

PHI KAPPA PHI FORUM

Spring 2011



EMPATHY

IN ACTION: Neuroscientists map it on the brain; enemy lines in World War I adopt it for Christmas; a college student abroad learns about it; contagious yawns stem from it; and an NBA coach practices it. **IN THEORY:** It underlies philosophy, psychiatry, social media, and plays and movies, and should pertain to workplace policies and community banking. **IN ABSENTIA:** Dolphins do not provide it and teen bullies could care less about it.

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi clicks with thousands of members by enhancing its online communities.

Phi Kappa Phi Forum and Its Relationship with the Society

Phi Kappa Phi Forum is the multidisciplinary quarterly magazine of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. Each issue of the award-winning journal reaches more than 100,000 active members as well as government officials, scholars, educators, university administrators, public and private libraries, leaders of charitable and learned organizations, corporate executives and many other types of subscribers.

It is the flagship publication of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest, largest and most selective all-discipline honor society, with chapters on more than 300 college and university campuses across the country. Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 at the University of Maine and upwards of one million members spanning the academic disciplines have been initiated since the Society's inception. Notable alumni include former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, former NASA astronaut Wendy Lawrence, The Ohio State University head football coach Jim Tressel, writer John Grisham, YouTube co-founder/CEO Chad Hurley and poet Rita Dove. The Society began publishing what's now called *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* in 1915.

Spring, summer and fall issues

The spring, summer and fall issues (usually mailed late February, late May and late August, respectively) feature a variety of timely, relevant articles from influential scholars, educators, writers and other authorities, oftentimes active Phi Kappa Phi members, who offer variations on an overall theme.

Notables to have contributed pieces include Ronald Reagan, fortieth President of the United States; Myrlie Evers-Williams, civil rights trailblazer; Warren Burger, the fifteenth Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court; Molefi Kete Asante, African-American studies groundbreaker; Sally Ride, former NASA astronaut; Ernest Gaines, fiction writer; and Geoffrey Gilmore, former director of the Sundance Film Festival.

Phi Kappa Phi Forum also encourages movers and shakers to speak for themselves through exclusive interviews. Q & As have run the gamut from public servants such as Lynne Cheney, former chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, to famous artists such as playwright August Wilson to literary critics such as Stanley Fish.

(For other significant contributors, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/forum.)

The spring, summer and fall issues further contain columns on fields such as education and academics, science and technology, and arts and entertainment in addition to book reviews, poetry and humor. Plus, these issues compile member



The first organizational meeting of what came to be known as The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi took place in Coburn Hall (above) at the University of Maine in Orono, Maine, in 1897. The Phi Kappa Phi name was adopted on June 12, 1900. Although the national headquarters have been located in Baton Rouge, La., since 1978, the vast majority of the Society's historical documents are still kept at the founding institution.

news, chapter updates and Society developments, along with letters to the editor, the Phi Kappa Phi bookshelf and general announcements of interest to keep readers abreast of Society programs and activities.

Through words and images, Web links and multimedia components, the magazine intends to appeal to the diverse membership of Phi Kappa Phi by providing thoughtful, instructive, helpful — and sometimes provocative — material in smart, engaging ways.

Winter issue

The winter issue (mailed late November) celebrates those who win monetary awards from Phi Kappa Phi.

The Society distributes more than \$700,000 annually through graduate and undergraduate scholarships, member and chapter awards, and grants for local and national literacy initiatives, and *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* applauds the recipients in this edition, listing them all and spotlighting a few. (For more information about Phi Kappa Phi monetary awards, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/awards.)

As an arm of the Society, *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* helps uphold the institution's mission: "To recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others." ■

Phi Kappa Phi Forum mission statement

Phi Kappa Phi Forum, a multidisciplinary quarterly that enlightens, challenges and entertains its diverse readers, serves as a general-interest publication as well as a platform for The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

Phi Kappa Phi Forum

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Submissions

Address material intended for publication to: Peter Sztatmary, Editor *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi 7576 Goodwood Blvd. Baton Rouge, La. 70806

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Phi Kappa Phi Forum staff

Editor: Peter Sztatmary (800) 804-9880 ext. 42 pszatmary@phikappaphi.org

Designer: Kellye Sanford (freelance)

Proofreader: Martha Allan (freelance)

Editorial consultant: Traci Navarre Director of Marketing and Member Benefits (800) 804-9880 ext. 22 tnavarre@phikappaphi.org

Change of address

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This Issue:

Empathy

Make a list of the prerequisites of a good person, and empathy would surely rank high. This edition explores empathy's importance: its presence and absence, development and nature, and implications and applications.



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On the Cover: H. J. Bott, *Choices (over the sofa sociogram)*, 1984, glazed polymers on polyflax, 48 x 84 inches. Bott was born in 1933 and lives in Houston, Texas, with his wife DeeDee. For more information, go online to hjbott.com. Photo credit: Carol Gerhardt.



By William A. Bloodworth, Jr.

“Strategic initiatives” is becoming an important term for The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

As proposed by me (after attending Phi Kappa Phi Board of Directors meetings for three years) and adopted by the Board for the current biennium, three strategic initiatives will help move our honor society forward:

- Increase participation of at-large members in the governance and programs of the Society
- Increase the number of chapters at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs)
- Develop a national service identity for the Society

Each initiative begins with a verb and compels action. And each one relates to this *Phi Kappa Phi Forum's* theme of “Empathy.”

The first initiative is not new to us. Thanks to decisions in 2007, we now have, for the first time, at-large and student vice presidents on the Board. Moreover, in 2012 all active members will be able to vote on the election of the vice presidents at large. Such developments expand the Board's awareness of the broad human spectrum of our membership, improve services to members, and encourage more members to add their ideas and energy to our work. Common sense, democratic principles, and ordinary empathy tell us to continue our progress on this front.

The second initiative will drive efforts

to establish new chapters at institutions that deliver high value to our nation and to their own students. As the presence of chapters in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Maryland testifies, this is not new work for Phi Kappa Phi, either. But it now becomes *strategic* work. The increased presence of HBCUs among our chapters raises our value as well — and opens doors not only to diversity as a good in itself (which it is) but also to new appreciation of honor and excellence on such campuses. Empathy is well-served all around here.

The third initiative challenges the Society to create a service program for us to do good work for the sake of others. Championed by Ray Sylvester, who heads the committee on marketing and member benefits, and others, this undertaking, if fully achieved, promises benefits for our larger national and international society while burnishing Phi Kappa Phi's identity in the process. We offer support already for service projects related to literacy. What else can we do — what else should we do — as an empathic organization? How can we make our academic honor society synonymous with service to particular human and social needs? The Board and staff members have begun to think about this. We welcome your input, too.

These three strategic initiatives happen to share empathy as an inspiration and destination and further round out this edition of the magazine. But more than that, they seek to capitalize on our history, fulfill all the more our purposes as an organization, and build new sources of pride for all Phi Kappa Phi members.

I present them to you with honor and excitement. ■

Editor's Note



By Peter Szatmary

I love clever gags but hate practical jokes. There's something cruel about a practical joke — a lack of empathy, even if momentarily, stemming from misused trust. Along these lines, I sometimes feel better after a good cry but always feel worse after a sentimental ploy, what with its cynical twist on empathy.

My favorite part of a boxing match: when combatants hug at the end after exchanging all those blows. Why I prefer to watch movies at the cinema and attend arts events with packed houses: for the cooperative experience. Literature that makes the deepest impression on me: works in which I learn to relate to others.

Ours is an era of community service and support groups, activism and therapy. We

also remain in a fight against terrorism and in a battle against recession, and dictatorships still rule and poverty still cripples. Empathy exerts a pull on us for so many reasons and in so many directions.

In fact, in the three days I worked periodically on this article, the word “empathy” appeared in the newspapers I read, the newscasts I tune in to, the radio stations I listen to, the websites I surf, the books I'm perusing, and the conversations I heard at least 100 times. (I stopped the informal count after that.)

Most of us (try to) acquit ourselves with empathy and yearn to receive it. Why? This edition of the magazine, suggested by contributor Simon Baron-Cohen, examines empathy across the disciplines. Indeed, every single piece pertains to empathy, usually directly, sometimes indirectly. In a way, that's how it should be. ■

Board of Directors

SOCIETY PRESIDENT
William A. Bloodworth, Jr., Ph.D.
Office of the President
Augusta State University
2500 Walton Way
Augusta, Ga. 30904-2200
wbloodwo@aug.edu

SOCIETY PRESIDENT-ELECT
Diane G. Smathers, Ed.D.
Emeritus College
E-304 Martin Hall
Clemson University
Clemson, S.C. 29634
dsmthrs@clemson.edu

SOCIETY PAST PRESIDENT
Robert B. Rogow, C.P.A., Ph.D.
Dean, College of Business and Technology
Eastern Kentucky University
Business & Technology Center 214
521 Lancaster Ave.
Richmond, Ky. 40475
robert.rogow@eku.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE
Curtis D. Black, Ph.D.
Department of Pharmacy Practice
University of Toledo College of Pharmacy
3000 Arlington Ave., MS 1013
Toledo, Ohio 43614
curt.black@utoledo.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR CHAPTER RELATIONS
Timothy L. Hulsey, Ph.D.
Dean, The Honors College
Virginia Commonwealth University
P.O. Box 843010
Richmond, Va. 23284-3010
thulsey@vcu.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS
William J. McKinney, Ph.D.
Kettler Hall 169
Indiana University-Purdue University-Fort Wayne
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.
Fort Wayne, Ind. 46805
mckinnew@ipfw.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR MARKETING AND MEMBER BENEFITS
H. Ray Sylvester, Ph.D.
University of the Pacific
Eberhardt School of Business
3601 Pacific Ave.
Stockton, Calif. 95211
rsylvester@pacific.edu

VICE PRESIDENT AT LARGE
Yaw A. Asamoah, Ph.D.
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
201 McElhane Hall
441 North Walk
Indiana, Pa. 15705-1018
osebo@iup.edu

VICE PRESIDENT AT LARGE
Judy A. Highfill
821 Craig Dr.
Kirkwood, Mo. 63122-5712
judyhigh@swbell.net

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENTS
Jeffrey Harrison
Junior business administration major
Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville
SSC 1280, Box 1160
Edwardsville, Ill. 62026-1160
jefharr@siue.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENTS
Rodney Hughes
Doctoral student in higher education
Pennsylvania State University
400 Rackley Building
University Park, Pa. 16802
rph144@psu.edu

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Perry A. Snyder, Ph.D.
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
7576 Goodwood Blvd.
Baton Rouge, La. 70806
psnyder@phikappaphi.org

Empathy, Politics, and Italian Nationalism



Unification of a diverse Italy (Venice is seen in these undated photos) epitomizes ideas about empathy.

This spring 2011 edition's theme of "Empathy" calls to mind how 18th-century philosophers including Francis Hutcheson, Lord Kames, and Adam Smith used it to develop "Sentimental Ethics." According to their thinking, people made moral decisions by putting themselves subjectively in another's situation, then objectively evaluating it. Thus, a person encountering a hungry child would imagine the pangs, then understand the pain, compelling a reaction: to feed the child or not.

"Sentimental Ethics" also contain a political dimension. They account for Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence changing John Locke's language about people's rights from "life, liberty, and property" to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The reiteration of "liberty" here leads to my point: the ways in which peoples of various ethnic, geographic, and religious groups have fought for and achieved national autonomy. They often gain support during their struggles for liberty by evoking an empathetic response in those who already have (or hope to have) such freedoms.

We see this in the Frenchman Marquis de Lafayette and Pole Tadeusz Kosciuszko fighting for the colonies during the American Revolution; in Americans like the abolitionist Samuel Gridley Howe and



Europeans like the poet Lord Byron backing Greece's push to extricate itself from Ottoman control — and in the people of the Italian peninsula establishing a nation state 150 years ago this spring. The Italian parliament proclaimed the kingdom of Italy on March 17, 1861, after a movement called the *Risorgimento*.

(Editor's note: See Bookshelf on page 29 for the author's *Byron and the Rhetoric of Italian Nationalism*, which partly examines this idea.)

Historians generally identify rebellions against regional and foreign powers in 1820-21 and 1830 as the first manifestations of the *Risorgimento* that ultimately unified the peninsula's many governments (except for the Vatican State and San Marino). Three wars of independence followed. Italy lost the first in 1848-49, but won the second in 1859, though without gaining possession of Venice and the surrounding region. In March 1861, Parliament declared Victor Emanuel King of the *Regno d'Italia* and Rome its capital. Complete unification came about with the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, when Italy gained Venice and the Veneto region.

This spring, then, we may feel empathy with Italians who 150 years ago created their own nation, as we feel for all peoples who have gained legitimate self-determination and for those who still hope to achieve it. ■

— Arnold Anthony Schmidt
(California State University-Stanislaus former chapter president)
Professor of English
California State University-Stanislaus
Email him at aschmidt@csustan.edu

Coming Next Issue

The theme is "color." Potential topics for the summer 2011 edition include the "going green" ecology movement; a profile of the late civil rights leader Dorothy Height; astronomical detectors that capture particles from the universe; red, white and blue in countries' flags and political campaigns; the Negro Baseball League(s).

Letters to the Editor Submission Guidelines

Phi Kappa Phi Forum publishes appropriately written letters to the editor every issue when submitted. Such letters should be no more than 300 words. We reserve the right to edit for content and length. Send letters to:

Letters to the Editor
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
7576 Goodwood Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
editor@phikappaphi.org

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A dolphin assisted therapy session takes place at Dolphin Cove, Ocho Rios, St. Ann, Jamaica, in 2003.

Dolphin Assisted Therapy: From Ancient Myth to Modern Snake Oil

By Lori Marino

Diviner than the Dolphin is nothing yet created.

— **Oppian of Silicia**
Greek poet, 200 A.D.

No nonhuman animal has attained the mythological status of the dolphin. Much of the fascination comes from our recognition of the dolphin's deep intelligence and lively curiosity; in fact, modern science confirms ancient intuitions that dolphins and other cetaceans (aquatic, mainly marine mammals like whales) possess large and highly elaborated brains, sophisticated thought, demonstrable self-awareness, complex societies and multilayered cultures. Also, dolphins live

in a mostly inaccessible and therefore mysterious environment, adding to their allure. And the dolphin "smile" — not a grin but merely the physical configuration of the jaw — leads some mistakenly to pronounce dolphins as interminably happy and benign.

These attributes fuel several prominent themes in dolphin mythology, all bound by the common mystical belief that dolphins hold an elevated position above all other animals and that dolphins share an inherent empathic bond with humans.

The dolphin as hero

Kinship and rescue scenarios, typically involving human redemption and literal rebirth, recur in dolphin legends from

Australia to Papua New Guinea to Laos to the Greco-Roman empires to South America, to name just a few sources. For example, in ancient Greece, Taras, son of the sea god Poseidon, was said to be rescued from a shipwreck by a dolphin sent by his father, and historical coinage depicts him riding one. In modern times, stories abound about dolphins protecting humans from sharks or guiding ships across treacherous waters. One famous example over the past several years is JoJo, a wild Atlantic bottlenose dolphin from the Turks and Caicos Islands in the British West Indies, whom inhabitant Dean Bernal claims safeguards him from sharks. Bernal has turned his bond with JoJo into a full-time job.

The dolphin as enlightenment

Similarly, some people believe that dolphins are spiritually and morally superior to humans. The simplistic notion of dolphins as entirely peaceful, altruistic and moral in contrast to mainly violent, self-absorbed, immoral humans persists among many Western metaphysical movements. Dolphins double as the



A dolphin is taken away to be put in captivity in Futo, Japan.

ultimate New Age icon, omnipresent in websites, books, music CDs and posters, representing unconditional love and, just as eons ago, a path toward transformation, and an entrance into utopia.

Indeed, in the most extreme New Age postulations, dolphins are saviors of humankind, and the devotion to dolphins becomes one of religious worship. Jeff Weir, executive director of the Dolphin Research Institute in Hastings, Victoria, Australia, aptly refers to these radical beliefs as “Dolphinism.”

Dolphin assisted therapy

The practice of dolphin assisted therapy (DAT) — humans swimming and/or interacting with captive dolphins with the intent of treating some mental or physical disorder — derives from these notions. The view of dolphins as the means to a transformative end has always been intimately connected with the dolphin’s supposed special healing and empathic powers. Throughout time, people as far apart as Brazil and Fiji have traded in dolphin parts for curative and totemic purposes. Today, people recast these superstitions in the context of medicine and science for a patina of credibility, allowing dolphin therapy to move easily from alternative medicine circles to the mainstream as a profitable worldwide commercial industry.

DAT formally began in the 1970s with Florida International University educational anthropologist Betsy Smith — who would denounce it publicly in 2003 as ineffective and exploitative. DAT now has facilities all over the world, including several in the U.S. (mostly in Florida and Hawaii), Mexico, Israel, Russia, Japan,

China, and the Bahamas, to list only a few countries. The pervasiveness obscures the fact that DAT is often not readily distinguishable from the “swim-with-dolphin” recreation programs that permeate the entertainment and tourism industries. Like those experiences, DAT is not regulated by any authority overseeing health and safety standards for either humans or dolphins, and DAT practitioners are not required by law to receive special training or certification.

Supposed benefits of DAT

Autism and similar developmental disabilities top the list of conditions touted as highly treatable by DAT. Proponents also claim it helps everything from depression and anxiety to infections to neuromuscular disorders to cancer and AIDS. These sessions often include conventional remedial tasks, such as hand-eye coordination exercises, or rudimentary physical therapy, such as limb exercises in the pool or poolside.

Proponents also assert that DAT provides humans with enhanced concentration (a vague claim unproven scientifically); alters people’s brainwaves therapeutically via the dolphin’s echolocation, the sensory system of high-pitched sounds the dolphin makes (nothing more than pseudoscience); and generally enhances biophilia (a feel-good, New Age love of nature).

Actual results of DAT

As with other fad treatments, DAT inundates popular media with testimonials, often involving the hope of a remedy for a child’s illness. But instead of offering proof

of DAT as legitimate therapy, these anecdotes are nothing more than justifications of the emotional needs and significant costs of the participants. Moreover, many of these reports, filed immediately after a DAT session, smack of bias via the understandable enthusiasm, sincerity, and desperation of those attesting “in the moment.”

But no scientific evidence exists to support the claim that DAT improves any disorder. My Emory University colleague, psychologist Scott O. Lilienfeld, and I published two analyses of DAT literature in *Anthrozoös*, a multidisciplinary journal of the interactions of people and other animals (in 1998 and 2007), focusing on papers that tried to show that DAT was effective. We found all of these studies fraught with methodological weaknesses that rendered the authors’ suppositions untenable. For instance, these studies often lacked a control group with which to compare the so-called positive effects of dolphin therapy. And none of the studies provided evidence for even general feel-good effects enduring beyond the therapy session. Authors of other critiques of DAT have come to the same conclusion.

Just like the snake oil of yesteryear, DAT is a modern-day quack-medicine version of dolphin mythology. Yet it continues to grow in popularity for desperate people persuaded that dolphins dispense a special healing quality that sometimes even modern medicine cannot match. (While similar therapies involve cats, dogs, horses, and other domesticated animals, almost none include direct contact with wild animals.)

Some might argue that DAT is not completely devoid of merit because, at the very least, children and adults enjoy interacting with dolphins in a once-in-a-lifetime experience. So, even if DAT provides no scientifically proven salutary benefits whatsoever, who could quarrel with putting a smile, at least temporarily, on the face of a sick child?

There is more to DAT than meets the eye and when one becomes aware of the tradeoffs, DAT no longer seems benign. The costs are enormous, for humans (except for the practitioners) and dolphins alike, in all sorts of ways.

How DAT hurts humans

It provides false hope. In the spirit of bogus remedies, DAT takes advantage of vulnerable people, most especially parents of children with autism and other developmental disorders, as alluded to above. Hawked heavily to these target audiences, DAT plays on the desperate needs of frantic parents trying any means possible to improve their children’s communication and social skills.

It comes at great expense. Families carry a heavy financial burden when paying

for DAT. The standard fee ranges from \$5,000 to \$7,000 for a few half-hour sessions over the course of several days, excluding travel expenses. (And DAT is not covered under health insurance.) Families might also wipe themselves out in other ways: forgoing more effective mainstream treatment because of their emotional and monetary investment in DAT.

It poses a risk of injury or disease.

DAT programs place participants at risk for physical injuries and dolphin-human transmission of infections and parasites. Numerous published reports tell of children and adults being bitten, scraped, bruised, thrown around, and even held under the water by these massively strong animals. DAT dolphins are not domesticated — including those born in captivity. They are wild animals often coerced into swimming with people and would rather be, and should be, left alone.

How DAT harms dolphins

It causes debilitating stress, disease and mortality to both the wild-caught and captive-born.

Stress derives from many aspects of captivity, not the least of which being changes in social groupings and resulting isolation and estrangement from friends and family. Social relationships play a critical role in the well-being of dolphins and whales. Bottlenose dolphins, orcas, and other cetaceans form complex societies with intricate networks and cultural traditions. For instance, bottlenose dolphins pass on tool use (e.g., sponge-carrying) and cooperative prey-capture methods from one generation to the other. In the wild, individuals can build strong and long-lasting relationships. Social group composition is dynamic and fluid, with individuals exerting choice about their associations and avoiding intense aggression by spacing out. In the confines of captivity, social groups are often artificially constructed and transferred in and out of different pools and facilities without choice, and there is not enough room or social support to resolve conflict.

As a result, captive dolphins suffer extreme stress that has led to disease and reduced life expectancy in captivity. (Bottlenose dolphins, the most common species, can live 45-50 years in the wild.) The 2010 *U.S. Marine Mammal Inventory Report* lists numerous stress-related disorders, such as ulcerative gastritis, perforating ulcer, cardiogenic shock and psychogenic shock, as causes of death for captive dolphins. (Mylanta and other over-the-counter medications for humans are commonly given to captive dolphins for stomach ulcers.) Moreover, when dolphins are forced to make physical contact with people and tow them around in the water, hyperaggression often results,



Bottlenose dolphins look like they're smiling but that's an optical and anatomical illusion.

toward humans, as summarized above, but also towards other dolphins and themselves in the form of self-mutilation.

It depletes natural populations and contributes to dolphin slaughters. Many DAT facilities outside the U.S. take dolphins from the wild and, by doing so, harm whole populations. The removal of even a single individual from a social group can destroy the cohesiveness and integrity of that group. And regular interference with natural populations through capture can affect reproductive behavior.

Many of these facilities also support horrific drive hunts around the world that involve the slaughter of tens of thousands of dolphins. (The worldwide count of bottlenose dolphins is estimated at 600,000.) Drive hunts, such as those that occur every year in Taiji, Japan (the subject of *The Cove*, winner of the Academy Award for Best Documentary of 2009), involve panicking and herding whole groups of dolphins into a small cove where they are brutally slaughtered for meat. Representatives from captive facilities also use these drives as opportunities to choose individuals to capture and take back to their sites. American public outcry inspired a moratorium on U.S. facilities taking animals from the wild in 1989 but DAT remains in use nationwide with animals taken from the wild prior to that time. And there is no such moratorium outside the U.S.

The ultimate irony

Human fascination with dolphins continues to give rise to modern-day versions of dolphin mythology and has led to the ultimate irony: exploitation of and death for these creatures because of our very admiration of them. The contemporary view of dolphins encouraged by DAT and other captivity-based programs serves as a cruel reminder that humans compartmentalize their beliefs in a way that makes for some very inconsistent behavior. In ancient Rome, harming

dolphins was punishable by death because Romans revered them as messengers from the gods, for one reason. Today, directly and indirectly, humans cause the deaths of tens of thousands of dolphins each year through hunting and captivity. Most participants in DAT have a genuine affection for dolphins (and a real need to find treatment for what ails them), and the tragedy is that DAT proponents, with their vested interests, exploit these feelings and try to keep the public unaware of the harmful impact of captivity on dolphins, of the risks of injury to participants, and of the lack of evidence of therapeutic effectiveness.

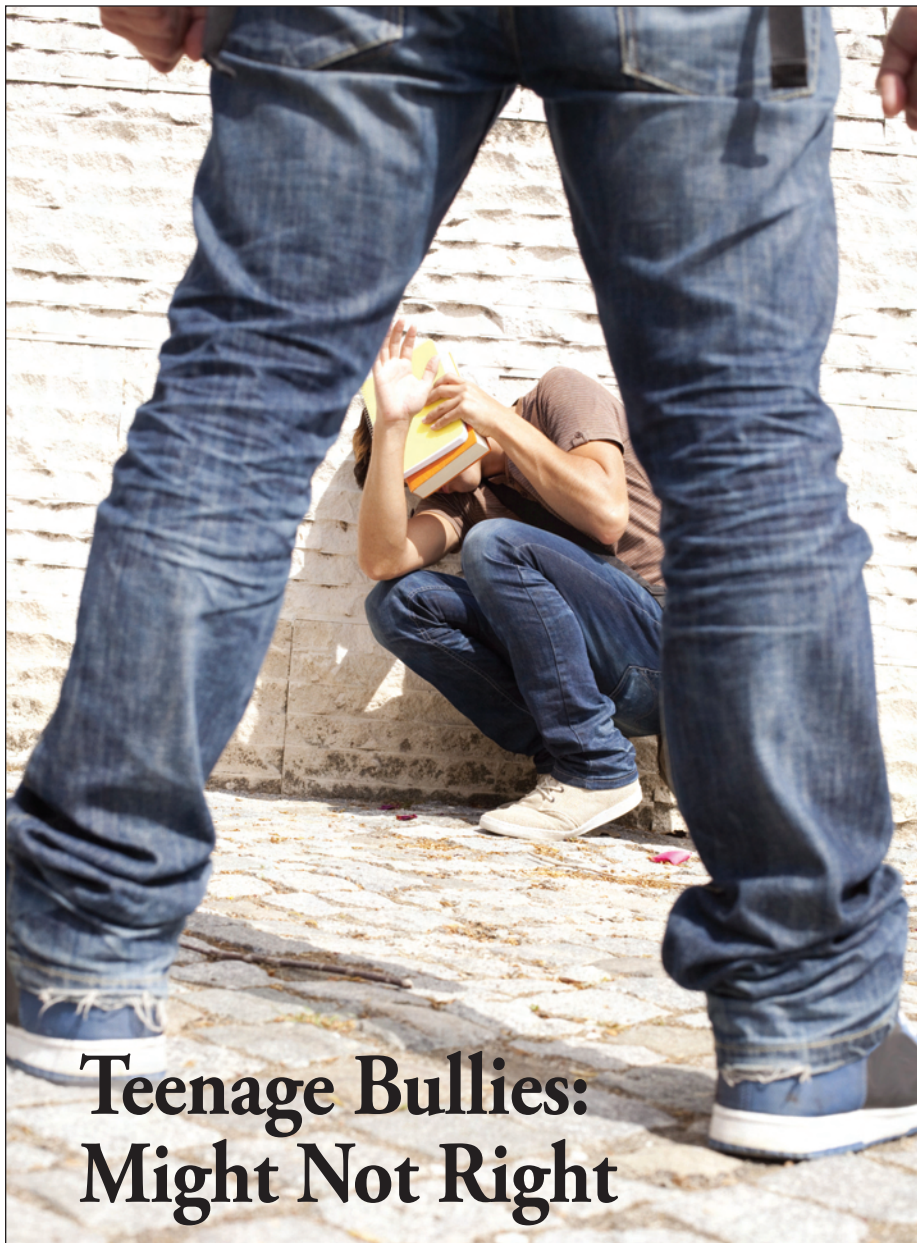
Towards true healing

Our attraction to dolphins will never wane, nor should it. They, like us, are complex, intelligent, emotional and cultural beings and therefore stimulate our desire for communion with them. We do not need to attach supernatural qualities to them, for their actual nature is much richer and multidimensional than any human mythology can provide. It is time we move into a more progressive, knowledgeable and respectful relationship with dolphins by refusing to support their exploitation. If we decided to do this, then we could say that both dolphins and humans would, for the first time, experience true healing. ■



Lori Marino is a senior lecturer in psychology at Emory University, a faculty affiliate at the Emory Center for Ethics, and co-founder and executive director of the Aurelia Center for

Animals and Cultural Change, Inc., a nonprofit organization focused on applying scholarship and science to animal advocacy. Her research and teaching interests include the evolution of brain, intelligence and self-awareness in cetaceans and other species; human-nonhuman animal relationships; and animal welfare/ rights and ethics. Marino is author of more than 80 publications in her areas, including several methodological critiques of dolphin assisted therapy and dolphin-human interaction programs. In 2001 she published, with Diana Reiss, the first definitive evidence for mirror self-recognition in bottlenose dolphins in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, an experience that prompted her to view research on captive animals as ethically unjustifiable. Marino is a founding signatory of the Declaration of Rights for Cetaceans and recently testified at a session of The House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife, about the educational claims of the marine mammal captivity industry. She earned degrees from New York University (B.A., Psychology), Miami University (M.A., Experimental Psychology), and University at Albany, State University of New York (Ph.D., Biopsychology). Email her at Imarino@emory.edu.



Teenage Bullies: Might Not Right

By Karen Waters

Sixteen-year-old Christian Taylor hung himself in his bedroom on Monday. His family claims he was taunted and bullied at his (York County, Va.) high school in the weeks before his suicide. However, the family says he showed no signs of being suicidal. ...

"They (bullies) said he should just go and sit in the corner and cut himself, just terrible things no one should say," says (a) close friend. ...

"The comment made to my son was why don't you just go and kill yourself?" said (his stepfather).

— CBS-6 TV, Richmond, Va.

That sad and horrific story occurred in June 2010. In trying to process the loss of the teen, a skateboarder who

volunteered at Ronald McDonald House Charities, friends and family wound up gathering "at a church to remember Taylor and to search for answers in his death."¹

That the boy, who also liked hard rock music and playing the guitar, took his own young life was awful but, unfortunately, not unusual. A month before, *The Christian Science Monitor* identified 10 previous teen suicides associated with bullying in the last year.²

The media has coined the term "bullycide" to describe the suicides of individuals who kill themselves following bullying. Suicide is an act linked to a complex set of variables such as biologically based mental illness, substance abuse, and environmental factors (like relationship breakups or school troubles). Although bullying alone cannot cause suicide, it adds to the stress adolescents

experience during a time of physical, social, and cognitive change, sometimes dangerously so.

Extreme reactions of victims to bullying date at least to 1983 when three adolescents committed suicide in Norway following severe bullying. The Norwegian Ministry of Education responded to national outrage by calling on psychologist Dan Olweus, a pioneer in the study of bullying, to produce a prevention program. In doing so, Olweus provided a well-accepted definition of bullying: verbal or physical actions that cause physical or psychological harm, are repeated over time, and occur in a relationship of unequal power.

Not all victims of bullying commit suicide, but most suffer lingering consequences such as battling low self-esteem, developing psychosomatic problems, or dropping out of school. Many carry the emotional or physical scars to adulthood.

Indeed, bullying is a widespread phenomenon in American secondary schools. About one-third of 12- to 18-year-olds in 2007 said they were bullied during the academic year, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found, in its most recent data available.³ Furthermore, bullying or the claim of it is on the rise: a 2005 NCES study indicated that 28 percent of middle and high school students reported being bullied on campus whereas in 1999 only 5 percent did.^{4,5} In another study, of nearly 80,000 students, 31.5 percent declare involvement in bullying: as bully (11.4 percent), victim (12.7 percent), or both (7.4 percent).⁶ And social networking sites seem to be a growing medium for the bully ("cyberbullying").⁷

Much of the media attention has understandably been on the victims, especially those who committed suicide. But the bullies themselves receive much less coverage. Perhaps it is the bullies whose makeup must be fully understood before the real work of prevention can take place.

Are bullies male or female?

Bullies are much more often male than female.⁸⁻¹¹ In an extensive study combining self-, peer-, and teacher-identified bullies, boys were at least twice as likely as girls to be bullies or victims and three times as likely to be both, a bully-victim.¹²

However, the preponderance of male bullies may reflect definitions of bullying that overlook analogous behaviors by females. "Direct" bullying (e.g., pushing, hitting, kicking) typically denotes physical confrontation and applies more to boys. "Indirect" bullying (e.g., withdrawing affection, excluding others, spreading rumors) causes harm through the manipulation of a relationship and applies more to girls.¹³ These oblique ways of

bullying may be more in keeping with expectations for female behavior.¹⁴

What marks a bully?

In the interest of developing prevention programs, researchers attempt to identify individuals likely to bully. Signs include:

Psychiatric symptoms and temperamental differences. Poor psychosocial adjustment, first and foremost, characterizes bullies.^{15, 16} Tormentors display symptoms consistent with low self-esteem and conduct disorder: serious repetitive aggression that violates the basic rights of people, animals, or property. They also reveal callous-unemotional traits (including a lack of empathy and guilt) and low levels of altruistic behaviors such as carrying groceries for an elderly neighbor or comforting a crying child.¹⁷

Bullies admit to few adjustment problems when asked for self-assessment.¹⁸ Research has yet to explain the reasons why. Perhaps bullies wish to obtain or sustain high social status. Maybe they're not introspective. Or some might be unwilling to share what they consider to be their flaws, worries, and insecurities (to the extent that bullies are insightful about their feelings).

Psychosomatic complaints. Bullies run a risk for psychosomatic problems.¹⁹ Symptoms include headache, dizziness, backache, abdominal pain, stomachache, vomiting, loss of appetite, bedwetting, sleeping difficulties, fatigue, skin problems, and feeling tense.

This may seem surprising because aggression is an acting-out behavior while psychosomatic symptoms are internalized. However, as alluded to earlier, bullies may lack insight into their own motivations, emotions, and behaviors. When individuals fail to recognize relationship and adjustment defects, stress may manifest as physical symptoms. (Think an executive with an ulcer or a heart condition.) Thus, bullies turn unsuccessful social and school interactions into perceived health issues.

Conduct disorders. Bullies frequently exhibit behavioral problems such as drinking and smoking,^{20, 21} fighting and defiance,²² and low grades and truancy.²³ These represent poor coping strategies. Bullies may abuse substances to distance themselves from recognizing or experiencing their feelings. Alcohol also lowers inhibitions, thereby increasing risk-taking (for example, translating anger into physical confrontation). Driven by their own anger or fear, or by the fear and submission of others, bullies lash out. Low grades and truancy elicit disapproval and other negative consequences from teachers and administrators, making school an unpleasant place for the bully. All of these behaviors have societal repercussions as well.

Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity



Children traumatized by physical or sexual abuse are more likely to bully. ... These children develop in a context of negative relationships and carry them forward, creating situations in which empathy for others is not felt.

Disorder (ADHD). Children diagnosed with ADHD wind up as bully or victim more than children without the diagnosis, according to parents and teachers.²⁴ The impulsivity and lack of behavioral restraint associated with ADHD make aggression more likely.

The bullying often leads to rejection of the antagonist by peers. The rejected child, seeking inclusion with other children nonetheless, may only be accepted by those who also bully, furthering the vicious circle.²⁵ Or the rejection may set up a victim role.

Authoritarian parenting. Bullies often grow up in authoritarian households.²⁶ This style of child-rearing bypasses support and reasoning for more heavy-handed discipline buoyed by parental power. Children whose parents use manipulation, shaming, and guilt to induce compliance often model this behavior; bully through indirect or manipulative means;²⁷ develop inappropriate attention-seeking, maladaptive friendships; and otherwise display social incompetence.²⁸

Male bullies frequently disagree with their mothers.²⁹ Boys whose mothers are cold or depressed are more likely to bully.³⁰ Little is known about the impact of fathers

on bullying since they don't seem to participate in this research as much as mothers. And research on familial relationships involving girl bullies is just now emerging.

Victims of maltreatment. Children traumatized by physical or sexual abuse are more likely to bully. The anxiety and wariness of severely mistreated children translate into an emotional constriction that represses feelings. These children develop in a context of negative relationships and carry them forward, creating situations in which empathy for others is not felt.³¹

Social status. Children often rank bullies high in social status, according to an influential study.³² At first glance, this apparent contradiction may reflect the average age of participants in this study: susceptible sixth graders who identified bullies as "cool." However, another recent analysis of 11- to 14-year-olds confirms these results and broadens the age group.³³

The impressionable adolescents in these studies equate power, however misused, with prestige. However, classmates by and large avoid bullies, with most watchers admiring the aggressors from afar, where it is safe.

How do bullies think and feel?

Bullies display two types of aggression: reactive and proactive. These constructs, first posed in animal research, appear to apply to children as well.^{34, 35}

Reactive aggression stems from frustration and is a defensive act: striking out towards what is perceived as harmful, without much control or consideration of consequences. These individuals misinterpret ambiguous events as containing hostile intent and react aggressively in retaliation; for example, the child accidentally jostled by a peer on the school bus instinctively pummels the person.³⁶

Children display reactive aggression via rapid increases in anger; at the same time, they prove less able to gain control over their feelings or decrease their intensity. Since these bullies often misread the intentions of others as hostile, their own anger rises and they lash out physically and/or verbally. In short, these bullies lose self-control.³⁷

Conversely, **proactive aggression** builds up over time because it is perceived as a way to get what one wants; it's used for gain and is almost Machiavellian. Proactively aggressive bullies weigh the situation and determine what to exploit. For example, a child wants to be picked as the top student in class and spreads rumors that a likely challenger cheats.

These bullies reveal low levels of emotional arousal; rather than becoming angry quickly, they experience a "slow burn," a process allowing them to make deliberate decisions about what they might



do with the anger, to be calculating and malevolent. This dysfunction derives less from a deficit in social skills than from a facility in using means to an end.³⁸

Both types of aggression occur in a social context. Social information processing (SIP), or how individuals decide what actions to take in exchanges with others, has been studied in relation to aggression in general and to bullying in particular. SIP theory posits that individuals selectively attend to cues in any social situation and interpret them, accurately or inaccurately, to figure out how to respond; people set goals based on their experiences and what they consider to be pertinent cues. Action follows.³⁹ In displays of aggression, bullies generally show more deficits in processing social information than non-bullies and respond with more emotion.⁴⁰

Consider the recent bullying of Phoebe Prince, a 15-year-old Irish immigrant newly arrived to the U.S. who had described herself as “not a tough girl.” According to *The New York Times*, bullies methodically threatened and taunted the South Hadley (Mass.) High School freshman. Phoebe briefly dated a popular senior boy, a football star. When he broke up with her and resumed an old relationship, the reunited couple joined forces with other friends, male and female, in belittling and threatening Phoebe for months. After a particularly difficult day in January 2010, she hanged herself on a stairwell at home, wearing her school clothes. Six teens have been charged with offenses from stalking to statutory rape.^{41, 42}

Because the media focused on the victim, the public was not privy to the motivations of the bullies. For instance, the initially spurned girlfriend’s actions could

have derived from reactive or proactive aggression (or both). She may have viewed Phoebe as taking a relationship rightfully hers and attacked the victim from a sense of outrage: the injury of having been abandoned (reactive aggression). Or she might have determined that to ensure the on/off romance she must undermine Phoebe, a threat (proactive aggression). Likewise, did the boyfriend want to impress his girlfriend or shore up their renewed relationship by joining in the evildoing (proactive aggression)? Or did he strike out at Phoebe for some real or imagined emotional injury he felt that she had caused him (reactive aggression)?

While these interpretations are conjecture, they illustrate important differences in motivation. Without understanding the reasons and emotions behind bullying, interventions may be misdirected.

Do bullies lack empathy?

The Washington Post (in May 2010) described a Concord (N.H.) High School ninth-grade boy tattooed against his will by a group of four older young men. The 14-year-old victim was reported to have learning disabilities and low self-esteem. He was coerced into the tattooing of obscenities on his buttocks by the bullies to avoid being beaten up by them.⁴³

This account might suggest that bullies do not feel for others. Actually, a bully may register an empathic response, but one that falls short of completion. Male and female bullies are able cognitively to label what the victim feels (“He is sad”), but are unable affectively to join in the emotion as the victim experiences it (“I feel sad with and for him”). This disconnect between thinking

and feeling allows a bully coldly to appraise the suffering of a victim but not care.⁴⁴

The bullies in the forced tattooing probably knew what the victim felt because they could see his fear of being beaten; in fact, they made him afraid repeatedly and manipulated the victim into a torturous “compromise.” To capitalize on their sense of power and kinship, the bullies upped the ante, causing further pain and humiliation.

What can be done about bullying?

Prevention programs run the gamut from instituting anti-bullying policies to establishing zero tolerance of this intimidation in schools to helping victims become more resilient and empowered.⁴⁵ However, the efficacy of such programs has not been definitively demonstrated. Research often finds negligible or even negative effects because the prevention programs differ in design and lack standardization in how schools carry them out. In addition, results often depend on reports of bullying by the bullies themselves and their victims — a subjective rather than objective measurement.^{46, 47}

Does this mean that such efforts should be scrapped? Of course not. Teachers, for instance, praise these interventions for increasing their knowledge about what to do about bullying and for establishing a context for dialogue about the problem within the school. But more systematic research is needed to create and compare similar programs. Effective prevention strategies will likely address the multidimensional aspects of social information processing and empathy, not merely identify bullying, to meet a measure of success.

One positive result of media attention on the terrible consequences of bullying by teens is a redefinition of it from simply a rite of passage to a significant problem with potentially devastating results. It’s too late for the likes of Christian Taylor and Phoebe Prince — but they did not have to die in vain. ■



Karen Waters, a clinical psychologist, manages an early intervention program for young children and their families at the Chesterfield Community Services Board in Richmond, Va. She has specialized in treating children from infancy through adolescence. Waters earned psychology degrees from University of Maryland, Baltimore Campuses (B.A.) and University of Virginia (M.A. and Ph.D.). Earlier in her career she was director of psychology at Children’s Hospital of Richmond (Va.), clinical director for behavioral healthcare at a major health insurer, and an adjunct faculty member at University of Richmond. Email her at watersk@chesterfield.gov.



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The Empathy Bell Curve

By Simon Baron-Cohen

We all lie somewhere on an empathy spectrum (from high to low). That is, we can all be lined up along this spectrum based on how much empathy we have.

To explore this, we first need a definition of empathy. *Empathy occurs when we suspend our single-minded focus of attention and instead adopt a double-minded focus of attention.* Sometimes attention is compared to a spotlight, so this definition of empathy suggests our attention can be a single spotlight (shining through the darkness on our own interests)

or can be accompanied by a second spotlight (shining on someone else's interests). Single-minded attention means we are only thinking about our own mind, and double-minded attention means we are paying attention to someone else's mind at the same time. So far my definition ignores the process and the content of what happens during empathy. So we can extend the definition as follows: *Empathy is our ability to identify what someone else is thinking or feeling and to respond to that person's thoughts and feelings with an appropriate emotion.*

This suggests there are at least two stages in empathy: recognition and response. Both are needed, since if you

have the former without the latter, you haven't empathized at all. When that second spotlight works, and you are able to recognize and respond, you can sensitively avoid hurting another's feelings and consider how everything you say or do impacts that person or others. But if your attention has a single focus — your current interest, goal, wish, or plan — with no reference to another person's thoughts and feelings, then your empathy is effectively switched off. It might be switched off because your attention is elsewhere, a transient fluctuation in your state. A temporary fluctuation in one's empathy is potentially rescuable. An enduring lack of empathy, as a trait, potentially is not. My contention is that however you get to this low point on the empathy scale, the result can be the same.

This definition of empathy so far

presumes it is either present or absent (off or on), like a light bulb in the head. In reality, empathy is more like a dimmer control. On this quantitative view, empathy varies in the population along the familiar bell shaped curve or normal distribution, shown below:

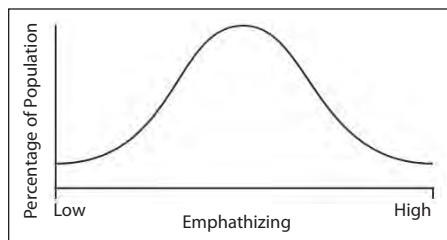


Figure 1: The Empathy Bell Curve

Measuring empathy

As part of our research into the nature of empathy, my colleagues and I developed a scale with which to measure empathy across the age range, called the Empathy Quotient (EQ). It works well in that it distinguishes people who have an empathy difficulty from those who do not.¹ It reveals, for example, that humanities students score slightly higher on EQ than science students,² and females in the general population score slightly higher on the EQ than males.³ Most importantly, EQ produces the empathy bell curve we expected to find in the population.

The adult version of EQ relies on self-report, which is of course problematic, since people might believe they are much more empathic than they really are. This is because someone with poor empathy is often the last person to realize this. But with large samples such “noise” in the data is probably minimal. We went on to develop a child version of EQ, filled in by a parent, and again found that on average girls have a slightly higher EQ than boys.⁴

The empathy circuit

What leads an individual’s empathy to be set at different levels? The most immediate answer is that it likely depends on the functioning of a special circuit in the brain, what I call the “empathy circuit.” Thanks to functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), scientists are getting a

clear picture of the brain areas that play a central role when we empathize. There is a consensus in neuroscience⁵ that at least 10 interconnected brain regions are involved in empathy. See Figure 2. Imaginative experiments using neuroimaging have revealed the different parts of the empathy circuit.

The **medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC)** is thought of as a “hub” for social information processing and is important for comparing your own perspective to someone else’s.⁶⁻⁸ It divides into the dorsal (dMPFC) and the ventral part (vMPFC). The dMPFC is involved in thinking about other people’s thoughts and feelings^{6,9} (sometimes called “meta-representation”) as well as thinking about our own thoughts and feelings.^{7,10} The vMPFC seems to be used more when people think about their own mind more than someone else’s, and in self-awareness.^{7,11-13}

The **orbito-frontal cortex (OFC)** is activated when people are asked to judge which words described what the mind could do.¹⁴ Patients with damage in the OFC have difficulty judging when a faux pas occurs, an indicator of difficulties with empathy.¹⁵ Damage to the OFC can also lead to patients losing their social judgment, becoming socially “disinhibited.” In addition, when you see a needle going into a normal (but not an anesthetized) hand, the OFC is active, suggesting this part of the empathy circuit is involved in judging whether something is painful.¹⁶

The **frontal operculum (FO)** is part not only of the empathy circuit but the language circuit too. The FO is equivalent to an area in the monkey brain involved in coding other people’s intentions and goals.¹⁷ That is, when a monkey (with a deep electrode in its brain) sees another monkey reaching for an object, cells in the FO increase electrical activity, and the same cells fire when the monkey reaches for an object.

Damage to the **inferior frontal gyrus (IFG)** can produce difficulties in emotion recognition.¹⁸ One interesting experiment involved looking at facial expressions such as those in Figure 3 on the next page (happy, sad, angry, and disgusted). This found that disgust is mostly processed in the anterior insula (AI),¹⁹ which will be

described below, happiness is mostly processed in the ventral striatum, anger is mostly processed in the supplementary motor cortex, and sadness is processed in a number of regions, including the hypothalamus.²⁰ The one brain region that consistently correlated with a person’s EQ, regardless of which emotion the person was viewing, was the IFG. The better your empathy, the more active your IFG when looking at emotional faces.

The **caudal anterior cingulate cortex (cACC)**, also called the **middle cingulate cortex (MCC)**, is involved in empathy because it is activated as part of the “pain matrix.” This region is active not only when you experience pain but also when you observe others in pain.²¹ The **anterior insula (AI)** plays a role in bodily aspects of self-awareness, itself closely tied to empathy.²² When a person receives a painful stimulus on the hand or witnesses the painful stimulus be applied to his or her partner’s hand, the AI and the cACC/MCC are activated, whether you are experiencing your own pain or perceiving your loved one’s pain.²³ And if you watch someone’s hand being caught in a door, the AI and cACC/MCC are also activated.²⁴

The **temporal-parietal junction** on the right side (**RTPJ**) has been found to play a key role in empathy, particularly when

For a related story, see page 16.

judging someone else’s intentions and beliefs.²⁵ This is relevant to the recognition element of empathy, or to what is called a “theory of mind.” We use our theory of mind when we try to imagine someone else’s thoughts.

Animal research shows that cells in the **superior temporal sulcus (pSTS)** respond when the animal is monitoring the direction of someone else’s gaze.²⁶ In addition, damage to the pSTS can disrupt a person’s ability to judge where someone else is looking.²⁷ Clearly, we look at another person’s eyes not just to see *where* he or she is looking but also to sense what the person might be *feeling* about what he or she is looking at.²⁸ The pSTS is also involved when you observe “biological motion” (animate, self-propelled kinds of movements that living creatures make).²⁹

The **somatosensory cortex (SMC)** is involved in coding when you are having a tactile experience and by observing others being touched.³⁰⁻³⁴ And when you watch a needle piercing someone else’s hand you get a burst of electrical activity in the somatosensory cortex, also seen using fMRI.^{35,36} This strongly suggests that we react in a very sensory way when we identify with someone else’s distress. This clear brain response is telling us that even without any conscious decision to do so, we must be putting ourselves into the other

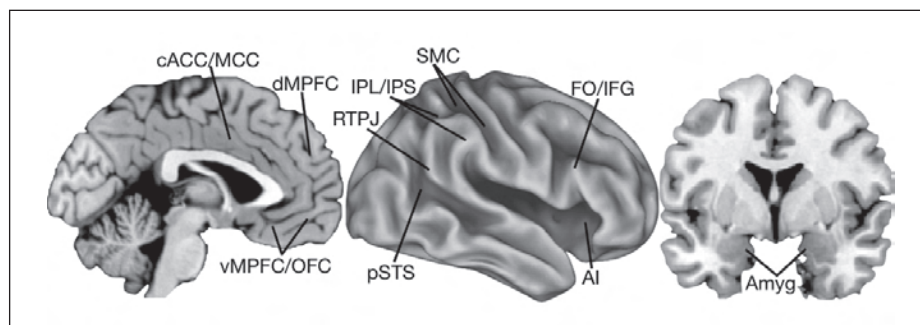


Figure 2: Regions in the social brain. Acronyms are explained in the text.

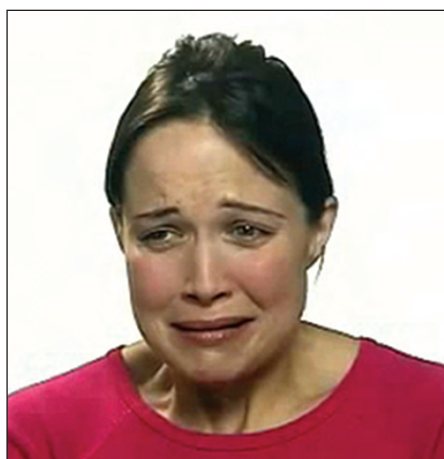
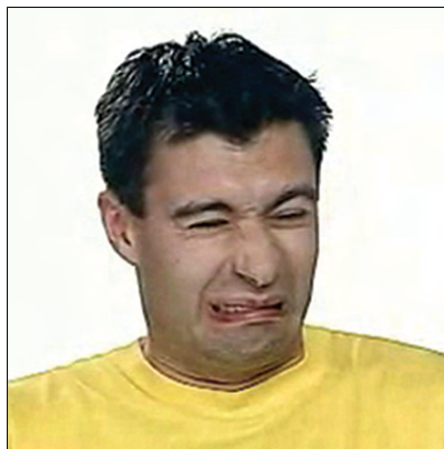


Figure 3: Examples of emotive faces clockwise from upper left: happy, disgusted, sad, and angry.

person's shoes, not just imagining how we would feel in the individual's situation, but also actually feeling it as if it had been our own sensation. No wonder we wince involuntarily when we see someone else get hurt.

The FO/IFG connects to the **inferior parietal lobule (IPL)**, both part of the "mirror neuron system," regions of the brain that are active when you perform an action and when you observe someone else performing the same action. The existence of mirror neurons in primates³⁷ was discovered by placing electrodes into parts of the brain to record nerve cells that fire not only when the animal is performing an action but also when the animal sees another animal performing the same action. If the IFG is part of the human mirror neuron system, this suggests empathy involves some form of mirroring other people's actions and emotions.^{38, 39}

The mirror neuron system in humans is hard to measure, obviously because it is unethical to place electrodes into the awake human healthy brain. But using fMRI it appears to span the IFG, and the **inferior parietal sulcus (IPS)** just posterior to the IPL.

The **amygdala (Amyg)** is involved in emotional learning and regulation processing.^{40, 41} New York University

What leads an individual's empathy to be set at different levels? The most immediate answer is that it likely depends on the functioning of a special circuit in the brain, what I call the "empathy circuit."

neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux argues the amygdala is at the center of "the emotional brain"⁴² because of his extensive studies about how we learn to fear something. When my colleagues and I asked people to look at other people's eyes to make judgments about their emotions and mental states, while they were lying in the fMRI scanner, the amygdala was clearly activated.⁴³

Another clue that the amygdala is part of the empathy circuit comes from a famous neurological patient, known by her initials S. M. She has very specific damage

to both Amyg (we all have one in each hemisphere). Despite having good intelligence, her main difficulty is not being able to recognize fearful emotions in others' faces.⁴⁴ This difficulty S. M. has in recognizing fearful faces is related to the fact that the eyes are critical for recognizing fear in someone's face. S. M.'s damage in the amygdala affects her ability to make eye contact, which is why she has difficulty recognizing fearful faces.⁴⁵ We know this because, when directed to attend to the eyes, she regains the ability to recognize fearful faces.⁴⁶

This brief tour of the 10 major brain regions involved in empathy allows us to talk about an empathy circuit in the brain. And there are multiple connections between these regions too. Finding that these regions vary in activity in different individuals according to the person's particular level of empathy⁴⁷ supports the idea of empathy varying like a dimmer control. And it gives us a direct way of explaining people who for different reasons (people with autism, or Asperger syndrome, or one or other of the personality disorders) have little or no empathy. ■

For more about empathy and autism, see page 22.



Simon Baron-Cohen is Professor of Developmental Psychopathology at University of Cambridge. He directs the Autism Research Centre at Cambridge and the Cambridge

Lifespan Asperger Syndrome Service. His latest book, *The Science of Evil*, will be published in June by Basic Books and in April by Penguin UK as *Zero Degrees of Empathy*. Earlier books include *Prenatal Testosterone in Mind* (MIT Press, 2005), *The Essential Difference: Men, Women and the Extreme Male Brain* (Penguin UK/Basic Books, 2003), and *Mindblindness* (MIT Press, 1995). He has edited or co-edited a number of scholarly anthologies and written books on his areas of expertise for parents and teachers. Baron-Cohen also serves as an editor-in-chief of the online open access journal *Molecular Autism*. He has been awarded prizes from the American Psychological Association, British Science Association, and British Psychological Society for research on autism. Baron-Cohen earned degrees from University of Oxford (B.S. in Human Sciences), the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London (M.Phil. in Clinical Psychology), and University College London (Ph.D. in Psychology). His article "The Essential Difference: The Male and Female Brain" appeared in the winter/spring 2005 edition of this magazine. Email him at sb205@cam.ac.uk.



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The Philosophy of Empathy

By Michael Slote

Everyone talks and writes about empathy nowadays, not just presidents who speak about “feeling your pain” or appointing empathic federal judges, but scientific writers, talk show hosts, journalists, and most of the rest of us, too. Scientists tell us about mirror neurons in the brain that might underlie empathic processes and about the various ways in which apes and other nonhuman animals are capable of empathy. And studies indicate that human males are less disposed toward empathy than human females because only the male brain is bathed in testosterone in utero and because the higher testosterone levels that males tend to register throughout their lives are associated with a greater aggressiveness that gets in the way of empathy.

But these studies and this work and all the words from others typically don’t make clear what the ethical and broader philosophical implications about empathy might be, and those are precisely the issues I want to address, however briefly, in this article.

First, however, let us be clear about what is meant by empathy. The term “empathy” was invented early in the 20th century. Before that the term “sympathy”

was used to refer to what we nowadays refer to as sympathy, but also to refer to what we would now call empathy. So what is the difference? For most of us today, empathy differs from sympathy in the way that “I feel your pain” (empathy) differs from “I feel sorry about your being in pain” (sympathy).

But many current psychologists of moral development accept an “empathy-altruism hypothesis,” according to which empathy powers and shapes our sympathy and, more generally, our altruism. Psychologists of empathy think that even young babies are capable of empathic reactions and that as one becomes cognitively more mature, a typical person’s capacity for empathy will develop. For example, by the time one reaches adolescence, one will be capable of empathy not only with those one knows or sees around one, but also with disadvantaged people one only knows about through television, the Internet, films, books, or the newspaper. Moreover, the identification with others that empathy involves isn’t a total merging or submerging with or into another person — empathic and caring individuals retain a sense of their own identity even when helping others.

How is all this relevant to ethics? Well,

philosophical ethics has largely been dominated by ethical rationalism, the view that our moral capacities and tendencies are a function of our rationality, our powers of reason. But all the current talk about caring and empathy — and these notions didn’t much figure in common talk in our society as recently as 30 years ago — has led some philosophers, myself among them, to think that being moral is more a matter of empathic concern for or caring about others than it is a question of being rational.

Those of us who think this way are called (moral) sentimentalists, and the earliest sentimentalists were the 18th-century British philosophers David Hume, Francis Hutcheson, and Adam Smith (best known for his work on economics). But nowadays people called care ethicists have revived that tradition and claim it is superior to the ethical rationalism that has dominated philosophical thought since Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Morality and empathy dovetail

To reiterate, most care ethicists (like myself) think morality is more a matter of being empathic and caring for others than of being rational. They think that an immoral person is not necessarily irrational

in his or her thinking and actions, but can be said to be heartless if he or she is malicious or indifferent toward other people. So care ethics sees being moral as a function of someone's emotional tendencies and capacities. And some care ethicists also believe that our moral thinking is based on empathy. In other words, we believe that one has to be empathic in order to be caring and that the combination of these qualities is what makes people into or makes them count as morally decent or even good people.

But we may also believe that our ability to think in moral terms, to call actions right or wrong, depends on our capacity for empathy — rather than on pure reason, the way rationalists tend to assume. (There are also those who believe our moral thought and capacities refer to or depend on God, but I want to limit our discussion to secular views.) And now that everyone is talking about empathy and people are more inclined to recognize its importance in human life, philosophers and students of ethics are likely to take (more) seriously the idea that our moral thinking and judgment are based on empathy. Hume claimed as much, but his ideas lay dormant for a long, long time, and it is only now that they seem to be coming to the fore, once again, in philosophical discussions.

Let me mention two pieces of evidence that seem to me to support the idea that empathy enters into the very concepts of right and wrong and morally worse and better. First, we are inclined to be more empathic with people we know or whose problems we are directly (perceptually) aware of than with people we don't personally know or whose problems we only know about secondhand. But we also think it is morally worse not to help those we know or see to be in trouble than not to help someone who (se bad situation) we only know about. So in this case (and, in fact, in many others) what goes more against human empathic tendencies is thought of as morally worse, and the easiest or likeliest explanation is that our moral notions contain a reference to empathy. Second, we believe it is wrong to hurt another person through negligence but don't think the same way about people's negligently hurting themselves, and yet surely any given individual can be as rationally and morally worthy as the person the individual negligently hurt.

So what accounts for the distinction? Once again, I think it is due to a difference regarding empathy. Empathy toward others is a viable and familiar notion, but psychologists and we ourselves have a difficult time making any sense of the idea of empathy toward oneself. So the idea that empathy is built into our moral concepts would explain why we regard it as wrong to hurt or neglect others in a way that it isn't wrong to hurt or neglect oneself.

Of course, none of this tells us exactly



Some care ethicists ... believe that our ability to think in moral terms, to call actions right or wrong, depends on our capacity for empathy — rather than on pure reason, the way rationalists tend to assume.

how empathy enters into concepts like right and wrong, and that is an issue I have been working on very hard in recent years. (See my book *Moral Sentimentalism*, published by Oxford University Press in 2010.) If empathy somehow enters into our understanding of and thinking about right and wrong, and good and evil, then it has a relevance to our culture, society, and political system that has not really been recognized. If empathy also helps make us morally decent individuals, then, once again, it has a social, political, and individual significance that recent scientific studies of empathy have not really or fully homed in on.

However, it would be a mistake to suppose that the philosophical significance of empathy is restricted to morality or ethics. It also has bearing more generally on how we understand or know about the

world, on what philosophers call epistemological questions. And I believe some of the most interesting things that can be said about empathy lie in this direction.

Empathy influences human knowledge

Hume (in his monumental *A Treatise of Human Nature*) pointed out that feeling can spread by a kind of “contagion” from one person to another (as when we feel another person's pain or joy). But he also said that opinions and attitudes can spread in something like the same way. That latter fact has an interesting bearing on questions about human knowledge and about what, from a cognitive or epistemic standpoint, we have reason to believe. Children take in many of their parents' attitudes and opinions by a kind of empathic osmosis, but even adults can be more or less empathic with the beliefs of others, and a large part of what it is to be open-minded or fair-minded is to be willing and able to see things from the point of view of those one disagrees with.

This clearly involves being empathic, but it is empathy with opinions and arguments — rather than empathy with sheer feelings like pain, pleasure, sadness, and joy — that is most relevant to the cognitive/epistemic side of our lives. Think how important it is in our contemporary



world to encourage this kind of cognitive/epistemic empathy. If people of different nations or religions were more willing to see things from each other's points of view, there might be a lot less conflict and misunderstanding (though, of course, the same could probably have been said in earlier centuries and in relation to different national or international conflicts).

Moreover, if we are empathically concerned with people's welfare in the way that care ethics tells us to be, we will presumably also be morally impelled to try to get people to be more empathically open- or fair-minded, too. Once again, then, the importance of empathy to each of us is philosophically underscored, but this time in a way that goes beyond narrowly conceived moral issues of the kind discussed above.

There exists another (somewhat contrary) connection between empathy and epistemology that also merits (further) attention. Hume says that people imbibe or soak up other people's opinions and attitudes, but he never mentions the fact that children are more likely to take on their parents' opinions and attitudes than those of other people. In other words, just as we are more likely to empathize with and, as moral agents, want actively to help those who are near and dear to us, our very empathy with those who are near and dear

to us can lead us unconsciously and in some sense passively to imbibe or soak up their opinions in a way we wouldn't so readily do with other people.

This fact has considerable philosophical and, in particular, epistemological/cognitive significance. When children, via empathy, imbibe or soak up the opinions (or attitudes) of parents they love and feel close to, they don't necessarily subject those opinions to critical or evidential scrutiny. So there is something irrational, from a cognitive or epistemic standpoint, about arriving at beliefs in this way — and about retaining them into later life. Yet this is how many or all of us acquire (and retain) many of our beliefs/opinions/attitudes.

Because of the "insidious" way in which empathy allows or causes the infiltration or infusion of parents' opinions, say, about religion or politics into children, it will turn out that most people (and even — God help us! — a lot of philosophers who think they are highly rational) have acquired and retained beliefs and attitudes that are far from being the product or result of epistemologically warranted reasons or evidence. Epistemological rationalists (who are not the same group, entirely, as ethical rationalists) often tell us that we should be rational in our adoption of beliefs about the world and base them on good evidence. But

it would seem that the empathy we have in relation to our love of our parents (or other loved ones) interferes with such rationalistic good habits. So we may invariably and necessarily be less cognitively rational about things than rationalistic philosophers would like us to be.

Maybe all we need is love

Is it a shame that this is so? Not necessarily. Unlike epistemological rationalists, I think there are many times when people are led toward cognitive/epistemic irrationality by feelings we (almost) all value and desire. Like love, for instance. If one loves another person, one is going to resist evidence that the person has acted criminally or in a highly unseemly or immoral fashion — in a way that a more disinterested and impartial person wouldn't resist. And I think this means that love makes us to some degree evidentially and epistemically irrational (love, we say, is "blind"), but also that we have to accept such irrationality as part of human life if we want to encourage or preserve the relationships that give most meaning to our lives.

In that case, then, we may also have no reason on the whole to regret the fact that children imbibe or soak up beliefs from their parents in ways that don't accord with actual evidence. This may be a byproduct of the empathy that is typical of a close relationship, and we should perhaps accept the cognitive/epistemic irrationality involved here as a price we are or should be willing to pay for such deep, crucial bonds.

In any event, empathy can have a (philosophical) significance for human life that goes beyond anything that has been said by scientists or that arises immediately out of their investigations, data, and theories. And now you can see where I am coming from, right? ■



Michael Slote, UST Professor of Ethics at University of Miami, is the author of many books and articles on ethics, political philosophy, and moral psychology. Most recently, he

has published two books, *Moral Sentimentalism* (Oxford, 2010) and *The Ethics of Care and Empathy* (Routledge, 2007), that place empathy at the center of moral thought and practice. Slote is currently working on applying some of this material to fundamental issues in moral education and the philosophy of education more generally. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy for the sciences and humanities and a past Tanner Lecturer on human values. Educated in philosophy at Harvard University (B.A. and Ph.D.), Slote previously taught at Columbia University, Trinity College Dublin, and University of Maryland, College Park. Email him at msslote@miami.edu.

Doctor's Order: Learn Empathy

By Gary Small

To deal with what seemed like impossible situations, I often fell back on my textbook knowledge and tended to treat patients in a stilted, clinical way. Whatever defenses I was using in those days, my human side managed to slip out on occasion, and I think those moments of empathy were the ones that helped my patients the most.

— The Naked Lady Who Stood on Her Head: A Psychiatrist's Stories of His Most Bizarre Cases

The above excerpt from my experiences as a neophyte psychiatry resident illustrates how I used psychological defenses to cope with the stress of training, yet how letting down my defenses and becoming more empathic seemed to benefit my patients. Of course, in most forms of psychotherapy, understanding another person's emotional point of view is essential to the healing process. After all, empathy forms the social glue that keeps humanity connected; we strive to experience it, seek out empathic individuals to enrich our lives, and otherwise esteem the trait.

Yet we often have difficulty achieving empathic moments. That's one reason people undergo psychotherapy. But teaching empathy to a psychiatry specialist (or to any mental health professional, for that matter), not to mention ensuring best practices, can be challenging, as there is no standard curriculum on the topic.

Adopt detached concern

During my training as a psychiatry resident at Massachusetts General Hospital (1978-81), noted psychiatrist Edward Messner offered a seminar entitled "Autognosis" that helped residents improve diagnostic skills by recognizing their emotional reactions to patients.¹ The course was based on the principle that our innate empathy allows us to approximate, to some degree, the emotions of others. In other words, if we spend time with a depressed or angry person, that individual's mental state is "empathically contagious," and we may start feeling sad or irritable ourselves. This process enables therapists to build a type of sentient bridge to patients and is particularly helpful when the latter, consciously or unconsciously, attempt to mask their true feelings. For example, if an empathic therapist feels sorrow after talking with a patient, that may suggest diagnostic information about the patient's gloomy mental state.

Of course, a psychiatrist wouldn't want to go overboard and fall sway at every



encounter with a patient. It helps to maintain "detached concern," a simultaneous emotional distance to and sensitivity towards the patient.² (This strategy also protects the practitioner from the predicament of caring for patients who cannot get better or face imminent death.) Detached concern, which can be considered strategic empathy, can be taught through, for example, workshops that include viewing and analyzing emotionally charged encounters between patient and practitioner.

A difficulty in training psychiatrists or other mental health professionals is helping them overcome their anxieties when dealing with patients. Such apprehensions tend to block us off from others. The notion that therapists could suffer from the same kinds of mental and emotional disturbances as patients might be too much for the specialists to bear because they may have underlying concerns about their own stability, particularly under times of stress. With experience, however, therapists learn to tolerate — and use — these thoughts and feelings. When the patient detects too much emotional distancing, s/he may feel misunderstood. When the therapist does listen and understand, the patient perceives this empathy and it seems to have a therapeutic impact.³

Empathy can be mapped on the brain

What happens in the brain when people receive or express empathy? In a word, it percolates. Neuroscientists at the Ahmanson-Lovelace Brain Mapping Center at University of California, Los Angeles, used functional magnetic

resonance imaging (fMRI) to observe brain activity while volunteers engaged in the empathic exercise of mirroring another person's facial expressions.⁴ The participants were shown pictures of six facial expressions: happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, disgust, and fear. When participants looked at these pictures, brain activation was observed in the insula, the oval-shaped region that translates our experiences into feelings. When the volunteers imitated the expressions, the brain stimulation was in the exact same area, but significantly greater.

Further, Tania Singer and former colleagues at the Institute of Neurology at University College in London (she's now director of the Department of Social Neuroscience at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig, Germany) studied 16 couples in love.⁵ In experiments, one partner received a brief painful stimulus, such as a small electric shock, and then observed the spouse *appear* to be administered the same brief pain. Whether the latter actually got the electric shock or not, the former *believed* the mate did, triggering in the witness the anterior cingulate cortex and insula, brain regions that scientists have pinpointed as defining empathy and humanity.

Mindfulness deepens as people mature

We also know that empathy improves with age. Psychology professor Robert McGivern and coworkers at San Diego State University have found that when children enter adolescence, they struggle with the ability to recognize another



person's emotions.⁶ In a study of 295 subjects, teenage and young adult volunteers viewed faces demonstrating different emotional states. Compared to other age groups tested, 11- and 12-year-olds (the age when puberty typically begins) needed more time to identify happy, angry, sad, or neutral faces. One explanation is that the adolescent brain is still in the midst of pruning excess synaptic connections. Once that pruning is complete and the adolescent matures to adulthood, expression recognition becomes faster and more efficient.

Scientists have pinpointed a specific region of the brain that controls this tendency in teenagers. Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, of the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience at University College in London, and colleagues, used fMRIs to study the brains of teenagers (11 to 17 years) and young adults (21 to 37 years) asked to make everyday decisions, such as when and where to see a movie or go out to eat. The scientists discovered that teenagers activated a brain network in their temporal lobes to make these decisions, while older volunteers triggered the prefrontal cortex, a region that processes how our decisions affect other people. Such differing neural circuitry may explain why teens are less able than older people to appreciate how their decisions affect those around them.^{7,8}

The same scientists further assessed how rapidly teenagers consider the impact of their decisions on others. The teens were asked questions such as, "How would your friend feel if she weren't invited to your

party?" Younger volunteers took much longer to answer such questions. As people get older, they are more able to put themselves in another person's shoes by using the neural circuitry in their frontal lobes.

Empathy plays a role in evolutionism

Blakemore hypothesized that evolutionism may account for this. Early adult humans with empathic skills had an adaptive advantage by forming groups that could fend off predators and hunt for prey more successfully than the rest could. The young offspring of these better equipped ancestors had less of a need for empathy since they were still being cared for by adults and probably began considering other people's perspectives upon maturation, with such decision-making improving their survival.

Teenagers typically desire instant gratification. Their underdeveloped frontal lobes often impair their everyday thinking. Many teens feel they are invincible, that danger will bounce off them. With normal aging and growth in the life cycle, the frontal lobe neural circuits strengthen, and judgment improves; we develop a greater capacity to delay gratification, consider other people's feelings, put things into perspective, and understand the danger certain situations may hold.

People can learn to be empathic

Taking the biology of empathy into account, having empathic role models, and

acknowledging our own feelings can help shape our understanding of others. In my professional experience, learning empathy involves mastering three essential skills:

Recognizing feelings in others. Verbal and nonverbal expressions can convey what another person is feeling and experiencing. Unfortunately, we don't always recognize these expressions because we are distracted or self-absorbed.

Learning to listen. The best conversationalists are people who know how to listen well. This involves giving undivided attention. Good listeners have self-control; they keep their minds from wandering, hold back from interrupting, ask leading questions, and pick up on cues.

Expressing understanding. Grasping another person's point of view is critical, but the true power of empathy comes from communicating that understanding back. Restating what one perceives as the other person's perspective or asking for additional detail often conveys such understanding.

Although empathy is a topic that neuroscientists, philosophers, and mental health professionals have studied to a considerable extent, a more systematic approach to teaching it would have an important benefit not only to practitioners but also to patients. We'd have a new cadre of more effective practitioners as well as patients who would likely respond better to psychotherapy and gain deeper insights.

For practitioners, developing empathy toward patients is an essential rite of passage. When confronted with challenging behavior in others, a practitioner's first instinct may be to shut down. But getting beyond this allows for an opportunity to understand pain, and foster growth — for the patient, most of all, but also for the practitioner.

For me, learning empathy has been a lifelong goal. I know that when I do express empathy, it helps the person suffering from a mental problem — and helps me feel more human. ■



Gary Small is Professor of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences and Parlow-Solomon Professor on Aging at the David Geffen School of Medicine at University of California, Los

Angeles (UCLA). His latest book, *The Naked Lady Who Stood on Her Head: A Psychiatrist's Stories of His Most Bizarre Cases*, cowritten with Gigi Vorgan, was published last September by Morrow. Other volumes include the best-selling *The Memory Bible* (Hyperion, 2002). Small has authored or coauthored more than 500 scientific publications. He earned degrees from UCLA (B.A. in Biology) and University of Southern California School of Medicine (M.D.) and completed a residency and fellowship in psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital, among other training. Email him at gsmall@mednet.ucla.edu.



For footnotes, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/forum/spring2011.



British soldiers react to enemy fire on their unidentified trench in this undated photo from World War I.

Christmas Truce of 1914: Empathy under Fire

By David R. Woodward

The bloodiest phase of the Great War occurred in 1914, in the first year of the conflict that had begun that summer, as mass conscript armies attempted quick victory through delivering knock-out blows. On the Western Front the Germans and Allies each suffered approximately 800,000 casualties. Astonishingly, the original British Expeditionary Force (BEF) lost 86,237 out of some 110,000 men.¹

Following the First Battle of the Marne in Northeast France that had dashed Germany's hopes of a swift conquest, both sides attempted to outflank the other. But once the opposing armies reached the North Sea, there were no more flanks to turn, and the war of movement ended. Soldiers dug in. An almost continuous system of trenches emerged, stretching some 475 miles from the North Sea to Switzerland.

Adversaries found themselves in close proximity, separated by mere tens of yards of what became known as "no-man's land." One could catch a glimpse of the enemy or hear him talking and, on occasion, even laughing. Both sides shared common discomforts and dangers. Rainwater deluged

trenches and uniforms became caked with mud. And snipers threatened ration parties. Mutual empathy inevitably arose.

"Live and let live"

Although prepared to assault the enemy or repel his attacks, some soldiers on both sides resisted practices such as sniping ration parties. A British soldier's comment that this practice was "simply organized murder serving no purpose whatever so far as war's results are concerned"² resonated in German trenches. Lower ranks, especially on quiet fronts, established tacit truces allowing ration parties to resupply front line troops without coming under fire. As one British noncommissioned officer told a newly arrived soldier, "Mr. Boche (French slur for a German) ain't a bad feller. You leave 'im alone: 'e'll leave you alone."³

These attempts to limit violence have been aptly described as the "live and let live" system by Tony Ashworth, who argues that unofficial armistices, which sought to limit aggression and emphasized similarities rather than differences, portended the famous Christmas Truce of 1914. In his words, the Christmas Truce "can be likened to the sudden surfacing of the whole of an iceberg, visible to all including non-combatants, which for most

of the war remained largely submerged, invisible to all save the participants."⁴

Fire at white flags "as a matter of principle"

The political and military leadership, however, did not share the front line soldiers' empathy as the war's first Christmas approached. Pope Benedict XV's appeal for a holiday stand-down and the cessation of "the clang of arms" was generally ignored by governments and certainly by the military.

Sir John French, commander in chief of the BEF, ordered "instant fire" on any German white flag raised on the Western Front because of Germany's alleged perfidious use of that symbol. On Dec. 22, Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, sent a similar message to the Royal Navy: "Any white flag hoisted by a German ship is to be fired on as a matter of principle."⁵ Joseph Joffre, commander in chief of the French Army, on the eve of an offensive to drive the Germans from Northern France, encouraged his troops with the fighting words: "The hour of attack has sounded; after having contained the attacks of the Germans, it is necessary now to smash them and liberate completely the occupied national territory."⁶

"This is Christmas Eve for both of us"

Nonetheless, the approach of Yuletide turned soldiers' thoughts to season's greetings, loved ones, and home. Presents and cards arrived from monarchs (the Kaiser sent cigars and George V and Queen Mary sent cards) as well as from family and other supporters. German authorities even provided Christmas trees for every unit in their armed forces.

Lt. Michael Holroyd, a British machine-gun officer in the 1st Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, noted the "vast quantities of Christmas presents and other miscellaneous goods arriving."⁷ Bruce Bairnsfather, also a British machine-gun officer, and a cartoonist whose personal account of wartime in the trenches, *Bullets & Billets*, became a bestseller in Britain, remarked in a chapter entitled "Christmas Eve — a Lull in Hate — Briton cum Boche," that "there was a kind of an invisible, intangible feeling extending across the frozen swamp between the two lines, which said, 'This is Christmas Eve for both of us — something in common.'"⁸

Even weather contributed to this Christmas spirit. Rain of the previous days stopped and frost firmed up the muddy terrain.

Although Germans usually initiated ceasefires, it is impossible to pinpoint where the Christmas Truce began. Examples of fraternization also occurred more frequently and on a much larger scale on the British fronts. Unlike the French, the British had



German soldiers in an unidentified trench pause from duties in this undated photo from World War I.

suspended offensive action for the year and now defended only some 21 miles of trenches. (In November the French had temporarily replaced British troops in the Ypres sector in anticipation of the former's forthcoming offensive by the 10th Army.)

Rifleman Ernest Morley, 16th Battalion, London Regiment, in a letter home described how the truce began in his sector:

We had decided to give the Germans a Christmas present of three carols & 5 rounds rapid. Accordingly as soon as night fell we started & the strains of "White Shepherds" (beautifully rendered by the choir) arose upon the air. We finished that and paused preparatory to giving the 2nd item on the programme. But lo! We heard answering strains arising from their lines. Also they started shouting across to us. Therefore we stopped any hostile operations and commenced to shout back. One of them shouted "A Merry Christmas English. We're not shooting tonight." We yelled back a similar message. ...

As fighting ceased, lights appeared along Morley's front. In his words, "the two lines looked like an illuminated fête. ... (W)e had all the candles & lights we could muster stuck on our swords (actually bayonets) above the parapet."⁹ Holroyd, who heard this singing in the distance, concluded that German and British soldiers would not "desecrate Christmas Day" by killing each other.¹⁰

Enemies exchanged gifts

"It was a perfect day," according to Bairnsfather. "A beautiful, cloudless blue sky. The ground hard and white, fading off

towards the wood in a thin low lying mist."¹¹ Although fighting continued elsewhere, many Germans and British soldiers, as Holroyd had predicted, refrained from hostilities on the Christian year's most holy day. In sectors where assaults had recently taken place, officers arranged ceasefires to retrieve and bury decaying corpses in "no-man's land," those wedged in shell holes, for instance, or propped up on rows of barbed wire. Conversations ensued between rival burial parties.

In other parts of the front, according to Morley, German soldiers "started getting out of the trenches & waving & some came over towards us. We went out and met them & had the curious pleasure of chatting with the men who had been doing their best to kill us, & we them."¹² Enemies exchanged gifts including alcohol, cigarettes and cigars, food, uniform buttons and insignia.

Much has been made of makeshift football games played in "no-man's land" between German and British soldiers. A few games were actually played with teams being chosen and scores recorded. But more often what occurred was the unorganized kicking about of caps, tin cans and whatever else could substitute for a soccer ball.

This fraternization was extraordinary and recognized as such by participants. Pvt. W. J. Chennell, who served with the 3rd and 2nd Battalions, Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment, wrote his wife that he had shared "a unique experience which won't perhaps occur again for a hundred years."¹³ Some soldiers recognized, as Holroyd emphasized to his parents, that "peace on earth" had "really happened, in spite of the Pope's failures."¹⁴

Holroyd also noted on New Year's Eve that since Christmas day "not a shot has

been fired across at us with intent to kill." He went on to tell his parents: "Why only last night they showed a red light and cried aloud 'Put your heads down.' Which we did and a furious fusillade came whizzing over our heads. After a space, fire ceased, a white light replaced the red one, and they shouted 'All right, Hampshires. Our Officers gone now.'"¹⁵

"There was not an atom of hate on either side that day; and yet ..."

The Christmas Truce reflected the better instincts of ordinary men under fire. And examples of "live and let live" continued throughout the war on all fronts. But the Christmas Truce of 1914 was not to be repeated. The survival instinct and empathy for a fellow human should not be confused with a desire to end the war before vanquishing foes or establishing peace. Stanley Weintraub has suggested that this truce "had the potential to become more than a temporary respite."¹⁶ But did it really have the potential to bring the war to a conclusion?

Bairnsfather, the machine-gun officer, spoke for many comrades when he wrote, "There was not an atom of hate on either side that day; and yet, on our side, not for a moment was the will to beat them relaxed. It was just like the interval between the rounds in a friendly boxing match."¹⁷ And Malcolm Brown, the leading authority on the Christmas Truce, emphasizes that vital issues of national security had to be resolved before peace could be made. He argues that "ending the war without resolving the injustices resulting from it was, quite simply, not a tenable option."¹⁸ The price of the subsequent Allied victory in 1918, however, proved extraordinarily high. France, for example, mobilized 8,500,000 men; 5,300,000 were killed or wounded. ■



David R. Woodward is Professor Emeritus of History at Marshall University, at which he taught for 36 years. Earlier he taught at Texas A & M University.

Woodward specializes in modern European history with a research interest in the First World War. His books include *Trial by Friendship: Anglo-American Relations, 1917-1918*; *Lloyd George and the Generals*; *Hell in the Holy Land: World War I in the Middle East*; *World War I Almanac*; and *Field Marshal Sir William Robertson: Chief of the Imperial General Staff in the Great War*. Other publications include articles in trade periodicals such as the *Journal of Modern History*, *Albion*, *The Historical Journal*, *The Historian*, and *Military History*. He is currently writing a history of the U. S. Army during World War I for Cambridge University Press. Woodward earned history degrees from Austin Peay State University (B.A.) and University of Georgia (M.A. and Ph.D.). Email him at woodwadr@marshall.edu.



Empathy Abroad: A Student's Perspective

By Brianna Randall

Editor's note: *Brianna Randall, a junior marketing major at University of Georgia, spent three weeks last summer in Siem Reap, Cambodia, writing, photographing and reporting, and teaching English. A 2010 Study Abroad Grant from Phi Kappa Phi helped offset the cost of the trip. She was one of five keynote speakers who had won Society awards to talk at a gala dinner at the 2010 Phi Kappa Phi convention in August in Kansas City, Mo. Much of her presentation about the adventure — and her online journal, Bree in Bodi, breeinbodi.wordpress.com — concerned empathy. Randall was invited to adapt her comments for this edition of the magazine. Here are edited excerpts. Email her at brandall@uga.edu.*

Wearing an ankle-length skirt, loose-fitting blouse, and wide-brim hat, I expected to blend in among the similarly dressed villagers near Angkor Wat, a 12th-century temple in Angkor, once the seat of the ancient Khmer Empire. But within minutes of disembarking from my tuk-tuk, a three-wheeled auto rickshaw, my attempt at assimilation crumbled.

Locals turned from the sacred site to circle me, as if I were an exhibit in a glass case, staring and mumbling. Were they afraid? Several sped by when checking me out. Curious? A few beckoned others to venture closer (but not too close). Amazed? Some rubbed my skin and tugged my hair.

I was self-conscious and confused but remembered the ideals of Southeast Asian femininity: petite frame, straight hair, pale skin. Intuiting that African Americans were a rarity in this part of the world, I understood that my tall figure, matted locks, and caramel hue were just as foreign to them as their language and culture were to me.

Snakes

During a boat ride to a floating village on Tonle Sap (freshwater) Lake, the largest in Southeast Asia, swelling to 12,000 square kilometers during monsoon seasons, I expected fish farms, caged alligators, and maybe seasickness from the choppy muddy waters. I did not expect children greeting me with snakes.

As my fellow visitors and I approached the floating village (a loose community whose population fluctuates from scores to hundreds as people form, migrate and reform, tour guides explained), a canoe pulled alongside our boat, and two toddlers wrapped in boa constrictors welcomed us. Terrified, I contemplated jumping out of



Author Brianna Randall learned to conquer her fear of snakes last summer and honor a local Cambodian tradition in the process.

the other side of our boat and swimming back to America, but I spotted another boy in a second canoe untangling a little wriggling friend from a clump of slimy creatures in the water. This was obviously a custom.

The children lived on a body of water with no dog or cat in sight but with more than four million water snakes floating around them *each year*, I eventually learned. For domesticated fun kids would dip in and take their pick of serpents, name them, converse with them while rubbing their heads, and play games with them like, for instance, expert balloon magicians, molding the malleable bodies into various patterns and shapes around limbs.

This explained a four-year-old's amusement at my fear of his slithery



A four-year-old Cambodian boy "double dared" Randall to pet his snake.



If you want a snack in Cambodia, consider crickets, a national treat.



Randall decided not to try fried tarantula, a favorite among Cambodians.

cohort. Walking toward me, he peeled the snake off of himself, raised it above his head, and yelled one of the few English terms he knew: “Double dare!”

What to do? Protect myself, decline the challenge, and perhaps insult him and his elders? Try to bond with this boy and his seemingly harmless “pet”? My peers were watching and there really was no choice. I closed my eyes, bent to the child’s level, and, with a tour guide’s help and encouragement, let the slippery being coil around my shoulders, back and waist, as I screamed. Paralyzed with fright, I looked at the young owner and said through an apprehensive smile, “Happy?” I had no idea whether or not he understood my question, but he shook his head yes and giggled.

Haggling

Whether new or old, marketplaces in Siem Reap operate not by set prices like American stores but instead by prices set by haggling. Since vendors spoke Khmer and I spoke English, the main communication we shared was body language.

For customers, raised eyebrows suggested their disbelief about the price; lack of eye contact conveyed the need for more time to think about the possible purchase; and prolonged silence (or pretending to walk away) meant no sale. Vendors negotiated with tourists every day and knew not only how to manage these signs but also how to play on shoppers’ sympathies. Vendors sensed that they often were seen as less fortunate than their customers and, therefore, would, if all else failed, resort to begging, falling to their knees, or trying to pull consumers back, literally. “Please! Business no good!” they might plead in broken English. Sometimes that was true; sometimes it wasn’t.

For several days I fell for this routine and paid too high a price for everything from coconut palm sugar to reproductions

of Apsara paintings of traditional Khmer dancers. Eventually, I learned how through expressions and gestures to decrease the supposed final offer by at least 30 percent.

Food

To understand the local palate, we college students traveled to a rural village just outside of Siem Reap. Freed from basic American rules of dining etiquette, we let the sweet juice of green coconuts run down our chins. Pleased to put my elbows on the table and abandon utensils, I embraced the rawness of it all.

This feeling lasted until we passed a lakeside market of exotic fruits and snacks and our tour guide broke away to make a quick purchase of fried crickets.

“Who first?” he asked, digging one up from the bag. Each of my peers curiously or eagerly downed a crispy insect, but all I could do was cringe at the crunching. And my stomach churned when the leader of this extreme taste-test playfully pulled a cricket leg from between her teeth. I just couldn’t embrace this aspect of the foreign country!

I thought my colleagues had satisfied their hunger for adventure, but no. At an upscale restaurant blocks from the king’s palace, while I stayed true to the American way and munched on a hamburger, the rest of the group ordered another local favorite: fried tarantula. A few ate with relish. Most spit out what little they had tried, and one regurgitated into her plate, before asking for something they considered more palatable.

Education

Santhou, a college-educated interpreter and tour guide from Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital, talked with us American college students about the lack of education in his country as we rode to

Banteay Srei, a 10th-century temple in Angkor. (Most Cambodians we interacted with, like Santhou, went by only their last name.)

Almost 38 percent of U.S. adults ages 25-65 have college degrees, according to the Indianapolis, Ind.-based Lumina Foundation for Education, a private, independent organization whose mission is to expand access to postsecondary education in the U.S. And as of fall 2007, 18.7 million undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education that participate in Title IV federal student financial aid programs, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, the main federal entity that collects and analyzes education data and that’s located in Washington, D.C.

But only 7 percent of Cambodians, some one million people, were enrolled in postsecondary school in 2008, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the statistical branch of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, hosted by University of Montreal.

Santhou expressed the few by holding up his index finger and thumb and peeking at us through them. Coming from a small village just outside the capital and being the oldest of nine children, Santhou had worked nights chopping and transporting wood in a factory to pay for college. He was the only sibling to enroll in higher education. (Poor families like his typically send only the oldest son to go beyond primary school.)

“The government does not help,” he added, tracing with his fingertips deep scars on his hands and wrists.

We explained that, for most Americans, the government, schools themselves, and other organizations provide opportunities for funding. Santhou stared at his feet for several seconds. “Oh, wow!” he finally replied, forcing a smile. ■



are being watched.⁷ Empathy only goes so far when self-consciousness is thrown into the mix, I suppose.

Those who don't experience contagious yawns

Someone with an injured prefrontal cortex often cannot empathize with others and, consequently, doesn't tend to yawn contagiously.⁸ Autistic people are another subset rarely emitting contagious yawns, in this case because they may have delays in (or lack) language, communication, or socialization skills, therefore inhibiting empathy.⁹

Further, an experiment of more than 100 autistic children ages 1-6 posited that a) humans unconsciously match mechanics and emotions of others, leading to the ability to empathize, but that b) autistic children struggle to mimic others and pick up on social cues and, thus, are unlikely to have contagious yawning. Results of this study confirmed the latter claim. Plus, the more severe the form of autism, the less likely the child is to yawn contagiously.¹⁰

The importance of contagious yawns

E. O. Smith, professor emeritus of anthropology at Emory University, argues that the contagious yawn is "poorly understood (in) evolutionary history."¹¹ And Simon B. N. Thompson, specializing in clinical psychology and neuropsychology at Bournemouth University in the United Kingdom, concludes in a recent review of the literature on contagious yawning that more research is needed to understand the origin, process and effect of this "scientific conundrum."¹²

Perhaps future investigations will uncover more about the relationship between empathy and contagious yawning and the brain. For now, the next time someone tells you to stop yawning, just respond that you can't help it; you're simply built to empathize. And I hope I made you yawn. ■

Nothing to Yawn About?

By Catherine C. Shoultz

Reading this column might make you yawn. In a good way, I hope! Writing it certainly made me yawn — for all the right reasons. Here's why: contagious yawning, which is linked to parts of the brain that control the capacity for empathy.

This involuntary reaction, seemingly unique to humans and chimps, is caused by cues ranging from watching someone yawn to thinking about yawning.¹ In fact, up to 50 percent of adult humans, plus 33 percent of adult chimpanzees, emit contagious yawns.²

Contagious yawns versus spontaneous yawns

Contagious yawns are not to be confused with spontaneous yawns. Contagious yawns stem from a type of mindfulness and develop over time. Spontaneous yawns derive from biology and start in the womb. Hypotheses accounting for spontaneous yawns include supplying lungs with air that oxygenates the blood; stretching the lungs via inhalation and exhalation to increase feeling awake; and bringing in fresh air to

Scientists discovered in experiments that the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain associated with personality and social behavior, activates when a person watches another yawn.

cool the brain. Spontaneous yawns also express aggression, or the threat of it, by the baring of teeth, a vestigial reflex in humans and a vital tool in chimps.³

Contagious yawning in humans happens because of the inherent trait of empathy. Scientists discovered in experiments that the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain associated with personality and social behavior, activates when a person watches another yawn.⁴ And numerous studies prove that contagious yawning in humans occurs immediately after people see, hear, or read about someone yawning.⁵ What's more, 60 percent of the time witnesses will yawn after another has done so or talked about having done so.⁶

Inversely, subjects in experiments suppress yawns if participants know they



Catherine C. Shoultz (Missouri State University) is pursuing a master's degree in public health, with a concentration in the epidemiology of infectious disease, from Yale University's School of Public Health. She graduated magna cum laude in biology from Missouri State University's Honors College and was one of six students to earn the school's highest award, the Citizen Scholar. Shoultz also won a 2009 Award of Excellence from Phi Kappa Phi to help finance her graduate studies. Email her at catherine.shoultz@yale.edu.



For footnotes, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/forum/spring2011.



Empathy 2.0: Virtual Intimacy

By Timothy L. Hulsey

The rapid growth in social media websites tells us that we like feeling connected. Facebook, for example, currently claims more than 400 million users. The average participant has 130 friends, receives eight friend requests per month, and is a member of 13 groups, according to the company. And some 106 million people now have Twitter accounts. Last year, upwards of 110 million individuals visited the website and generated in excess of 55 million tweets per day.

We have come to accept virtual as real, online as social, and Facebook as face-to-face.

One effect has been a dramatic increase in our ability to know what those in our social circle are doing, what (and whom) they like and dislike, where (and with whom) they go — and how they feel about pretty much everything. Called ambient awareness in technological circles, this new way of relating allows us to be knowledgeable about the lives of people we may or may not have actually met, without much effort.

But is this necessarily a bad thing? Might this not be simply a 21st-century, technologically enhanced way of doing

what humans have been doing since time began?

Some advantages

In his Sept. 5, 2008, *New York Times* magazine article, “Brave New World of Digital Intimacy,” Clive Thompson quotes one man’s experience as a regular user of social media: “I feel like I’m getting to something raw about my friends. It’s like I’ve got this heads-up display for them.”

Thompson goes on to note that, “It can also lead to more real-life contact, because when one member of Haley’s group decides to go out to a bar or see a band and Twitters about his plans, the others see it, and some decide to drop by — ad hoc, self-organizing socializing. And when they do socialize face to face, it feels oddly as if they’ve never actually been apart. They don’t need to ask, ‘So, what have you been up to?’ because they already know. Instead, they’ll begin discussing something that one of the friends Twitted that afternoon, as if picking up a conversation in the middle.”

More disadvantages

While admitting that ambient awareness may enhance preexisting relationships, skeptics like G. Anthony Gorry, a computer scientist at Rice University, point out that, “In our life on the screen, we might know more and more about others and care less and less about them.” (See “Empathy in the Virtual World,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Aug. 31, 2009.) The concern is that more and more time in the virtual world corresponds necessarily to less and less time engaged in “real” interactions.

In fact, a Feb. 16, 2000, *New York Times* article by John Markoff cites a study, conducted by Stanford University, that

found “the more hours people use the Internet, the less time they spend with real human beings.”

“I fear,” Gorry writes, “that we will pay for our entry into the magical garden of cyberspace with a loss of empathy — that our devotion to ephemeral images will diminish our readiness to care for those around us.”

Indeed, more time living virtually seems to result in poorer functioning in the real interpersonal world. In their September 1998 article in *American Psychologist*, Robert Kraut, Michael Patterson, Vicki Lundmark, Sara Kiesler, Tridas Mukopadhyay and William Scherlis write that “the paradox” of the Internet is that it is “a social technology used for communication with individuals and groups, but it is associated with declines in social involvement and the psychological well-being that goes with social involvement.”

In a trenchant critique of media and technology, computer scientist and multimedia artist Jaron Lanier, often credited with popularizing the term “virtual reality,” takes this idea a step further, lamenting “the end of human specialness” and the “decay in the belief in self” created by the online world. In a piece for the Aug. 29, 2010, edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, he argues that technology uses us as conduits for information. When we forward a YouTube video or react to a Facebook post or tweet, we treat information as “a free-standing substance, independent of human experience or perspective.” Lanier, Innovator-in-Residence at University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, entreats his students not to tweet or blog during class, “so that they might exist.”

After all, Lanier asks, “If you are only a reflector of information, are you really there?” ■



Timothy L. Hulsey (Society Vice President for Chapter Relations) is Associate Professor of Psychology and Dean of the Honors College at Virginia Commonwealth University.

He co-authored the 2004 book *Moral Cruelty* (University Press of America), and articles he wrote or co-wrote have appeared in industry publications including the *American Journal of Psychiatry* and *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. Hulsey earned psychology degrees from Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi (bachelor’s), Trinity University (master’s), and University of Tennessee (doctoral) and served as a pre- and post-doctoral fellow at Dartmouth Medical School. Earlier in his career, he taught and directed the university honors program at Texas State University. Email him at tlhulsey@vcu.edu.



Morgan Freeman (left), as South African President Nelson Mandela, and Matt Damon, as François Pienaar, captain of the national rugby team, recognize how crucial empathy is in the 2009 fact-based film *Invictus*.

How Empathy Unfolds in Plays and Movies

By (William) Arnold Johnston and Deborah Ann Percy

Some great works of theater and film center on empathy. The attribute, whether apparent or missing, helps define the characters, plots and themes that make these pieces compelling.

Empathy on the stage

In Shakespeare's *Othello* (1602-04), villainous Iago, the conniving aide of the titular character, the heroic Moor of Venice, represents the importance of empathy via the subordinate's absence of it. Consumed by envy and hatred, Iago destroys the guileless Othello by convincing him that his beloved, virtuous wife Desdemona is unfaithful. Jealousy then drives the otherwise admirable general to murder and suicide.

Ironically, had Othello understood resentment's malign effects — possessed empathy for his tormentor — he might have avoided disaster.

2.5 Minute Ride, a seriocomic 1996 monologue by playwright-performer Lisa Kron, refracts empathy through the Holocaust by retelling the true story of her father, Walter. A retired lawyer living in Lansing, Mich., he was born in Germany in 1922 and evacuated from Nazi Germany in 1937 via the *Kindertransport* program by his parents before they were murdered at Auschwitz. Walter later returns to Germany as a U.S. Army interrogator of Nazi war criminals. As Kron describes her father's interrogation of one who refused to

acknowledge his guilt, Walter eventually admits to himself that had he been in the man's position, he might have committed the same acts. Despite this unexpected empathy, when the man finally confesses, Walter reports his crimes without hesitation, doing his duty to fellow Jews and humanity.

Empathy only goes so far — or does it?

Empathy on the screen

Director Clint Eastwood's drama *Invictus* (2009) tackles empathy by finding parallels between politics and sports in post-apartheid South Africa. Written by Anthony Peckham and based on John Carlin's 2008 book *Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Changed a Nation*, the film stars Morgan Freeman as President Mandela and Matt Damon as François Pienaar, captain of the Springboks, the national rugby team. Becoming the first black head of state after 27 years of imprisonment, Mandela employs his hard-won understanding of his former captors in rallying support for the Springboks, who, with an almost all-white roster, typify what the black majority found brutal and exclusionary during decades of oppressive white minority rule. Mandela helps awaken the empathy of Pienaar, whose challenge in leading his team in a society that's integrating symbolizes Mandela's countrywide endeavors at inclusion and understanding.

Their efforts turn the mediocre Springboks into a squad that improbably unites the nation — black and white — and even more improbably wins the 1995

World Cup against seemingly invincible opponents.

Empathy becomes a life-and-death struggle in the psychological drama *Five Minutes of Heaven* (2009), directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel from a script by Guy Hibbert, based on conversations the author had with the main characters. Liam Neeson portrays Alistair Little, who as a 17-year-old in 1975 wanted to raise his profile as a member of a Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force paramilitary cell in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and wound up shooting and killing a young Catholic man, Jim Griffin, in front of the victim's 11-year-old brother, Joe. The action then moves forward 33 years as a television documentary crew intends to film a reconciliation between Alistair, now an antiviolence counselor, and Joe, a family man depicted by James Nesbitt, who secretly means to kill Alistair. Unable to carry out his plan, Joe agrees to meet Alistair alone at the scene of the crime. Their subsequent violent confrontation suggests the necessity of mutual suffering as a pathway to empathy, and the two men tumble out of a window in a painful symbol of twinned rebirth.

Before limping away, Alistair urges Joe to live in the present for his wife and daughters, and Joe eventually telephones Alistair that, "We're finished," with the past.

Such works help us empathize with evildoers, thereby enlarging our understanding and opening the way to forgiveness. They also show us that a deficiency of empathy can lead to misdeeds so heinous as to demand an accounting. ■



(William) Arnold Johnston (Western Michigan University), Emeritus Chair and Professor of English at Western Michigan University, and his wife Deborah Ann

Percy, a former educator-administrator at public middle and high schools in Kalamazoo, Mich., are full-time writers and frequent collaborators. His poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and translations have appeared widely in literary journals and anthologies, as have her short fiction and prose pieces. Together and individually their plays have won awards, production, and publication across the country. Their books include his *The Witching Voice: A Novel from the Life of Robert Burns*, her collection of short fiction, *Cool Front: Stories from Lake Michigan*, and their anthology, *The Art of the One-Act*, and their collection of one-acts, *Duets: Love Is Strange*. Their play *Beyond Sex* is forthcoming in English and Romanian editions (the latter translated by Dona Roşu and Luciana Costea as *Dincolo de Sex*), and their translation (with Roşu) of Romanian playwright Hristache Popescu's *Epilogue* also will appear soon. Email them at arnie.johnston@wmich.edu or dajohnston2@gmail.com.

Empathy Spurs Basketball Coach to Success

By Joe Cascio

Longtime San Antonio Spurs head coach Gregg Popovich twice seemed frustrated at a practice last November at my school, Santa Monica College, a few games into the 2010-11 National Basketball Association (NBA) season. First, players initially joked around instead of immediately warming up, per his instructions. Later, they failed to hustle into a huddle. But Popovich never raised his voice in the two-hour session. Instead, he relied on a firm stare and a few key words like, “Guys, it’s time to work.”

What’s more, Popovich welcomed input. For instance, starting small forward Richard Jefferson suggested a minor change to an otherwise fully conceived play (by adding a screen on the opposite side of the court from the ball). “Pop,” as the celebrated coach is called, made the improvement instantly, recognizing that the 10-year NBA veteran knew a thing or two about the game. “You nailed it, R. J.,” Popovich said, for all to hear.

Such collaboration might seem unremarkable or simply pragmatic. But Jefferson, in his second season with the Spurs, and a good but not great player, tested free agency last year, before returning to the team — making Popovich’s open-mindedness perhaps unusual, even remarkable.

In fact, Popovich engaged the entire squad at that practice, not just All-Stars like power forward Tim Duncan, point guard Tony Parker, and shooting guard Manu Ginobili. Popovich gave equal time to the bench, too. And he treated all respectfully as adults.

His ability to relate to players — to be empathic — is one reason the Spurs have won four championships (1999, 2003, 2005, 2007) since his tenure began in 1996.

Truth be told, Popovich, 2003 Coach of the Year, must show empathy. Coaching counterparts who also led teams to titles, such as Phil Jackson (six with the Chicago Bulls and five with his current team, the Los Angeles Lakers) and Pat Riley (four with the Lakers and one with the Miami Heat, for which he currently serves as president), had long careers as players in the NBA and were part of championship rosters (two for Jackson with the New York Knicks and one for Riley with the Lakers). But Popovich, who competed for the Air Force Academy and the U.S. Armed Forces Team, never stepped foot on the NBA court as a player.

(Other NBA head coaches who also never played in the league include Stan Van Gundy, Miami Heat, 2003-06, and



San Antonio Spurs head coach Gregg Popovich (white shirt), who uses empathy as a motivational technique, talks with an unidentified reporter, as assistant coach Brett Brown readies for team practice, last November at Santa Monica College.

Orlando Magic, 2007-present; his brother Jeff Van Gundy, New York Knicks, 1995-2001, and Houston Rockets, 2003-07; Frank Layden, Utah Jazz, 1981-88; and Lawrence Frank, New Jersey Nets, 2003-09.)

This means he empathizes in a figurative sense. Popovich, chair of the student life committee when head coach at Pomona-Pitzer Colleges early in his career, embraces the idea that the game revolves around two points of view: the coach’s and the players’. He understands that players see things on the court that he cannot from where he sits.

“Listen,” he told Adrian Wojnarowski for Yahoo! Sports in October 2007, “it’s a player’s league. I think it’s very important for a coach to make sure that his players believe 100 percent — and not with lip service — that it’s about them. Coaches are going to do everything they can to create that environment for them. It’s not about creating an environment for us.”

When basking in the 2005 trophy, Popovich praised the frequent benefits of Ginobili’s improvisations despite the occasional drawbacks. “The more I watched him play, the more film I watched,

He empathizes in a figurative sense. Popovich ... embraces the idea that the game revolves around two points of view: the coach’s and the players’. He understands that players see things on the court that he cannot from where he sits.

the more I realized there was going to be a hell of a lot more good doing it his way than my way,” Popovich said in a much repeated quote. “And at the beginning of this season, we made the commitment that we’re going to eat a couple of turnovers, or we’re going to eat a bad shot here and there, and we’re going to see where it goes. And this is where it’s gone.”

Another reason that the 62-year-old Popovich, who paid his dues for years at the college level and in the NBA ranks before getting a shot to run a pro club, appreciates multiple points of view stems from his education. He majored in Soviet studies at the Air Force Academy, and then trained in intelligence to become a spy. Popovich learned how to walk in the shoes of allies, enemies, and all in between. He applies perspective when dealing with players, assistants, opponents, referees, and officials. Plus, his worldliness helps him reach international players like Duncan (St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands), Parker (France), and Ginobili (Argentina).

“Ultimately, his ability to be tough and demanding of his players is tempered with a trust borne out of the fact that they believe he cares about them,” Wojnarowski wrote in June 2007 as the Spurs headed for their fourth ring. No wonder that Coach visited Duncan in St. Croix before drafting him — and that Parker considers “Pop” a father figure. ■



Joe Cascio (California State University-Dominguez Hills) is Project Manager of Athletics at Santa Monica College. Previously, he was the associate head coach of men’s basketball.

Earlier in his career he was assistant coach for the Redondo Union and Loyola (Calif.) High School men’s basketball teams. After beginning higher education full-time at age 34, he earned a bachelor’s degree in kinesiology and a master’s degree in physical education administration from California State University-Dominguez Hills. Email him at Cascio_Joe@smc.edu.

For Executives, Empathy Means Dollars and Sense

By Kimberly Thompson

Name the most important ability for business executives. In wake of the recession, where the bottom line rules, you might answer: generation of revenues over expenses. You'd be half right.

Soft values like empathy also drive hard results like profit.

Bosses who are good "people managers" produce better strategic and financial performance than supervisors who are not, according to a recent study by Green Peak Partners, an organizational consulting firm, and a research team at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

To some, empathy suggests niceness, allowing for the possibility of being taken advantage of or the dulling of the internal determination, not to mention the competitive edge, crucial for success. Thus, the argument goes, administrators should be hard-charging, not sugar-coating. Although individual cases can of course be made for that approach, the study disproves these general assumptions.

Among the findings, based on input from 72 senior executives at 31 companies with \$50 million to \$5 billion in annual revenue:

- Bullying, often regarded as part of a business-building culture, signifies technical incompetence; ineffective leadership; mishandling of talent; and lack of vision.

- Poor interpersonal communication translates to underperformance in all executive functions.

- The more organizations an executive has worked for, the less able the executive is to deal with employees. Ambition aside, job-hopping tends to indicate running away from one's problems, perhaps regarding insufficient perspective on causes and effects of decisions made when in a position of authority.

Psychologist Daniel Goleman, author of the bestseller *Emotional Intelligence*, anticipated these conclusions years ago. "Empathy is particularly important today as a component of leadership for at least three reasons: the increasing use of teams; the rapid pace of globalization; and the growing need to retain talent," he wrote in "What Makes a Leader?" in the November-December 1998 edition of the *Harvard Business Review*. But the very word "empathy" seems "un-businesslike, out



Employers that try to stress the significance of empathy often gain from the practice, as do the employees.

of place amid the tough realities of the marketplace," he observed.

Along these lines, when employees disappoint or other problems arise, managers may struggle between coming down hard on them or rooting them on. University of Amsterdam social psychologist Gerben van Kleef and colleagues demonstrate in a forthcoming study in *Psychological Science* that cheerleading generates better performance. Why? Because mental fatigue and time pressure in stressful situations make team members more likely to respond to the leader's mood than think carefully about the message. And people don't react well to fear, anger, coldness, authoritarianism, or other negativity.

Plus, direct and indirect costs of employee turnover (from the position search to less productivity, more overtime, low morale, and employee burnout/absenteeism during the process) impact profitability and image — and calculate, in the private sector, up to 150 percent of the annual remuneration package for each replaced worker, estimate experts Leonard A. Schlesinger and James L. Heskett in a 1991 article in *MIT Sloan Management Review*. "Other sources have replacement costs ranging from nearly 29 percent of an employee's annual wages to several times his or her yearly salary," tallies the American Management Association in "Retention before the Fact," posted on its website in 2007. Whatever the figure,

it pays off to be empathic in business.

The challenge, then, becomes changing a corporate mindset that relies on objective analysis to evaluate and motivate. After all, it's difficult to measure "nice" on a spreadsheet or performance review; empathy often gets discarded as an intangible, or subordinated in a generic way as "considerate" or "responsive," but something without calculable worth.

However, empathy can be identified and assessed, therefore, rewarded and stressed. Take a director of sales who came up short of it by calling a department meeting at 5:00 p.m., one hour before closing, on Valentine's Day. Bad enough the staff was given only a few hours' notice in what didn't amount to an emergency. Worse, the discussion lasted until 7:30 p.m., meaning that preplanned dinners and social events were ruined — so much so that at least one employee held a grudge for years.

Just the opposite occurred with an employee who fondly remembered from early in his career a manager who distributed handwritten notes of appreciation to personnel and recognized them in meetings for outstanding contributions on special projects, even though no bonus or party occurred. The manager's understanding of the benefits of thinking about others went such a long way that the employee adopted the same practice when he became a manager.

From maternity leave to flex time, family bereavement to casual Fridays, employment policies and company procedures can be influenced by empathy to increase profitability and image — and otherwise improve the workplace. ■



Kimberly Thompson, a National Board Certified Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor, has provided career transition workshops and career counseling for more than 20

years. She has coached all levels of management in both the public and private sectors, developed numerous career transition programs, and consulted with employers on establishing career services for employees. Thompson has written widely on issues dealing with job loss and contributes a weekly column and blog called "Career Rescue" for the "Jobs" section of the *Houston Chronicle*; go online to blogs.chron.com/careerrescue/. Purchase her "Career Rescue" app at iTunes. She received a M.Ed. in Counseling from University of Missouri and a B.S.W. in Social Work from Harding University in Searcy, Ark. Based in Houston, Thompson is a member of the American Counseling Association, National Career Development Association, Career Planning & Adult Development Network, and American Association of Christian Counselors. Email her at careerrescue@yahoo.com; put *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* in the subject line.



The First Citizens Bank in Augusta, Ga., where the author works.

Banking on Local Empathy

By Philip R. Wahl II

Jay Leno based much of his Sept. 29, 2008, *Tonight Show* monologue on news that Congress still hadn't agreed on a \$700 billion bailout bill for faltering financial institutions and that Wachovia was the latest bank to go under in the Great Recession. "They're gone and they're still running ads," the comedian mocked, cut to a Wachovia "Way2Save" commercial of dollar bills raining down on a customer, and then quipped, "They're throwing money in the streets! That's why they went out of business!" He continued that "when kids play Monopoly now, the dumbest kid is the banker." Leno ended the set with an example "about how bad the economy is: I wrote a \$5 check over the weekend. The check was good. But the bank bounced!"

In December 2009, President Barack Obama turned those jests into accusations. Obama said in an interview on *60 Minutes* about what he called "fat cat bankers on Wall Street": "They're still puzzled why it is that people are mad at the banks. Well, let's see, you guys are drawing down \$10, \$20 million bonuses after America went through the worst economic year that it's gone through in — in decades, and you guys caused the problem."

Furthermore, the federal government's Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission (FCIC) — established, according to its website, to "examine the causes, domestic and global, of the current financial and economic crisis in the United States," including "major financial institutions which failed, or were likely to have failed, had they not received exceptional

government assistance" via the bailout — came down hard on banks for a meltdown so vast and complicated that it also included a subprime mortgage debacle, toxic assets, a plunging stock market, and 10 percent unemployment.

Big banks did, of course, play a role in the mess. (So did government regulation, or the lack thereof.) But not all bankers are at fault. In fact, community bankers aren't. As a community banker with 25 years of partnering prudently with individuals and businesses to help realize their goals, I should know.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, among many other experts, agrees that community bankers didn't have a hand in the disaster. For instance, his address at the Independent Community Bankers of America national convention in March 2009 empathized with them: "Many of you likely are frustrated, and rightfully so, by the impact that the financial crisis and economic downturn has had on your banks, as well as on the reputation of bankers more generally. You may well have built your reputations and institutions through responsible lending and community-focused operations, but nonetheless, you now find yourselves facing higher deposit insurance assessments and increasing public skepticism about the behavior of bankers — outcomes that you perceive were largely caused by the actions of larger financial institutions."

Bernanke then apportioned some of the proper blame: "No doubt this frustration has been heightened by the problems caused by financial firms that are too big or

too interconnected to fail. Indeed, the too-big-to-fail issue has emerged as an enormous problem, both for policymakers and for financial institutions generally. Creditors of a firm perceived as too big to fail have less incentive to monitor and restrict the firm's risk-taking through adjustments to the price at which they lend money to the firm."

Wachovia embodied Bernanke's position on "too big to fail." Imposing "large losses on Wachovia's creditors and foreign depositors could intensify liquidity pressures on other U.S. banks, which were vulnerable to a loss of confidence by creditors and uninsured depositors (including foreign depositors), given the stresses already present in the financial markets at that time," states a preliminary FCIC staff report (Aug. 31, 2010), citing a study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. Regulators concluded that "a Wachovia failure could intensify pressures on other large banking organizations that, like Wachovia, reported they were well capitalized but continued to face investor concerns about deteriorating asset quality."

In October 2008, after a favorable change in tax law, Wells Fargo began its acquisition of Wachovia, completing it by year's end. But Leno didn't joke about that.

Although some days we local bankers feel like we work in a fiscal triage unit, trying to stop the monetary bleeding of a business or an individual, we continue to work diligently on taking care of the financial health of our community. Leno's gags about banks provided a little welcome comic relief from the pain of the bottom line. But local bankers serve as invaluable potential curatives and follow a type of capital Hippocratic oath. ■



Philip R. Wahl II (Augusta State University) is Senior Vice President/Augusta City President for First Citizens Bank in Augusta, Ga. He serves as chair of the Augusta Metro

Chamber of Commerce in his spare time. Other outreach includes being on the Augusta State University Foundation board of trustees and the school's Hull College of Business board of advisors; the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center Network advisory council; and the Medical College of Georgia's presidential community advisory council. Wahl's past chairmanships span the Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau; Downtown Development Authority of Augusta; Leadership Augusta; and Junior Achievement of the Central Savannah River Area. He has sat on numerous area boards in fields ranging from workforce to art. Wahl earned a B.B.A. in Management from Augusta State University. Email him at Philip.Wahl@firstcitizensonline.com.

A Kidnapping Occurs. Literal or Figurative?

By Gerald Duff

In a short poem, “The Aesthetics of the Novel,” Kenneth Koch advises, “Put one plot / Inside another plot,” to make prose narrative compelling. That is precisely what David Madden (University of Tennessee) does in *Abducted by Circumstance*, his 11th full-length work of fiction.

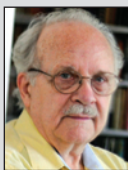
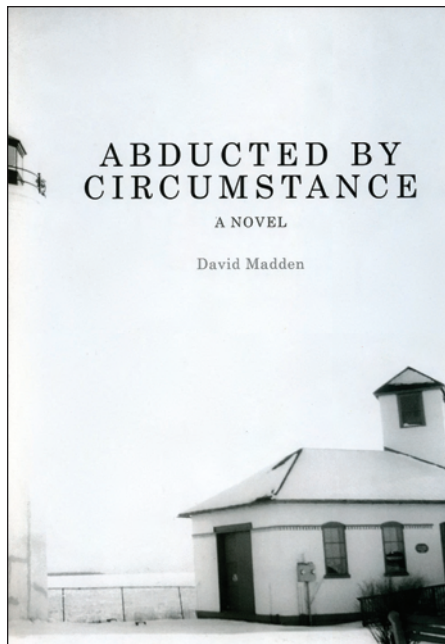
The demanding but artful saga masquerades on one level as an account of a woman’s horrified fascination with the possible disappearance of another woman, supposedly at the hands of a serial killer. While the tale Madden tells us involves no shedding of literal blood, the veiled violence we are asked to observe does not allow us to look away.

In a deeper and much more subtle sense, the burden of Madden’s tale has to do with the growing conviction by Carol Seaborg, the seemingly average heroine at the marrow of this parable, that the vanished woman, Glenda Hamilton, accomplished, striking and confident, represents what she herself should have been but never was. The circumstance of typical daily life, with parents and husbands and lovers and children and employers and work and boredom and death, has not allowed it.

Beginning with Carol’s convincing herself that she has seen the abduction of Glenda from a lighthouse on Lake Ontario deep in winter by a man wearing a mask, the narrative works its way in and through the consciousness of a brooder who may be losing her grip on reality. Also at stake is the thirtysomething college dropout and ambivalent wannabe nurse’s life with her current (third) husband, her two children, and her role as housewife and mother and as intermittent employee at clerical jobs. As she imagines how Glenda, a middle-aged former educator and arts patron with successful children and a second marriage to a distinguished but ailing doctor, might be cleverly dealing with the psychopath, Carol discovers the sense of her own selfhood shearing away.

“You are my heroine, Glenda,” she tells the vanished woman and herself at one point, “I have been abducted since childhood.”

Recognizing when Carol is indeed being Carol, as she casts her mind back over her failed marriages, the heartbreaking loss of her true love, the suicide of her (nurse) mother, and the cold arrogance and distance of her academic father, becomes a main task of the reader. When is Carol to be believed? Is she constructing out of airy nothing a reality involving Glenda, the perfected alter ego Carol craves — despite,



By David Madden
143 pp.
University of Tennessee
Press (April 2010)
\$25.95 hardcover

and yet because of, the kidnapping?

Such confusions of what is real and what is imagined lead the reader into the frozen darkness where Carol has dwelt for most of her days. Abductions do take place, but are not (with the possible exception of Glenda) literal snatchings of a person out of a quotidian life, but instead constitute a series of hazily realized kidnappings and carryings away of self.

Writing convincingly of a character so uncertain of her own psychic location is a tricky business, but Madden, whose best-known novels include *The Suicide’s Wife* and *Sharpshooter*, handles it masterfully in this short, acute work. The narrative is permeated with an intentional, almost voluptuous sense of misdirection and lack of clarity of purpose. Has Glenda, the ideal image of independence and self-reliance, been abducted? Does she exist still, or did she ever? Why do we even bother to care about the question of Glenda when it’s so much more fascinating to observe the unpacking of Carol’s frail hold on her past, present, and future?

The power of Madden’s story comes from the interplay and conflict of Carol’s two plots, her seizing the opportunity to reconstitute her emotional world into a shape she can bear, and her final

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reckonings with the abductions she has suffered her entire life. Glenda serves as a springboard for introspection for Carol, but a real or delusional one, and does it matter which? Let circumstance rid me of this self I can no longer abide, Carol says within, and the journey she takes to reach that point of relinquishment is the wonderfully realized psychological, empathic and otherwise heady thriller Madden provides.

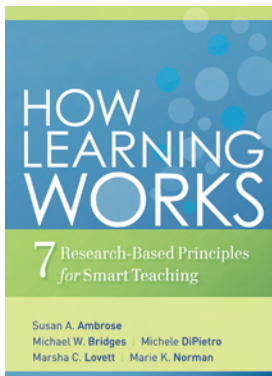
An abduction of us as detached observers of this embroiled and fragmented life has taken place as well. As Carol tells herself near the end of her story, thinking of a second surgery scheduled to remove a physical growth threatening her literal existence, but also summoning, if not for her, then at least for us, her psychological ailment, “I have an appointment tomorrow I cannot miss.”

We all do, Madden shows us. Our immersion in the plot of our own narratives demands it. There is no escape. There can be nothing to carry us easily away. ■



Gerald Duff (McKendree University) has published seven books of fiction, two collections of poems, and three books of nonfiction. His most recent is a collection of short stories, *Fire*

Ants and Other Stories, from NewSouth, and his memoir, *Home Truths: A Deep East Texas Memory*, will be published by Texas Christian University Press in the fall. He has won the Cohen Award from *Ploughshares* for the best work of fiction in the year of its publication in the magazine. His books have been nominated for the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Edgar Allan Poe Award, the Texas Institute of Letters Award for Fiction, and the University of Michigan Literary Fiction Award. Duff has taught at Vanderbilt University, Kenyon College, St. John’s College of Oxford University, and The Johns Hopkins University. Go online to www.geraldduff.com, or email him at Gerald.Duff@gmail.com.



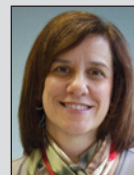
How Learning Works

By Susan A. Ambrose, Michael W. Bridges, et al.

Foreword by Richard E. Mayer

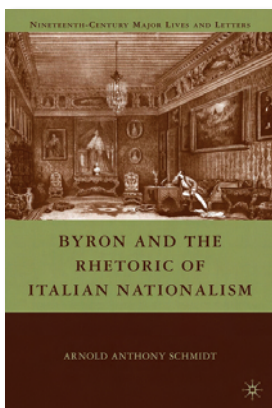
301 pages. Jossey-Bass (May 2010).

\$38 hardcover.



“Instructors who want to investigate the mechanisms and conditions that promote student learning often find themselves caught between two kinds of resources: research articles with technical discussions of learning, or books and websites with concrete strategies for course design and classroom pedagogy.” The former texts “focus on learning” but are often “inaccessible and lack clear application to the classroom.” The latter texts “are written in accessible language but often leave instructors without a clear sense of why particular strategies promote learning. *How Learning Works* aims to bridge this gap,” writes Susan A. Ambrose, Associate Provost for Education and Director, Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, at Carnegie Mellon University, home of her Phi Kappa Phi chapter. She and Michael W. Bridges (also a member of the Carnegie Mellon chapter), faculty development director at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, St. Margaret — and other coauthors Michele DiPietro, Marsha C. Lovett, and Marie K. Norman — devise what the subtitle calls *Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*.

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Byron and the Rhetoric of Italian Nationalism

By Arnold Anthony Schmidt

206 pp. Palgrave Macmillan (June 2010).

\$80 hardcover.



Arnold Anthony Schmidt’s first book, *Byron and the Rhetoric of Italian Nationalism*, “is a fascinating and expertly researched addition to our understanding of Byron not just as a British Romantic poet but as an international cultural phenomenon,” states Ohio State University Professor of English Claire A. Simmons. “Positioning Byron in the context of European liberal nationalism, Schmidt demonstrates how although Byron’s scandalous lifestyle and provocative writings tended to overshadow his liberal leanings in Britain, he became an inspiration to the emergent nationalist movement in Italy.” Schmidt, Professor of English at California State University-Stanislaus, and former Phi Kappa Phi chapter president, made

extensive use of previously untranslated texts in what noted Byron scholar Peter Cochran considers “a tour de force of documentation and analysis” that “shows with impressive detail and thorough argument that the mythical image of Byron was as important to the development of the Italian nationalist ideal as it had been to the Greek.”



Sweet Cane

By Lucy B. Wayne

176 pages, 82 illustrations. University of Alabama Press (July 2010).

\$45 hardcover, \$22.50 paperback, \$18 ebook.



Lucy B. Wayne (University of Florida), Vice President/Archaeological and Architectural Historian Principal at SouthArc, Inc., a cultural resource management firm in Gainesville, Fla., uses her training in *Sweet Cane* to rediscover, as the subtitle puts it, *The Architecture of the Sugar Works of East Florida*. “From the late 18th century to early 1836, the heart of the Florida sugar industry was concentrated in East Florida,” press materials explain. “Producing the sweetest sugar, molasses, and rum, at least 22 sugar plantations dotted the coastline by the 1830s. This industry brought prosperity to the region — employing farm hands, slaves, architects, stonemasons, riverboats and their crews, shopkeepers, and merchant traders. But by January 1836, Native American attacks during the Second Seminole War had devastated the whole

sugar industry.” Through text, illustrations and bibliography, the book “documents an important and little-known phase of Florida’s history,” writes Herschel Shepard, Professor Emeritus of Architecture at University of Florida.

Compiled by Editor Peter Szatmary



Phi Kappa Phi Bookshelf Submission Guidelines

If you are an author and would like your work to be considered for inclusion in the Phi Kappa Phi Bookshelf, send two copies of the book, a color headshot of yourself, contact information, (address, phone numbers, email), and a one-page synopsis to:

Phi Kappa Phi Bookshelf
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
7576 Goodwood Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
editor@phikappaphi.org

*All submitted books will be added to the Phi Kappa Phi library housed at the Society headquarters.



A screen capture of Phi Kappa Phi's Facebook public "fan" page.

Society Online Networks Reach 15,000 Members

By the time this edition of the magazine went to press, Phi Kappa Phi's online networks on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter had topped 15,000 members cumulatively. And participants are thrilled with what they find.

"The Phi Kappa Phi LinkedIn group helps me to establish connections with other passionate professionals in my field and related fields," said group member Stacey Greene Wicksall (Syracuse University), an education outreach librarian at Newark Public Library. "Members pass along interesting information and support one another in many helpful ways."

Bonnie Parnell Riechert (University of Tennessee), associate professor and director of the public relations program at Belmont University in Nashville, agrees. "A former chapter officer and president at University of Tennessee, I now teach at a university where there is no chapter of Phi Kappa Phi," she said. "The Phi Kappa Phi LinkedIn group gives me opportunity to engage with the national Phi Kappa Phi community, even though I don't have a local chapter network."

"Phi Kappa Phi's Facebook page is a great way to keep up with fellow members of our community of scholars," echoed Donna Clark Schubert, associate vice chancellor for marketing and communication at Troy University (her Phi Kappa Phi chapter) and former Society vice president.

Social Media by the Numbers

- 5,830 members in our LinkedIn group
- 4,487 members in our Facebook public "fan" page
- 4,147 members in our Facebook private "group" page
- 556 people follow the Society on Twitter

"I love seeing the photos and hearing about the experiences of other members, and I've found that Facebook is a great, informal way to network."

Phi Kappa Phi entered social networking in fall 2008 as part of an ongoing effort to communicate more effectively with current and prospective members. As more Society members and chapter officers joined the ranks of Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, establishing a Phi Kappa Phi presence on these sites became a priority. Indeed, 15,020 users and counting participate in the Society's online networks, as of press deadline.

"To communicate more effectively with our members, we had to reach them where they were spending their time, put information in front of them and engage them," said Phi Kappa Phi communications specialist Jeremy Garland, who was hired in October 2008 in large part to develop robust online communities that would promote member engagement and build

Phi Kappa Phi's Social Media Outlets

• Facebook, the public "fan" page

General information about the Society for active or inactive members as well as nonmembers. Also provides timely updates on award application procedures and deadlines; chapter events; member activities; discounts and specials from corporate partners; and training opportunities.

• Facebook, the private "group" page

For Phi Kappa Phi members only. Includes discount codes for various member benefits; special offers from corporate partners; and exclusive podcasts on educational and career-related topics. Joining requires approval from a group administrator.

• LinkedIn

Geared for members seeking to build a stronger online professional network. Includes career-related podcasts and articles about resume writing, interviewing techniques and the like. Also helpful for members no longer associated with a Phi Kappa Phi chapter.

• Twitter

For anyone interested in receiving short, timely news items (e.g., Society events and member accomplishments) and important reminders (e.g., graduation merchandise and convention details). Also, immediate feedback for members with questions or comments about the Society (e.g., requesting reasons to join Phi Kappa Phi or sharing excitement about being initiated).

awareness about Phi Kappa Phi. "What we found through these outlets was a way to reach out to and have a dialogue with the Society's membership."

Because social media continues to be a burgeoning platform for membership-based organizations, it is important for Phi Kappa Phi to keep up with the trends, Garland said. He has two main goals for enhancing the Society's online communities in 2011: increase the number of users and encourage more dialogue among them.

"We'll be promoting the Facebook public 'fan' page prominently in welcome emails to newly initiated Society members. Signing up for it will help new Phi Kappa Phi members get acclimated more quickly with all the Society has to offer," he said. "A welcome page is in the works for this Facebook page as well that will offer a visually attractive overview of the Society at a glance. And LinkedIn has introduced several new features that we plan to take advantage of." ■

— Staff report

Making a Difference One Mind at a Time

By Ehsan Ejaz

Editor's note: *One Saturday last October, Phi Kappa Phi Council of Students Western Region Representative Ehsan Ejaz led members of his University of California-Davis chapter on a trip to an area senior center to spend a few hours with those diagnosed with dementia. Ejaz, a fourth-year neurobiology, physiology and behavior major, was invited to write about the community outreach. Email him at eejaz@ucdavis.edu.*

How do you interact with someone diagnosed with a mild form of dementia — someone largely self-sufficient but sometimes unable to understand basic concepts?

Senior psychology major Elizabeth Tremaine and four other Phi Kappa Phi student members from the University of California-Davis chapter, myself included, along with chapter secretary and neurobiology staff research associate Christina Craig-Veit, tried to answer this question one Saturday last October when volunteering with the Citizens Who Care's Time Off for Caregivers Program at the Davis (Calif.) Senior Center. It was the chapter's first student-run community service.

"They have great skills and some are really good at board games such as checkers. But they struggle with normal tasks, which you wouldn't expect," said Tremaine, who helped one of eight clients in attendance, all with intermittent dementia and most with beginning stages of Alzheimer's disease, piece together a jigsaw puzzle.



Phi Kappa Phi chapter secretary and neurobiology staff research associate Christina Craig-Veit (upper right) and junior managerial economics major Stephanie Yee (lower left) play the board game Sorry! with clients.



Elizabeth Tremaine, a fourth-year psychology major, helps a client put together a jigsaw puzzle.

Most clients don't require one-on-one assistance; instead, they just need someone to be there for them in case a problem arises, said client aide Wayne Everingham.

The Time Off for Caregivers Program, funded by Citizens Who Care, a nonprofit

organization providing support services to area frail elderly and their families, offers caregivers a break from responsibilities every other Saturday for much of the day. Volunteers play a key role since the program only has a staff of three for a total client base of 10-12, said client aide Keiko Tokida.

"We love having people from different backgrounds come serve," said Everingham, adding that it's hard to find volunteers. He praised the Phi Kappa Phi chapter for its enthusiasm in everything from unfolding chairs to setting up games, to helping make and serve lunch, to talking individually with clients, to leading and playing rounds of bingo.

"It was really fun," said Tremaine, a theater minor who sang four show tunes for the responsive audience. "I like working with elderly patients because they have great stories to tell." She also felt like she accomplished something. "I made their day better and they have made my day better." ■

A Day of Wine and Society

Nine current and past California State University-Fresno Phi Kappa Phi chapter officers and six other chapter members attended a wine-and-cheese party last October to build community while conducting business. The gathering took place within eyesight of the 160-acre Fresno State Winery, the first fully-licensed business of its kind at a U.S. university. A vineyard winemaker Ken Fugelsang, a former chapter president who has taught winemaking at Fresno State for more than two decades, offered insights about vintages during the get-together.

"We started our fall socials about three years ago," said chapter president Jody Hironaka-Juteau, also associate dean

of the College of Health and Human Services. "This event has been important in promoting Phi Kappa Phi to the campus community. It has allowed us to reconnect with our membership and encourage their involvement in various chapter activities."

"For a professor who is new to Phi Kappa Phi, I found the event both informative and a really fun way to get to know my fellow members and the national leadership," seconded Honora Howell Chapman, director of the Smittcamp Family Honors College and an associate professor of classics and humanities. ■

— Molly Stauffer
Chapter Relations Director



Left to right: Tom Gaffery, administrative project coordinator in the Fresno State administration office; Briana McDonald, senior classics major and chapter student vice president; Paul Oliaro, vice president for student affairs; and Fraka Harmsen, associate dean of the College of Science and Mathematics and chapter president-elect, catch up on Phi Kappa Phi news over refreshments.

Member Spotlight

MY WORK: educator

MY MISSION: transforming lives

MY BYWORDS: success is never final

MY HONOR SOCIETY: Phi Kappa Phi

GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE.

Freeman Hrabowski serves as president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the #1 "Up-and-Coming" national university. His other accomplishments range from co-authoring books about raising academically successful African American students to earning the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. Hrabowski was initiated into Phi Kappa Phi at the University of Maryland, College Park, in 1990. For more information, visit umbc.edu/bestcolleges.

Founded in 1897, **Phi Kappa Phi** is the oldest and most selective honor society for all academic disciplines. Its more than 100,000 active members include great minds in science and medicine, government and law and the military, education and business, along with sports, literature and the arts and just about every other field imaginable.



Howard Korn

**KNOW OF OTHER GREAT MINDS TO FEATURE IN THE PHI KAPPA PHI GREAT MINDS CAMPAIGN?
SEND US YOUR SUGGESTIONS AT WWW.PHIKAPPAPHI.ORG/GREATMINDS.**

Ted R. Anderson (McKendree University) presented the paper "David Lack, the Galapagos, and the Birth of Evolutionary Ecology" at the David Lack Centenary Symposium at the University of Oxford Zoology Department last summer. He is working on a biography of Lack, the ornithologist and ecologist who wrote the landmark 1947 study, *Darwin's Finches*.

Caroline P. Barlow (United States Naval Academy) and **Kathleen C. Hansen** (Montana State University) earned 2011 Rhodes Scholarships that cover expenses for two or three years of study at University of Oxford. More than 1,500 people applied for approximately 80 worldwide awards, including 32 for Americans. Barlow, a senior oceanography major and cross-country runner at the academy, has worked for the Navy Energy Coordination Office at the Pentagon. She will pursue a master's degree in environmental change and management. Hansen graduated from Montana State last May with a major in industrial and management engineering and is at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies at Kibbutz Kefura, Israel, working on water conservation projects between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. She will pursue a master's in water science, policy and management.

Raylene Brill (Bloomsburg University), senior social work major, was appointed student member of her school's council of trustees.

Lynn Burlbaw (Eastern New Mexico University), Associate Professor, Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture, College of Education and Human Development, Texas A & M University, has been named 2010-11 Scholar in Residence at the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company archives, managed by the Bessemer Historical Society, which also oversees the Steelworks Museum of Industry and Culture. All are located at the same site in Pueblo, Colo.

Ann Butts (Campbell University), a management analyst at the Womack Army Medical Center in Fort Bragg, N.C., received the Army's Superior Civilian Service Award last August. The honor, the third highest of its type, consists of a medal, lapel button, and certificate and is granted by a commander (brigadier general and above) or civilian equivalent. The citation reads in part that Butts has "provided invaluable feedback related to system issues, process changes, and proper capture of labor costs ... (and) assisted all military medical treatment facilities by alleviating potential software problems before full implementation of software changes."

Russell O. Colson (Minnesota State University-Moorhead), Professor of Geology at Minnesota State University-Morehead, was one of four named U.S. Professors of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Winners, selected from more than 300 nominees, receive \$5,000.



Jeremy dePrisco (Bloomsburg University) released his seventh album, *Chaos Rise Up*, on his label, Blue Buddha Records. The album "was largely inspired by the Bush years and the ways in which media — particularly digital media — have impacted our lives," writes dePrisco, a senior analyst and web applications software designer for a healthcare system. "Part protest rock, part anthem/social commentary, *Chaos Rise Up* melds a dystopian view of technology with a critical

reading of our responsibility to hold ourselves accountable for its use," he states. \$11.99 CD; \$9.99 MP3; 99 cents per song. Go online to www.mindspoke.com or www.cdbaby.com.



Mark Finlay (Armstrong Atlantic State University), Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Professor of History at Armstrong Atlantic State University, won the Agricultural History Society's 2009 Theodore Saloutos Memorial Award for his book, *Growing American Rubber: Strategic Plants and the Politics of National Security* (Rutgers University Press). The award, created in 1982, recognizes the year's best book on U.S. agricultural history.



Traci Goodwin (University of Houston-Clear Lake), principal of McAdams Junior High School, was named Principal of the Year for Dickinson (Texas) Independent School District last June. There were 11 nominees. Goodwin has been principal at the school of 1,250 students and 116 staff for two years. Previously, she was a teacher and administrator at public schools in Galena Park and Alvin, Texas.

John Knox (University of Alabama at Birmingham), an assistant professor at University of Georgia's geography department, won the T. Theodore Fujita Research Achievement Award from the National Weather Association last October for significant contribution to operational meteorology, specifically for clear-air turbulence forecasting. A 1988 Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship recipient, he was a science and technology columnist for this magazine in the late 1990s and, among other roles, guest edited the spring 1999 edition about weather and culture.



Charles B. Rodning (University of South Alabama), Professor of Surgery, College of Medicine and Medical Center, University of South Alabama, was recognized last June by his school's medical alumni association with a distinguished service award for three decades of scholarship and mentorship. President of area professional societies, he also is a poet and visual artist.

Teresa Rust (Southern Illinois University-Carbondale), who teaches technology and career exploration at Oasis Elementary School in Peoria, Ariz., was one of 32 primary and secondary school educators nationwide to win a 2010-11 Einstein Fellowship. Winners spend the academic year at a congressional office or federal agency in or around Washington, D.C., and receive \$7,000 monthly stipends and additional travel allowances. The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program, authorized by Congress in 1994, administered by the U.S. Department of Energy, and coordinated by the Triangle Coalition for Science and Technology Education, encourages the teaching of science, technology, engineering and math in elementary, middle and high schools.

Padmanabhan Seshaiyer (Texas Tech University), Associate Professor of Mathematical Sciences at

George Mason University, was one of the "Nifty Fifty" experts in science, technology, engineering and math nationwide to participate in the USA Science and Engineering Festival last October and visit secondary schools around Washington, D.C. Science and engineering companies, federal agencies, professional associations, museums, outreach organizations, and colleges and universities partnered in the event that many members of Congress also supported.

Karen Sorenson (Austin Peay State University chapter president) delivered the keynote speech at the dual winter commencement ceremonies at Austin Peay State University, where she is Professor of French. Sorenson also won the school's 2010 alumni association distinguished professor award.

The following members published books:

Duane C. Acker (Iowa State University), *Two at a Time: Reflections and Revelations of a Kansas State University Presidency and the Years that Followed*; 295 pages; iUniverse, August 2010; \$31.95 hardcover, \$21.95 paperback, \$9.99 ebook.

Neil Bernard Dukas (California State University-Dominguez Hills), *A Pocket Guide to the Battle of Nu'Uana 1795*, an illustrated Hawaiian military history; 90 pages; Mutual Publishing, May 2010; \$9.95 paperback.

Shafiel A. Karim (California State University-Long Beach), *The Islamic Moral Economy: A Study of Islamic Money and Financial Instruments*; 148 pages; BrownWalker Press, 2010; \$25.95 paperback.

Art Myers (University of Florida), *Winged Victory: Altered Images: Transcending Breast Cancer*, photos with text; 81 pages; Photographic Gallery of Fine Arts Books of San Diego, August 2009; \$29.95 paperback. Winner of a 2010 Nautilus Book Award and a 2010 Living Now Book Award.

Blanche Sosland (University of Missouri-Kansas City) and SuEllen Fried, *Banishing Bullying Behavior: Transforming the Culture of Pain, Rage and Revenge*; 197 pages; Rowman & Littlefield Education, November 2009; \$80 hardcover, \$29.95 paperback and ebook.

Andy Weiss (The Ohio State University), *An Escape from the Lunacy Chair: A Free Flowing Thought Experience*, memoir; 125 pages; Lulu.com, February 2010; \$28.50 hardcover, \$13.89 paperback, \$3 download.

Philip K. Wilson (University of Kansas), Elizabeth A. Dolan, and Malcolm Dick, editors, *Anna Seward's Life of Erasmus Darwin*; 312 pages; Brewin Books, July 2010; £19.95 hardcover, £14.95 paperback.

Kenneth R. Woolling (Butler University), *Recollections of a Mayo Clinic Fellowship at Mid-Twentieth Century 1948-1952*; 262 pages; IBJ Book Publishing, 2010; \$39.95 hardcover; available at kwoolingMD36@aol.com or c/o the author at P. O. Box 80192, Indianapolis, Ind. 46280. ■

Compiled by Editor Peter Szatmary



For more Member News, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/forum/spring2011.

In Memoriam



Doyle S. Bivins (member at large), 82, of Wichita Falls, Texas, was a petroleum engineer. In his spare time, he was an amateur radio operator.

The Army veteran died on Sept. 13, 2010. Nelda Bivins, his wife of 60 years, mentioned in a letter that he had been an active Phi Kappa Phi member since 1952. Other survivors include two daughters and sons-in-law and four grandchildren.



John Crawford (Oregon State University), 63, taught wildlife ecology at Oregon State University for 27 years; wrote or co-wrote 75 articles published in professional journals; served as president of the Oregon chapter of the Wildlife Society; and was associate editor of the *Journal of Wildlife Management*, *Journal of Range Management*, and *Journal of the World Pheasant Association*. Perhaps those accomplishments were inevitable: Crawford grew up on a family farm in Moorland, Iowa. He also received commendations from the Wildlife Society, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Crawford earned a bachelor's degree from Creighton University, a master's degree from University of Nebraska at Omaha, and a doctorate from Texas Tech University. He died on July 11, 2010, at the Hospice House in Bend, Ore. Survivors include his wife of 42 years (and middle-school sweetheart), son and daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.



Eleanor Wheless Ford (member at large), 90, taught first and second grades at Thomaston, Ga., public schools for 31 years. Active in teacher organizations, she graduated from University of

Georgia with a degree in elementary education. Ford also taught at the Baptist church she had attended for 58 years. The Georgia native passed away on Aug. 31, 2010, and was preceded in death by her husband; survivors include a son.

Darrell Davis Giffin (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), 67, soared in all sorts of ways. He was the first person from his hometown of Bucyrus, Ohio, to attend the United States Air Force Academy. Giffin spent 20 years with the Air Force as a pilot instructor and flew support missions. Awards included a Meritorious Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and a Vietnam Service Medal. After retiring in 1985, Giffin, who earned a master's degree in industrial engineering from University of Illinois, became a commercial pilot for what is now US Airways, hanging up his wings in 2003. He died on July 10, 2010, from complications of mantle cell lymphoma, a rare form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Survivors include his wife of 36 years, their daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter.

David Calvin Reynolds Heisser (The Citadel), 68, worked as a librarian at what's now Stony Brook University, Tufts University, University of Miami, University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie, and The Citadel, from which he had retired (also as a professor) in 2007. Heisser also taught history at, for instance, Appalachian State University as a tenured professor and was once employed by the New York Historical Society as a specialist in American art history. The Renaissance man authored numerous works on library science, governmental symbols, South Carolina emblems,

and Catholic bishops. He earned history degrees from College of Charleston (bachelor's) and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (master's and doctoral), received a master of library science from Columbia University, and studied French language and history at Aix-Marseille University on a Fulbright scholarship. Heisser held various offices at the American Library Association and South Carolina Library Association and was a member of numerous historical societies. He died on Oct. 29, 2010; survivors include a sister.



Marshall Vance Marchbanks (Clemson University), 63, performed more than 5,000 open-heart surgeries. His career also included almost 20 years as chief of cardiac surgery at

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital, a stint as chief of medical staff, and a position on the board of trustees. The good doctor earlier served two years on active duty in the Navy as assistant chair of the cardiothoracic surgery department at Balboa Naval Medical Center in San Diego and on assignment in Adak, Alaska; he received an honorable discharge with the rank of lieutenant commander. Marchbanks earned degrees from Clemson University (B.S.) and the Medical University of South Carolina (M.D.), at which he completed surgical and cardiothoracic surgery residencies. Success was evident early on: He was 1965 student body president of D. W. Daniel High School in Central, S.C., and voted best leader. Marchbanks also attained the rank of Eagle Scout as a youth. When not saving lives, he flew his own airplane and played sacred music on the piano for churches and recorded four CDs. Marchbanks died of esophageal cancer at his family residence in Six Mile, S.C., on Oct. 4, 2010. Survivors include his wife of 35 years, daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter, and parents.

Jerilyn (McCall) Puccio (Sage Colleges), 62, cared for the sick and taught nursing. She began her career at Strong Memorial Hospital in her hometown of Rochester, N.Y., and then moved to St. Peter's Hospital in Albany. Puccio went on to become school nurse at East Greenbush (N.Y.) Central School and health teacher at Maple Hill (N.Y.) Middle School. Earning a master's degree in health education from Russell Sage College, she also was an instructor at the Albany Memorial School of Nursing. Puccio enjoyed community work, bargain shopping, traveling, and collecting angels. She died on June 16, 2010, surrounded by her family, after battling ovarian cancer. Survivors include her husband of 40 years, two daughters and a son, their spouses and five grandchildren, among many other relations.



Harry C. Saxe (The Citadel), 90, loved Phi Kappa Phi so much that he served as chapter president at The Citadel and University of Louisville. His family requests that donations in his memory be made to the Society's programs and awards or to the American Society of Civil Engineers Foundation, the field in which he was trained. He loved higher education as well, serving for 50 years as an award-winning professor and administrator at a dozen schools, including

Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Cincinnati, University of Notre Dame, University of Louisville, and The Citadel. Saxe loved his country, too, earning seven bronze stars and a bronze arrowhead as a lieutenant with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (1942-48) in the North African, Mediterranean and European theaters. He earned degrees in civil engineering from City College of New York (B.C.E.), University of Florida (M.S.E.), and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Sc.D.) Saxe died on Sept. 4, 2010; survivors include his wife, two daughters and sons-in-law, three stepdaughters, 10 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



W. Keats Sparrow (East Carolina University), 67, earned honors in academia and beyond it. He was president of the East Carolina University (ECU) Phi Kappa Phi chapter for two terms in the

mid-1990s and served on the 2001 Phi Kappa Phi Scholar selection committee and on the 2004 nominating committee for national offices. Dean Emeritus of ECU's College of Arts and Sciences at the time of his passing, he earlier was professor and chair of the English department. Sparrow specialized in North Carolina literature and technical and professional writing and published many acclaimed articles and books in these fields. Upon his retirement, ECU named a conference room after him; his department created an endowment for a distinguished chair in his name; and he was presented with a distinguished service medallion. Other highlights included presidencies at numerous learned societies and associations. Also light on his feet, Sparrow was inducted into the Atlantic Beach Shaggers Hall of Fame. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from ECU and a doctorate from University of Kentucky. Sparrow died on Nov. 11, 2009. Survivors include his wife of 47 years, daughter and son-in-law, and granddaughter.



William Douglas Warde (Oklahoma State University), 67, devoted himself to young minds. At the time of his passing, he was a statistics professor at Oklahoma State University (OSU),

Phi Kappa Phi chapter president, and a Boy Scout leader. He also ran camps and summer programs for budding scholars, was chapter adviser to the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and served as Phi Kappa Phi chapter president in 1998-99 and treasurer the year before. Warde, who also had headed the OSU statistics department for 10 years during a tenure with the school that began in 1972, earned degrees from University of London (bachelor's), Florida State University (master's), and Iowa State University (doctoral). He died in his sleep on Aug. 2, 2010, at the 2010 National Boy Scout Jamboree at Fort A. P. Hill, an active-duty Army installation near Bowling Green, Va. Warde spent 59 years in scouting and was commissioner of the Boy Scouts' Cimarron (Okla.) Council, serving upwards of 6,500 youth. He attended every National Boy Scout Jamboree since 1977 and won nearly every honor possible. Survivors include his wife of 41 years, two sons, and one grandchild. ■

Compiled by Editor Peter Szatmary



For more obituaries, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/forum/spring 2011.

Mustangs

For example, I nearly blew off
college to become a rodeo clown.
I don't know what
you wanted exactly, a life that steered
away hunger?
And didn't our coaches
know it? We grasped above the painted-on,
down-home feeling. There are young
well-toned horses involved. A heart
deferred to the second half.
A deep snap that lands
right in the numbers.
Going deep and never coming back.
Once, a man with a cowboy hat
and a red and white
mouth burned me with his
breakfast cigar
and even today bacon strips
remind me of the American flag.

Thirteen bars themselves an instrument
of measure. One bar more than
the blues. The stripes
running the crest of your helmet —
a long highway we could never camp out on,
no stories or dreams of breaking
the 10-yard chains to pieces
under a night. There's
no cactus near Swift Lake and harmonicas
are old hat. Blunt force, my man,
young hunger on a Friday
evening under the same stinking sky
that could well reflect the grid,
ticked away distances and time.
It's the seconds we had
in common.
We're always on our way.

By Curtis Rutherford

Tackling Fellow Feeling in the Game of Life

Ranging from the domestic to the distant, the poems that address this edition's theme of "Empathy" center on pain and loss. From watching the horrors of a war halfway around the globe to experiencing disease ravaging one's own family, poets explore how empathy bridges the distance between sufferer and observer — or fails to do so.

The two runners-up share a thematic narrative — what's left after loss — though with opposing settings. In Amy Nawrocki's "'A Great Deal of Company'" a "half-day trek" leads to an isolated cottage where an artist paints "with gravity's sadness salted to one brush tip." Frances Won's "In the City that Loves You" uses the second person "you" to transform the reader into someone mournfully imagining a poor girl who works at a factory where "they coerce her hands into latex gloves that inflame / her skin." Consolation arrives through envisioning a human connection: "you" wanting to let the girl "embrace you with her skinny arms" in Won's poem, and the lonely artist in Nawrocki's "forg[ing] a scene: stick figures walking / in the terrestrial moonscape of dune summer."

Curtis Rutherford's winning entry, "Mustangs," examines the necessities and shortcomings of empathy through a speaker's weaving fragments of his life with those of a high school football

teammate whom the poem remembers and seems to address, perhaps in absentia. Acknowledging the failure of imagination, Rutherford writes, "I don't know what / you wanted exactly."

Empathy — not omniscience — however, forms through the poem's structure of fusing the pair's thoughts and experiences. Finally, "It's the seconds we had / in common," the poem states, those "seconds" suggesting the ticking game clock and the critically short time given to each of us. Ultimately, what we know is what we share: "Going deep and never coming back."

— Sandra Meek, poetry editor



Curtis Rutherford (University of Alabama), a native of Vidor, Texas, received a B.A. in English from New Mexico State University and is pursuing an M.F.A. in Creative Writing (poetry) at University of Alabama. He has served as assistant poetry editor for *Black Warrior Review* and *Puerto Del Sol* and won numerous student poetry awards and fellowships. Email him at clrutherford@crimson.ua.edu.



Sandra Meek (Colorado State University) is author of three books of poems, *Nomadic Foundations* (2002), *Burn* (2005), and *Biogeography* (2008), winner of the Dorset Prize from

Tupelo Press. Her fourth, *Road Scatter*, will be published in 2012 by Persea Books. She also edited *Deep Travel: Contemporary American Poets Abroad* (2007), an anthology that earned a 2008 Independent Publisher Book Award Gold Medal. Recipient of a 2011 creative writing fellowship in poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts, Meek has also published poems in *The American Poetry Review*, *Agni*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Poetry*, *Conjunctions*, and *The Iowa Review*, among other journals, and she has twice been named Georgia Author of the Year. Meek is a cofounding editor of Ninebark Press, director of the Georgia Poetry Circuit, and Professor of English, Rhetoric, and Writing at Berry College in Mount Berry, Ga.

Editor's note: *The poetry contest is open only to active Society members, published or unpublished. Submissions — one per entrant per issue — should be up to 40 lines long and must reflect the theme of the edition. One original, previously unpublished poem is selected for the printed version. Runners-up may appear online. The summer theme is "color." Entry deadline is midnight, March 6, only by email at poetry@phikappaphi.org. For complete rules and details, go online to www.phikappaphi.org/poetry.*



For runner-ups, go online to
www.phikappaphi.org/forum/spring2011.



Weight – It Gets Better

By Bob Zany

Way back in 1974, long before first lady Michelle Obama started the “Let’s Move!” crusade against childhood obesity, I was The Fat Kid. I was 13 and in the seventh grade, and it was the first time I can recall experiencing empathy, and the lack of it. On a hot, smoggy afternoon in the San Gabriel Valley, the gym teacher decided it was a good day for a race. At least he made it an “official” race: with prizes going to the top three runners from each set of four competitors. Coach drew names from a baseball cap and I wound up with two star basketball players and someone from what was then called special ed named Dave. As The Fat Kid — and there was only one per campus back then, it seemed — losing races was part of the job description, but those odds I could live with.

The course, one lap around the baseball diamond, looked doable, even to me, the guy my classmates called Bob the Blob. As I rounded third, the basketball players had already headed for the showers. But I chugged along, visualizing a white ribbon on an otherwise empty corkboard at home. I glanced over my shoulder, expecting to see Dave on my heels. Instead, in a cloud of dust, he had made a bee line from

As The Fat Kid — and there was only one per campus back then, it seemed — losing races was part of the job description, but those odds I could live with.

second base to the finish line. I watched, furious, as the gym teacher cheered him on, even though Dave was obviously way off-course. Right after I huffed up to the backstop and tagged it, Dave said, “Nice try, Blob.”

That’s when I realized that before the race, Dave and I were just two outcasts thinking the same thing: “Whatever it takes, there is no way I’m going to let that kid beat me.”

I was picked on a lot as a boy because of my weight. I tried to fight back with humor. One of my tormentors was named Clay. He chased me home from junior high on a regular basis, threatening to beat me up, until I finally got up the courage to say, “I think my dad has an ashtray made out of you.” On that day, while icing my swollen, busted lip, I decided to start writing much better material.

And when The Fat Kid finally became the funny fat kid and then, at 350 pounds, the funny fat comedian, I could tell jokes about being overweight: “I had a cholesterol test. They found bacon,” and, “When I dance, the band skips.”

But over 10 months in 1991 I lost 175 pounds — and half of my act. Nobody wanted to hear those jokes from a thin person, and that led to my second chance at empathy. As a stand-up comedian, I use empathy as a secret weapon to find common ground with my audience quickly. I go right into the crowd and start asking questions about everything from love and money to politics and religion. Nothing is off-limits. If someone gets offended, my standard response is, “Why don’t you make a list of the things you don’t want me to talk about? Then maybe we can all go home early.”

I start by asking people about their jobs. Hopefully, a lot people still have them. If not, I try to find someone else who is hiring. That might not sound like empathy, but in a way, being self-employed is a lot like being unemployed. And I am proud to say that there have been successful matches because of my introductions. And one firing: a fan admitted to calling in sick to come to my show, not realizing his boss was there, too. The one thing I always promise audiences is, “I’ll make you forget your problems ... by creating new ones.”

I think empathy is a fancy way of saying, “I can relate.” And if I get the audience to that point, they enjoy themselves, a few might find a job, and Bob the Blob goes home with a metaphorical ribbon. ■



Comedian **Bob Zany**’s “Zany Report” is featured weekly on the nationally syndicated “Bob & Tom” radio show. He is currently touring with The Bob & Tom All-Stars and producing stand-up shows for casinos and resorts nationwide. Zany’s 33-year-long ride on the joke-telling roller coaster is the subject of the documentary, *Close, But No Cigar*, which debuted as a work in progress at the St. Louis International Film Festival last November. He has made more than 800 national television appearances and costarred in the 2009 film *The Informant!*, starring Matt Damon and directed by Steven Soderbergh. Zany treasures his 17-year association with *The Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Association Labor Day Telethon* that has included stand-up spots, co-hosting duties, fund-raising, and a seat on the board of directors. A Los Angeles native, he lives in the San Fernando Valley with his wife, Erin, and their certified pre-owned adopted dogs, Henry and Frankie. Go online to www.bobzany.com or www.facebook.com/bob.zany or email him at bob@bobzany.com.

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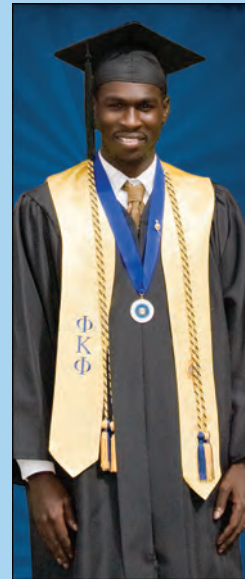


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University of Texas-Pan American, Edinburg, Texas
University of Texas at Tyler, Tyler, Texas
University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio
University of Tulsa, Tulsa, Okla.
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah
University of West Alabama, Livingston, Ala.
University of West Florida, Pensacola, Fla.
University of West Georgia, Carrollton, Ga.
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Platteville, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-River Falls, River Falls, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wis.
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Whitewater, Wis.
University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyo.
Utah State University, Logan, Utah
Utah Valley University, Orem, Utah
Valdosta State University, Valdosta, Ga.
Villanova University, Villanova, Pa.
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.
Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Va.
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Va.
Wayne State University, Topeka, Kan.
Wayne State College, Wayne, Neb.
Weber State University, Ogden, Utah
Wesleyan College, Macon, Ga.
West Virginia University, Morgantown, W.Va.
West Virginia Wesleyan College, Buckhannon, W.Va.
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C.
Western Illinois University, Macomb, Ill.
Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Ky.
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich.
Western Oregon University, Monmouth, Ore.
Western Washington University, Bellingham, Wash.
Westfield State University, Westfield, Mass.
Westmont College, Santa Barbara, Calif.
Widener University, Chester, Pa.
Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.
Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio
Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio

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