



# Discover SDIS

San Diego Independent Scholars [www.SDScholars.org](http://www.SDScholars.org)

## Scholars Notebook -- March 2020

### How are Cellphones Shaping the Future of Photography?

**Kim Signoret-Paar**

Award-winning Photographer  
and Photography Instructor

**1:30pm, Saturday, March 21**

Chancellor's Complex 111A , UCSD

Map at [www.sdscholars.org](http://www.sdscholars.org)

**Open to the Public**

**Summary:** Since Joseph Niépce made the first photograph in 1826, we have used a variety of cameras to create photographs. The question of whether photography is art has been extensively debated and continues to be discussed. So how do cellphone cameras fit into this discussion? How is this shaping the future of photography? Expect some tips for amateur photographers.



**Kim Signoret-Paar** creates photographs that tell stories from fleeting moments or from structures around us. She won her first competition with a photo of a boy in a tree when she was thirteen. With a degree in journalism from the University of Iowa, she went west in 1980. Her career in California and Mexico focused on public relations, publishing, and fundraising. In 2009, Kim returned to creating art with her camera and in the summer of 2014, she won **Best of Show** at the **2014 International Exhibition of Photography at the San Diego County Fair**. In addition to showing her photography in various venues, Kim teaches iPhoneography at the UCSD Retirement Center and OASIS San Diego.



The Scholars Notebook is issued monthly during the academic year, except December, by the San Diego independent Scholars (SDIS), a nonprofit organization founded in 1982.

The mission of SDIS is to promote opportunities for active learning and scholarship, both for its membership and for the San Diego community.

Public service activities of SDIS include: (1) monthly public lectures presented during the academic year; (2) discussion groups held in public libraries; (3) small grants awarded on a competitive basis for research projects and (4) participation in the Union-Tribune’s annual Festival of Books.

More information about SDIS and its activities is available at [www.sdscholars.org](http://www.sdscholars.org). Questions: [sandiegoindependentscholars@gmail.com](mailto:sandiegoindependentscholars@gmail.com)

The Scholars Notebook welcomes contributions by SDIS members, including Letters to the Editor, which should be sent by the middle of each month to the Editor, Dorothy Parker, at [dorothyparker@gmail.com](mailto:dorothyparker@gmail.com).

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## *New Offerings in North County*

Because traffic and other accessibility problems are making it increasingly difficult for some SDIS members to attend events in La Jolla or further south, we are exploring ways of better serving SDIS members who live in North County.

Here we report two new developments:

- a) a new discussion group in Carlsbad led by SDIS member Jack Cumming
- b) a cooperative relationship with North County Village (NCV) in which SDIS members are invited to attend NCV activities as guests and *vice versa*.

This page and the next one present more information.

## *New Discussion Group in Carlsbad*

This group will meet every Sunday at 3:00 PM in the Classroom, downstairs at Carlsbad by the Sea Retirement Community, 2855 Carlsbad Blvd, Carlsbad, CA. People can sign in at the front desk and they will be directed to the Classroom. The group is held under the auspices of Carlsbad by the Sea and is not directly sponsored by SDIS, but all SDIS members (both North and South County) are welcome. For questions, contact [JackCumming@actionaging.com](mailto:JackCumming@actionaging.com).

The group, called **Topics for Thinkers**, currently features a video series of lectures by Yale Political Scientist Ian Shapiro, who covers international and national trends since 1989. Jack Cumming sometimes adds portions of additional videos with differing analyses. The group's discussion will follow the video(s). Meetings in March are:

- March 1:** Fusing Capitalist Economics with Communist Politics: China and Vietnam
- March 8:** The Resurgent Right in the West
- March 15:** Reorienting the Left: New Democrats, New Labour, and Europe's Social Democrats
- March 22:** Shifting Goalposts: The Anti-Tax Movement
- March 29:** Privatizing Government I: Utilities, Eminent Domain, and Local Government

# *North County Events Open to SDIS Members:*



## **North County Village (NCV)**

**What is North County Village?** The Village community model combines aging in place with the type of interdependent living that helps make aging alone for longer possible. It's an innovative, DIY [Do It Yourself] take on what life in traditional American villages used to offer - trusted relationships with neighbors and the wider community. A nonprofit, grassroots solution that's governed by its members, villages have become the way of life for thousands of urban and suburban seniors across the US. The Village movement is now over 350 Villages strong, with 230 Villages that are operational and 130 in development.

NCV and SDIS have agreed to let each other's members visit their activities during a trial co-operative period.

### **North County Village Activities for March:**

3/10 - Happy Hour @ 20/Twenty restaurant - Westin Carlsbad Resort 5480 Grand Pacific Dr. 4-6 pm. No RSVP needed.

3/11 - Memoir writing group - 2 pm RSVP Inga Liden <inga.liden9@gmail.com>

3/14 - Game Day @ Cole Library Carlsbad Village Dr. 1-4 pm RSVP Inga

3/15 - Mira Costa College Symphony at the Concert Hall - 3 pm RSVP Inga or Jack

3/17 - Oceanside Museum of Art - docent tour - 1-2 pm. 704 Pier View Way, Oceanside, followed by lunch or libation. RSVP Jack <jek123@msn.com>

3/25 - Book Club 3:30 pm RSVP Inga (place & book TBD) <inga.liden9@gmail.com>

3/29 - Meet the Authors - A dozen book club favorite authors will mix & mingle at Dove Library 1-5 pm RSVP Inga. <inga.liden9@gmail.com>

## READING EXPERIENCE

10 am, 3rd Monday of month

This new SDIS study group is now focusing on our second theme, Where and When.

On Monday March 16, as usual at 10 a.m. in the Pacific Beach public library, the discussion will address *DUBLINERS*, a short story collection by James Joyce portraying Irish middle-class life in the early 20th century. Two stories, “The Sisters” and “The Dead”, will be the primary topics.

Our February discussion concerned Peter Carey’s *THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE KELLY GANG*, the author’s story of Ned Kelly, the legendary outlaw and folk hero of Australia, who lived in the late 19th century.

Memoir was the theme of the first four monthly meetings of Reading Experience, allowing participants to experience and compare various expressions of that genre.

Interested readers are invited to attend. Meetings at the Pacific Beach Library are open to the public.

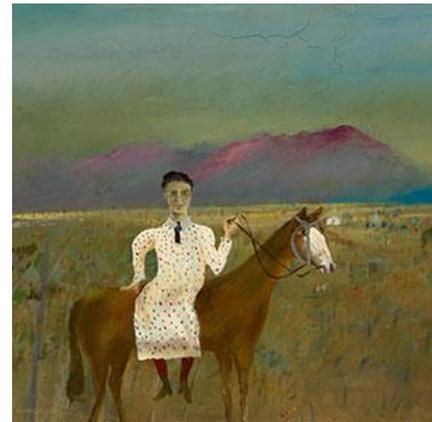
Gerry Horwitz

## DEPICTIONS OF THE KELLY GANG

Paintings in Sidney Nolan’s “Ned Kelly Series” are in a touring exhibition from the National Gallery of Australia: 2019-2020.



“Nolan’s starkly simplified depiction of Kelly in his homemade armour has become an iconic Australian image.”  
Quote from <https://nga.gov.au/nolan>.



The wearing of women’s clothing by male Irish-heritage rebels against perceived English dominance appears both in *The True Story of the Kelly Gang* by Peter Carey and the “Ned Kelly Series” by Sidney Nolan. ([nga.gov.au/nolan](https://nga.gov.au/nolan))

## INSIDE POLITICS

10 am, 1<sup>st</sup> Sat of month

Our new study group called Inside Politics held its first meeting on Saturday morning, February 1, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon at the North University Branch Library at 8820 Judicial Drive in San Diego. About 25 people attended. We sat in a circle and discussed some of the hot political issues of the day.

Based on some of the comments made to me at the conclusion of the class, everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to express their opinion about the political issues they read about in the newspapers and see discussed on television news. Some of the members of the class also chose to just listen to fellow participants discuss these issues, which is also just fine. In my opinion, a good time was had by all. I hope many of you will join this lively study group.

I begin every class by telling everyone that you are welcome to say anything critical about any of our politicians, but you are not allowed to say anything critical about any member of our class! I believe we can all learn a lot from our fellow SDIS members who, as you know, are extremely smart.

Inside Politics is always held on the first Saturday of every month. Next month's meeting is Saturday March 7, which is right after what is known as Super Tuesday, when primary elections are held in several states, including California, and about one third of all delegates to the Democratic National Convention are selected. As you know, that convention will choose the Democratic nominee to run against President Trump in the 2020 presidential election

Al Korobkin

## SDIS FILM GROUP

10 am, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed of month

The film group will meet Wednesday, March 4 at 10 am to view *The History Boys*, a 2006 British comedy-drama about a group of grammar schoolboys who scored at the school's highest ever A-level history exams. The film tells of the school's involvement and the boys' efforts to score high enough on history entrance exams to enter Oxford or Cambridge.

**ALERT:** Our April film is moved to Wednesday, March 25 at 10 am. We'll view the 2019 Korean film *Parasite*, which just won both Best Picture and Best International Film at the Oscars last month. Themes include wealth, social inequality and class differences.

We watched 2019 Spanish film *Pain and Glory* in February. Director Pedro Almodovar's movie was another Best International Film nominee, starring Antonio Banderas in a Best Actor nominee role. Banderas plays an aging addicted film director who examines his current and past life in terms of the pain and glory he has experienced. Almodovar used experiences from his own life as part of the story, but he cagily hasn't revealed which parts are true. This is possibly Almodovar's best movie and is certainly Banderas' best acting. It is well worth viewing.

Barbara Heckler

## COLLOQUY CAFE

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of month

February's subject was "a good life". It was chosen last month after one member related being asked by an eleven-year-old granddaughter, "We're born, we live, and then we die..... grandma, what does it all mean?" She remembered answering by talking about living a good life.

An attempt to address the issue was to define a good life. "Do the" superficialities comprise a good life?, we wondered. The superficialities were identified as such usually dreamed of factors as wealth, a palatial home, an illustrious career, travel, successful offspring, and even fame. These are not enough, in fact are not even necessary, said participants.

"A good life", it was agreed upon, is an ethical life, one that includes reaching out to and contributing to others rather than centering solely on one's own life. Sharing one's talents and largesse with others gives meaning to existence.

Other questions then arose: Is enjoying one's actions on behalf of others selfish? What about efforts to benefit others that are unknown? Must one have a "significant other" in for one's life to be considered a good one?

And, finally, one participant pointed out the subtle difference between the good life and a good life, the former being the usual terminology for a notably prosperous one.

"Redemption" will be discussed at the next meeting, March 18.

Gerry Horwitz

## JUST LUNCH: March 27, 2020

We'll meet on Friday, March 27 at 12 noon at Berta's Latin Cuisine, 3928 Twiggs Street in Old Town. Berta's offers traditional dishes from Spain to Mexico and Costa Rica to Chile, which is Berta's country of origin.

The restaurant has its own parking lot. You can make reservations now to [bheckler@san.rr.com](mailto:bheckler@san.rr.com). I'll also send out a reservation deadline and reminder in mid-March.

Barbara Heckler

## SCHOLARS' SUPPER

6 pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of month

6:00 p.m., March 5

At Humphreys Grill in La Jolla  
3299 Holiday Court, La Jolla, CA.  
Meals from the menu are Dutch Treat.  
(See [www.humphreyslajolla.com](http://www.humphreyslajolla.com))

Please RSVP 2 days in advance to:  
[parkerd1954@gmail.com](mailto:parkerd1954@gmail.com)

Group discussion is based on suggested topics that have particularly interested the attendees in the last month. The subject is selected each meeting by vote of those present. We try to select a question that can be addressed from the differing viewpoints of the various areas of expertise of the participants, which are ordinarily quite diverse, ranging from the humanities to natural sciences to social sciences to various professions.

Open to all SDIS members and persons considering SDIS membership.

Dave Parker

The **General Relativity Group** met on Jan. 29 and again on Feb. 19, with all in attendance. At these meetings we further discussed the solutions to the free space equations including the spherically symmetric case (about a sphere of mass) as well as the propagation of gravitational waves. Most of the group felt that they wanted a deeper understanding of the curvature tensor (the left side of Einstein's Equation) before going on to the right side of Einstein's equation, the energy tensor that "causes" the curvature. To do this would require a little more attention to the theory of Manifolds. After a cursory review of this topic, It was remarkable to realize that almost all structures needed for General Relativity could be constructed without the need for a metric (i.e., a "distance" formula). These structures include: vector and tensor spaces at each point in space( i.e.,tangent spaces), and tangent bundles (the collection of these at each point in the manifold), dual spaces (twins to the vector spaces), connections (relating the vector spaces at one point to that at another on the Manifold), parallel transport (moving vectors from one point to another ion the Manifold), covariant differentiation (maintaining the vector properties of the derivative in a curved space), and even the curvature tensor itself. However, to pin down these last four uniquely, and have proper (relativistic) time as a critical parameter, does indeed requires a metric. At the next meeting we will discuss the Manifold approach more deeply to get a clearer appreciation of the fundamental quantities: connections, parallel transport, covariant differentiation and curvature. The next meeting is on March 12, same time same place.

Alvin Halpern

## **Neuroscience Group**

1:30 p.m., 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of month

The next meeting of the Neuroscience Group is from 1:30 until 3:00 pm on Friday, March 13. This will be an organizational and introductory gathering because the group has recruited some new members and is adventuring into a new topic.

The new focus of the group is a comparison between human cognition and artificial intelligence (AI). Initially we are exploring AI, including its practical applications and cultural ramifications.

References for our group discussions will include articles in the Scientific American or other sources, but especially two recent books that present interviews reflecting the diverse viewpoints of various leaders in AI research (Ford) and philosophy or ethics (Brockman). These books are:

- 1) Ford, Martin. **Architects of Intelligence**: The truth about AI from the people building it.
- 2) Brockman, John. **Possible Minds**: Twenty-five ways of looking at AI

We encourage anyone who is curious about artificial intelligence to join our group. No specialized expertise or prior knowledge of the subject is required.

Dorothy Parker

# *Lessons from the End of Representative Democracy in Rome*



## **Edward Watts, Ph.D.**

Chair, Department of History UCSD  
A. Vassiliadis Endowed Chair  
Professor of History UCSD

### **Oceanids Sounding Board**

Thursday, March 5, 2020

*Ida and Cecil Green Faculty Club,  
UCSD*

**11:30 to buy required lunch  
Noon for lecture**

Parking is metered in front of the Faculty Club. Purchase of lunch is required (\$13.00 for Faculty Club members, \$16.50 otherwise.) No RSVP.

When most people think of Rome, they think of the Roman Empire, a political entity that lasted for nearly 1500 years. But Rome had been a Republic, a representative democracy, for 500 years before the first emperor took power. The Roman Republic was one of the world's most successful representative governments. Rome's political system allowed it to win long and grueling wars with Carthage and assume control of territory across three continents, but this territorial expansion also destabilized the Republic, brought political violence back to Roman life, and gave ambitious individual politicians the ability to prey upon popular discontent in ways that advanced their own careers while harming the Republic. This last development ushered in the century of conflict that ultimately pushed Rome into autocracy.

## March 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Topics <b>1</b> for Thinkers 3 pm	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	Film <b>4</b> Group 10 am	Scholars <b>5</b> Supper 6 pm	<b>6</b>	Inside <b>7</b> Politics 10 am
Topics <b>8</b> for Thinkers 3 pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	Neuro- <b>13</b> science 1:30 pm	<b>14</b>
Topics <b>15</b> for Thinkers 3 pm	Reading <b>16</b> Experience 10 am	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Colloquy Cafe 1:30	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	Public <b>21</b> Lecture 1:30 pm
Topics <b>22</b> for Thinkers 3 pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Note</b> <b>25</b> Film 10 am	<b>26</b>	Just <b>27</b> Lunch noon	<b>28</b>
Topics <b>29</b> for Thinkers 3 pm	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				

### Looking Forward

**1:30 April 18: What's in the Air We Breathe? Dr. Vicki Grassian,**  
Chair of Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, UCSD.

(Aerosols, defined as solid or liquid particle suspended in air, are important components of the Earth's atmosphere and can travel long distances to impact the Earth's climate and human health. We will also highlight recent studies suggesting the levels of pollutants can be much higher indoors than outdoors.)

**10 am April 13: SDIS Board Meeting.** Also 10 am June 8, Aug. 10 ...  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of alternate months)

**For questions** concerning locations or availability of space in SDIS  
Study Groups: [sandiegoindependentscholars@gmail.com](mailto:sandiegoindependentscholars@gmail.com)