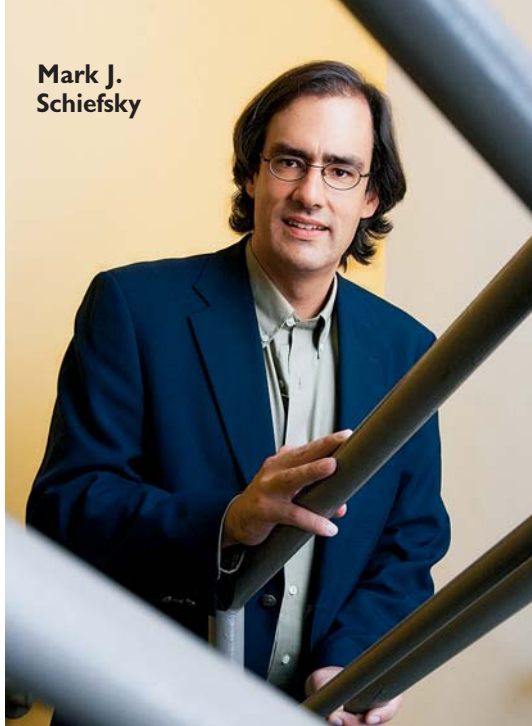


Mark J. Schiefsky



ROSE LINCOLN/HARVARD NEWS OFFICE

strength the classics entry monopolized a full 12 pages in this year's undergraduate *Handbook for Students*—will be reduced to two: one emphasizing a knowledge of classical history, philosophy, and archaeology; the other, proficiency in the ancient languages per se. The language requirement itself is less burdensome: the six language courses required by the new track fall short of the eight that the current sequences demand.

Department leaders, led by professor of the classics Mark J. Schiefsky, director of undergraduate studies, who initiated the curricular review in the fall, have suggested that the new formulation will make the concentration more accessible. It eliminates the obstacle that the long-standing reading list and general examination posed for those students lacking the high-school Latin and Greek training that was once a staple

of secondary-school curriculums. There is also hope that the general examination's demise will increase pedagogic creativity, liberating professors who have sometimes felt they could draw students only by offering syllabi that in-

cluded material covered by the exam.

*Mirabile dictu*, students within the department have not rushed to embrace the generals' demise. "We wanted to make it clear from our side that many students liked the idea that there was a final milestone to hit," says Paul Mumma '09, a concentrator who serves as one of two student liaisons to the department's faculty. "That was really the only difference of opinion between faculty and students."

Students pushing for more exams? It's not for nothing that the English department's Simpson compares the construction of a curriculum to "getting a Rubik's Cube into place." But one thing seems clear: the new general-education program, scheduled for introduction this fall, won't be the only curricular novelty Harvard educators will be watching with fingers crossed.

—CHRISTIAN FLOW

## A Pioneer in Family Planning

Selected items from the papers and effects of John C. Rock '15, M.D. '18, and other items related to his work.



Rock, a professor of gynecology who taught clinical obstetrics for three decades at Harvard Medical School (HMS), is remembered for two landmark professional achievements, both grounded in the notion that women should have control over their own reproductive systems.

Rock (pictured at left) pursued these two tacks with equally intense conviction, said Margaret Marsh, Distinguished Professor of history at Rutgers University and coauthor of the 2008 biography *The Fertility Doctor: John Rock and the Reproductive Revolution*, at a March 26 symposium to mark the exhibit's opening. Marsh said that Rock, a practicing Roman Catholic, believed couples should have as many children as they had means to support, but that they should also have the power to stop their families from expanding. Below are two samples of fam-

On display through September 30 at the Center for the History of Medicine ([www.countway.harvard.edu/chom](http://www.countway.harvard.edu/chom)) are selected items from the papers and effects of John C. Rock '15, M.D. '18, and other items related to his work.

ily-planning devices from the days before the pill. Rock would have given the "scientific prediction dial" or a similar device to patients in his early days at the Rhythm Clinic, which he founded in 1936 at the Free Hospital for Women (now Brigham and Women's Hospital). The Rythmeter (circa 1944) came with a more complicated set of instructions. At the time, the rhythm method was the only legal form of contraception in Massachusetts; it was at Rock's clinic, in the early 1950s, that the first trials of hormone-based birth control took place. Rock advocated for the Food and Drug Administration to approve oral contraceptives (which it did in 1960), and for his church to change its position on birth control (which it did not).

It was also in Rock's lab that the first successful in vitro fertilization took place. At right is a photograph of the fertilized ovum from this experiment, which Rock conducted along with HMS colleague Arthur Hertig and laboratory assistant Miriam Menkin in 1944. Research in this area was later banned in the United States; the first in vitro baby, Louise Brown, was born in England in 1978. Since then, more than a million children have been born through this method.



To view larger versions of these images, as well as additional images from the exhibit, visit [www.harvard-mag.com/extras](http://www.harvard-mag.com/extras).

Images courtesy of the Harvard Medical Library in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine