



# Morning Groups 2009 SVHE Conference

## I. Celebrating the Spiritual Search

Convener - Carol Ochs [cochs@earthlink.net](mailto:cochs@earthlink.net)

Convener - Hal Jackson [halamjac@ca.rr.com](mailto:halamjac@ca.rr.com)

Will continue its exploration of the many areas in the religious life that fascinate and baffle us. Tentatively we are scheduled to hear from Hal Jackson, Allison Moore, Peter Paris, Peter Amerman, Carl Edwards, Carol Ochs-- and you if you'd care to present please contact us.

## 2. Chords of Memory: The Cold War Spy Film

Convener - Jon Wiant [wiantjc@earthlink.net](mailto:wiantjc@earthlink.net)

Along with geo-political tensions and proxy wars, the Cold War gave us the contemporary spy novel and spy film. John Kennedy's fascination with Ian Fleming's *James Bond* took the spy novel from a sub-genre of mystery writers into a class by itself. In the forty years that followed, James Bond became synonymous with intelligence work and the pens of gifted writers and pulp fiction hacks alike churned out hundreds of "spy stories". In print and in film, these creations became the new realities. From them we learned not only threats but also capabilities - real and imagined - as well as tradecraft and technique. The spy novel and film both reflected our world and helped shape it creating entertainment for the masses while often confounding the professional and deviling the historian. In the course of our review we will examine several examples of the genre looking at them both as a form of history and a source of education. We will analyze these works in terms of their historical representation and their "realities". Morning Group participants will be prepared to offer their own examples of fictional works that have contributed to their understanding of the world of intelligence or that have been offered up as representations of reality.

**First session:** *Decision before Dawn* (1951) While set in the last months of World War II, this film starkly lays out questions of betrayal and the amorality of agent-handling. Professionals consider this the most realistic portrayal of battlefield HUMINT or human source intelligence.

**Second Session:** *Our Man in Havana*. Carroll Reed's 1958 film based on Graham Greene's novel is a masterpiece from any perspective. We, however, will be looking at it terms of how fabrication of information percolates through an intelligence service. Plays on Cold War themes but this 1965 film is as contemporary as CURVEBALL'S reporting on Iraqi WMD.

**Third Session:** *The Spy who came in from the Cold*. This is THE iconic Cold War film, stark in its black and white photography; the movie mirrors the Manichean polarity of the time. Most agree that it successfully translates LeCarre's novel and lays out the dilemmas of a democracy engaging in the moral ambiguity of espionage and counterespionage.

**Fourth Session:** Under consideration. We welcome suggestions.

Jon Wiant, Morning Group convener is a veteran of nearly 40 years of analytical and operational intelligence work; the last 20 years were spent in senior positions at State and CIA. He is a past President of SVHE.

### 3. Forms of Autobiography

Convener- Mary Treanor [mtreanor@valpo.edu](mailto:mtreanor@valpo.edu) or 574-233-5409

This presentation/discussion group is interested mainly in intention, decisions about form, and strategies of shaping one's story; we aim for a balance between presenters' own autobiographical work and studies of such materials by others. Past presenters have given us scholarly articles, excerpts from personal journals, poetry, memoirs, videos, photographic essays, and/or informal spoken reminiscences—a rich tapestry of possible forms for autobiography. We are always happy to greet returning members and eager to welcome new ones. We invite anyone interested in presenting a paper and/or leading a discussion on some aspect of autobiography to contact us.

### 4. Historical Fiction Seminar 2009

Convener - Mary E. Papke ([papke@utk.edu](mailto:papke@utk.edu))

In honor of our meeting near Chicago, we will explore various historical novels and one history that reads like a novel set in the Windy City. The first novel is *Haymarket*, by Distinguished Professor of History Martin Duberman, that depicts the Haymarket Square Riot of 1886. As Peter Franck of *The Washington Post* writes, "we should be grateful to Duberman for spotlighting a neglected chapter in the struggle for workplace rights and human dignity." The second selection is the nonfiction *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America*. Janet Maslin of the *New York Times* noted about the bestseller that it is "a dynamic, enveloping book...And it doesn't hurt that this truth really is stranger than fiction." We then jump from the turn of the century to the 1930s with Richard Wright's *Native Son*, described on the Harper Perennial restored text edition, introduction by Arnold Rampersad, as "an unsparing reflection on the poverty and feelings of hopelessness experienced by people in inner cities across the country and of what it means to be black in America." I have a presenter/facilitator signed up for the Wright novel and welcome any offers to facilitate either of the other two sessions. I would also like to discuss a fourth book, perhaps informally at a lunch or dinner, that brings us up to post 9/11 Chicago, the simply named *Chicago* by noted Egyptian writer Alaa Al Aswany. I look forward to hearing from anyone interested in the group and meeting with the group in workshop sessions and for a special discussion of the last novel.

### 5. Popular Culture

Convener -Margie Jones [margie8888@aol.com](mailto:margie8888@aol.com)

The popular culture seminar will continue to bring a distinctively SVHE lens to popular culture. We are interested in popular culture broadly understood, with four questions in mind:

- 1) What values are communicated through popular culture?
- 2) What does popular culture tell us about society?
- 3) What are we reading/watching/listening to in popular culture, and why do we like it?
- 4) Why this study is important, and what can we do with this knowledge?

Two presentations are scheduled so far for summer 2009:

Dan Sack: Celebrity and show business have often played an important role in America's religious economy. Moral Re-Armament, a Christian movement of the mid-twentieth century, developed this tendency to a fine art, using celebrities (from politics and the movies) and media (including movies and staged musicals) to spread its message. This history helps us understand phenomena from *Up With People* to Tom Cruise.

David Jones: "From Jackie Robinson to Barack Obama: Our National Game and the American Dream." Baseball has long been called our national game, but when Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947 it made possible baseball as a TRULY national American game. The election of Barack Obama manifests a fuller measure of the American Dream. We will consider how Robinson and Obama are critical actors in the drama of American meaning.

Please contact Margie Jones at [margie8888@aol.com](mailto:margie8888@aol.com) to offer additional presentations.

## 6. Reacting to the Past-Darwin and the Copley Medal

Organizer - Dave Stewart [dstewar2@csulb.edu](mailto:dstewar2@csulb.edu)

Charles Darwin, the Copley Medal, and the Rise of aturalism, 1862-64, thrusts game players into the intellectual ferment of Victorian England just after publication of *The Origin of Species*. Since its appearance in 1859, Darwin's long awaited treatise in "genetic biology" had received reviews both favorable and damning. Thomas Huxley and Samuel Wilberforce presented arguments for and against the theory in a dramatic and widely publicized face-off at the 1860 meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Oxford. Their encounter sparked a vigorous, complex debate that touched on a host of issues and set the stage for the Royal Society's consideration of whether or not they ought to award Darwin the Copley Medal, their most prestigious prize. While the action takes place in meetings of the Royal Society, Great Britain's most important scientific body, a parallel and influential public argument smoldered over the nature of science and its relationship to modern life in an industrial society.

## 7. Theorizing Culture: Knowledgeable Consumers and Consuming Knowledge

Convener - Allen Dunn [ardunn@utk.edu](mailto:ardunn@utk.edu)

Convener - Eric Bain-Selbo [eric.bain-selbo@wku.edu](mailto:eric.bain-selbo@wku.edu)

This year's "Theorizing Culture" group will focus on the explication and critique of issues related to the theme of the 2009 Fellows Meeting. It will begin on Thursday with a discussion of selections from John Henry Newman's *The Idea of a University* (the 19th century work that shaped and continues to shape much of our thinking about higher education) and John Dewey's *Democracy and Education*. On Friday and Saturday, the group will move on to a selection of writings from philosophers associated with the Frankfurt School, such as Theodor Adorno and Jurgen Habermas--focusing significantly on the critique of instrumental rationality and its pervasiveness in contemporary culture. Finally on Sunday, the group will read and discuss portions of *Homo Academicus*—a contemporary critique of the French academic community by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Participants who would like to receive photocopies or *pdf* files of readings should contact Eric Bain-Selbo at [eric.bain-selbo@wku.edu](mailto:eric.bain-selbo@wku.edu).

## 8. Understanding Africa

Convener - David A. Hoekema [dhoekema@calvin.edu](mailto:dhoekema@calvin.edu)

Convener - Cheedy Jaja [cjaja@mail.mcg.edu](mailto:cjaja@mail.mcg.edu)

As the world grows smaller, sub-Saharan Africa has drawn increasing visibility from the West. Its struggles with poverty, disease, and corruption are well known; but its rich religious, cultural, and intellectual resources are often overlooked. In this new Morning Group, we invite Fellows to bring their observations, insights, and questions concerning the ways in which the diverse nations and peoples of the African continent can benefit from, and contribute to, the new global order. Presentations in any areas of the humanities and the social sciences are invited for this initial exploration. Possible topics include African Christian and Islamic traditions, economic development, human rights, health, environmental and resource issues, and emerging voices in postcolonial literature and philosophy. Some common readings relevant to the presentations may be suggested to participants in early summer when topics of presentations have been determined.