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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

# TheRecord

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NEWS AND IDEAS FOR THE COLUMBIA COMMUNITY

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## Roy and Diana Vagelos Donate \$50 Million For New Medical Education Building

By Record Staff

When P. Roy Vagelos graduated in 1954 from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, polio was rampant and heart attack victims spent weeks in the hospital. Over a long and distinguished career in medicine and the pharmaceutical industry, Vagelos gained a unique perspective on the power of the health sciences to improve the quality of human life.

Now with his wife, Diana, a Barnard College alumna, Vagelos is donating \$50 million for a new medical and graduate education building on the medical center campus. It will be named in their honor. The gift is the largest received for Columbia University Medical Center's capital campaign, and with its receipt, the campaign has raised more than \$1 billion.

"It is clear that whatever the benefits Roy and Diana Vagelos may have gained from attending Columbia and Barnard, they have given even more back to our University through decades of service and support, and we are enormously grateful," said Columbia University President Lee C. Bollinger. "With this latest demonstration of generosity, they are helping establish a new sense of community and campus life at our medical center in Washington Heights that is so important to our attracting future generations of talented medical students and faculty."



P. Roy and Diana Vagelos

Vagelos, 80, is former chair and chief executive officer of pharmaceutical giant Merck & Co., Inc. An authority on lipids and enzymes, he published more than 100 research papers in peer-reviewed journals and won scientific recognition at the National Institutes of Health before becoming chair of Washington University School of Medicine's Department of Biological Chemistry. After joining Merck in 1975 as director of research, he rose through the ranks of senior management and held the firm's top jobs from 1985 until he stepped down in 1994. He currently is chair of Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc., a biotech company.

A longtime supporter of P&S, he has campaigned to raise money for its pro-

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## THINKING GLOBALLY

### SASSEN NAMED TO CO-CHAIR COMMITTEE ON GLOBAL THOUGHT

By Adam Piore

Urban sociologist Saskia Sassen was born in the Netherlands, grew up in Argentina and Italy, studied in France and the United States, and speaks six languages.

With such a background, "global thought" would seem to come naturally to Sassen, who specializes in the social, economic and political dimensions of globalization and is known for creating the term "global city." The term refers to a city that plays a significant global economic role, illustrating in an extreme way some of the major features of globalization, from the organization of finance to new forms of socio-economic inequality, she says.

Now, Columbia President Lee C. Bollinger has named her co-director of the University's Committee on Global Thought, which he set up

in 2005. "Given the significance of urbanization around the world," Bollinger explains, "I felt that Saskia's innovative efforts to understand cities in all their complexity offered a wonderful pathway into a better understanding of how global society is evolving." Bollinger points out that the committee is one of a number of initiatives to help the University understand the process of globalization, including Global Centers abroad, the World Leaders Forum on campus and the Earth Institute.

Sassen, the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology, taught at Columbia in the 1990s and was lured back from the University of Chicago in 2007.

She will collaborate with fellow co-director, Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz, to push the boundaries in the emerging field of globalization studies.

It's exactly the kind of thing Bollinger had

in mind for the committee, whose purpose, he says, "is to support faculty who want to think in broad terms about globalization and also create a place for some unconventional appointments like [Nobel Prize-winning author] Orhan Pamuk."

"It's now widely recognized that globalization is dramatically changing our world," Stiglitz says. The committee "is trying to promote teaching and research on the many dimensions and questions that this raises." He too praises Sassen's work for being so multidisciplinary and crossing geographic borders. "Her focal point is cities, which are the setting in which local, national and global forces all come into play," he says.

Sassen says it was far easier to study globalization 20 years ago. "It has become more complex and contradictory," she says. "We

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## Eric Foner Thinks Anew About Lincoln and Slavery

By Record Staff

As one of the nation's most prominent historians, Eric Foner has fulfilled a Columbia tradition of making history relevant to our own time, especially for audiences beyond the academy.

While Foner retains a scholarly skepticism of facile comparisons between past and current events, he has consistently worked to make history part of our contemporary culture. Now he is about to publish his 22nd book, this one on a topic about which some might have thought there was little left to say: Abraham Lincoln and slavery. But it turns out that, despite Foner's own extensive scholarship on the 16th president's tu-

multuous epoch, the specific focus of *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (W.W. Norton) remained fresh for him.

"I have touched on Lincoln in a number of my books on the pre-Civil War period, the Reconstruction era after the war," he explains. "But I personally have never really written di-

**"In some ways, Lincoln is always our contemporary."**

rectly about Lincoln and I thought that it was still possible to say something new, despite the voluminous literature that's out there."

Working on the book, Foner says, provided

fresh insights about Lincoln's longtime opposition to slavery's westward spread; the role of the issue in the founding of the Republican Party in the 1850s; and, conversely, the frustration of abolitionists with Lincoln's resistance to emancipation in hopes of keeping slave-holding border states in the Union and his support of efforts to encourage blacks to resettle in colonies outside the U.S.

Foner believes that Lincoln's assassination and quick ascension to near saintly status as "the Great Emancipator" obscured a more interesting and human story about the change Lincoln underwent during the course of the war as he developed a greater respect for black people, so many of whom served bravely in the Union Army. What comes through the pages of

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ELEEN BARROSO

African drylands were the topic of a Sept. 20 forum with East African officials and Columbia faculty. From left, Sheba Rukikaire, head of the drylands program in Uganda; Belay Begashaw, director of the Earth Institute's MDG Centre; and Upmanu Lall, director of the Columbia Water Center, discuss the challenges facing communities in the drylands, which suffer from extremely limited access to food and water. The World Leaders Forum event was co-sponsored by the Earth Institute, which in July launched its Drylands Initiative aimed at accelerating development, including in livestock production, health and education, in six East African countries.



DAVID MENTWORTH

José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission, meets with students in the Burden Room of Low Library following his Sept. 21 speech during the World Leaders Forum. The 15 students, who are enrolled in a dual-degree program at the School of International and Public Affairs, got to ask Barroso one question apiece. Some of the questions dealt with economics, while others focused on policies and governance of the European Union.



ELEEN BARROSO

Columbia College Dean Emeritus Austin E. Quigley speaks at the Sept. 13 dedication of a theater named in his honor in Lerner Hall. Quigley served as dean from 1995 to 2009, the second-longest tenure in the school's history. Quigley, who is the Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature and special adviser to the president on undergraduate education, established the undergraduate major in drama and theater arts at the college, revived the doctoral program in theater and helped reinvigorate the M.F.A. program in theater at the School of the Arts.



ELEEN BARROSO

The 315 incoming members of the School of Engineering and Applied Science kick off the academic year at an Aug. 31 orientation program by tossing their first-year beanies into the air. Engineering Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora revived the Columbia tradition of handing out beanies to first-year students, which dates back to the late 1800s, as a way to build community among class members. However, Peña-Mora told the students wearing it was no longer a requirement.

## Vagelos

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grams and served as a mentor for faculty, students and staff. He also serves as chair of Columbia University Medical Center's Board of Visitors and chair of the medical center's capital campaign.

"When I first came to P&S 60 years ago, the facilities were first-rate, as many of them had just been built," Vagelos said. "Naturally, over time, some of them have aged, and new technologies and teaching resources are now required to provide the best modern education opportunities. We are training the doctors who will deliver medical care, the scientists who will perform groundbreaking scientific research, and the teachers who will help train the future generation of physicians and scientists. It is important that their educational facilities are as exciting as medical science is today."

The medical center was built in the 1920s, and has been periodically updated and added to as it has grown into a larger institution. But the need for new and improved space is widely acknowledged. "This new education building will ensure that Columbia continues to produce superior doctors and researchers, trained in the latest techniques, as medicine continues to evolve rapidly throughout the 21st century," said Lee Goldman, executive vice president for Columbia University and dean of the Faculties of Health Sciences and Medicine at the medical center. "Roy's support has been essential to our efforts to improve the quality of life and learning on the medical campus."

Vagelos met his wife, Diana, at a party held by a mutual friend while he was attending P&S and she was a first-year Barnard student. A 1955 graduate, she is now a trustee. The Diana Center, Barnard's new student center, was named for her in recognition of a major gift from the couple. They also funded Barnard's Vagelos Alumnae Center.

The P&S project is part of an overall medical center campus revitalization plan that will add green space, consolidate student services and renovate several existing buildings. The projected cost for the entire project is \$185 million.



## WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?

Hint: Although the serene sea-blue colors may fool you, this is no vacation retreat. Around here, students failing to produce the required work are likely to be issued a professorial subpoena *duces tecum*. Where is this? Send answers to [curecord@columbia.edu](mailto:curecord@columbia.edu). The first person to email the right answer wins a *Record* mug.

ANSWER TO LAST CHALLENGE: Sliding gate door of Journalism School building.

WINNER: Daniel P. Romanello, Associate Director, Print Services

## Saskia Sassen

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need new categories of thinking, new categories for research and for interpreting data."

She gives an example: China spends billions of dollars to buy mines in Africa and land to grow palm trees for bio-fuels. The leading investors in many developing nations are not from the West, but sovereign wealth funds from countries such as China and the United Arab Emirates. They are making new global geographies that often bypass Europe and the United States entirely, she notes, highlighting the need for new ways of understanding the growing economic and cultural interdependence of the world's nations.

The committee's first five years, Sassen says, really "put this organization on a global map." Last year alone, the committee brought in 70 speakers from around the world. The next step, she says, is to move forward with projects that promote cross-disciplinary collaboration and take a new look at issues ranging from food policy and ecology to trade and war.

To that end, Sassen has organized her second Columbia conference about global cities on Oct. 1, "Cities and Eco-Crises."

"My hope with these annual conferences is to make the subject of cities and their economic, social, technological and ecological challenges one of the core subjects of the CGT, along with governance and religion," she says.

On Oct. 4 and 5, the committee will sponsor a forum titled "Sovereign Wealth Funds and Other Long-Term Investors: A New Form of Capitalism?" Panelists will include speakers from the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Abu Dhabi Investment Council, as well as former Vice President Al Gore and George Soros.

"We do these conferences that either are mapping out a new global event or global actor," Sassen says. "The sovereign wealth funds have existed for quite a while. But the global finance crisis has significantly increased their role in the world economy and we need to understand a great deal more about what that means."