

***THE PARADOX OF THE RESISTIVE STUDENT:
SOME THOUGHTS FROM A SECOND YEAR ASSISTANT PROFESSOR***

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For those of you who have access to HBO, you are probably familiar with *Arliss* – a show about a sports agent which begins: “I am Arliss Michael’s and I ...” Well, prior to actually becoming a college professor, I easily imagined saying: “I am Grace Ibanez Friedman and I teach college and graduate students.” The imaginary scene always ended with my smirking as Arliss does in each opening sequence. I don’t smirk now. My eyes were rudely opened by new experiences.

Why does the passive student still remain a relatively unexplored mystery to me, whereas resistive students are the very ones I have always torn my hair out over – fusing and fuming – trying to figure them out. I know that I am a passionate person. My childhood nickname isn’t Sarah Bernhardt for nothing. My husband recently said to me, “You feel deeply offended when the class or student doesn’t get it.” This was after hearing me endlessly carrying on about one particular group of students who were seemingly acting out in one graduate course during the fall semester. My husband’s comment was a helpful insight into my personal psychology, but not that of my students.

These so-called resistive students really puzzled me. Yet, these difficult students were producing the best work for me. Their work was clearly superior in every way: well-written, reflective and in some cases highly original. What was I missing?

I especially recall handing back a reaction paper with an A- grade which just infuriated one student. She waved her corrected paper directly in my eyes, right in my face, and told me in no uncertain terms that she had done all I had indicated and what was expected. I stepped back and pointed out where that wasn’t exactly true: there was one section that was a bit too sketchy. Tears came to her eyes. Angry tears. She stormed out for a cry and later came back with her arms crossed over her chest. For the next 2-3 weeks, she would make no eye contact or speak to me unless directly called upon. From my perspective an A- grade isn’t exactly failing, and I had told all the students that they could improve their grades by a rewrite due the next week. What was the big whoop?

Another case in point was the student who badgered me with almost daily questions, both face to face and in e-mail form. They were all basically the same question; so either she really didn’t understand my assignment or she was refusing to do it as I indicated it had to be done. I had required that the three reaction papers chosen for her final paper had to be research based, and not something lifted from the home page of a local newspaper or a teacher newsletter. I require this of undergraduates, why should it be different for the graduate level? At first she insisted that no such articles existed.

DATES TO NOTE:



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

The College Library in the New Age

2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Location to be announced

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH

Civility as a Basis for Excellence

12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

Council Hall

TUESDAY, MARCH 11TH

The Honors Program and Its Facilities

12:15 to 1:15 p.m.

Honors Lounge, St. Augustine Hall

TUESDAY, MARCH 18TH

The Core: Competencies and Courses

12:15 to 1:15 p.m.

Marillac 139

THURSDAY, MARCH 27TH

A Look at Our Student Population

12:15 to 1:15 p.m.

Marillac 139

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2ND

Motivating Students Effectively

4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Faculty Club

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9TH

Residence Life and the Faculty

12:00 to 1:30 p.m.

Community room in Donovan Hall

THURSDAY, APRIL 10TH

Faculty Research Forum

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Council Hall

To register please call the CTL
at x1859 or email
CTL@stjohns.edu

**This newsletter is published
monthly during the academic year
by the Center for Teaching and
Learning.**

**Managing Editor: Lisa Getman
Assistant Editor: Maria Barnett**

This was after the university's research librarian showed the entire class how to do on-line searches of research based articles. When I just refused to accept her explanation, she continued to insist that it was too difficult for her to access these articles. Then, she complained that the order of work progression I had suggested was too difficult to accomplish in the time allotted. Again, why the commotion when all others were complying?

My last example comes from a student in the same class who did all her work on time, and didn't protest in any verbal way but sported a look of total contempt throughout most of semester. At times I wanted to video tape her facial expressions, just to have another person validate my perhaps distorted perceptions. Was I being paranoid? Perhaps I have been known to be too sensitive. She was also one of those persons who is a natural leader, and she slowly influenced others – they didn't go down her route, but made up their own signals of disrespect: side jokes, smirking looks, having to be asked to quiet down when others spoke. Again, was I that boring or incompetent that I deserved the contempt?

In order to solve these concerns or at least resolve my growing frustration, I ended up crafting a different solution for each student. I recalled reading John Hersey's book, *The Child Buyer*, at 17 years of age and being totally shocked. I thought naively at that point that people did the things they did because of duty to family or whatever singularly propelled them. I didn't really know that many kinds of motives play a role in human behavior. The novel told the story of a stranger who comes into town to convince the family of a very precocious little boy to allow him to take the child to an advanced research facility. The facility was building computers (then a novelty) and the director wanted to study how this boy's mind worked. The entire community goes up in arms in unwavering protest. But by the end, the child buyer walks out with the boy – who willingly joins him. The child buyer has given everyone in this small town what they really wanted: it wasn't money except in a few cases, but instead – love, recognition, a feeling of belonging to something bigger. I realized then that the world was a very complex place. It really scared me.

In a sense Daniel Goldman (best selling author) years later put Hersey's insight in much more positive terms, that some of us have better emotional intelligence than others. Some of us can figure out what gets a person to not only go along, but also be willing to do what's asked. Unfortunately, I am like the fellow from Missouri; I need to learn life's lessons over and over. Show me and I learn.

Thus, I decided to study my students more carefully. I finally came up with some working hypotheses about these students: the first student had obviously felt surprised and betrayed by my lack of understanding that only a perfect grade was acceptable to her. I tried to undo this later by having her read one of her papers aloud to the class: they just spontaneously applauded when she was done. It was clearly a work of art, not just a paper for class, and we were all moved by it. Her arm - crossing stopped.

My second student, I later realized, was a brand new teacher and was overwhelmed by her responsibilities. She needed shoring up and extra reassurance to accomplish learning her dual role as new teacher and new graduate student. I used more humor and developed more patience with her questions, and she calmed down.

My third student clearly had no idea how strong her personal influence was. Once when I was certain I might be late to class, I called her up and asked her to open the class, take attendance as well as welcome the expected guest speaker. She was really shocked that I had called her. To me it had become obvious that if she was in charge, all would go well. Later I spoke with her about a future career in supervision and/or leadership. Again, she was surprised. I needed to notice her uniqueness more openly. *(continued on page 6)*

Faculty News

January 2003

Professor Joseph Adolphe (Fine Arts, adolphej@stjohns.edu) showed his artwork at the "Holiday Small Works Show II" held at the Object/Image Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (December 2002).

Dr. George Ansalone (Sociology and Anthropology, ansalong@stjohns.edu) conducted a workshop, "Delivering Instruction to the College Student: An Assessment of Educational Delivery Systems and Learning Styles," for the faculty of Providence College, Rhode Island as part of their Annual Professional Development Day; also presented a paper, "Educational Delivery Systems: Prescriptions for Academic Success or Failure," at the annual meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Educational Research in Jacksonville, FL (November 2002); published "The Impact of Tracking on Attrition" in the *Michigan College Journal of Research and Practice* (Fall 2002) and "Poverty, Tracking and the Social Construction of Failure" in *The Journal of Children and Poverty* (Spring 2003).

Professor Ross Barbera (Fine Arts, barberar@stjohns.edu) was named "Artist of the Month" for December 2002 by the Liquitex Company; his artist's statement and photos of his work are shown on www.liquitex.com and also on the new Department of Fine Arts' website, www.sjuart.com.

Dr. Fredericka Bell-Berti (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, bellf@stjohns.edu) presented a paper "Rhythmic patterns in the speech of developmental apraxia of speech and articulation-disordered children," with co-authors including current student Joanne Paoli, and alumna Maria Passadakes, at the Pan-American/Iberian Meeting on Acoustics in Cancun (December 2002).

Dr. Nancy Colodny (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, colodnyn@stjohns.edu) published an article, "Interjudge and intrajudge reliabilities in fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES) using the penetration-aspiration scale: A replication study," in the current number of *Dysphagia*.

Dr. Frank Coppa (History, coppaf@stjohns.edu) serves as Editor in Chief and contributor to the two volume, *The Great Popes Through History: An Encyclopedia*

(Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002); his article therein is "Pope Pius IX (1846-78): The Last Pope-King" in vol II.

Dr. Nancy Eng (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, engn@stjohns.edu) gave a paper at ASHA in Atlanta: "Language Perception in Second Language Learners: The Effect of the Listening Environment"; delivered a lecture to the Long Island Speech, Language and Hearing Association: "Bridging the Gap between Research and Clinical Practice"; also served as Issue Editor of the current number of *Topics in Language Disorders*.

Dr. Nancy Everhart (Library and Information Science, everharn@stjohns.edu) has been serving as a developer/evaluator for the New York State Department of Education and National Evaluation Systems in the design of a content exam for school library media Specialist Certification in New York State and attended a three-day work session in Saratoga Springs (December 2002); has been named Research Editor for *Knowledge Quest*, the official journal of the American Association of School Librarians; has published the chapter, "Evaluation of School Library Media Programs" in the 2003 Educational Media and Technology Yearbook.

Dr. Jeffrey Fagen (Psychology, fagenj@stjohns.edu) published a book which he co-edited with Dr. Harlene Hayne of The University of Otago (New Zealand) entitled *Progress in Infancy Research* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003).

Dr. Louis Folen (Sociology and Anthropology, folenol@stjohns.edu) chaired a discussion on "Leadership and School Organization," a roundtable at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago IL (August 2002); was given the Dolphin Award for outstanding teaching by a member of the adjunct faculty, presented by Dr. Marlene Springer, President of the College of Staten Island (June 2001).

Dr. Robert Forman (English, formanr@stjohns.edu) published an article, "On Marsha Norman," in *Critical Theory* (June 2002); and reviews of Elizabeth

Cook's *Achilles*, and Iain Pears' *The Dream of Scipio* for *Magill's Literary Annual* (2002).

Dr. Donna Geffner (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, geffnerd@stjohns.edu) spoke at the ASHA Convention in Atlanta last month on "Current Trends in Treatment of CAPD;" presented a poster session entitled, "Rhyming Skill Comparisons of First kGrade Good and Poor Readers"; also served on ASHA's Committee on Honors.

Dr. John Greg (Speech, Communication Sciences & Theatre, gregj@stjohns.edu) and colleague Mary Ann Renz presented a short course on teaching small group communication at NCA in New Orleans.

Professor David Gregory (Law, gregoryd@stjohns.edu) recently presented papers at conferences at Yale Law School and Emory Law School; regarding the labor relations situation at United Airlines, he was quoted in the *New York Times* on November 19, 29, and December 5 and 6; regarding a federal court holding unconstitutional the Alabama Supreme Court publicly posting the Ten Commandments, he was quoted in the *Chatanooga Tennessee Times* and *Free Press* and in the *Associated Press* on November 23 and 24; regarding the New York subway threatened strike, he was quoted in the *New York Times* on December 12, 13 and 17, in the *NY Daily News* on December 13, in *Bloomberg News* on 15 and 16, and in the *Deseret News*, Salt Lake City on December 13; was interviewed as a labor law commentator on the subway labor management relations and negotiations on NY Channel 1 TV on December 13, 14, 16, and 17, on WNBC Channel 5 on December 15 and 16, on Fox Channel 5 TV on December 16, and on WCBS Channel 2 TV on December 17.

Dr. Irvin Hirshfield (Biological Sciences, hirshfii@stjohns.edu), with Sabina Hirshfield, Ph.D., gave a father/daughter lecture in his General Microbiology course; Sabina presented information on the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS and he lectured on the biology of the virus and the disease (December 2002).

Dr. John Hogan (Psychology, hoganj@stjohns.edu) was elected President of the Academic Division of the New York State Psychological Association for 2003; received the first Helmut E. Adler Award from the New York Academy of Sciences for "distinguished contributions to the history of psychology" and delivered a lecture following the award ceremony titled "People and Places in the History of Psychology"; is the author of three recent chapters: "June Etta Downev: Pioneer of

Pioneer of Developmental Psychology" and "Anne Anastasi: Master Differential Psychologist and Psychometrician" in G. Kimble and M. Wertheimer (Eds.) *Portraits of Pioneers in Psychology*, Volume V. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2003); participated in a symposium at the annual meeting of the New York State Psychological Association: "Launching Your Career in Academic and Research Psychology" (June 2002); and presented a paper (with doctoral student Thomas Vaccaro) at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association: "Recent Developments in Norwegian Psychology" (August 2002); has also been named to the Editorial Advisory Board for the *Handbook of International Psychology*, Eds. Stevens & Cummings (Sage Publishing, 2002-2003).

Dr. Michael Hostetler (Speech, Communication Sciences & Theatre, hostetlm@stjohns.edu) gave a paper at NCA in New Orleans, "Buying Alaska--Embracing a Continent: Charles Sumner's One Man Rhetorical Campaign;" also had a paper published, "Joe Lieberman at Fellowship Chapel: Civil Religion Meets Self-Disclosure," in *The Journal of Communication and Religion*.

Dr. Peggy Jacobson (Speech, Communication Sciences and Theatre, jacobsop@stjohns.edu) presented a poster titled "Past Tense Use and Grammaticality Judgments in Bilingual Children with Specific Language Impairment" at the annual meeting of the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association in Atlanta (November 2002); also received a faculty seed grant on "Morphology in Bilingual School-aged Children & Adults;" published an article titled "Morphology in incipient bilingual Spanish-speaking preschool children with specific language impairment" in *Applied Psycholinguistics* (2002).

Dr. Theodore D. Kemper (Sociology and Anthropology, kempert@stjohns.edu) published a chapter, "A Structural Approach to Social Movement Emotions," in *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements*, Eds., Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper and Francesca Polletta (University of Chicago Press, 2001); and a chapter, "Predicting Emotions in Groups: Some Lessons from September 11," in *Sociological Review Monograph Emotions and Sociology*, Ed., Jack Barbalet (Blackwell, 2002).

Professor Thomas Kerr (Fine Arts, kerrt@stjohns.edu) rendered two illustrations for the Viewpoints page of *New York Newsday* for the articles, "Sexism Fuels Women's AIDS Risks", and Sheryl McCarthy's, "Central Park 5 Can Dream Again" (December 2002); also illustrated for the INX syndicate on the subject of

"U.N. Inspectors Looking for Underground Weapons"; recently completed the initial phase of the new Department of Fine Arts website, www.sjuart.com.

Dr. Azzedine Layachi (Government and Politics, layachia@stjohns.edu) published "Morocco: Will Tradition Protect the Monarchy?" in Judith S. Yaphe, Ed., *The Middle East in 2015: The Impact of Regional Trends on U.S. Strategic Planning*, (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2002).

Professor Martha L. Mackey (Pharmacy and Administrative Sciences, mackeym@stjohns.edu) presented a workshop to physicians, pharmacists, nurses and other health professionals on "Risk Management Strategies and Liability Concerns for Health Professionals" in Orlando, FL; this event was sponsored by University Learning Systems, a national continuing education provider (December 2002).

Dr. Stephen Paul Miller (English, millers@stjohns.edu) published a book essay: "Ted Berrigan's Influence: Eileen Myles, Bob Holman, and Sparrow," in *The World in Time and Space: Towards a History of Innovative American Poetry in Our Time*, edited by Edward Foster and Joseph Donahue (Jersey City, NJ: Talisman House Publishers, 2002); gave a lecture at the City University of New York Graduate Center concerning Alan Turing; a lecture at NYU to foreign students concerning baseball and America; presented a paper concerning fascism and literature at the SUNY Cortland Conference on Language and Literature; presented poetry readings at The Bowery Poetry Club, Cornelia Street Café, and The Ear Inn.

Dr. Douglas Rasmussen (Philosophy, rasmusd@stjohns.edu) presented a paper: "Human Flourishing and the Right to Liberty: A Perfectionist Basis for Non-Perfectionist Politics," at Mont Pelerin Society, London (October 2002); published a chapter "Aristotle and Modern Politics" in *Aristotelianism, Commerce, and the Liberal Order*, (University of Notre Dame Press, 2002); chaired a session of the American Semiotic Association on John Deely's "Four Ages of Understanding" at the American Catholic Philosophical Association convention, Cincinnati, OH (November 2002); participated as a discussant in a colloquium on "The Philosophy of Natural Law in Rommen" sponsored by Liberty Fund and the Liberal Institute, Gramado, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (November 2002); gave a lecture on "The Philosophical Significance of Ayn Rand," to the Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies and the Liberal Institute, Porto Alegre, Brazil (November 2002).

Dr. Kelly Rocca (Speech, Communication Sciences &

Theatre, roccak@stjohns.edu) was respondent at the panel for "The Top Papers in Instructional Communication" at the National Communication Association Convention in New Orleans and also helped to plan the convention (November 2002).

Rev. Jean-Pierre Ruiz (Theology and Religious Studies, ruizj@stjohns.edu) published a book chapter "Die Bibel und der Diskurs der Latino/a Theologen in den Vereinigten Staaten. Lektionen aus einer keineswegs unschuldigen Geschichte," in *Glaube an der Grenze: Die US-amerikanische Latino-Theologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 2002); published a chapter, "Peter," in *The Great Popes Throughout History: An Encyclopedia*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2002).

Dr. Robert O. Stanton (Mathematics and Computer Science, stantonr@stjohns.edu) was reelected Vice President of the Long Island Daylily Society.

Professor Michael S. Torre (Clinical Pharmacy Practice, torrem1@stjohns.edu) acquired an unrestricted educational grant from Therasense, Inc. to fund and facilitate pharmacy continuing education programs in the areas of diabetes pharmacotherapy and self-monitoring of blood glucose; presented 7 continuing education programs to a total of 640 pharmacists in the northeastern United States at locations in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont and Massachusetts (Fall 2002).

Dr. Julie Upton, R.S.M. (Theology and Religious Studies, uptonj@stjohns.edu) published an essay, "H.A. Reinhold: Architect of the Liturgical Movement in America," in *Benedict in the World: Portraits of Monastic Oblates*, edited by Linda Kulzer and Roberta Bondi (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002).

Dr. Scott Williams (Fine Arts, willias1@stjohns.edu) exhibited his artwork in the "Holiday Small Works Show II" at the Object/Image Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (December 2002).

If you would like to send an entry to "Faculty News," the deadline for the February issue is February 3rd. We prefer that you e-mail the information to us at CTL@stjohns.edu. But if that is not possible, then send a typed copy of your announcement to our office located in Bent Hall, room 281. We reserve the right to edit all material received.

Maria Barnett, Assistant Editor

(The Paradox of the Resistive Student continued from page 2)

Looking over the lessons of this semester, I now realize what a really complex job effective college level teaching is. Combining the roles of entertainer, scholar, researcher, and psychologist is no small matter. So much for my earlier pipe dream of a cushy job in my latter years! Perhaps, too, this article should be renamed: The Search for a Unified Theory of Student Motivation: the never-ending quest.

REVALUING THE JOY OF LEARNING

Maura C. Flannery

There are four biologists whose writings are particularly important to me: the botanist Agnes Arber (1879-1960), the ecologist George Evelyn Hutchinson (1903-1991), the physiologist Homer Smith (1895-1962), and the microbiologist Hans Zinsser (1878-1940). They shared a love of learning, a love so intense that it could not be contained within their scientific work. It is as if their curiosity and zest for knowing couldn't be stopped by disciplinary boundaries; they needed to explore the historical and philosophical implications of their work, and even to write creatively about it. Arber wrote *The Mind and the Eye* on the philosophy of biology, while Hutchinson wrote essays on such subjects as the leaves carved into pillars in Southwell Cathedral. Smith produced two wonderful novels, *Kamongo, or the Lungfish and the Padre* (1932) and *The End of Illusion* (1935), and Zinsser is best known now for his classic "biography" of typhus, *Rats, Lice and History* (1935).

Who, in this day and age, cares about people with old-fashioned values such as enjoying learning simply for the fun of it? Today learning is much more serious. Our students go to college in order to get jobs; learning is pragmatic. It is not an aesthetic experience, but a work experience. They work to learn so they can enter the work force at a higher rung than if they hadn't gone to college.

My four biologists belong to a different age, with different values. The reason I can relate to them is that I had parents who also loved learning simply for its own sake. But they didn't just read, they shared. With them, as with my four, learning was tied to telling others about what they learned. My four biologists did it in writing,

my parents did it in the kitchen and living room.

Often, particularly when I am preparing for a new semester, I think of my parents' gift to me, and about how to give this same gift to my students. The need to transmit a love of learning simply for its own sake seems particularly urgent today. I do not think it is coincidental that for the last 30 years higher education has been stressing the practical benefits of a college education in terms of standard of living and that there is now a crisis of values in business. We have made money our greatest value and have forgotten what got most of us into higher education to begin with—the joy of learning. In addition, we have become so caught up with the business model of education, so focused on assessment and productivity, that we have ignored the aesthetic or affective side of our work, the part that is hardest to assess and to put a dollar value on.

If our economy is headed into hard times, and we continue to see success in life merely in monetary terms, the depression will be more than just economic. Our emphasis on money as the measure of success has fueled the greed causing this economic crisis. If academe doesn't value learning for its own sake, why should society as a whole do so? It is time to take up again the values that drove my parents and my four scholars. Pleasure in learning is what we have to reintroduce as a focus in higher education if we are to be serious about life-long learning. This concept is often discussed in relation to helping people learn new skills so they will continue to be successful in the market place, but a more essential reason for encouraging life-long learning is simply the sheer pleasure in learning something new, at any age.