

Special Book Issue: Writing is a central KWF focus and books an increasingly frequent result, with the University's strong fiction/nonfiction writing programs playing an essential part. For the first time this year, we brought in a novelist, Valerie Laken, to meet several times with the informal, fire-side group of Fellows and spouses/partners that was meeting regularly to discuss one another's work. It seemed time for our first book issue.

A few weeks ago, we asked all alumni to tell us about what they'd published. Those who answered mentioned 55 books; doubtless there are more. They range from a murder mystery about a TV reporter who sees a body "Falling Off Air" to an analysis of why a ten-minute argument between two philosophers at Cambridge University had cosmic implications; from the history of hip-hop to the history of the Ottoman Empire. As with the rest of the program, spouses/partners are very much included, as noted in this issue, opened by Peter Osnos '74, whose PublicAffairs Books has compiled a distinguished record of books by, about and for journalists.

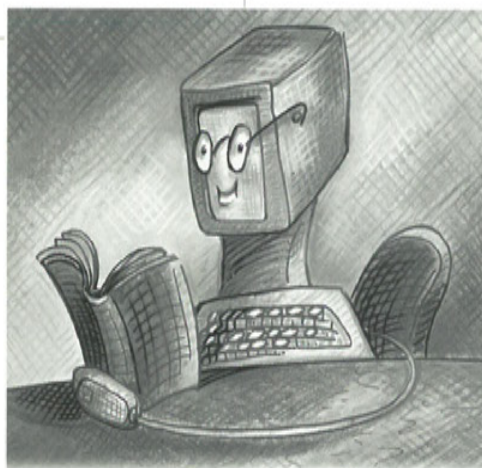
Homer, Hemingway and the Palm Pilot: The Changing Business of Books

—By Peter Osnos '74

The book is an eternal artifact of civilization. Sacred texts. Classics by a crackling fire; a great story; a library lined with the handsome bindings of favorites; a bookstore where browsing is a joy of reminiscence and discovery.

And then there is business: Time Warner has just unloaded its venerable book companies on the French, an event so mundane that *The New York Times* put it well inside the business section. Farrar, Straus and Giroux and Alfred A. Knopf are owned by German conglomerates. Penguin (including Putnam, Dutton and Viking, among others) are British. And HarperCollins (once Harper and Row) is a Murdoch-owned company that he tried unsuccessfully to spin off in the late 1990s. Simon and Schuster is a bit player at what is now called CBS and the proprietor, Sumner Redstone, has said repeatedly that he is prepared to sell it.

The point is that books are wondrous things but in the high-rolling world of American media, they don't compare to say, an exciting startup or any of the mass-distribution products like movies and television. And yet, after over 20 years as a book person, I remain a believer in the durability of the book object and its enormous value to society. For journalists, book-writing remains an honored craft. Many Knight-Wallace Fellows would forgo their season tickets to Michigan football if they could finish that novel, memoir or investigation of Eisendrath's hunting activities. Of all the books to have come out of the Fellowship, probably many more never quite got done.



We are at a crucial moment in the development of book distribution. Sony is about to release another version of the e-book, which it says has the quality of a fine reading experience and the convenience of a digital device. My Treo 650 handheld phone cum computer with Palm software has space for three digital books (*The Last of the Mohicans* comes already installed). The Ingram Book Group's Lightning Source division offers

thousands of print-on-demand titles and has sold over 25 million books on demand.

The popularity of the podcast and downloadable audio text means that books, like music, may no longer need expensive packaging. Google Book Search promises searchable texts from the world's libraries (which scares the daylight out of publishers because of the copyright problems).

And Amazon seems to have an initiative a week to make books more affordable, including selling them secondhand, which is great for consumers and another nightmare for authors and publishers who get nothing on the sale.

One constant in history is content. From cave paintings through Gutenberg, from Homer to Hemingway and beyond, the role of stories and facts has been inseparable from the development of society. Music has had the same trajectory. From tom-toms to hip-hop, there is always a composer who provides the content and eventually a means of distribution which brings the finished product to the consumer.

—continued on page 12

From the Head Fellow

—By Charles R. Eisendrath '75

FINISHING THE U.S. ENDOWMENT

In the fall of 1928, a University of Michigan journalism major named Bert Askwith was stranded in Ann Arbor by a strike on the New York Central Railroad, along with numerous classmates who relied on the train for transport home. Askwith, an editor at the *Michigan Daily*, had a brainstorm. He would rent a bus and sell tickets for the ride. It worked well and he had started a company which covered his UM costs during those tough depression times.

That's how journalism lost Askwith. Immediately after graduating in 1931, he went home and transferred Campus Coach Lines (named for UM), a charter bus company, to the New York metro area. It became a substantial enterprise, which he now runs with his daughter, Patti Kenner. Once I asked her whether she thought her father might be free for lunch. "He's hardly ever free for lunch," she said, "because he thinks it's a waste of time."

He's serious about his philanthropy, too, including how it's described. Building KWF has made me a sort of connoisseur of donor sensitivities and Bert is at the extreme end of the extreme end of modesty. No numbers to be known, please, and seldom his name. He is also an original thinker. As Charlie Gibson '74 and I found out several years ago, Bert's ideas may not be easy to implement, but they're fresh, interesting... and they work.

Neither of us had met Bert when he introduced himself at one of UM's "tailgate" parties, which are held inside for hundreds more than that quaint term implies. Bert started talking about the sad state of politics. We agreed. Then he mused whether Michigan could set up a sort of civilian equivalent of scholarships to West Point, which members of Congress award to students from their districts. Great idea,

we thought. The honoree would then come to Ann Arbor to speak in the Political Science Department. Wonderful, I agreed. Then Bert asked whether it shouldn't be journalists who judge the merits of legislators to make such an award. By then we noticed the twinkle in his eye and realized there was no escape. The man had seduced us on idea power alone.



Gibson introduced the first University of Michigan Distinguished Service Award at the National Press Club in 1996. The award went to Senator Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas, who wondered aloud—to an audience of 150, including Katharine Graham, much of the Michigan Congressional delegation and a number of national journalists—why no university in her state had such a program. The answer was that only Michigan had Askwith.

Administering the program was not simple. The award winner would select a student in her state to receive a four-year scholarship. The University admissions office reorganized the way it did business to identify excellent prospective freshmen from specific legislative districts. Wallace House assembled a panel of judges with unquestioned expertise and unassailable balance. Bert stipulated that the scholarships should

be generous but not a free ride; the need to work had given him some of his best ideas and would do the same for others.

Despite its considerable success—it was given twice more, to Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar and West Virginia Sen. Robert Byrd—plans to make the contest permanent lapsed. That won't happen to Bert's new programs with us because they are endowed. Once again, they began at a tailgate.

There was Bert and he had that twinkle. This time he was talking about some kid I'd never heard of who "perfected the forward pass" on the 1925 UM football team. Benny Friedman praised by none other than Knute Rockne as "the greatest football player ever," was the first Jew elected captain of a major college squad. Bert said Friedman never got his due because of the prevailing anti-Semitism of the time and thought he and a few friends could raise an endowment in his name. The first Benny Friedman Fellow in Sports Journalism arrived with the class of '06.

But one last increment of the Knight Foundation's matching grant still needed to be found and, frankly, I was out of ideas. I asked the Office of Development and Mike Wallace, honorary co-chair of the University's capital campaign, to throw themselves into the project. In the end, to our amazement, the donor was again the man that journalism lost to the bus-chartering business in 1928.

Major generosity always excites me. But from individuals, "moved" is how I feel. In this case the sensation is sharpened by the knowledge that Bert's gift essentially completes permanent funding for our 12 positions for Americans.

Now it's on to the internationals. We're after six positions and I'm confident we'll get them. That's what we will be celebrating at the reunion next September.

Want to Write Books? Fellows/Partners Tell How

Finding Your Inner Author

—By Fara Warner '06

I can count on being asked two questions when people learn I'm a published author. First is, "How did you find your agent?" That's easy—through a friend.

The second is tougher to answer because I know the questioner is desperately seeking the magic recipe for how and when to write so that they, too, can become an

writing—*your* own inner author—is a far more lucrative endeavor than mimicking what other authors use to bring forward the writing spirits.

I learned this the hard way. I wasted a week writing—or not writing—in the early morning because I read that was the time many authors were most productive. I spent three days wondering if I needed a weird food to get me going after a friend told me she ate 200 bottles of Nutella while writing her book. I worried for months that I was keeping my house too tidy when an-

muscle warmed up about 1 p.m. and didn't tire before 6:30 or 7 p.m. The library mimicked an office, albeit a quieter one than most *Journal* bureaus. As for the lack of strange foods and a clean house, I realized that eating Nutella or 200 bottles of anything would just make me sick, and an untidy house would raise the ghost of my neat and tidy grandma—neither of which I needed while speed-writing a 200-page book in six months.

Yo-Yo Ma's inspiration was a happy accident born out of trying to write like someone else. One dismal day, I had settled myself on a hard chair, laptop on the dining room table, and proceeded to stare at the white wall in front of me. I saw this in the movie *The Tango Lesson*. But the actor in the movie actually managed to write, while I spent an hour staring at the wall. I decided to turn on some music to inspire a nap. But as the music soared through the house, I pulled myself off the couch, sat down at

the table and pounded out a chapter. I don't question why it happened. I just thank the writing gods and now turn to Yo-Yo Ma when the words won't jump from my mind to the screen.

Now when people ask me that second question, I counter with a few of my own: When do you normally write? What place makes the words flow? And I always urge people to look for happy accidents that will draw forth their own writing spirit.

—Fara Warner's book, *The Power of the Purse: How Smart Businesses are Adapting to the World's Most Important Consumers—Women*, was published in 2005 by Pearson Prentice Hall. For her next book Warner looks at the effect of globalization and consumerism on Chinese culture.



Lisa Bergout

Fara Warner among Wallace House's famous faces.

author: "So what's your writing style, when do you write, where do you write?"

It's both easy and difficult to answer. Easy because I can detail how I found it hard to work at home, so I decamped to my public library where the hushed energy helped me write. I can tell the funny story about learning to love doing laundry because on those days when the words wouldn't come, I knew I could finish a load of dazzling whites. I can offer up the tidbit that Yo-Yo Ma's cello music could make the words flow like nothing else.

But it's difficult because that only answers how *I* wrote. Finding *your* way of

other friend told me she simply let everything else fall apart when she was writing her book.

It wasn't until I examined my own productivity that I found my inner author. And it didn't include 5 a.m. writing gauntlets, weird foods or unmade beds.

I was trained as a daily journalist, pounding out copy on deadline at *The Wall Street Journal*. I realized that my writing

Try, Try Again

—By Catherine Sampson '95, Spouse

How many books do you have to write before you get published?

The simple answer is that I wrote one novel that was not published, but my second was.

But if the question's aim is to probe how much stamina a writer needs, then the true answer lies in the detail. Like the fact that my first published novel, *Falling Off Air*, arrived in bookstores in 2004, a full ten years after I wrote that first doomed manuscript—a decade in which I wrote, had three children and did some freelance journalism, too. Or that by a rough estimate I wrote about 400,000 words in draft for the 100,000 that were eventually published. Or that I contacted 18 literary agents before I found one who wanted me.

When I accompanied my husband, James Miles, to Ann Arbor in 1994, I resolved to spend one year writing a novel. If it was not published then I would waste no more time on fiction.

It was at the end of that year that a literary agent rang after receiving my manuscript and left a message that I should call her, causing my heart to pound with excitement. When I rang her back, she told me how bad she thought the book was. Over the next few months I showed that book to about a dozen publishers and a couple of agents before I admitted defeat. It is brutal to discover that being a writer is to share your most private imaginings, only then to have them hurled back at you, sometimes with what seems like an undignified amount of glee.

But there are reasons books get thrown back, and some of the rejections were encouraging, so I started again. Being a journalist was good training—I knew to write in short sentences and structure my story, and to keep in mind how many words I had to play with. I edited ruthlessly. I never joined a writing group, partly because I was scared, and

partly because I couldn't see what I could learn from picking apart the language of a paragraph or two when it was the shape of the book that seemed the difficult bit. I did, however, read every book on writing novels that I could find.

Then I got lucky. I found Amanda, my agent, and she found Sarah and Amy, my editors. *Falling Off Air* was published by Macmillan in the U.K. and Time Warner in the U.S. in 2004, and *Out of Mind* was published in 2005.

I am now working on what I hope will be my third published book, a novel, *The Pool of Unease*. I have no contract yet, so my status feels very precarious. I've been working on this book for a year, approaching it from all sorts of different angles, and in the process I have written tens of thousands of words, and I have binned almost all of them. They were all the bad ideas that needed to be tried and discarded before I could get back to the beginning.

—Catherine Sampson was the Beijing correspondent for *The Times of London* and has written for *The Economist* and other publications. She lives in Beijing with her husband, James Miles '95.

Getting Closer By Getting Away

—By Caroline Finkel '03, Spouse

The news that my husband, Andrew Finkel, had won a Knight-Wallace Fellowship for 2002–03 reached us in Istanbul, where he had been working as a correspondent for a number of media outlets. For five years I had been writing a history of the Ottoman Empire, and welcomed the chance to get away from my all-too-familiar surroundings and look at the Ottoman and Turkish worlds from the other end of the telescope.

Anyone who has been to Turkey cannot fail to appreciate how visible are the traces of the past, even though many of the monuments left by the great civilization that preceded today's republic are in poor

repair. Among the most arresting images greeting the visitor to Istanbul are the mosques of the sultans crowning the spine of the hill in the Old City. Along the Bosphorus we see their palaces and the villas of the aristocracy.

But who were these people? What do we know about the times in which they lived? Why did they build what they built where they did? I wanted to write a book that would answer these apparently simple questions, and also tell in an accessible fashion the complicated history of a largely forgotten dynasty that lasted over 600 years and ruled over territories extending into all three continents of the Old World. But living in the imperial capital city of Istanbul is, for an Ottoman historian, like living in a theme park—one that never closes.

The riches of the University of Michigan library are legendary, and the access accorded to the spouses of Fellows was a privilege beyond my expectations. Istanbul houses the archives of the Ottomans and the state they founded, but offers limited opportunity to keep abreast of recent work by colleagues in other fields.

Perhaps as important as burying myself in the library stacks was the chance to speak to people outside Turkey, whose view of the Ottomans and their history was inevitably very different from that of my Turkish friends and colleagues. We had lived in Istanbul for 15 years, and I was concerned that I had “gone native,” that I had lost the clarity of thought about the Ottoman past that was necessary not only to write a focused history but also to construct a narrative that would capture the imagination of a wider readership.

War broke out in the Middle East during our months in Ann Arbor. Iraq was for centuries part of the Ottoman imperium, and I watched with horror as the U.S. made light of the region's complexities in the name of importing a cultural mode quite at odds with what had gone before. And very many of those

around us assumed that their government was doing the right thing.

Most of all, then, our time at Wallace House convinced me of the importance of knowing the past. Our stay led me to hope that an understanding of history might impart a modicum of good sense to temper the wildest and most arrogant of schemes. Writing *Osman's Dream* in Ann Arbor I learned that the world view of us denizens of the old world is as different as it can be from our friends in the new. Our stay was stimulating at every turn, and made of me a more reflective historian.

—Caroline Finkel is the author of *Osman's Dream, The History of the Ottoman Empire*, published by Basic Books, 2006.

Screw Your Chutzpah to the Sticking Place

—By Jason Tanz '05

Before I arrived in Ann Arbor, I harbored all sorts of fantasies about my Fellowship year. Most did not pan out. I wasn't able to rent a three-bedroom house with a Jacuzzi and air-hockey table for \$250 a month; I never got the chance to test drive the physics department's petawatt laser; and as for my plan to glue myself to the floor of the Wallace House and refuse to leave at the end of the year... well, let's just say that I'm writing this from back in New York. But at least one of my dreams did come to fruition: I was able to use my time in Michigan to write and sell a book proposal.

Almost every year, some journalist leaves Ann Arbor with a book deal or plans to secure one. Last year, two of my fellow Fellows sold their proposals as well. Cynthia Barnett is writing about Florida's water woes as a way of examining how fresh water is disappearing from the American east. Faye Flam is studying how advances in the fields of genetics and neuroscience are changing the way we think about ourselves. My book is about the spread of hip-hop culture through suburban America, a topic that doesn't pack

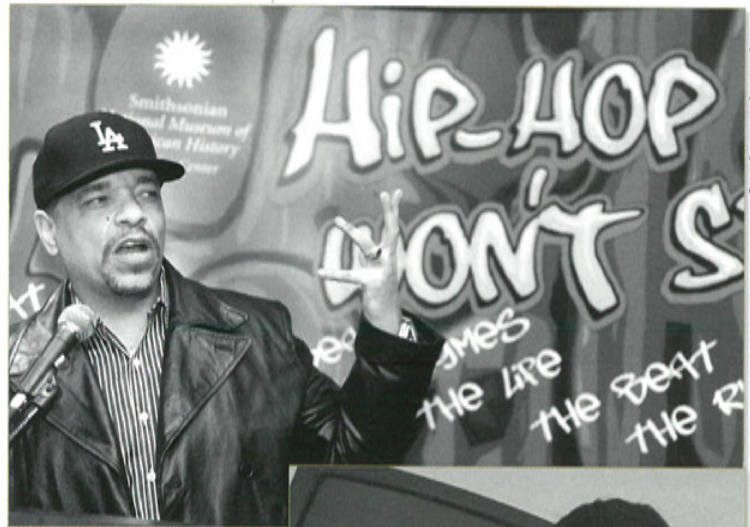
quite the same gravitas. When visitors stopped by Wallace House, I rarely talked about my proposal when I introduced myself, instead mentioning the study plan I'd used in my application, which I think had something to do with artificial intelligence.

Maybe I would have written a successful proposal without my Fellowship. Most authors, after all, get deals without the benefit of eight free months to work on their ideas and writing. But I cannot for the life of me figure out how they do it. At the University of Michigan, I took classes—from intellectual history to film—that inspired me and provided important new perspectives. I am still in touch with my music theory professor, who helped me develop some of my most important theories and pointed me to relevant source material. The members of my creative nonfiction workshop offered me feedback on my sample chapter, and so did Nicholas Delbanco, the acclaimed novelist and Knight-Wallace board member, who graciously agreed to read and discuss my work with me—an intimidating, but incredibly productive, experience.

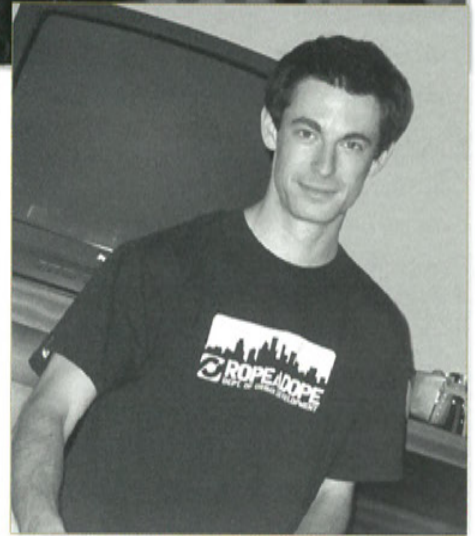
Here's something else that my Fellowship taught me: chutzpah. I returned to work with the intention of writing my book while holding down my day job. Again, authors do this all the time. But not me. I think Michigan spoiled me; I missed all that chin-stroking time I'd spent in the library or under a tree on the Diag. So I requested book leave. Yes, three months after returning from an eight-month Fellowship, I asked for another six months off. And I

got it. This is another lesson that I learned from Charles: if you make a ridiculous request with a straight face, nobody but you need know it's ridiculous.

Now I'm nearing the end of my book leave, and putting what I hope are the finishing touches on my manuscript. Honestly, I have no idea what will become of it. I don't know how my publisher will respond to it, when it will be published, what kind of reviews—if any—it will receive, whether it will have any impact, or



The rapper and the writer: Jason Tanz tracks Ice T from the Streets to the Smithsonian.



whether it will just waft away, unread, into the ether. But I do know this book is of an entirely different class than anything I could have written before I came to Michigan. And if it does sell, maybe I'll finally be able to afford that air-hockey table.

—Jason Tanz is a senior editor at Fortune Small Business magazine. He is currently writing his first book, tentatively titled *Walk This Way: A Shadow History of Hip-Hop in White America*, for Bloomsbury USA.

Timothy A. Chynoweth/Getty Images

Iranian Thieves and Bulgarian Bars: Advice On Publishing Internationally

—By David Edmonds '02

I've been asked to cobble together 500 words on "international book contracts"—which is about 400 words beyond my expertise. Fortunately, I've already used up 29 words. For what it's worth, here are some thoughts/advice (great, there goes another 15):

- ▶ Agents are worth it. Although some people manage without them, they handle all the boring and nasty bits of the book process, and most importantly allow you to remain chums with your editor.
- ▶ Retain as many rights as you can. In particular, hold back your language rights and sell them separately. In Britain, the standard deal involves giving ten percent to your agent and ten percent to the agent acting in the relevant foreign country. That means the author keeps 80 percent, which will probably be more than he/she can wrestle from the publisher.
- ▶ Unless your surname is Rowling, initials J.R., the Bulgarian and other translated versions of your book are unlikely to pay the mortgage. But they look nice on the shelf, and they haven't added to your workload. I'm not sure whether our

books are typical, but, guesstimating, the U.S. accounts for around 50 percent of our sales, Britain 30 percent and the rest of the world 20 percent. Royalty

- ▶ Don't expend too much atomic energy worrying about the Persian market. The Iranians may be covertly planning to develop nuclear weapons, but far more inexcusably, they have failed to

sign on to the International Copyright Conventions. Still, I was grateful when our brazen Iranian word-thief mailed over a copy of the translated book.

We've been astounded by how little involvement we've had with foreign sales. One day you sign the contract, 18 months later the translated book drops through the letter box. There's generally been little consultation about timing of publication, about marketing, about cover design, very few linguistic/translation queries. Still, if you suffer from high levels of control-freakery, you're free to stipulate contractual conditions. For example, we insisted on veto rights over the

German title of our second book after they lumbered the first book with a title so mind-numbingly

tedious that potential readers had been spotted nodding off before they'd even turned over the cover. (*Wie Ludwig Wittgenstein Karl Popper mit dem Feuerhaken drohte zzzzzz*)

Well, that's it, only got four words to....

— David Edmonds works for the BBC and has published, with co-author John Eidinow, *Bobby Fischer Goes to War* and *Wittgenstein's Poker: The Story of a Ten-Minute Argument Between Two Great Philosophers*. *Rousseau's Dog: Two Great Thinkers at War in the Age of Enlightenment*, also co-authored with Eidinow, was published in March.



David Edmonds and co-author John Eidinow. Their new book is *Rousseau's Dog: Two Great Thinkers at War in the Age of Enlightenment*.

rates for foreign sales are lower than English (by about three percent). Even so, given the teeny

size of most markets, the economics of publishing translated books is baffling. I watched our wonderfully enterprising Bulgarian publisher flogging copies of our book in a seedy bar, as though he was peddling narcotics.

- ▶ If you're expecting foreign sales, make sure you acquire worldwide rights for any photographs you use—this will save you much subsequent hassle with picture libraries.

BOOKS AND THE LIVES THEY COME FROM...AND CHANGE

Scott Huler '03

I not only shockingly actually studied my topic for the Fellowship, I wrote a book about it. (The auction for the rights to the book took place literally the day after I got the Fellowship. Fellowship Monday, book



Scott Huler and June Spence

contract Tuesday; comment from my wife, June: "Wednesday's going to be BORING.")

That book was *Defining the Wind: The Beaufort Scale and How a 19th-Century Admiral Turned Science Into Poetry*. I just returned from England, where I addressed a conference organized by the Royal Meteorological Society. The conference opened with Sir Ian McKellen providing a dramatic reading of the Beaufort Scale, demonstrating that I'm not the only madman to fall in love with it. The book was a BookSense 76 pick, a Harvard Bookstore Select 70 pick, a History Book Club pick, a Powells.com Fourteen Favorites pick, and a Strand Bookstore Best Biography, but the only actual award news I can share is that it was a finalist for the Ragan Old North State Award for books of nonfiction in North Carolina. "Finalist" is something of a meaningless term, however; it means that my book was apparently chosen first among the 30 books submitted for the award (at which point they called me). Then it turned out that it had actually only tied for first among the voters for the award (at which point they apologized, though with not nearly enough sincerity, in my opinion).

In the subsequent mano-a-mano runoff, *Defining* regrettably came in second to a book with a much greater North Carolina connection and thus

probably a much greater claim to a North Carolina award.

My wife, June Spence, also published a book that she finished while we were on my Fellowship. *Change Baby* is a wonderful novel that also has received wonderful reviews. Inexplicably, the Royal Meteorological Society has shown virtually no interest.

Sue Nelson '03

My book is *How to Clone the Perfect Blonde*, popular science, nonfiction. It was longlisted for the prestigious Aventis Science Book Award in 2004.

I started writing the opening chapter of this book during the 2002 fall Fellowship semester, in the evenings, after too much sherry. The book was divided, four chapters apiece, between myself and my husband and co-author, science writer Richard Hollingham. For us, it was a great experience. We edited one another's chapters, began to truly appreciate each other's discipline—mine physics, Richard's biology—and discovered that we worked well together both personally and professionally.

We learned that marketing is all when it comes to selling your book or even getting it off the ground in the first place, and that proofreaders miss a lot of stuff. Also, if you're not a "name," don't bank on getting much help from the publisher's publicity department. You are not their top priority. Or any priority. The publicists usually plow every resource into that book by a soap actress/TV presenter/second-rate pop star—the one who got paid several naughts more than you for the advance despite not even writing their own book in the first place. Let's face it, the publishers have to recoup that huge advance somehow. So those who are in least need of publicity usually get the most. Go figure, as you Yanks say. Most of our big broadcast interviews—TV and radio—were therefore initiated by ourselves through contacts.

Despite the critical recognition, our book was never a best seller so all thoughts of a life of luxury were put on hold—and we weren't paid a lot to write it either. But it was something we both genuinely wanted

to do and enjoyed writing. Amazingly, mostly through selling foreign rights—including Japan, Korea and the States—we even made money out of it. Richard has just completed a sample chapter for the same editor on British meteorologists and, due to another Fellowship, I'm mostly writing screenplays and science-based radio dramas. Though I do have three chapters of a novel if anyone's interested...



Sue Nelson and Richard Hollingham

Tim Wendel '96

My novel, *Castro's Curveball* (Ballantine Books, 1999), was rewritten during my Fellowship year with the help of Nicholas Delbanco and his incredible MFA class that included Elwood Reid and Joel Lovell. It's been optioned on and off to the movies, and it will be republished this fall by University of Nebraska Press.

The New Face of Baseball: The One-Hundred-Year Rise and Triumph of Latinos in America's Favorite Sport (Rayo/HarperCollins, 2003) was named Top History Book for 2004 by the Latino Literary Awards. Not bad for a gringo sportswriter.

My Man Stan (Arbutus Press, scheduled for May '06) is a novel for young readers (Grades 2–6) and opens in Ann Arbor. Hall of Fame hockey player Stan Mikita is a major character and penned the foreword. This is the first of the Magic Radio Series for kids.

My amazing spouse, Jacqueline Salmon, ghosted Jim Kuhn's *Ronald Reagan in Private: A Memoir of My Years in the White House*.

Micheline Maynard '00

I wrote *The End of Detroit: How the Big Three Lost Their Grip on the American Car Market*. It was published in hardcover in October 2003 and in paperback a year later by Random House. Website: www.endofdetroit.com

I began sketching out the proposal for what became *The End of Detroit* while I was a Fellow and got serious about it a year or two later, while I was teaching a course, "The Global Auto Industry" to MBA students at the Michigan Business School.

The End of Detroit made the *Business Week* Best Seller list and was named one of the Top Books of 2003 by Borders Books



Micheline Maynard

and Music. It was published in Japanese, Korean and Chinese and has become a best seller in Japan.

Jay Gallagher '80

The Politics of Decline: A Chronicle of New York's Descent and What You Can Do to Save Your State (Whitston Publishing Co.) was published in October 2005.

It's about how New York's government, called the nation's "most dysfunctional" by a NYU think tank in 2004, is helping to sink the state economically. It's the outgrowth of a series I did for the Gannett papers in New York in '03 and '04.

It was a great experience for several reasons. I stayed on the payroll when I did the bulk of the research, occasionally writing a series on what I had at that point. When it came time to convert the newspaper stories into a book, I restored almost

everything that had been edited out (the ultimate reporter's revenge). And I learned that when you put everything on this topic in one place, people are shocked—shocked at what goes on at the Capitol in a way that piecemeal newspaper stories never seem to inspire.

The major frustration was that I was finished months before publication, and had to do several updates as well as a new foreword to try to keep up with events. The long lag time is tough for someone who has had daily deadlines for most of the past 36 years (except for that delicious year in Ann Arbor).

In marketing the book I have had to get used to being nice to reporters, even ones who try to interview me without reading the book. The highlight of the promotional efforts so far was a story in an alternative weekly in Rochester. The cover depicts a large finger pointing out at the audience with the headline: "New York Sucks, and It's All Your Fault." (I blame citizen apathy as the ultimate cause of our woes.)

Robyn Meredith '99

I'm in the middle of writing my first book and wish I knew all that my fellow Fellows who have already written their books know. *The Elephant and the Dragon* will be published by Norton in the spring of 2007. The book is narrative non-fiction, and draws on my experience covering Asia for *Forbes* over the past four years. A summary:

The streets of India look like zoos: camels pull carts, elephants lumber past and monkeys race across roads. In China, men in Mao jackets pedal bicycles along newly-built highways, past skyscrapers shooting up like glassy bamboo. Yet exotic India is on the phone answering an 800 number for \$1 an hour. Communist China is as close as the local Wal-Mart, filled with goods made in China for \$1 a day.

The Elephant and the Dragon shows that the rise of India and China is about a significant shift in geopolitics, a thirst for oil, massive environmental change, and a future with lower prices along with softening American salaries. Not since the United States rose to prominence a century ago have we seen such tectonic shifts in global power. India and China are opposites who share this: a stunning ability to change our world.

Michael Vitez '95

For years, I never felt any pressure to write a book. I figured I'd write one if and when the urge ever hit me. Well, the urge finally did. I have lived in the Philadelphia area now for over 20 years, and I often bike a loop around Fairmount Park and the Schuylkill River that passes the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Virtually every time I ride by the steps I see somebody run up them like Sylvester Stallone did in *Rocky* and celebrate at the top. The original movie is 30 years old this year, yet the people still come here from all over the nation and the world. As they run, and when they reach the top of the museum steps, they all share a certain momentary joy.

One summer day, after stopping to talk with two runners from Denmark, I decided I wanted to do a book. I wanted to capture this joy, explain it, celebrate it with stories and pictures, and share it. What I discovered, after spending a year at the steps, is better than even I had expected. The world, increasingly, is filled with chaos, sadness, madness, and hate. The "Rocky steps" (as they have come to be known) offer an escape from that, if only for a few moments. Even better, they offer a tonic to the world's problems, a chance to celebrate hope. People come here and affirm their dreams. *Rocky* may have brought them here, but it is their own lives that they celebrate.

I recruited my friend and colleague Tom Galish, an *Inquirer* photographer, to do the book with me. We started on New Year's Day 2004, and we wrapped up the following New Year's Eve. Our method was simple. Tom and I would just show up at the steps. We looked like tourists—a camera around Tom's neck, a notebook in my pocket. We'd watch the steady stream of people as they approached the steps from both the top and bottom, and we quickly developed an ability to tell who was going to run the steps like Rocky. We'd position ourselves as best we could. We'd watch and listen and take photos as they ran, and only when they were finished celebrating, when their mission was accomplished, would I approach them and introduce myself. I'd tell them I was a staff writer with *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, but I was working on a book about people who run the Rocky steps. Many simply couldn't believe it. Some would gladly have spent hours talking to me (and a few of them did).



Michael Vitez

Our first few months, we gathered enough material to convince ourselves the idea was as rich as we had hoped. We got a New York agent who loved the idea, and she sent proposals to nine big publishing houses. All turned us down. So on my own I found Paul Dry Books in Philadelphia, a small but superb publisher. Paul truly got the idea, and we have had fun. Just trying to reach Sylvester Stallone was a great adventure.

Rocky Stories: Tales of Love, Hope and Happiness at America's Most Famous Steps will be published in September, and I'm sad to see the adventure come to an end. Writing this book has been wonderful, a chance to be creative in a completely new way. I see myself not only as a journalist, but as an entrepreneur, and I feel a great sense of accomplishment. I was always happy working on the Rocky book. As an experience, it ranks right up there with a Michigan Journalism Fellowship.

David Caldwell '94, Spouse

I've written *Speed Show*, about the popularity of Nascar. The publisher is the Kingfisher Division of Houghton-Mifflin. The book is to be published in the fall, but they're rushing it, so it catches as much of the Nascar season as possible.

What makes this interesting is that the book is part of a series that the *Times* is publishing for young-adult readers. As I've written the book, however, Houghton-Mifflin has become more interested in marketing the book for adult readers who've always been curious (but don't want to ask) about Nascar.

I'm pretty excited about the project,

because it will carry the *Times* logo and is being published by a top-line publisher and will be marketed heavily.

Ron French '03

Driven Abroad will be published by RDR Books in Spring 2006. It chronicles the movement of an assembly line that builds automotive wire harnesses from Michigan to Mexico, then to Honduras

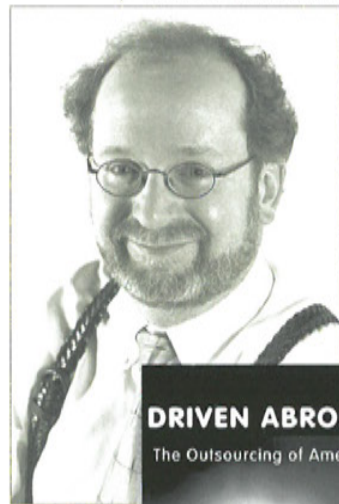
and finally to China. I explore the lives of the managers moving jobs around the globe like a giant game of Risk, as well as the lives of workers who seldom understand the global forces determining how long they are employed.

This book was an extension of a newspaper project, which itself was an extension of lessons learned during my Fellowship. My year in Ann Arbor surrounded by new friends from around the globe opened my

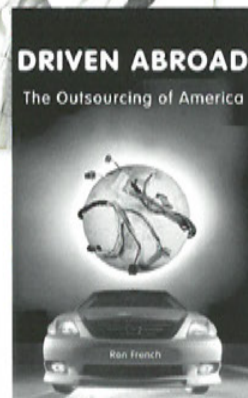
eyes to Americans' myopic view of the world. I wanted to give readers that same experience.

Having written a book is a great ego trip. Writing it, on the other hand, is pure torture. For newspaper reporters used to writing to length to fill a 10-inch hole, it is a daunting experience to hit the word-count tool on your computer and realize, Gee, just 40,000 more words and I'm done.

At some point in the process you break through a barrier built in your head by years of newspaper work, and instead of sweating how you can possibly write enough to fill a book, you begin worrying how you can fit all the good stuff in. Maybe writing your first book is like jumping out of an airplane for the first time. You may know in your head that your parachute will open, but it still scares the crap out of you. You'll be fine. You just have to take that first big step.



Ron French



Fatih Turkmenoglu '04

The Interpretations of the American Dream (July 2005) tells of our extended Fellowship and experiences in Michigan, over our 15 months in Ann Arbor as Knight-Wallace Fellows. There are three layers of the book: On the first, the reader gets acquainted with the Fellowship and our own experiences in the U.S. The second layer is the people around us—our friends, fellow Fellows, teachers, neighbors, school friends, Turks living in the area, etc. On the third layer, we have the country itself. What was happening in the U.S.? The Patriot Act, Paris Hilton, *American Idol*, consumption, shopping, Halloween, kids...

Today the publisher is planning to print a second edition. The publicity was very good. It appeared in many magazines and internet sites. I appeared on *CNN Türk* as a 15-minute special guest at the culture program. On Habertürk, I was a special guest of the day: one hour! I was invited twice by the *TRT*, national radio. I was guest speaker for Rotary members, universities, various companies. Especially among Turks living in the U.S., it became popular. I received many e-mails from them.

Idil Turkmenoglu '04, Spouse

I published *The Office Stories* in November 2005, and it's still on the best-seller list in Turkey.

This book is a collection of challenging essays on popular issues in career, people and organization management. Meanwhile a semi-real life story is told throughout the book, parallel to the essays: The story of my father, who has been working as a CEO for the last 35 years. The book presents two generations, different backgrounds and experiences but the very same issues in the offices: Office politics, de-motivating managers, staffing errors, victim psychology among employees, stealing from work, mobbing, self-fulfilling prophecies...

The book was written in Ann Arbor during our pregnancy and my husband's Fellowship. It is widely read among human resources people, professional organizations and trainers.

I did a show on national radio, and *The Office Stories* appeared in many magazines and newspapers. Some companies bought dozens of copies and gave it to its managers as a New Year's present.

Cynthia Barnett '05

Mirage: Florida and the Disappearing Water of the American East, due in April 2007, tells a tale of how over-consumption and unwise development is drying up water supply all over the east—astonishing, given that the eastern United States is one of the wettest places on the planet. The great water wars of the west have moved to the east. I use Florida as the narrative driver to tell tales of disappearing water all over the east, taking readers from the Everglades to sprawling Atlanta to the shores of the Great Lakes. Chapters cover wetlands drainage, privatization, the bottled-water industry, water wars, even the weather.

This book idea was part of my proposal to the Fellowship. Turns out I had no idea what was involved in writing a book proposal and sample chapters and trying to land a publisher. I have a full-time job and two small kids, so I would never have been able to do it without those nine months.

Courses in water policy helped me shape the content, and a writing class with Nicholas Delbanco helped me improve the narrative. I thought of the title while driving on I-94 in a snowstorm, but only after Charles told me that my original title was “awful.” One more thing: I went with the University of Michigan Press, maintaining my ties to Ann Arbor. I’m sure that landing the contract, too, would not have happened without the Fellowship.

Joanne Jacobs '92

I wrote *Our School: The Inspiring Story of Two Teachers, One Big Idea and the School That Beat the Odds* (Palgrave Macmillan, Nov. 24, 2005). It tells the story of a charter school created by two young teachers. Self-proclaimed “grumpy optimists” Greg Lippman and Jennifer Andaluz recruited students who were “failing, but not in jail” and promised them a chance to go to college.

The average Downtown College Prep student comes from a Mexican immigrant family and starts ninth grade with fifth-grade reading and math skills. All graduates in 2004 and 2005 went on to four-year colleges; 97 percent remain on track to earn a degree. DCP has hit a 731 on the Academic Performance Index, well above the state-wide average.



Joanne Jacobs

After 19 years as a San Jose *Mercury News* editorial writer and Knight Ridder columnist, I quit in 2001 to freelance, blog on education at joannejacobs.com and report and write *Our School*. I observed classes, faculty meetings, board meetings, disciplinary hearings, parent sessions and school assemblies. I shadowed the principal, sat in on a teacher evaluation, helped the Mock Trial Club and tutored ninth graders at the school. I hung around.

Our School shows how a do-it-yourself school with a work-your-butt-off philosophy can move students from the drop-out chute to the college ladder. Roberto finds his voice—in English—and fights his way to the honor roll. (He’s now studying agricultural business at Chico State.) Jorge, who’d read “ride the carousel” as “ride the carrot salad” as a freshman,

stands in the outfield joking that “fair is foul and foul is fair.” He’d read *Macbeth* in sophomore English. (Jorge is a sophomore at Cal State Monterey Bay.) The girls’ basketball team loses every game by more than 20 points, keeps playing and wins in the end. (The star player, a five-two Cambodian girl, is now a pre-med at Cal Poly. Another girl won a full scholarship to Mount Holyoke.)

While *Our School* puts DCP in the context of the charter school movement, it doesn’t pretend to be a scholarly study. I was shooting for Tracy Kidder meets *Up the Down Staircase*.

The book can be ordered on my blog, joannejacobs.com, or my new site, ourschoolbook.com.

Michele Stanush '95

I returned to the *Austin American-Statesman* after my Fellowship before summoning up the courage to take a bold and perhaps foolhardy step. I left to tackle fiction: novels and screenplays. On the book front, I’ve co-authored one novel, *All Honest Men* (about cotton and crime; published in 2003), and am working on two others: *A Piece of Cheese* (about theology, war and art; also as a co-author) and *Tonight the Inevitable Happened* (about the loves of a 93-year-old).

The move into fiction was a logical

progression. I love journalism; it’s one of the few professions remaining that actually encourages one to tell the truth. But fiction can also tell the truth, albeit in a somewhat different way. It involves peeling that odd onion we call human nature—exploring motivations, contradictions, the ways people skid along on psychological scar tissue. Fiction can also explore cultural trends and values.

All Honest Men, co-written with Claude Stanush (my father), is a biographical novel based on the true story of J. Willis Newton, a sharecropper’s son who fled the Texas cotton fields in the early 1900s to become a bank robber. On a deeper level, it’s a look at a pivotal period in U.S. history when the American Dream was changing from owning a patch of land to making big money—the more, the better, and to hell with how you got it. Not surprisingly, Willis Newton’s career was more lucrative than mine.

The book received a starred rating in *Kirkus Reviews*; was named a GEM by Pennsylvania-based Brodart Inc., a primary distributor of books to libraries and schools; was a BookSense 76 selection, and was reviewed/recommended by the American Library Association’s *Booklist* magazine. (Shameless call to publishers: We’re hoping for a paperback reprint.)

Surprisingly, I’ve discovered that I research fiction as compulsively as I did newspaper stories. A peek into the “novel section” of my industrial-grade file cabinets would reveal material on the economy of the Old South, the neurobiology of love, the Vietnam War, spiritual ecstasy, how redbone hounds chase down escaped convicts, the history of modern art, Roquefort cheese, Vatican II and geriatric courting—to name a few topics. I should add that I haven’t given up non-fiction: I’m also working on a book, *The Language of Pain*, with a talented rehab therapist who a decade ago helped save my arms, hurt by years of breakneck typing. The book will chronicle lessons learned over the therapist’s 17 years of body work and give practical advice for self-healing.

I can say with no risk of hyperbole that I divide my life into pre-Michigan and post-Michigan. The Fellowship came at a critical juncture in my career and gave me the validation and confidence to flap my wings and take off into risky areas of writing that I hope will contribute to something humanly worthwhile.

Our Great Geniuses

Lance Williams '87 published, with co-author Mark Fainaru-Wada, *Game of Shadows: Barry Bonds, BALCO and the Steroids Scandal that Rocked Professional Sports*. The book was excerpted in *Sports Illustrated* in March.

Lawrence MacDonald '89 is director of communication and policy at the Center for Global Development, an independent think tank in Washington, D.C.

Mike Lewis '91 finished his doctorate in media studies at Wayne State University and was appointed director of the Oakland University journalism program in Rochester, Mich.

Candy Cooper '93 quit her newspaper job last year and has been freelancing since then, with appearances in the *Columbia Journal-*

ism Review and *The New York Times*. She's also a contributor to an anthology of writing on stepfamilies, *My Father Married Your Mother: Writers Talk About Stepparents, Stepchildren and Everyone in Between*, due out in May from Norton.

Dan Ephron '00 is the new national security correspondent for *Newsweek*, based in Washington, D.C. He takes the job after five years in Jerusalem as a contract writer for the magazine.

Micheline Maynard '00 is the new Detroit bureau chief for *The New York Times*, covering the auto industry. Her book, *The End of Detroit: How the Big Three Lost Their Grip on the American Car Market*, published in 2003, is profiled on page 8 in this issue.

Douglas Johnson '01 interviewed his fellow Fellow, cartoonist Milt Priggee '01, on the *Voice of America* in February on the international debate over editorial cartoons. Anyone who missed it can find the replay under the "past programs" link on the VOA's website www.voanews.com. The show aired Feb. 8.

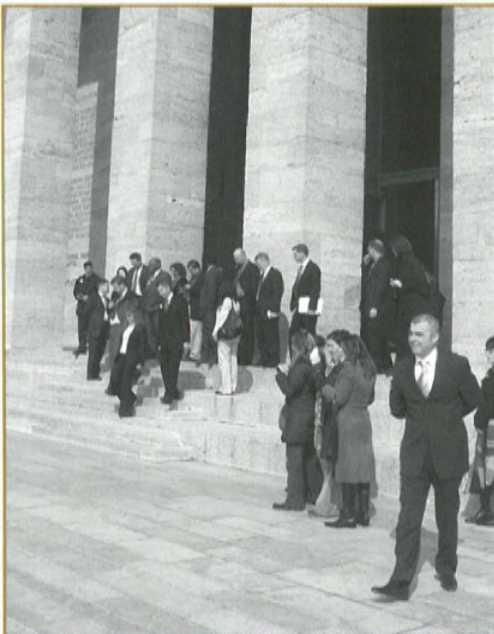
Miguel Wiñazki '03 assumed directorship of the Master of Journalism program at *Clarín* and Columbia University in Buenos Aires. He also directs the training department at *Clarín*.

**SAVE THE DATE:
BIG REUNION**

September 15–17, 2006

Send your doings to
Birgit Rieck at brieck@umich.edu

Around the World With KWF



Fara Warner

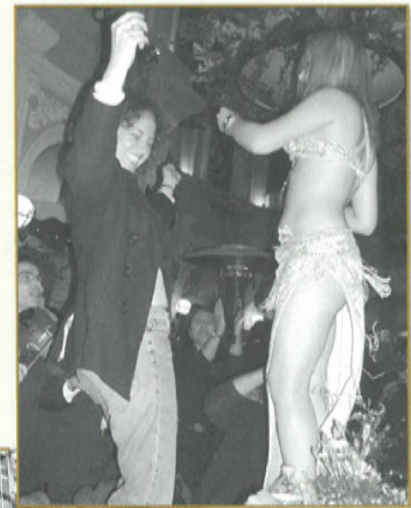
▲ In Ankara, Fellows visited the mausoleum of Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish republic.

► In Buenos Aires, Fellows Graham Griffith, left, and Christopher Carey attended a demonstration, along with Griffith's wife, J. Rainey Tisdale.

Fellows took learning on the road again, traveling to Buenos Aires in December and Istanbul in February, for the insights only travel can provide.



Gail Gibson



Jamie Bellis

▲ Vanessa Bauza '06 takes up belly dancing in Istanbul.

—Homer, Hemingway, continued from page 1

The principal issue for now is how the chain from author to reader will develop. The author hands the book to an editor (often through an agent) who prepares it for publication and sale to a wholesaler and/or retailer and eventually to the customer. The warp speed of technological change is putting intense pressure on that chain. As it stands, and has for centuries, books are printed and shipped to purchase points. The key components of the process are publishers and booksellers (who also supply libraries).

But given the distribution breakthroughs of the past ten years or so, mainly via the internet, the author can easily skip all the cumbersome middle stages and head right to the sale. The publisher and printer are irrelevant in that model and the bookseller could be overwhelmed by Google, Yahoo or Amazon which control the channels of Web distribution. That possibility and many others still to be devised are what give everyone in the world of books the shakes. It is hard to imagine a world without real books, edited and properly presented, without bookstores and libraries.

So, if we go back to the beginning with books as artifacts of civilization and the reading experience as a profound

element of comfort as well as knowledge, preserving the classic chain becomes a fundamental challenge. The current system is badly out of whack. Printed inventory has a wicked way of being inefficiently available. Publishers of hardcover books routinely get as much as 40 percent back unsold, a number that is untenable. As in other areas of modern life, we have to decide what should be changed, what should be preserved. And then have the wit to make both happen.

—Peter Osnos is founder and editor-at-large of *PublicAffairs Books*, a senior media fellow for *The Century Foundation* and was a *Michigan Journalism Fellow* in the program's first year, 1973-74. This essay appeared in slightly different form on *The Century Foundation's website*.



Peter Osnos '74

Publisher: Charles R. Eisendrath '75

Editor: Nancy Nall Derringer '04

Production and Design:

Kathleen Horn, Designer
Kelly Mitchell, Project Manager
UM Marketing Communications

Views expressed in the *Journal* are not necessarily those of the Fellowship Program or the University of Michigan.

Mike and Mary Wallace House
University of Michigan, 620 Oxford Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2635
Telephone: 734-998-7666
FAX: 734-988-7979
www.kwfellows.org

The Regents of the University

David A. Brandon, Ann Arbor;
Laurence B. Deitch, Bingham Farms;
Olivia P. Maynard, Goodrich;
Rebecca McGowan, Ann Arbor;
Andrea Fischer Newman, Ann Arbor;
Andrew C. Richner, Grosse Pointe Park;
S. Martin Taylor, Grosse Pointe Farms;
Katherine E. White, Ann Arbor;
Mary Sue Coleman, *ex officio*

University of Michigan

Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex,* color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity and Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator, Office of Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

*includes gender identity and gender expression

MUNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Knight-Wallace Journalism Fellows
University of Michigan
Mike and Mary Wallace House
620 Oxford Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2635

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ann Arbor, MI
Permit #144