

Scholar's



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CELEBRATING OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

**DAKOTA SPECULATORS
IN THE
GREAT MINNESOTA OUTBACK**

WAYNE FANEUST
SDIS MEMBER

Saturday, February 18, 2012
1:30 p.m.

Room 111-A Chancellor's Complex, UCSD Campus

In the 1850's, the American West was ablaze with land speculation. From Minnesota to Kansas, town site companies eagerly sought out the most desirable locations for new towns, taking advantage of an 1844 Act of Congress. This generous law was the impetus for ambitious men to create companies and send exploration parties into the prairie wilderness.

Among the new breed of speculators were men from the Dakota Land Company from St. Paul and the Western Town Company from Dubuque. Their sights were set on the Falls of the Big Sioux River, considered to be a place of great natural beauty as well as an ideal place to start a city. By 1857 both companies had staked out their town sites

claims at the majestic Falls. They joined forces to deal with the harsh hand of nature and the threat posed by the Native Americans who objected to the presence of the trespassing white men.

Wayne Fanebust was born in Sioux Falls, SD and raised “out in the country,” always living near Sioux Falls, except for a short stay in Iowa. His early years were entirely rural and his elementary education was in small, wooden country schoolhouses. He graduated from Washington High School in Sioux Falls, joined the United States Marine Corps and was stationed at Camp Pendleton, California.

In 1965 Wayne moved to Los Angeles and pursued a career as a rock ‘n roll musician and songwriter. As a guitar player he sang and performed in bands in Los Angeles in the mid-and late 60’s.

It was while he was a student at the University of California, Santa Barbara, that he acquired an interest in history. He took a course called “History of the American West” and found he was fascinated with the frontier experience and how it shaped the American character. He graduated with a degree in history from UCLA in 1973.

Wayne attended law school at Western State University College of Law in San Diego and received a Juris Doctor of Law Degree. He was admitted to the California bar in 1980, entered private law practice in San Diego, and maintained a law office until 1993 when he returned to Sioux Falls for a career change. He is now semi-retired and very active in the business of writing.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

As independent scholars, we each have the freedom to follow the torch of individual intellectual interest wherever it may lead, to pick topics of our own choosing, to change topics as interest changes, or to stop whenever interest wanes. Such freedom is remarkable but — a big caveat — it depends on an original decision: choosing to start. What is required is taking the leap of getting started on something which sparks interest. This may develop into a life-enhancing long term interest — or it may not, in which case it can be dropped. But it surely won’t develop into anything worthwhile if it is not begun.

As a case in point, I’ve decided to start something of that sort for myself. Because of the nature of the subject, I feel it appropriate to keep you informed from the outset. My subject is independent scholarship and the initial data base for study will come from what we know about SDIS. I tend to view research as data driven and, from this point of view, a good way to start is to look at available data and see what questions arise. I have started with the SDIS Directory. In it, each member has self-reported personal scholarly interests in self-chosen words.

Some potential questions: What are members' self-reported interests? Do these interests cluster around certain topics or are they scattered? What does this tell us about the relationship between activities offered by SDIS and members' self-reports of scholarly interest? What does this tell us about SDIS? Running way ahead, what might this tell us about independent scholarship as it is practiced and is evolving in the context of SDIS? Even more broadly, what does this suggest about the nature of, and opportunities for, independent scholarship in the United States today? As usual, the best place to start is at the beginning: what are members' self-reported interests? Follow-on questions have a habit of changing, multiplying, and getting more interesting once some actual data are in hand.

A first cursory analysis indicates approximately 1.7 self-reported topics of interest, on average, for each of the 69 members listed in the Directory. The range of different self-reported topics of interest is broad. The number of different topics reported is somewhat arbitrary, depending on whether closely related topics are counted separately or combined and counted as one. A first broad-brush assessment indicates self-reported interest in more than 100 separate topics, probably about 120. I have consolidated these, with a considerable degree of arbitrariness, into eight broad categories, as shown below. Also shown below are the numbers of members whose Directory statements include mention of topics which fall within each of these broad categories.

- 35 CULTURE
- 23 HISTORY
- 20 PSYCHOLOGY/BIOLOGY INCLUDING NEUROSCIENCE
- 20 LITERATURE
- 14 NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS
- 14 ARTISTIC TOPICS AND EXPRESSIONS
- 7 SYMBOLS, INCLUDING LANGUAGE
- 5 RELIGION AND MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS IN THE HUMANITIES

I intend to re-visit this first attempt at categorization, especially the culture category which brings together a wide variety of topics only marginally related to each other, if at all. Nonetheless, even this first broad-brush examination demonstrates clearly that SDIS would be a tower of Babel if we only spoke and listened to each other from the specific points of view associated with each of our particular special interests as stated in the self-reports. Since we do speak and listen to each other with considerable interest, most obviously in study groups, this first look at the Directory information suggests that within SDIS we routinely transcend narrow personal interests and point of view.

As with many exploratory studies, I have no idea whether anything useful will emerge, but I am curious to look at what's available to be seen, and that's reason enough to take a few first steps. Perhaps I'll have more to say about this next month. In the meanwhile, I will welcome your comments and suggestions.

Sam Gusman



STUDY GROUPS

Colloquy Café

The Colloquy Café study group will discuss "Prostitution" on **Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 1:30 p.m.** If you are interested in attending, contact Mary Ellen Stratthaus at mestratt@san.rr.com.

Culture One

The original Culture study group, now known as Culture One, will continue its focus on the issues described in Chapter 8 (Who Deserves What: Aristotle) of *Justice: What's The Right Thing to Do?* by Michael Sandel on **Thursday, February 16, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.** Special emphasis will be given to comparing concepts in this chapter with those described in earlier chapter as they all relate to the subtitle in Chapter 8, "What's the purpose of politics?" Contact Sam Gusman at sagus@sbcglobal.net for further information.

Culture Two

The new group, known as Culture Two, will focus on the issues described in Chapter 2 (The Greatest Happiness Principle/Utilitarianism) of *Justice: What's The Right Thing to Do?* by Michael Sandel on **Friday, February 10, 2012 at 1:30 p.m.** Contact Sam Gusman at sagus@sbcglobal.net for further information.

Film

The Film Group will meet **Wednesday, February 1, at 12:30 p.m.** at the home of Barbara Heckler to view *Citizen Kane*. Discussion will begin at **2:30 p.m.** Contact Barbara at bheckler@san.rr.com for information.

Literature

The Literature Group's next meeting will be on Monday, March 5, at 10:30 a.m. at Gerry Horwitz's home. Donna Boyle will lead a discussion of Alan Paton's "Cry the Beloved Country." Contact Harry Boyle at hhboyle28@cox.net for more information.

Science (aka Brain)

The Science Group will meet on **Monday, February 27, 2012 at 3 p.m.** at Bea Rose's home (please note time return to 3 pm). We have chosen our new adventure in reading, *Who's In Charge: Free Will and the Science of the Brain* by Michael Gazzaniga. Our reading assignment is the Introduction and Chapter 1 which will be the topic of discussion. Visiting when we are starting a new book is an excellent time to observe and participate. Visitors are welcome but please call Bea Rose first at (858) 458-9263 so that proper arrangements can be made.

Works in Progress

Two SDIS members are actively working on projects to present at WIP. No firm dates yet; stay tuned. For more information, contact Donna Boyle at dboyle101@cox.net.



A LOOK AT *THE MAGDALENE SISTERS*

VIEWED BY THE FILM GROUP IN JANUARY 2012

There was a dark side to the seemingly pious task of reforming “wayward girls” and prostitutes in what were called the Magdalene asylums from the 18th century to the mid-20th century. The first one was founded in Dublin in 1765 by a Protestant, Lady Arabella Denny. The first Catholic asylum started in Cork in 1809. Accusations of abuse of women and civil rights violations accumulated through the years. The last Magdalene asylum closed in Waterford, Ireland in 1996 (referenced in Wikipedia under Magdalene asylum).

The Magdalene sisters of the film managed one of these institutions in Ireland in the early part of the 20th century. But the conditions were closer to a prison and workhouse for young women who were sent there because: they got pregnant out of wedlock, were orphans caught flirting, or were raped, sometimes by relatives. The latter women were the characters portrayed in the movie. All were used as unpaid laundresses for the convent and the town, and they could not leave of their own accord.

The mother superior in charge of this order was played by the actress most would recognize as Christie’s Miss Marple (Geraldine McEwen). She showed extraordinary skill in portraying a character that could be sugary sweet to clerics and townspeople and despicably cruel to the girls in her charge.

Here is a confession (no pun intended) about reviewing this film when our astute and generous leader, Barbara Heckler, asked. I was one who voted to see it because, as a child raised Catholic, I had heard about the Magdalene Sisters at St. Margaret’s Academy and wanted to hear more. I remembered being in a Social Studies class taught by a younger nun we all liked. One of my more daring classmates asked her if a woman, who was “disgraced” could become a nun. And the answer was yes, there was one order that would accept such a woman, the Magdalene Sisters. For many years, the Catholic Church saw Mary Magdalene as a reformed prostitute and I tucked the whole matter back into my memory, until now.

Recently I found in Wikipedia that “in 1969, the Catholic Church allegedly admitted that Magdalene's standard image as a reformed prostitute is not supported by the text of the Bible.” In fact, she may have been the Mary that sat at the feet of Jesus to hear his word, for which he praised her instead of her sister Martha who was working and grumbling in the kitchen. (My own attempt to be relieved of dish duties by my parents for more intellectual pursuits on this basis miserably failed!)

The movie was worth seeing, and its realistic portrayal was supported by historical evidence. This study group has led to stimulating conversation and camaraderie and is always a thoughtful learning experience.

Judith Strupp Green



NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The current Nominating Committee is charged with presenting a slate of SDIS officers, directors, and candidates for the next Nominating Committee to be voted on by SDIS members at our Annual Business Meeting, May 19, 2012.

Elected in May, 2011, the present Nominating Committee consists of William Houghton, Marjorie Jackson, Gail Orell, Jean Renshaw, and Sue Rosner (Chair). At its first meeting, January 5, 2012, the Nominating Committee clarified the list of positions to be filled, i.e., those officers and directors who are completing their terms of office this May, 2012.

The Committee will continue its work in selecting a slate of candidates for these positions which will be presented to the membership in ballot form prior to the May, 2012 Annual Business Meeting. For information contact Sue Rosner, rosnersue@gmail.com.



UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH MARY STROLL

Mary is a founding member of SDIS. In 1987 the Los Angeles Times printed a long article about SDIS which gives insight into why many people found that membership in SDIS was an important addition to their lives. The entire article can be read at http://articles.latimes.com/1987-06-24/news/vw-6248_1_independent-scholars. Excerpted below are parts of the article pertinent to Mary, followed by my interview with her.

Barbara Heckler

“Stroll explained that many of the group's members obtained graduate degrees after they were middle-aged or older and found it difficult to obtain teaching positions. ‘They've reached an age where they're not as competitive as they might be within academia, but are still interested in doing serious research in their fields of expertise,’ she noted.

Stroll... was a top undergraduate in medieval history at the University of Iowa; she had her choice between a graduate scholarship at Columbia University and a Fulbright Scholarship to Austria when she graduated in 1955. ‘But I gave the whole thing up and got married,’ she said with a smile.

In the late 1960s, with her children older and more independent, Stroll went back to school at UC San Diego as a graduate student in history. "My first

class was on church and state relations in the 12th Century, and after all that time my love for the field came back," she recalled.

Stroll obtained her doctorate in history from UC San Diego in 1975. For a time she taught at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, but that forced her to live separately from her husband, and after a year she returned to her home in La Jolla and pursued historical research on her own.

It didn't take her long to realize that she was at a disadvantage compared to her counterparts in universities. "Independent scholars frequently work in isolation, so they don't have the stimulation of (interacting with) other people working in the same field, or using (colleagues) as a sounding board," Stroll said."

And here's our interview.

Q. What do you find so intriguing about medieval history?

A. I am very interested in politics, and one of the most intriguing periods in history was the Middle Ages with the competition between the two great institutions, the empire and the church. It is also a period of critical development with, for example, the institutionalization of the Church, the rise of Islam, the establishment of the nation state, the establishment of parliamentary democracy, the crusades and the split between the Latin and Greek churches, and the recognition of romantic love.

Q. You've published five books and numerous papers. What is your favorite?

A. Probably *The Jewish Pope*. It was the first book that I wrote, and my skills were primitive. Yet, there was the excitement for the first time of looking at a situation differently from the accepted opinion, and arguing my case.

Q. What has been the hardest thing you've ever written? The easiest?

A. Nothing was easy. My last book, *Popes and Antipopes: The Politics of Eleventh Century Church Reform*, was the most difficult. The Vatican Library was closed for research, and I had to work at the Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rome, which also has an excellent library if not comparable to the Vatican. I should have gone back to Rome to check out many things, but we were unable to travel, so I had to do the best I could here. Also, I had always worked in the twelfth century, and the eleventh was quite different. I had to start from scratch to master the sources and literature.

Q. Tell me about your experience as a Fulbright scholar. How long did you spend in Rome doing research? What book (paper?) resulted from your research?

A. I spent about eight months in Rome writing my dissertation called *The Regalia in the Kingdom of Burgundy in the twelfth century*. It was the first time that I had worked in the Vatican Library, which was very different in those days, and much less accustomed to female scholars.

Q. Is there another book or paper in the works?

A. I should like to continue my work on the politics of the eleventh century church reform, but it depends upon being able to travel back to Rome.

Q. If you had chosen a different career, what would it be?

A. I would probably work in a charitable organization to make the world a better, more humane place, but medieval history is in my blood.

Q. Your husband Avrum Stroll is well known as a prominent philosophy professor emeritus at UCSD. What attracted you to him?

A. Avrum was a visiting professor for a semester when I was an undergraduate at the University of Iowa. We were good friends while I had a passion for a trampoline artist. Eventually I realized that it was Avrum who was my true companion, and accepted his suggestion that we get married. Avrum is a modern analytical philosopher with an infinitely creative mind, and who can hold vast amounts of information in his head. He has published 20 books, over 100 papers, and attended numerous conferences. Our professional lives have enriched one another's.

Q. What is your favorite way of relaxing?

A. Having a glass of wine before dinner while watching the BBC News.

Q. As a founding member of SDIS, how have you seen it change?

A. That would be too long to describe, and I haven't been able to be active for several years. I rejoice at the way that it has blossomed and think that its present president, Sam Gusman, is a wonderful president.

Q. Do you have any advice or recommendations for the current SDIS Board?

A. No. You are doing a great job.

About SDIS

San Diego Independent Scholars (SDIS) supports unaffiliated writers and researchers and welcomes everyone who appreciates creative and intellectual activities in the humanities, science, and the arts. SDIS is a non-profit organization and an affiliate of the National Coalition of Independent Scholars. **Sam Gusman, President,** sagus@sbcglobal.net.

Scholar's Notebook is the newsletter of SDIS. Please send your news for the *Notebook* to Barbara Heckler, *Notebook* editor: bheckler@san.rr.com or by mail to 3489 Wellesly Ave, San Diego, CA 92122. The deadline for submissions is the 22nd of the month prior to publication date.

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