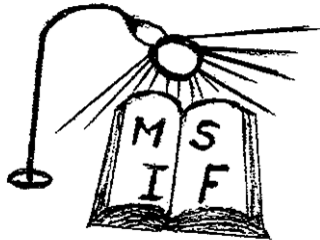


The Minnesota Scholar

Journal of the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum

Volume 19, Number 1, June 2024



New Study Group on Urban Agriculture



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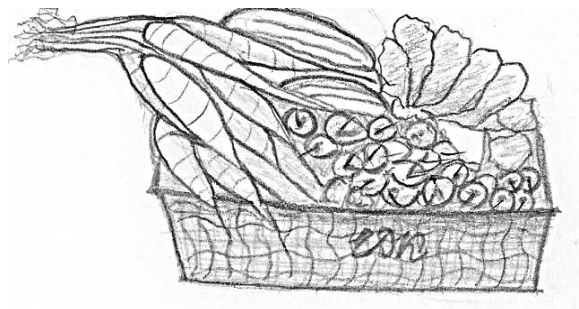
The Minnesota Scholar is published semi-annually and distributed by mail to members of MISF and to selected institutions.

The Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum is starting a new study group on urban agriculture. This group will explore the diverse facets of urban agriculture, such as backyard, rooftop, indoor, container, and community gardening.

While we will operate, in many ways, as a traditional garden club, we intend to go beyond this and offer members opportunities to dig more deeply into topics that interest them. These can include not only, of course, involve growing fruits, vegetables, and flowers but also livestock husbandry, beekeeping, and raising insects, in addition to considering soil health, fertilization, and composting as well as systematized approaches to agriculture like hydroponics and permaculture.

We have established a group on meetup.com – the MISF Urban Agriculture Group – for those who use that platform, and we are also starting an email list to keep people informed of our plans. If you would like to be included, contact Curt Hillstrom at curthillstrom@hotmail.com.

We hope to see you at the meeting!



See more study and discussion groups on page 11.



Bird Watching

by Evelyn D. Klein

Spring came early in 2024 in the Twin Cities with a surprise of above average temperatures, fifties in February and sixties in March. Warm February temperatures were followed by a sudden dip in temperature, however, and a considerable snowfall.

In my four-season porch are large picture windows whose blinds I like to draw back first thing in the morning to check out weather and birds. The windows look onto a lawn, where, in spring, I often see the male house finch rest on the neighboring fence singing his heart out, in summer, watch robins dash across the lawn in search of food, see gold finches stop by on the blue spruce that chickadees claim year-round, and juncos pass through on the ground in fall. I had planted the Colorado blue spruce some years ago in memory of my father, right next to the little apple tree. Both trees now tower over the house and have become a virtual bird sanctuary.

That particular February morning, snowy ground and snow-covered trees greeted me. A flock of robins fluttered excitedly in the tree still laden with last year's tiny crabapples, gorging themselves. On the ground below, it was almost comical to watch some robins attempting to run but see them stumble across the snow instead, trying to pick up fallen fruit or whatever they found edible. Chickadees joined the romp, darting into the apple tree to carry their treat quickly back into the safety of the spruce. Even normally ground-feeding juncos found their way into the trees and joined the flutter for the fruit right beside the chickadees.

It leaves one to wonder how much climate change is causing this excitement and

confusion among birds and wildlife and people. The spring 2024 issue of *National Wildlife* magazine reports scientists are concerned that particularly songbirds cannot “keep pace with spring’s early arrival and that birds produced fewer young in years that were out of sync with peak leaf out.” This is because wildlife normally “rely on the timing of leaf out,” according to UCLA and Michigan State University researchers. Furthermore, in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, it was reported that spring will keep arriving earlier. Lead author Casey Youngflesh indicated that North American breeding birds have fallen by nearly 30% since the 1970s, (9).

It appears there is much to learn, as yet, about bird life and its future. While I watched the excitement of the birds in the two trees go on most of the morning, I noticed some birds among them were shaped and acting like robins. But they did not have the usual coloring of robins. I had never seen these here before. A quick look at *A Guide to Field Identification, Birds of North America*, revealed that these were actually Eurasian blackbirds “a European replacement of the American robin,” the male black, the female brown.

Excited by my discovery, I continued looking through the book for descriptions of other birds common to the area where I live. For instance, the field guide only illustrated the male robin, stating simply the female’s head is paler than the male’s. I went on to look up mourning doves that “coo” so mysteriously in spring and summer and seem to disappear in winter. But one winter, as I walked around the nearby lake, I

spotted two mourning doves resting side by side on a branch, almost blending in with winter's bare tree configuration. The guide simply illustrated the dove without sexual denotation. For the house finch, I found both sexes illustrated. For blue jays, I found one illustration with the notation that the sexes are similar, whatever that means. For juncos, there were illustrations for male and female, though they were similar in appearance. As a longtime bird watcher, I ascribed little significance to the inconsistencies of descriptions between the sexes of birds in the guide, however.

Then I came across another article in that same spring issue of *National Wildlife* magazine, entitled "Getting Their Due" by Laura Tangley. She traces early research and on-going tendency to admire male birds, like the male cardinal for its bright red color and the male robin for its beautiful song. It is easy to relate to that. She quotes Kenn Kaufman, a well-known birder and field guide author as saying, "With male birds usually brighter and more conspicuous, a tendency to overlook the so-called fairer sex is largely unconscious" (16).



Interestingly, the scientific study of birds and natural history collections relied upon by researchers, focus primarily on male birds. Not

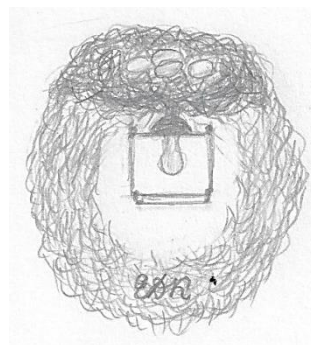
surprisingly, in 2019, the *Proceedings of the Royal B* study examined five leading international natural history museums and concluded that 60 percent dealt with male examples. This has left a huge gap in what we know about birds and their behavior. According to Shannon Hackett, curator of birds at Chicago's Field Museum: "As we have discovered in human medicine, the assumption that females are just subsets or small versions of males is not true, and it's not true in the study of birds" (16) as well. The promising signs are that technology

has greatly advanced in the last 100 years, particularly with the study of DNA. It makes it possible with only a tiny piece of skin from a dead bird to sequence the entire genome of that species, according to Hackett, for example.

An area of study to come about more recently involves bird song. Although bird song has primarily been ascribed to male birds, researchers are discovering that in many species both males and females sing. At present, studies are underway to document female bird song.

The article, further, points out that the lack of information about female birds is quite concerning in respect to the conservation of birds, particularly when it comes to migrating birds. In 2019, a study reported in *Biological Conservation* found "between one-third and two-thirds of North America's most valuable neotropical and other migrator landbird species segregate sexually during the non-breeding season, meaning males and females spend those months in different locations" (17).

Unfortunately, little attention is being paid to this separation with most paid to male birds, according to lead research ecologist, Ruth Bennett, at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. And because the area where female birds winter are often threatened for one reason or another, the survival rate of female birds is lower than that of their male counterparts in 70 species. The women



scientists in this article surmise that the favoritism toward male birds may arise out of the fact that most ornithologists are men. They encourage more women to enter the field which, traditionally, is not always welcoming. Kenn Kaufman supports this new cause of studying female birds. Looking "beyond all macho, most of the interesting things – such as producing the

next generation – are being done by female birds” (17).

It is May now with still warmer than usual temperatures for the month. Spring is in full bloom. From the kitchen window, a robin can be seen darting from the front of the building. She is building her nest on top of the artificial wreath the neighbor left up near the front door around the light fixture, where the nest is sheltered. Some days ago, she darted out of her nest to do a dance with a male cardinal that had ventured into her territory. Round and round they went on the lawn, until he departed. Yesterday, she descended onto a grackle exploring the grass, until he took off. For the time being, we avoid using our front door which is right across, lest the robin dart out of her nest chiding, chiding, chiding, before landing in the linden tree at the edge of the lawn.

Today, the robin stops on the sidewalk alongside the house, straightening up, raising her head, regally, looking at me looking at her from behind window glass. This is her domain for now, until fledglings leave the nest. And I keep watch from a distance.

~Evelyn Klein is an author, independent scholar, and artist who published four books of poetry, essays, and illustrations as well as a reference book about the English language.

To the Sun

from: *Seasons of Desire*
by Evelyn D. Klein

Lily pads rise
from the pond
here and there
in a snake dance
to the sun.

The Minnesota Scholar

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The Minnesota Scholar welcomes submissions. We are especially interested in topical issues. We print essays, reviews, and memoirs.

Submission guidelines: Articles should be between 1000-1800 words maximum. Use Times Roman font, size 12. Submit articles electronically in a Word Document. Manuscripts will be edited and minor adjustments may be made. Submissions will be acknowledged, although the editor reserves the right to decline to publish an article deemed unsuitable. For more specific guidelines and information contact the editor.

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Book Review

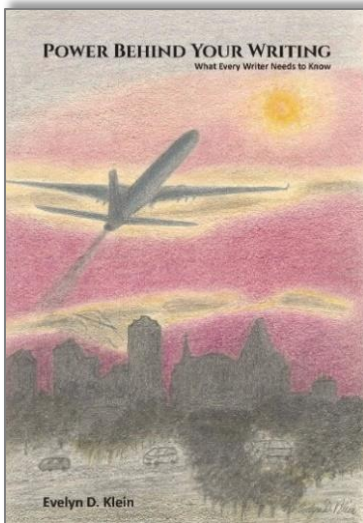
A Peer Review of:

Power Behind Your Writing:

***What Every Writer Needs to Know* by Evelyn D. Klein**

By Rhonda Petree

Not so long ago, the question “What pronouns do you prefer?” would not have made sense to most people, but now it is a common introductory question in many settings. It is only because of the recent global pandemic that the terms *social distancing* and *super-spreader event* became common in everyday English. While it is interesting to consider current additions and changes to the English language, these are not new phenomena. The English language is always in flux due to changes in society, influences from other languages, and emerging communication trends. In the new book, *Power Behind Your Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know* [dealing with the essentials of the



English language], Evelyn Klein explains that being informed about the historical changes of the English language, as well as its structural components will help students be more effective

and successful writers.

Power Behind Your Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know is composed of two parts. The first, “Our Changing Language,” contains two sections - “Roots and Branches” and “The Story of English.” In the first section, Klein

explains how language is acquired and how English evolved along with other Indo-European languages. A chapter on cognates makes the relationship between these languages clear. In “The Story of English,” Klein offers a concise and readable history of Old, Middle, and Modern English. This section is filled with examples of how words entered the English language through contact with different peoples and how the certain words can be traced through the times. The chapters end with questions to further the readers’ thinking.

For people looking for an easy-to-use, helpful reference source, the second part of the book titled, “Components, Structures and Principles of Language” will be valuable. Each chapter in the first section, “Sentence Components: Parts of Speech” begins with a short, engaging poem, then provides clear definitions and explanations of the different parts of speech along with relevant examples, and ends with a segment called “Exploring Language” that offers creative application activities. These activities ask readers to identify the part of speech in the poem at the beginning of the chapter, complete short writing tasks using the part of speech and other noticing tasks. While these activities are optional, they provide an immediate application opportunity for those engaged with the chapter. In the second section titled, “Language Structures that Carry Writing: Sentence Types,” Klein emphasizes the importance of clear and meaningful communication by way of well-constructed sentences. As in the previous section, these chapters end with a segment titled “Exploring Writing” which asks the reader to apply the

information into one's own writing or to notice how sentence types are used in authentic written communication.

Teachers and students alike will find this book useful. Teachers can access and reference specific sections as they prepare their own units and lessons. Teachers could also assign specific chapters to students for background reading on the developments of the English language or for information on parts of speech or types of sentences. Students who want or need a concise history of the English language for research or writing projects will find the first part of the book informative and accessible. The second part will be particularly useful to writing students when they are uncertain about how to use particular words or how to construct different types of sentences. The information is readable, and the explanations and examples are clear. Both native and non-native English speakers will find value in this book. Teachers and students alike will benefit from the chapter titled, "Punctuation Revisited" as it offers concise, useful information about correct punctuation usage.

Power Behind Your Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know [dealing with the essentials of the English language] is a highly readable book and an easy-to-use reference tool. The text moves quickly through topics allowing the reader to take in a lot of information from each page. Intricate detailed illustrations at the beginning of some chapters further enhance the reader's experience with the content. The English language will continue to change to reflect the needs of modern society. With this book, teachers and students will be well-equipped to write effectively in our ever-changing world.

~Rhonda Petree has an M.A. in English as a Second Language, Secondary Teacher Certification, and was a Fulbright Scholar in Estonia 2018-2019, and is a Lecturer, Department of English, TESOL, and Modern Languages, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, WI

Aember Publications

Anthony J. Amato

The Stark Carpathians: Ritual, Text, and Authority Among Ukraine's Hutsuls

Published in January of 2024

This book examines the rituals and texts of the Hutsuls, who inhabit a small mountainous region located in today's Ukraine. The pages cover local affairs, habits, and dispositions as they manifested themselves in rituals and texts in the late nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century.

Evelyn D. Klein

Power Behind Your Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know

Published in February of 2024

This is a book about the English language. For a description see page 5.

Democracy

by Carl L. Becker

Since the Greeks first used the term, the essential test of democratic government has always been this: the source of political authority must be and remain in the people and not in the ruler. A democratic government has always meant one in which the citizens, or a sufficient number of them to represent more or less effectively the common will, freely act from time to time, and according to established forms, to appoint or recall the magistrates and to enact or revoke the laws by which the community is governed. This I take to be the meaning which history has impressed upon the term democracy as a form of government.

~Excerpt from "Modern Democracy" by Carl L. Becker, 20th century historian

Programs and Meetings



January 27, 2024

Wonderland Park

Presented by Susan Hunter Weir

Susan Hunter Weir, a lifelong resident of south Minneapolis, who spent the last 25 years researching the residents of Minneapolis pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, the oldest existing cemetery in Minnesota, came to speak about Wonderland Park, once located at Lake Street and 31st Avenue in Minneapolis. The Twin City amusement park, a midway, was established in 1905 and continued until 1911.

Some interesting facts about life in the U.S. in 1905 indicate that there were about 8,000 cars in existence that used the 1440 miles of paved roads. 95% of births took place at home, and about 6% of the population graduated from high school.

Lake Street was a convenient location for the midway, because it was located half-way between Minneapolis and St. Paul and offered transportation. It was an area of residential and commercial development and had a significant working- and middle-class population. It, also, had electricity which was not always readily available as well as paved streets, street lighting, security, curbs, and sewers.

Inspired in St. Louis, it offered an Infantorium with infant incubators at World's Fair in 1904. The fair sparkled with 25,000 incandescent bulbs, attracting people. It offered numerous attractions according to its poster, such as a Scenic Railway, a Carousel, Fairy Theater, Myth City, Crystal Maze, Airship Swing, Miniature Train, Bump-the-Bumps, and surprisingly by today's standards,. Admission was 10 cents for adults and 5 cents for children. Some of the rides, like Bump-the-Bump and the circle bike ride were not safe by today's standards.

Wonderland included some futuristic amusements, such as the Airship Ride, the Circle

Swing, and the giant illuminated umbrella twirling. Among the highlights were the Scenic Railway, a kind of roller coaster overlooking the Longfellow neighborhood and the Denzel Carousel with its giraffe.

In addition, every evening offered music, acrobats, and fireworks. Performers abounded with high divers, trapeze artists, and human rockets, all known by their exotic names, like Allman Fedora and her husband Herr Granada or the Real Guy.

Not everyone, however, loved Wonderland Park, mostly because it was open on Sundays. Thus, the church across the way, filed a lawsuit. But even though Sunday openings were generally against the law, the law was not greatly enforced.

The most startling inclusion in Wonderland Park for the modern audience was the Infantorium, a building which is still in use today and is located between 31st Avenue and 31st Street. The Infantorium took care of babies big and small, "tiny morsels of humanity," as they were called, since little or no pediatric care was available at that time. Infant mortality was high in those days, because most infants were born at home. Incubators were brought in to help premature or ailing infants. But these incubators were not popular with many. Yet parents did not have to pay for the care of their babies, who were returned to their parents once they were well enough.

Wonderland closed on September 17, 1911. Having outlived its appeal, possibly because it was no longer profitable or because of competition from other amusements. The park was demolished in April 1912.

A lively question-and-answer period followed the lecture. Approximately 20 people attended.

February 24, 2024

The Indigenous Oral History Manual: Canada and the United States

Presenter Barbara Sommer

Barbara Sommer discussed this Manual which was authored by Winona Wheeler, Charles E. Trimble, Mary Kay Quinlan, and Barbara Sommer. This oral history serves as the primary source of information gathered in interview sessions with a participant in an event or way of life for purposes of preserving the information and making it available to others. Oral history is both process and product. She is working with the Minnesota Historical Society in this respect.

Oral traditions are shared history in specific Native communities and source of historical knowledge. Native Americans recorded histories in a number of methods, including pictographs.

It is important to note that oral histories and traditions cannot be adequately defined by non-Indigenous people, because they do not view or understand them from the Native perspective. For oral history is contained in oral traditions. It is, therefore, important that these be examined in community engagement and proper handling of information. Efforts are being made to preserve the material appropriately.

Oral history programs are flourishing across the country. However, there is no single Native voice, because there are many different cultures among the native people.

In 2002 President Bush handed out medals to code talkers. Among them were both Ojibwa and Navaho people.

Hopi people have recordings by using traditional visual images. Ojibwa people have done a lot of documentation. The Seminole oral history has been recorded in a book which is preserved in a museum in Florida. The American Tribal Histories Project can be found in the Western Heritage Center.

In Canada Native people have found support as well. The Crow Nation have gotten grants in Montreal. Others have found support in Saskatchewan. In Canada's National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, people studied the impact of boarding schools on children, particularly in Winnipeg.

In Alaska, Project Jukebox exposed a project that is now found on websites. Interestingly the use of recordings was spurred on by oral histories.

In South Dakota, Doris Duke's Native Oral History represented a revitalization project. It is not up to today's standards, but it is still good information, according to Barbara Sommer.

Barbar Sommer, M.A., has over forty years of experience in the public history and oral history fields. She is author and co-author of several publications on oral histories.

This enlightening lecture was attended by about 27 people.

March 23, 2024

Minnesota Carnegie Libraries After 100+ Years

Presenter Greg Gaunt

Greg Gaunt began his lecture by pointing out that Minnesota's Carnegie Libraries are a part of public spaces. The Minnesota Carnegie Program is concerned about what has to be done with the 100-

year-old buildings and what can best be done with preserving and expanding them in addition to today's requirement for accessibility.

The history of these libraries began with Adrew Carnegie. He was born in Scotland and immigrated 1848 to Pennsylvania, where he became a successful, wealthy businessman. In 1901 he sold his holdings and became a philanthropist. He, then wrote “Gospel of Wealth,” stipulating that a rich person should regard himself as a steward. He wanted to give his wealth away before he died, though he made some arrangements for his family. He wanted his money to be given to public organizations, particularly to libraries.

Ultimately, he gave grants to 1,681 libraries in the United States, amounting forty-one million dollars. In England, Scotland, and Ireland he gave 800 grants. Initially however, he had given grants only in Pennsylvania. His “wholesale” period started in 1898.

James Bertram managed the library program for him with the following stipulations for the libraries:

1. It had to be a public library. By 1860 public libraries began. And in 1879 Minnesota taxed residents to have a public library.
2. The library had to be built on public land.
3. It had to have an annual percentage of tax funds.
4. \$2.00 per capita was given.

Subsequently, in Minnesota there were 65 public library buildings between 1902 and 1918. At

the same time, Wisconsin had 63 and Iowa 101, for example.

Architecturally, the library buildings generally conformed to a specific design. The buildings were all neoclassical. The particular design of each library was not a requirement by Carnegie, but they were built in the popular style of the times. However, many innovations and a democratizing of the libraries resulted in open stacks, a lecture hall, a children’s department, and branch libraries.

What has happened to these libraries after 120 years? 18 were lost between 1963-73; 47 remain; 22 are public libraries; 25 are repurposed; and 37 are on the national register.

There are a number of issues with the buildings. For one, growth required expansion. Then came the Americans with Disabilities Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. Also, the siting of the buildings came into the picture.

Greg Gaunt is emeritus faculty at Saint Mary’s University in Winona. Since 2012 he worked as historic preservation consultant. He is a lover of libraries and published some library histories, among them “Reinventing the Peoples Library,” about St. Paul’s Arlington Hills Public Library, a Carnegie library, which is now the East Side Freedom Library.

An enthusiastic group of about 30 people attended the meeting.

April 27, 2024

Building Community Food Webs

Presenter Ken Meter

Ken Meter, one of the most experienced food system analysts in the U.S., discussed his book, *Building Community Food Webs*, Island Press, 2021, where he integrates market analysis, business development, systems thinking, and social concerns.

Meter has been active for a better future in inner-city and rural community capacity building. His vision centers around a food system that builds health, wealth, connection, and capacity, since

culture is built around food. At present, the system is failing, he states.

However, his local economic analyses have promoted local food networks in 144 regions, in 41 states, two provinces in Canada, and four tribal nations over a 20-year span. Considering the supply chain, it constitutes a circle, beginning with farmers to aggregators, processors, wholesalers, distributors, institutions, restaurants, retailers, consumers to recyclers.

Eight states are involved in building these community food webs. They include Montana, Hawaii, Arizona, northeast Indiana, and Ohio. Tucson has established a food bank, as gardening brought about a greater connection. Hawaii managed to reclaim traditional cultures in the process. Northeast Indiana engaged farmers, low wealth residents, and immigrants. In Ohio, food leaders forged a network with businesses in low wealth areas of Athens. However, in Phoenix, Arizona, housing developments threaten farms and farmer networks. Et in Colorado, municipal officials are purchasing farmland at its developmental value to reserve it for agriculture. In Minnesota, Dakota County is constructing networks of greenways.

Farm financial data reveal that farmers are losing out, as net cash income for U.S. Farms 1910-2018 shows. Even though there is a rise in sales, farmers are not better off. If we figure in inflation, farmers make even less. If farmers are not making money, they are wondering why they are farming. Farmers usually made money when there was a crisis. But now, farmers are selling to developers. The commodity system has extracted at least four

trillion dollars from rural America, a huge loss for farming.

Cities build close to farmlands, threatening agriculture. Land prices soar higher than farmers can afford. Development is a good thing, so goes the saying. There, of course, are arguments on both sides of the issue.

It is desirable when city and county work together. In Brighton Colorado, for example, over 1,200 acres are set aside for food production, and they offer ag support services. They are constructing community food systems, not simply local food purchases. Question is whether scale is the solution or the problem.

Successful community food webs build a core group with strong interpersonal trust. They balance private with social success, production with consumption, inner vision with external realities, culture and technology.

The meeting was attended by about 19 people and was followed by an involved question and answer period.

Ken Meter is at the Crossroads Resource Center www.crcworks.org and can be reached at kmeter@crcworks.org

May 25, 2024

What About Metaphor?

Presenter Evelyn D. Klein

For centuries, linguists and poets have debated the question about the use and purpose of metaphor. The speaker began by quoting the American Heritage Dictionary definition of metaphor. A metaphor is “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another.” The word metaphor comes to us from Middle English through Old French from Latin and before that from Greek, meaning to transfer. *Roget’s Thesaurus* has a listing for metaphorical (metaphor is not listed) with its synonyms “allegorical, figurative.”

The presenter continued the discussion with references from *The Princeton Book of Poetic Terms*, edited by Alex Preminger, giving a more detailed definition of metaphor. This was followed

by Aristotle’s definition which is close to today’s dictionary definition.

She pointed out, furthermore, that grammarians over the century have “insisted upon the harmony or congruity of metaphorical elements, and upon a measure of visual clarity.” This has taken exception to the use of mixed metaphors because these can obscure and confuse the intended meaning. After all, the idea of using metaphor is to clarify and illuminate the thing being talked about.

The significance of metaphor has been discussed variously over the centuries. Aristotle praised the use of metaphor and stated that it is a sign of genius, because good metaphor cannot be learned from another but arises out of an “intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilar” (Poetics, Rhetoric). In more recent times, Derrida (1972)

asserts that metaphor does not only imply metaphor but it, in itself, constitutes philosophy.

The presenter followed this discussion with a reading of poems of various poets, elucidating metaphors from simple to extended. The readings began with a poem from Joe Amato "Cinderella Southern Pine," from his book *Buoyancies: A Ballast Master's Log*. This was followed by a poem, each by Emily Dickenson, Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, former poet laureate, Billy Collins, current Minnesota Poet Laureate Gwen Westerman, Philip Bryant, and Evelyn Klein.

Following is the untitled poem by Emily Dickinson and her extended metaphor on "Fame."

Fame is a fickle food
Upon a shifting plate
Whose table once a
Guest but not
The second time is set.

Whose crumbs the crows inspect
And with ironic caw
Flap past it to the
Farmers Corn –
Men eat of it and die.

Evelyn Klein has an M.S. in the teaching of English, is an author, and former educator, and editor of TMS.

An enthusiastic open reading followed the program with personal poetry and readings of additional poems by Carl Sandburg done by attendees.

Please note: Due to illness, Joe Amato was not able to do the program. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Study and Discussion Groups

Study groups meet monthly over Zoom or other designated meeting place at 7:00 p.m. Books and topics are chosen by participating, attending members. See Meetup.

History Group

Meets first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. No meetings in July and August. Facilitated by Emily Pollack.

Philosophy Group

Meets second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., ongoing. Facilitated by Curt Hillstrom.

Upcoming Programs and Meetings

MISF is meeting at its new venue for the foreseeable future. We now meet at the Ramsey County Public Library, Shoreview at 4570 Victoria Street North, Shoreview, MN 55126, 651-724-6006.

Membership meetings occur on the fourth Saturday of the month, except for May and November when they are usually held on the third Saturdays. No membership meetings are held in July, August, and December. Meetings begin at 10:30 a.m. and usually last until 12 noon. Everyone is welcome.

June 22, 2024

Annual Meeting

A short business meeting will precede the program to elect board members and

describe MISF activities.

Members have the opportunity and are encouraged to run for the MISF board, the perfect opportunity to have their voices heard and make their contributions.

June 22, 2024 (continued)

Improving the Odds for the Livability of Cities in the Future

Presenter: Larry Baker

Following many centuries of mostly agrarian lives, more than half of the people on our planet now live



in cities. Early industrial cities were a mess, choked with smog,

filthy water, large epidemics to the point that lifespans around 1900 were shorter for folks living in cities than the countryside.

This talk examines the progress we have made, and some ideas for future progress, illustrated in part by Larry Baker's own research. We will continue this vein with a structure discussion to dive deeper into the topic of "improving our odds" for the livability of cities in the future.

Most of Larry's career was in academia. His research applied his hybrid education in environmental engineering and ecology to the study of applied biochemistry, with a focus on human ecosystems – cities and farms. He generally focuses on water quality, seeking practical solutions from a biogeochemical perspective, often working in Pasteur's quadrant, combining practice and theory. Recent projects have focused on nutrient flows in urban stormwater, agricultural P balances, urban road salt management, and water policy. He often collaborates with scholars, ranging from social sciences to animal and crop science to civil engineering. Newly retired, he is an embryonic novelist, working on a historical fiction about the early Puebloans in the "Basketmaker era" and serves as a board member of the DFL Environmental Caucus.

August 24, 2024

MISF Annual Picnic

The annual picnic has been scheduled tentatively to be held at the small shelter at Cherokee Park in St. Paul at 11:00 a.m. Bring your own picnic and/or a dish to share whatever feels more convenient.

September 28

Power Behind Your Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know

Presenter: Evelyn D. Klein

Evelyn Klein will discuss how and why this book came about in the course of teaching English, language arts and world languages for many years. In order to be successful both in expository and creative writing, students needed a solid base of skills. By introducing students to the essentials of the English language in an easy-to-understand format, they met with considerable success. In this book that can serve both as text or reference, Part One introduces students to the story of English which helps dispel many language myths and misconceptions. Part Two sets forward an updated approach to studying grammar and sentence structure. The material in this book also offers the necessary preparation for second language and ESL study. Books will be available.

Evelyn Klein has lived most of her life in Minnesota. She has a B.S. in Secondary Education and an M.S. in the Teaching of English. She taught in the public schools for many years, at Century College, and The Loft Literary Center and presents programs on writing-related topics to interested groups and organizations. A prize-winning poet, she has published poetry and articles in numerous publications. She is author of four books, variously, of poetry, essays, and illustrations, three of which have found their way into the Minnesota Historical Society's permanent library collection. *Power Behind Your Writing: What Every Writer Needs to Know* is her latest book.

October 26, 2024

Cohousing – Living in an Intentional Community

Presenters: Becca Brackett and Lynn Englund

The program will address the topics of how cohousing counters loneliness. It means living next door to someone who cares about you. Cohousing is good for your health. Humans are social animals and can benefit from living in an intentional community.

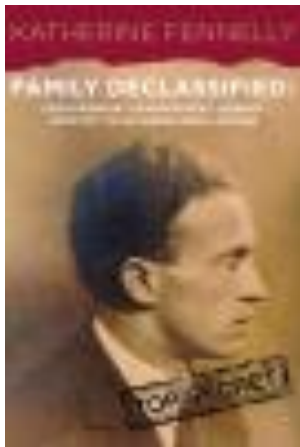
Both presenters are part of the Twin Cities Cohousing Network.

November 16, 2024

***Family Declassified: Uncovering My Grandfather's Journey from Spy to Children's Book Author* by Katherine Fennelly**

Presenter: Katherine Fennelly

Why do people keep deep secrets about their lives and ancestry? In her book, *Family Declassified* (Sunbury Press, 2023) Katherine Fennelly applied her expertise as a social science researcher to answer this question regarding her grandfather, a Jewish Hungarian immigrant who arrived in the US one hundred years ago and who became a high-ranking spy for the Allies in WWII. It took several years of reviewing previously unexamined government records and conducting personal interviews and



genealogical searches to piece together the life of a man who hid his Jewish identity, the nature of his work as a spy, and the murder of his sister and nephew by Hungarian Nazis. The result is a manuscript that examines the nature of

family myths and presents the gripping story of a man whose life was shaped by some of the most extraordinary events of the 20th century. Please go to KatherineFennelly.com for order information, and to see the book group discussion questions.

Katherine Fennelly is an emeritus professor of public policy at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs of the University of Minnesota with a Ph.D. from Columbia University, where she was on the faculty in the School of Public Health early in her career. She is an immigration policy expert whose work has taken her to many of the countries where her late grandfather lived out his adventures. She has studied and worked in Spain and Ecuador and did consulting work and academic residencies across Latin America and Europe. Katherine is a voracious reader and a life-long student of languages. She discovered her family's Jewish roots as an adult, something her Hungarian-American mother preferred not to discuss. When not tracking down classified documents and delving into family history, she volunteers for refugee service organizations, serves as a Spanish-English interpreter, and enjoys biking in Prospect Park and spending time with her daughters and granddaughters who live nearby in Brooklyn.

What Is an Independent Scholar?

by Evelyn D. Klein

You may say that it is a scholar not currently associated with an academic institution. It is a student or someone continuing his or her education on their own, showing interest in or preoccupation with life's challenges, studying them, working with them, perhaps even completing scholarly works on his or her own, to name only a few examples.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, son of a minister, essayist, poet, and critic, may provide

some inspiring answers to the question. Though he was a contemporary of the 19th century, we can easily apply his thoughts to the 21st century.

In an essay entitled "The American Scholar," he refers to the emergence of the individual, and as was customary in his time, he speaks to men. But if we carry the meaning of the word "individual" forward into our time, we need to include women to complete the meaning.

Following, then, are some elucidating excerpts from “The American Scholar.”

Stemming from the mistaken notion that there is “One Man,” he stipulates that “... you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all.”

Furthermore, “In this distribution of functions, the scholar is the delegated intellect.” He continues by saying: “Is not, indeed, every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student’s behoof?”

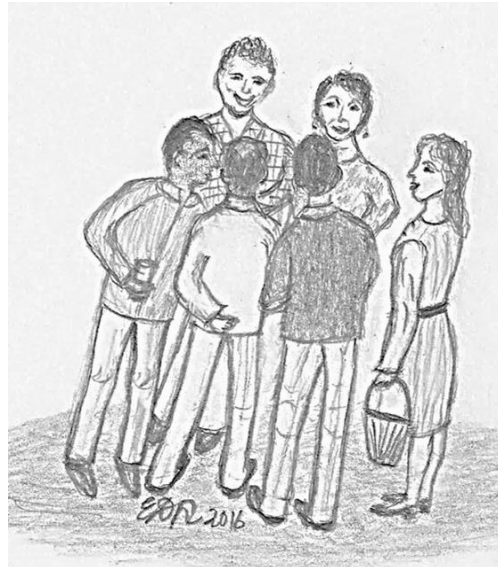
In the school of life, Emerson considers three important influences on the mind. The first is nature which does not only include creation, but every-day life and human interaction.

He goes on to state that “The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is

the mind of the Past, -- in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth...”

In the third influence, he seeks to dispel the notion that scholars are recluses. He concludes that “Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential” in order to discover the truth.

Along with his third influence, he states “The world,-- this shadow of the soul, or *other me*, lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself.”



~Evelyn D. Klein
Editor
“The Minnesota Scholar”

Join the conversation. Join MISF.

Notes

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