Understanding the Environment and Rediscovering Ourselves Through Nature

April 20
1:30pm
Room 111A, Chancellors Complex
UCSD Campus

For more than two million years we evolved outside, in Nature, driven by our instincts. Over the last several thousand years, our newly conscious minds have tried to reconcile the conflict between the demands of civilization, social expectations, and our ancient, wild selves. Yet despite our best efforts, the conflict persists, causing many of the personal, social, and environmental problems (especially how we deal with wildfire) we face today. Nature provides the remedy. Join us as we explore how connecting with Nature through local native habitats offers us a way to achieve what so many philosophers through the ages have identified as essential to achieving a meaningful existence — to “know thyself.”

About Our April Speaker
Richard Halsey

Besides being the Chaparral Institute’s director, Richard W. Halsey is also a writer, photographer, and most importantly, a guide to help others reconnect with Nature and their wild, inner selves.

Halsey has given more than 500 presentations and written numerous books, research papers, and articles over the past 15 years concerning chaparral ecology and the importance of reestablishing our connection with Nature. Richard also works with the San Diego Museum of Natural History and continues to teach natural history throughout the state. He founded and has been leading the Chaparral Naturalist Certification Program over the past five years. The second edition of his book, Fire, Chaparral, and Survival in Southern California, was awarded the 2008 Best Nonfiction-Local Interest Book by the San Diego Book Awards Association.
Richard earned undergraduate degrees from the University of California in environmental studies and anthropology. During graduate work he received teaching credentials in life, physical and social science and a Master's in education. Richard taught biology, physics, and environmental science for over thirty years in both public and private schools, was honored as Teacher of the Year for San Diego City Schools, and was awarded the Christa McAuliffe Fellowship which allowed him to begin writing his first book.

Editor’s Note, here’s a direct quote from the Chaparral website: “The California Chaparral Institute was established shortly after the 2003 Cedar Fire in San Diego County, the 273,000 acre wildfire that marked the beginning of the California's new era of catastrophic mega fires. ... Since 2003, the Institute has produced publications and provided hundreds of public presentations explaining the value of the chaparral ecosystem and how we can live safety within California’s fire-prone environment.”

NATIONAL COALITION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS CONFERENCE INVITATION

Below is a message from Barbara Ellertson, liason to NCIS Partners. One or two of our members attended the conference five years ago. Ellertson is in regular contact with SDIS and extracts information from Scholars Notebook to put under Partner News on the NCIS website.

“Hello, SDIS members. The National Coalition of Independent Scholars is working hard at plans for our upcoming conference in Amherst, Massachusetts on June 21-23, 2019. Please consider yourself most warmly invited. The conference theme “Making Connections, Meeting Challenges” is one we think that all independent scholars will find timely. It has been five years since the last NCIS conference; this is a rare opportunity to meet with NCIS members from near and far.

Please take a few minutes to review the conference agenda at:

https://www.ncis.org/ncis-conference-call-papers

We know it would be a long way to travel for SDIS members, but we very much hope that you can join us in June in Amherst.”
STUDY GROUPS

Colloquy Café

The March discussion was one of the most, if not the most, challenging we've had. It began with one member's comment that although she could not think of a synonym for the meaning of “grace” which refers to pleasing physical movement, she understands it; but she does not understand the meaning which is expressed in the song “Amazing Grace.” Does “grace” in that apparently religious context mean acceptance of God’s forgiveness? God’s pardon? God’s love? God’s mercy? What? Is “grace” salvation from original sin?? And if so, can one earn admission to heaven and eternal life, or is admission pre-destined? Or freely given and unmerited by God?

Another participant added that in early Christianity all believers were equal, but the teachings of Martin Luther, John Calvin and Puritanism reformed, or altered, concepts of the prevailing Catholic Church in the early 16th century, thus originating various Protestant faiths. And what about non-Christians, or atheists, asked another?

How did the religious meaning of “grace” transfer to the more modern meaning of simple and elegant movement or expression? asked a member. Still another participant turned that around when he showed on his i-phone an image of Canova’s 1814 marble sculpture of the “Three Graces”, daughters of the Greek god Zeus. Personifying beauty, mirth and elegance, the perhaps original image of the 3 maidens of pleasure and joy is a marble relief from the year 470 BCE. The ancient meaning of “grace” came first; the religious one came from that!

April 17 will be the next discussion of the Colloquy group; the topic will be “the worthwhile life.” Less complicated than “grace”?…..we’ll see.

Gerry Horwitz

Culture One

Culture One will discuss the Third Part of "China Rules" (cf. New York Times, November 25, 2018) at our Thursday, April 11 meeting, 2:00 PM, Signature Room, Vi. This meeting focuses on how "China uses its Money and Muscle to Pave its Way to Global Power". We are privy to China's aspirations, use of economic clout, geopolitical influence, and astute strategies to become a major player on the world scene.

Our March meeting first reviewed last month's coverage of “Part One: China Rules, the prevailing Catholic Church in the early 16th century, thus originating various Protestant faiths. And what about non-Christians, or atheists, asked another?

How China Became a Superpower". Emphasis was primarily on our March assignment: "PART 2: How China's Rulers Control Society"", i.e., "China promises a good life to those who work hard. In return, they stay out of politics". In other words, "How China’s Rulers Control Society: Opportunity, Nationalism, Fear".

The focus was on "How does government manage this multiple orientation?" and "How do its citizens handle its dual values?" There was much to fathom, discuss, predict.

Sue Rosner
**Film**

We will meet Wednesday, April 3 at 10 am to watch *BlackKkKlansman*, a Spike Lee biographical crime film based on the 1970s true story about the first African-American detective, Ron Stallworth, in Colorado Springs. The detective infiltrated the local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan to expose it. The film is based on the 2014 biography by Stallworth.

Our March film was *Kusama-Infinity*, a 2018 documentary about famed Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama. She is famous for her Infinity Mirror Rooms and polka dot style. Despite early mentoring by Georgia O'Keeffe, she experienced decades of obscurity in the 70s and 80s. Today her exhibits receive record numbers of visitors who wait in long lines to view her work. In the past five years alone, more than 5 million visitors have queued to for a brief glimpse of her work.

She has been called the most famous living female artist.

*Barbara Heckler*

Raised in rural Japan, Kusama was haunted in early years by disturbing hallucinations of flowers talking to her…her wealthy family managed a number of plant nurseries. To help cope, she drew the images that appeared in her hallucinations. Her trauma was made worse by a rageful mother who discouraged her art. For more than forty years, Kusama has voluntarily lived in a psychiatric hospital, returning to live there after major touring exhibits in the U.S. and Europe. She is instantly recognizable today…her ninety year old head topped with the brightest of red wigs screams ARTIST. This documentary is highly recommended!

Yayoi Kusama

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**General Relativity**

At our January meeting, we had an extensive discussion of Schwarzschild black holes, and the meaning of time parameters inside the black hole. We also tried to understand black hole in terms of proper time for a freely falling object. Next meeting on Wed. April 10, same time and place.

*Alvin Halpern*
Neuroscience

The next meeting of the Neuroscience Study Group is scheduled for April 16 at 2 pm in Bea Rose’s apartment at the Vi. We will be discussing Chapter 4 of Michael Gazziniga’s book “Consciousness is an Instinct”.

This chapter introduces us to the philosophical and scientific thinking ongoing in the 19th century in areas

Scholarly Adventures

Scholarly Adventures is off to a grand start. Designed as a community in-service program sponsored by SDIS, we began our examination of Understanding Humor in March. Ten active members participated in a lively discussion on humor, using personal experiences that deepened the quick read of scholarly information in ways that broadened our understanding of theoretical ideas.

Because the process-learning event was engaging and entertaining the group collectively decided to continue in April to focus on Understanding Humor, examining its aspects from “what” to “why.”

Join us in a fascinating journey into scholarly ideas from past and present, viewed though the quality insights of our members – that’s you. We will be taking a look at contemporary visual humor from a historical perspective.

Tell us what you’d like to understand better so we can select future “Understanding” topics that address Individual interests.

Suggested Readings for Understanding Humor: The Whys?
cognitive humor processing
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_humor_processing
neural correlates of consciousness
perception
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perception
visual humor
http://www.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_definition_of_visual_humor
visual vs verbal
https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/humor/274987
forms and functions
Rebus: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebus
Emoji: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoji
memes: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meme

Evolving communications law

John Alexander
Just Lunch

Save the date: Another lunch will be scheduled for Monday, April 29 at 12 noon. Join us at Fidel’s Little Mexico restaurant in Solana Beach. This award winning colorful restaurant is over fifty years old and is located in a sprawling old house with several outdoor patios.

Barbara Heckler

Supper With Scholars

We are meeting on the first Thursday of each month, at 6 pm. Thus, we will meet next on Thursday, April 4. If you plan to attend, please RSVP, stating whether you are coming alone or bringing friend(s).

We meet at Humphreys La Jolla Restaurant, 3299 Holiday Court. Meals from the menu (www.humphreyslajolla.com) are Dutch Treat. Group discussion is based on suggested topics that have particularly interested the attendees in the last month. If possible, we select a question that can be addressed from the viewpoints of various diverse areas of expertise.

Dave Parker

Looking Forward

General Meeting

May 18, 2019

Election of
Officers & Board Members

and

Lecture by
SDIS Member
Mike Siedel

Slow Reformation in Martin Luther’s Backyard
SDIS CALENDAR

Colloquy Café
April 17
1:30 pm
At Vi
Contact: Peter Lisbon
plisbon@san.rr.com

Culture One
April 11
2 pm
Signature Room
At Vi
Contact: Sue Rosner
rosnersue@gmail.com

Film Group
April 3
10 am
At Barbara’s home
Contact: Barbara Heckler
bheckler@san.rr.com

General Relativity
April 10
10 am
At John Alexander’s home
Contact: Alvin Halpern
alvin.halpern@gmail.com

Neuroscience Group
April 16
2 pm
At Bea’s home
At Vi
Contact: Bea Rose
beabe@me.com

Scholarly Adventures
April 22
12 noon
North University City Library
Community Room
Contact: John Alexander
journalus@live.com

Just Lunch
April 29
Fidel’s in Solana Beach
Contact: Barbara Heckler
bheckler@san.rr.com

Supper with Scholars
April 4, 2018
6 pm
Humphreys
In the Sheraton La Jolla
Contact: Dave Parker
parkerd1954@gmail.com

General Meetings
April 20, 2019
May 18, 2019

President
Barbara Heckler
Send information for
SDIS Notebook to bheckler@san.rr.com