

H A R V A R D P O R T R A I T



Rebecca Henderson

Rebecca Henderson began her career studying why large companies find it difficult to change. One part of the answer is the phenomenon of “overload”—essentially, the failure to spend time planning for the future because one is so focused on urgent needs of the present. This phenomenon, the subject of research by the newly minted McArthur University Professor, applies to individuals as well as companies. For example, even though we know that skimping on sleep and exercise can harm us, “we jeopardize long-term health for short-term results.” (Henderson herself recharges by kayaking and hiking with her 15-year-old son, Harry. Her late husband, John Huchra, was Doyle professor of cosmology in the astronomy department.) The dangers of such short-term thinking are also a theme of her current work as co-director of the Business and Environment Initiative at Harvard Business School. Predictions of the likely fallout from climate change are dire—erratic rainfall and drastically diminished crop yields, followed by famine and political unrest—yet environmental legislation failed in Washington again last year. “Are we really going to wait until these things are upon us to take action?” she asks. Yet she remains an optimist: even with government gridlock, she has faith in the power of the private sector. Saving the environment will be the next big wave in innovation and job creation, she believes, as steel, railways, plastics, and information technology were for previous generations. “We need clean energy. We need abundant clean water. We need safe and effective waste disposal,” she says. “Business can do that. That’s what business does.”

comes below \$65,000 will be able to send their children to Harvard at no parental cost, an increase from the current \$60,000 ceiling (established in 2006); this change applies to returning undergraduates and those matriculating with the class of 2016. (According to a chart on the financial-aid website, close to 1,200 scholarship students now in the College are from families with incomes of \$60,000 or less.)

At the same time, the expected parental contribution for newly enrolling students and their successors will grade up from 0 to 10 percent of income for families whose incomes fall between \$65,000 and \$150,000; the prior ceiling for this formula, introduced in late 2007, was \$180,000. Those families in the range of \$150,000 to \$180,000 will, according to the news release, “be asked to pay slightly more than 10 percent of income”—grading up to 16.5 percent, an increase of as much as \$11,700 in their annual bill compared to the prior formula. (According to the website, slightly fewer than 600 families of students now receiving scholarship aid have incomes from \$140,000 to \$180,000.)

The College’s financial-aid payout—\$166 million this year—will likely increase even with the new scholarship parameters, given that the term bill for tuition, room, and board (\$52,652 now) will continue to rise. Part of the aid, in turn, is funded by the unrestricted tuition funds the College collects. (For fuller details, including peer schools’ aid decisions, see harvardmag.com/financial-aid-2011.)

Arts and Sciences Annual Report

DEAN MICHAEL D. SMITH discussed his draft annual message (available at www.fas.harvard.edu/home/content/annual-report) with Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) colleagues at their first meeting of the year on October 4. Among the notable points:

- FAS reduced its unrestricted core deficit from a projected \$35 million to an actual \$16 million during the fiscal year ended last June; Smith still expects to eliminate the structural deficit this year.

- With the size of the tenured and tenure-track faculty holding constant since 2008, the number of junior professors decreased by one-sixth, as promotions to tenure exceeded retirements. Since the in-

troduction of the faculty-retirement program, 51 tenured professors have signed agreements to phase out of their positions within a four-year period; 42 retirements are planned during the next four years, up from 27 during the past four years. The proportion of women in the faculty ranks has held at 25 to 26 percent since 2008.

- In the College, the dean of undergraduate education has commissioned a two-year study of academic integrity.

- The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, where underrepresented American minorities have persistently made up less than 5 percent of the doctoral population, appointed an assistant dean for diversity and minority affairs; new recruiting strategies resulted in stronger admissions

and a 20-percentage-point increase in the yield of admitted minority applicants. Separately, the graduate students' Dudley House celebrates its twentieth anniversary on October 27.

- Following the 2010 introduction of its biomechanical engineering concentration for undergraduates in 2010, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences plans concentrations in electrical engineering and materials and mechanical engineering.

- Continuing incremental investments in arts practice and performance, the division of arts and humanities created Arts@29 Garden, a space for arts-making collaborations among faculty members, students, and visiting practitioners.

- The division of science, emphasizing

collaborative research in a more constrained funding environment, has proposed a center for neurophysics and a center for the study of extrasolar Earths as candidates for National Science Foundation support. Separately, the Museum of Comparative Zoology is beginning to move its huge collections to modern work and storage spaces in the Northwest Building, ultimately freeing museum areas for academic reuse.

- And the division of continuing education reported that distance learning accounted for 42 percent of total course enrollments, as the Extension School offered 171 online courses.

For a more detailed account of the annual report, see harvardmag.com/fas-report-2011.

THE UNDERGRADUATE

Far Away

by KATHERINE XUE '13

IT TOOK 15 minutes to walk to town. I went across the sand, out the school gates to a path through the tall, feathery savanna grass (Are there snakes? I'd asked a student once, and he said yes. Then, with glee—Are you afraid?). Next, the dusty, unpaved road through the dry

riverbed; another student showed me how to dig and find water just below the surface. On the other side was the one road through the town of Omaruru in central Namibia, and next to the municipal building was the supermarket, Spar.

Under the warm yellow lights among

the well-stocked shelves I found, on one occasion, cupcake tins and a grapefruit fork, and the presence of these objects struck me as peculiar, and stayed with me.

Other oddities, carefully catalogued and considered:

I sat halfway in the aisle of a crowded combi as it sped down wide, open roads to the coast. Outside, termite mounds and stunted trees interrupted kilometers of vast savanna and the perpetually cloudless sky; inside, Rihanna's "Rude Boy" blasted over the speakers.

In class, my students jabbered in three or four tribal languages, but they'd seen Rubik's Cubes and watched detective shows. A few friended me on Facebook via their (school-banned) cell phones.

My most bizarre finding: nightly on television, after the national news, came *India—A Love Story*, a soap opera with a cult following, its Brazilian-and-Indian plotline, originally broadcast in Portuguese, dubbed to English for its Namibian run. On Saturday they replayed all the week's episodes.

All this made me wonder how big the world really is, and what it would take to be far away.

I WAS SUPPOSED to be far away. In winter of my sophomore year I started feeling

BOTH OF THE NEW Ledecky Fellows had summer experiences illuminating their Harvard identities and College values, so we, atypically, publish a column by each in this issue. ~The Editors

The author with some of her grade eight math students

