

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE

If you or someone you know would like to be a speaker at our monthly dinner, please contact Jim Mizera at 203-522-1959 or Jmizera@hotmail.com. The dinner is held the third Saturday of the month.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: If you have an annual Mensa membership, and have not renewed, your membership expired at the end of April. You should have received a renewal notice in the mail in January. You can return that form or visit www.us.mensa.org to renew.



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going back to 2000 are available on the Internet at <http://www.doctechical.com/scm>. You can download the latest e-mail version of the Chronicle there, as well as previous issues. All issues are in read-only Adobe Acrobat format so there is no chance of viruses accompanying the files.

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Southern CT Mensa is looking for an Activities Coordinator. If you would like to fill this position, please contact President Rick D'Amico at usamarbiol@aol.com

SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR AUGUST

Saturday, August 5, 7:00

Theater Event

Shelton's Youth Connection will present Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I* at Sacred Heart University, 5151 Park Ave., Fairfield, CT, near the Trumbull and Bridgeport town lines. Tickets are \$15. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

Wednesday, August 9, 5:00 - 8:00 pm

Music and Dining

Folk/Acoustic/Singer-Songwriter Melissa Mulligan with Sean Morrissey at Harbor Side restaurant, front lounge, 946 Ferry Blvd, Stratford, CT (on bridge leading to Milford Post Rd.) www.harbor-sidebargrill.com. Running approximately 5 pm – 8 pm. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

Friday, August 11, 7:00

Southern CT and Western MA Joint Dinner

Monthly dinner at the Old Sorrento Restaurant,

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Newtown Road, DANBURY, CT. Interested Mensans should contact Ward Mazzucco at (203) 744-1929, ext. 25, wjm@danburylaw.com, or Rev. Bill Loring at (203) 794-1389, frbill@mags.net.



Saturday, August 19, 6:30

Monthly Dinner

Speaker to be announced. Before the presentation, we will enjoy dinner in our private dining room at the Stony Hill Inn, 46 Stony Hill Road (right off Exit 8 on Rte. 84), Bethel, CT 06801, (203-743-5533). You can bring a donation of money or food to benefit the Connecticut Food Bank. Dress is casual. Contact Jim Mizera, jmizera@hotmail.com, 203-522-1959, for information and reservations. Guests are welcome. If you make reservations and can't attend, PLEASE call and cancel.

Directions from New Haven or Bridgeport: Take Route 25 into Newtown, where it becomes Route 6 West. OR take I-84 and get off at Exit 9 (Route 25 Brookfield). At the end of the ramp take a left if eastbound or a right if westbound. At the first light take a right on to Route 6 West. The hotel is located 2 miles on the right, not far over the Bethel line. From Stamford/Norwalk: Take Route 7 to I-84 and follow the above directions, turning right after exiting I-84.

Saturday, August 26, 8:00

Theater Event: Robin Hood

The Elm Shakespeare Company will present

If you wish to comment on articles or submit material, please write or e-mail Jim Mizera at PMB #181, 7365 Main St., Stratford, CT. 06614-1300, Jmizera@hotmail.com. E-mail submissions are preferred. Please include your name, address, and e-mail address or telephone number. Anonymous material will be rejected, although names will be withheld on request. Items will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Currently, the deadline for postal submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication, and the 20th of the month for e-mail submissions.

Robin Hood at Edgerton Park, Whitney Ave., New Haven, CT, near the New Haven-Hamden town line. Suggested donation of \$10 adults, \$5 children. This is an outdoor theater so please arrive early and bring a chair. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 2, 8:00

Theater Event: Much Ado About Nothing

The Elm Shakespeare Company will present Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing at Edgerton Park, , New Haven, CT , near the New Haven-Hamden town line. Suggested donation of \$10 adults, \$5 children. This is an outdoor theater so please arrive early and bring a chair. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

Friday, September 8, 7:00.

Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner

See above listing for details.

Saturday, September 16, 6:30.

Monthly Dinner

See above listing for details.

CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS

This is not a complete listing WE - Weekly Event, ME - Monthly Event, YE - Yearly Event CT & W. Mass Calendar Editor Gisela Rodriguez, (860) 872-3106, email: lilith@snet.net.

Mensans on the Radio:

C&WM Mensan Janine Bujalski is on the airwaves every 1st & 3rd Friday 6-10 a.m. on 89.5FM, WPKN in Bridgeport, CT. There is a limited internet broadcast - about 25 can listen simultaneously at www.wpkn.org . From 6-9 AM there's jazz, blues & music from Brazil and from 9-10 AM the music is from Louisiana, mostly Cajun & zydeco.

Vice LocSec Will Mackey is hosting Friday evening Classics from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. weekly on 91.3 FM, WWUH, in West Hartford. The name of the program is "What You Will" and its focus is chamber music.

For event listings in the Media, leave a message for me by the 10th of the previous month at (860) 872-3106 or email Lilith@snet.net Subject: Calendar There's also the [CWM-Announce] upcoming events reminder email list, which I send out *approximately* weekly. Subscribe and unsubscribe options are located at <http://lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/cwm-announce> for your convenience. And any Mensan who wants to notify their fellow Ms about any late-breaking event s/he wants to share with our delightful chapter, please email me ASAP with the details and I'll get it out to the list. You may also check the website www.cwm.us.mensa.org for our calendar updates.

AUGUST

3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Thursdays 7:00 pm

Scrabble

(WE) at Emmanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Drive, West Hartford. Ellen Leonard, 860-667-1966 (Please call first to make sure this is happening today).

4 Friday 5:30 pm

Happy Hour

in Wallingford (ME, 1st Fridays) Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or ann.polanski@rfsworld.com) hosts us upstairs at George's II Restaurant, 950 Yale Avenue, Wallingford, CT 06492 Phone: 203-269-1059. Directions: Exit 66 off Wilbur Cross Parkway. Turn left (south) onto Rte 5. Take first left that's not a highway entrance onto Yale Avenue. George's II is in the Yale Plaza on the right.

16 Wednesday 6:30 pm

Pioneer Valley Dinner

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(ME, 3rd Wednesday) at Aqua Vitae Italian Restaurant, route 9 in Hadley. We will meet there every month for a bit and hope to grow the ranks. Join us. Conversations, friendship, solve the world's problems, drink and eat. Once we grow in numbers, we'll explore other places to meet and consider other Western MA activities. Questions? MargotZalkind@aol.com

18 Friday 6:00-8:00 pm or so
Diner Dinner (ME, 3rd Friday) at Olympia Diner, Rte 5, Newington, just north of the Berlin town line and North East Utilities. Menu ranges from toasted cheese sandwich to steak and fish dinners. Basic bar menu available, no happy hour prices, but the food is good and very reasonable. Please contact Nicole Michaud at (860) 434-7329 or email nirimi@snet.net, Subject: Diner Dinner

25 Friday 5:00 pm
Happy Hour (ME, 4th Friday) Colonial Tymes, 2389 Dixwell Ave, Hamden. Located about 1/2 mile north of Exit 60, Wilbur Cross Parkway. We are now reserving the middle tables on the left as you walk in the bar. Dinner is a possibility if enough people are interested. Come on down and join us this month, we'd love to see ya. Contact Gail Trowbridge (203) 877-4472 or Gail.Trowbridge@att.net.

30 Wednesday 12:00 noon
Middlebury Lunch
 (ME, last Wednesday) at Maggie McFly's in Middlebury, visible on the right from Rte. 63 just south of the Rte 63 and Rte 64 intersection. This intersection is at the end of a long ramp at Exit 17 on Rte 84 west. From this exit, turn left at the 63/64 intersection. If you use Exit 17 on Rte. 84 east (heading toward Hartford), turn left off the exit ramp and see Maggie McFly's on your left. Contact Richard Fogg at 860-274-2370 for more info.

Regional Gatherings

MENSA WORLD GATHERING, AUGUST 8 – 13, LAKE BUENA VISTA, FLORIDA.

Join Mensans from across the globe for this once-in-a-lifetime celebration, hosted by American Mensa. A truly fascinating and rewarding adventure awaits you. Visualize space travel,

cartoon characters, sugar-white beaches, unique flora and fauna and historical treasures in the Sunshine State of Florida.

Commemorating Mensa's Diamond Anniversary (60 years), this World Gathering promises a week of enlightening experiences Tuesday, Aug. 8, through Sunday, Aug. 13, 2006. Walt Disney World® Resort Lake Buena Vista, Florida
<http://wg06.us.mensa.org//AM/Template.cfm?Section=WGHome>

Dr. Miles Storfer. I'm a 24-year Mensan who has lectured at numerous AGs & RGs, authored a highly acclaimed book (Intelligence & Giftedness), undertook a characteristics study of (2,720) members of high IQ societies, and, most recently, in behalf of a foundation I've dedicated my life to since 1982, built conceptually-organized, deeply subject-indexed, easy-to-use, computer-housed, journal-article libraries. In behalf of this foundation, I'll be unveiling these libraries at the Orlando AG. Since there are many deeply-covered subjects that will sparkle the interest of Mensans - and since copyright theft prevention is of major concern - the extent to which attendees will be able to access specific areas depends on whether we can find people to volunteer their time and computers to this effort (setting up opportunities for attendees to view a particular subject area, acting as a guide to its subject-index organization, doing a "show and tell" ..., or serving general safeguarding functions).

If you would like to volunteer to help Dr. Storfer at the gathering, please contact him. Dr. Miles Storfer, Foundation for Brain (Life) Research, brainfoundation@adelphia.net.

12th ANNUAL MENSA CAMPING WEEKEND Friday September 15 - Sunday 17

Bishops Field Groupsite. Pittsfield, MA. As usual, Eric's Campfire Pizza will be offered Saturday night for a \$2 cost. If 10 people attend, the cost for the actual camping will just be \$6 a person for the whole weekend. Contact Bibi Sandstrom at bibis@juno.com for more info. This is a smoke-free event (except for the campfire!) This is a BYO tent and food & camping gear kind of stay, but you should see what gear Mensans tote! One can still enjoy technology and comfort and great food in the woods - and for a very low cost.

**COLLOQUIUM 2006 - "Revolution in Cosmology",
OCT. 6 - 8, 2006**

ALBANY, NY. Presented by Mensa and the Mensa Education and Research Foundation. Hosted by Mensa of NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK.

Einstein unified space, time and matter 100 years ago; recent events have revealed the existence of a mysterious new kind of matter and energy. This existence was unforeseen by even Einstein, and it demands a new vision of unification. This new matter/energy has now been confirmed by many of the world's top scientists in astronomy, astrophysics and cosmology. It encompasses 96 percent of the known universe. It is quite likely that the resolution of this conundrum will impact the world as we know it forever.

We are inviting speakers from an elite group of world renowned scientists. These guests are not simply familiar with the current state of knowledge; they created it! Topics will include: Dark matter, Dark energy, String theory, Quantum loop gravity, The accelerated expansion of the universe, and more....

REGISTRATION:

Register online at www.colloquium.us.mensa.org. Space is limited! "Revolution in Cosmology" will take place at the Albany Marriott in Albany, N.Y. To make your reservations, call 800/443-8952 and mention Mensa to get our group rate of \$109 per person

for single or double rooms. If making reservations online, enter the code "amsamsa" to get the group rate.

The hotel provides free transportation to and from Albany International Airport; for pick up, use the courtesy phone kiosk in the luggage claim area. Hotel parking is free.

Albany Marriott
189 Wolf Road
Albany, N.Y. 12205
Phone: 518/458-8444
Fax: 518/458-7365
<http://marriott.com/property/property/page/ALBANY>

Adult member registration rates:

\$170 until April 30, 2006

\$220 until Aug. 31, 2006

\$270 after Sept. 1, 2006

Non-Mensa registration rates: add \$50

Student registration rate: \$220

Your registration includes lunch on Saturday and dinner on Friday and Saturday.

All Colloquium 2006 reservations must be made by the cut-off date of Sept. 15, 2006. Reservation requests received after this cut-off date will be subject to availability and rate review. All reservations must be accompanied by a first night's room deposit or guaranteed by a major credit card.



*FROM THE VICE CHAIR**WHAT'S COOKING IN REGION 1*

Marghretta McBean

Our region is still reeling from the torrential rains and flooding that deluged it. Twelve New York counties have been declared federal disaster areas; more should have been, but I have never figured out who decides how disastrous is a disaster. Many of Binghamton's residents spent the 4th of July helping their neighbours clean out from under the soggy debris. Parts of Maine and Massachusetts, which were declared disaster areas in May, were soaked again. Parts of New Hampshire and Vermont, while not formally declared disasters, suffered from flooding and unfortunately some deaths. Here in New York City the 150 year-old water and sewer system was straining. I hope none of you have been hit by Mother Nature, and that you can help those who have been.

Italy's victory in another World Cup is being celebrated here con molto giubilo. While New York has a large number of French speakers, most of them are from former French colonies with understandably conflicting feelings about France.

Because of the longer than usual time between meetings, the AMC (American Mensa Committee) met via teleconference at the end of June. The most discussed item was an AMC sense motion stating that access to the AML Forums does not entitle members to unlimited choice of expression. In some of Mensa's online Forums (Fora, for we Latin purists), a small but vocal number of Mensans feel that they are entitled to post anything, using any language, without censure. Attempts by our dedicated and hardworking Communications Officer, Robin Crawford, to establish linguistic boundaries were not taken well and some have vented their anger at her. As one of the minority who did not vote in favour of the motion, I feel that there is no need to

reassert a position that has already been taken. It sets a poor precedent, I think, if the AMC feels it must formally defend an already stated policy position in reaction to member hostility. By appointing Robin, the AMC placed its full faith in her abilities to formulate its policies regarding print, online and other forms of member communications. She has done an admirable job in an area where it is almost impossible to please everyone.

It's getting to be really hot and no one wants to spend time in a hot kitchen. My summer staple is cold noodles which have been bathed in a spicy paste. These travel well and, other than the half hour or so to boil water and cook pasta, it's a cool dish to prepare. I usually make 3 pounds at a time; the recipe is easily doubled or trebled.

COLD SESAME NOODLES

(enough for 1 lb. pasta: spaghetti, spaghettini, soba (buckwheat) noodles, etc.)

3 Tbl. sesame oil
 5 Tbl. soy sauce (I prefer low salt)
 3 Tbl. rice vinegar
 4-1/2 tsp. sugar or honey
 3 Tbl. sesame paste (tahini)
 3 Tbl. dry sherry, sake or dry vermouth
 5 tsp. hot pepper oil
 1 tsp. hoisin sauce
 1-1/2 to 3 tsp. minced fresh ginger
 Garnishes [optional]: slivered scallion (green onion) greens; toasted sesame seeds; roasted peanut pieces; slightly steamed carrot slivers

1. Using a whisk, mix ingredients together thoroughly in large bowl. Dump hot drained (but not rinsed) pasta into bowl and stir well to coat.
2. Serve cold or at room temperature, with garnishes if desired.

To see this and past articles visit
<http://region1.us.mensa.org/cooking.shtml>

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THE JULY DINNER

BEER APPRECIATION

Southern CT Mensan Charles Donais knows a thing or two about beer. He has sampled beers here and abroad, collected hundred of labels from different brands, studied brewing, and served an apprenticeship in a microbrewery. At our August dinner, he presented a blend of chemistry, technology, history, business, and personal stories, along with a few samples, to share with us the knowledge of beers and brewing that he has soaked up over the years.

Remember when microbrewers like Sam Adams burst onto the market in the 1980s? That's when Charles began looking into the business. As he recounted, he had sampled the famous German beers when he served in the Air Force, and it stimulated his curiosity about a subject that had always interested him. After working in telecommunications in the States, he decided to investigate opening his own microbrewery. He attended the Chicago Brewing Institute and then apprenticed at a small microbrewery in Maine. Although he decided the \$750,000 investment was too much for him to launch his own operation, his training deepened his knowledge of what goes into beers, how different styles of beers are produced, and the subtleties in beer tastes.

Charlie started out by outlining the biochemistry used in producing beer. Beer has four main ingredients - water, a grain (usually barley), yeast, and hops (a type of flower). Beer is over 90% water (purified) and the water's mineral content and acidity affect the taste. The sprouted grain helps produce the color and sweetness, the yeast fungus generates the alcohol and carbonation, and the hops provide flavor and aroma.

Our guide put on his production cap to step us through how a brewery converts the basic ingredients into beer. The first step is mashing - crushing the grains into malt and soaking it in heated water to create malt extract. The mashing goes through stages of carefully controlled heating to activate different enzymes. Near the end of the mash, the solution is heated to about 150 degrees to break down the grain's starch molecules into sugars that can be fermented. The

mashed grains are rinsed with hot water, leaving a sugared liquid called the wort ("wert"). This mixture is then drawn off into the brew kettle in 700-pound batches for boiling. During the boil, the brewer adds hops, either at the beginning for taste or at the end for aroma. The hops provide bitterness that balances the sweetness of the malt.

After the boiling, centrifugal force is used to separate the liquid in the wort. Before adding yeast, brewers quickly cool the wort to about 68 – 70%. The cooled wort moves on to another tank. Yeast is put in to ferment the sugars into ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide – what can now be called beer. The beer is fermented for at least a week, and then goes on for secondary fermentation and conditioning.

Charlie was careful to explain the terminology of brewing. One person asked what the difference between ale and beer is. "Ale," Charlie pointed out, "is simply beer that is fermented at a higher temperature." He described the two basic categories of yeast used. Ale yeasts are top-fermenting yeasts. They ferment at about 70 degrees, and form foam on the surface of the beer. Small microbreweries tend to produce ales because they are cheaper to make. Lager yeasts are bottom-fermenting yeasts. They ferment at approximately 50 degrees, and are best served at cool temperature. "Lagern" is a German word meaning "to store." Whereas ales are ready to drink in about three weeks, lager beers are stored for at least a month, in chilled cellars. This mellows and smooths their flavor.

Brewing technology draws on a long and colorful history. Beer has been around for 5000 years, harking back to ancient Mesopotamia. Charlie amused us with the story of the large Egyptian beer sipping tanks which beer-cheologists found, and discussed Germany's rich beer tradition. The Bavarian Weihenstephan is the oldest running brewery in the world, he noted, dating back to 1040. Germany is also famous for its Reinheitsgebot ("Rhine-heights-gah-boat"), or beer purity law, which was enacted in 1516. This law requires that only malted barley, wheat, hops, and water can be used to make beer. Charlie sampled German quality first-hand when he visited many off the beaten path German breweries while living over there.

Immigrants from Germany and many other nations brought their native styles of beer to the United States in the 1800s, giving the nation the world's greatest variety. Before Prohibition, there were about 1800 breweries in the U.S. Afterwards, however, the number declined to about 30 – 40, thinning the diversity of wares. World War II also changed American beer production. During the war, barley was scarce so brewers switched to rice, wheat, or corn. These are still used, as Americans have become accustomed to lighter grains. But variety returned to American shores in the 1980s when regional microbreweries began sprouting up. Many revived the immigrant beers of earlier years, and others came up with new and exotic brands that enlivened the market.

Not content to give us just the theory and history of beer, our speaker had us taste-test nine beers he brought in. Since the taste of the dark beers linger on the tongue longer, he proceeded from the lighter beers to the darker beers. The first beer was a surprise - a mystery beer that Charlie asked us to sample and name. Several of us were startled to learn that this wasn't a true beer at all, but Beck's non-alcoholic beverage. "People often can't tell the difference," Charlie remarked, "not only between non-alcoholic beers and light beers, but also between low-quality and high-quality brews, or even between stale and fresh beers."

Brewmaster Donais had a variety of other beers, both domestic and foreign, for us to sample – wheat beer, yeasty beer, Trappist beer, pale ale, very dark Porter beer, stout, and, yes, a stale beer. More often than not, people couldn't guess the mystery beers that he threw in. But Charlie gave his expert commentary on each drink, spelling out the differences in flavoring, aging, and heating that gave each its special taste. He also sprinkled his analysis with historic tidbits that traced the comings and goings of these specialties and highlighted the changing fashions in drinking.

Everyone agreed it was an evening well spent, as we all learned a lot from Charlie's talk. He illuminated both the science and artistry of brewing, and gave us an example of the diverse talents of Connecticut Mensans. We will continue to draw on these talents at future dinner meetings, and we hope to see you there.

Charles Donais recommended British writer Michael Jackson's 1977 book *The World Guide To Beer* as an excellent reference that has influenced many microbrewers and homebrewers. You can visit Jackson's website at <http://www.beerhunter.com>.

For a glossary of beer terms, visit www.howto-brew.com/glossary.html.



Brian Lord is an internationally read cartoonist, writer, and member of Middle Tennessee Mensa (Nashville area). His cartoon Kick Irrational is read weekly by people in 192 cities, 46 states and 9 countries via the Internet. His work can be seen at www.KickComics.com

KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord



PUZZLES & QUESTIONS

(Answers may be in next month's Chronicle.)

1. Where is human nature at its weakest?
2. Which U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman held office longest?
3. What helpful computer software do you think is missing from the market?
4. What is the difference between a retort and a rejoinder?
5. Name as many different schools of psychological thought as you can.
6. What was the population of Boston in 1770? Of New York City?

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:

2. What percentage of unskilled jobs are held by immigrants?
A: According to the Center for Immigration Studies, a think tank in Washington, D.C., immigrants hold 35% of the unskilled jobs in the U.S. There are about 17.7 million immigrant workers, about 13% of the labor force, the highest percentage since the 1930s.
4. How many states in the U.S. have wineries?
A: All 50 states have wineries.
6. How many rocket scientists work in the U.S?
A: There are about 100,000 rocket scientists in the U.S.
8. What is the total area of Fairfield County? Of New Haven County?
A: The total area of Fairfield County is 626 square miles, while that of New Haven County is 606 square miles.

NOTED AND QUOTED

Nothing is more memorable than a smell.

- Diane Ackerman, (1948 -), U.S. poet, writer, and social worker.

Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability. - Sam Keen, (1931 -), American editor, professor and philosopher

Tactics is knowing what to do when there is something to do. Strategy is knowing what to do when there is nothing to do. - Savielly Grigorievitch Tartakower, (1887 - 1956), Polish-French chessmaster.

In life, as in chess, forethought wins.

- Charles Buxton, (1823 - 1871), English brewer, philanthropist, writer, MP

It is easy to flatter; it is harder to praise.

- Jean Paul Richter, (1763 - 1825), German author

Good conscience is sometimes sold for money, but never bought with it.

- James H. Aughey, American clergyman, (1828 - 1911)

The world is the best of all possible worlds, and everything in it is a necessary evil. - Francis H. Bradley, (1846 - 1924), English idealist philosopher.

One sees great things from the valley, only small things from the peak.

- G. K. Chesterton, (1874 - 1936), English essayist and poet.

Two basic rules of life are: 1) Change is inevitable 2) Everybody resists change. - W. Edwards Deming, (1900 - 1993), American statistician, quality expert

How did I get into the world? Why was I not asked about it, why was I not informed of the rules and regulations but just thrust into the ranks as if I had been bought by a peddling shanghaier of human beings?

- Soren Kierkegaard, (1813 - 1855), *Repetition*, (1843)

Every fact that is learned becomes a key to other facts.

- Edward L. Youmans, (1821 - 1887), American chemist

The point is not to pay back kindness but to pass it on. - Julia Alvarez, (1950 -), Dominican-American poet, novelist, and essayist

To live long, it is necessary to live slowly.

- Cicero, (106 - 43 B.C.E)

Between stimulus and response is the freedom to choose.

- Viktor Frankl, (1905 - 1997), Austrian psychiatrist, author

Fear makes us feel our humanity.

- Benjamin Disraeli, (1804 - 1881)

The future has many names: For the weak, it means the unattainable. For the fearful, it means the unknown. For the courageous, it means opportunity. - Victor Hugo, (1802 - 1885)

When all else is lost, the future still remains.

- Christian Bovee, (1820 - 1904), American author.

Forgive others often, yourself never.

- Publius Syrus, (c. 100 B.C.E.), Roman slave and poet.

Men as well as rivers grow crooked by following the path of least resistance.

- Thomas Jefferson, (1743 - 1826)

Fancy tortures more people than does reality.

- Ouida, (1839 - 1908), English novelist and social critic.

Vanity plays lurid tricks with our memory.

- Joseph Conrad, (1857 - 1924), *Lord Jim*, (1900)

Peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war. - John Milton, (1608 - 1674)

Life is a jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing. - Anonymous

One cannot know everything.

- Horace, (65 - 8 B.C.E), Roman lyric poet.

You may have the universe if I may have Italy.

- Guiseppe Verdi, (), *Attila*, (1846)

Every man is a hypocrite.

- Frederick IV, (1574 - 1610), Elector of Palatine

Hell is full of musical amateurs.

- George Bernard Shaw, (1856 - 1950), *Man and Superman*, (1903)

I teach you beyond Man (superman). Man is something that shall be surpassed. What have you done to surpass him.

- Friedrich Nietzsche, (1844 - 1900), *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, (1883 - 85)

The world is like a board with holes in it, and the square men have got into the round holes, and the round into the square.

- Bishop George Berkeley, (1685 - 1753)

RUMINATIONS

REQUIREMENTS OF THE SHORT STORY

From *Short Stories for English Courses*

Edited by Rosa M.R. Rikels

Critics have agreed that the short story must conform to certain conditions. First of all, the writer must strive to make one and only one impression. His time is too limited, his space is too confined, his risk of dividing the attention of the reader is too great, to admit of more than this one impression. He therefore selects some moment of action or some phase of character or some particular scene, and focuses attention upon that. Life not infrequently gives such brief, clear-cut impressions. At the railway station we see two young people hurry to a train as if fearful of being detained, and we get the impression of romantic adventure. We pass on the street corner two men talking, and from a chance sentence or two we form a strong impression of the character of one or both. Sometimes we travel through a scene so desolate and depressing or so lovely and uplifting that the effect is never forgotten. Such glimpses of life and scene are as vivid as the vignettes revealed by the search-light, when its arm slowly explores a mountain-side or the shore of a lake and brings objects for a brief moment into high light. To secure this single strong impression, the writer must decide which of the three essentials-- plot, character, or setting--is to have first place.

As action appeals strongly to most people, and very adequately reveals character, the short-story writer may decide to make plot pre-eminent. He accordingly chooses his incidents carefully. Any that do not really aid in developing the story must be cast aside, no matter how interesting or attractive they may be in themselves. This does not mean that an incident

which is detached from the train of events may not be used. But such an incident must have proper relations provided for it. Thus the writer may wish to use incidents that belong to two separate stories, because he knows that by relating them he can produce a single effect. Shakespeare does this in *Macbeth*. Finding in the lives of the historic *Macbeth* and the historic King Duff incidents that he wished to use, he combined them. But he saw to it that they had the right relation, that they fitted into the chain of cause and effect. The reader will insist, as the writer knows, that the story be logical, that incident 1 shall be the cause of incident 2, incident 2 of incident 3, and so on to the end. The triangle used by Freytag to illustrate the plot of a play may make this clear.

AC is the line of rising action along which the story climbs, incident by incident, to the point C; C is the turning point, the crisis, or the climax; CB is the line of falling action along which the story descends incident by incident to its logical resolution. Nothing may be left to luck or chance. In life the element of chance does sometimes seem to figure, but in the story it has no place. If the ending is not the logical outcome of events, the reader feels cheated. He does not want the situation to be too obvious, for he likes the thrill of suspense. But he wants the hints and foreshadowings to be sincere, so that he may safely draw his conclusions from them. This does not condemn, however, the "surprise" ending, so admirably used by O. Henry. The reader, in this case, admits that the writer has "played fair" throughout, and that the ending which has so surprised and tickled his fancy is as logical as that he had forecast.

To aid in securing the element of suspense, the author often makes use of what Carl H. Grabo, in his *The Art of the Short Story*, calls the

"negative" or "hostile" incident. Incidents, as he points out, are of two kinds--positive and negative. The first openly help to untangle the situation; the second seem to delay the straightening out of the threads or even to make the tangle worse. He illustrates this by the story of Cinderella. The appearance of the fairy and her use of the magic wand are positive, or openly helpful incidents, in rescuing Cinderella from her lonely and neglected state. But her forgetfulness of the hour and her loss of the glass slipper are negative or hostile incidents. Nevertheless, we see how these are really blessings in disguise, since they cause the prince to seek and woo her.

The novelist may introduce many characters, because he has time and space to care for them. Not so the short-story writer: he must employ only one main character and a few supporting characters. However, when the plot is the main thing, the characters need not be remarkable in any way. Indeed, as Brander Matthews has said, the heroine may be "a woman," the hero "a man," not any woman or any man in particular. Thus, in *The Lady or the Tiger?* the author leaves the princess without definite traits of character, because his problem is not "what this particular woman would do, but what A woman would do." Sometimes, after reading a story of thrilling plot, we find that we do not readily recall the appearance or the names of the characters; we recall only what happened to them. This is true of the women of James Fenimore Cooper's stories. They have no substantiality, but move like veiled figures through the most exciting adventures.

Setting may or may not be an important factor in the story of incident. What is meant by setting? It is an inclusive term. Time, place, local conditions, and sometimes descriptions

of nature and of people are parts of it. When these are well cared for, we get an effect called "atmosphere." We know the effect the atmosphere has upon objects. Any one who has observed distant mountains knows that, while they remain practically unchanged, they never look the same on two successive days. Sometimes they stand out hard and clear, sometimes they are soft and alluring, sometimes they look unreal and almost melt into the sky behind them. So the atmosphere of a story may envelop people and events and produce a subtle effect upon the reader. Sometimes the plot material is such as to require little setting. The incidents might have happened anywhere. We hardly notice the absence of setting in our hurry to see what happens. This is true of many of the stories we enjoyed when we were children. For instance, in *The Three Bears* the incidents took place, of course, in the woods, but our imagination really supplied the setting. Most stories, however, whatever their character, use setting as carefully and as effectively as possible. Time and place are often given with exactness. Thus Bret Harte says: "As Mr. John Oakhurst, gambler, stepped into the main street of Poker Flat on the morning of the twenty-third of November, 1850, he was conscious of a change in its moral atmosphere since the preceding night." This definite mention of time and place gives an air of reality of the story. As to descriptions, the writer sifts them in, for he knows that few will bother to read whole paragraphs of description. He often uses local color, by which we mean the employment of epithets, phrases, and other expressions that impart a "feeling" for the place. This use of local color must not be confused with that intended to produce what is called an "impressionistic" effect. In the latter case the writer subordinates everything to this effect of scene. This use of local color is discussed elsewhere.

Perhaps the writer wishes to make character the dominant element. Then he subordinates plot and setting to this purpose and makes them contribute to it. In selecting the character he wishes to reveal he has wide choice. "Human nature is the same, wherever you find it," we are fond of saying. So he may choose a character that is quite common, some one he knows; and, having made much of some one trait and ignored or subordinated others, bring him before

us at some moment of decision or in some strange, perhaps hostile, environment. Or the author may take some character quite out of the ordinary: the village miser, the recluse, or a person with a peculiar mental or moral twist. But, whatever his choice, it is not enough that the character be actually drawn from real life. Indeed, such fidelity to what literally exists may be a hinderance to the writer. The original character may have done strange things and suffered strange things that cannot be accounted for. But, in the story, inconsistencies must be removed, and the conduct of the characters must be logical. Life seems inconsistent to all of us at times, but it is probably less so than it seems. People puzzle us by their apparent inconsistencies, when to themselves their actions seem perfectly logical. But, as Mr. Grabo points out, "In life we expect inconsistencies; in a story we depend upon their elimination." The law of cause and effect, which we found so indispensable in the story of plot, we find of equal importance in the story of character. There must be no sudden and unaccountable changes in the behavior or sentiments of the people in the story. On the contrary, there must be reason in all they say and do.

Another demand of the character story is that the characters be lifelike. In the plot story, or in the impressionistic story, we may accept the

flat figures on the canvas; our interest is elsewhere. But in the character story we must have real people whose motives and conduct we discuss pro and con with as much interest as if we knew them in the flesh. A character of this convincing type is Hamlet. About him controversy has always raged. It is impossible to think of him as other than a real man. Whenever the writer finds that the characters in his story have caused the reader to wax eloquent over their conduct, he may rest easy: he has made his people lifelike.

Setting in the character story is important, for it is in this that the chief actor moves and has his being. His environment is continually causing him to speak and act. The incidents selected, even though some of them may seem trivial in themselves, must reveal depth after depth in his soul. Whatever the means by which the author reveals the character--whether by setting, conduct, analysis, dialogue, or soliloquy--his task is a hard one. In Markheim we have practically all of these used, with the result that the character is unmistakable and convincing.

Stories of scenes are neither so numerous nor so easy to produce successfully as those of plot and character. But sometimes a place so profoundly impresses a writer that its demands may not be disregarded. Robert Louis Stevenson strongly felt the influence of certain places. "Certain dank gardens cry aloud for murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable." Perhaps all of us have seen some place of which we have exclaimed: "It is like a story!" When, then, scene is to furnish the dominant interest, plot and character become relatively insignificant and shadowy. "The pressure of the atmosphere," says Brander Matthews, holds our attention. The

Fall of the House of Usher, by Edgar Allan Poe, is a story of this kind. It is the scene that affects us with dread and horror; we have no peace until we see the house swallowed up by the tarn, and have fled out of sight of the tarn itself. The plot is extremely slight, and the Lady Madeline and her unhappy brother hardly more than shadows.

It must not be supposed from the foregoing explanation that the three essentials of the short story are ever really divorced. They are happily blended in many of our finest stories. Nevertheless, analysis of any one of these will show that in the mind of the writer one purpose was pre-eminent. On this point Robert Louis Stevenson thus speaks: "There are, so far as I know, three ways and three only of writing a story. You may take a plot and fit characters to it, or you may take a character and choose incidents and situations to develop it, or, lastly, you may take a certain atmosphere and get actions and persons to express and realize it." When to this clear conception of his limitations and privileges the author adds an imagination that clearly visualizes events and the "verbal magic" by which good style is secured, he produces the short story that is a masterpiece.



POETRY CORNER**LOST THINGS**

Sara Teasdale, (1884 – 1933)
from *Flame and Shadow* (1920)

OH, I could let the world go by,
Its loud new wonders and its wars,
But how will I give up the sky
When winter dusk is set with stars?
And I could let the cities go,
Their changing customs and their creeds, --
But oh, the summer rains that blow
In silver on the jewel-weeds!

WHAT THE GHOST OF THE GAMBLER SAID

Vachel Lindsay, (1879 – 1931)

WHERE now the huts are empty,
Where never a camp-fire glows,
In an abandoned cañon,
A Gambler's Ghost arose.
He muttered there, "The moon's a sack
Of dust." His voice rose thin:
"I wish I knew the miner-man.
I'd play, and play to win.
In every game in Cripple-creek
Of old, when stakes were high,
I held my own. Now I would play
For that sack in the sky.
The sport would not be ended there.
'Twould rather be begun.
I'd bet my moon against his stars,
And gamble for the sun.

YOUTH AND CALM

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)
from *New Poems by Matthew Arnold* (1867)

'Tis death! and peace, indeed, is here,
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.
There's nothing can disarm now
The smoothness of that limpid brow.
But is a calm like this, in truth,
The crowning end of life and youth,
And when this boon rewards the dead,
Are all debts paid, has all been said?
And is the heart of youth so light,
Its step so firm, its eye so bright,
Because on its hot brow there blows
A wind of promise and repose
From the far grave, to which it goes;
Because it hath the hope to come,
One day, to harbour in the tomb?
Ah no, the bliss youth dreams is one
For daylight, for the cheerful sun,
For feeling nerves and living breath--
Youth dreams a bliss on this side death.
It dreams a rest, if not more deep,
More grateful than this marble sleep;
It hears a voice within it tell:
Calm's not life's crown, though calm is well.
'Tis all perhaps which man acquires,
But 'tis not what our youth desires.

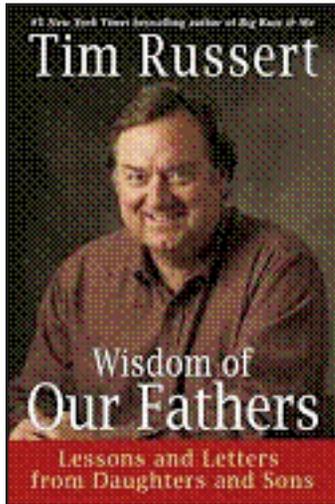
MONOTONE

Carl Sandburg, (1878 – 1967)

THE monotone of the rain is beautiful,
And the sudden rise and slow relapse
Of the long multitudinous rain.
The sun on the hills is beautiful,
Or a captured sunset sea-flung,
Bannered with fire and gold.
A face I know is beautiful--
With fire and gold of sky and sea,
And the peace of long warm rain.

BOOK REVIEW

By Rick D'Amico

***Wisdom of Our Fathers: Lessons and Letters from Daughters and Sons***by *Tim Russert*

Tim Russert is moderator and managing editor of NBC's Meet The Press, one of the most widely watched television news talk shows. But in 2004, Russert stepped out from

behind the camera to tell a more personal story in his book *Big Russ and Me*. This touching memoir about him and his father struck a deep chord, eliciting 60,000 letters and e-mails from readers.

Most of the letters and e-mails told stories about the lasting lessons the sons and daughters learned from their fathers. The dads described were ordinary people who provided extraordinary examples, advice, or moments to their loved ones. Russert selected the best of these letters for his new book.

The writers, like Russert, express profound gratitude for what their father did for them or taught them. In some cases, the appreciation didn't come until decades later. But the book underscores that it's never too late to give or receive thanks.

The book is divided into chapters or themes such as The Protector, The Teacher, and Forgiveness. There's even a chapter on baseball. But one of my favorite stories is about football - a father who brought his son to the 1990 49ers-Giants playoff game at Giants Stadium. As a Giants season ticket holder, the dad had four tickets for the big game. However, there were only the father and son, leaving two extra tickets. The son expected his father to sell the tickets for a

handsome profit (called "scalping") to some the highest-bidding fans. Instead, his father found another father and son who needed tickets and sold them to them at his price. The subtitle to this passage is, "Doing the right thing - priceless."

Not all the dads described were particularly good role models. Some were eccentric or had seriously flawed personalities. But their stories are important as well.

Overall, it's an excellent book, and Russert has arranged the writers' reminiscences most appropriately and effectively. I won't give it away, but the epilogue of the book tells an anecdote that sums things up beautifully. Having lost my Dad this past January, this was, at times, a very difficult read for me. There were times when I just had to put it down. Still, I found it very rewarding, and maybe because of my loss, it meant more than it would have under different circumstances. I highly recommend it.

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