The number of women in the workforce swelled from 13 to 19 million during World War II.

The interviews gave a sudden dimension to Rosie’s flattened image and would become the seeds of the archive. Hemmendinger went to Carol A. Mandel, dean of the Division of Libraries, to see whether there were any resources within the archives. “We’re hoping to make a film that will be an inspiration to people who don’t even know that women contributed to the war effort.”

Even in her nineties, Kalbas continued to work with metal, fashioning small objects of art out of silver. "I love people who don’t have a lot of money," she says. "I think we have to keep on making things." Her daughter, who is also a sculptor, said, "Mom has a great sense of humor and a great sense of timing. She’s very understanding and very patient."
Likt so many writers before him, David Holmes (GSAS ’12) experienced a crucial moment at the most unexpected of times while riding the subway. Artfully avoiding watchful back-to-back episodes of Battlestar Galactica, he was writing a song about fracking, in which pipelines transport dry, unshakable water into the ground in order to explain that—and the potential consequences, and harmony. As an enfant terrible of New York University’s Studio 20, which pairs Los Angeles-based animators with Los Angeles–based writers and composers like him, David Holmes decided, couldn’t be more suited for each other, especially considering how complicated and controversial the fracking issue is. It hit him: “What the frack is going on? / With all this fracking going on? / I knew the lyrics, I knew the score.”

His Water’s on Fire (The Fracking Song) is a two-and-a-half minute original song and corresponding animated music video created by Holmes and fellow student Nicole Bekker for a graduate journalism nonprofit Pro-Publica to find innovative ways to break down complex news stories. The finished product combines the musical learning tools from Schock- house Rock, the irreverence of HBO’s former comedy Flight of the Conchords, and the journalistic integrity of NPR. More important, the vibrant clip—which pairs incisive lyrics about the process of fracking with an unshakable beat and that earns a chorus—provided an entry point into Pro-Publica’s three years’ worth of extensive, if sometimes dry, reporting on the controversial issue. As a music video, it’s highly entertaining; as news, it proves that journalism may be more exciting than ever.

Early on in the process, Holmes invited his childhood friend Andrew Bean, an audio engineer with Battlestar Galactica, to produce the song. They didn’t even meet for a couple of weeks before the start of class, but the initial video was posted on YouTube within a few weeks, and currently has about 260,000 mainstream views, such as The Huffington Post and The New York Times, picked it up. In its year-end countdown, Time named it the Best Video of 2011. The Class: Post-Catastrophe Reconstruction seminar, students do not meet in a classroom. They don’t even meet once a week and how they could help. One aimed to create jobs, housing, and small businesses in an area with no infrastructure. Another sought to increase commercial development, and a third required a plan for building an orphanage on an empty field outside the city.

Back in New York, students—met with groups such as Architecture for Humanity and Habitat for Humanity to discover what projects were under way and how they could help. One aimed to create jobs, housing, and small businesses in an area with no infrastructure. Another sought to increase commercial development, and a third required a plan for building an orphanage on an empty field outside the city. In Sri Lanka, which has struggled to rebuild after the 2004 tsunami, there was a recent focus of the course.

In the wake of this success, Holmes and his team were commissioned by Britain’s The Guardian to create a song and video about the Euro crisis. Next came another collaboration with Pro-Publica called “The Redlining Song,” a hip-hop explainer about how politicians carve up voting districts to their advantage. Currently, Holmes and Bean are crafting a song on the housing crisis inspired by Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. Holmes estimates that each number, including meticulously researched and fact-checking, takes about 80 hours to produce.

Holmes’s dream is that news organizations will soon hire staff composers, like him, just as they would a staff writer or copy editor. He believes such alternative news media are integral to getting consumers interested about issues they would ordinarily ignore. “The best part of the digital revolution is that we’ve got all these different tools at our disposal,” he says. “I think that people who are able to look at a topic and know instinctively—what they’re learning about—be that through innovative feasibility studies, analyzed data, created budgets, studied previous disaster recovery efforts, or came up with proposals for implementing the projects in Haiti.

During their stay, they investigated options for the swift construction of four-story housing, so that residents forced out of their homes by disaster might remain in the area and continue to support local business. Whether its focus is close to home or far away, Packard’s hope for the class is that it will result in real change. “I’d like the students’ prop recommendations to be implemented,” she says. “They are passionate about their work, and they come up with excellent plans. I’d like to see those plans transform lives.”
NYU HITS ITS GREEN GOALS YEARS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, BUT IS THAT ENOUGH?

by Andrea Crawford

Five years ago, any- one taking a late- night, summertime stroll around NYU would have seen clear evidence of a city that never sleeps. No matter the hour, lights in most university buildings would have been ablaze and had one stepped inside, an icy blast of air-conditioning would have greeted them. Things have changed.

The moment NYU saw the light, as it were, dates to the fall of 2006 when the university launched a formal green initia- tive. The following spring, it hired Jonah “Cecil” Scheib, as its first director of sustainability and en- ergy, and Jeremy Friedman, as manager of sustainability initia- tives, and announced a bold mis- sion. As part of New York City’s PlaNYC 2030, NYU took up the mayor’s challenge and pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent per square foot by 2017. Last fall—some six years ahead of schedule—NYU kept that promise to the city. “We’ve been aggressively enormous on reducing our energy use,” Scheib says. “I don’t know anyone else who cut 30 percent in five years.”

But Scheib and Friedman aren’t ready to sound NYU lades on the university’s behalf: there’s plenty of work left to do. Reducing greenhouse gas emis- sions, or the amount of carbon that’s released into the air, can be accomplished in two ways. The first is to use cleaner energy sources—more highly refined oil, natural gas, or renewable sources such as wind, geothermal, and so- lar power. In fact, to mark the launch of its sustainability initia- tive, NYU made one of the na- tion’s largest purchases of wind power in 2006 and 2007. More signif- icant, the university invested $120 million to replace its 30- year-old, oil-fired power plant with a new natural gas-powered co-generation plant. This facility, which’s only 2010, now supplies electricity to 22 campus buildings, while using the steam it generates to supply heat and hot water to another 37.

The second way to lower emis- sions is to reduce energy usage, and when Scheib arrived at NYU, he was determined to focus first on consumption, and then sup- ply. “There’s no point in putting solar panels on the roof if you have a space heater in the summer because people are so cold in their office,” he notes. At first, NYU took the most straightforward steps. “You know how your mom told you to shut off the light when you leave the room?” Scheib asks. “We weren’t doing that.” Scaling heating or cooling and lighting of buildings back to a minimal level from midnight to 6 AM, for example, reduces energy consump- tion by 25 percent. Even shutting it down for just a couple of hours a night still creates sizable cut.

But turning off the lights also meant breaking electrical wiring apart, so that one out of every few lights in an office or hallway remains lit for safety purposes, or making light switches operable office by office, rather than a whole floor at a time, so janitorial- ists don’t have to go down to the specific light they need. NYU installed new, higher-efficiency lamps and made office walls that don’t light- ing loads 40 to 50 percent, and occupancy-based or daylight har- vesting sensors, which means of- fice lights grow dimmer when sunlight fills a room.

“It’s been a building-by-build- ing approach to see what we can do,” says Dianne Anderson, man-ager of sustainable resources, who oversees these efforts. In student residences, for example, she and her staff installed some 4,000 indi- vidual “smart thermostats” in an occupancy-based system, which knows to scale back heating or cooling when no one is in a room. Another project involves making data centers, the rooms that store the university’s servers, more effi- cient because they must be kept very cool to offset the heat they generate. Based on the slew of projects planned, Scheib estimates that within the next three to five years, NYU will have cut energy consumption by 30 percent, a number he says is “not pie in the sky.”

Beyond this, the university is aggressively studying the potential of biofuel mixtures and requesting proposals for renewable energy al- ternatives. But harvesting such power in the middle of Green- wich Village poses many obsta- cles. “With tall buildings and skinny roofs and heavy loads all the way down, there’s literally not enough sun input, wind input, or geothermal inputs to power [those buildings],” Scheib says.

“Can you imagine visiting any office or hallway on a Saturday and seeing the lights? It’s so different,” Scheib says. “It’s like a completely different building.”

At first, NYU had to fight in the courts to get reductions in space heating. “I remember when we were changing the fuel in Peabody, and when the embers would fall from the flue, the unions would run in and turn everyone’s central heating back on,” Scheib says. “Eventually, we did it.”

The key to making buildings more efficient is energy management. “In the past, NYU couldn’t make any cuts, it was just about what we could afford,” Scheib says. “Now we have some money, and we can make some changes.”

DUMPSTER DETECTIVES

Once a year, Jonah “Cecil” Scheib and the rest of NYU’s sustainability staff can be found roaming campus and sniffing trash bags off the sidewalks. They’re not looking for litter, but are instead attempting to “characterize our waste.”

The staff gathers garbage and recycling from a representative sample of bins on campus and finds out where the garbage is going. The staff tests that promise true at NYU, where 80 percent of what we’re actually throwing away needs recycling. “The goal for landfill diversion, which Scheib believes is well with- in reach, is 90 percent. Once NYU gets to that level, it will be worth looking at the last bit. Then, for example, the sustainability staff might work with the purchasing department and its suppliers, per- haps lobbying a computer manufacturer not to install the plastic piece in its keyboards that prevent them from being recycled, gaining new suppliers who can’t be located in Chicago or somewhere not far away. 

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Jonah Scheib projects that within the next three to five years, NYU will have cut energy consumption by 50 percent. But ‘that can’t help’—Also helping are innovations from students, facul- ty, and staff who have received nearly $400,000 in NYU Green Grants for some 61 original proj- ects since 2007. The aim is to en- courage the community in devising sustainability efforts—and the pro- gram has yielded many now-insti- tutionalized projects, including a campus bike share and an initia- tive that uses overflow food in dining halls to feed the homeless. Scheib says that NYU embraces the challenge of pursuing clean energy in an urban setting. “If we can do this in Lower Manhattan, we’ve shown that you can do it anywhere.”

This progress has not gone un- noticed. Last year, the Association for the Advancement of Sustain- ability in Higher Education, or AASHE, gave NYU its highest rating, one of only 23 colleges and universities in the country to re- ceive a “gold” distinction. This system, an independent program called STARS (the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System), considers broad criteria, measuring an institution’s entire educational, cultural, and opera- tional approach to sustainability. In the operations category, NYU ranked highest among all 122 schools assessed. AASHE also pres- ents individual national awards, and last fall its top prize for student research went to Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Hu- man Development graduate stu- dent Anna Brotscheider for her dis- sertation on student perception and behavior sustainability. Meeting its pledge to New York City so far ahead of schedule will be a significant ac- complishment, but Scheib suggests that the philos- ophy of “cut” may already be out- dated. Instead, he and others are asking new questions: Should the university simply pick an arbitrary number to aim for? Or is there a better way to create new targets? In essence, how much energy does a building actually need? In 2007, President John Sexton signed the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment to reach “climate neutrality”—or net-zero carbon emissions—which NYU estimates it can achieve by 2040; engineering studies are now under way to help make that hap- pen. Scheib says “Right now we’re doing 80,” and I don’t know if the speed limit is 65 or 35.”

NYU / SPRING 2012 / 13
**SHANGHAI CALLING: A NEW CAMPUS IS BORN**

by Sally Laukner / GSAS ’10

**For NYU students in New York, the university’s latest endeavor is a challenge—large and complex, but also the right move to maintain the university’s global presence. So far, students, faculty, and staff have embraced the new campus, which will open in fall 2014.**

Shanghai is a great opportunity for a student who wants to be in a major city but also wants to be part of a smaller community. In New York, you’re one of 20,000 undergrads. [In Shanghai] you’re one of, at its biggest, 2,400 undergrads. The campus might also attract more adventurous students. When our New York students travel, they go to D.C. or California. Our students in China can travel to Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, or even Australia.

**WHAT’S THE BLUZ IN SHANGHAI SO FAR?**

Shanghai is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world and has an incredible talent pool. There’s palpable excitement in China about NYU coming, and our potential presence makes us uniquely global.

**WHAT’S BEEN THE MOST DIFFICULT TIME IN SHANGHAI SO FAR?**

Wang’s philanthropy will create great momentum in advancing President John Sexton’s global vision for NYU. His recent gift will endow the World Creditsingh—equivalent of being at the base of Mt. Everest. It’s a huge challenge to get a university in China to open in New York. We’ve already found another space for us to build a bigger, more beautiful campus for when we can really expand our presence. That’s not until much further down the line.

**WHAT KINDS OF STUDENTS WILL YOU ADMIT?**

We’ll admit students and Chinese students, and initially there will be a different process for each. We’re in the process of preparing a global admissions system that will cover NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai, but that’s still being refined.

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In 1999, a Congressional-sponsored study on U.S. health care turned up some disturbing results. Americans who live in more rural, less-likely-to-white areas with organ transplants, undergo bypass surgery, receive kidney dialysis, and even receive heart surgery. Additional barriers include financial, geographical, and language issues, which contribute to health disparities.

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