

# The Observer

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THE OBERLIN COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF NEWSPAPER

## Damon Keith to Deliver Commencement Address College Names Honorary Degree Recipients and Other Awardees for 1988



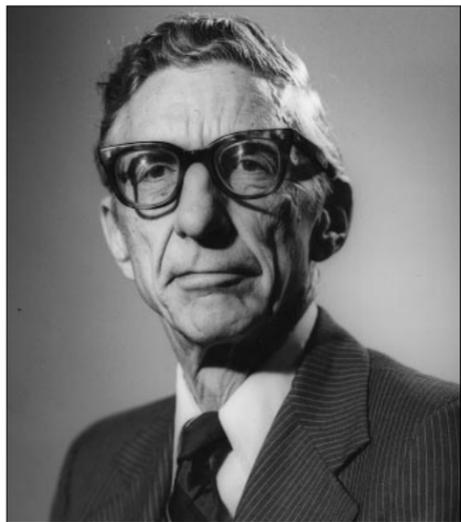
Damon Keith



Denyce Graves



Jerry Greenfield



F. Champion Ward



Francine Toss



Albert McQueen

Damon Keith, United States Court of Appeals judge for the Sixth Circuit, will receive an honorary doctor of law degree from Oberlin College at the College's commencement exercises May 25, when he will deliver the commencement address. The other honorary degree recipients this year will be Denyce Graves, Jerry Greenfield, and F. Champion Ward. Francine Toss will receive the Award for Distinguished Service to the Community, and Albert McQueen will receive the Alumni Medal.

Damon Keith has been a United States Court of Appeals judge for the Sixth Circuit since 1977. Earlier, he was chief judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He is most cited for his opinion in *United States v. Sinclair*; which had to do with illegal governmental wiretapping and is commonly referred to as the *Keith Decision*. Keith chaired or was a member of several important committees concerning the bicentennial of the Constitution; he was appointed to the committee posts by

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## Paula Richman Receives Guggenheim Fellowship

Paula Richman, Houck Professor of Religion, has won a Guggenheim Fellowship that will enable her to spend eight months next year completing a book about the Ramayana, one of the two most sacred texts for Hindus. Through translations and analyses of Tamil-language tellings of the text, her monograph will consider the religious presentation of three issues: notions of the perfect Hindu state, constructions of "demonic" behavior, and ideals of good wives and sisters.

Having completed most of her research between 1994 and 1996 at archives and libraries in South India and London, Richman will spend only three or four weeks of her fellowship in South India, where she will collect more tellings of the Ramayana from "grandmothers and other great storytellers," she says. She will do her writing in Oberlin.

"I was inspired to apply [for the

Guggenheim] by [Artz Professor of History] Marcia Colish," says Richman. "She has always encouraged me in my research and has, herself, received many grants."

Richman has been translating and writing about the Ramayana since 1989, when she began research for *Many Ramayanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia* (University of California Press, 1991), which she edited. Her work has been supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, her Houck professorship, and an Oberlin College sabbatical. For the spring semester of 1998-99 Richman will teach a new 200-level course that includes a unit on the Ramayana: Indian Religious Epics.

The Ramayana appeals to Richman partly because it is what she calls "a fluid tradition," one that "can absorb new ideas, unlike some other

religious canons." As far as Richman knows, no one else has studied the Ramayanas of India's Tamilnadu region as a whole, where the variety in the stories is greater than in the north. One of the tasks she sets for herself is to account for the differences in the tellings.

Other faculty members who have received a Guggenheim include Richard Spear, Jay Professor of Art, for 1987-88; Marcia Colish, Artz Professor of History, for 1989-90; Wendell Logan, professor of Afro-American music, for 1991-92; and Jeffrey Hamburger, former Houck Professor in the Humanities, for 1997-98.

The John Simon Guggenheim Foundation awards fellowships based on demonstrated accomplishment and strong promise for future achievement.



Richman leans on Ramayana texts to carry out her work.

## Faculty and Staff Notes

**Donaldson "Donald" Byrd**, who taught jazz trumpet at Oberlin between February 1987 and June 1988, is artist in residence at Delaware State University. He gave a concert at the university with the Delaware Brass and others January 28, and recently performed at the Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center. The Wilmington, Delaware, *Sunday News Journal* called Donald "one of the most influential jazz figures alive" in a profile, "Byrd of Many Feathers," in its January 25 edition. • **Richard Miller**, professor of singing, was in Utah to give master classes at the Debra Bonner Speech-Level Academy, Brigham Young University, and the Joseph Smith Center January 10-16. He taught a course and master classes at the Sydney Opera Center January 21-26, and he gave master classes for the National Association of Teachers of Singing at Northwestern University February 7. Between June 2 and July 7 Richard will give a course in systematic vocal technique and master classes in four locations: the Vocal Performance and Pedagogy Institute at the Belmont University School of Music in Nashville, the Northern Arizona University School of Performing Arts, Stetson University, and the Juventude Musical Portuguesa in Lisbon. Mid-July (13-18) he will teach in the conser-



vatory's Institute of Vocal Performance Pedagogy, and will teach voice technique and performance interpretation for teachers of singing in France's Ile de France region for the French Ministry of Culture July 31 to August 5. In August (10-22) he will teach master classes at the International Summer Institute of the Mozarteum in Salzburg. • **Steven Plank**, professor of musicology, gave a lecture, "Bonds of Affection: Music, Sculpture, and Piety in Seventeenth-Century Rome," at the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) March 13. In his talk Steve examined how Renaissance and Baroque composers explored the affective power of various musical structures. His presentation coincided with the museum's current major exhibit, *Vatican Treasures*. Also coinciding with the exhibit, Steve led the Musica Ecclesiastica (mostly professional singers from Cleveland, assembled for the event) in a concert, Marenzio's "Messa Jubilate Deo," at the CMA March 6. And on May 3 he will return to the CMA with Oberlin's Collegium Musicum to perform Palestrina's "Pope Marcellus Mass." "Rome produced an impressively large amount of music in the early 17th century to meet its various liturgical, social, and courtly needs," says Steve. "Much of it is conservative in style, but the papal



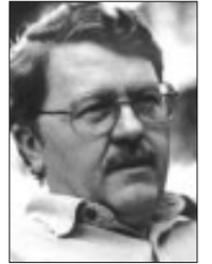
court was also an important patron of new-fangled forms like the opera and the cantata." • **Caroline Jackson Smith**, associate professor of theater and dance and African-American studies, was the director for *The Resurrection of Lady Lester*, which opened at the University of Pittsburgh's Kuntu Repertory Theater in January and ran through February 14. The play is based on the life of jazz musician Lester Young. "[Young's] life is a metaphor for the spiritual triumph of the African-American people over a difficult history," Caroline told a reporter for the January 29 edition of the Greensburg, Pennsylvania, *Tribune Review*. Caroline directed the play at Oberlin in 1992. "It was first produced at Yale in 1981," she told a reporter for the January 30 edition of the *Beaver County Times*, "and I was close to some of the collaborators who brought the play to life." While in Pittsburgh Caroline conducted four workshops at local high schools. • **Mathis Szykowski**, emeritus McCandless Professor of French, is one of the presenters in *Voices of Silence: The Holocaust Experience*, a



lecture series cosponsored by the Oberlin Public Library and the Living and Learning Institute of Lorain County. Mathis will speak April 16 from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.; his talk is titled "Survival: Two Perspectives." The Ohio Humanities Council is funding the five-part series, which begins April 2 at the public library. • **Yolanda Kondonassis**, teacher of harp, taught a workshop at the University of Richmond January 22 and gave a concert with the Shanghai Quartet there in the evening. The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* described the workshop in the article "Creative Encounters" in its January 23 edition. The reporter quoted Yolanda telling the students "Don't be hesitant to be curious and innovative. If something doesn't work, try something different. Experiment until you're comfortable and fluent." • Milkweed Editions has published Miroslav Holub's *Shedding a Life*, translated by **David Young**, Longman Professor of English. The *New York Times Book Review* ran a review of the book in its February 22 edition, and the *Nation* reviewed it in its February 23 issue.



the piano. **Werner Soellner** (Babes-Bolyai University M.A. 1975) is a Max Kade Writer-in-Residence. He was a visiting professor in German at Dartmouth College last semester. He is interested in German and East European literature and enjoys music and dogs. Soellner's works have appeared in several poetry collections and in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Dimension*. He says he looks forward to finishing his next book while in Oberlin.



Survivors include his wife, Elizabeth; two children; and eight grandchildren.

## Transitions

### New Faculty and Staff

**Bree Banks** (Miami University B.A. 1997) is a departmental assistant in the conservatory dean's office and assistant to the music education division director. She says she's looking forward to attending concerts at Oberlin. "I'm excited," she says, "because I had decided last year that I would really love to work at a college, so when I found out that I would be moving to Vermilion, Oberlin was my first choice." Married to Brad Banks, she enjoys reading, travel, and music—especially playing

the piano. **Werner Soellner** (Babes-Bolyai University M.A. 1975) is a Max Kade Writer-in-Residence. He was a visiting professor in German at Dartmouth College last semester. He is interested in German and East European literature and enjoys music and dogs. Soellner's works have appeared in several poetry collections and in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Dimension*. He says he looks forward to finishing his next book while in Oberlin.

### Changes in Appointment

**Erik Inglis**, visiting instructor in art, became a visiting assistant professor February 1. In the computing center, **Robert Hoban** was promoted to an equipment technologist II position March 9.

### Departures

**Robert Willis** left his job in the grounds department March 20. He had worked for the College since fall 1980.

## Sylvia Watanabe: Junior Faculty Fellow

Sylvia Watanabe, assistant professor of creative writing, has received a Junior Faculty Fellowship for 1998-99, which she will use to continue work on a novel under contract to Doubleday. The fellowship is supported by the B. Wade and Jane B. White Fellowship in the Humanities and has additional support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Surdna Foundation.

Watanabe's book, to be titled either *The Naming Walk* or *Things That Fall from the Sky*, covers the period between 1939 and 1959 and is set on a small plantation town on the island of Maui and in a Japanese relocation camp in

## W. Dean Holdeman, Former Dean of Men

W. Dean Holdeman, 81, who worked in the Office of the Dean of Men from 1949 to 1965, died March 9 in Naperville, Illinois. A graduate of the Class of 1938, he began his Oberlin career in 1945 as assistant director of admissions; his last 10 years with the College were as dean of men. He retired from Keystone College in 1980 after 11 years there. He held a master's degree from Columbia University.

## Willis Ludlow, Former Campus Minister

Willis "Willie" Ludlow, campus minister at the College between 1976 and 1984 died of cancer March 10 in Pittsburgh, where he was pastor at the Community of Reconciliation Church. He was 64.

Chris Baymiller '71, assistant director of the student union, says Ludlow was a mentor to many students. "For many," says Baymiller, "he was the conscience of the institution, forcing in-

tense dialog on many issues. . . . The Peace and Justice banner that has been seen for over 20 years at demonstrations across the country was Willie's idea. That banner now resides in the Student Union office and continues to travel to political demonstrations as a symbol of Oberlin's commitment to social justice."

His wife, Ann, survives, as do four children and 14 grandchildren.

## Honorary . . .

*Continued from page 1*  
Justice Warren Burger, Chief Justice William Rehnquist, and President George Bush. Keith has received more than 30 honorary degrees and many awards, including the NAACP's Spingarn Medal. He is a graduate of West Virginia State College, Howard University School of Law, and Wayne State University. Gilda Keith '82 is his daughter. Albert McQueen, emeritus professor of sociology, will present him for the degree.

Mezzo-soprano **Denyce Graves** '85 has sung the title role in *Carmen* in at

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*The Observer* (ISSN 0193-368X), the faculty and staff newspaper of Oberlin College, published 17 times a year, is delivered to employees and made available to students on campus. Copies are mailed to retired employees, certain alumni and friends of the College, and paid subscribers. The editor welcomes off-campus readers but does not always provide background information for them: news that has already been reported in the *Review* (the student newspaper) or announced elsewhere may not be reported fully or prominently in the *Observer*.

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## Stationary Engineer Fred Adkins Looks Forward to Fishing

From the top on down, says stationary engineer Fred Adkins, "we've got one of the best groups of guys I've ever worked with." Adkins, who has worked in Oberlin's heating plant since 1986, is retiring at the end of the month.

"I never left a place I really wanted to leave," Adkins says, but he thinks "now's the time" to leave Oberlin, while his health is good and he can travel with his wife of 46 years, Isolene. The two plan to "go wherever we want to go," he says. The couple's seven children, "scattered around" (except for Shirley Adkins, ID checker in the student union), offer some destinations. This summer's itinerary also includes trips to Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi, and Texas.

Born in Kentucky, Adkins has spent most of his work life, and all his married life, in Ohio. He was with U.S. Steel in Lorain for 9 years, until the coke ovens

shut down; then Airco in Huron for 13 years, until the company stopped operating in the area; then the Columbia Gas SNG plant in Greensprings, Ohio, where Adkins ran the boiler and operated the gas plant for 13 years, until the company shut down the facility.

Although he says "this place was a dream" after working outdoors and on heights at Columbia Gas, his Oberlin job has had its challenges.

"When something goes wrong, you have to know what to do." Something does go wrong nearly every day, he says. "You're always on call at home," and may have to come in to work another shift if another stationary engineer is sick. No other part of the College is so depended upon, he says, as the heating plant, which also supplies electricity to College buildings. "Twenty-four hours a day you've got to run this heating plant."

What will he do on his travels? Fish. "I have a fishing boat, a 22-1/2 footer. She [Isolene] fishes with me, too." Not only do the Adkins fish, but they share what they catch with their extended family. Last year at a family reunion in Kentucky they prepared their own recipe of beer-batter fried fish for 108 people.

And what will he do when he's not traveling and fishing? "I agreed to help [my wife] around the house. She's already handed off the jobs she doesn't like."



Fred Adkins won't be watching the boilers in the heating plant after Sunday.

## Two New Grants Boost Watershed Education in Area

By Mark Graham

With recent grants from the Stocker Foundation and the Bill Long Foundation, the Watershed Education Project will soon publish a report on the Black River Watershed and host a bioregional teach-in for area teachers, students, and residents.

The Watershed Education Project began in spring 1996 after the Orion Society, a nature-literacy group, picked Oberlin as one of five pilot sites for watershed-education programs. Brad Masi, project coordinator, describes the watershed-education approach as "developing an interdisciplinary curriculum that engages students with the dynamics of their own local place." The Watershed Education Project, which includes the local

environmental group Seventh Generation, is developing a watershed-based curriculum intended to reshape education in local elementary and secondary schools.

The Black River Watershed, which covers about 80 percent of Lorain County, has been designated by the International Joint Commission as one of 43 toxic hot spots in the Great Lakes basin.

The project will use the \$7500 Stocker grant to complete a State of the Watershed report. Students in Oberlin and the Biosphere, a class taught by Professor of Environmental Studies David Orr, are researching the watershed and compiling information from local environmental experts for the report. Three students hired with money from the Gund Foundation (see "Environmental

Grants Let Students Learn While They Aid the Community" in the October 10, 1997, *Observer*) will continue the research over the summer. Orr, working with an advisory board of faculty from the anthropology, biology, English, and geology departments, will edit the report for expected publication in January 1999. The information in the report will be unveiled at a state-of-the-watershed conference on the Oberlin campus this fall.

The publication will be "the first comprehensive report on the natural history and current condition of the Black River Watershed," says Masi.

To raise local interest the group will give the report to school teachers, governmental officials, and citizens' groups. It will also be available to the

general public on the World Wide Web.

The \$750 Bill Long Foundation grant will help fund a bioregional teach-in this coming fall that will feature John Elder, Stewart professor of English and environmental studies at Middlebury College. Elder established the watershed-education approach to learning about ecology and one's community.

The teach-in will lay groundwork for future programs that include a teacher workshop and an environmental-education-resource center, as well as a comprehensive K-12 curriculum on the watershed.

"The teach-in will serve as a high-profile, inaugural event" that brings together area teachers, community members, and College students and faculty, says Masi.

## Honorary . . .

Continued from page 2

least 15 productions, including the Metropolitan Opera's production (where she played opposite Plácido Domingo) and Franco Zeffirelli's production for Arena di Verona. She has sung title or leading roles in operas and oratorios around the world, performing at the Zürich Opera, Vienna State Opera, Israel Philharmonic, Spoleto Festival USA, and the Kennedy Center, and other venues. Several of her performances have been broadcast on television and radio. PBS aired *Denyce Graves: A Cathedral Christmas* late last year. Graves's many awards include the Marion Anderson Award and the Grand Prix Lyrique; she has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and from Opera America. *Glamour Magazine* named Graves one of the 1997 Women of the Year "for being a diva with grit and guts." She attended Oberlin from 1981 to 1984 and also studied at the New England Conservatory of Music. William Perlik, chair of the Board of Trustees, will present her for the doctor of music degree.

**Jerry Greenfield '73** is cofounder and vice chair of the board of directors of Ben and Jerry's Homemade, Inc., a company he and cofounder Ben Cohen began in 1978 after receiving A's from a \$5 Pennsylvania State University correspondence course in ice-cream making. Greenfield is also president of the

Ben & Jerry's Foundation, which offers grants to organizations that address underlying conditions of social or environmental problems. He and Cohen, known for involving their business in community concerns and for their humane business practices, were named U.S. Small Business Persons of the Year in 1988, won the 1993 James Beard Humanitarians of the Year award, and were recognized by the Peace Museum as the 1997 Community Peacemakers of the Year. They have coauthored two books, *Ben & Jerry's Homemade Ice Cream & Dessert Book* (Workman Publishing Company, 1987) and *Ben & Jerry's Double-Dip: Lead With Your Values and Make Money, Too* (Simon & Schuster, 1997). Richard Levin, professor of biology, will present him for the honorary doctor of humanities degree.

**F. Champion Ward '32**, honorary trustee of Oberlin College, began his career in education on the faculties of Denison University and the University of Chicago; at Chicago he was also an administrator—including dean of the undergraduate college. In the 1950s Ward was an educational consultant to the governments of India, Turkey, Jordan, and Burma, and directed the Ford Foundation's Overseas Development Program for the Middle East and Africa from 1958 to 1963. Other positions he held with the foundation until his retirement in 1977 were deputy vice president for international programs, vice president for education and research,

and senior advisor in education to the International Division. Since 1977 Ward has been a consultant to many organizations, including the World Bank, the MacArthur Foundation, and the Association of American Universities. In the early 1980s he was chancellor and acting dean of the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research. He received his A.B. and A.M. degrees from Oberlin and his Ph.D. degree from Yale University. He is the father of Geoffrey Ward '62 and the son of Emeritus Professor of Fine Art Clarence Ward, deceased, director of the Allen Memorial Art Museum from 1917 to 1950. George Bent, honorary trustee of Oberlin College, will present him for the doctor of humanities degree.

**Francine Toss**, director of pupil services for the Oberlin Public Schools, has championed the interests of school-aged youth since she began her career as a teacher at Eastwood School in 1970. Her community activism includes past presidency of the Oberlin Community Services Council, Friends of the Oberlin Public Library, the Oberlin branch of the American Association of University Women, and the Friends of Oberlin. Cochair of the Oberlin Inter-agency Council, she helped to bring together nonprofit organizations, the city government, the schools, and Oberlin College to work toward an improved community. A co-owner of the Carlyle Shop, she has encouraged community involvement by downtown merchants, resulting in Heritage Days, the Easter

Egg Hunt, and the Friendship Tree Lights. Toss earned her master's degree in teaching at Oberlin in 1971 and has done graduate work at Bowling Green and Kent State universities. Her A.B. is from Western College for Women. Hilary Greer, community services coordinator, will present her for the award.

**Albert McQueen '52** taught sociology at Oberlin from 1966 to 1992. He earned his master's and doctor's degrees at the University of Michigan. As an Oberlin student McQueen was one of the founders of cooperative housing on campus; he also helped desegregate Oberlin barber shops, and helped pass a petition against a restaurant that favored white customers over black. After joining the faculty McQueen led the development of the Black Studies Program (now the African American Studies Program) and helped black students form the first Afro-American House, in Talcott Hall. McQueen has addressed alumni groups across the country, and has served on many panels and symposia for alumni on campus. A frequent member of faculty councils and the Educational Plans and Policies Committee before his retirement, he currently serves on the Nominations Committee of the Alumni Council. McQueen was inducted last year into the African American Alumni/ae Committee's African-American Hall of Fame. Alumni Association president Peter Kirsch will present McQueen for his award.

## Observations

# Snippets from A Dictionary Of Local [Oberlin] Usage

Compiled by participants in English 339, Fall Semester 1997

## Some Notes on the Dictionary

By Robert Longworth

I first tried assembling a dictionary of local usage in 1989 as an exercise in a course I teach called History and Structure of the English Language, currently English 339.

As a practical task for the class, the purpose was multi-fold:

- to provide an experiential perspective on the cultural diversity of English usage;
- to heighten an awareness of how linguistic change takes place; and
- to offer a case study on the nature, limitations, and problems in constructing a dictionary.

In terms of those objectives, I thought that it worked fairly well; and it has become a fixture of the course. In 1993 Christopher LeCluyse '95, now a doctoral candidate in English at the University of Texas, produced a carefully researched and edited pamphlet based on the version of the dictionary compiled by the class in 1992. That publication (a Winter Term project for Chris) sold briskly at the Co-op Book Store, but is now out of print. The other versions languish in my files, except for the one excerpted below: the entire dictionary is on line at [www.oberlin.edu/~english/syllabi/fall197/english339/dictionary/339dictionary.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/~english/syllabi/fall197/english339/dictionary/339dictionary.html). I suspect that the data may one day have a slight historical interest: as most faculty and alumni can attest, collegiate slang is both imaginative and evanescent; and these compilations furnish some specific evidence of both those qualities in *fin de siècle* Oberlin.

The entries were subjected to the editorial scrutiny (or, as some students might have thought it, the whims) of the instructor—and occasionally to the editorial views of other members of the class. The result of this project might best be thought of as an unrepresentative sample of words and phrases that were thought by about 40 contemporary students to have some distinctive local flavor.

*Robert Longworth is professor of English.*

**all kinds of** (adv. phrase) an intensifier, roughly equivalent to “very”; can be used to modify any adjective or any phrase that acts adjectivally, as in “Honey buns are all kinds of good.”

**Aural Thrills** (n.) nickname for courses in music theory for which the official titles are Aural Skills

**beauty-head** (n.) a student who is stereotyped as an aesthete, used especially by English majors and professors; in contrast to “theory-head” (q.v.)

**Big Daddy Grimm** (proper n.) an affectionate name for Robert Grimm, professor of philosophy; used by his students

**bit hockey** (n.) term for Computer Science 210 (Computer Organization), used by a student minoring in computer science

**[the] Bunny** (n.) a strange and esoteric quasi-religion/philosophy/way of life with membership confined largely to certain residents of East Hall—members of the Bunny can be recognized by their use of the sacred Bunny mantra (in appearance similar to a “victory” sign with two fingers placed to the forehead); also, the deity worshiped by members of the Bunny

**chutes and ladders** (n.) a nickname for Mathematics 329, Rings and Fields, widely supposed to be the most difficult course offered in that department; from the name of a child's board game

**[the] clounge** (n.) the student lounge in the Conservatory of Music: a slightly derogatory pun, involving the shortening of “con lounge” to resemble the word “clown”

**collie** (n.) a student enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences; a form paired with “connie” (q.v.), with the further pun on the name of a variety of dog

**connie** (n.) a student enrolled in the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music

**D.G.** (n.) a student who lived in the all-female wing of Dascomb Hall during 1996-97, or a student who associated frequently with those who did live there; 2. (adj.) characterized by the participation of such students (as “a D.G. party”): an acronym (for “Dascomb girl”)

**freshling** (alt. **froshling**) (n.) a student in the first year of collegiate study; perceived as offering a nonsexist alternative to the old-

fashioned word “freshman,” but without the cumbersomeness of “first year”; “froshling” conveys a tone of greater slang usage than “freshling”

**F.T.L.** (n.) a derogatory term for a person who has received a diploma from Oberlin College but has continued to reside in the town of Oberlin after graduation; an acronym for “failure to launch,” presumably from the jargon of space exploration

**gaydar** (n.) the ability to detect the sexual orientation of another; a portmanteau term combining “gay” and “radar”

**hit** ([esp. predicate] adj.) feeling exhausted after a long weekend or by arduous school work, as in “I'm so hit . . .”

**I got your hot sauce**, a phrase, meaning “I know what you mean”; imported from elsewhere for use by the seven members of a residence known as Firestorm House, now thought to be spreading in general usage among Oberlin students

**Moons for Goons** (n.) jocular name for Astronomy 100 (Introductory Astronomy); or Astronomy 118/Geology 118 (Planets, Moons, and Meteorites); in either case, reflecting a perceived lack of difficulty in the course

**Oberhood** (n.) the less affluent part of the city of Oberlin; used by students who live off campus; a blend of *Oberlin* and *hood*, a widespread slang term for an urban ghetto

**octagon** (n.) name for the cement platform in front of Warner Gymnasium; used, with reference to its shape, especially by students in the Theater and Dance Program and by skateboarders

**[a] Pollock in one's drawer** (n. phrase) a bad situation that one tries to ignore; used by preservationists employed in the menderly of Mudd Library; derives from an incident (in June 1997) in which a preservationist discovered, after performing intricate repairs on a book about Jackson Pollock's art, that the work had been upside down—and therefore stowed the botched repair job in a handy drawer

**pomo** (n.) a person who studies Postmodern theory; or a person who is associated with such study, based on use of shoulder bags and black and navy blue clothing, with an appearance that is both unkempt and highly fashionable; a

contraction. (adj.) possessing the quality of ostentatious self-consciousness

**resident male** [also, sometimes, **R.M.** (q.v.)] (n.) a heterosexual male (usually) who, because of his constant or long-running association or friendship with a given group of heterosexual women, has been in effect desexualized in the minds of the members of the group. Such social groups often include no more than one male: his participation is accepted as a matter of course, but he is not permitted to indicate a romantic interest in any other member of the group

**R.M.** (n.) acronym for “resident male” (q.v.)

**Rocks for Jocks** (n.) jocular name for Geology 118/Astronomy 118 (Planets, Moons, and Meteorites), particularly notable for employing the widespread American slang term for an athlete (*jock*); cf. “Moons for Goons.” (The term has also been applied to Geology 160 [Physical Geology] by a physics major.)

**sketch out** (v. tr.) to behave in a strange or disturbing way toward other persons; often used, for example, in the form of a past participle, as in “I was sketched out”

**sketchy** (adj.) seedy; questionable (mostly used to describe the actions and perceived intentions of other people)

**snark** 1. (v. intr.) to bitch, to gripe, or to complain; 2. (n.) a complaint

**spicy** (adj.) sexy and even a little kinky without being tawdry; risqué

**theory-head** (n.) a student who is stereotyped as having an obsession with contemporary literary theory and its jargon, used especially by English majors and professors in contrast to “beauty-head” (q.v.)

**ver** (interj.) a shortened form of “whatever,” used to express scorn, cynicism, or disregard as a response to a statement made by another person

**wack** (adj.) inappropriate, offensive, or misguided: used especially of persons and their opinions—as in “his opinions on capitalist patriarchy are wack”

**[the] weather control device** (n. phrase) a spire atop the Wright Laboratory of Physics to which some students have been wont to attribute responsibility for producing good weather on occasions that are important for purposes of public relations (e.g., Parents Weekend, All Roads Week)