

The Longwood Symphony Orchestra performs at Jordan Hall.



music lovers at the Longwood Medical Area (ranging from students to doctors to chaplains) founded the group in 1982, and about 85 percent of the orchestra's members still work in healthcare. That doesn't surprise its president, Lisa Wong '79, who used to play her violin in both the Harvard-Radcliffe and Bach Society Orchestras. "The kind of dedication and precise training you need to get as a musician," she says, "translates well into the dedication and precise thinking you do as a medical professional."

Wong joined the group shortly after its inception, but by 1991 she and a number of other members felt that simply showing up once a week to play music "didn't seem to be enough." The LSO therefore decided to organize a symposium with the Boston-based Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, which was launching a program to send medical students to underserved areas of the United States. The two-day event included panel discussions on HIV/AIDS and domestic violence, and culminated in a concert featuring the LSO and cellist Yo-Yo Ma '76, D.Mus. '91. For further guidance the group turned to Jonathan McPhee, a sometime guest conductor who was then music director for the Boston Ballet. "When I first came into contact with them, they were just a bunch of doctors playing together for fun," he remembers. "But whenever you've got that many Type-A people in a room, you're going to have growth."

The orchestra now partners with non-profit medical organizations for each of its four yearly concerts. (The nonprofit groups buy discounted tickets and then sell them to earn the difference; concertgoers also can, and do, make larger donations.) To date, the LSO has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for more than 25 organizations, including the March of

Dimes, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program.

In 2004 McPhee agreed to become the LSO's conductor (in addition to his Boston Ballet job). "When I took the group on,"

he says, "it was really because I believe in the good work they do in the community and I felt I could help them continue to build their model." The American Symphony Orchestra League recently took note, too, and gave the LSO the 2007

MetLife Award for Excellence in Community Engagement.

This summer, about a third of the group's 125 members will tour in England, and Wong dreams of someday taking the orchestra to a developing country where the doctors and therapists could practice both their hobby and their professions.

"Sometimes you're in a scurry over at the hospital, trying to get to rehearsal, and you wonder if it's worth it," says Wright. "But then you get there for five minutes, and yup, it was."



Visit [harvard-mag.com/extras](http://harvard-mag.com/extras) to listen to the Longwood Symphony Orchestra CD, "The Sounds of Healing."

## Connecting with China

CHINA DISORIENTS the visitor. The scale and bustle of its cities—propelled by the greatest economic growth and urban migration in history—overwhelm. The currency features Mao's likeness, but new luxury apartment towers have displaced commoner housing all around the site of this summer's Olympics in his capital city. The ubiquitous advertisements for Western consumer goods in Shanghai symbolize openness to the world, but during the March protests in Tibet, *China Daily* duly reported overseas Chinese students' outrage at purported distortions by "the Western Goebbels' Nazi media." Along a Shanghai thoroughfare near the "Cowboy Boot Bar," laundry dries on bamboo poles extended from balconies to the passing telephone wires; at street level, a retailer's lingerie display would make Victoria's Secret close the curtains.

Perhaps it should not surprise that such contrasts, arising within a generation of the Cultural Revolution, can disorient the Chinese, too. Under the twin pressures of the one-child policy and the migration of 150 million rural workers to urban jobs (with a quarter-billion more expected to follow within 20 years), traditional, extended families have shrunk. Frantic growth and projects like the Olympics have uprooted whole communities and created new ones; what

will it mean for the way people live, for instance, as 97 new airports open by 2020?

During a recent visit, some of these issues were tackled by alumni and fellows who have spent time in Massachusetts, by Harvard faculty members and their academic partners in China, and by panelists at the Harvard Alumni Association's (HAA) conference in Shanghai (March 28-30). They also looked deep into China's history, analyzed its present challenges, and tried to support its pursuit of a more fulfilling future for its 1.3 billion people.

THE STATISTICS in official accounts of every aspect of China's transformation obscure as much as they explain. The pace and scope of change demand the telling of individuals' stories, of neighborhoods enduring the whirlwind—the tools of social anthropology. But that discipline has scarcely existed in the Chinese academy, apart from ethnographies of minority groups within the People's Republic.

Now, Pan Tianshu,



Ph.D. '02, one of perhaps a dozen western-trained social anthropologists in the country, is pioneering the field. Trained by faculty members including Rabb professor of anthropology Arthur Kleinman (who has worked in China since 1978 and in Taiwan the prior decade), Pan described how he inserted himself into one of Shanghai's "lower quarter" neighborhoods. His dissertation details the effects of the "unemployment scheme" that stripped state-enterprise jobs from "work-unit persons" during China's economic reforms. In response, they began besieging the official neighborhood organizations, once organs of social control, for job aid and welfare.

These same marginal city dwellers—once Mao's vanguard class—saw their neighborhoods targeted for clearance and redevelopment. Pan said that their initial embrace of the promise of better housing was followed by mourning for the loss of community, and ultimately anger at inadequate compensation. More generally, he said, the residents have suffered from a "change of time-space," a "compression" of their lives and the city's meaning for them.

Now an assistant professor at Fudan University's School of Social Development and Public Policy—itself created only in 2004—the energetic Pan is in a hurry to bring such qualitative, human-

istic research into China's more technocratic, quantitative academic mainstream. (The importance of doing so *throughout* China's higher education system was a principal theme of the HAA keynote address by Geisinger professor of history William C. Kirby, director of the Fairbank Center for East Asian Research. He observed that for centuries, imperial China's examination system brought the most accomplished humanists into high state service precisely because they were broadly learned, *not* because they were experienced administrators or—as are most current senior leaders—engineers.)

Pan teaches four courses per term and edits authorized translations of exemplary American works. Among them are books by mentors Theodore Bestor, professor of anthropology; senior lecturer Rubie Watson; and Kleinman, whose *What Really Matters* contains a shattering portrait of a doctor whose life was all but destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and by repeated personal betrayals. Thus Pan introduces a new perspective into China's contemporary discourse on itself.

PAN'S ACADEMIC WORK touches on other broad changes in Chinese life. Not only work and neighborhood but family have been redefined. During President Drew Faust's visit to Shanghai No. 3 Girls High School (where a student greeted her, "Good afternoon, respectable president"), she listened as a student explained the appeal of extracurricular groups: "We are the only child in the family, so we seldom have the chance to organize such big programs." Faust said that Chinese students at Harvard had told her "how much they felt they were the prod-

uct of being only children."

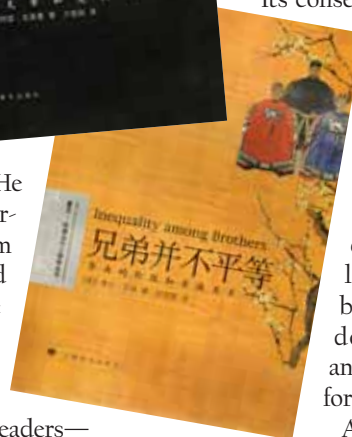
Across the society, Pan said, citizens refer to the "four-two-one" family (grandparents, parents, child), an abrupt shift from the past resulting from the strict family-planning policy.

Its consequences range from altered family experiences to China's looming rush toward the uncertain demographics of hundreds of millions of elderly citizens—living longer, but bereft of traditional domestic supports and as yet unprovided for in other ways.

Amid so much rapid dislocation, Chinese experts report more mental-health problems: depression, pervasive anxiety, drug abuse, eating disorders, even Internet addiction. There is also greater willingness, at least in urban centers, to recognize and address such challenges—best symbolized by the new Shanghai Mental Health Center (SMHC), a treatment and teaching complex considered the standard-setter for China. The 900-bed facility, and a larger unit where geriatric, rehabilitation, and combined mental-infectious-disease cases are cared for, now handle more than 4,000 hospitalizations and a third of a million outpatient visits annually, according to Xu Yifeng, professor of psychiatry and incoming chair of the Chinese Psychiatrist Association.

In China, proposed national legislation on mental illness has been through 10 drafts since 1985 but remains unadopted, and medical training is less specialized than in the United States, so fellowships for one or two professionals annually to study at Harvard have played a significant role in educating SMHC's staff members, and in advancing care. (Xu was one of the first such fellows, in the late 1990s.) In a group meeting with several former fellows, center president Xiao Zeping emphasized, "All the candidates come back as a master of the hospital," prepared to lead a unit or department.

She said of her colleagues that the Free-



**Above: Translations of works by Harvard scholars Arthur Kleinman (top) and Rubie Watson, edited by their former student Pan Tianshu. Below, Peking University students Zhou Jia and Liu Jiang, and Professor Deng Xiaonan, are part of an international consortium transforming the study of Chinese history.**





man Foundation Fellowships, coordinated through Kleinman in his Harvard Medical School (HMS) capacity—he is professor of psychiatry and professor of medical anthropology—and Fogarty Fellowships underwritten by the National Institutes of Health, “change their mentality and their knowledge.” The returning fellows, she added, “have a large influence on students, policy, and the culture”; several play significant roles in advising on China’s mental-health policies and care system.

Chen Jue, a 2004–2005 Fogarty Fellow, conducted research on eating disorders. After observing group therapy at Harvard hospitals, she introduced group-therapy techniques in her eating-disorders clinic at SMHC, and reports “much better success.” Cheng Wenhong, a vice professor, used part of her fellowship year, in 2003–2004, to observe at Children’s Hospital, before she established a clinic for adolescents.

Predating even the earliest exchanges for mental health were joint efforts to strengthen the foundations of modern public health in China. At Fudan University’s School of Public Health, near SMHC, Professor Chen Jie recalled studying at the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) in 1985–1986. Her focus then was on hospital management and health economics; today, she teaches graduate courses in hospital management and in the assessment of new healthcare technologies and practices. Her Ministry of Health-affiliated laboratory evaluates the efficacy of drugs, devices, and procedures proposed for use throughout China’s medical system (and advises on such topics throughout Asia).

Chen has chaired the Harvard affiliates of the Shanghai Overseas Returned Scholars Association, a role now passing to Qian Xu, the school’s vice dean. Qian studied maternal and child health at HSPH and Tufts in 1992–1993. Both speak passionately about their continuing contacts with colleagues in Boston and their strong desire to keep in touch more closely and regularly. Underscoring the point, SMHC’s Xiao said the center maintains relationships with dozens of academic institutions worldwide, but Harvard’s training role is the most extensive and important—of particular value because “the U.S. is the engine of the world”

**Students at Shanghai No. 3 Girls High School performed traditional music for President Faust.**

for the development of science.

MANY SIMILAR professional and academic ties, some directed at pressing new priorities, were evident throughout a week’s travel. On a weekday afternoon, a presentation on the nation’s truly alarming air pollution began at Tsinghua University, in northwestern Beijing. Seated at tables supplied with bananas and bottled water, with tea nearby, Chris Nielsen, Wang Yuxuan, and Mun Ho outlined the findings from *Clearing the Air*, the latest product of a multiyear, interdisciplinary collaboration between Harvard and Tsinghua’s department of environmental science and engineering.

The trio—Nielsen, executive director of the China Project at the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences; Wang, who will join the Tsinghua faculty after receiving her Harvard doctorate this June; and Ho, an economist who is a fellow at Harvard’s Institute for Quantitative Social Science—were presenting novel research. Theirs is the first detailed model of Chinese air pollutants by source (electrical power, mostly from coal; cement; steel; chemicals; and China’s burgeoning vehicle fleet), the health impact of each, and the effectiveness and costs of economic means (“green taxes”) to mitigate the problem.

Their audience was novel, too: not environmental scientists, but faculty and students from Tsinghua’s School of Economics and Management—people who will help shape China’s energy, environmental, and global-warming policies. In the ensuing discussion, none of the audience members undercut the researchers’ basic assumptions or market-based approach to pollution control. Rather, they questioned details of the scientists’ model, their

**The HAA event attracted more than 600 people.**

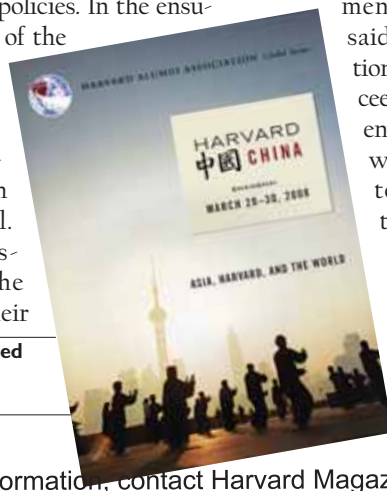


health data, and projections of economic impacts from various uses of green-tax revenues—points the Harvard speakers embraced as they seek to further refine their projections and demonstrate remedies for troubling pollution and global-warming trends.

Interviewed separately, Deborah Seligsohn ’84 underscored the sense that Chinese policymakers are addressing energy, environmental, and global-warming problems, to a degree not widely acknowledged in the United States. Seligsohn, who recently left the Foreign Service after 21 years so she could remain in Beijing and focus on the environment, now directs the World Resources Institute’s China program. The nation, she said, “is at this major overall inflection [point]....There is a new idea of what development means”—not just raw gains in output, but all the aspects of “creating what looks like an affluent society” in terms of citizens’ health, education, the physical environment, and income equality.

“That’s what they want,” she said of the leadership, whose ranks have recently broadened to include new disciplines and greater administrative experience; they have carefully embraced new goals as well (including such terms as “harmonious society” and the “scientific concept of development”). “What’s needed,” she said, “is more serious international action to help China succeed” in attaining its energy and environmental goals, beginning with American commitments to develop and deploy new technologies.

There are tangible signs of the kinds of changes Seligsohn identified. Tsinghua’s School of Public Policy and Management, established



in 2000, is busily educating administrators using a curriculum and case-teaching method developed in cooperation with Daewoo professor of international affairs Anthony Saich and Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) colleagues. (Saich, who also directs the University Asia Center, runs executive-education programs in the United States and China for public officials at all levels of the Chinese government.) During a recent morning class in the school's new master in international development program, associate professor Cheng Wenhao—a 2003 HKS fellow—led students from China, Ethiopia, Korea, South Africa, Taiwan, and Zambia through exercises in performance management for a police department and other agencies. Elsewhere, his colleagues were using sharply drawn case studies on such hard issues as public opposition to relocating the Beijing zoo, farmers' demands for price supports, and compensation for people displaced by redevelopment.

A few minutes away by taxi, at Renmin University of China School of Law, the country's largest, Wang Liming was advancing a two-front humanitarian agenda. As dean, he has established China's first legal center and clinic devoted to disabled persons. As a member of the National People's Congress, he is helping to develop a comprehensive revision of the 1990 law on "protection of disabled persons"—a landmark, but too generally worded to promote effective action.

In describing his work, Wang—a Harvard Law School (HLS) fellow in 1998-1999—cited Stimson professor of law William Alford, who directs the graduate legal program and international and East Asian legal studies at HLS. Alford has been involved with the Special Olympics for 30 years, and has extensive contacts in disability issues.

When Renmin convened a conference in early 2007 to seek diverse "suggestions about how to amend our law," Wang said, Alford helped invite experts from around the world. The conference proceedings have been published, in Chinese, by the school. Among the key participants was Ma Yu'e, deputy director-general and chief legal officer of the Chinese Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF)—the intermediary between the state and disabled

citizens. She began drafting the amended law in 2005, and said it now incorporates strong language prohibiting discrimination and outlining government responsibilities toward disabled people. Alford has been a regular conduit of information to HLS and international experts, she said, particularly because "We did not know about the implementation or the cost to enforce the disabled people's rights."

While taking care to suggest that any policies must be China's own, Alford has been encouraged by the momentum building for reform of the disability law—and its wider implications. He has spoken about the CDPF as one form of representation for a citizenry who need many more such avenues to express their views and secure their rights.

Another of Alford's Chinese associates, Lu Zhian, associate professor at Fudan University Law School, has in fact added the study of disability to his expertise in international and human rights law. Although his students principally go into international business law, Lu said he had engaged them in rights questions, particularly as he coaches contestants in international moot court competitions, where rights issues frequently arise. He has drawn on wide public interest in recent, horrific legal cases, such as the forced sterilization of two institutionalized, mentally disabled girls when they began having painful menstrual periods. As Fudan-HLS student and faculty exchanges proceed, Lu said, he sees rising interest in the field.

A *China Daily* report that President Hu Jintao led a March 28 Politburo meeting on the need "to provide better welfare for the country's 83 million handicapped people" as a "major barometer of the progress of society and civilization" suggested that final legislation might indeed be near.

**Conference proceedings and papers on disability law, published by Renmin University**

ULTIMATELY, the paths China pursues will reflect its own history and interests. In a young country like the United States, it can be easy to forget the weight of a civilization that has persisted for millennia.

In a traditionally styled building on the northern edge of Peking University's campus, professor of history Deng Xiaonan and her graduate students are part of an international consortium that will make China's past accessible to radically fresh research and exploration. The China Biographical Database (CBDB), including the university, the Harvard-Yenching Institute, and the Academia Sinica (in Taiwan), is meticulously recording names, homes, writings, official positions, histories, family relationships, and other information on the tens of thousands of known Song dynasty figures (960-1279). Ultimately, it aims to extend forward and back in time to capture the records of hundreds of thousands of other documented scholar-officials.

Carswell professor of East Asian languages and civilizations Peter K. Bol, who leads CBDB's Harvard contingent, said that the historical record in total exceeds that available from any other civilization—and that when the records are computerized and opened to scholars worldwide, they will enable unprecedented inquiries into China's leadership and political and economic development over time. (This technological infrastructure will also fit neatly with the historical geographic information systems Bol has built separately with Fudan colleagues; see "Hello, Geotech," November-December 2006, page 44.) Liu Jiang and Zhou Jia, students who are doing some of the data entry, said they had already identified new research questions about the relationships among families, social groups, and members of the administrative elite. Professor

Deng, herself a Song specialist, said she imagined that "the method of history studies might be greatly changed" by the CBDB technology.

The stakes are not merely academic. Bol moderated perhaps the most animated of six panel dis-





cussions at the HAA “global series” conference at a modern hotel in the Pudong section of Shanghai. “Does Chinese Culture Have a Future?” engaged professor of East Asian languages and literatures Tian Xiaofei, historian Zhu Xueqin of Shanghai University, and philosophy professor Xu Youyu of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in a vigorous, bilingual critique of the government-sanctioned vogue for “national learning”—an attempt, most thought, to justify a particular Chinese path that would support an increasingly market-driven economy without the trappings of liberal democracy. In historical perspective, this reflects a huge reversal from Mao’s original proposition that China was caught in a cultural backwater, and had to be yanked into line with the universalist principles of modern Marxist-Leninist communism. Such debates echoed sharply across China from the dying days of the imperial government in the late 1800s throughout the twentieth century; in different forms, they still do today.

In her remarks at Peking University, where she received an honorary degree on

March 26, President Faust spoke of the sixfold increase in China’s higher-education enrollment during the past decade, and of the recognition that “knowledge and learning are as essential to human beings as food,” particularly as “we struggle to understand what it means to be human amid such disorienting shifts in our societies and our lives.” She spoke of education in the Chinese context as “illuminating one’s bright virtue.”

Whatever the differences in culture and circumstances, Harvard has been able to play a role in that illumination for a growing number of Chinese professionals and academicians—and increasingly the traffic is flowing in the other direction.

He Yanling—a Freeman Fellow at HMS in 1998-1999, now at Shanghai Mental Health Center as a clinician, psychiatry professor, and researcher investigating the need for mental-health care—compared her Chinese education to “feeding the Beijing duck”: force-feeding of knowledge and facts. Harvard, she found, was “totally dif-



**President Xu Zhihong of Peking University confers an honorary degree on the visiting President Faust in Beijing on March 26.**

ferent.” Faced with the challenge to “stimulate your thinking,” she said, at first she found “my brain was very quiet.” But soon she discovered herself exchanging views with colleagues in elevators, reveling in the library collections, and learning how to collaborate in designing research projects. The whole experience “opened my mind, opened my eyes. That was the most exciting thing to me.” Brief though her fellowship was, He said, “It changed my view of medicine.”

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG

## THE UNDERGRADUATE

# Getting My Feet Wet

by LIZ GOODWIN '08

I REMEMBER MANY THINGS from my cousin’s wedding—my poofy bridesmaid’s dress, the humidity, how pretty the small church looked during the ceremony—but most of all, I remember the guests’ advice, bestowed with drawled urgency, about how to survive in New England. It was the summer before my freshman year of college, and my relatives (from my mother’s 100-percent-Texas side of the family) were anxious to help me avoid the pitfalls of living in an arctic, Yankee-filled part of the country, referred to simply as “up there.” Many of them were impressed that I was going away to Harvard, but that was not the point. The point was that I was venturing off to a far-away land, where I knew none of my future

classmates and was unprepared for the conditions that awaited me.

The night before the wedding, many of us were sprawled about on deck chairs next to the hotel’s pool. A distant cousin approached me and sat down.

“Have you heard about the bugs?” I replied that I had not. “They have enormous bugs up there—big as softballs! They fly into your clothes and bite you. Don’t ever leave the house without some strong bug spray on.” After this advice was dispensed, my cousin leaned back into the deck chair and took a sip of his beer. “You should talk to Bill, though,” he added, mentioning a distant relative by marriage to whom I had hardly ever spoken. “He lived up there for a couple of years.”

I had no intention of seeking out more terrifying counsel, but, Bill, it turned out, found me anyway. After exhausting the subjects of the size of the wedding party, the quality of the food, and the humidity of the day, Bill turned to my precarious future in Massachusetts.

“I only have one thing to tell you, kid.” I waited in suspense, hoping to hear nothing more of enormous insects. “Never—and I mean never—get your feet wet.”

I looked at him expectantly, but Bill seemed finished talking.

“Don’t get my feet wet? Like when I go swimming?” I asked.

“Don’t get your feet wet, period! You know what I used to do? I used to put both of my feet in Ziploc bags, then put my socks on, then put my shoes on,” he said. “That’s the only way to guarantee your feet will remain dry. Do what you have to do. Just don’t get them wet.”

The rest of the weekend passed in a blur of photographs, dancing, and feasting. But a vague sense of foreboding accompanied me as I drove home with my parents that Sunday. My anxiety at the prospect of