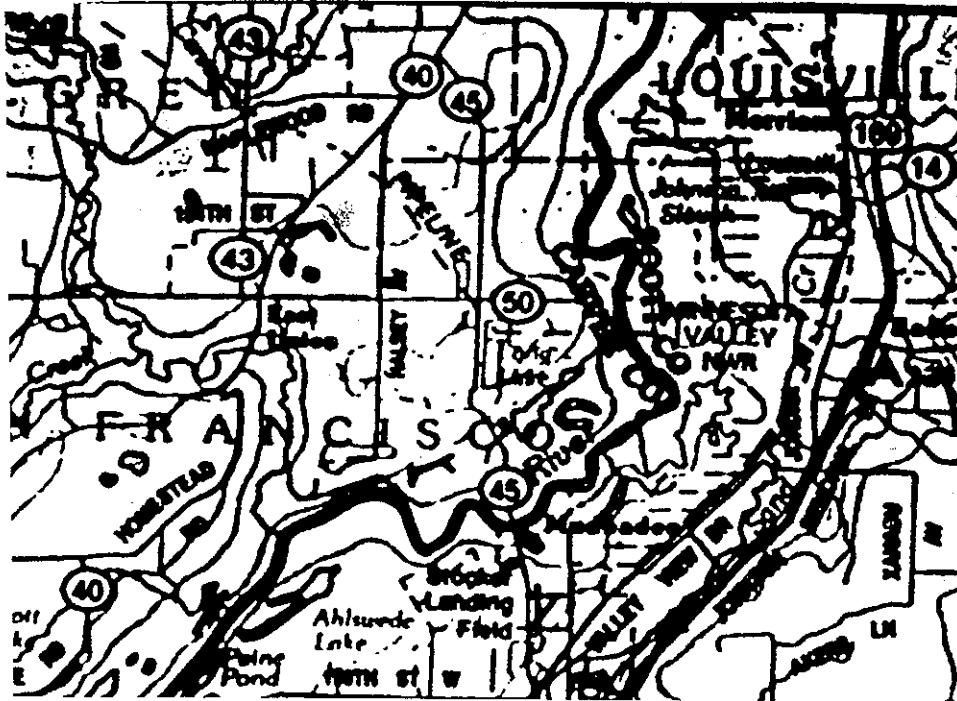


PHILOSOPHERS ON HOLIDAY

Philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday--LW

Volume III, no. II/III
Fall/Winter 1999-2000



Map showing
Highway 40 and its
tributaries, Highway
45 and Halsey
Avenue.

Warning: Merging World-versions Ahead

Since the fact that there are many different world-versions is hardly debatable, and the question how many if any worlds-in-themselves there are is virtually empty, in what non-trivial sense are there...many worlds? Just this, I think: that many different world-versions are of independent interest and importance, without any requirement or presumption of reducibility to a single base.

Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*

Lisa writes: The next time you set off on a serious trek across uncharted territory, I am not the gal you want to bring along to hold the compass. Regular readers of this 'zine are of course already intimately familiar with this fact; in an earlier issue, we brought you the harrowing tale of Peg's and my misadventures on the sand dunes of the Oregon coast. For related reasons, I'm also probably not the person you want reading the handwritten directions on the napkin, while you pilot the vehicle down the eight-lane L.A. freeway during rush hour. Let's face it; I'm poor with directions. (And as Tevya says in "Fiddler on the Roof," "It's no sin to be poor--but it's no great honor either.")

But I've come to realize that I'm poor for at least one very good reason--namely, the incommensurability of world-versions. The world-version I presume when I examine and employ a map is fundamentally incompatible with the one utilized by roadmap makers in at least one crucial respect:

See Roads, p.10

From the Editors

It's been a looong time coming, but this special double issue of *Philosophers on Holiday* was well worth the wait. This issue comes chock-a-block with philosophical travel news.

We've been on an Elizabeth Cady Stanton kick since watching *Not for Ourselves Alone*. So too has Jay Benjamin (see page 3). Stanton's great-great granddaughter visited our campus recently and gave us some of the inside scoop.

While we're not trying to imitate *America's Most Wanted*, there is an important warning on page 5. Any resemblance to known persons is purely coincidental.

We have two exciting developments here at *PonH* Central. First off, we broke down and got our own checking account. Yes, that's right; now you can address those checks (ten dollars for four big, big issues--or sometimes two big, big issues and a third, doubly big, big issue) to Peg O'Connor, Lisa Heldke or *Philosophers on Holiday*!

But even more exciting for you, our faithful readers, is the long-awaited arrival of our web page. Still in its fledgling stages, the page may be found at <http://www.gustavus.edu/~poconnor>. Web goddess and senior philosophy major Lauren Fler is in the process of creating our Web Presence, as we say. But never fear, hard copy fans; *Philosophers on Holiday* will always remain a paper 'zine.

TRAVEL NOTES

In the Borscht Belt of upstate New York, there's a restaurant called **MAZEL WOK**, featuring (naturally) glatt Kosher Chinese cuisine--and free delivery.



Philosophers on Holiday

A quarterly 'zine

Editors Peg O'Connor and Lisa Heldke
Staff Columnist Abby Wilkerson
Foreign Bureau T. Michael McNulty, Mecke Nagel
Movie Reviewer, Immobile Reporter Barb Heldke
Production Assistants Carol and Richard Heldke
Web Goddess: Lauren Fler
Archivist: Ann O'Connor

Subscriptions Send your check for \$10 for a one-year subscription. Make checks payable to *Philosophers on Holiday*!

Submissions We always welcome your essays, editorials, artwork, advertisements, photos, puzzles, letters, rants.

Direct all correspondence to:

Philosophers on Holiday
1002 Riverview Hills South
St. Peter, MN 56082
poconnor@gac.edu heldke@gac.edu

About the motto

We borrow our motto from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. Wittgenstein suggests that philosophical problems emerge when we forget how words function in ordinary circumstances. When language "goes on holiday," we *create* our own thorny, knotty problems--and then we proceed to chew on them for a thousand years or so.

Our 'zine was born out of our recognition that when philosophers go on holiday, we also tend to thrum up thorny little problems that keep us worrying all the way across Montana. Philosophers, unleashed in the ordinary world, are *dangerous*--or, at the very least, highly amusing. Of course on a good day, we can also be rather insightful. (Paying way too much attention to the ordinary *can* produce real wisdom every once in awhile.) *Philosophers On Holiday* attempts to bring all things philosophical and holiday-related together in one place; the danger, the amusement, the bumbling, and, yes, the occasional pearl of wisdom

P.R. FOR THE FOUNDING MOTHERS

Jay Benjamin of Red Hook, New York writes: "Unbelievable! How could he never have heard of her?"

This was my reaction when Ken Burns revealed, "I'm a film maker, but I'm also pretty well-versed in American history, and I had never heard of Elizabeth Cady Stanton." He said this in the background video shown after part one of his recent PBS documentary *Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*. Surely a graduate of Hampshire College in Amherst, and an acclaimed maker of films about the Civil War, Lewis and Clark, the Shakers, Thomas Jefferson, Frank Lloyd Wright, and other Americana, must have heard of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Even I, retired male software engineer, knew as a teenager that Stanton was a nineteenth century activist for women's rights, particularly the right to vote. Why, she was on a United States postage stamp, along with Lucretia Mott and Susan B. Anthony, wasn't she? I dug out the stamp album from my youth, and found the remembered 1948 "Progress of Women" stamp with images of three women: Stanton, Mott, and Carrie C. Catt. Carrie C. Catt? Who the heck is that? And where was Susan B. Anthony? Turns out Anthony had her own stamp in 1936, a three-cent "Suffrage for Women" issue. What I knew and when I knew it were muddier.

Maybe growing up in the Finger Lakes region of New York State and taking a state social studies class in junior high gave me a leg up on Ken Burns. Seneca Falls, site of the first women's rights convention in this country in 1848, is between the northern ends of the two longest Finger Lakes, Seneca and Cayuga, and not far from my southern tier stomping grounds. Rochester, home of Susan B. Anthony, is also nearby.

But none of our family outings included Seneca Falls or Rochester. While I was growing up, there was no Women's Rights National Historic Park and no National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls. The Susan B. Anthony house in Rochester was not open to the public. Any mention of the nineteenth century women's rights movement in history class in the late 1950s was but "scant mention."

Maybe high school American history in the early sixties taught me about Stanton and Anthony and their roles in eventual passage of the nineteenth amendment (in 1920, after their deaths). But it didn't teach me how broad the women's rights movement was after the Seneca Falls convention; that it fought not only for women's right to vote, but also for their rights to property and wages; to attend colleges; to enter professions; to become ministers; to be equal partners in marriage; to be granted guardianship of children after divorce; and, more generally, to be granted "the equal station to which they are entitled." These last words are from the Declaration of Sentiments, patterned after the Declaration of Independence, written largely by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and adopted at the 1848 convention. Even after graduating from college in 1967, I had never seen the Declaration of Sentiments. Nor had I learned about the decades-long symbiotic relationship between Stanton, the philosopher and strategist, and Anthony, the crusader and tactician; about their intertwining efforts for abolition and temperance; and about their angry reaction when the fifteenth amendment gave the vote to black men, but not also to women.

Not for Ourselves Alone revealed this and more, and left me wanting to know even more. Whether Ken Burns really never heard of Elizabeth Cady Stanton before Paul Barnes (editor of his Civil War series) told him about her no longer matters. Realizing

he knew next to nothing about, in his words, "the most important woman in American history," Ken Burns did something about it. *Not for Ourselves Alone* deepens our understanding of the struggle to fulfill the promise of American ideals, and entices us to dig deeper.

We need to be enticed. According to a poll commissioned by GM, corporate underwriter for Ken Burns' film projects, ninety-three percent of Americans could not identify Elizabeth Cady Stanton as a women's rights activist, and ninety-three percent could not identify the decade the women's rights movement began. Publicity provided via the Burns film will help remedy this widespread ignorance, and easy access to related information via the World Wide Web should help, too.

But arousing curiosity and making it easy to satisfy that curiosity are not enough, I fear. Something else must be overcome--namely, the attitude that influenced the editor of the *TIME* magazine television section (November 8, 1999 article) to devote two full pages and part of a third to buxom female action stars, with color photos emphasizing the "buxom" aspect--but only two-thirds of a page to *Not for Ourselves Alone*, and another PBS documentary on New York City by Ken Burns' brother. This same attitude was at work on the CNN Larry King Live segment (June 1, 1999) when two of the panelists discussing Hillary Clinton's imminent run for Senator from New York offered negative comments on her anatomy, which won them a P.U.-litzer prize from Norman Solomon (for one of the stinkiest media performances of 1999). The seven Rochester women who fought for their right to go shirtless, and the Australian women's Olympic soccer team members who shed their clothes for a calendar intended to bring more attention to women's soccer in that country were manipulated by this attitude. Maybe the

"Founding Mothers" will be as well known as the "Founding Fathers" once attitudes have changed enough that we no longer encounter such examples.

Want to know more about Stanton and Anthony? Check out our website, where Jay has compiled a handy list of links to relevant web addresses. That's
<http://www.gac.edu/~poconnor>.



Hometown Tourist

Welcome to a new feature of Philosophers on Holiday. We at Phil on Hol believe it's important to know where you live. Some of the most interesting history and unique sites are found close to home. We hope this column will encourage you to check out that tourist site right down the road from you--and write to us about it.

This first installment of Hometown Tourist comes from Ann O'Connor, the retired head law librarian of the Fitchburg (Massachusetts) Law Librarian, and Peg's mom. This article originally appeared in the Newsletter of the Worcester County Bar Association (volume 8, number 3).

The First Female Attorney in Worcester County

In 1880, only four women were engaged in the practice of law in Massachusetts out of a total of 1,984 lawyers. Apparently none of these women was admitted to practice before the Supreme Judicial Court. In *Robinson's Case*, 131 Mass. (Lathrop) 376 (1881) our Supreme Judicial Court determined that neither common law, nor existing statutes permitted the admission of women to the Bar. In concluding its decision, the court stated: that our duty is limited to declaring the law as it is, and that whether any change in that law would be wise or expedient is a

question for the legislative and not for the judicial department of the government.

The legislature reacted swiftly and enacted Chapter 139 of the Statutes of 1882, which made women eligible for admission to the Bar. By 1920, however, there were still only 47 women practicing law in the Commonwealth out of some 4,850 members of the bar.

Addie F. Gillette was born in Fitchburg on February 27, 1885. Addie's parents were friends of Judge Charles Sidney Hayden and his wife, Mary. After her parents' deaths, Addie came to live with Judge and Mrs. Hayden, who treated Addie as a member of their family.

At some point, however, Mrs. Hayden left the family home. Judge Hayden subsequently married Addie on August 27, 1898, when he was fifty years old and she twenty-three. Addie read and studied law in her husband's office and was admitted to the Bar in 1904. The women of Fitchburg were horrified a "delicate woman" would be associated with hardened criminals in the practice of law. The Fitchburg's Women's Club opposed her admission to the Bar.

Despite Judge Hayden's untimely death at the age of fifty-five on April 30, 1903, Addie continued her husband's practice. She also opened a Boston office and was admitted to practice in the U.S. District Court on December 13, 1905. At the time, Addie was the only women practicing law in Worcester County. She maintained her husband's practice in Fitchburg under the name A. Frances Hayden, Attorney and Counselor at Law, until 1907; thereafter she moved her practice exclusively to her Boston office.



*Keep Philorophers on Holiday Ad-Free!!
Send in your subscription today!!*

Wanted: Dead or Alive



Wanted: the notorious Hollywood Gang, pictured here in a rare photograph. The charges: unauthorized use of a duster coat, reckless bandana wearing, using an overhand grip on a bullwhip, and consorting with Satin. Oh, and impersonating a New Mexican cowboy too. If you know the whereabouts of any of the Hollywoods--Lyle Hollywood, Pug "Babyface" Hollywood, Christine Hollywood, or Abner Hollywood--contact local authorities immediately. Do not try to apprehend these rascallions on your own; they are armed with rapier sharp wit, and they *will* use it.



Pantheon Gastronomique

WEIRD CANDY REPORT

Lisa reports:

I head up the *Philosophers on Holiday* Weird Candy and Snack Foods Research Bureau (POHWCASFRB), a division of *PonH* dedicated to unearthing those odd, unusual (and *sometimes* tasty) sweets made by smallish companies that don't exactly distribute nationally. You know the kinds of things I mean; you have them in your own grocery store or drug store, and you never think twice about them until someone from out of town walks in and says "You have a candy bar named Idaho Spud? Filled with white goey stuff to simulate baked potato?" My job is to alert the general public to the existence of Idaho Spud and its brethren.

Last summer's research trip to Albuquerque netted me two new candy bars. I review them briefly for you here.

Chick-o-stick: When you were a kid, did you ever use your teeth to peel all the chocolate off the outside of a Butterfinger bar, so that you were left with a big, long, orange log of slightly peanut-buttery, brittle, crunchy, stuff that turns to goo in your teeth? Okay, you didn't. Well, if you had, you would have invented the Chick-o-stick. Or you would have if, afterwards, you'd thought to roll the whole thing in toasted coconut. Brought to you by Atkinson Candy Company of Lufkin, Texas.

Annabelle's Big Hunk (no, I am not inventing these names): A's BH bills itself as "low fat," and "terrific chewy nougat with peanuts." I am forced to take their word for it, because alas, I forgot to eat this bar when I bought it and now, some seven months later, I fear it has reached its freshness limits. The BH comes from Annabelle's Candy in Hayward, California.

You Don't Know What You've
Got, Unless You Ain't Got It:
The Glad Corn¹ Experience From Afar

*Patrick McGann, of Takoma Park,
Maryland, writes:*

Some people are fans of Michael Jordan. I think their adoration is misplaced. Sure, I like Mike, but I like Glad Corn more. My heart swells at the thought of it, my hands tremble, I get all shaky inside. Just the words, Glad Corn, put me in a swoon. I become Jello, turn to mush inside. I'm a thirteen year-old girl screaming at a Beatles' concert. I would do anything to prove my undying love for Glad Corn.

How do I describe the experience of eating Glad Corn? Angels singing in your mouth? Soul-satisfying crunchiness? The smells and sounds of autumn on your tongue? Better than Corn Nuts, better than popcorn, it is both and neither. Partially popped, large sepia-colored kernels slightly open, hinting at their inner offerings. Everyone I've offered a taste has been seduced. Do you have any more? Where's that Glad Corn? Where can I get this? they ask. Minnesota, I answer.

Imagine my excitement when I heard that Cajun Glad Corn is in development!² It set my skin a tingling. I mean, Glad Corn with endorphins! Oh, what ecstasy! My mind zooms with fantasies of mingling north and south, a perfect balance and blend of Minnesota sturdiness with Louisiana spice. My tummy anticipates with heightened pleasure.

But imagine my sorrow, my despair, at being so far removed from the source of Glad Corn. It's as though there's an ocean between Minnesota and Maryland and I have no ship. I rely on the generosity of Lisa and Peg (the POH editors, writers,

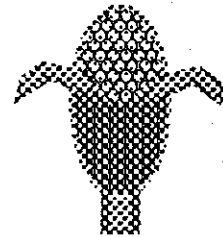
creators) who mail me three or four bags at Christmas time or my birthday-bags that disappear in what seems an instant, a snap of the fingers. Poof! They're gone. Yes, there's the desire to hoard, to slowly dole myself out a little at a time to make those little nuggets of pleasure last, but impulse-control disappears in the face of immediate Glad Corn gratification. Plus, how can I deny those around me the rapture of Glad Corn? Oh, for a hundred birthdays!

Only once have I had the opportunity to travel to the Land of Lakes (or is that Montana?). My partner, Abby, and I presented at the Feminism(s) and Rhetoric(s) Conference held in Minneapolis this past October and stayed for a few days afterward as a mini vacation. We explored Uptown and on our walk back noticed a co-op not far from the Bed and Breakfast we were staying at. Since Abby works part-time at a co-op we thought we would compare the two. When we came to the bulk aisle, my eyes grew large. I thought I would faint. There, before me, was a tower of Glad Corn reaching nearly to the ceiling. Abby had to hold me up. Once I had gained my composure, I rushed to tear off a plastic bag, placed it under the opening and lifted. Glad Corn came rushing out like water flooding the desert. Oh reader, you know what I ate on the plane back to Maryland!

Lisa has told me that she and Peg have actually let bags of Glad Corn go stale, that--this is difficult for me to write--they have thrown away bags of Glad Corn! I just want to state that I would never let that happen! Really! I never would! Never ever! And that's why I think I'm the perfect person to be President of the Glad Corn Fan Club. Only a \$10 fee to join! Make out your check or money order to Patrick McGann and send it to: President, Glad Corn Fan Club, 7904 Long Branch Pkwy #3, Takoma Park, MD 20912. The purpose of the club is to collect enough money to fly the President

to Minnesota to purchase a supply of Glad Corn for himself and maybe the members, if any is left over. That means every subscriber to *Philosophers On Holiday* needs to join. You won't regret it! Think how *glad* I'll be! I mean, think how glad *we'll* be!

1. Ed note: For the uninitiated, Glad Corn is a snack food made in the tiny southwestern Minnesota town of Mountain Lake. Stan and Gladys, the Glad Corn (get it?) makers, "discovered" it in their kitchen one night, as they tried to make popcorn using field corn. It didn't work, but they did produce something that Stan and Gladys call "a-maize-ingly good."
2. Ed. note: This may be only an idle rumor. Lisa had a student in one of her classes this fall whose ex-boyfriend now runs the Glad Corn factory for Stan and Gladys, and she had *heard* that this is a possibility. On the other hand, it may be the spite of an ex boyfriend, so let's not be getting our hopes up too high, Pat.

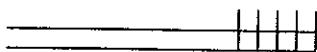


Dining Foe Paws

Barb (the Brief) sends this posting from her Sunday morning breakfast haunt:

So Café Pongo (named for a dog and the scene of more than one dog at a time--usually very well behaved, but dogs nonetheless) reached a new low today, when the diner next to us was sneaking bits of his/her BLT to the two rats hiding out in his/her jeans jacket. I try to be broadminded, but this is ridiculous....

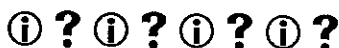
Contest Results!!



Your editors regret to inform you that they mailed out not a single POH dental hygiene travel kit following the summer, 1999 issue of PonH. It's a shame to let such terrific contests go unwon, so here's another chance at them. Refer to your Summer, 1999 issue for complete details--page numbers are noted below.



What television sitcom character from the 1970s said "I've never had New Mexican food," after the leading (woman) character on the show mentioned the *new* Mexican restaurant in town? Hint: one of these people can take a nothing day and suddenly make it all seem worthwhile. (p.4)



Tell us about an odd, inexplicable or unusual-sounding establishment (a business, a museum, a roadside marker) that *you* 've seen when you were too busy rushing from here to there to stop and investigate. Then construct your own hypothesis about what that establishment is or does. (p.5)



What sorts of amenities do you imagine you might find at a place named Kafka's Resort? Write and tell us about it. (p.12)

**Have a favorite
Grave?**

**Write about it for the
Cemetery, Gravestone
and Memorial Marker
special Issue of *PonH***

slated for Spring or
Summer, 2000



barb's briefs

Barb the Brief sends her regrets for this issue. She's recovering from the aftereffects of two visits to actual movie theaters, but advises that *American Beauty* is no beauty at all, and that she wants no part of John Malkovich's brain.



kant really *did* shoot pool!

After reading the Summer, 99 issue of PonH, which featured several stories on Immanuel Kant (including one alleging that Kant had a billiards habit), Mecke Nagel of SUNY Cortland called in the following absolutely astonishing story:

I knew, ever since I got interested in Kant and got myself a little booklet by Uwe Schultz, that he was an avowed hustler, and his friend was able to pay his French teacher with the money. Ever since I knew this tidbit, I knew that Kant was my type of philosopher--no party boy, but into pool!

Here is the Passage In Question from Schultz's, "Kant." (Series Rowohlts Monographien, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965):
Studentischen Auslassungen und fröhlichen Unternehmungen war Kant wenig zugetan, konnte es aus finanziellen Rücksichten auch wenig sein, so daß seine einzige Belustigung das Billardspiel war, das er mit seinen Freunden Wlomen und Heilsberg eifrig und mit Geschick trieb, so geschickt, daß Heilsberg sogar mit dem gewonnenen Geld einen französischen Sprachlehrer bezahlen konnte. (p.12)

(Copyright law prohibits us reprinting the artwork that accompanies this text: a charming, but inexplicable, drawing of a stoop-shouldered Kant wearing a long ponytail and mixing a pot of mustard.)

Thanks for the heads up, Mecke!

The Hills Are Alive with the Sound of...

...Music, you say? Well, perhaps. But perhaps with the sound of false names. Who among us has not seen *The Sound of Music* at least once, if not half a dozen times? Julie Andrews plays Maria, the young novice who is sent to the Von Trapp family to care for the brood of Georg Von Trapp (played by Christopher Plummer). There are many children, one of whom is sixteen going on seventeen (Lisl) while another has a hard time going to bed (little Gretl). There is young Kurt, trying to be a good young man, and then a bunch of other nondescript siblings who didn't get their own songs. We know the story of their daring escape from Austria, and if you're from New England, you know they eventually settled in Vermont.

The Von Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe was a definite must on our travel itinerary a few years ago, when Lisa and I (Peg) took an extended jaunt around New England, while visiting my parents in Massachusetts. We hooked up there with Lisa's sister Barb (the Brief), and her partner Jay Benjamin. Stowe is beautiful, and the lodge is home to some of the most gorgeous cross-country skiing you will find anywhere. I was thrilled to be at the lodge. Unrealistically and unfairly, some part of me did expect Julie Andrews to be running around on the hillsides, followed by children in cute outfits made from the drapery. I know it was wrong to expect this.

What I didn't expect to learn was that all of the names of the children in the movie were made up. There is no Lisl; the oldest daughter was herself named Maria, and she was only about 10 minutes younger than Maria (or so it seemed to me on the basis of photographs in the gift shop). There is no Gretl. No Kurt.

For some reason, this was deeply unsettling for me. It left me uneasy, and sad in some sort of way. I have not watched the movie since, and I am not sure that I can.

Solongfarewellourfeetarestainedgoodbye

Ship to Shore

This past summer, my parents, Ann and Jack O'Connor, along with my brother, John and his partner, David Reichert, went to England and cruised back to the States on the Queen Elizabeth II. They flew into London, where they stayed for several days. During that time, they went to the London Silver Vaults (over forty vaults--all for sale), the Cabinet War Rooms (where they learned all about Churchill's daily routine and intelligence gathering), and the hat shop where Diana purchased many of her hats.

In what can only be described as a dream come true (ever since my family saw Murder on the Orient Express in the 1970s), they took the Orient Express to Southampton, where they boarded the ship.

My mother is quite the experienced traveler, and has been known to have a few adventures while on holiday. So, I asked her to keep a journal, in the hopes that there might be tales for us to tell in this esteemed publication. We were not disappointed. Below are some excerpts from Ann's diary.

Days 8 and 9--Woman Overboard

We went to the Grand Lounge to watch the dancers. It was ladies' night. Did you ever see the movie with Walter Matthau and Jack Lemon in which they were professional dancers on a ship? Well, the "walkers" or "escorts" were all out there doing their tangos and rumbas. The best thing in the world is watching people.

We met for cocktails before dinner and John was sitting at the bar talking to a lady that was older than me. Maybe much older. Her name was Ruth, and two months ago her husband died after their having been

married 58 years. So her daughter (whom the mother said was an "old fart") sent her on cruises. On one trip, she was cruising down the Danube River, and decided to get a breath of fresh air. She asked a crew member what door went out to the deck. He showed her. She went. She dropped right into the river. They couldn't find her for half an hour. They had to stop the ship and send out a search boat. Being a feisty little lady, she kicked off her shoes and lost the cashmere sweater, but she was damned if she would let go of her Louis Vuitton bag. She just floated until they fetched her.

The daughter thought she should meet some younger men—that's why all the cruises. But, she says she has a girlfriend now. In fact, she has two and isn't interested in young men.

Day 10—The propositioning of your father

Jack took a little walk to get some fresh air on deck and was looking out to sea when an "old lady" asked him if he was alone. He immediately said that he was not and that his wife was right inside the door. I don't know if the lady thought he was an "escort" or "walker," but he was thoroughly shocked and his eyes were as big as tea cups. I was unable to get a picture of this incident.

Roads, cont.

I assume the tributary model of roads.

And just what is the tributary model of roads? You ask. This model--a fundamental component of my world-version, actually--might best be illustrated by recounting an incident--*the* incident, as it turns out, in which I came to recognize the incommensurability of my theoretical presuppositions with those of most mapmakers.

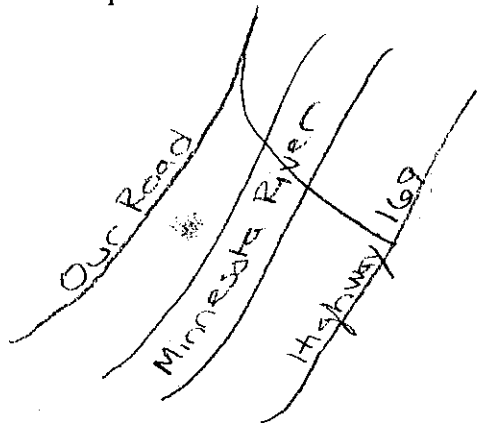
It was an overcast but mild winter day when Peg and I decided to use an unfamiliar route to drive to Minneapolis/St. Paul for a

day of recreation. Now, the Twin Cities are close enough to St. Peter that we head up to them nearly once a week, on some excuse or other. But we always take the same basic route--169, a wide, four-lane road that follows the Minnesota River valley north. (That's *downstream*, btw--the Minnesota flows *north* into the Mississippi, just like all those miserable rivers in Russia that flow north into that sea that freezes solid in the winter (a state of affairs that caused Russia to spend a lot of time trying to rustle up a warm-water port, if I remember my tenth-grade Russian history properly.) But never mind; this article actually has nothing whatsoever to do with rivers, north-flowing or otherwise.) There's no other reasonable (read: speedy, efficient) route to Minneapolis or St. Paul, and since we're usually rushing up for a meeting or a play or something, speedy and efficient are usually our choice.

But on this particular day, we were in the mood to meander, so we pulled out the *Minnesota Atlas and Gazeteer*, a half-inch-thick book of maps showing every road in the state. (And I do mean every road, up to and including some people's driveways.) Forty-five minutes later, I'd ascertained which map displayed St. Peter. Another 45 and I'd found an alternate route north--a route that followed the river on the *other* side, a route, come to think of it, that I'd even taken once, a few years back. With Peg in the driver's seat and me clutching the map we'd be using for the next five miles (before we had to turn the page--these maps are nearly life-size), we set off.

Upon leaving our driveway, we were almost instantly lost trying to get across the river to find the other road. The exit for the road we sought was one I'd passed roughly a million times before, in the umpteen years I've lived in St. Peter. Call it the purloined road, because there it was, hiding from us in plain sight.

But that was just inattention on my part—nothing very theoretically interesting about that. The incommensurable part came later, at the point at which we needed to find the road that would allow us to cross *back* over the river, to complete our journey. I just couldn't see a way to get there. I saw a place on the map that looked like this:



Well, you can probably see where this is going, can't you? I looked at that place on the map and announced, "well, there's a road that goes across the river, and that road connects with our road, but we can't get on it at that point." In *my* universe, you cannot go from a road heading north onto a road that heads sorta south for a while before it decides to head east, because as anyone can see from just looking at the map, that second road is a tributary of the first one. And even if you could maneuver that hairpin of a turn that takes you from our road to the other road, what good would it do you? *You'd have to travel upstream!*

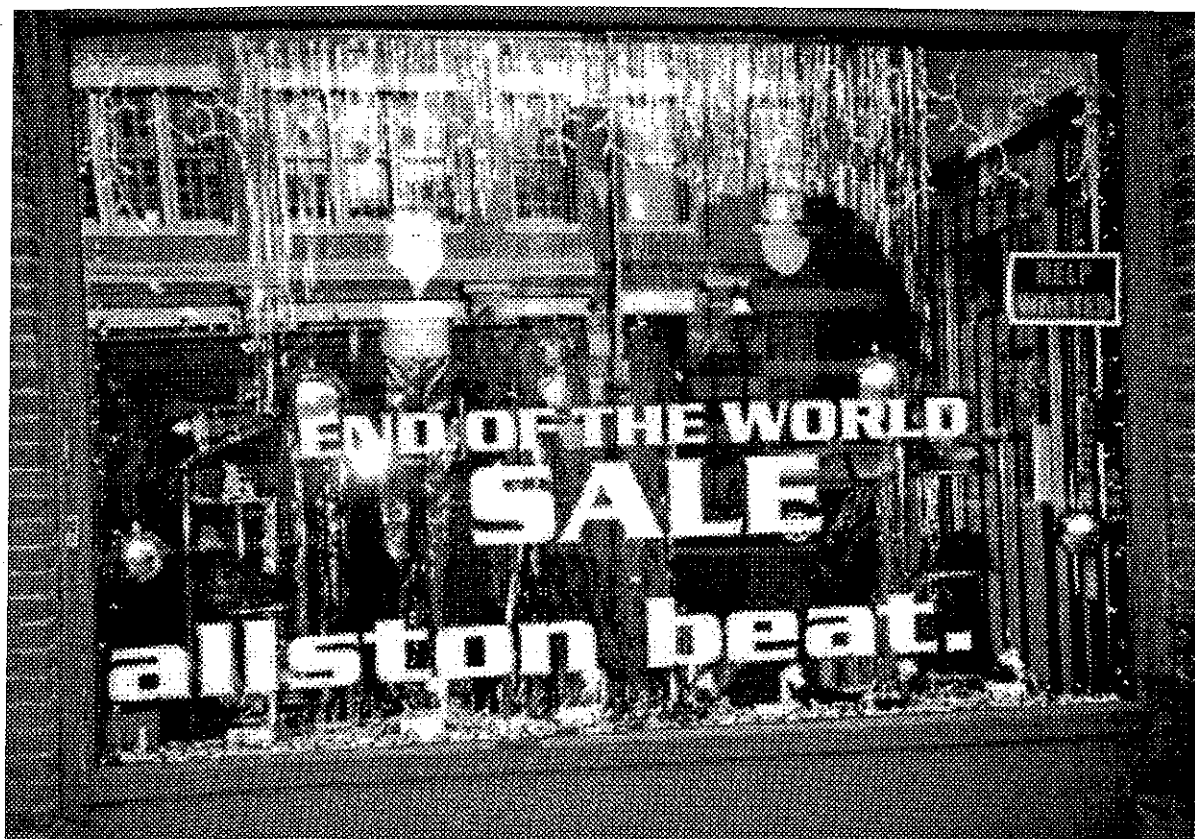


Photo by Mike McNulty

Oh sure; you'll hire me today, and tomorrow I'll be unemployed.

Sketches for an Album: El Salvador 1999

T. Michael McNulty, SJ, of Marquette University writes: The following are excerpts from letters sent to Lisa in the course of the fall semester of 1999, when I was teaching a course on "Wittgenstein and the Social Reality of Latin America" at the Jesuit Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas" (UCA) in San Salvador.

The flight down to El Salvador was uneventful until it came to immigration. The interior minister, an ultra-rightist maintained in that position because of pressure by the right wing of ARENA [the ruling party] on President Flores, has changed the norms so that one can get only 30 days on entering the country. I must admit that given the way the INS treats visitors to the US, I'm in a poor position to be indignant.

It is a continual effort not to come across as the demanding gringo and to accept the way things are done here, especially when the way things are done are neither efficient nor respectful of the people who have to put up with the nonsense. Interpersonal relations are often structured by the fact that the powerful oppress the powerless with impunity, and that distorts relationships that should be straightforward. *(Later)*

Last weekend I took a trip to Guatemala.... Sunday morning was unlike any other experience I've ever had--what one of my Jesuit friends called his "schizophrenic" pastoral work. In the early morning we went to a small church in a poor barrio in the parish of San José Pinula. It had been drizzling all night and continued to mist, making everything soggy and dim. The celebration [of mass] was subdued, partly due to the weather and the fact that the crowd was down; but partly also, I think, because of the chronic depression of the people. They live in ramshackle shacks, on rutted, muddy unpaved roads, and their

prospects are as dismal as their surroundings. But there were also signs of joy and liveliness among the people, and given the surroundings that is all the more surprising.

After mass we drove a half a mile, to a posh country club, where elegant people play golf and tennis and eat fancy food. The place abounds in manicured lawns, trimmed shrubs, flowers, and elegant salons and dining rooms. Here my friend celebrates mass in the club chapel (where in the U.S. would you find a chapel at a country club?), among a congregation of upper-class business and professional people, the children of the old oligarchs. The cognitive dissonance with the morning's experience was overwhelming: these country-club folks were worried that the rain was going to deprive them of golf, and that the revenue of the dining room would be down. But when it came to the basics of their own lives, they were absolutely in control. They even have a large curtain of netting by the tennis courts, so they don't have to look over the poor barrio right next door. It truly does cry out to heaven.

(Later)

I had an interesting conversation with a Salvadoran priest acquaintance in Chalatenango, the northernmost province of El Salvador--the scene of heavy fighting during the war. He said that the hardest thing for him was to watch the youth grow up without hope. There are simply no prospects here: no work, and no possibility of an education. Young people see themselves as having no choice but to try to make it to the U.S., with all the perils of the journey and living illegally when they arrive. It is still better than what they face at home. A recent graduate of a Jesuit university who is working as a volunteer in the priest's parish mentioned the same thing about the lack of employment, and complained about the incomprehension of

her friends back in the US for the situation. I am reminded of the Doonsbury cartoon in which Lacy Davenport informs some of her wealthy friends that there were homeless people on the streets of Washington, DC. One of the matrons asked, "Well why don't they just go to their houses in the Hamptons?" Salvadorans are about the most hard-working people in the world, but there is simply no work to be had. The economy is skewed to favor the small minority of wealthy business and professional people, and the rest are simply left behind. The government has interest only in the macro-economic numbers, not in creating an economy that would create jobs and actually serve the needs of the majority.

Of course that is all tied in with a global economic order that continues to widen the gap between rich and poor. And North Americans, willy-nilly, benefit from the misery of others: because they have the economic power, the world economy is structured to respond to their wants and desires. North Americans have absolutely no idea how easy they have it. Not that there isn't stress and conflict and difficulty, but for the vast majority in the First World, the stress has little to do with whether or not they are going to eat tomorrow. I think that one of the things that I find paradoxically attractive about being here is that life is so hard, even for someone as insulated and well-off as I am.

My friend also talked about the goodness of so many of the people he has to deal with, and how much satisfaction that gives him, even in the face of the helplessness he often feels to alleviate their plight. He talked of people walking four hours, leaving home perhaps at 3 am, to come to the parish for a meeting or a workshop. This includes women with small babies, who carry them all the way along mountain paths.

(Later)

Nov. 15-16 was a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the murders of six Jesuit priests and two women co-workers at the UCA by the Salvadoran military in 1989. I have never seen so many people at the vigil--I would estimate the crowd at 10,000 or more; the campus is mobbed, far more than the parking lot could possibly hold.

The Sunday before the vigil there was mass sponsored by the UCA in the crypt of the Cathedral, where martyred Archbishop Oscar Romero was buried. I'm glad I went, though El Centro, where the Cathedral and National Palace are located, is not San Salvador's most attractive feature.

Congressmen Joe Moakley and Jim McGovern of Massachusetts both attended the mass. Moakley had chaired the congressional committee that investigated the murder of the Jesuits. Afterward, they were photographed at the Tomb of Mons Romero, and *Prensa Gráfica* did a nice story on them. (A big evolution for *Prensa*; a few years ago they would have ignored the anniversary of the martyrs entirely.)

I hitched a ride with Moakley and McGovern's motorcade back to the Camino Real, since I needed to check out some things at Metro Centro across the street. I wasn't expecting the ride I got: sirens, motorcycle escort, no need to stop at traffic signals. It was a bit much for a trip to the mall to buy a battery.

The celebration was very "emocionante" this year for me--the candle-light procession and vigil mass with the "clases populares" who had traveled long distances to celebrate the memorial through the night, even to the formal commemoration on Wednesday. Way too many words, of course, but this is El Salvador, after all, and we can't have anything go uncommented-upon.

I can't wait until I can find a reason to come back.

The Scientific Method

Date and time: 1/16/00, 12:30 p.m.

Location: Highway 169, Scott County, MN

Ambient conditions: sunny, bright, cold.

Researchers: Heldke and O'Connor

Equipment: 1995 Toyota Tacoma truck

Observations:

- 1 12:30: Unidentifiable object appeared at 11:00, some distance above the horizon. Distinguishing features: long, narrow rectangle, blue and white, seemed to waver above earth's surface.

Hypothesis: Object is brand new, very tall gas station sign.

- 2 12:31: Object appears to waver slightly. Gas station hypothesis thrown in doubt.

Research plan: Seek disconfirming evidence.

- 3 12:33: Object appears to turn around 180 degrees; highly unusual behavior for gas station sign. Also, object appears to be attached by filament of some kind (wire? rope?) to small aircraft. **Hypothesis:**

Object is sign being towed by said aircraft. **Research plan:** Ascertain content of sign

- 4 12:35: Researcher O'Connor notes that we have entered Scott County.

Background information: Active citizen group in Scott County is waging fierce campaign against building an academy for troubled youth there.

Hypothesis: "No Academy" organization has taken to the air.

Research plan: Seek confirming evidence.

- 5 12:35:45: Researcher Heldke, believing herself to be possessed of clear view of sign, announces "It says 'ACADEMY!'"

Hypothesis temporarily regarded as confirmed. **Background information:** Heldke has worn corrective lenses since age seven. **Research plan:** Seek independent confirmation from

O'Connor (whose vision was not corrected until age nine).

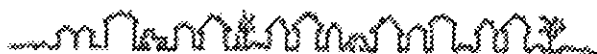
- 6 12:36: Upon gaining a more advantageous perspective, Heldke corrects previous observation: "It says 'AHAMAY.'" (Note: despite fact that new observation would require rejection of preliminarily confirmed hypothesis, researcher Heldke made no attempt to suppress data.) Research team is left with no viable **hypothesis**. **Research**

plan: Use internet search engine such as Google, Metacrawler, or Dogpile, to ascertain nature of AHAMAY.

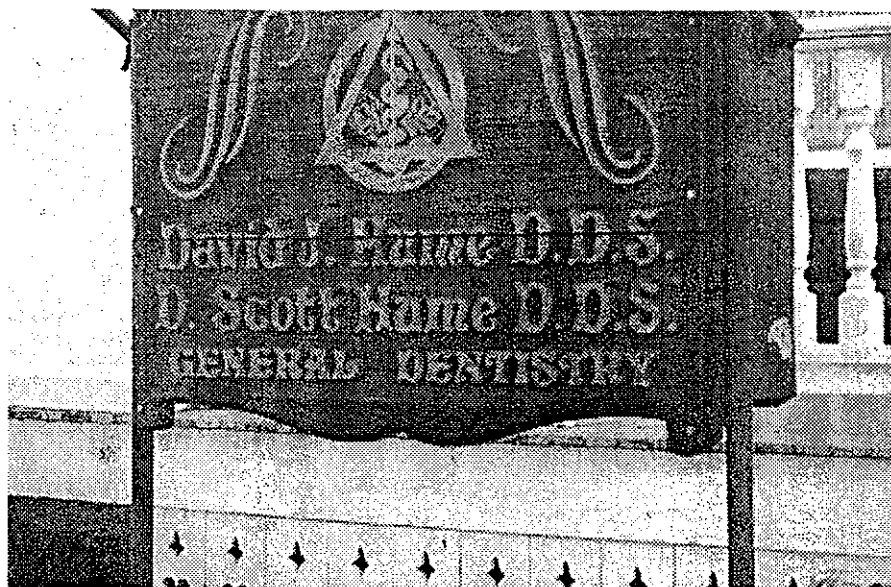
Research temporarily suspended, due to fact that cell-phone-cigarette-lighter hookup for laptop has been malfunctioning, rendering internet connection unreliable. Resolve to take up research again as soon as internet access is restored.

- 7 12:39: Airplane towing sign makes 180 degree turn, allowing reverse side of sign to be visible. Readers who wish to replicate this observation for themselves may wish to write AHAMAY in all capital letters on piece of onionskin, or similarly transparent paper--and then reverse the paper. In the absence of suitably thin paper, same text may be written on ordinary bond and then held up to a mirror. (Note: while latter operation less closely replicates actual observational conditions, in laboratory tests, it was found to produce effects identical in all relevant aspects to onionskin method.)

Plans for future study: Researchers have no plans to investigate the matter further.



Where are they now?



Alison Bailey (University of Illinois, Bloomington/Normal) sent us some long-awaited documentary evidence for the whereabouts of one of the most important philosophers of the eighteenth century. She writes:

David Hume and his brother Donald have set up practice here in Bloomington. Convinced by what David calls the "constant conjunction of pain and abscessed teeth," they have set about finding a remedy. Here's proof of where they are today!

Subscribe Today!

Send your checks for \$10, payable to Philosophers on Holiday, to:
Philosophers on Holiday
1002 Riverview Hills South
St. Peter, MN 56082

Name:

Address:

And while you're at it, how about a gift subscription for that hard-to-buy-for friend, relative, or sweetie (Valentine's Day is just around the corner!)

Name of Recipient

Address: