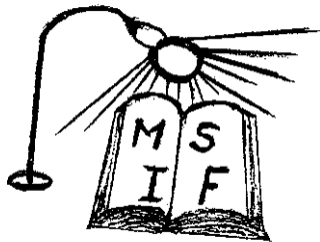


# The Minnesota Scholar

Journal of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum

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## Washburn Library



Current Home of MISF Membership Meetings

Thank you.

## The Library

by Evelyn D. Klein

*There is no Frigate like a Book*

*To take us Lands away.*

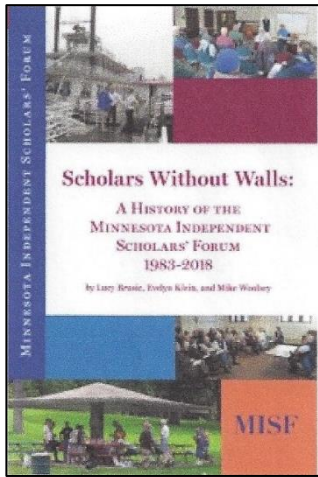
*Emily Dickinson*

This Noah's Ark of records  
sails across the flood of time,  
to the harbor of our being  
for our journey from beginning  
into future and to places in-between.

We can simply drift in wind or set our course.

(Continued on Page 2)

# Coming in 2019



Find out what it takes to be a Minnesota Scholar! Join us at our membership meeting in June of 2019 as the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum introduces its book, edited by Lucy Brusic, to the World:

## **Scholars Without Walls:**

A History of the Minnesota Independent Scholars' Forum 1983-2018

(The Library, continued from Page 1)

From headwaters of intent, we can launch  
down the Mississippi River of inspiration,  
climb Mount Everest of aspirations,  
cross Amazon forest of exploration,  
travel Romantic Road of imagination,  
reflect at Rock of Gibraltar.

We track humanity from cave to skyscraper,  
spears to missiles,  
from Egyptian art to Picasso,  
ride the Trojan horse to shore of Moby Dick,  
song to symphony.

Edison's light will keep us alert into the night.

We can solve equations  
with Founding Fathers or Audubon Society,  
with quantum theory or Equal Rights Amendment,  
with Einstein or Angelou,  
with vaccine or prayer.

Pavlov concluded, it's all about conditioning.

We debate Socrates to Hegel,  
meditate with Buddha or Julian of Norwich,  
plunge into depths with Jung or Zuckerberg,  
linger with Goodall or Dylan.  
Shakespeare said, "all the world is a stage" –  
and we are the extras.

Two by two, opposites on shelves of this Ark  
console past and present, contrast fact and fiction  
in climate of change, of wildfires and hurricanes.  
Curiosity at the helm, we follow our compass –  
looking for land –

Library from Latin, "liber," book –  
or free –  
meaning we have a free ticket  
to embark  
on library's historical vessel anytime  
balloon of mind's intent drifts  
in inquiring directions –

*~Evelyn D. Klein, independent scholar and TMS editor, has an M.S. in English. An essayist and prize-winning poet she is author of three books of poetry, essays and art, including "Seasons of Desire."*



Columbus Sighting Land  
Woodcut by Wolfgang Klein



## Why Genealogy

# Interviewing the Past

by Lucy Brusic

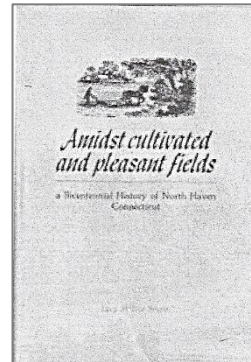
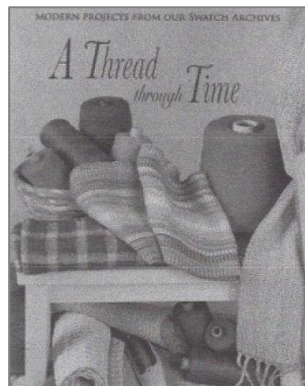
I have been writing newsletters since I was 12. My favorite class in high school was journalism. My least favorite class in high school was history; the history teacher was a football coach who felt that memorizing dates was all we needed to do. It would never have occurred to me that I would be writing (or even interested in) history as an adult.

### I have written several history books

Yet I have written several history books; most of my current leisure reading is history, biography, and mystery stories in that order. I look forward to lectures and discussions about history. What happened? What changed my perception of history?

What happened was that I came to see my high school training as a journalist as a tool for discovering history. I like reading and interpreting diaries, letters, and newspaper articles about what happened long (or even not so long) ago. I also like interviewing or talking to individuals who want to talk about the past – and who doesn't?

In so doing, I have learned that fascinating stories and insights can be gathered from people who don't usually write – such as farmers, weavers, and unmarried ladies. On the basis of such interviews, I have written several history books—ranging from the story of apple-growing in Connecticut to a town history of North Haven, Connecticut, to a 75th anniversary account of the history of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota.



With the apple growers, I was fortunate to know farmers who were willing to tell me the stories of their lives. I had a background narrative of the history and some professional experience with apple growing; fitting the small personal details into the narrative brought many insights to the whole story.

For the history of North Haven, Connecticut, I was dealing, for the most part, with events that happened outside the lifetime of anyone then living. Although I could consult the old timers living in North Haven, I derived many personal details from old newspapers, and diaries. While I was doing this project, I discovered that I enjoyed delving into paper records. Research, interviewing, and writing made history come alive for me.

The history of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota was a different project. It began as a book of weaving patterns (another of my interests) to which was added a short history of the guild, somewhat as an afterthought. After I had interviewed a number of longtime weavers, I read through the newsletters that the guild had produced for most of its 75-year history. These papers gave me a firm background for the interviews. Sadly, the guild is no longer printing and sending paper newsletters, so the next historian will have to use a different research technique. I wonder if future historians will find research so interesting with only a digital archive.

Since I also wanted future historians to know who had woven for the book, I made it my mission to print a biographical statement from each weaver who submitted a sample. I kept reminding people that we were not repeating "Anonymous was a woman."

(This statement was inspired by Virginia Woolf when she quipped, "I would venture to guess that Anon, who wrote so many poems without signing them, was often a woman" (A Room of One's Own).

### **Until about 2010 I had not tackled anything like family history**

Until this time (about 2010), I had not tackled anything like family history. My mother was a genealogist; she had researched all of my family back to the Mayflower (and earlier in some cases). My husband's family extends (with effort) only as far as late-19th century Poland. There was not much information for me to chase down.

Then in 2014 a personal history project presented itself: I found the diaries of my "Great Aunt Eva." My father had saved the diaries when he settled Eva's estate in 1937, but I am sure that he did not think they were worth preserving in an archive, because Eva had no particular significance outside of her family (which pretty much consisted of my father.)

Eva E. Tilden was born in 1853 in Illinois. She moved with her sister Lucy (my grandmother) to Maryville, Tennessee, at the turn of the twentieth century. If Lucy kept a diary, I have not found it, but Eva kept diaries from 1909 to about 1930.

Out of curiosity and because they were a source of information about the day-to-day life of my father, I had looked at the diaries. But I have never read them through. The diaries, which run (with occasional omissions) from 1909 to 1930, record the details of the life of an unmarried woman in a small town in Tennessee at the beginning of the 20th century.

Eva recorded a brief sketch of what she did during the day – cooking, gardening, and visiting. She often attended church events, at least one a week. Sometimes she went to church services on Sunday, but other times she attended women's society meetings. On August 30, 1923, she had a Home and Foreign Missionary reception at the house she shared with my grandfather, my father, and two nieces.

Although Eva regularly employed a woman (Rosa) to do the laundry and the ironing, it seems that she did most of the food production. (I presume she

liked to cook.) In 1923, on August 4 and again on August 11, she made cookies. She also worked in the garden, picked a pan of grapes, supervised a young man (Dave) to plant lettuce, kale, turnips, mustard, and spinach. Later he pulled corn and pole beans. In August 1924, Eva recorded that she canned 23 quarts of apples and three quarts of grape juice. She also picked corn and dried it. She went into downtown Maryville by "taxie" (sic) to buy groceries. And she made cookies several more times.

Eva often recorded the temperature; it was 56 and 57 degrees respectively on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of August, 1923. And she recorded whether it rained or threatened to rain.

She took many train trips and always detailed the time lapsed, whether the train was on time, and the changes she had to make. She also, carefully, recorded the money she spent on travel. She also wrote down how much she spent on clothing and what she bought. She did not have what we would call an exciting life, but she was not a recluse.

### **Reading the diaries sequentially**

Now I am wondering if, by reading the diaries sequentially, I can reconstruct the life and maybe the thoughts of a spinster in early 20th century America. It is not a subject that is much written on, and, in this day of interest in women, it might give new light on the past.

There are many questions I would love to ask. Why did she decide to move to Tennessee with her widowed sister? Was she educated to be a teacher as many women in that time were? Can I figure out what she actually enjoyed? What did she think of the changing fashions and behaviors of the 1920s? How does her life in East Tennessee compare and contrast with life in urban America?

She never drove an automobile, though I know she rode in them. What did she think of autos? Did she miss driving a horse and buggy?

East Tennessee was strongly Presbyterian, and my father and grandfather were Presbyterian. Aunt Eva left money to the Methodist Episcopal Church in her will. Why? How did the church change or not change during her lifetime? Although her social

life was organized around the church, she did not always go to worship on Sunday. Why, I wonder?

Such questions can go as far as my historical imagination holds out. How many answers I can find is another question. But I think I would like to try. After all other diaries, even just rudimentary accounts of health, work, and money, have told me a great deal about people and the times in which they lived.

I have certainly come a long way from the historical indifference of my youth.

### **The forthcoming book**

One last word. In putting together the forthcoming book about MISF, *Scholars Without Walls*, I tried to find answers to some of the same questions I had asked of apple growers and weavers. I asked scholars about their lives and their accomplishments. More than that, I tried to let them speak for themselves through selections from MISF journals through the years.

Because MISF is an activity apart from the university, the academic milieu, and the media, it does not receive a lot of public notice. But it has left

a paper trail of records, newsletters, and letters, reports, and soon the new book. Those all count for something in the recovery of history. Possibly, independent scholars' questions and voices will be heard in the coming years and people will know some of our thinking. At least, they will know we were here.

For myself, I continue to feel a responsibility to the people I meet on my forays into historic diaries and letters. Although they often faced small problems that we no longer have, they were real people, who also dealt with some of the larger problems that we now face. If they wrote something down, they deserve to be remembered. And the dates are right on the pages of the diary or the letter, so I don't have to memorize them!

*~Lucy Brusic is a writer and a hand weaver. She is the author or co-author of five books under her own name and the editor or designer of at least a dozen books written by other people. She is the former editor of this journal.*

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## *Scholarly Reflections*

# **Academy Cooperates with Independent Scholar**

by Lucy Brusic

**S**ometimes Universities do cooperate with independent scholars. While reading the catalog for the forthcoming Egyptian exhibit, *Sunken Cities*, at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, I came on the following information about the independent scholarship that lies behind the exhibit. Franck Goddio, the prime mover in charge of the project, is an underwater explorer but not an academic. Although he had secured, on his own expertise and reputation, permission from Egypt to do the exploration and the funds for the equipment he needed, Goddio gradually came to the realization that he needed "a university partner...to continue [the] successful research, [and] publish and throw its findings open to discussion in the scientific community."

An academic structure was needed says, Goddio, 'one we could hand our data and finds over to for analysis... '(p.105)." Lengthy negotiation with Germany and the USA was ultimately unsuccessful. But through the active intervention of some scholarly supporters, Goddio secured a solid commitment from Oxford University for academic support and continuing collaboration. The Oxford Center for Maritime Archaeology (OCMA) opened its doors in 2003 and Goddio now works with them (p. 101 ff).

*Diving to the Pharaohs: Franck Goddio's Discoveries in Egypt* by Jurgen Bischoff and Christoph Gerigk. Gottingen: Steidl, 2016.



## **Be Still!: Departure from Collective Madness**

by Gordon C. Stewart

WIPF & Stock: Eugene, OR, 2017, 145 pgs.

**P**salm 46 tells us, “Be still, and know that I am God.” Gordon C. Stewart, in his collection of essays entitled *Be Still! Departure from Collective Madness*, meditates on what this means. Is this quietism and withdrawal from the world? Possibly sometimes. But if Jesus bestirred Himself to drive moneylenders from the Temple, how still was He? What consequences would have been inflicted on the sneering Goldman Sachs representatives testifying about their role in the Great Recession described in “American Oligarchy – 4/29/10”? Are stillness and engagement mutually exclusive?

Reverend Stewart did summer internships as a street outreach worker in Philadelphia, worked with a poverty law firm in Minneapolis, and has served in seven congregations and ecumenical campus ministries. Anyone who contributes to Sojourners’ “God’s Politics: Blogging with Jim Wallis and Friends” fits the category of liberal Christian. He recognizes the common ground in the gun debate of fear of the threats of chaos and insecurity and that guns are different realities for rural and urban populations, “The Common Ground Beneath the Gun Debate” and “Reframing the Gun Debate.” However, a description of a call for support from the National Rifle Association indicates he sees the threat from guns, not gun control, “Religion and Politics: Cain and Abel.”

Essays reflect views to be expected from someone with Stewart’s background. He celebrates nature and deplores those who threaten the environment, “Stillness at Blue Spring”, “The World in an Oyster,” and “Climate Change and the Nations.” He deplores a criminal justice system and attitudes which send minorities to prison and death row and makes existing while black perilous, “The Execution of Troy Davis,” “Hands Up! Don’t Carve!” and

“Homeland Militarization.” Islamic and other fundamentalisms are seen as evil but the bombings and other military action in retaliation are condemned as, well, “Being Human”, “Creating Hell in the Name of Heaven,” and “Losing Our Heads.” The many sins of capitalism are seen in the context of its victims and protesters, “The Wall Street Tattler”, “American Oligarchy—4/29/10,” and “Mary of Occupy.”

The best essays highlight voices of stillness and moments of reflection. Friend Dr. Kosuke Koyama, to whom the book is dedicated, speaks at commemoration of Hiroshima about how the sin of exceptionalism led Japan to self-destruction and threatens the world today, “Only One Sin: Exceptionalism.” Sitting in an Amish rocking chair, Stewart reflects on the forgiveness and kindness extended to the family of a man who murdered Amish school children, “Jacob Miller’s Amish Rocking Chair.” He faces the death of a friend and asks Muslims for prayers and sees that death can be a mercy, “The Waiting Room” and “When Breath Flies Away.” An Airbnb rental in Paris is the apartment of a late Tunisian Sufi poet and novelist whose rooms are filled with books, “The Anguished Heart of God.” He imagines Jesus healing a madman in a Capernaum synagogue in a time too early to have heard the advice that “worshippers should wear crash helmets,” “The Man Who Knew.”

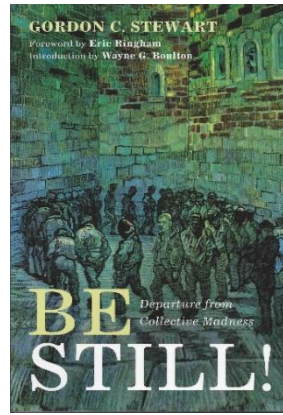
Multiple essays reflect on Stewart’s heritage, especially the coffin makers and others of South Paris, Maine, a town where one is known in relation to the relatives who remain. He sees the tension in St. Augustine, Florida between the local civil rights activists and the celebrities like Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Committee (SCLC) who drew more attention. Is it possible to have two Freedom Trails? And is the Civil Rights struggle something historical which happened in the

distant past and no longer relevant to later generations?

The essays are preceded by quotes and poems illustrating the theme of the entry. Some of the quoted are well known like Henry David Thoreau, Arnold Toynbee, Wendell Berry, Emily Dickinson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Albert Camus, and Matthew Arnold. Others are welcome discoveries such as Willem Zuurdeeg, a Dutch writer whose parents fought in the Resistance trying to make sense of the fact that civilized Germany could have produced the Nazis, and Stewart's friend, Steve Shoemaker. The quotes help frame efforts to make sense of the world and extract truth from the chaotic events of life.

A collection of essays will, by its nature, be episodic and even disjointed. It is a series of snapshots not a continuous film. Otherwise, it would be a treatise on philosophy or theology. It would be less like life. Although reasoned, the vignettes appeal to emotion which is our ultimate decision-maker. It is a worthwhile work. One may quibble here and there as one will in a conversation, but there are profound truths throughout the work.

As a Baha'i who believes in the oneness of religion, I was hooked at the first essay, "Tide Pools



and the Ocean.” Like the proverbial blind men and the elephant, it is easy to mistake one’s tide pool for the ocean, fail to celebrate each tide pool’s unique features, and not see what each really has in common. A good collection of meditations will have something for everyone.

*~Steven Miller, President of Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum and participant in a, perhaps, unhealthy number of discussion groups, is a sole practitioner attorney practicing labor and employment for management. He has a B.A. and M.A. from George Peabody College (now part of Vanderbilt University) and a J.D. from Duke University School of Law.*

## *Words to Ponder*

**T**o read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, the steady intention almost of the whole life to this object. Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written.

Henry David Thoreau,  
from *Walden*

**T**he literary work exists in the live circuit set up between reader and text: the reader infuses intellectual and emotional meanings into the pattern of verbal symbols, and those symbols channel his thoughts and feelings. Out of this complex process emerges a more or less organized imaginative experience.

Louise M. Rosenblatt,  
from *Literature as Exploration*

# Programs & Meetings

June 23, 2018



## MISF Annual Meeting

June's regular program was preceded by a brief business meeting which approximately 25 people attended.

President Steven Miller initiated the meeting by pointing out the variety of programs presented over the year. He encouraged potential members to join MISF in view of these and other benefits.

He also mentioned research grants presented to MISF for Booth Memorial Hospital and History of MISF, both nearing completion soon. Another such project in the making is about Vietnam Protesters. MISF functions as an administrative group for those looking for a grant that requires a grant administrator.

Miller pointed out such membership benefits as a biannual newsletter, *The Minnesota Scholar*, a newly refurbished website, active study groups in philosophy and history, and other social activities, such as a guided trip on a special theme to the Mia and the annual picnic.

Treasurer John Schwarz, who filled in the interim for outgoing Treasurer Bill McTeer for health reasons, presented the report. He reported an income of \$3,000 and expenses of the same amount. Main income is derived from donations, grants, and memberships. Expenses are primarily for the journal,

\$580.00 and meetings, \$450.00, membership mailings and miscellaneous amounts for Meet-up and website.

A number of board positions were open to election, according to Curt Hillstrom, Nominating Chair. The Board is allowed nine to twelve members. During the past year, the board lost a number of members, Shirley Whiting to death, Bill McTeer and Peter Riola to health reasons. Also, the terms of office of two board members, Steven Miller and Emily Pollack, had expired.

**General nominations** were as follows: Emily Pollack, Charlie Roger, John Schwarz, and Charles Yancey.

**Nomination for president:** Steve Miller was nominated for a second term.

No nominations were received from the floor. All nominees were elected by general consensus, without objections.

**Editor's Note:** Due to John Schwarz's request for resignation from the Board and from the treasurer's position, President Steven Miller appointed Emily Pollack as interim treasurer at the Board Meeting on September 19, 2018.

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## Connections and Corrections:

### Women in the Criminal Justice System and Their Families

Presented by Ruth Campbell

Ruth Campbell, now retired, moved to Minnesota in 2014. She worked as a clinical social worker, having earned an MSW from the University of Iowa. She, then, did postgraduate training in Bowen family systems theory and therapy with the Minnesota Institute of Family Dynamics and the Bowen Center for the Study of Family in Washington D.C. The Bowen Center has established the Bowen family systems theory into a science of human behavior and

assists individuals, families, communities, and organizations in addressing major life challenges through understanding and improving human relationships.

What interested Campbell, who had previously worked at Catholic Charities in Iowa that did not offer counseling, was that family systems theory went into psychology to determine how family relationships between mother, father, and siblings affect emotions and behavior. She was interested in



the emotional cut-off, the differentiation of self in the push pull between self and independence and still belonging to a group. In her study with women in prison, she found system imbalances, evident with physical, emotional and social symptoms.

Illegal activities of 48 women, many of whom were on probation in this instance, led to residential confinement on average of three months. Some were sentenced for DUI. They were required to do thirty-two hours of work or go to school.

Campbell interviewed 18 women between the ages of twenty-two and fifty-five years of age. All those interviewed volunteered for the study. She met with individuals twice for one-and-one-half hours each. The first interview centered on personal statistics and the second one on personal history. The idea was to find facts on functioning of each individual, including personal relationship patterns, to determine what happened, when and not why – the who, what, when, where, how. The idea was not to assign motive.

None of the interviewees were able to live successfully at home. Growing up, six had both parents in home; 12 grew up in family disruption, death or divorce. Further, three grew up in foster homes. Six lost contact with mothers. Ten lost contact with fathers. One third grew up as oldest, one third as middle and one-third as youngest child. Most went through teen-age rebellion, a cut-off to break away from past to grow up in the present.

Many of the women dropped out of school and had intense relationships with their own generation. twelve women had three or more relationships. Only one woman had a relationship over a long period of time. Some women were in relationships that drove them to criminal activity. Some had given up their children to non-family situations, while others cared for them jointly with family.

As far as arrests, fourteen were arrested in their teens or early twenties, some in their thirties, one in her forties.

Situations leading to difficulties involved parties and men, drug use, break ups, and mental problems. One woman had a significant mental illness.

In a ten-year follow-up, four of the women had no new charges. All of these grew up with two parents, stayed in school longer, including college. Two were in contact with their mothers, but all had fathers who died. All had children. Two had relationships with boyfriends.

Fourteen of the women had new charges. Ten of these had lost contact with their parents and dropped out of school. Four had no contact with their children. All had difficulties sustaining relationships with parents, partners, and children.

One of the women who was charged at the ten-year mark had parents who divorced when she was six. The parents remarried and had more kids. The mother died, and the father tried to keep her in school. She had her first baby at fourteen, got divorced and had other relationships, where she had a child each time. Three of her kids, now adults, are in prison.

The women had difficulty growing up and managing their lives. Most charges against the women were for theft or burglary. The women were in longer for DUI than for some of the other charges, such as forgery. They were stressed having rigid schedules day to day. They had to do chores, see counselors or therapists in addition to working.

The lecture was followed by a lively question and answer period, leading to a discussion on possible ways the system can help these women come to a more productive life style.

~~~~~  
July 12, 2018

## Women in Art with Bob Brusic

In spite of wind and rain and thunder and lightning, Bob Brusic carried out his docent duties for the MISF

on the night of July 12. Eight people braved the weather to hear about "Women of Mystery and

History." The tour included works by women artists ranging from Maria Meriam (b.1647), the first depicter of the lifecycle of the silk worm, to Georgia O'Keefe. Brusic also considered pictures of women such as *Lucretia* by Rembrandt and *Mrs. T* by George Bellows. He concluded with the mysterious "Women

with a Veil," by Raphael Monti in which marble is made to look transparent by the sculptor's skill—a woman of mystery indeed.

~Lucy Brusic

August 25, 2018

## MISF Annual Picnic

The annual picnic took place at the small shelter at St. Paul's Cherokee Park. Despite the cloudy day, it was well attended and the picnic was a success. There

was good conversation and lots of food and frivolity, according to Steve Miller, MISF president. The corn casserole that Ruth brought was a favorite and resulted in Lucy emailing Ruth's recipe to members.

September 22, 2018

## ***F. Scott Fitzgerald in Minnesota: The Writer and His Friends at Home***

Presented by Dave Page

On September 24, 1896 F. Scott Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul. Two years later his family moved to New York, but he returned during his young years and spent his formative years in St. Paul. In his book, *F. Scott Fitzgerald in Minnesota: The Writer and His Friends at Home*, Dave Page, F. Scott Fitzgerald scholar, examines the influences of Minnesota and his family background and their emergence in the content of his writing. Page carefully examined letters and diaries, and linked friends, acquaintances and well-known names to landmarks, events, and characters in his writings.

F. Scott Fitzgerald took three important icons that influenced his thinking away with him. They were the Josiah King monument of the Civil War, the St. Paul Cathedral, and James J. Hill, the empire builder in St. Paul. Although wealth can be seen in relative terms, Fitzgerald was greatly influenced in his writing, also, by the wealth of the Midwest.

The influences of the Civil War permeating his writing came about from what he learned from his father. The first great success was his Civil War play, *The Coward*. Most of the stories he wrote on the topic,

Page noted, were terrible, in part because Fitzgerald did not have first-hand knowledge of events. Some stories were republished later, however, when he had become famous. His story of Mary Surratt, who was hanged for complicity in Lincoln's murder and whom he sought to exonerate, was the last in this series.

For a time, Fitzgerald attended a catholic boarding school in Saint Paul, which may have initiated his relationship to the catholic church. It surfaces in the story, "The Popular Church," about the Saint Paul Cathedral. In 1920 he wrote the novel *This Side of Paradise* which became a big success. Fitzgerald had self-created the myth that he was a poor boy, although nothing could have been further from the truth, particularly after publishing *This Side of Paradise*.

Catholics were big in Saint Paul. Summit Avenue was owned by Catholics. Fitzgerald was friends with the Hills and Weyerhaeusers. Consequently, he wrote about James J. Hill in *The Great Gatsby*. In the story, "Camel's Back," he wrote about a Hill costume ball. In "Winter Dreams" he describes the Weyerhaeuser house on 294 Summit Avenue (now the Garrison Keillor house).

The Fitzgerald's, like many others of the time, moved frequently. And because he left Minnesota, for a time, many people hated Fitzgerald. Yet people tried to get a landmark named after him. Fitzgerald wrote the *Great Gatsby* in Duluth, although he may have stated it in White Bear Lake. It includes the characters of Thomas Cole and Dan

Cody and Cole's yacht, Alvina. He returned to Saint Paul, where he lived on Holly, Portland and Summit Avenue and spent a lot of time at W.A. Frost. After publication of *This Side of Paradise*, he married Zelda in White Bear Lake. In 1921 they had a baby girl and moved to Goodrich. He had an office in downtown Saint Paul and on Summit Avenue.

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October 27, 2018

## The Theatrical Experience

Presented by Nathaniel Fuller

A distinguished actor of the Guthrie Theater, Nat Fuller related his experience and interaction with the audience as a performing artist.

He defined the theater, in itself, as more than a building, organization or event but as a live interaction of audience and performing actors. It comes alive in front of an audience in a shared experience of imagination. The audience will tune in and react in a certain way that will affect the performance, and in that sense, the play will be different every time it is performed, depending on the type and age of the audience. In that way, the actors feed on the response of the audience.

Asked if actors modulate their performance to get a certain response, the actor conceded that they do. For example, actors prepare for the laugh curve with the punch line which they hold, while remaining in character, waiting until the laugh is almost done, then power the next line. Timing is very important here.

Fuller indicated that morning audiences are very different from evening audiences. Actors generally ignore inappropriate responses. Young audiences often don't get subtle Dickens jokes, for example. They often don't understand that their comments and reactions are not appropriate. Therefore, the best audiences are mixed and positive.

The actor discussed some of the Shakespeare plays like *Henry V*, a twelve-hour performance which had to be presented in stages. Some of these performances have been presented in eight hours and in modern costumes. They elicited strong audience reactions in which audience members established themselves as part of the performing relationship.

Fuller pointed out high school performances can be great because of the performers' relationship with the audience.

Referring to the Guthrie, he explained the three stages require not only different set-ups but also different performances. The stages affect not only the volume of voice used but also the positioning of actors, so as not to block anyone and yet still sound natural. Love scenes can be difficult, depending on the kind of stage, because of positioning.

He indicated the Guthrie is not an intimate space, so he has to speak out. Asked how he protects his voice, he indicated a lot of vocal exercises are required to deal with the physiological part of the voice. Every show has a vocal coach. Sleep before a show is important. Water is best for voice lubrication.

Asked what his pet peeves are, Fuller responded, it's late comers who should be made to wait for late seating. Coughing and the feedback of hearing aids can be disruptive to a dramatic moment.

As far as editing Shakespeare, it is limited to modern word use, where meaning is otherwise not clear as well as leaving out long irrelevances and stage directions. In the past, people would attend a play to hear the battle of ideas, the poetry rather than the characters, for the build-up of ideas.

Nathaniel Fuller has been a professional actor in local theaters in the Twin Cities since 1976. He performed with the Guthrie in over ninety productions over thirty seasons. Among his favorite roles are King Lear in *King Lear*, Nat Miller in *Ah! Wilderness*, and Otto in *The Magic Fire*. He is currently rehearsing another of his favorite roles,

Ebenezer Scrooge in Guthrie's 2018 production of *A Christmas Carol*.

~Program Notes by Evelyn Klein, unless noted otherwise.

**Please Note:** The *Scholars Without Walls* program originally scheduled for October 27, 2018 has been moved to June 2019 because of the exigencies surrounding its publication.



November 17, 2018

## Development of Public Parks in Small Town America

Presented by Frank Egerton Martin

**F**runk Edgerton Martin, a landscape architect and historian, addressed the Minnesota Independent Scholars' Forum on the subject of the Development of Public Parks in Small Town America. His talk was illustrated with images from postcards of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Martin took as his organizing principle quotations and concepts from Sinclair Lewis's novel, *Main Street*, published in 1920. Lewis mocked the myth of small-town life, but at the same time, he laid down some principles that explain the design of public parks in nineteenth and twentieth century America.

The first of the principles is the Romantic Sublime. This principle was illustrated by pictures of such parks as Indian Mounds Park in Quincy, IL, Palisades Park in Iowa Falls, IA, and the Lincoln Monument in Council Bluffs, IA. In each of these cases Americans took over a place that had been sacred to native Americans and effectively "erased" the native Americans from the landscape.

The second principle is that of the Local Picturesque. A rural place is made more appealing by the addition of a rustic bridge or a grove of trees. Martin illustrated this aspect of local parks with pictures of a grove in Beatrice, NE, a rustic bridge in Duluth, and a grove of trees in Le Seuer.

Another principle was that of imitating or

emulating English landscapes. This principle was particularly evident on college campuses. To make his point, Martin showed photo cards of Doane College in Crete, NE, Kingfisher College in Kingfisher, OK, and the State Normal School in Peru, NE. The landscaping principle behind these campuses was to adopt the landscape and make it English/American.

The fourth principle was to create landscapes of Pleasure and Retreat. To this end many towns created destination gardens with exotic plants and spatially patterned paths. Affluent towns such as Galesburg, IL, and Salina, KA, had elaborate parks. Less affluent towns such as Grand Island, NE, and Shawnee, OK, planted groves of trees. Lovers' Lanes became a fad: Roswell, NM, Clarence, IA, and Canton, SD were cited as examples.

In all cases, the new settlers wanted to put their stamp on the land and make it over in the image of the parks they remembered from New England.

In addition to his work as a landscape consultant, Martin maintains a collection of photo postcards from the turn of the twentieth century. Cities and towns created these cards to advertise their towns as places to visit. This collection added a great deal to Martin's talk, making one wish to be able to visit some of them.

~Lucy Brusic



## Outlook

### About the ERA

by Evelyn D. Klein

Now that the status of women in society has garnered the interest of many, it is interesting to note that in a recent presentation at a Twin Cities church, the speaker came to the topic of the ERA. Old news, I thought. Many of us put it out of our minds long ago. We did so, not because we did not care, but because we deemed it taken care of – so we thought.

In light of the #Me Too Movement and on the heels of the 2018 Midterm Elections, where record numbers of women were elected to Congress, it seemed surprising that the Equal Rights Amendment was still stuck back in 1982, when time for its passage was supposedly up. It is amazing that by the year 2018 it still has not been passed. Yes, I admit I was among those who were surprised to discover this. It remains one state short of ratification. No, Minnesota, progressive as it is in so many ways, did not ratify it.

Is it any wonder that equal pay for equal work for women is still up in the air, among other, gender related, issues? According the founder of ERA Minnesota, the Equal Rights Amendment is needed “because laws can be overturned, reinterpreted or rolled back in the courts.” The ERA is just a brief declaration, providing equal rights to women and men: “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”

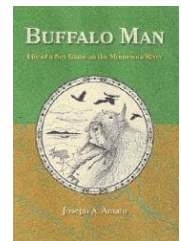
While the credibility gap for women, partly because of their differing approach to life, may be closing, it is because of this differing approach in working out all manner of legislation and challenges facing our communities, states, and our country that it provides a much-needed balance. After all, women constitute at least about 50% of the population.

The child-like Shirley Temple dream of the 1930s and 1940s, or the Wonder Woman garb and dazzle of the 1970s, nor the proverbial, expected smile of more recent time, while entertaining, no longer suffice. Certainly, women’s voices are increasingly heard, if the last election is any indication. Are not most of us, men and women alike, looking to grow into a productive and fulfilling future?

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### 2018 MEMBER PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Joseph A. Amato, *Buffalo Man*,  
Life of a Boy Giant on the  
Minnesota River. Crossings  
Press: Minnetonka,  
Minnesota, 2018. \$19.95



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## Upcoming Events

**All Scheduled meetings of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum, unless otherwise noted, take place at the Washburn Public Library, 5244 Lyndale Avenue, Minneapolis, MN.**

We begin gathering at 9:30 a.m. Meetings start at 10 a.m. with a brief business meeting first. Note meeting time and place of special events. MISF meetings are free and open to the public.

**Saturday, January 26, 2019**  
***The Romansh in Minnesota***  
**Presenter: Barbara W. Sommer**

Among the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century waves of immigrants from northern Europe to the U.S., and Minnesota, the Romansh people from Switzerland were a small but influential group. Often counted with Swiss



immigrants as a whole, or with German, French, or Italian immigrants, their Story in Minnesota, though carefully saved in family histories, has not been well known publicly. Barb Sommer, with support through a Gale Library Fellowship from the Minnesota Historical Society, has researched and written a short history of the move of Romansh people from the canton Graubünden to Stillwater, Le Center, St. Paul and other areas in Minnesota. This program will cover information gathered by Sommer about Minnesota's Romansh immigrants and their families, including the story of her great-grandmother.

Barb Sommer, a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Minnesotan, is a public historian with a specialty in oral history and a published author. She became interested in her Romansh heritage when told by a family member to remember "We are Roman" – a statement often made by people of Romansh background. Interested in learning more about it, she applied for a Gale Library Fellowship from the Minnesota Historical Society. The results of her work are available on MNopedia (<http://www.mnopedia.org/group/romansh-minnesota>).

**Saturday, February 23, 2019**

***The Power of Landscape Art***

**Presenter: Robert Brusic**

Minnesota Public Radio frequently mentions the power of classical music. Bob Brusic will adapt this theme and talk about The Power of Landscape Art. He will discuss the various ways in which the genre of landscape painting has been used to communicate ideas and evoke emotions. The talk will be illustrated.

Brusic has been a docent at MIA for ten years. Previously he was the pastor at Luther Seminary. He has degrees from Dartmouth and Harvard and is a longtime member of MISF.

**Saturday, March 23, 2019**

***Ignatius Donnelly: Ultimate Independent Scholar***

**Presenter: Patrick Coleman**

Ignatius Donnelly, poet promoter, politician, orator, and author, was a most interesting figure in Minnesota history. Although today largely dismissed as a crank, Donnelly was an indefatigable champion of nineteenth century underdogs. His writings were both a reflection of the times and of his moods. He revived interest in a legendary lost continent in *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*. His 1890 *Caesar's Column* was the first dystopian novel and a best seller,

despite populist pessimism. Despite his many defeats, many of his ideas eventually came to fruition, creating an impressive legacy.

Patrick Coleman has been the acquisition librarian at the Minnesota Historical Society for the last three decades. He writes and lectures on topics related to Minnesota's culture and history. He served as President of the Library of Congress's Minnesota Center for the Book, president over the Minnesota Book Awards, is on the boards of Coffee House Press and the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, and received the Kay Sexton Award in 2009 for his contributions to Minnesota's community of the book. Currently, he serves as Executive Leadership Fellow at the University of Minnesota's Center for Integrative Leadership.

**Saturday, April 27, 2019**

***The Writing Life***

**Presenter: Emilio De Grazia**

As an active writer for more than a half century, he has benefited from the prestige and authority conferred on the general culture by the invention of the printing press. Since that time, books have had a short five-hundred year run and a mixed success as cultural influences. While the book's influence seems to be in decline since the advent of the digital age, ironically, more books are published today than at any other time in history. What roles do contemporary writers now fulfill, and how should a "serious" writer define this role? He hopes to address these issues from his own personal experiences as writer and editor in the hope that his example is at once typical in some basic way and therefore instructive.

Emilio De Grazia, a long-time resident of Winona, Minnesota, taught at Winona State University from 1969-2002 and continues to write and edit from his home. He founded *Great River Review* in 1977, and it, currently, is the official literary journal for the creative writing students at the University of Minnesota. He has a long and varied history as a writer. A first collection of short fiction, *Enemy Country*, New Rivers Press, was selected by Ann Tyler for a Minnesota Choice Award, and a novel, *Billy Brazil*, New Rivers Press, was chosen for a Minnesota Voices Award. A second story collection, *Seventeen Grams of Soul*, received a Minnesota Book Award in 1995, and a second novel, *A Canticle for Bread and Stones*, appeared in 1996. In the past few years, De Grazia published *Burying the Tree*, his first collection of essays, a memoir called *Walking on Air in a Field of Greens*, *Seasonings*, a first collection of poetry, and *Eye*

*Shadow*, creative non-fiction. He, also, has two plays produced and has served two terms as Winona's Poet Laureate.

**Saturday, May 25, 2019**

***What is Poetry?***

**Presenter: Evelyn D. Klein**

For those who are wondering what poetry truly is, Evelyn Klein will examine its nature, perspectives, and renditions as they developed over the centuries. She will answer the question of whether it is rhyme and meter or anything the writer wants to express. From Aristotle to Carl Jung, from Greek philosophers to modern thinkers, she will shed light on the literary form that has some modern readers mystified. Brief examples of poetry from Chaucer to Collins will shed light on the discussion. At the end of her presentation, she will give opportunity for a brief writing exercise that hope to inspire both experienced writers and newcomers. After the presentation, an open mike will follow, and attendees are invited to read their own poetry or that of their favorite poet.

Evelyn Klein has a B.S. in Secondary Education and an M.S. in the Teaching of English. She taught literature and writing in the public schools, at Century College, and, most recently, at the Loft Literary Center. She is an independent scholar and editor of *The Minnesota Scholar*. A prize winning poet with the Family Housing Fund and the Minnesota Jung Association, among others, her articles and poetry have been widely published, and she is author of three books: *From Here Across the Bridge* with woodcut illustrations by Wolfgang Klein, a memoir in verse, Nodin Press, winning a cover award; *Once upon a Neighborhood* and *Seasons of Desire*, with her own illustrations, poetry and essays, North Star Press of St. Cloud, both placed in the Minnesota Historical Society's permanent library collection.

**Saturday, June 22, 2019**

***Scholars Without Walls***

**Presenter: Lucy Brusic, Lead Editor, Evelyn Klein, Mike Woolsey, Support Editors**

We will introduce our new book, *Scholars Without Walls: The History of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum*. This book, due out in 2019 tells how a group of unemployed academics became a current-day organization with monthly meetings, study groups, a regular newsletter, and fiscal agency assistance. In addition to a history of the organization,

this new book includes examples of writing by independent scholars – on subjects from health insurance to history.

Lead editor Lucy Brusic, and support editors Evelyn Klein and Mike Woolsey, will introduce the book. They will talk about what inspired them to write the book and what they hope to accomplish by publishing it. Copies of the book will be available for sale.

Lucy Brusic is a writer and editor; Evelyn Klein is an author and editor; Mike Woolsey is an independent scholar grant writer. All editors are independent scholars serving on the MISF Board.

### ***The Minnesota Scholar***

A subscription to *TMS* is a benefit of membership in MISF. Subscriptions can be obtained for a \$15 annual fee. Single issues are \$7.50. Send subscriptions and address changes to MISF at the return address below.

*The Minnesota Scholar* welcomes member submissions. We are especially interested in topical issues. We welcome essays, reviews, and memoirs. Generally, articles should be no longer than 1500-1800 words. Please submit articles electronically. Use as little formatting as possible. All submissions will be acknowledged, although the editor reserves the right to decline to publish an article deemed unsuitable. No second party submissions. For guidelines and queries contact the editor.

The editor has the right to make adjustments in manuscripts. *TMS* assumes no responsibility for contributor errors. Opinions expressed by the contributors may not reflect the opinions of the editor or of MISF. Copyright reverts to the individual authors after publication.

Deadline for the next issue is May 3, 2019.

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