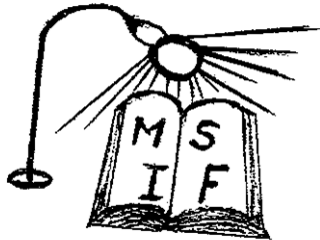


# The Minnesota Scholar

Journal of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum

Volume 14, Number 1, June 2019



## A History of the Minnesota Independent Scholars' Forum

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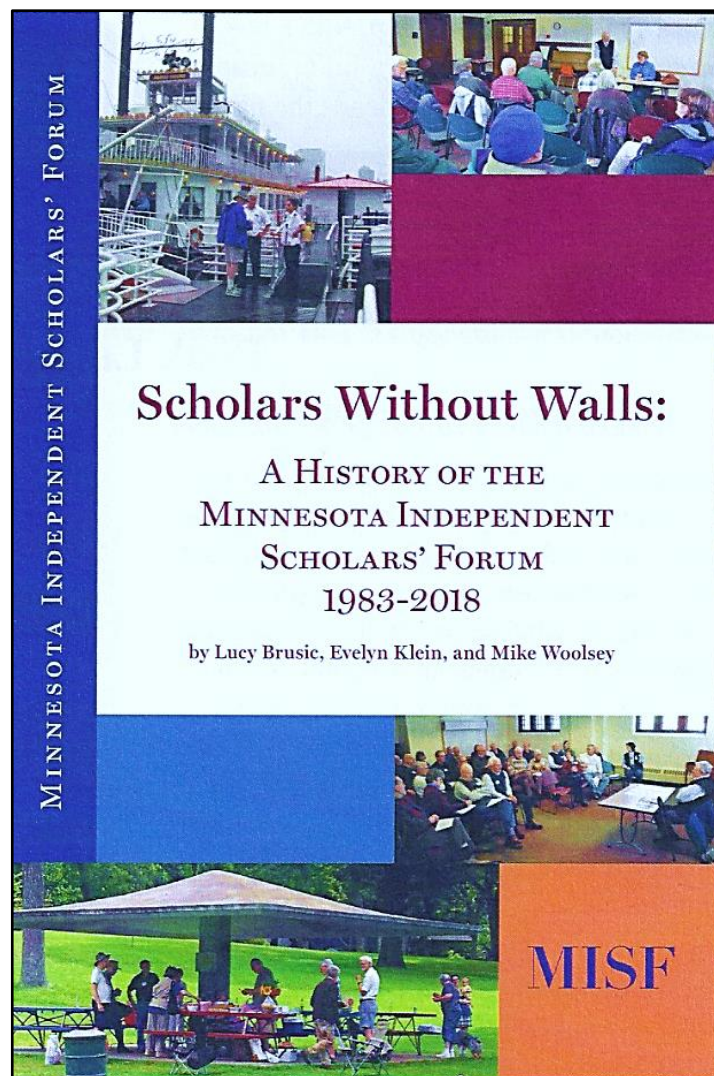
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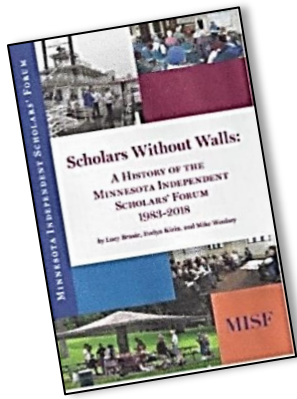


**Book Launch, June 22, 2019, 10:00 a.m.**

**Washburn Library, Minneapolis**

The *Minnesota Scholar* is published  
semi-annually.

This much anticipated book, three years in the making, is finally  
out. See Page 2 for more details.



# Scholars Without Walls: A History of the Minnesota Independent Scholars' Forum 1983-2018

## Endorsements

Saying I am pleased by this publication is an understatement. The careful work in these pages is an invaluable contribution to Minnesota history and the history of Minnesota Scholarship. MISF has transformed itself and achieved a fuller meaning of scholarship for the state as it leads the nation of independent scholars.

~David Grabitzke, Site Manager,  
Texas Historical Commission

Carefully selected from a wealth of source material, *Scholars Without Walls* is a thought-provoking account of the evolution of an intrepid group of PhD's "fighting for a place at the institutional table" in its early years to today's self-defined, inclusive group of scholars, artists, and writers with "its own ethos, expectations, and pleasures."

~Laura Weber, Editor, *Minnesota History*,  
*The Quarterly of the Minnesota  
Historical Society.*

## Book Launch

*Scholars Without Walls, A History of the Minnesota Independent Scholars' Forum, 1983-2018*, by Lucy Brusic, Evelyn Klein, and Michael Woolsey, will be launched at the Scholars' Annual meeting, June 22. This book covers the story of the first 35 years of MISF. The launch will feature speeches by all three authors and special refreshments. Copies of the book will be for sale. The price for the book will be \$20, including sales tax.

*Scholars Without Walls* recounts the story of the founding of the MISF, one of the first independent scholar organizations in the nation. It then continues the story through the next 35 years. The book contains essays by prominent scholars including George Anderson, Robert Brusic, Marilyn Chiat, Gus Fenton, Rhoda Gilman, Ginny Hansen, Kim Heikkila, Curt Hillstrom, Roger Jones, David Juncker, Evelyn Klein, Rhoda Lewin, Bill McTeer, Steve Miller, Arthur Naftalin, Dale Schwie, Susan Margot Smith, Robert Thimmesh, Helen Watkins,

Lee Wenzel, Shirley Whiting, Mary Treacy, David Wiggins, and Mike Woolsey.

This book has been three years in the writing. The 304-page book is enhanced with photos and a colorful cover. It is 304 pages long and includes a complete index.

Only 400 bound books will be printed. To make sure that you have one for yourself, your local library, or to give as a gift, you must preorder the number of copies you will need. (After the initial launch no more bound copies will be printed.) Of course, additional copies will continue to be available (print-on-demand) from Amazon.

We are excited by the prospect of this publication and hope that you will plan to join us for the launch.

On June 22, we will have a special "2 books for the price of 1" offer.

~Lucy Brusic, Lead Editor  
*Scholars Without Walls*



## Editor's Perspective

# The Milestone

by Evelyn D. Klein

**W**elcome to the world of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum!

Publication of the anthology, *Scholars Without Walls*, is an exciting event for the Scholars. As we, the three editors working on the project, read our way through articles contributors had submitted to past editions of the Forum's newsletter or journal in the selection process, I was struck by the relevance of the discussion to my own experience, not only as an individual but also to that of writer/artist and scholar, in so many ways. I noted the divergent backgrounds not only of the writers of the articles but also of the three of us, editors united in pursuit of this worthwhile venture. Not only did we receive grants for the project, but we had the unfailing feedback and support of the Minnesota Historical Society, a remarkable validation of MISF's very existence.

Since imagination and curiosity are the spring brook of creativity, observation and examination, experimentation, exploration, experience and eventual recording or writing become messengers of the arts, sciences, and humanities, in the universe we inhabit. No single individual or institution is privy to them, as they have become part of all our humanity, part of the collective unconscious. Institutions, such as colleges and universities, may underwrite them; persons already in the limelight or those with the right connections may readily carry them to the forefront; previously unknowns may have to wrest their way into existence with them, but each offers its own perspective.

Sometimes the sources of inspiration lie within us, brought to the surface by images of one of the senses and/or by memory. At other times, inspiration comes to us from the outside, from the community that surrounds us, from our experiences and observations. That is why, when you have a mind like mine that from childhood on tried to make sense

of life's puzzle, when you look not only at but into things, the only solution is to read about them, study them, and write, write – about the unending array of intricacies making up this world. I have come to conclude there is meaning in nearly everything. It just takes time and focus to see what it is. So, writing for me is a lot like breathing –

We are bombarded with an ever-increasing surge of technological advances and subsequent barrage of information and advertising using the latest psychologically derived strategies. Thus, seeking a glimpse of truth, existence of facts, new insights in this veritable wilderness of modern existence as we walk the yet untrodden path, seems a natural response. How do we connect to the reality of our well-being, our very survival, when we don't know what the truth is or how to look for it, when our voice is overpowered by those who ultimately insist on their way? With divergent voices about the environment trying to minimize effects, environmentalists and scientists are concerned. With drug advertising flooding the market, just "ask your doctor," how does the opioid crisis figure into this equation? And in education, America's favorite debate, the teaching of civics has gone the way of teaching grammar, so that "Me and him really like that picture." And do women truly achieve success through flawless make-up, wearing stilettos, and exposing ample skin to show off their professionalism? Really?

There is plenty left to consider about our existence and for additional voices to join the chorus. Let's consider that the fashion industry tells us how to dress; genetically modified and chemically affected foods determine the quality of our nutrition; the automobile industry defines the vehicles we drive; Hollywood initiated the youth culture and business and industry now run with it; manufacturers and stores decide what products are sold and where; and technological giants are changing not only the work

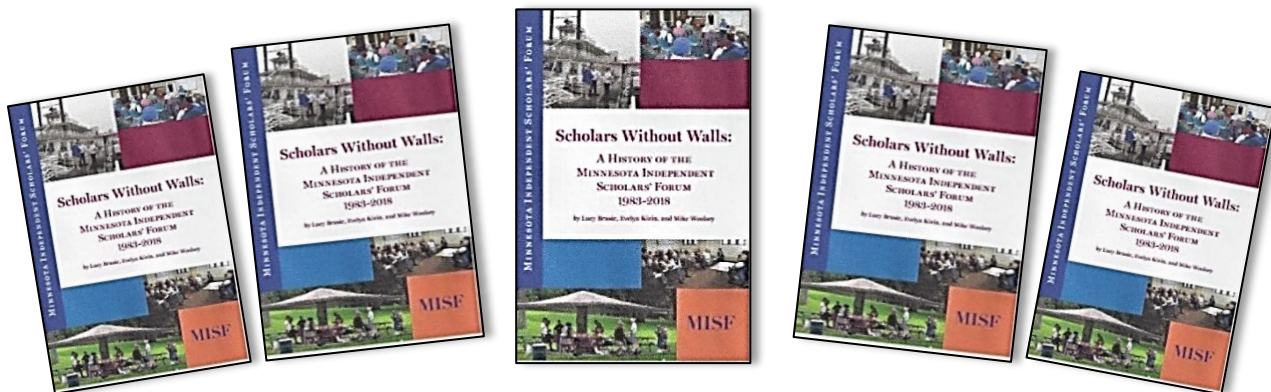
force but our personal lives as well. Whew! This reminds me of Carl Sandburg’s poem, “Name Us a King.” Whether we espouse any of these ideas or not, how we live our lives is up to us. But would it not be nice to know the why or why not, and the how or when of these situations and the way they affect and steer our lives to determine our choices? We can look on subsequent examinations, discussions, and conclusions as a kind of checks and balances, to borrow a political term.

Traditions are hard to change. Insistence on adhering to the conventions of the past, whether established by the culture as a whole or advanced by a given group, abound and may not be based on a changing reality. But change is inevitable, carrying challenges and risks along with benefits. Shaming those looking for truth by turning away at the mention of the word scholar, or classifying them as “misfits” or questioning who would read a book based on the ideas of independent scholars is counterproductive, restrictive. More people are open to discussing the state of the community, the world and our place in it, though some of these may often have been taboo subjects in the past. Men and women include themselves increasingly in discussions of various kinds, as evidenced by groups such as the Scholars and others interested in examining and carrying on a discourse about the world in which we live.

While many prefer to go with the flow, which may change from time to time and community to community, many people are seeking answers first-hand. And since humans are gregarious and our lives are community based, some of us need a place to have this discourse, listen to those who are at the core, listen, also, to divergent opinions, not necessarily for convergence but for understanding a different point of view. In this regard, MISF offers interested individuals, both male and female, an opportunity to add their ears and voices to the community at large.

Sometimes you have to stand back and look at the effects of the total picture. Sometimes a poem’s metaphor puts things in perspective. Sometimes an expert’s exposé or lecture can clarify ideas. At other times, a discussion or debate will shed light. At still other times, nothing less than an essay or article will do. Then a milestone publication like *Scholars Without Walls* can bring it all together, conclusions, like offerings, ready to be shared with the world.

*~Evelyn Klein, author/speaker/artist and editor, with a B.S. in Secondary Education and an M.S. in English taught in the public schools, at Century College and Loft Literary Center. She published three books of poetry, essays and illustrations, two of which are in the Minnesota Historical Society’s permanent library collection .*



History is who we are  
and why we are the way we are.  
*David McCullough*

Without words, without writing, and without books,  
there would be no history; there could be no concept of humanity.  
*Hermann Hesse*



## Applied Scholarship: Sciences and Humanities

by Charles Yancey

Since genealogy is a history, *how* my history came about seems more fertile ground for writing. My *why* feels unchanged since childhood: curiosity and caring of the world. I believe that humans and the natural world are in a process of harmonizing. But this is an unnatural process to learn. Applying scholarship is *how* my learning is always new.

This began in a public grade school – being a child scientist at home – becoming an engineering designer of both systems and their details – eventually fulfilled through partnership with the humanities.

But there is a puzzle. The effects of science are pervasive and dynamic across this earth. And yet the humanities, despite abundant scholarship, seem in deadlock.

### Childhood Learning

My childhood home was a stew of application, scholarship, science, and the humanities. Neither parent was distinguished in any of these ingredients, but they knew how to encourage and add all their flavors. Mother was a primary grade teacher – she knew children. And she loved her college major English literature. Father had a law degree, never practiced, with a career as a non-legal administrator. He loved words and the ideas they could bring to life. Together they ensured books were in our home. I recall times we would open a volume of *The American Peoples Encyclopedia* and read together. Aside from classic forms, the humanities were in old westerns – Bob Steele, Tim McCoy, Johnny Mack Brown – and new westerns – *Gunsmoke* and *Have Gun Will Travel* – with tales of community and justice. Complementing highbrow words and serious works were our unique senses of humor. Complementing all words were the carpentry skills of my father and his father as they patiently taught me.

My teen years expanded the world beyond my parents' scientific ability, but not beyond their infinite encouragement. Our public library was within

easy walking distance. Growing up in the shadow of Los Angeles International Airport, there were no weather hurdles to learning. By age ten I was fascinated by the wonders of electricity, the shocking kind. Dewey Decimal 621 would be my tutor, my guardian, in a dangerous world.

Two of Dewey Decimal System classifications are 500 (Pure Science) and 600 (Technology). Within 600 is 620 (Engineering), therein is 621 (Applied Physics). I became quite obsessed with telephones. On the library shelf was James E. Homans' classic *ABC of the Telephone*, first published in 1904. I applied its scholarship by adding and moving telephones in our home. Before deregulation of the telephone utility, all equipment and wiring belonged to the Bell System. I had to be careful, because the Central Office had the means to detect how many extensions were “on the premises.” My books taught me what happened when a handset was picked up and that a person did not need to know everything about a topic, only enough to reliably affect the world. All this from a book borrowed from a public library. This was a time of learning without a teacher, led by curiosity directing my head and hands and heart.

Years would slowly teach me that everything and everyone has a history. My deeper history is that of invention by humans, an unnatural history – the actions and things of people that have compounded complexity. It is the humanity of the sciences, layers of recorded thought and practice, a dense forest that entangles scholarship and application.

### Childhood and Unconscious Humanities

Lessons in the humanities are mostly the province of adults. However, my childhood offered me a glimpse because my family was modestly cross-cultural.

My father, Charles, was born in Lake County, Florida. His teenage work was hoeing orange trees, for which he had no affection. His father was born in

Brazil, where his family had retreated during Reconstruction after the American Civil War. The Great Depression came early to Florida, aggravated by oranges in a cash crop economy. My ancestral family of Southern Democrats adapted, and my father earned a public university law degree.

“East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet” wrote Kipling. My mother, Dorothy, was the only child of well-off pioneers in Orange County, California. Her father was in the network of founders, playing roles in the local bank and water utility. His personal industry was in oranges and chili peppers. But more than a cash crop, he built and operated a chili mill and shipped spices nationally, some into Mexico. The Great Depression had little effect on them, my mother graduating from a private college.

During my child scientist years, I was shaped by the humanities within my family. First, through some combination of human frailties, my mother’s parents lost title to much of what they had built over fifty years, with their deaths following a few years later. Dorothy was quiet in the sadness she felt. But my father wore his thoughts and emotions on his sleeve and shared stories that complemented my scientific model with the human context always surrounding the natural world.

Second, in the later 1950s, my bi-cultural family was well-settled in Los Angeles. The Supreme Court decision on school integration and racial prejudice was a national topic. According to my father’s workplace, prejudice was not systemic, rather concentrated in the American South which my father represented.

The world view even crept into a close friendship. Dorothy’s best friend was Frances. She married Earl and the two couples remained close all their lives. There was occasional tension after a news story about race relations. It would resolve, layering complexity on my otherwise scientific world.

Last, adversity came to our extended family in the deaths of three grandparents and my father’s brother across two years. It would move my younger brother to share with me decades later that his life changed from paradise to tragedy at age seven, with subtle life-long effects on him.

These experiences, however, never diluted the good humor and loving care of home.

## **Education**

Although I was a model grade school student, high school was different. I graduated with what was called a General History major – not college material.

Reading *Le Misérables* and *Catcher in the Rye* were not enough. So I enrolled at Los Angeles Trade Technical to learn television repair.

My parents soon steered me from vocation to college. Northrop Institute of Technology, a private engineering college, was ten minutes from home. The school was founded by aviation pioneer John K. Northrop after WW II, offering both engineering bachelor’s degrees and aircraft mechanic programs. I registered for Electronics Engineering. Lack of high school credits required a no-credit quarter of pre-engineering – which I failed because of poor attendance.

I repeated pre-engineering, paid attention, and started the engineering curriculum. But high school ghosts returned, and my performance paused. “How about trying the aircraft mechanic school? It’s right across the street,” counseled my advisor. Enthused from the first day, I remember it as my best year in school. The world was rich in books and tools, in head and hands. Classroom time and shop time. The one-year vocational program yielded a certificate from the FAA. Led by colorful characters who had lived through the dawn of aviation, multiple skills were taught and practiced – woodworking, sheet metal, hydraulics, propellers, electrical, instruments, fabric, welding, powerplants, rigging.

My cohort of twenty-or-so was equally colorful, hard-working, determined. Along the way we would refer to the engineering school as the “puzzle palace” or the “brain barn.” Aircraft mechanic school was a sensory world that demanded respect – chemicals, machinery, apparatus, tools, real airplanes with live propellers we would start by hand. Some situations would never pass muster in the protected workplace of today. We learned how to complete a task and keep our fingers. At graduation, we were prepared to “Keep ‘em flying.”

I still love airplanes, but never did become a mechanic. The interlude prepared me for the engineering college. An Aircraft Maintenance Engineering degree made use of all my mechanic credits. Completing that degree, I was still not satisfied. Building on my course work again, I completed an Aerospace Engineering degree. The “puzzle palace” world was quite different; safer, with chalk boards and slide rules and books full of mathematical equations. It was a kind of scholarship, contrasted with the applied world of an aircraft mechanic. The humanities were there – my minor at NIT was philosophy.

## Career

About twenty-six years elapsed between college graduation and the next juncture in my exploration of transforming scholarship into application. A civilian U.S. government post, non-engineering entrepreneurial experiments, a large corporation, and small design companies engaged my interests and abilities. There was always something that challenged me, that moved me to jump on a horse when my teacher wasn't looking.

Jumping on horses before knowing how to ride has unpredictable outcomes. The business world usually prefers applied competence – scholarship is supposed to be complete. I navigated this because I found challenges and situations where I could still learn without a teacher present. Today I believe that the business world is turning in my favor. I've been following business scholarship on design and business processes, research that has had little application. The parent-child relationship that has shaped the manager-designer world is being compelled to form a partnership, rather than simply to keep the child – and balance sheet – safe more like my childhood family. I think it is a joining of science and the humanities in common need.

## Master's Degree

As I've sketched, informal learning in science occurred through years before a science degree. It was also so with the humanities. Business humanities were supplemented by televised versions of classics like Jean-Paul Sartre's *Roads to Freedom* and Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. Science and the humanities each have their complexities, but a science has no spirit vulnerable to being broken.

Discernment over a graduate degree was slow. An MBA or MS were considered, finally making a commitment to a Master of Arts in Systematic Theology. Although typically for religious studies, I have emphasized the arts and systematics as unusual partners. This fits my history.

Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota granted my MA. The path there was circuitous. I was raised a nominal Presbyterian. It was my beloved spouse Janet, born Lutheran, who would slowly immerse me in her tradition. I resisted, but eventually found an intersection of worlds through a common humility, curiosity and openness to questions, driven by a sense of justice and care for the world notions not owned by any belief or practice.

Today I am devoted to the integration of the sciences and the humanities in service to this complex world. It is imperative to apply scholarship in mindful and heartfelt thought, feeling, and action. Before humans, the world had immense diversity and vitality. We humans need to continue the process of enhancement, despite the danger our presence brings.

## The Next Generation

A brief anecdote may illustrate applied scholarship. A welcome annual event for me is a fall visit to the Minnesota State Fair. It includes a key vital sign of the future of my community – the 4H building. Here I see the fruits of applied scholarship. Consider the expanded 4H acronym – Head, Heart, Hands, Health. Almost every exhibit is of a tangible nature, often with descriptive short essays. Occasionally I will witness the human vitality behind an exhibit's scholarship. There are temporary tables set up among the exhibits, each with several young people and a leader of discussion. It's a peer review of each exhibit. So from being welcomed by a young greeter at the door, the exhibits, a theater performance, the 4H building is a leading indicator of the future of the human and natural world.

## Closing

My thesis that the application of the sciences is more pervasive than that of the humanities needs more testing. Even my genealogy, despite its claim to their joint venture, needs testing. To what extent has the transition of the world from multiple isolated agrarian communities into mechanized farmers on to so-called knowledge workers and global industrialization made scholarship a necessity? Opinions need to become experiments in application. To expect that complexity will be managed by some invisible hand is doubtful. Equally so is management by central planning. How might we compose some four-part harmony of application, scholarship, the sciences, and the humanities?

*~Charles Yancey is an independent engineering designer in Minneapolis, specializing in electronic systems. Early on his work in technology drew from its theory and practice. Time has now complemented the natural world with that of human nature. He holds a B. S. in Aerospace Engineering and an M. A. in Systematic Theology.*



## Review and Discussion of *The Common Good*

by Robert Reich  
(Knopf: New York, 2018)

**M**y husband and I just read *The Common Good* by Robert Reich in conjunction with a three-session class in the Continuing Education Program at the University of Minnesota. The following are my reflections and thoughts.

### First Class

When people introduced themselves at the first class, it became apparent to us that we were among the least socially involved people in the class. Everybody knew of Reich. Some even knew him personally. Several class members followed Reich on Facebook and a few had even eaten dinner with him at some time. Many of the class members were ardent disciples, while we had barely heard of him. (The only reason we took the class was that Bob had to read the book for a study group and it seemed like a good way to find some discussion points.)

This situation presented us with a unique perspective. Because we were not disciples, we came to the material in the book with a certain level of skepticism.

In fairness, Reich is trying to say that things now are very different from the 1930s and 1940s when the “Common Good” (the idea that we must all work together for our sake and the sake of the country) influenced and directed decision-making in this country. To explain how we got to where we are now, Reich traces a progression of law breaking (or running rough shod over laws) both by presidents and other powerful people. While we were perfectly aware of most of these crimes, which have been reported in depth in the newspapers and other news media, we didn’t see them in quite the same light as the instructor did. He was quite censorious. On the other hand, we had a ‘that’s life’ attitude.

As we walked home, two thoughts prevailed: one, that neither Reich nor the liberals (of which the class is full) seemed to have any acquaintance with the concept of original sin. I don’t mean this in the Catholic sense of something you are born with, but rather in the realistic and practical sense that almost

all people, at all times, look out for their own or their families’ best interest. Any realistic discussion of the Common Good has to allow for selfish variations.

The other point was that the world in which the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution (usually cited as the origins of the Common Good in this country) was written was very different from our world. The Constitution and the Declaration were written for and by white men of wealth and status. We were disappointed that the instructor did not spend more time delineating the differences between then and now. Just as we should try to understand the context of people who express opinions different from our own, we also need to immerse ourselves in the world of the writers of the primary documents.

It seemed to us one should start from the world of the 18th century when trying to adapt the 200+ year-old writings on which our political ideals are based. This exercise of adaptation does require massive amounts of adjustment, thought, listening, and compromise. Listening is especially important. Instead of hoping that Reich’s book will provide guidance for applying the common good to our situation, we should be listening to what others want and expect, which probably means that the teachers, social workers, and pundits in the class should just listen.

Anyway, that is what we thought after the first class.

### Second week

After the second class, of which the theme was “how did we get here?”, we felt a little more connected to the other class members, although we still felt our age. Reich provides a 10-page list of things that he thinks illustrate the fact that our government has moved a long way away from exercising the Common Good: his list begins with the Bay of Tonkin, includes the Clinton impeachment and the first closing of the government under Newt Gingrich, and runs all the way to the Wells Fargo scandal in 2017.



What my husband and I found interesting was the list did not include the assassinations of JFK, MLK, or RFK. Somehow for both of us, the modern world begins to disintegrate at those points rather than because the government took liberties with either truth or money. It may be simply that our orientation is to historical people rather than to economics.

Having said those things, the class broke into small groups to discuss what was really wrong. Curiously, many members of the class did not concentrate on Reich's list of governmental misdeeds, but rather on the unequal distribution of wealth that has resulted from governmental rule changing.

One person even quoted the expression “gredom” from a play at the History Center. The statistic that 1% of the people in the world control 90% of the world's wealth was cited more than once.

Also, and importantly, even though Reich does not remark on it, several people brought up the fact that we are all connected to each other through the World Wide Web, rather than in face-to-face conversation. Though it seems that we all profit from greater connection to the news, we regretted that we do not speak to each other, but rather bury our heads in our devices.

### Week three

This was the week when we were supposed to figure out how to restore the Common Good. Several points came up quickly—the most important, for me, being that Civics (and related history) is no longer taught in American public schools. It has been edged out by the No Child Left Behind initiative. Many people opined that teaching Civics would ameliorate some of the present problems.

Having said that, much of the class criticism was directed at the specifics of the current administration: attitudes toward the press, fear of immigrants, harm to international relations. People also pointed out that where college used to be a public good, it is now a private privilege.

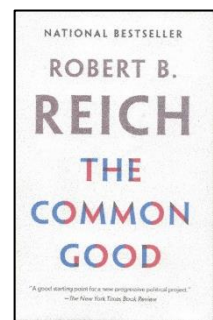
The instructor was able to point out that some of the problems we ascribe to the current administration actually emerge from previous history: unequal wealth distribution started long before this administration; rising prices for college education resulting in crippling debt began before the current century; the exclusion of young people from the American Dream if they don't have money has also been present for several decades.

Though we could agree (more or less) on the problems, we did not come up with good solutions. Someone actually (not entirely cynically) suggested that letting Global Warming and disease take their toll would wake people up to environmental dangers and create an impetus for change. The idea is appealing in the abstract, but hard to argue for in a debate.

More idealistically, people favored a national program of two-years of public service to the country which would precede college. This service could be done through the military, through public service, or even through churches (though one must say that Reich gives almost no recognition or even lip service to religion and religious institutions).

The teacher also pointed out that we need to restore the idea of leadership as trusteeship or service and instill respect for government. He also pointed out, as he did in the first class, that we need to resurrect the truth. Much of our media is based on lies and propaganda. There seems to be no desire to find a common ground.

It was not a class that inspired one to feel that change was possible, but Reich's book points out that while it may take a half-century to repair the idea of the common good, it is a worthwhile and perhaps critical effort. Despite having almost no reference to religion, Reich concludes with a quote from Reinhold Niebuhr: “Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; therefore, we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history” (p. 184).



Reich's book is a fast read. It is also a sobering read in that it does not offer any easy solutions. The class made us read it more thoughtfully and gave us a broader perspective on the Common Good and the problems we face as a nation. It would make a good text for a thoughtful group discussion.

*~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.*

# Programs & Meetings

January 26, 2019



## The Romansh in Minnesota

Presented by Barbara Sommer

Scholar Barb Sommer explained that the Romansh are a group of ethnically distinct Swiss who emigrated to Minnesota in the middle of the nineteenth century. Sommer, who is of Romansh descent, had researched the emigration under a Gale Library Fellowship. The Gale Library is the library of the Minnesota Historical Society and offers supported fellowships for the use of their collections.

The Romansh, who still remain in Switzerland, are concentrated in Graubünden, a mountainous region in eastern Switzerland. Their language, Romansh, is Latin-based and is recognized as one of the official languages of Switzerland, even though it is only spoken locally by about 9% of the Swiss population. (Official communication in that part of Switzerland is done in German.)

The original people may have been Etruscan, but their language was heavily influenced by Roman soldiers sent to guard the frontiers of the Roman Empire in 15 BCE. Romansh is regarded as a vernacular Latin language. The name refers both to the language and to the people who speak it, who called themselves "Romans."

So how did this group of Swiss come to Minnesota? As political unrest grew and economic opportunity shrank in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century, groups of Romansh began to emigrate to the United States. Seeking land and jobs, they came to Ohio, Pennsylvania, Chicago, and California. In 1850 two Romansh, Francis Tambornino and Jacob Beer,

were sent to Minnesota to explore possibilities for resettlement. They bought land in Le Sueur County.

Then in 1854, a group of 150 emigrants settled in Stillwater and established sawmills and farms. This close-knit community, which practiced cooperative, collective decision making, was behind some Stillwater businesses, such as Simonet Furniture and Jacob Wolf Brewing. As businesses became established, the settlers then sponsored the rest of their families. The last Romansh immigrants arrived in 1925-1930.

A similar pattern of immigration occurred near LeSueur (in a community called St. Henry) where patterns of community cooperation were also instituted. The most famous (now defunct) Romansh settlement in the United States was at Badus, South Dakota. Badus was a cooperative community of mutual support, which reached its goal of member self-sufficiency in 1886. Both towns are no longer incorporated but both have old churches which are maintained by the local residents.

Commitment to language and to family were outstanding characteristics of the Romansh. Although the Romansh today refer to themselves as Swiss, Sommer quoted her great-great grandmother as saying over and over, "Remember we are Roman!"

Sommer has written an article for MNopedia about the Romansh in Minnesota. This article may be found at <http://www.mnopedia.org/group/romansh-minnesota>.

~Lucy Brusic

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### CORRECTION

In the program presentation notes on *F. Scott Fitzgerald in Minnesota* by Dave Page it should have read: Fitzgerald began outlining *The Great Gatsby* in White Bear Lake but wrote the bulk in southern France in 1924. The story with the description of the St. Paul Cathedral is "The Popular Girl."

Scott and Zelda were married in the rectory of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City in 1920. Fitzgerald had an office in downtown St. Paul.

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February 23, 2019

## The Power of Landscape Art

Presented by Robert and Lucy Brusic

With supplemental readings by Lucy Brusic involving the pictures under consideration, Robert Brusic presented this program on Landscape Art. As lover of classical music, Robert Brusic observed there are four types of attitudes prevailing in classical music: People who can't imagine life without it. Those who don't mind it. Those who never listen to it. And those who think they are tone deaf.

When it comes to landscape art, there are four corresponding types of attitudes, namely: People can't imagine life without it. Those who don't mind it. Those who never look at it. And those who say they do not know anything about art, but they know what they like.

Robert sees four reasons why we look at art, landscape art in particular. We enjoy it and feel awe and wonder. We can escape into it. Art can be part of a healing process. Art can have a spiritual value.

He brought along an extensive selection of slides depicting landscape art to share with the audience. Throughout his presentation he solicited comments and reactions from his audience to add to and elaborate his own observations. Art representations ranged from 1638 with Claude Lorrain, including such artists as Rousseau, Van Gogh, Bierstadt, Cole, Shutoku, Moran, Russell, Jacques, Webster, Morrison to Nguyen in 2017, among others.

The speaker pointed out landscape art did not actually have a place in the history of art until Claude Lorrain. With his *Pastoral Landscape* in 1638, where he presents "nature full blown," he influenced, as founder of modern landscape art, many artists to come, including Claude Monet.

Among the slides presented, Robert noted that when we look at modern versions of landscape

art, such as George Morrison's, *Mount Maude*, 1942, near Grand Portage, Minnesota, or any of his other creations, we can simply enjoy them for what they are. Some artists helped foster an appreciation by the general population for the beauty and value of national parks, such as Yosemite and Yellowstone respectively, like Albert Bierstadt, with pictures like *The Merced River in Yosemite*, 1890, and Thomas Moran with *A Scene on the Tohickon Creek*, 1858.

The influence of art extending to the preservation of wilderness "for public use and recreation" was further advanced beginning in early 19<sup>th</sup> century by artists, such as Thomas Cole with his wilderness images and Carleton Watkins with his photographs of Yosemite. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Ansel Adams, a conservationist, helped define our notion of "wilderness" with *Clearing Winter Storm*, 1935. His works influenced President Franklin Roosevelt's declaration, making the King Canyon area a national park.

Charles M. Russell's *Buffalo Hunt*, 1850, captures a part of history of the Old West, when buffalo numbered in the millions and Native Americans rode "freely," Robert said. "Russell's work is a powerful landscape of memory and regret." By contrast, Francis Lee Jacques' paintings of *Cranes*, 1920, and *Spring Birds*, about 1940, are certainly beautiful enough to instill awe in themselves.

The foregoing descriptions were only a few of the examples and insightful observations Robert Brusic and Lucy Brusic shared in their landscape art presentation. Robert serves as a docent at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and he invited his audience to come to the MIA to see these creations and more in person. This stimulating presentation was attended by about 26 people.~

March 23, 2019

## Ignatius Donnelly: Ultimate Independent Scholar

Presented by Patrick Coleman

For the March MISF program, Patrick Coleman, Acquisitions Librarian at the Minnesota Historical

Society, presented a talk on Minnesota political figure and writer Ignatius Donnelly. Coleman has studied

Donnelly and the part he played in Minnesota history and has a personal collection of Donnelly biographies and books that were part of Donnelly's extensive personal library.

Ignatius Donnelly was born in 1831 as one of six children; his family lived in a community outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was educated in public schools and became a lawyer, though he did not practice law. He and his wife, Kate (McCaffrey), arrived in Minnesota in the 1850s after which he became a land speculator with the brother-in-law of Alexander Ramsey. From 1860-1863, he served as Ramsey's lieutenant governor and then served a term in the United States House of Representatives. He later served in the Minnesota Senate and House of Representatives. In addition to his land speculation and political involvement, Donnelly is remembered for his writing and his work as a newspaper publisher.

As a land speculator, Donnelly founded the town of Ninegar in Dakota County. The town initially thrived, before failing in the Panic of 1857. His house, the only one to survive, was razed in 1949.

An unmatched orator, Donnelly made a living as a lecturer. He supported the Farmers Alliance and the Grange movement, opposed slavery, supported western expansion, and people who were oppressed – farmers, laborers, and immigrants among others. He called for grain inspection, dairy and grain commissioners, supported bi-metallism, and fought for fair profit, agricultural experiment stations, the 8-hour work day, and control over child labor.

During his years in politics, Donnelly transitioned from involvement in the main political parties (Democrat and Republican) to third party activism. In 1892, he ran for vice president on a third-party ticket and, for a number of years, made a living as a third-party lecturer. He was a national leader of

third-party movements, known for his stamina—it was said he could give three 2-hour lectures a day.

His research and writing interests were many and varied. He studied the lost city of Atlantis and wrote about it in *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World* (1882). In *The Great Cryptogram* (1887, 1888). He attempted to prove that Sir Francis Bacon wrote the works of Shakespeare. His best-selling novel, *Caesar's Column* (1890) is a story of America in the 1980s and what he saw happening if capitalism continued unchecked. In it, he incorporated his political and personal beliefs, stating that society would “come crashing down” if reforms did not take place. He also published three newspapers supporting his political views.

Donnelly kept a diary all his adult life. He and his wife, Kate, also maintained an extensive correspondence throughout their marriage. The collection of Ignatius Donnelly papers at the Minnesota Historical Society – a little over 40 cubic feet and 172 reels of microfilm – covers his work and career. In addition to documenting his public career as a political and intellectual leader, through his diaries and correspondence with his wife in the collection, researchers can find insight into him as an individual.

Donnelly passed away on January 1, 1900, and thus, as Coleman pointed out, did not see 20<sup>th</sup> century reforms he had supported come to pass. His legacy as Minnesota politician, author, and nationally known leader of late 19<sup>th</sup> century reform movements and Midwestern populism continues to be studied and remembered today.

The meeting was attended by about 27 people.~

~Barbara Sommer

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## Remembering Lionel Davis

Longtime MISF member **Lionel Davis**, born in Duluth, Minnesota in 1923, passed away December 23, 2018, at age 95. He was a long-term member of Or Emet. He was a widely beloved piano and recorder teacher, synagogue organist, composer, and zesty optimist. Lionel was also a WWII veteran.

He was the loving husband of Edith and is survived by Peggy, Barbara, Julian, Saul and grandchildren Aaron and Kayla.

Service was held December 26, 2018 at Mayim Rabin in Minneapolis with interment on December 27 at Temple Emmanuel Cemetery in Duluth.

Most recently, Lionel had been working on some musical pieces. He was, also, on the board of MISF and an active member of the History Discussion Group.

April 27, 2019

## The Writing Life

Presenter Emilio DeGrazia

The Scholars were pleased to welcome Emilio DeGrazia as a speaker on Saturday April 27. DeGrazia, a published poet, taught English at Winona State University for 43 years and is the author of several awarding winning books of essays and fiction. He also served two terms as Winona's Poet Laureate.

Since DeGrazia's self-introduction in the publicity described his position as that of a poet in a society that no longer values poetry, he began by describing the state of modern society and particularly poetry.

According to DeGrazia, human communication began with grunts. Eventually grunts grew into longer communication and "flowered into language." The age of the spoken word, which is the longest age in human history, produced story-telling groups. The discussions of these groups were captured by poets such as Homer (DeGrazia believes there were actually several "Homers") who recorded the discussions and disagreements. In effect, poets were like talking books. Incidentally, there were about 500 years between the siege of Troy and the first recorded version of the poem—plenty of time for oral embellishments.

Along the way there arose hand-copied manuscripts of poetry, information, and the Bible, among other things. However, these were only available to those who could read and lived in monasteries or had money.

Then, in 1440 the printing press was invented and introduced the age of books, as we know them. The printing of books had many consequences: there was an explosion of writing; it freed people from

priestly control; it enabled the expansion of mind and thought. Printing also enabled the privatization of consciousness. Thus, the book had a major influence on culture and held that position for about 500 years.

Now, DeGrazia says, we have come to the end of the age of books and have entered a digital age, where everyone can express an opinion and post it on the web. According to DeGrazia, images in motion seem even more real than books and influence people's beliefs in a way that books do not. Even ads with moving pictures are able to influence us. Although books are being printed at a greater rate than ever before, DeGrazia actually sees us as regressing to an age of speech.

So why is DeGrazia still writing books in this digital age? He says he has a hungry mind. The unknown pulls him. In troubled times like ours, writing clarifies. He has a religious need to discover meaning, and to see clearly and sympathetically. The process, rather than the product, is important.

DeGrazia continues to write by hand and does not generally read any book on the web. He cannot stand "screens." He has a number of books "in print" (most of them stored in his garage) and at least nine manuscripts that could be printed. He does admit that writing books is not a way to make money.

DeGrazia did not have an answer when asked what will replace digital democratization. He suggested that perhaps we should all slow down and "clean wash" or get rid of everything and start over.~

~Lucy Brusic

May 25, 2019

## What Is Poetry?

Presented by Evelyn D. Klein

Over 2,500 years of poetry have brought forth various theories and speculations about poetry, but no single theory exists. The presenter outlined four historical perspectives pervading poetry, taking us from traditional to modern poetry over the centuries. She included many quotations of well-known

historical thinkers, writers, and poets. The following is a summary of the program.

The first perspective of poetry is mimetic, where poetry and the arts are essentially imitations of the world in a variety of systematic applications. For example, Plato stated history is imitation; Socrates said poetry holds a mirror to the universe; and

Aristotle thought poetry was more philosophy than history.

Second, poetry imbues a pragmatic perspective that shifts emphasis from the nature of the world to the nature of humankind. Here the end is to please the reader, including improbabilities and absurdities. It deals with actual facts and occurrences and the practical side of life, presented with ornamental reality which represents the world's true image.

Third, in poetry's expressive perspective, the poet moves into the center of the scheme and becomes the prime generator of subject matter, characteristics and values of the poem. The mirror held up to nature becomes the mirror held up to the poet. The romantics espoused this view and considered poetry the antithesis of science. In the age of Freud, some held that the literary work is objectified embodiment of the author's consciousness and is reflected in the vicarious experience of the audience.

Fourth, in the objective perspective, the poet creates his or her own world. Northrop Frye makes reference to the four genres of comedy, romance, tragedy, and satire. Freudians see poetry as various disguises of the poet's unconscious desires, while Carl Jung sees poetry as a representation of archetypal paradigms in the cycle of seasons as products of the collective unconscious.

Klein then took her audience on a condensed journey of poetry samples over the ages and the changes it experienced in its development. She began with traditional poetry, the poetry of Chaucer, excerpt from *The Canterbury Tales*, Shakespeare, Sonnet 18, and Tennyson poem, "Crossing the Bar." She continued with the transitional poetry of Emily Dickinson, "Hope..." to Whitman's "Song of Myself" to Klein's prose poem, "River," excerpt from *Once upon a Neighborhood*. Modern poetry included Ezra Pound's "In a Station of the Metro," e.e. cummings' "since feeling is first," Langston Hughes' "Litany," and Billy Collins' "Sonnet."

The presenter concluded What Is Poetry? with the modern perspective of poetry. First, she explained the reader response method as set forth by Louise M. Rosenblatt from the book, *Literature as Exploration*. Second, according to Coleridge, poetry is "a speculative instrument." Third, Klein stipulated that poetry is a reflection of the feelings, thoughts, philosophies, images, and language of a given time in history, along with its style, form, rhythm, lyric, and content. She ended the presentation with two poems on writing, one by Alice Walker, "How Poems Are Made: A Discredited View," the other by Emily Dickinson, "This is my letter to the world."

The program was followed by a lively, stimulating discussion, and ended in an open reading. It was attended by approximately 18 people.~

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## Upcoming Events

**All regular meetings of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum take place at the Washburn Public Library, 5244 Lyndale Avenue, Minneapolis, MN., Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

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

**June 22, 2019**

**Annual Meeting**

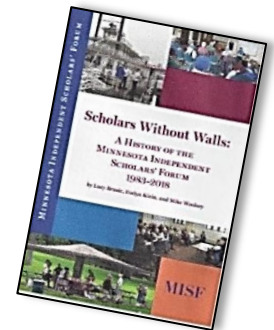
***Scholars Without Walls***

**Presented by Lucy Brusic, Lead Editor,**

**Evelyn Klein and Mike Woolsey, Support Editors**

We will introduce our new book, *Scholars Without Walls: The History of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum*. This book 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 create 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



*Continued on page 15*

writer. All editors are independent scholars serving on the MISF Board. For more information see Pages 1 and 2 of this issue.

**August 24, 2019**

**MISF Annual Summer Picnic**

MISF is planning its annual summer picnic to be held at Cherokee Park in St. Paul. As usual, we will meet at the small shelter at 11:00 a.m. Bring a dish to share, something to drink and utensils and such for yourself. Of course, don't forget to bring some good conversation to spread around. Come and visit with your fellow independent scholars for an informal good time. Bring a guest or two.

**September 28, 2019**

**The Woodcut Art of Wolfgang Klein  
Presented by Evelyn D. Klein**

The program will introduce the topic with a brief description of the history of woodcuts. It will then focus on Wolfgang Klein's art of woodcuts, including materials and tools needed in the process. The presenter will have actual art samples on view and take her audience on a journey of the artist's creative life by means of a slide show of works.

Evelyn Klein, Author, Speaker, Artist is the daughter of Wolfgang Klein. She has a B.S. in Secondary Education and an M.S. in English. She is editor of *The Minnesota Scholar* and her own newsletter. A prize-winning poet she is author of three books of poetry, essays, and art. Her first book, *From Here Across the Bridge*, contains woodcut illustrations by her father, winning a cover award. Her subsequent books, *Once upon a Neighborhood* and *Seasons of Desire* contain her own illustrations.

**October 26, 2019**

**Minneapolis and Tangletown Neighborhood  
Landmarks**

**Presented by Tom Balcom**

What is a neighborhood and how does change make it better, lessen it, or make it a different world? Step into the past with a presentation illustrated by maps and photographs of historical interest. The maps show what most of south Minneapolis looked like prior to urban development. The photos are of early downtown Minneapolis and the Mississippi River, as well as historical and current-day images of Tangletown. These maps and photos provide a sense of place, identity, and pride in the city where we live.

Tom Balcom grew up in Minneapolis, majored in Geography/Urban and Regional Planning at the U of M, and worked in planning and environmental protection programs at the Minnesota department of Natural Resources. In retirement, Tom enjoys doing historical research and writing, as well as giving bus, bike and walking tours of the city and south Minneapolis neighborhoods.

*Continued on next Page*

***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 October 4, 2019.

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## Upcoming Events

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**November 16, 2019**

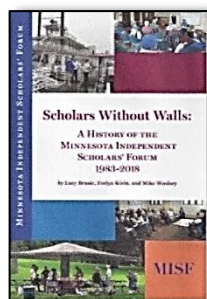
***Oxaca: Mexican Discoveries***

**Presented by Charlie Roger**

Oxaca is a city and state in southern Mexico that today is a popular destination for foreign and domestic tourists and those wishing to spend the winter months in a warm, sunny climate. Oxaca has been populated for thousands of years, and there is still a large indigenous population that carry on traditions and customs from years past. It is known for its cuisine, its festivals, its archeological sites and its artisans and crafts, including weaving, textiles,

pottery (green, red, black), alebrijes and mezcals. Charlie Roger has spent a few winters in Oxaca and would like to share his experiences from there.

Charlie Roger is now retired after years of working for hospitals in respiratory therapy and data management. He enjoys reading, teaching English with the Minnesota Literacy Council, studying Spanish, and travel.~



*Your Are Invited  
to the Publication Launch of Scholars Without Walls!*

We are excited by the prospect of this publication and hope you will plan to join us for the launch on June 22, 2019. We will have a special 2 books for the price of 1" offer for this special occasion.

*The MISF Board*



