

HANDS on



JILL KARGMAN

*Author (and mom of three!) **Jill Kargman** talks to **Michael Brodman**, Professor & Chair Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Science, about his life in and out of Mount Sinai*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KATE BURNLEY**

JILL KARGMAN: What was the eureka moment that made you want to go into medicine?

CHAIRMAN MICHAEL BRODMAN, MD: I was working as an engineer and I completely hated it. I realized that I shouldn't do what everyone thinks I should do because I'm good at it, I should do what I want to do. Then, in medical school, the rotation I had the most fun at was OBGYN. I learned that 90 percent of what you do is the routine—that's the part you have to like. I like working with people, I like working with my hands, I like action. I wanted to have long-term relationships with my patients and the only field you're really allowed to do that is OBGYN. Women are great patients because they're open, they talk. I love this practice because I have patients I've been taking care of forever.

KARGMAN: You're right—I feel so close to my doctors, I love them. I heard you also love woodworking. Is it hard to make the switch in your head when you finish a hysterectomy and then you go build a gazebo? *(laughs)*

BRODMAN: I don't really switch gears. It's still working with my hands. Whether I'm performing surgery or making a table, I have an image in my head of what it's suppose to look like. However, when I'm woodworking I can turn my brain off a little. I get lost in what I'm doing. It's a way of sort of purging whatever's going on in my head.

KARGMAN: How do you get through your personal life when you're sleeping on a gurney and on-call so much?

BRODMAN: Well to be honest, I didn't do it well early

on. You can't come home and only talk about work, it creates problems. I think that it's really hard to get through those years. One advantage was that when I was working 110 hours a week my wife and family understood why I was tired all the time. The critical thing is balancing work with the rest of the world. You can't get absorbed with thinking, 'oh I just saved a 7-year-old and nothing else is as important.' If you take that attitude then the world just seems so unrelatable. The critical piece is when you're working, you're working and when you're off, you have to shift gears.

KARGMAN: Tell me about delivering your first baby.

BRODMAN: It just blew me out of the water. It's the most amazing thing you could ever watch and it only confirmed that I wanted to be in this field. Again, it's a happy field. It's exciting and you develop relationships with your patients over time. If you put a group of doctors together, I guarantee no one will complain about what they do. We just love what we do.

KARGMAN: You are then involved in so many lives—you're



DR. BRODMAN AND KARGMAN IN THE PRISTINE LOBBY OF MOUNT SINAI

part of their history.

BRODMAN: Exactly. People come up to me today and still say, "You delivered me!"

KARGMAN: You are like the mayor of Mount Sinai—everyone's saluting you.

BRODMAN: Well, I've been here forever.



KARGMAN AND DR. BRODMAN OUTSIDE THE NURSERY

"The critical piece is when you're working, you're working and when you're off, you have to shift gears."

Dr. Brodman

For more information on Dr. Michael Brodman, please visit www.mountsinai.org/OBGYN