

Scholar's



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Atlantic Divide: American and European Attitudes Toward Public Policy

DONNA BOYLE
SDIS Member and Immediate Past President

**Saturday, October 16, 2010
1:30 p.m.**

Room 111-A Chancellor's Complex, UCSD Campus

Provoked by the healthcare debate of recent memory, Donna began to consider the differences between Americans and Europeans on that issue as well as others. To get past the caricatures of Nanny States and Heartless Capitalists, she explores a wider variety of issues and searches more deeply into the past. She recalls the different feel of walking a European public street; she reminisces over last summer's World Cup and American sports enthusiasts' disdain of soccer. And she looks back to an earlier Britain, where America got most of its political and legal institutions. There she finds differences in emphasis characterized by the rule of law in England and feudalism in mainland Europe. Still elbow deep in this investigation, Donna hopes to pique your interest, with a view toward all of us considering the issue and discovering whether our attitudes require adjustment.

Donna draws on all of her background to explore any interesting question. Her history includes education and business. As a high school teacher of Math and English,

she willingly took on classes for which no other faculty were available and ended up teaching Chemistry for eight years. She also picked up occasional classes in art and drama. These rich events demonstrated to her that even with little formal training in a field, a person can search for solutions and stimulate a similar interest in others. Put another way, subject matter knowledge does not a teacher make. Subsequent to her teaching, Donna's path took her through managing small businesses to work as an accountant in a large healthcare company. Currently she conducts a Writer's Workshop for older adults through the San Diego Community College District's Continuing Education program.



Save the Date!

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Saturday, December 4, at Carlsbad-by-the-Sea Retirement Community.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

In last month's Notebook I mentioned the variety of venues offered by SDIS and suggested "that these are all variations on a common theme: a home-base for sharing varied flavors of reasoned inquiry, for learning from and with each other." I also talked about expanding the ways in which SDIS can serve its members. This is now starting to happen.

- Gerry Horwitz, in this Notebook, describes the Dubois Library collection in Balboa Park's Museum of Photographic Arts. This is the first in a planned series of articles entitled "Community Resources in Focus," describing intellectual resources available to us in the greater San Diego area.
- Donna Boyle alerts us, also in this Notebook, to plans for reactivation of a Works-in-Progress study group later this year.
- Barbara Heckler is taking the lead in exploring possibilities for a new study group on Film, and I am doing the same around the broad topic of Culture.
- A small informal team will begin looking at the ways in which expanded use of electronic communication may be to our advantage.

The goal of any new activity, also true of activities SDIS has had in place for years, is to serve the interests of its members, and, of course, also to serve the interests of new members who refresh our ranks. Communication among us in the form of dialog about such matters can be of enormous help. I welcome hearing from you, learning your thoughts about SDIS. You can reach me at sagus@sbcglobal.net or by letter to my home address.

Sam Gusman



COMMUNITY RESOURCES: IN FOCUS

A little-known resource for scholars lies within Balboa Park's Museum of Photographic Arts. The Dubois Library of 20,000 items dedicated solely to the subject of photography is available, by appointment, not only to members of the museum (MOPA) but also to outside researchers and educators interested in aspects of film and photography.

The non-circulating collection consists of a variety of materials. The bulk of these items are monographs by or about individual photographers. Collections of 300 different serials, many no longer published but 25 currently subscribed to, are here. Auction catalogs are held; they sometimes contain images of photographs not otherwise available.

Annals of various worldwide photography organizations have been accumulated; even their advertisements can contain valuable information for research: e.g., types of photographic paper no longer used. Reference materials available include encyclopedias and directories of the photographic arts. Exhibition catalogs, histories, and anthologies are among the holdings.

An audiovisual collection contains 10,000 slides. Hundreds of hours of videotape and audiocassettes preserve relevant lectures and interviews.

Approximately 300 rare books reside here, many with tipped-in photographs. The library owns three unique archives. One consists of the photographs and papers of the prize-winning American photographer and filmmaker Lou Stoumen (1917-91), who willed his collection to MOPA. Another is "Nagasaki Journey", a collection of materials having to do with photos taken by the Japanese photographer Yamahata the day after the bombing of that city. The third archive is of materials concerning the history of MOPA.

The museum is one of only three free-standing (not attached to another institution) photography museums in the U.S. Originating as the Center for Photographic Arts in the mid-'70s, it was officially launched under its present name in 1983 when it was moved to Balboa Park. However, in 2000 MOPA was able to occupy its present location, a purpose-built space on the Prado enabling the library collection to increase from 1,500 items to its present size. The library is named for Edmund L. and Nancy K. Dubois of Los Angeles, collectors of photography books, whose generosity made possible its realization.

Open four days each week, Mon.-Thurs. from 8:30-2:30, the entire library space has a temperature and humidity-controlled environment where researchers are encouraged to use its wealth of material.

For an appointment to delve into its riches, call Librarian Holland Kissinger at (619) 238-7559, ext. 216. The library's catalog, which at present includes only books, is accessible on the Internet: www.MOPA.org.

Gerry Horwitz



STUDY GROUPS

Works in Progress

SDIS's Works-in-Progress study group has lain dormant since the passing of its energetic leader, Alice Marquis. She developed the calendar, coordinated presenters, and generously hosted each meeting. WIP, as it is familiarly known, is a cornerstone of any scholar group. Here scholars and artists expose their ideas to daylight, whether those thoughts are barely formed, full-fledged plans, or works almost ready for distribution or publication. The projects they present may be in their particular areas of expertise or in new arenas of inquiry. To help presenters perfect those projects, the group offers constructive feedback about what they've seen and heard.

We are eager to reactivate WIP. Watch the November Notebook for details of a planning meeting – to set up venue and times of meetings, and to address any other procedural issues that may arise. *Probable* planning meeting arrangements: Saturday afternoon, November 6, at my home in North Park. If you are interested in attending, or have suggestions about WIP, or if you have a project to present in the near future, please email me, Donna Boyle, dboyle101@cox.net.



Colloquy Café Study Group

The next **Colloquy Café**, on **Wednesday, October 20**, at **1:30 PM**, will be on the subject, *Soul*, at the home of Jean Mayer. Those who are interested in attending can contact Sam Gusman at sagus@sbcglobal.net.



Culture Study Group

Planning has begun for a new study group on Culture. A first meeting will be at **2:30 PM on Wednesday, October 27**. This is a very large subject area which will proceed in the direction favored by participants; this will be discussed at the first meeting. In addition, to get the study group started in a substantive way, the first meeting will also look at the relationship between metaphor and culture, using modern concepts of conceptual metaphors. If you may be interested, please contact Sam Gusman for further details, at sagus@sbcglobal.net, or by phone, as listed in the SDIS directory.



Film

The new **Film Group** will meet **Friday, October 8, at 2 P.M.** at the home of Barbara Heckler in University City. At that time, we will discuss a regular time and format for the group. We will also view the 2006 documentary film *Wordplay*, which looks at the world of Will Shortz, crossword puzzle editor at the New York Times. Contact Barbara at bheckler@san.rr.com.

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Literature

The **Literary Group** will meet on **Monday, October 25 at 10:30 AM** in the home of Donna and Harry Boyle. Betty Cortus will lead the discussion of selected poems of Philip Larkin. Contact Harry at hhboyle28@cox.net.

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Science (aka Brain Study Group)

The **Science Group (AKA Brain Study Group)** will meet on **Friday, October 8 at 3 P.M.** at Bea Rose's home. The new reading adventure starts with the first two chapters in *Sleeping, Dreaming, and Dying: An Exploration of Consciousness with the Dalai Lama*. This book documents the fourth and last of the Mind Life Institute Series "Conversations with the Dalai Lama," which started in 1987 and ended in 1997. For further information contact Bea Rose at (858) 458 - 9263 or bea.rose@sbcglobal.net.

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UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH SAM GUSMAN

In recent discussions with Board Members about articles for the newsletter, they agreed that interviews with current members would be interesting. I drafted questions and emailed them to Sam. His detailed answers give us a peek at the qualities which make him a great choice for President of SDIS.

Barbara Heckler

Q. Sam, thanks so much for agreeing to be the first person interviewed for the Notebook.

A. Barbara, I am at heart a private person so I reacted with some apprehension to your request for this interview. That said, I applaud your intent to include in the Notebook interviews with many SDIS members. This is good for SDIS. I feel it is useful for us to know a bit more about each other. So, here are some quick and unpolished answers to your questions.

Q. What can you tell me about your career? What kind of work have you done? How did you get into it?

A. There was always a thread connecting the phases of my work life. I attended M.I.T. as a chemical engineering student. It was only after a full chemical engineering education that I became convinced I was more interested in science than engineering. This led to a Ph.D. in physical chemistry at Brown University. After that, fast forward through a quarter century career of challenging, interesting basic and applied research, research management and general management related first to polymers, then to pharmaceuticals.

I then decided to leave this relatively straight track and see whether the world would accommodate my desire to do work of my own design, pleasing to me, yet directly worthwhile in a social sense. I learned the federal regulatory process first hand by spending perhaps a year as a consultant in the Environmental Protection Agency during the crafting of the first regulation under a new chemical regulatory law. I joined a respected Washington not-for-profit organization and started a pioneering program which I called Policy Dialog on Environmental Issues, bringing together leaders in the

chemical industry, in major environmental groups, and in government for face-to-face constructive dialog.

These people mostly had not had prior opportunity for such meetings in a non-adversarial problem-solving mode. The program was a success, and the concept of policy dialog continues to be used today in various ways. Throughout, in all these different phases, my sense of it is that finding the right question to ask is the single most crucial step. I feel this is true in most, perhaps in all, kinds of intellectual endeavors. Once the right question is found, the path to useful answers, though not always easy, is often clearly marked.

Q. You're very active in SDIS. You're President, you facilitate Colloquy Cafe, and you're introducing a new study group called "Culture". That's an endorsement for both you and for SDIS! What's your favorite part about volunteering?

A. I don't really treat volunteering differently from any other aspect of work life.

I work or volunteer because it intrigues me to do so, because I believe I stand a decent chance of making a difference, of having a positive effect on something I consider worthwhile. I have been slow to appreciate it, but I have now come to believe that the concept of SDIS is very important. SDIS has the potential to be a prototype of a non-disciplinary non-adversarial local organization in which the nature of our world can be explored in community with others.

Perhaps you remember the old motto: "Think globally; act locally." Action in SDIS is real and local. The "think globally" part of it is just an expression of my own tendency to try to understand what I do in large context. As I said in my "From the President" remarks last month, SDIS can be a home-base for sharing varied flavors of reasoned inquiry, for learning from and with each other. The world needs more of that, more places in which people can gather in community for scholarly discourse, collegially and in a spirit of joint inquiry. As I see it, the need is especially strong in today's adversarial, polarized, and fractious world. SDIS has lots of potential.

Can we build on SDIS's base to make it increasingly attractive to us, to our friends and to others who may choose to join us as they see the vigor and good purpose of this organization? With an enthusiastic membership committed to using SDIS to best advantage, all this seems likely.

Q. Do you have time for hobbies? What about other organizations (past or present)?

A. I like do-it-yourself activities in which I am an active participant. I started the Policy Dialog program in DC. I retired to Taos, NM, an archetypal "do-it-yourself or it doesn't get done" kind of place. There I helped start a community orchestra, a land trust, and a film festival. Working with others we made Taos the kind of place we wanted it to be through our joint efforts. But on a different note, I do need to get away from it all, regularly. In Taos, I used to love skiing and taking long solo walks in nearby mountains. That's tougher to do in this big city, but there is the beach and the hills at Torrey Pines for solitary walks. That's a pretty good substitute for the mountains.

Q. What kinds of things do you like to read? What's the last book you've read?

A. Mostly I've recently been reading non-fiction especially related to philosophy, neuroscience, and linguistics with a bit of psychology tossed into the mix. I've just

started "The Cybernetic Brain," a new book by Andrew Pickering. He traces the early history of cybernetics by following the careers of a few pioneers in that field, including Norbert Weiner (a renowned mathematician and my freshman calculus instructor) who coined the word Cybernetics in 1948. Cybernetic thinking rapidly spread across the intellectual map unimpeded by traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Pickering states the situation nicely, "It was a strongly interdisciplinary field, or, better, an antidisciplinary one: it did not aggregate disciplinary perspectives; it rode roughshod over disciplinary boundaries." I see cybernetics as relevant to SDIS only in the sense that both must deal non-traditionally with disciplinary boundaries.

Q. Are there any particular bragging points or interesting things that I don't know you well enough to ask?

A. I will say that I've had a really good time in my work life. As a child, I am sure to my parents' distress, I was addicted to the question, "Why?" It remains with me today. I am incorrigibly curious. Over the years, I've had enough success in finding good questions and useful answers to give me a sense of fulfillment. And I do not deny I am pleased that others have recognized some of these accomplishments in a very positive way.

Q. Married? Children? How long have you lived in San Diego?

A. Yes, married to Carolyn most of my life, since she was 19 and I was 21. We have two sons, both married with children of their own, and one of my sons already a grandfather. Carolyn and I have lived in San Diego for about ten years. Now I've arrived at something past what is called middle age but I don't feel the years. I continue to revel in the wonder of it all, day by day.



NEW MEMBERS

SDIS extends a warm welcome to its newest members. Look for them in the updated SDIS Directory due out the end of October or early November.

Nancy Acker

* Theater / Film / Literature / Psychology
nancylacker@gmail.com

Faye Girsh

* Right to die / Travel / Islam
fayegirsh@msn.com

I. R. Goodman

* Mathematical probability / Philosophy / Literature
(No email)

Betty Hiller

* Visual arts / Music / Literature / Philosophy
bhiller@sbcglobal.net

Margery Mico

* Philosophy / Mathematics
margeryamico@gmail.com

Sue Rosner

* Neuropsychology / Williams Syndrome / Developmental & experimental psychology
suersr@aol.com

Elizabeth Snowden

* Development of physiological & medical research from animal to clinical
elizabeth@esnowden.com



IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we announce the death of another SDIS member. Richard Julian died from a heart attack while riding his bike near his home. He was a regular contributor to Colloquy Café and always enjoyed the speakers at the general meetings. He was looking forward to taking on a larger role with SDIS. He will be missed.

Sue Punjack



November Meeting

Dr. Daniel Steinberg

**Preventing Heart Attacks
By Lowering Blood Cholesterol**

**The usual UCSD meeting place,
Room 111-A Chancellor's Complex
Saturday, November 20, 2010, 1:30 P.M.**

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, the *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.

www.sdscholars.org