory of particle physics known as the standard model, matter particles can be arranged in a periodic table much like in chemistry, according to School of Natural Sciences Professor Nathan Seiberg, with an important exception. In his October 4 lecture “The World’s Largest Experiment,” Seiberg explained that while there isn’t a single experiment that contradicts the standard model, which he called “an unprecedented success,” our current understanding of it is limited.

“We have this periodic table of matter particles but we don’t understand the fundamental structure underlying it, which explains why we have this periodic table,” said Seiberg. “In the case of chemistry the periodic table was eventually understood as a consequence of the structure of atoms. We don’t have the analogous story.”

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC), a particle accelerator expected to begin operating this year, offers an opportunity to probe beyond the standard model to find “a more complete theory, which has a larger range of validity, a theory that will explain the standard model,” Seiberg said.

Located at CERN, the European Center for Nuclear Research near Geneva, the LHC will allow for the exploration of physics at shorter distances and at higher energies than before. The accelerator, which cost about $2.5 billion, is located 100 meters underground and measures 17 miles around. Seiberg explained that in this underground tunnel two tubes of rotating protons will cross each other at four points. Detectors located at each of the crossing points will examine the debris left behind as the protons collide.

Overall, there will be about one billion proton collisions per second. “Only about 10 to 100 of the collisions will be of some interest to us and will be recorded,” said Seiberg. The very interesting collisions, those collisions that will teach us about new physics will be even more rare. They will happen only once every few hours or every few days. So this is really finding a needle in a haystack.

Physicists are hoping that the LHC will help clarify some long-standing mysteries. Among them, said Seiberg, is proof of the existence of the standard model’s Higgs particle, named after the Scottish physicist Peter Higgs, which has not yet been discovered experimentally. “The Higgs particle is very important because it is responsible for masses of particles,” said Seiberg. “Understanding the Higgs particle better will shed more light and will clarify the origin of mass.”

It is also hoped that the LHC will confirm the existence of supersymmetry, which unites matter particles and force particles by pairing them in a single framework and suggests that the three forces in the standard model—the strong force, the weak force, and the electromagnetic force—become one force at very short distances.

The LHC may also find new particles that could explain the existence of dark matter in the universe. “Recent astronomical results tell us that only about one-sixth of the matter in the universe is in the form of particles we know of,” said Seiberg.

Most of the matter in the universe is not the kind of matter that we know of in the standard model. In the context of supersymmetry we can offer an explanation. Supersymmetry naturally leads to a new stable particle which can be identified as the dark matter.”

In addition, the LHC might be able to detect the existence of additional space dimensions, beyond the currently known three dimensions. Ideally, the LHC may lead physicists to the “ultimate goal” proposed by String Theory of unifying gravity (which is excluded in the standard model) with electromagnetism, the strong force, and the weak force. While emphasizing that “we don’t know what the LHC will find,” Seiberg anticipates “that the discoveries will be very exciting. They will set the agenda and stimulate scientific research for decades to come.”

### COVER-UP: FRENCH GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ISLAMIC HEADSCARF

**The Politics of the Veil: Banning Islamic Headscarves in French Public Schools**

Underlying the 2004 law banning the wearing of Islamic headscarves in French public schools is a fundamental clash between French and Muslim gender systems, according to Joan Wallach Scott, Harold F. Linder Professor in the School of Social Science. In her December 3 public lecture “Cover-up: French Gender Equality and the Islamic Headscarf,” Scott analyzed one of the justifications given by French lawmakers for the ban—that they were protecting the equality of women, a founding principle of the French republic.

Drawing from her recently completed book, *The Politics of the Veil: Banning Islamic Headscarves in French Public Schools*, which is scheduled to be published by Princeton University Press in the fall, Scott concluded that, among other things, the Islamic headscarf revealed a “persistent contradiction in French political theory between political equality and sexual difference. Politicians and republican theorists have dealt with this contradiction by covering it over, by insisting that equality is possible while elevating the differences between the sexes to a distinctive cultural character trait.”

France’s “great emphasis on the visibility and openness of seductive play between women and men, and especially on the public display (and sexual desirability for men) of women’s bodies,” Scott said, “seems to be in contradiction of French republicanism.” Scott further noted, “Until their confrontation with Islam, many French feminists saw the sexual exhibitionism of their society as demeaning to women because it reduced them to a sexual body. But in the heat of the headscarf controversy, those concerns were set aside and equality became synonymous with sexual emancipation, which in turn was equated with the visibility of the female body.”

Beginning with the text of the French law, Scott pointed out the lawmakers’ use of the word “conspicuous” to describe those religious signs (such as veils) that were prohibited versus their use of the word “discrete” to distinguish those religious signs (such as small crosses and Korans) that were permissible. “I was struck by the sexual connotation carried by the words the lawmakers chose,” Scott said. “When ostentatious or conspicuous refers to an excessive display on or by a body, especially if it’s a woman’s body, it conveys a sense of erotic provocation. Discrete is the opposite of ostentatious or conspicuous; it doesn’t call attention to itself, it downplays the attractiveness of the body in question; it is somehow neutral-sexual.”

The law’s wording was particularly striking, said Scott, considering the fact that the Muslim headscarf is meant to signify modesty and sexual unavailability. “By what standard could girls wearing headscarves be considered disruptive, immodest or conspicuous?” Scott asked. “How then account for this seemingly strange reversal: Muslim modesty is taken to be sexually aberrant by French observers, who condemn it not only as different, but as somehow excessive (ostentatious, conspicuous), even perverse. The reason given by politicians and many feminists was the same: the veil represented the subordination of women, their humiliation, and their inequality.”

For Scott, the Muslim headscarf confronts a deep and disconcerting reality of gender relations in France. “It makes explicit what is available for all to see—the rules of public gendered interaction, which are in no way contradictory, and which declare sexual exchanges out of bounds in public space,” Scott said. “It is this explicit acknowledgment of the problem of sexuality that, for French observers, makes the veil ostentatious or conspicuous in the sexual sense of those words. Not only is too much being said about sex, but all of its difficulties are being revealed.”

Joan Wallach Scott has been a Professor in the School of Social Science since 1985. Her recent work has been concerned with the ways in which difference poses problems for democratic practice.

### Banning Headscarves in Bulgarian Schools

A similar movement in Bulgaria to prohibit headscarves in schools is one of the topics being examined by the School of Social Science Member Kristen Ghodsee in a book tentatively titled *Mini-Tehrani and Minarettes: Gender, Eastern Aid and Islamic Revivalism on the Edge of Europe*.

The Bulgarian political climate differs substantially from that of France, according to Ghodsee. Unlike France where Muslims were once colonialsubjects and today are largely immigrants, Bulgaria’s Muslims represent the heirs of the colonizers rather than the colonized and are primarily indigenous and moderate. But due to an influx of missionaries and outside financial aid after the collapse of Communist rule and official atheism (1946-1989), today a significant Slavic Muslim minority in Bulgaria is embracing more traditional forms of Islam fueled by Arab resources.

With educational secularism under threat, the Bulgarian Minister of Education recently suggested taking the French law a step further to ban all religious symbols in schools. “It is a great irony,” says Ghodsee, “that Bulgaria, a country which ensnared Orthodox Christianity as the national religion in its post-1989 constitution, now feels that it has to revert to policies associated with the Communist state.”

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**The Large Hadron Collider at CERN**

**A French-Islamic protester in France**

**School of Natural Sciences Professor Nathan Seiberg will direct the Institute’s 2007 Prospects in Theoretical Physics program, The Standard Model and Beyond, which will focus on particle physics phenomenology with special emphasis on model building. The July 16-27 program, which Seiberg will direct with SNS Member Michael Dine, is designed to help young physicists prepare for the physics that will emerge from the Large Hadron Collider.**

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Globalization has come with many promises, said Eric Maskin, Albert O. Hirschman Professor in the School of Social Science in his October 27 lecture “Why Haven’t Global Markets Reduced Inequality,” including the assurance that it would bring prosperity and growth to poor countries. “On this count I think it’s fair to say that there’s been some success—in the cases of China and India, quite spectacular success,” said Maskin. “But another promise often made on behalf of globalization is that it will reduce the gap between the rich and poor, the haves and the have-nots in developing countries. Here I don’t think globalization has delivered what was promised.”

According to Maskin, the persistent inequality between rich and poor in developing countries in the face of globalization is surprising because it contradicts the theory of comparative advantage, which originated more than two hundred years ago with the British economist David Ricardo and which Maskin described as “the most secure theory we have in economics for explaining international trade patterns.”

The theory of comparative advantage (the twentieth-century formulation is known as the Heckscher-Ohlin model) has “explained many historical trade patterns very well,” Maskin said, but it also “predicts quite unambiguously that free trade should reduce inequality in poor countries.” While the theory proved accurate when trade between the United States and Europe took off toward the end of the nineteenth century (inequality fell in Europe, which had a relative abundance of low-skill labor compared to the United States’s higher proportion of high-skill workers), the theory “is clearly inadequate for explaining the patterns of globalization we face today,” Maskin said.

The theory of comparative advantage also predicts that the bigger the difference in the skill-ratio—the number of low-skill workers per high-skill workers—between two countries, the more trade will occur between those countries. Yet Maskin observes, “The very poorest countries of the world have been almost entirely left out of globalization.”

To explain these conflicts with the standard theory, Maskin outlined an alternative theory he has been working on with Michael Kremer, Gates Professor of Developing Countries at Harvard University and a Senior Fellow at The Brookings Institution. The motivation for Maskin and Kremer’s model is the observation that recent globalization has to a large extent meant the globalization of the production process. Their theory explores the implications of cross-border production, in which a single product can be manufactured out of components made and assembled in different countries, or designed in one country and manufactured in another.

A major reason behind the increase in inequality in poor countries, according to the theory, is the different effect globalization has on the job opportunities—the potential “matches”—of workers of different skills. The model implies that globalization will typically open up more options for moderately to highly skilled workers, while actually reducing options for workers with the lowest skills.

The Maskin-Kremer theory also explains why the very poorest countries have been excluded from globalization: if the skill levels in a rich country are sufficiently different from those in a poor country, then international production efforts that employ workers from both countries will be rendered too inefficient to compete effectively in the global market.

“If the theory I have outlined is correct—and I should emphasize that it is one of several theories that are too new to have been thoroughly tested yet—then there is a clear implication for policy,” said Maskin. “The right policy is not to try to stop globalization—it probably couldn’t be stopped even if we wanted it to be—but rather to invest in the training and education of the lowest-skill workers, the poorest people of the world, which will allow them to share in the benefits of globalization.”

Eric Maskin has been a Professor in the School of Social Science since 2000. His work covers many areas of economic theory, including game theory, mechanism design, and the economics of intellectual property.

In his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, the Dutch philosopher Benedictus de Spinoza (1632-1677) explained the fundamental principles of the state he had defined:

“But its ultimate purpose is not to dominate or control people by fear or subject them to the authority of another. On the contrary, its aim is to free everyone from fear, so that they may live in security, so far as possible. That is that they may retain to the highest possible degree their natural right to live and to act without harm to themselves or to others. It is not, I contend, the purpose of the state to turn people from rational beings into beasts or automatons, but rather to allow their minds and bodies to develop in their own ways, in security, and enjoy the free use of reason, and not to participate in conflicts based on hatred, anger, or deceit, or in malicious disputes with each other. Therefore, the true purpose of the state is in fact freedom.”

During his November 1 Friends Forum talk “Spinoza. Or the Failed Jewish Businessman Who Changed the World Through Philosophy,” Jonathan Israel, Professor in the School of Historical Studies, credited Spinoza “as the first great philosopher who was a democrat.” Equally important and of particular relevance to Americans, Israel said, Spinoza was “the first philosopher to insist that you can’t build a free, stable, and successful society, or a moral order that is stable, if theological criteria, and it doesn’t matter which theological criteria, are allowed to be the basis of its principles.”

Israel’s talk drew on his extensive research on the impact of radical thought (especially Spinoza, Bayle, Diderot, and the eighteenth-century French materialists) on the Enlightenment and on the emergence of modern ideas of democracy, equality, tolerance, freedom of the press, and individual freedom. His recent book Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752 (Oxford University Press, 2006) continues the major revisionist study he began in Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750 (Oxford University Press, 2001), in which he credits Spinoza as the originator of the core principles of modern thought.

In his talk, Israel spoke about the “rival mythologies” or “the different grand narratives explaining Spinoza’s legacy, each of which is quite different from and incomparable with the other.” Prime among them is what Israel calls the “Voltaire Syndrome, because Voltaire was the earliest and perhaps the most important of its propagators. This is the myth according to which virtually nobody ever read Spinoza. Or of the few that did, practically no one understood him, and of those who understood him, practically none was ever influenced by him.” As Voltaire wrote in 1766, Spinoza “was a philosopher of whom everyone spoke but no one actually read, and who even if he undeniably had a huge reputation, had no discernible impact,” Israel said.
A youthful excursion in the Institute Woods, 1956

OSWALD VEBLEN AND THE INSTITUTE WOODS

I have walked over the new property of the Institute several times since there has been a hard crust on top of the snow. This enables one to explore the woods down near the brook much better than one will be able to after the ground gets soft again.

— Oswald Veblen to Frank Aydelotte, 13 February 1936

From the very beginning, the Institute for Advanced Study was conceived as a refuge for wildlife as well as a refuge for ideas.

Norwegian-American topologist Oswald Veblen (1880-1960) arrived in Princeton in 1905, became the Institute’s first Professor in 1932, and “conceived the whole project” in the words of P.A.M. Dirac. “There is no educational institution in the United States which has not in the beginning made the mistake of acquiring too little rather than too much land,” Veblen wrote to Founding Director Abraham Flexner on April 12, 1934. “I think that any institution which becomes a part of a community like this one, has a duty to contribute something to the amenities of the place,” he continued, urging the Trustees to acquire “a sufficiently large plot of land, which would thus be kept free from objectionable intruders.”

Veblen, the eldest of eight children (and nephew of Thorstein Veblen), was an indefatigable outdoorsman as well as an administrator whose leadership transformed Princeton into one of the mathematical centers of the world. He was proud of both his mathematics and sharpshooting during his student years, and traveled down the Iowa and Mississippi rivers in the style of Huckleberry Finn. “He is a most excellent person,” Flexner wrote to Founding Trustee Herbert Maass in 1937, “but the word building or farm has an intoxicating effect upon him.”

At a time when the Institute’s Professors were still occupying borrowed office space in Fine Hall, with the administration operating out of rented space at 20 Nassau Street, Veblen was already thinking big. “If we are going to have inflation,” he argued in March of 1933, “would it not be well to speed up the land question? At least two of the proposed sites seem good to me.”

It was Veblen who tramped through the Woods and fields at the outskirts of the University, driving a series of tough bargains with depression-strapped landowners to assemble the parcels that constitute the Institute Woods. He defended the Woods against encroachment until his death, conceding a small portion to the State of New Jersey for the Battlefield monument, but that was it. In 1949, he pushed for the condemnation of the swinging bridge. In 1959, Oppenheimer wrote to Veblen asking permission to change the name of one of the Institute’s roads from Portico to Veblen Lane. Oppenheimer’s notes record the response: “Said no. Would rather wait until dead.”

Veblen divided his time between his home on Battle Road and his summer retreat in the Maine woods, later retiring to a home on Herrontown Road which also became a public trust: the Herrontown Woods.

The late André Weil, former Professor in the School of Mathematics, spent time in the Woods as well. In 1999, Pierre Cartier, a former Member, wrote of Weil, “I had the immense good luck to share long walks with him in the Institute Woods, or sometimes along the frozen Lake Carnegie in winter; we discussed his published articles or ones in progress, or we discussed the plans for Bourbaki.”

In the preface to The Essential John Nash, Harold Kuhn, Professor Emeritus of Mathematical Economics at Princeton University, recalls a conversation he had with Nash, a former Member, in October 1994. “As we sat on the bench, enjoying the mild fall weather and the splendor of the Institute Woods, I told John that he should be at 6:30 a.m. the following morning to receive a phone call from Carl-Olof Jacobson, secretary general of the Nobel Foundation, who would tell him that he was sharing the Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel.”

School of Mathematics Professor Enrico Bombieri has observed of his late colleague Armand Borel, “He loved nature, and quite often I walked with him in the Institute Woods, talking about the future of mathematics and of our School of Mathematics.” According to Bombieri, Borel “liked the Institute Woods, and he was very relieved when eventually they did not fall to a developer and were preserved as a park. The last time I saw him I mentioned that the same afternoon I was planning to go in the Institute Woods to visit my secret chanterelles patch, maybe I would find a few, would he like to have some too? He had a big smile and just said, ‘Oh, yes!’ I found quite a few chanterelles, and I suspect that they were much better for him than those one can buy in a store, not just because they were fresh, but especially because they came from the Institute Woods.”

A Natural Administrator and Leader

In an oral-history interview with Albert Tucker and Frederick Nebeker, the late Herman Goldstine, a former permanent Member, described Veblen as “a natural administrator and leader ... He was the kind of guy who would keep dripping water on the stone until finally it eroded. If it didn’t happen otherwise, he just kept at it, and at it, and at it.”

Of Veblen, who was married to an English woman named Elizabeth (she introduced teatime at the Institute), Goldstine surmised, “I think it would have been a great ambition of his, if it were possible, to become an Englishman.” The young mathematicians at Fine Hall in the 1930s apparently proposed a Faculty Song with a Veblen verse: “Here’s to Uncle Oswald V., lover of England and her tea. He is that mathematician of note, who uses four buttons to fasten his coat.” Tall and slim, Veblen never wore them for a few years so that they wouldn’t look new when he put them on.”
**THE GöDELIAN CHALLENGE**

Kurt Gödel’s achievement in modern logic is singular and monumental—indeed it is more than a monument, it is a landmark which will remain visible far in space and time.

—John von Neumann

Upon presenting Kurt Gödel (1926-1978) with the Albert Einstein Award in 1951, John von Neumann remarked, “Gödel was the first man to demonstrate that certain mathematical theorems can neither be proved nor disproved with the accepted, rigorous method of mathematics... Gödel actually proved this theorem, not with respect to mathematics only, but for all systems which permit a formalization, that is a rigorous and exhaustive description, in terms of modern logic: For no such system can its freedom from inner contradictions be demonstrated with the means of the system itself.”

Kurt Gödel was among the Institute’s first Members in 1933-34, returning for further periods in the 1930s and 1940s before joining the Faculty in 1953. He remained at the Institute until his death in 1978.

On November 17, the Institute for Advanced Study hosted “A Program to Mark the Centenary Year of the Birth of Kurt Gödel.” The program, which drew some three hundred people to Wilenski Hall, consisted of talks by Karl Sigmund, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Vienna; Solomon Feferman, Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy, Emeritus, and the Suppes Professor of Humanities and Sciences, Emeritus, at Stanford University; John Burgess, Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University; Avi Wigderson, Herbert H. Maass Professor in the School of Mathematics at the Institute; and John W. Dawson, Jr., Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus, at The Pennsylvania State University. Excerpts and John W. Dawson, Jr., Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy, Emeritus, and the Suppes Professor of Humanities and Sciences, Emeritus, at Stanford University; John Burgess, Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University; Avi Wigderson, Herbert H. Maass Professor in the School of Mathematics at the Institute; and John W. Dawson, Jr., Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus, at The Pennsylvania State University. Excerpts follow:

“Gödel’s office was directly above the one that I shared with another visitor, the Japanese logician Gaisi Takeuti. We used to think we heard him pacing the floor above us. When I wanted to meet Gödel and figured he was in his office, I’d phone him for an appointment and would hear the phone ring and hear him answer. When it worked out, I would walk upstairs to his office. There he would be seat- ed at his desk and I would sit down across from him. We never worked at the blackboard, unlike most mathematici- ans... He’d raise some questions and make some sugges- tions and what he had to say would be very much to the point and fruit for further thought. After precisely half an hour the alarm on his watch would go off and he would say, ‘I have to take my pills. And I look that as my cue to leave.’

—Solomon Feferman (Member, School of Mathematics, 1959-60)

“What can we know about the world? Gödel showed that some true theorems can never be proved. Turing showed that there are functions which cannot be computed. These fundamental results, and further refinements of them regarding efficient computation, set basic limits on what is accessible by science and mathematics.”

—Avi Wigderson

“For Gödel, mathematical intuition was itself a kind of extrasensory perception. He believed that there is a world of concepts that we can access through our mathematical intuition, as he asserted in his paper ‘What is Cantor’s Continuum Problem?’ Gödel actually attributed some of his success precisely to his pleonastic, philosophical out- look and the fact that it allowed him to pose certain ques- tions that others would not consider meaningful.”

—John W. Dawson, Jr.

**DIRECTOR’S VISITOR: TOM PHILLIPS**

A Royal Academician and a Trustee of the British Museum, Tom Phillips is known for his pioneering work with word and image and for his portraits of notable figures in science and the arts. Institute Director Peter Goddard first met Phillips about ten years ago when, as Master of St. John’s College in the University of Cambridge, he was faced with the prospect of having his portrait painted. Regarding the idea as “somewhere between a visit to the barber and a session at the hygienist, I was determined to pick not only someone whose art appealed to me but who also seemed likely to be interesting to talk to,” says Dr. Goddard. “I certainly succeeded.”

Last term marked the second time Phillips, Slade Professor of Fine Art at the University of Oxford in 2005, has made a stay at the Institute as a Director’s Visitor. When he first invited Phillips two years ago, Dr. Goddard recalls, “I was told that he was as far as anybody could remember the first practicing visual artist at the Institute. But I knew Tom well enough to know that if he accepted our invitation anything could happen.”

An accomplished translator and a composer in his own right, his artworks are repre- sented in museum collections all over the world. He put to full use his many talents at the Institute last fall—creating sudoku prints from leaves found on the Institute grounds (see image below); appearing in a public presentation of the Heart of Darkness opera at the Institute; and continuing work on his 40-year-old project A Humument. In addition, he had “the solicited pleasure” of drawing Freeman Dyson, Professor Emeritus in the School of Natural Sciences, whom Phillips describes as a “pioneer physicist and lucidest of writers ... He’d raise some questions and make some suggestions and what he had to say would be very much to the point and fruit for further thought. After precisely half an hour the alarm on his watch would go off and he would say, ‘I have to take my pills. And I took that as my cue to leave.’

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The late Kirk Varnedoe, Professor in the School of Historical Studies, whose library was donated to the Institute.

MODERN ART AND KIRK VARNEDOE’S BOOKS

One of the final privileges to which members of the Faculty at the Institute accede as they approach retirement, is that of suggesting to their colleagues the names of possible successors. I was the third in the series of art historians, following Erwin Panofsky and Millard Meiss, whose interests focused largely on European art from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance and Baroque. I was acutely aware that, while Marquand had never been the School of Historical Studies an appointment devoted primarily to contemporary history. Although it was a dangerous move, given the current tendency of “modernism” to dominate, not to say overwhelm, university art history departments, I felt it was time for a change. And with Kirk Varnedoe, it seemed worth the risk. There was some initial, but soon dispelled, hesitation among the Faculty of the School because he was a “museum man,” rather than a proper academic historian. But Varnedoe had had a very orthodox training—undergraduate at Williams, graduate at Stanford—and his publication record was replete with important, innovative, professionally crafted, and beautifully written scholarly work, wide-ranging within his field. Moreover, throughout his career, he had continued to teach, attracting and rearing many young people to the rigors and unmatched intellectual rewards of our discipline. And after all, the glamour he brought from his long association with the world’s most important institution devoted to modern art (MoMA), as well as his equally legendary personal charisma, could do no real harm to the Institute for Advanced Study!

There has always been one significant reservation about the viability of art history at the Institute. By virtue of a cordial and mutually beneficial agreement with Princeton University we depend very heavily on our privileged access to the University libraries, including Marquand, one of the greatest art libraries in the world. Apart from its comprehensive holdings, a major virtue of Marquand is that it is non-lending. The policy seems, and may be, paradoxical, but it is essential: the books are there when you need them. Art historians by the very nature of their work need to have books physically present at hand, not necessarily (or even primarily) to read them, but in order to compare the images they contain. (Panofsky famously said, he who has the most photographs wins!) When I first came to the Institute I noticed immediately that the visiting Members in art history, unlike their colleagues in other fields, were scarcely to be seen at lunch or teatime, participating in the communal exchange of ideas that is, to my mind, the life-blood of the Institute. They were always working at Marquand Library. The Institute, I discovered, had once actually handed over to Marquand an important (now more valuable than ever) collection of art books—presumably because our Members could make better use of them there, for purposes of comparison. One of my first reactions to the situation was to try to build a basic, general collection of reference material and major periodicals, so that Members could have a place, even if it were only temporarily, in our field at least to establish a bibliographic point of departure here, and work at Marquand when, as is still frequently the case, he or she needs more specialized material. The then-Director, Carl Kaysen, was very sympathetic to my appeal and responded with a substantial initial grant of funds toward that goal. Judging now by the lively and regular participation of art historians at lunches, teas, and other events at the Institute, the effort has been largely successful.

Successful, that is, with the notable exception (as regards Western, let us not speak of more exotic fields) of modern art. All academic libraries tend to reflect the interests of the faculty, the smaller the more so, including the Institute’s. And one of the risks of making an appointment in the modern field was that the recipient would be faced with the same kind of situation that had confronted me thirty years before—no books, and members exiled to Marquand Library. The appointment of Kirk Varnedoe proved this risk minimal, since his personal library, which has been given to the Institute, is a veritable treasure trove, unique, of its kind. Some three thousand volumes in all, I suppose that virtually every important publication in his field for the last quarter century is there. The art historical quantity and quality of his library is of course no surprise, considering who Varnedoe was, and the nature of his all-too-brief life’s work. I knew Kirk fairly well for many years, but perusing the list of his holdings for this note in The Institute Letter, I have been astonished by the breadth and depth of his interests beyond his field: only half deal with art, the rest with all manner of themes, from airplanes, children’s and comic books to rugby and motorcycles, but especially philosophy, linguistics, psychology, and the sciences, including anthropology. With this legacy to our library Varnedoe has helped to ensure that modern art will find a firm future and an encompassing vision at the Institute. —Irving Lavin, Professor of Art History, Emeritus

Kirk Varnedoe’s Pictures of Nothing

While a Professor in the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study from 2002-03, Kirk Varnedoe worked on the A. W. Mellon Lectures he delivered at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in the spring of 2003, just months before his death. The lectures, which he gave to overflowing crowds, are reproduced and illustrated in the recently published Pictures of Nothing: Abstract Art Since Pollock (Princeton University Press, 2006).

In the book’s introduction New Yorker critic Adam Gopnik observes that Varnedoe did not have the chance to polish the lectures for publication, but suggests that “their necessarily unfinished nature—their existence as lectures, still-breathing sketches toward a final work, drafts and researches not yet fully closed—may allow readers more room for exactly the kind of open-ended responses, the inventive reinterpretations, the structured but uncensored freedom to use another’s thought to think again for ourselves, that Kirk Varnedoe thought was at the heart of all creative endeavors.”

Book Donations at the Institute: A History of Generosity

Donations to the libraries of the Institute have been central to the development of the collections over the years. In the Institute’s earliest days, School of Mathematics Faculty member Hermann Weyl took an avid interest in the library. He was the first to hold the title of Institute librarian, and he donated a considerable collection of mathematics books to IAS.

His was only the first in a series of significant gifts to the Institute’s libraries. Major collections have been donated covering subject areas ranging from the history of science to political history, from astrophysics to number theory, and from art history to epigraphy. Book funds have been established in memory of Trustees, as demonstrated by the Leon Levy Fund, and by interested members of the community, as with the Usdan Fund, established by Leo Usdan in memory of his parents.

Among those who donated their entire collections to the IAS libraries were Faculty members Ernst Kantorowicz and Kenneth Setton, both Medieval historians; Andrew Allofski, a Roman historian; mathematicians Armand Borel and André Weil; astrophysicist John Bahcall; art historian Kirk Varnedoe (see story above); and logician Kurt Gödel. Institute Director Harry Woolf’s entire library was presented to IAS by his children, and Benjamin Nadel and Carl Schorske, former Members in the School of Historical Studies, both donated their complete libraries.

Former Trustee Lessing J. Rosenwald established the rare book collection at IAS with his generous and ongoing donations. The Institute’s first female Faculty member Hetty Goldman gave a significant collection of works in archaeology, and countless important gifts covering a wide variety of subjects were made by former Faculty members, including George Kennan, Homer Thompson, and Millard Meiss. The libraries regularly receive donations of books from current Faculty and from current and former Members as well, such as the rare books donated by Princeton University Professor J. Lionel Gossman, a former Visitor in the School of Historical Studies.

The Leon Levy bookplate, inspired by an Attic Red-figure skyphos by the Brygos Painter, 485-480 B.C.

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Einstein Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540-0631 or email abridge@ias.edu.

For more than sixty years, the Institute for Advanced Study has been the steward of 589 acres of woods, wetlands, and farmland that are historically important and environmentally vital to central New Jersey... endowment and providing a tranquil environment for scholars engaged in theoretical research and intellectual inquiry.

In November, the Regional Planning Partnership presented the Institute with its 2006 Van Zandt Williams Community Involvement Award for the Institute’s role in the permanent conservation of these lands. The conservation was achieved in 1997 through the foresight and dedication of a private-public partnership, more than one thousand individuals, and more than one thousand dollars... which are open to the public and utilized year-round by bird watchers, walkers, runners, and cross-country skiers.