

# The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education



ACMHE Newsletter

Spring 2010

## Greetings!

From the Editors:

We hope this season's news from the ACMHE and its members finds you well, and breathing in the fair winds of spring. We're sending it from our new office, still in Northampton, MA, where we're discovering some new shoots, and look forward to finding out just what was under the frozen turf when we moved in last December. Our new address is listed below.

We're also looking forward to a year of expanded efforts to bring contemplative practice wider and deeper into campus life. The ACMHE intends to increase visibility and membership this year and we will be enlisting your help. Please help us by [completing the member survey](#) to help us refine our benefits, and consider forwarding ACMHE event announcements to colleagues when you receive them to help generate interest and recruit new members.

When Arthur Zajonc welcomed participants to last year's Summer Session, he spoke with a sense of urgency about making use of all available resources as we address the pressing issues of our time.

"Education has developed techniques over thousands of years to develop the exterior abilities of the student; we come together this week to give care and intention to the development of the interior. A contemplatively oriented "complementary curriculum" can offer great benefits, and has practical applications in many fields. We deprive ourselves of half the resources available when our solutions to problems fail to plumb our own depths of insight and concern."

--Arthur Zajonc

That sense of urgency intensifies in light of the news that Arthur has recently been diagnosed with stage one Parkinson's. He is meeting the challenge with extraordinary grace and courage, and making use of a wide spectrum of resources in response to the illness, including contemplation (see article below on "Meditation and Mortality").

This issue also includes a full report from that Summer Session (and an invitation to apply to the 6th Annual Session this August); two wonderful submissions from 2008 Contemplative Practice Fellow David Kahane; an interview with new member Pamela Russell; and an array of announcements from members which are worthy of your attention. Please consider making a contribution of your own to a future newsletter--we are always delighted to hear from you.

With warm regards,

Beth Wadham  
Geri DeLuca

### We've Moved!

The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society and The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education have moved to

**15 Conz Street, Suite 1  
Northampton, MA 01060**

Phone, fax and email contact remains unchanged.

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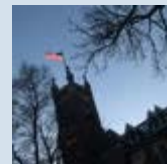
### **Meditation and Mortality: Practice and Parkinson's**

*by Arthur Zajonc, Professor of Physics, Amherst College and Director, Center for Contemplative Mind in Society*

The diagnosis came a few months ago; I had stage one Parkinson's disease. The most prominent symptom was a persistent resting tremor in my right hand. I had been meditating for many years, and now I was experiencing firsthand the ways in which meditation and a chronic medical condition can intersect.

I started my meditation practice in my usual way with the cultivation of humility, reverence, and calm. I slowly opened and closed my unsettled hand in synchrony with my shallow breathing. The tremor in my right hand gradually slowed as my meditation deepened and my awareness widened. The movements of my body associated with Parkinson's became smaller and ultimately stopped. The jitters that accompany me during the day had

### Upcoming Events



[6th Annual Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development](#)

August 8 - 13, 2010  
Smith College,  
Northampton, MA

finally ceased, and I found a place of rest and ease. I welcomed the silent spacious calm. It seemed as if a whole day's agitation slid from my body.

Then, taking up a line of poetry as the focus for a concentration practice, I noted that my hand began to tremor (is this the verb? Or tremble?) once again. Returning to spacious awareness, the tremor disappeared. I have noted the difference consistently over recent weeks. Concentration practices stimulate the tremor whereas a practice of deep, silent, open awareness calms it.

Meditation is not something apart from life, but firmly anchored in it. If we are ill, stressed, or distraught, meditation will meet each of these and we learn the ways in which practice and life can shape each other. In my case, open-awareness meditation has not only stilled the tremor in my hand for a short time, but it has helped me to carry the prognosis and changes in my life. Each day is more valued than the one before, each meeting with a friend is heightened and intensified. It has become clear to me that meditation and mortality are well-acquainted with one another, and that the profound calm at the heart of meditation is also courage before the challenges of life.

Published on February 5, 2010 at <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-meditative-life/201002/meditation-and-mortality-practice-and-parkinsons>



## Meditation Sessions at Mead Art Museum of Amherst College

The Mead Art Museum is in the midst of a series of four evening meditation sessions, free and open to the public, in the museum's galleries at 7:30 p.m. on the Wednesday evenings of April 7 and May 5 (previous sessions took place on Feb. 17 and March 24). Designed to foster mindfulness and a deep engagement with a selected work of art, the sessions will be guided by four members of the Amherst College community with

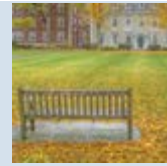
experience in mindfulness meditation and sustained, focused contemplation of visual art.

According to the series' organizer, Pamela Russell, recent studies have demonstrated the importance of "prolonged looking" for gaining a full appreciation of a work of art, and the sessions will offer an opportunity for art lovers to take their interests in art to a new level of engagement by doing so. Each one combines quiet meditation with time for shared responses to the "attentive looking" exercises designed by the session facilitator, she added.

Feb. 17: Arthur Zajonc, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Physics, with a focus on William-Adolphe Bouguereau's *Le TravailInterrompu (Work Interrupted)*, 1891.

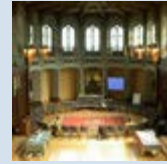
March 24: Daniel Barbezat, Professor of Economics, with a focus on George Inness's *Virginia Sunset*, 1889.

April 7: Mark Hart, Amherst College Buddhist Adjunct Advisor, with a



### [The Contemplative Academy](#)

*The 2nd Annual Conference of the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education*  
September 24 - 26, 2010  
Amherst College,  
Amherst, MA



### [Retreat for Academics](#)

November 11 - 14, 2010  
Garrison Institute,  
Garrison, NY

#### New Reports



[Report on the 2009 Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development](#)



[Report on the Fall 2009 Academic Retreat](#)

#### Our Next Webinar

focus on Randall Davey's *Monhegan Harbor*, ca. 1915.

May 5: Haley Douds '10, with a focus on Thomas Cole's *The Past and The Present*, 1838.

A complete schedule of the museum's spring events is posted on the Mead's Web site: [www.amherst.edu/museums/mead/programs](http://www.amherst.edu/museums/mead/programs). For more information, please visit the museum's Web site, [www.amherst.edu/museums/mead](http://www.amherst.edu/museums/mead), or call 413/542-2335.



### Interview with member Pamela Russell, Coordinator of College Programs, Mead Art Museum, Amherst College

by Beth Wadham

**Beth:** I was really intrigued when I heard about the meditation sessions you're offering at the Mead Art Museum. Joel Upton mentioned them when he came into the office to give his "Visualizing Contemplation" Webinar last December. Where did the idea to do this come from? Was it the museum director, or faculty members?

**Pamela:** I think...it was me. The way I trace the arc, it begins with my peripheral interest in mindfulness practice. Over the past 10 years I've read some key books, attended sittings, and I took a 3-part course at the Monadnock Mindfulness Center near my home base in Keene, NH. So it was in my very positive awareness.

Then, when I came for my interview here in May, there was an Amherst College magazine at the bed & breakfast where I stayed. In it was an article by Economics Professor Dan Barbezat about his "Consumption and the Pursuit of Happiness" course, in which he uses some contemplative practices. It may also have referred to the "Eros and Insight" first year seminar taught by Joel Upton and Arthur Zajonc. Well, when I read about what was going on at Amherst, I just popped. I'd never really thought about contemplative practice in a collegiate setting or being part of a course, and I thought, I love this. I didn't know if I was going to come to Amherst at that moment, but fortunately, about three weeks later I found out I would be. I didn't know who these people were yet, but the idea began percolating at that time.

The other thread is that there's a movement in museum education, which is my professional field, to slow down and look. There are many studies about what people actually do in museums, suggesting what they could do, and what are appropriate ways to engage visitors. An article in the *New York Times* last summer, by Michael Kimmelman, "At Louvre, Many Stop to Snap but Few Stay to Focus," gives a sense of the current reality. Then, there's Project Zero at Harvard, and their recent report on what happens in museum study centers. It asks how people quietly engage with works, what questions they ask, and what kind of guidance they need.

In the study center, conditions are different than in the hallways and



### [Contemplative Arts and Society](#)

a webinar with Anne Beffel, Assoc. Professor, Syracuse University  
Weds., April 28, 2010  
3:00 - 4:00 pm EDT

### Do you have a new email address?

If you need to update your email address or any other aspect of your subscription to our email list, please **click the "Update Profile/Email Address" link** at the very bottom of this email.

Thank you!

galleries of the museum. It's all about focused looking and deep engagement. In the report, visitors describe the power of objects to captivate their attention, surprise them, and invite wonder. There are rewards to this kind of prolonged looking, when people take the time to see new things and form new ideas.

In the mix as well (for generating the idea for the meditation sessions), in fact the real tipping point was the almost humorous news about Mount Holyoke Art Museum's spa night. They open the doors in the evening and in the lobby are manicures, temporary henna treatments. There's massage and ongoing yoga in galleries. I thought, well that could be popular at Amherst. And then it just clicked. Mindfulness is even a bit less to do than yoga-and more meaningful. Yoga uses the galleries as a pleasant environment, but doesn't really engage with the works of art.

Knowing there were people at Amherst, I thought there was potential. I reached out to Dan Barbezat and he suggested I speak to Arthur and also Mark Hart, who has a standing Buddhist meditation session on campus each week. During a meeting of the three of us, there was enthusiasm and we decided to send out a trial balloon with this series.

So that's the origin: my personal empathy with mindfulness, knowing a goal in museums is to stop, slow down and look, and the built-in expertise and interest in meditation at the college.

So far, there's been a positive response from students and others. It's a new idea. There have been meditation sessions in museums, but not focusing on the work of art. At the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum they used the courtyard for a Buddhist sitting session.

**Beth:** It is a new idea, but it seems like there is a wonderful concord with a mission of art museums, as I experience them. When I began going, as a child, I loved the hush and awe that invited feelings of being in the presence of something different, and awakening, and responding to it. They are contemplative spaces.

**Pamela:** What I like to think about is the time it takes to create a work of art, versus the couple of seconds it's usually looked at.

**Beth:** People aren't used to attending so carefully to visual information. In a way you do see it all at once.

**Pamela:** But there's a language. On a very simple level, we teach docents a way to talk about color, line, shape. To take the time to look at art only in terms of color, say, not the subject or content of the work. Discuss whether it's a warm palette or cool palette and ask what that does to the way we feel. Or break out a single feature, asking whether it's rectilinear or diagonal, and what that contributes to meaning. I like to compare it to paying attention to the meter of a poem.

And then, my favorite part is the discussions that follow. People invariably see things they've never seen, and that is so great. That's what I hope these events will allow. My husband was asking, "What is actually going to happen at these sessions?" I'm not really sure, but I'm sure we'll get some surprises.

**Beth:** Do you have any experience with inviting this kind of prolonged looking?

**Pamela:** When I was at the Maryland institute of Art, I taught "Art Matters"

to freshmen. Everyone who teaches it does something different. I saw models of what others had done, but I was feeling my way, and I put up Picasso's "Woman before a Mirror," and said, we're going to look at this quietly for 10 minutes. And it seemed like an eternity. Even for me. And I'm thinking, why am I doing this? I've made a grave mistake. But I kept with it and they stuck with it. It was challenging. For me, as a teacher it was hard not to talk for that long. But it set the tone, and we all became more comfortable with it.

**Beth:** It's kind of like with a practice, when you begin, you become aware of all the chatter and the difficulty of bringing yourself back again and again to your point of awareness.

**Pamela:** I remember when I first started with 20 minute meditations on my own, and then planned to go to the center where they offered 90 minutes. I was apprehensive, even scared, but of course found it's very possible and fine.

In my work with professors here, they usually come trying to get illustrative material, or examples, of what they're teaching. If they're reading Baudelaire they want to show a portrait. I would include that, but move beyond by suggesting that they put out several images and have the students compare them. For a Rilke class, we bring out prints to discuss, even pretend they're poems, to see what kind of message comes out.

It's so much more memorable for the students. Rather than just being shown something, they make something of what they see. And ultimately it's more fun for the teacher, too.

#### Select References

Joel Upton's "Visualizing Contemplation" Webinar is archived at <http://vimeo.com/9007209>.

The article on Dan Barbezat's "Consumption and Happiness" course is at <https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/news/classroom/node/95882>

An article on "Eros and Insight" is available at [http://www3.amherst.edu/magazine/issues/04spring/eros\\_insight/index.html](http://www3.amherst.edu/magazine/issues/04spring/eros_insight/index.html)

The final report for "Learning in and from Museum Study Centers," the research collaboration between Project Zero and Harvard University, is at <http://pzweb.harvard.edu/Research/HUAMPZStudyCenterLearning.pdf>



## Mindfulness and Presence in Teaching and Learning

*by David Kahane, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Alberta*

I was miserably anxious starting out as a teacher. There was an exhilaration in sitting or standing at the front of a classroom, but also deep insecurity about my knowledge and competence. I teetered between a sense of inadequacy and (when convinced that I'd given a seamless lecture or facilitated a great discussion) the surging exhilaration of accomplishment.

I embodied, in other words, a vacillation between senses of worthlessness

and worth that constituted my normative world as an undergraduate and graduate student. In this world, education is a hierarchy: you begin as a fundamentally inadequate novice and set about stacking up knowledge, skill, and accomplishment in order to deserve the esteem of those who survey and evaluate your performance. And we can become the harshest observers of our own performance, reading this harshness into the reactions of our students, peers, and teachers.

My teaching, especially starting out, tended to be about covering up what I didn't know, about coming across as accomplished, about performing seamless knowledge in order to stave off the ever-present specter of humiliation. I taught from a deep-seated sense of lack, and inadvertently modeled for my students that they could overcome their own lack by learning to perform expertise.

The alternative that I experience more often now is a pedagogy of plenty. My anxiety as a teacher is not gone - this jittery pulse is often with me in the classroom. But I am more able to work with it: to embrace groundlessness and uncertainty as the heart of learning. Instead of modeling academic (and teaching) mastery as an escape from lack, I hope that I invite students to recognize that they are already good enough, that their learning can be a way of more fully experiencing themselves and their fundamental adequacy.

Content mastery is of course crucial to good teaching, which requires knowledge of course material and is enhanced by scholarly depth. This article stresses presence and downplays content mastery because the culture of the academy so often skews things in the opposite direction. Each teacher needs to navigate this balance for themselves, including in light of the risks and rewards of particular teaching contexts and power relations.

During the decade I spent in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Alberta, I achieved some success by introducing collaborative models of teaching, but when I began mindfulness practices it helped me to clarify the meaning of "presence" in teaching. I stumbled into a week-long retreat at the Zen Monastery Practice Center in California and started learning basic mindfulness meditation. I connected deeply with this challenging practice of staying with the present-moment experience of my breath, gently releasing the thoughts and sensations and emotions that relentlessly drew me away. There was a connection between this mindfulness practice and many of the things I had been seeking in my teaching: an ability to be present to the nuances of the classroom in each moment, a sense of fundamental adequacy rather than lack, an open, non-judgmental curiosity about my own experience, and skilled ways of supporting others in this kind of learning. In meditation, I found a rigorous practice for cultivating presence.

I was so struck by the connection between my experience of Zen and my aspirations in teaching that (in addition to taking up meditation through daily practice and a rhythm of retreats) I looked for literatures and communities that explored links between mindfulness, meditation, and teaching. A number of Google searches later, I found the Center for the Contemplative Mind in Society. I attended three of their Summer Contemplative Curriculum Development sessions, sustained by the values of this community and inspired by its diverse experiments in teaching. These summer sessions gave me the confidence and skills to bring meditation overtly into my own classrooms. Let me provide just a glimpse of the form that this has taken.

I taught three iterations of a third-year course on "Obligation, Compassion, and Global Justice," where we studied texts from ethics and political philosophy on obligations to strangers while also undertaking contemplative inquiry into our relationship to our own and others' suffering and how this shapes our motivation to help. Each class began with about eight minutes of mindfulness or "shamatha" meditation: sitting straight in our chairs and training ourselves to stay with our breath, compassionately noticing when our minds got caught up in thoughts and gently coming back. This meditation had a number of effects. First, it brought all of us into the room together: we could calm down, drop the preoccupations we carried in, and focus on the conversations to follow. Second, meditation honed our abilities to actually notice our own experience: it laid the groundwork for articulating our own experience as part of our subject matter. Third, it attached a rigor to how first person experience entered the course: rather than simply rehashing habitual stories of who we were, we could look and see in new ways. And fourth, it showed how each of us had a plenitude of experience and knowledge relevant to the course: while there were difficult materials and skills to learn over the term, none of us was operating from a place of lack.

I am now piloting another contemplative course, Mindfulness, Activism, and Citizenship for Democracy. This course, too, stages a dialectic between "third person" texts (on deliberative democracy and mindful social activism) and "first person" inquiry based on meditative and contemplative practices. There also is a community service learning (CSL) component: each student spends twenty hours working with a dialogue-convening or frontline service organization as a counterpoint to classroom dialogues, contemplative techniques, reading, and journal writing. A key role of these CSL placements is to provide a context for students to explore their ability to remain present in the face of complexity and difficulty, and to notice what shifts when they can sustain this mindfulness.

Students are energized and inspired by these highly participatory, contemplative courses. The methods and subject matters of the courses speak to students' search for meaning in their lives and educations: they explore themes that matter in an unusually deep way, and share this exploration with fellow students in a context of calm and trust. I have learned several things in teaching these courses. First, while students gain a lot through regularly practicing meditation in class, my ability to model and embody mindfulness and compassion is nearly as important. The classroom presence that has preoccupied me through my teaching career is crucial. Second, my ability and that of my students to cultivate presence are mutually reinforcing: practicing as a class dramatically increases our individual capacities for mindfulness. Third, meditation encourages acceptance of whatever thoughts, emotions, and mental states arise: we notice them and return to the breath. This meditative orientation provides a grounded basis for dealing with strong emotions and energies that arise for each of us in the classroom, including my own anxiety as a teacher. Rather than experiencing this as debilitating, a meditative orientation allows me to recognize the powerful energies underlying anxiety, and to channel these into my teaching.

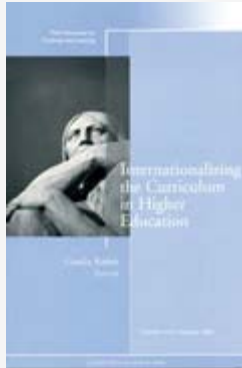
As I have found new ways to bring mindfulness and presence into my teaching, I have deepened my understanding and love for this vocation. I have started to glimpse, with my students, how increasing our ease with not knowing provides a foundation for our most authentic and joyful learning.

#### **About the author**

David Kahane ([david.kahane@ualberta.ca](mailto:david.kahane@ualberta.ca), [www.davidkahane.com](http://www.davidkahane.com)) holds



the Vargo Distinguished Teaching Chair in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. His teaching awards include the 3M Fellowship (Canada's highest award for undergraduate teaching), the Alan Blizzard Award (a yearly national prize for collaborative teaching projects), and the University of Alberta's Award for Excellence in Graduate Supervision, Rutherford Award for Undergraduate Teaching, and Teaching Unit Award. His research focuses on citizen participation, democratic deliberation, and social change, and he is especially interested on how models of inclusive, collaborative citizen action can inform what we do in university classrooms and university governance.



### **Learning about Obligation, Compassion, and Global Justice: the Place of Contemplative Pedagogy**

Excerpt from: Kahane, D. (2009) "Learning about Obligation, Compassion, and Global Justice: the Place of Contemplative Pedagogy. "

From *Internationalizing the Curriculum in Higher Education: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No. 118, Carolin Kreber (Editor), ISBN: 978-0-470-53733-6. Paperback, 128 pages, July

2009, Jossey-Bass.

*Caption: Contemplative techniques like meditation can help students to go beyond a merely cognitive understanding of their responsibilities as global citizens, and to find an authentic motivation to serve.*

There are many reasons to internationalize the higher education curriculum: catering to more diverse instructor and student bodies or equipping students to flourish in an increasingly globalized world, for example. For many educators, though, a key reason for internationalization is ethical: it helps students to examine their implicit and explicit beliefs about whose wellbeing matters, and to develop a more globalized sense of responsibility and citizenship. Doing this pedagogical and curricular work, though, raises a set of questions about how those of us in the relatively privileged global north draw boundaries around our concern for others, what motivates our relative indifference to or dissociation from the suffering of distant strangers, and how these dynamics can be challenged and changed. In this chapter, I draw upon my experiences teaching a 300-level philosophy course on "Obligation, Compassion, and Global Justice" to offer a rather unconventional answer to these questions. I suggest that while learning more about global inequalities, reflecting on moral principles, and getting a more vivid sense of the life experiences and perspectives of people in different parts of the world are important to a pedagogy of global citizenship, they are insufficient. A pedagogy of global citizenship also requires that students be supported in contemplative practice, bringing mindful attention to their own embodied experiences of dissociation from their own and others' suffering.

I have taught Philosophy 368 at the University of Alberta in western Canada since 2006, to a class of 35-45 students, about half of them philosophy majors and half from other disciplines.

The course is built around a cognitive and motivational puzzle relating to global citizenship and global justice. The puzzle begins with a few facts:

1. Large numbers of our fellow humans live in abject poverty (1.2 billion, by one recent estimate), go to bed hungry each night (an estimated 800 million people), and die daily from poverty related causes (perhaps 50,000

a day).

2. We could each prevent a portion of this suffering at minimal cost: the sachet of oral rehydration salts that could save a child from fatal diarrhea costs about fifty cents, and twenty cents buys a day's food rations distributed by the World Food Program in Sudan.

3. Almost all of us who work or study at universities in the global north spend a significant amount on luxuries we could easily forego.

Put these facts together, and a sobering set of choices and trade-offs becomes visible: in drinking lattes rather than regular coffees, for example, I am paying a premium over the course of a year that could instead be used to save many human lives. When I look this equation in the eye, I come to an inexorable conclusion: many aspects of my privilege come at an unconscionable cost, and ought to be given up for the immeasurably greater good that these resources could do for the world's neediest.

### ***Keep reading....***

For the course syllabus, see <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/phil368/2007-368-Syllabus.pdf>

For the full article, see <http://www.contemplativemind.org/programs/academic/Kahane-Kreber.pdf>.



### **Screenings on Campus of *The Buddha*, a film by David Grubin for PBS**

The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society is organizing screenings of *The Buddha* through its academic network to encourage discussion and scholarship on the impact of Buddhist religion, practice and philosophy across disciplines.

Screenings of the film along with panel discussions and other events, will take place at Brown University, City University of New York, Rice University and Georgetown University.

The documentary for PBS by award-winning filmmaker David Grubin and narrated by Richard Gere, tells the story of the Buddha's life. It features the work of some of the world's greatest artists, across two millennia, with depictions of the Buddha's life rich in complexity and beauty. Insights into the ancient narrative are provided by contemporary Buddhists, including Pulitzer Prize winning poet W.S. Merwin and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Screenings in academia present the film in a secular context, where it can be appreciated as the story of an extraordinary man who offered insights that contribute to the evolution of the human spirit, available to all, not just those who practice Buddhism or meditation.

All are invited to join the conversation and learn more about meditation, the history of Buddhism, and how to incorporate the Buddha's teachings on compassion and mindfulness into daily life. Visit the website at <http://www.pbs.org/thebuddha/> and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Buddha/204444522871>.

**The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society Welcomes New Board Members**

The Center is pleased to announce four new members to its Board of Directors: Daniel Barbezat, Bradford Grant, Carolyn Jacobs and David Scott.

**Daniel Barbezat** **Daniel Barbezat** is Professor of Economics at Amherst College.



A member of the Amherst faculty since 1988, Barbezat received B.A. degree in economics and philosophy from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and the M.S. and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Illinois at Champaign.

He is a 2008 Contemplative Practice Fellow and received funding to develop the course, Buddhist Economics, Skillful Means in the Marketplace, which examines the relationship between Buddhism and Economics to engender a means to understand individual market interactions and their connection to global economic issues.



**Bradford C. Grant** is the Associate Dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Computer Sciences, and the Director of the School of Architecture and Design at Howard University. He is the former Chairperson and Endowed University Professor of Architecture in the Department of Architecture at Hampton University, Hampton, VA. He received his Master's degree in Architecture with a focus on social and cultural factors from the University of California at Berkeley. A registered architect, Mr.

Grant has extensive experience in housing and community design through his research, teaching and architecture practice as principal of the architecture firm AGWA Architects, Hampton, VA. His research on cultural environmental design practice can be found in his work titled "Accommodation, Resistance and Appropriation in African American Building", in Craig Barton's *Sites of Memory* (Princeton Press, 2000) and in the *Directory of African American Architects/Survey of African American Architects*, co authored by Dennis Mann).

**Carolyn Jacobs** **Dr. Carolyn Jacobs** is the Dean and Elizabeth Marting Treuhaft Professor of the Smith College School for Social Work.



She is also the Director of the Contemplative Clinical Practice Advanced Certificate Program. She has taught primarily within the research and practice sequences of the School. Her areas of professional interest include religion and spirituality in social work practice and organizational behavior. She has written and presented extensively on the topic of spirituality in social work. In 2001 she was elected to the National Academies of Practice as a distinguished social work practitioner.

Dr. Jacobs received her B.A. from Sacramento State University, her M.S.W. from San Diego State University, her doctorate from the Heller School of Brandeis University and her training as a spiritual director from the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation.

**David K. Scott** was Chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1993-2001.



David K. Scott was born and lived as a boy on the northernmost of the Orkney Islands off the north coast of Scotland--a small island 4 miles by 2 miles with a population of 100 people. This experience led to his early interest in nature and science, and to the interconnectedness of matter, body, mind, soul and spirit. He worked as a nuclear scientist for 20 years with interests in extreme states of matter, such as existed in the Big Bang theory of the origin of the Universe, and for the last 20 years as an educator and University administrator. All these experiences over 60 years have converged on his current interest in integrative learning and action, and in the next stage of human consciousness evolution to more integral and holistic approaches to knowledge and its application in the world.

## Announcements from Members



### **Mirabai Bush at Vassar College**

*From Eugenio Giusti, Professor and Chair of Italian, Vassar College*

On February 24-25, 2010 Vassar College was graced by the visit of Mirabai Bush as the keynote speaker for the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the Carolyn Grant '36 Endowment Fund. The fund offers Vassar's faculty members the opportunity to integrate expressive arts and experiential processes into their teaching and to explore pedagogical methodologies that engage the imagination in a hands-on way. The "experiential processes" include meditative arts, and the organizing committee made the brilliant decision to invite Mirabai Bush to share her profound knowledge, and wisdom about meditative and mindful practices with the Vassar community.

During her two-day visit, a series of smaller meetings and an all-campus lecture took place. The first meeting, held on Wednesday afternoon, was open to faculty members who were new to and curious about contemplative practices. About 15 to 20 faculty attended the meeting. The conversation was lively and interesting, mostly centered on questions about introducing mindful practices into the classroom, or reporting on results of attempts already made, and the issues they raised. The evening lecture, "Beyond Distraction," was very well attended both by faculty and students. At the post-lecture dinner, celebrating the tenth anniversary, several attendees, whose personal and pedagogical projects had been supported by the Fund, toasted in honor of Carolyn Grant, who is now 95 years young.

The following morning a beautiful snowfall welcomed a meditation guided by Mirabai. About fifteen faculty, administration and staff members attended the meditation, which was followed by a sharing of present and past experiences about the meaning and feeling of practice. At lunchtime Mirabai met with a group of college staff and administrators who are applying some of the practices to students' life, or are themselves teachers of such practices. They all expressed a strong desire to make these practices more available to any group in the community, and even establish a regular weekly meditation time and location for anybody at the college. As the snow continued to fall into the late afternoon, Mirabai met

with a few students for an open conversation. The sharing was vivid, honest, and very rich. The students had questions about their own practices, and the ways Mirabai would see them growing into them. A warm hug ended the meeting and the day. Thank you, Mirabai for your visit.

### **Consciousness Studies at Evergreen State College**

*From Sarah Williams and Bill Arney, recipients of 2006 Contemplative Program Development Fellowship for "Sensing Sophia in Illich's Vineyard: Developing Evergreen's Curriculum through Collegiality."*

Various initiatives that were possible due to our 2006 Contemplative Program Development Fellowship have resulted in the establishment of a Consciousness Studies Curricular Planning Unit at our institution, The Evergreen State College. There is now a critical mass of scholars engaged in contemplative education who, within Evergreen's alternative institutional structures, have formed not a department but an interdisciplinary curricular planning unit to support teaching and learning under the rubric of "consciousness studies."

<http://www.evergreen.edu/catalog/2010-11/consciousness.htm>



### **Integrating Reflection at Seattle University**

*From Kellee Franklin, Ph.D., Adjunct Faculty, Albers School of Business & Economics, Seattle University*

At the beginning of this year, six faculty members from different academic disciplines at Seattle University (SU) embarked on a journey to explore how reflective practices could be integrated into classroom experiences. "The Heart of Higher Education: Inspiring Meaning and Purpose through Reflective Practices" is one of three fellowships offered this academic year

with The Center for the Study of Justice in Society at SU. The Center was established in 2001 to promote interdisciplinary faculty scholarship on topics of social, economic, and environmental justice.

Dr. Kellee Franklin, an adjunct faculty member with the Albers School of Business and Economics and the Institute of Public Service, designed the fellowship and serves as the topic facilitator for the session on reflection.

Franklin's interest in reflective practices stems from her career as an organizational effectiveness consultant and educator, during which she came to understand the value of contemplation as a means to encourage individual and organization transformation. In the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attack on the Pentagon, where she was leading a client engagement, she realized that her job was not just improving business performance, but about providing people with a safe space to bring their full selves to work—the joy and the pain. She found it incomprehensible to ignore the devastating situation of 9-11. To help her clients transition through the tragic events of that day, she adapted Jack Mezirow's work on transformative dimensions of adult learning, which emphasizes the use of reflection as a way to make meaning and facilitate positive change, to promote healing in the workplace.

Now she teaches students at SU about the need for greater empathy, compassion, civility, and awareness in their own lives and in their future work environments. "In this age of technology, it became apparent to me that students were missing out on real moments to reflect and find deeper meaning in their learning experiences," Franklin said. She also believes this trend is true of organizational leaders. "Organizations are forced to move at a competitive pace which results in little time and space to contemplate situations and their own actions. My hope is that by teaching students in higher education the skill of reflection, we are helping to form more mindful leaders and contributors to society."

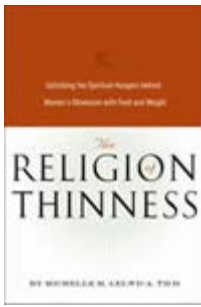
Students at SU have gravitated to reflection. In a cohort graduate program at SU where Franklin served as a core faculty member from 2007 to 2009, the reflective learning course was the only one that received requests to attend from students outside the program. Although they were not permitted, the requests sparked the idea of "Inner Wisdom: Reflective Practices for Inspired Leadership," an informal gathering Kellee offered once a month. The experience with the small informal group led Franklin to design the fellowship program specifically for SU faculty to learn about different ways to integrate reflection into the classroom experience.

Over two academic quarters, Kellee will lead the series with the goal of identifying a variety of reflection techniques that could be used in the classroom to promote deeper purpose and meaning, and increase awareness about social justice issues. The group will examine the theoretical, historical, and social perspectives of reflective practices in higher education as well as explore existing methods of reflection being applied in various schools at SU. Scholars and authors who recognize the significance of inner-work for fostering positive social change will be invited to share their thoughts with participants on the advantages of weaving reflective practices into learning experiences for students. Throughout the series, participants will be encouraged to engage in a variety of exercises as a means to fully understand the learning intention, process, and outcomes of reflection. Participants will discuss how different forms of reflection can be integrated across academic disciplines to (a) support whole-person [mind, body, spirit] learning, (b) help students with professional formation, and (c) equip students with resources to cultivate a more 'just and humane world'. At the end of the series, participants will present their core discoveries from the series and ideas for using reflective practices in their field of study at an open forum on May 14th at SU.

**Kellee Franklin** launched her independent consulting practice, Organizational Effectiveness Consulting (OE Consulting), in March 2008. Her practice focuses on organizational transformation through creating community, increasing self-awareness, and engaging individuals in the change effort. She served as adjunct faculty at George Mason University and at the Institute of Public Service at Seattle University.

**New Book from Member Michele Leiwica, Associate Professor of Religion, Concordia College**

*The Religion of Thinness: Satisfying the Spiritual Hungers behind Women's Obsession with Weight and Food* (Gurze 2009) deals with the spiritual dimensions of body image and eating problems. Mindfulness practice is one of the two practical tools the book offers



readers for developing a more peaceful relationship with their bodies.

**Forthcoming Book from Sonya Huber, Assistant Professor of Creative Writing, Georgia Southern University**

*The "Backwards" Research Guide for Writers: Using Your Life for Reflection, Connection, and Inspiration* is available for pre-order from Equinox Publications (London) in the Frameworks for Writing Series. Growing out of years as a writer and meditation practitioner, Sonya Huber's guide uses contemplative exercises to help students rediscover their own curiosity by watching the workings of their minds.

Pre-order information is available at <http://www.equinoxpub.com/books/showbook.asp?bkid=357&keyword=>



**Forthcoming book from Arthur Zajonc and Parker Palmer**

*The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal Transforming the Academy Through Collegial Conversations*  
By Parker J. Palmer and Arthur Zajonc with Megan Scribner  
Foreword by Mark Nepo

*projected publication mid-July, 2010*

A call to advance integrative teaching and learning in higher education.

From Parker Palmer, best-selling author of *The Courage to Teach*, and Arthur Zajonc, professor of physics at Amherst College and director of the academic program of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, comes this call to revisit the roots and reclaim the vision of higher education. *The Heart of Higher Education* proposes an approach to

teaching and learning that honors the whole human being—mind, heart, and spirit—an essential integration if we hope to address the complex issues of our time. The book offers a rich interplay of analysis, theory, and proposals for action from two educators and writers who have contributed to developing the field of integrative education over the past few decades.

- Presents Parker Palmer's powerful response to critics of holistic learning and Arthur Zajonc's elucidation of the relationship between science, the humanities, and the contemplative traditions

- Explores ways to take steps toward making colleges and universities places that awaken the deepest potential in students, faculty, and staff

- Offers a practical approach to fostering renewal in higher education through collegiality and conversation

*The Heart of Higher Education* is for all who are new to the field of holistic education, all who want to deepen their understanding of its challenges, and all who want to practice and promote this vital approach to teaching and learning on their campuses.

### **Endorsements for *The Heart of Higher Education***

Palmer and Zajonc have issued a compelling call for change and renewal in higher education. They show us how colleges and universities can be transformed by taking a more integrated approach to teaching and learning that focuses on the inner lives of their students and faculty. -- Alexander and Helen Astin, Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA

At a moment when many are dreaming of an integrative form of higher education that unites intellectual rigor with compassion and love, Palmer and Zajonc invite us to engage in conversations designed to infuse the academy with meaning, purpose and soul. For those who yearn to transform colleges and universities from sterile, vacuous spaces to places of hope, possibility and respect for everything human, this is the book you have been waiting for. -Laura I. Rendón, Professor of Higher Education, Iowa State University, and author of *Sentipensante Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice and Liberation*

Parker Palmer and Arthur Zajonc call for a renewal of our commitment to inspiring deeper thinking and educating the whole person. This book will and should inspire debate about our larger purpose, about how we can go beyond the traditional silos in which we work for the sake of individual and institutional transformation. -Anthony Marx, President, Amherst College

"What should be at the center of our teaching and our students' learning?" Palmer and Zajonc take up this simple but daunting question and provide the most solid ground yet on which to hold a conversation about the heart of our enterprise. They re-imagine higher education in a way commensurate with the magnitude of our problems and offer us practical paths toward implementation. Integrative education is the most important re-formation of the higher learning since rise of the modern university. This book can help us achieve it. - Anthony Lising Antonio, Associate Professor of Education and Associate Director, Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, Stanford University





*From Isis Brook, Lecturer, Philosophy Section, International School of Community, Rights, and Inclusion, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK*

Hi, I am Isis Brook and as well as working at my usual post as a Philosophy Lecturer

I am currently completing an MA in Education. The topic of my dissertation could be of interest to members, and I would be very pleased to receive any help or guidance. My provisional title is "Can a 'Way of Being' be Assessed?" The dissertation attempts to solve the problem (an increasing one in the UK context) of courses which have an explicit aim of facilitating a student developing/deepening/enriching etc. their way of being, having to either draw back from that aim or state how it is assessed. My own contention is that this should be an aspect of all higher education, but I am looking first at areas where it is not a contentious part, such as counseling. The help I need is in two areas: first, I can find very little written on this so if anyone can point me to relevant literature, that would be helpful; second, if anyone is currently struggling with the same problem or has discovered ways of dealing with this I would greatly appreciate an email exchange. Many thanks, Isis.

[hbrook@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:hbrook@uclan.ac.uk)



### **Audio File of Contemplative Practice for Spanish Students**

*From Tori Smith, Senior Lecturer in Hispanic Studies, Brown University*

[Here is an audio file](#) of one of the practices. It's a podcast I made available on iTunesU. My students in Intermediate Spanish really enjoy being able to

download them to be able to practice wherever they want. They also get Spanish listening practice credit for this work, a double bonus!

## **BECOMING CONSCIOUS**

*by Mary Rose O'Reilley*

Once I was the pool  
owning today a sky  
tonight a moon

cloud  
heron  
star.

Over eons I learned  
*water:*  
a bowl in the rock  
liking it well

to fill

empty  
and fill.



*Mary Rose O'Reilley is the author of Half Wild, published by Louisiana State University Press, which won the Walt Whitman Award of the Academy of American Poets.*

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