Wisconsin Academy review. Volume 46, Number 3 Summer 2000

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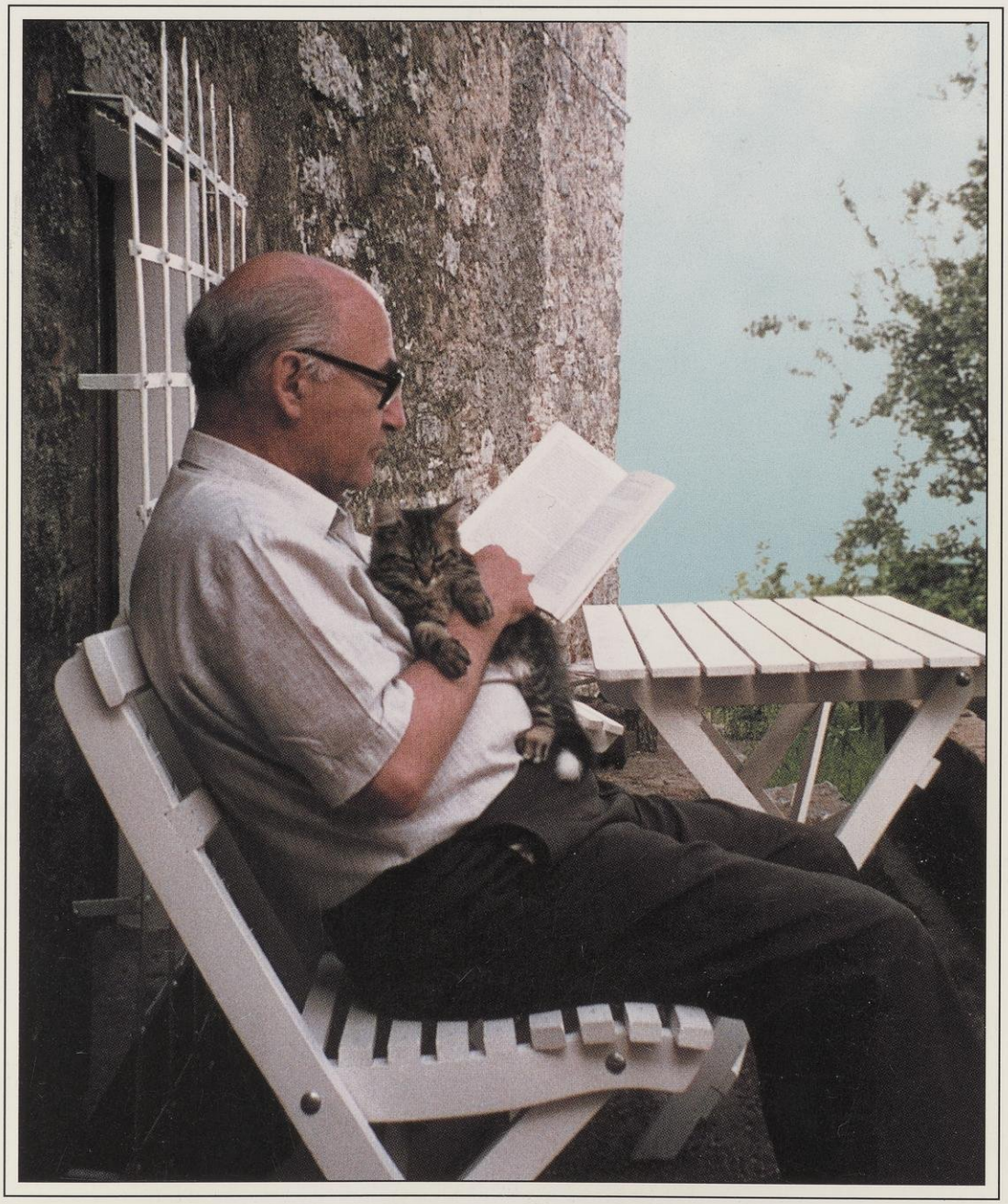
NO MOTOWN IN MILWAUKEE? • RON WALLACE'S ENDURING DESIRE
MYSTERIES OF THE WHY FILES

PR

Wisconsin Academy Review

A JOURNAL OF WISCONSIN CULTURE



GEORGE MOSSE'S MEMOIR: EXCERPTS FROM A NEW BOOK BY UW PRESS

Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters

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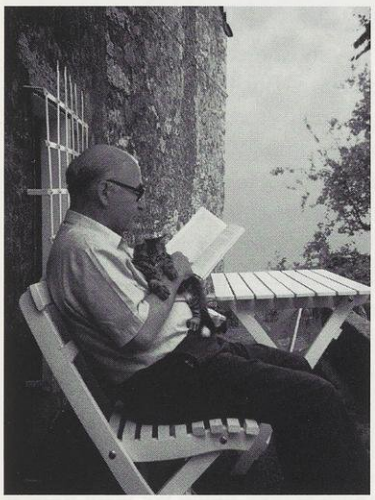

FRONT COVER: The scholar at rest. George Mosse vacationing in Assisi in 1992 with two great loves: a good book and a cat. Photo by John Tortorice.

BACK COVER: Metal *Dinosaurs* by outsider artist Ellis Nelson. Photo by Don Krug.

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The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters was chartered by the State Legislature on March 16, 1870, as a membership organization serving the people of Wisconsin. Its mission is to encourage investigation in the sciences, arts, and letters and to disseminate information and share knowledge.

Editor's Notes

He was more sophisticated than Steve Martin, but not as neurotic as Woody Allen. He was less profane than Lenny Bruce, but every bit as iconoclastic. Indeed, George Mosse, writes protégé and historian Lawrence Baron, was "the Groucho Marx of ideology."

How many scholars of George Mosse's caliber could be the subject of a paper entitled "The Wit of George Mosse"? As Mosse's student, Baron distributed a "best of" pamphlet of Mosse's quips to undergraduate classes at the end of every semester. "I was certain that these pamphlets captured the essence of the Mosse wit because George threatened to sue me," writes Baron, now on the faculty at San Diego State University.

Joan Fischer

Mosse's students loved him, revered him, were transformed by him. This is expressed not only in hundreds of student letters, but by historian Michael Ledeen, who, in the publication *Forward*, writes: "He was the most charismatic lecturer I have ever seen ... he was the ultimate teacher, combining rare tolerance for the political and religious views of his students with the ability to challenge us to become serious historians."

Did Mosse love his students? He was probably the only professor in the history of the University of Wisconsin to have refused a Vilas Professorship because it would have meant reducing his teaching by half. And he insisted, as a full professor, on teaching the introductory freshman survey in Western Civilization.

Did Mosse love his discipline? He left the University of Wisconsin a bequest of $12.5 million, apparently the largest endowment to the UW by an individual, earmarked in various ways to enrich the study of contemporary European and Jewish history.

Thanks to The University of Wisconsin Press, we have the good fortune to publish excerpts from Mosse's memoir, *Confronting History*, which will appear in book stores in July. The book is so engrossing that choosing excerpts was difficult. We settled on Mosse's eleventh-hour escape from Nazi Germany as a schoolboy; a passage on how being a Jew affected Mosse's study of history; and Mosse's recollection of his first years in Madison.

Mosse's life partner, John Tortorice, whom we interview on page 11, urged us not to have our tribute be morose. "George wouldn't have wanted that," he said. On that note, let us cheerfully remember at least two of Mosse's teachings:

"My mother's definition of communism: you are forced to share a toothbrush."

And, "Don't forget Mosse's Law No. 22: Intellectuals who try to help the masses get kicked in the ass."

Road work ahead

I suppose I should introduce myself as the new editor of the *Wisconsin Academy Review*. My most recent position was managing editor of *Madison Magazine*. But have no fear, we will not start running pictorials of "really cool kitchens," or even tackle that nagging, timeless question: Why do so many gifted hair stylists have such bad haircuts?

No, my task here is more daunting. I must not only follow in the footsteps of Faith B. Miracle, who ran this publication admirably for nearly ten years—and Louise Robbins, who held the fort during a transition period—but make some fairly significant changes. In terms of design, the *Wisconsin Academy Review* you are holding is the last of its kind. The fall issue will have a look that is more contemporary and reader-friendly while maintaining the intellectual sophistication our members deserve.

A point I can't stress enough is how much we want to hear your comments. This publication is for you. We welcome phone calls, e-mails, and letters to the editor. We'd be delighted to run reader letters in every issue.

I should also note that I serve as communications director for the Academy. That's because we've got a lot of programs and events in the works and need someone to keep you (and the media) informed. We are entering, we believe, a particularly vibrant, productive period in this institution's 130-year history. As an example, see "Inside the Academy" (page 47) for the latest information on November's conference on genetically modified foods, which is causing as much excitement as did our Aldo Leopold conference last year.

What else can you find in this edition? Have you ever wondered why Milwaukee never became a Motown? Writer Alexander Shashko takes us to Milwaukee's Walnut Street, once a beboppin' blues scene showcasing everyone from Duke Ellington to Dinah Washington—until the area was destroyed by urban renewal. You may have heard Shashko talk about Walnut Street on Jonathan Overby's Wisconsin Public Radio show "Higher Ground" on June 10. Likewise, public radio's Jean Feraca planned to air a segment on our George Mosse package in early June. We hope you were able to tune in.

We also explore "outsider art," a UW–based web site called The Why Files, and the harsh realities of infant care for Wisconsin's rural poor in the '30s. This is rounded out by a fine selection of book reviews and fiction, including poetry by Tenaya Darlington, who dares to pose the question: What *is* Victoria's secret?

Happy reading!

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CONTRIBUTORS

- Rima D. Apple is a professor in the School of Human Ecology and the Women's Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She has published widely in the areas of health history and the history of motherhood. Among her recent books are *Mothers and Motherhood: Readings in American History* (Ohio State University Press, 1997), co-edited with Janet Golden, and the award-winning *Vitamania: Vitamins in American Culture* (Rutgers University Press, 1996). Currently she is completing a history of motherhood in America.

- Tenaya Darlington is the managing editor for the *Beloit Fiction Journal*. Her work has appeared in *Scribner's Best of the Fiction Workshops 1998* (Scribner 1998) and in *In Brief: Short Takes on the Personal* (Norton 1999), as well as in such journals as *The Chronicle of Higher Education, Atlanta Review, Beloit Poetry Journal* and *Southern Poetry Review*. She lives in Madison, Wisconsin, where she is perhaps best known for her spirited column "On the Loose," which appears in the alternative weekly, *Isthmus*. She recently joined the *Isthmus* staff as features editor.

- Terry Devitt is the editor and project coordinator for The Why Files, a web-based exploration of the science behind the news produced at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His day job is as the science editor in the UW–Madison Office of News and Public Affairs, where, for the past fifteen years, he has covered the physical and biological sciences.

- Sharon Dunwoody is Evjue-Bascom Professor and director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She studies public understanding of science issues and, in addition to research on public use of science web sites, is investigating how individuals use information to make judgments about environmental risks.

- William P. Eveland, Jr. (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1997) is director of the Benton Survey Research Laboratory and assistant professor in the Department of Communication, both at the University of California at Santa Barbara. His research focuses on the impact of traditional and nontraditional media on knowledge and perceptions, with special attention to the roles of motivation and information processing. He has recently accepted a position as assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Communication at Ohio State University beginning September 2000.

- George L. Mosse (1919–1999) was the John C. Bascom Professor of European History and Weinstein-Bascom Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He was also the Koebner Professor of History at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and was the first scholar-in-residence at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. He wrote more than two dozen books, including *Nationalism and Sexuality*, *Toward the Final Solution,* and *Nazi Culture*. His final book, a memoir entitled *Confronting History*, will be published by The University of Wisconsin Press this month.

- Ann Parker is an artist, art teacher, art collector, and freelance curator of the work of self-taught artists. She helped produce recent exhibitions at Edgewood College on the work of Mona Webb, Ellis Nelson, Dr. Evermor, and Hope Atkinson. She is currently completing a book with Professor Don Krug (Ohio State University) tentatively titled *Telling Tales: Folks, Arts and Narratives from Wisconsin*. The book will contain interviews with twenty-five Wisconsin self-taught artists.

- Stanley Payne, a professor of history with the University of Wisconsin–Madison, has emerged as the world's foremost scholar of Spanish and Portuguese history in general and fascism in particular. Payne combines detailed research with a strong underpinning in social scientific theory. His many internationally recognized studies include *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism*, *Franco's Spain* and the two-volume *History of Spain and Portugal*. Payne chaired the history department between 1979 and 1982 and has served on many all-campus committees. Originally from Denton, Texas, Payne received his B.A. from Pacific Union College, his M.A. from Claremont Graduate School and University Center, and his Ph.D. from Columbia University in New York.

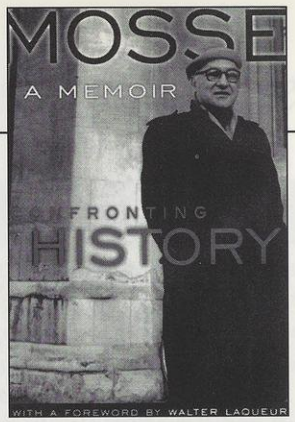
- Alexander Shashko is a doctoral candidate in American history at the University of Michigan. His dissertation, *La Follette's Ghost: Wisconsin and the Politics of Consolidation in Postwar America, 1945–1990*, uses Wisconsin as a case study to examine the legacy of political culture in the United States since World War II. He is also a freelance music writer whose work appears in such publications as *Goldmine*, *Addicted to Noise* , and *Rock & Rap Confidential*. He is a Milwaukee native and currently lives in Madison.

- Fiction writer Juliet Vosnos Skuldt is managing editor at The University of Wisconsin Press. She lives in Madison with her husband. She has an M.F.A. from Eastern Washington University.

- Artist Kelly Parks Snider lives in Madison. She holds a B.S. in occupational therapy from the University of Kansas and has worked as an independent advocate for people living with disabilities. As an artist she works with pastels, mixed media, and textiles. She was inspired to do the paintings accompanying Skuldt's short story by visiting estate sales and imagining what the owners had been like. She enjoys hiking through the beautiful woods of Wisconsin with her husband and four children.

- John Tortorice is development specialist for the General Library System at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He received an M.L.S. from the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He recently prepared a bibliography of the works of George L. Mosse which will be published in the fall issue of the journal *German Politics and Society*.

- Ron Wallace is a professor of English at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he directs the creative writing program and edits the University of Wisconsin Press poetry series (the Brittingham and Pollak prizes). He is the author of ten books, including *Quick Bright Things* (Midlist Press, 2000), his first collection of short stories, and *The Uses Of Adversity*, a collection of sonnets (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998). His poetry collections include *Time's Fancy* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994) and *The Makings Of Happiness* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991). He divides his time between Madison and a forty-acre farm in Bear Valley, Wisconsin. He is, in his words, "a mean spiker" on "The Grapes of Wrath" city-league volleyball team.



George Mosse Looks Back

In July, The University of Wisconsin Press is publishing the memoir of the pioneering UW–Madison historian George L. Mosse. We are honored to offer excerpts from *Confronting History: A Memoir.* Mosse completed the work just two weeks before his death by cancer at age eighty in January 1999.

How does one begin to take stock of a life that was so full of drama, so productive, and so enlightening to the many thousands of people who knew him, attended his classes, or read his works? That, of course, was Mosse's task in writing his memoir, and he did so with amazing candor and self-insight. What we offer here are selections we found especially gripping or revealing about the man and his work, including a lengthy passage about Mosse's early years in Madison.

Exile

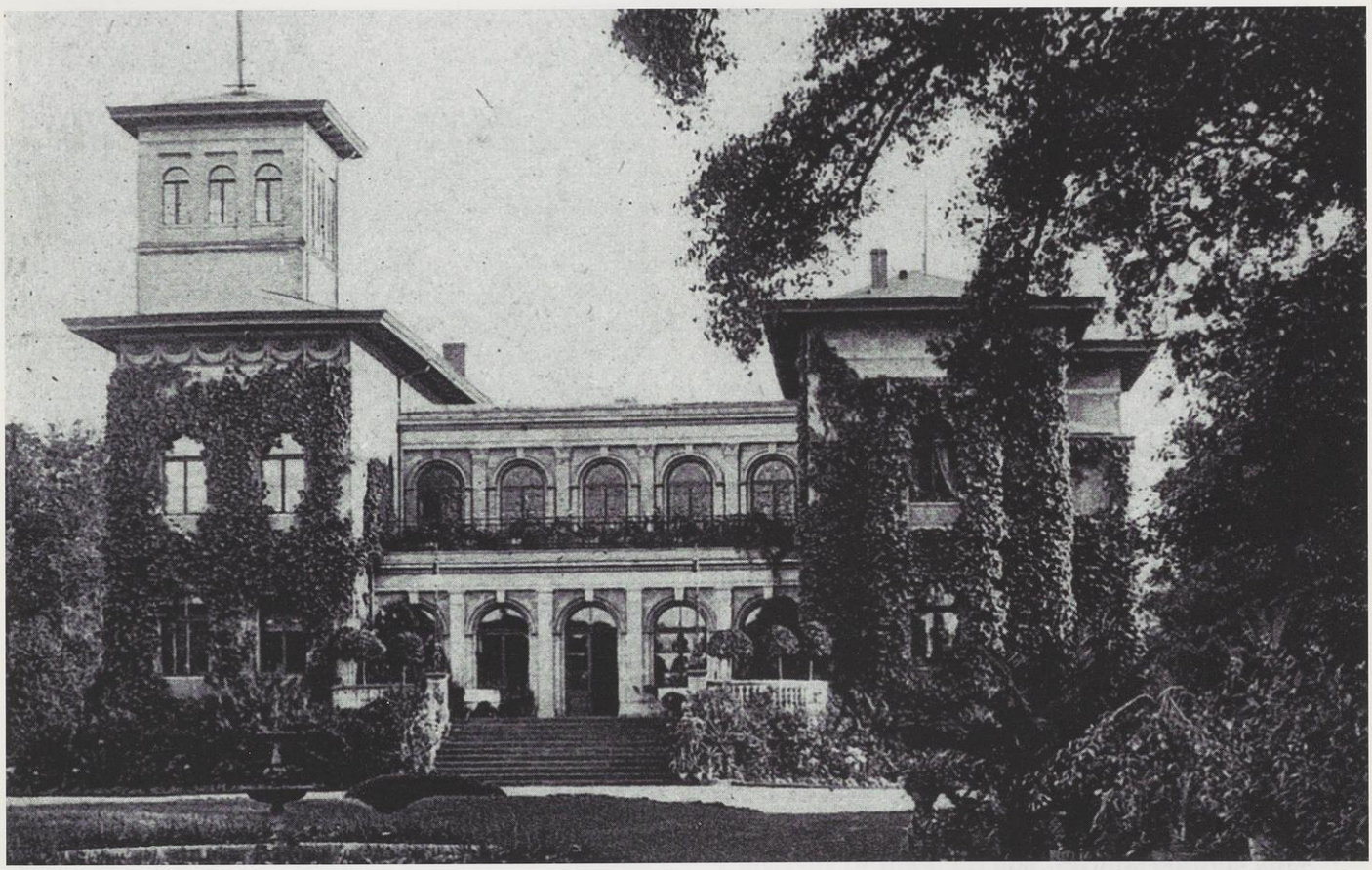
The young George Mosse, scion of a wealthy, prominent Jewish publishing family, was restless and disorderly in the local schools in Berlin. At age ten his family sent him to a famous progressive boarding school, Salem, in southwestern Germany. But even the seclusion of a boarding school in the countryside could not protect him from the Nazi regime's growing terror.

The approaching storm cast its shadow over my school years. I remember seeing swastikas burning as fiery symbols on the hills surrounding the Hermannsberg [Salem's junior school], and the racist poison, though rejected by the school itself, had become so much a part of daily life that it penetrated the vocabulary of the boys and girls, aggravating the atmosphere of anti-Semitism. An awareness of the so-called Jewish Problem was everywhere in those years; why should it have bypassed the school? The blond girl to whom I was closest at school told me often enough to go back to Jerusalem, and this despite the fact that she used to visit Schenkendorf [the Mosse family's country home outside Berlin] as our guest during the summer.

But there was another way in which the turbulence of the times was brought home to me personally. One evening, quite suddenly, late in 1932, even before the Nazi triumph, my father appeared at school with a lady who was eventually to be my stepmother and whose son was also at school. I threw myself on the floor with delight and astonishment; homesickness was always latent under the discipline of the school. My father explained that he had sought refuge in Salem's famous inn *Der Schwan* (The Swan) because the general who was in command of Berlin, in accordance with the emergency decrees then in force, had forbidden the appearance of our newspapers for a time, and Berlin apparently had become too dangerous. He said nothing about the demonstrations which had taken place against us as ready-made symbols of the so-called Jewish Press. My mother had left Berlin on one of her numerous travels abroad, which seemed now to absorb much of her time. Such surprise visits were repeated several times.

Still, I was not unduly alarmed. We were too far removed from the daily happenings of the world around us—we read no newspapers and did not possess a radio. Living in a well-regulated school "state" was indeed like living on an island in the midst of a stormy sea; it was bound to make the eventual transition to the real world rather difficult.

How typical for the school's German national orientation that Hahn [school head Kurt Hahn] himself did not wake up to the menace of National Socialism until August 1932 (Weimar Germany had only some five months more to live), when Hitler sent a telegram pledging solidarity with his "comrades," the storm troopers who in the Silesian village of Potempa had brutally trampled a Communist worker to death in front of his mother. Hahn believed that the Potempa murder had sullied the honor of the German people, and it was now inconceivable that Hitler could ever become chancellor. This reaction, once more, emphasizes the basic principles of the school: Hitler had soiled the "honor" of Germany in condoning such a brutal political crime; he had violated the ideals of honesty and the clean fight



An opulent upbringing: Mosse spent much of his childhood at Schloss Schenkendorf, the family estate outside Berlin, surrounded by servants and cared for in part by a governess. Occasionally children from the impoverished village of Schenkendorf were brought over to play with him.

for which the school and the German officer corps presumably stood. Given all that the Nazis had done previously, this attitude is a little like the insistence of the Hermannsberg's headmistress that she would not teach Hitler's *Mein Kampf* because it was written in bad German.

My final departure from the school at the beginning of March 1933 again illustrates how distant it was from the reality of the new Germany whose time had now come. Hitler became chancellor on the 30th of January 1933, and immediately began a campaign of intimidation which culminated in the coincidental burning down of the Reichstag on February 27, 1933, a fire which he used as the occasion to silence his political enemies once and for all and to begin his dictatorship. Soon after this my mother, brother, and sister left the country, warned by the violent anti-Semitic demonstrations. Earlier, on one of her visits to my brother and me at school, my mother had been cursed as a "Jew-bitch" as she walked on a street in the nearby city of Friedrichshafen. Indeed, at home my father had feared for some time that my sister might be kidnapped and held for ransom, and an elaborate security system connected to the police had been installed in her bedroom and bathroom. I was not impressed, and one day while she was taking a bath, I set off the alarm, with the result that a police-commando stormed up the stairs and into the bathroom. But the danger seems to have been real enough. It is typical that no one seems to have thought that my brother or I could have been kidnapped; kidnappers would, it was assumed, go after the "weaker sex," though, in reality, my sister was the strongest member of the family.

On one of her visits to my brother and me at school, my mother had been cursed as a "Jew-bitch" as she walked on a street in the nearby city of Friedrichshafen.

My father fled to Paris in March 1933 after he had been rudely expelled from his publishing house; this indeed was a different sort of occupation from that of the Spartacists with whom he had dealt so easily after the First World War. I was left behind at the Hermannsberg, an apparent hostage to fate.

The Nazis, soon after coming to power, had started to limit Jewish mobility. One of the deadlines affecting me was March

31, 1933. On April 1, further anti-Jewish laws came into effect, the Aryanization of Jewish businesses commenced officially, and in some German states all Jews had to hand their passports to the police. Therefore, I had to be out of Germany by midnight of March 31.

The time when I had to leave was drawing nearer and nearer and if I had missed it, the Nazis would have gained a valuable hostage, enabling them to pressure my parents to legally sign over our important foreign holdings, the European branches of our advertising agency which had escaped their grasp. Moreover, they might have blackmailed my father into lending his name to the Nazification of his newspapers and keeping quiet about the setting of the Reichstag fire, about which Goering at least assumed that as a press lord he had some knowledge. I might have ended up in a concentration camp, and these memoirs would probably never have been written. Why, then, had I not left in good time? To be sure, my parents left it to the last minute to ask me to join them. But another circumstance was decisive. I had, as usual, flunked several lessons and misbehaved in addition, so that I was required to stay after class and finish a paper which had been set for me as a punishment. Desperately my parents phoned the headmistress, but there was no relenting: the punishment had to be carried out and, besides, the term still had a few weeks to go. Duty came first if a boy was to become a responsible citizen—character building at the edge of the abyss. No ill will was involved; on the contrary, the best intentions were displayed and the political situation ignored. The Hitler government was simply regarded as another normal and lawful regime.

I myself at the Hermannsberg was only vaguely conscious of what was at stake. Of course, the main school had not yet been sealed off by the Nazis nor Hahn arrested, and the Nazis had not yet shown of what they were capable. However, as far as my family was concerned, the danger should have been plain enough. My own complacency would change dramatically when I finally left, only a few hours before the deadline of midnight of that same day. Then for the first but by no means the last time I would encounter politics not as an abstraction but as a very personal menace.

The quickest way to leave the country was by ferry from the German to the Swiss side of Lake Constance. As I walked to the ferry, both sides of the approach were lined by storm troopers in their SA uniforms, scrutinizing those who boarded and examining their passports. When my turn came my passport was duly taken, the name noticed, and with meaningful looks and much nodding the passport was handed down the line from one to another of the troopers. I must have been extremely scared, but hard as I may try, I do not recall my exact feelings at this critical moment, though I can remember the experience as if it were happening today. This must be the result of a very serious shock and fright. But I was at the same time impatient to finally get to see Paris, and that might have given a "sleepwalking" quality to this confrontation, as my thoughts raced ahead.

Yet, though I was convinced that I would be detained, to my astonishment I was allowed to board the ship, the last ferry before midnight. It was clear to me then, and today in retrospect, why I was allowed to depart even though the storm troopers had obviously recognized my name. Surely it would have been easy to find a pretext to detain me for the very short time (my memory tells me it must have been some fifteen minutes) before the ferry departed. I was saved by the often despised German conscientiousness and obedience to orders: the law took effect at midnight, and midnight meant midnight and not a quarter to twelve.

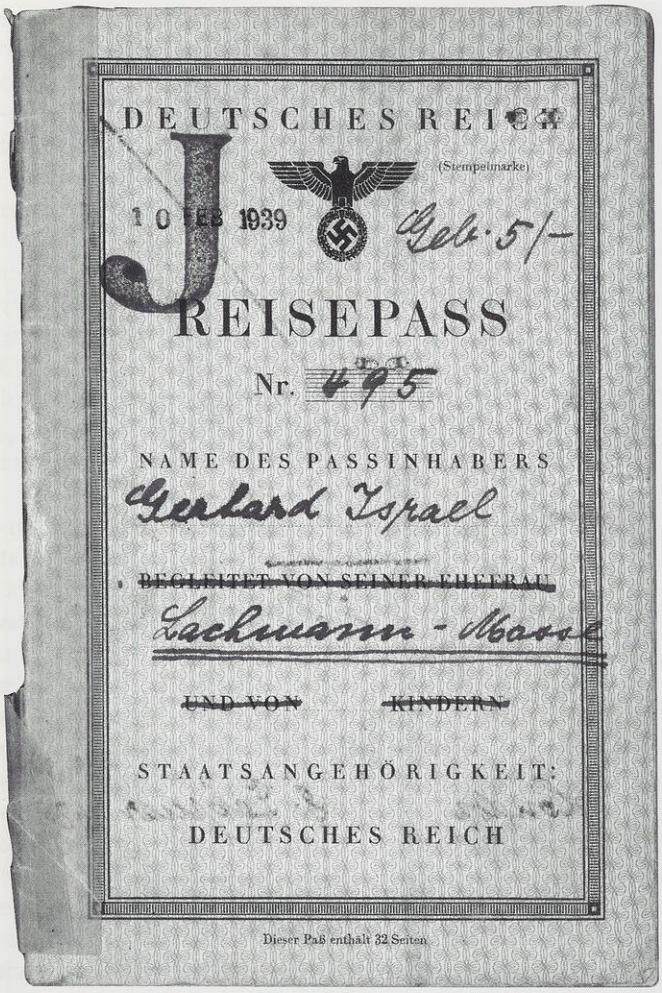
A historian, if he is to get history right, cannot be bigoted or narrow-minded.

Though this episode has remained with me in blinding clarity ever since, I soon overcame my fright in joyful anticipation. This was to be my first trip to Paris, where I was to meet the rest of the family, and it cannot be overestimated what Paris meant to a Jewish boy who had been brought up in admiration of France, with tales of the glitter and beauty of its capital. French had been my second language, and since I had learned meanwhile that France was not ruled by a king, its history of tolerance was all the more familiar. This anticipation was surely one reason why I remained so calm during my departure: my thoughts were already at the banks of the Seine. I was not aware at the time that escape meant exile—how could I be when it was a generally held opinion among my elders that the Hitler government could not outlast the winter? Nevertheless, the ride across Lake Constance separated what I have come to experience as the two distinct parts of my life: the first one, up to this crossing before I was fifteen, is so distant that when after many decades I once more visited the scenes of my youth, I experienced no deeper feelings than those for the baroque and Salem's Swabian landscape, which, as I have said, I consider my landscape to this day.

From the chapter "Building Character in Salem."

On Mosse's Jewish identity

Being Jewish dominated my fate, but this did not lead to a preoccupation with Judaism. I had been expelled from the Reform Congregation's Sunday School, it will be remembered, and I was influenced by my father's dismissal of all religion as trickery. Because of my experiences it seemed to me that it was anti-Semitism which defined Jewishness; and the existence and strength of anti-Semitism were obviously determined by the forces of history. Being Jewish meant for me at this stage of my life being a product of historical circumstance, and I kept this belief even when my Jewishness was no longer a burden but had become an opportunity to deepen and propagate the liberal


DEUTSCHES REICH

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(Stempelmarke)

10 FEB 1939

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REISEPASS

Nr. 495

NAME DES PASSINHABERS

Gerhard Israel

~~BEGLEITET VON SEINER EHEFRAU~~

Lachmann - Mosse

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STAATSANGEHÖRIGKEIT:

DEUTSCHES REICH

Dieser Paß enthält 32 Seiten.

The infamous "J" passport officially designated Mosse as a Jew. Note that his first name was "Gerhard"; Mosse changed his name to "George" only after emigrating to England. Also note the middle name "Israel." All Jews were given the middle name "Israel" or "Sarah" to further depersonalize and humiliate them.

and humanistic values that the German Jewish community to which I belonged upheld in a special manner. But at the same time there remained the feeling that I had a special bond with my fellow Jews through a shared fate assigned to us by history.

History for me took the place of religion, with the advantage that history is open-ended and not exclusive, for one cannot understand one's own history or the history of one's ethnicity without trying to understand the motivations of others, whether they are friendly or hostile. A historian, if he is to get history right, cannot be bigoted or narrow-minded. Empathy is for me still at the core of the historical enterprise, but understanding does not mean withholding judgment. I have myself mainly dealt with people and movements whom I judged harshly, but understanding must precede an informed and effective judgment.

Eventually, at Wisconsin, I was to have a leading role in starting a Jewish Studies Program, having begun in the early 1970s to teach the first course in modern Jewish history ever offered at that university. Teaching modern Jewish history, as far as I was concerned, meant communicating that which has formed the modern Jew; understanding his modern history can give him support and dignity, even while he sees his place and opportunities in society much more clearly.

I emphasize the modern because the last three centuries have been crucial in determining our fate; not just Jewish fate after the age of emancipation, but that of all Europeans. I have often been told that such-and-such ideas and concepts already existed in earlier ages, and indeed every age has contributed to the construction of modernity. Nevertheless, though we must know the history of those ages, what counts is how modern men and women perceived them rather than what actually happened at the time. They looked at them through the prism of their own age. The historian obviously has to know even the faraway past in order to understand this prism and what it means, but I have always opposed drawing a direct line from past to present without taking people's perceptions into account.

From the chapter "Confronting History."

A new home

Mosse lived in France and England before emigrating to the United States in 1941. He arrived in Madison after spending some twelve years on the faculty of the University of Iowa, his first teaching position after studying at Cambridge University and Harvard.

When I arrived in Madison, Wisconsin, in the autumn of 1956 I had no real sense that a whole epoch of my life had ended, that the years of apprenticeship were over. While my time in Iowa brought an end to a long period of searching and gave me a feeling of self-confidence and belonging, the years in Madison had no such far-reaching consequences. I now had a foundation upon which I could build; there was no real rupture with the past, and themes like Americanization or the road to respectability no longer applied. In Madison I started on an intense academic involvement which at the same time led to a new intellectual understanding of my environment. The broadness of experience which in Iowa came with involvement in modern art or creative writing no longer existed. Moreover, I was no longer a novice in the American Middle West, and even here I could build on existing foundations. The story now becomes one chiefly of intellectual growth, and not of an attempted adjustment or the need to reinvent myself as teacher, scholar, and member of an academic community.

At the time the distance between Iowa City and Madison seemed to me much greater than the six-hour drive which separated the two towns. That I would have to live on a lower salary than I had been offered at Iowa did not weigh heavily. My indifference to money, because it had always been there when I

Working the lecture room in Madison, 1961. "He was the most charismatic lecturer I have ever seen," wrote one former student. Mosse received hundreds of letters from former students throughout his career thanking him for his mentoring. Many of them went on to become noted historians.

needed it—even when the family's earnings were low—paid off, and so did the fact that while I certainly liked luxury, thanks to Salem and Bootham I could do without it as well. I was excited to be joining such a lively and famous history department, and a university which seemed so much richer, so much more settled, than the University of Iowa. New research opportunities beckoned as well at a much bigger library, and I would have one free, if unpaid, semester's leave every other year in order to facilitate my research and writing. But, above all, I found myself immediately in the midst of a formidable cast of academic characters.

Madison itself, however, was, at the time, not so different from Iowa City. Both towns had only one passable restaurant, which made life difficult for bachelors, who were confined to various "greasy spoons." Most of the better restaurants were outside of town; for example, in the Amana Colonies, pietistic settlements barely an hour away from Iowa City, were various restaurants specializing in excellent Germanic cuisine. From Madison one drove a short distance to the Swiss colony of New Glarus or to the Cornish settlement in Mineral Point. But then eating out was not as common as it is today, and with many good restaurants in town it is not such a special event as it was when one had to make an excursion.

These were small cities, Iowa City much smaller than Madison. I remember when the first travel agency opened in Iowa City at a desk in the middle of the lobby of the main hotel, a lobby which was decorated with friezes showing the conquest of the West. Social life itself took place in the home, and I have the feeling that, among my circle, dinner parties were much more common than they are today.

Academic life was the focus of all of one's activities. The structure of the history department at Wisconsin was not much different from that at Iowa: the key person in charge of day-to-day activities was the departmental secretary rather than the chairman, and I had learned long ago that to be in her good graces made life much easier. Miss Veva Cox at Iowa, who ran the department with an iron hand, had been immensely helpful, and so were the departmental secretaries at Wisconsin. How mistaken some of my colleagues were who treated the Cerberus of the office like a departmental servant.

Among the faculty there was a rich social life which declined in the 1960s with the enormous expansion of the university—a departmental intimacy which would soon vanish forever. Not only among the faculty: who could imagine today the way in which I was promoted from associate to full professor not long after I had arrived. The president of the university, E. B. Fred, used to mix with the students as classes were changing in the main entrances of Bascom Hall, the central building of the university. He listened carefully to what students were saying about the classes they had just left. Apparently they said good things about my teaching, and soon the suggestion came down from on high that it was time for a promotion.

Perhaps this was not so extraordinary; I had, after all, already made a good impression on the university president. When I was interviewed for the position in the history department, the chairman had introduced me to E. B. Fred in order to be looked over. I sat down ready to answer all sorts of weighty questions, but instead the president asked only one question: "Professor Mosse, what do you think of the artificial insemination of horses?" I had been unaware of the president's background as dean of the College of Agriculture, and taken aback I blurted out that I had never given the subject any thought. Honesty paid; that was the right answer, for E. B. Fred, rather than making the usual small talk or addressing subjects of

The Mosse Legacy

by Stanley Payne

As a historian, Mosse not only pioneered research into new areas of fascism, he ventured into such previously "taboo" areas as historical examination and analysis of the interplay between gender, sexuality, and culture.

For more than a third of a century George L. Mosse was known to thousands of students at the Universities of Iowa and Wisconsin as an exciting and provocative teacher, but his most important legacy as a historian was not so much his inspired teaching as his highly original and extensive research and writing. If his students numbered in the many thousands, his readers number in the many tens of thousands as his work continues to be widely read into the twenty-first century.

Of Mosse's more than twenty-five books, the most commonly known were his brief text *The Reformation* (1950), which remained in print for most of the second half of the twentieth century, and *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1961), reissued in the 1990s. These works provided clear and incisive interpretations of modern European culture and religion, and were translated into several languages.

Even more influential in the long run, however, was Mosse's research, which served to open up a whole series of new areas in modern European history, from the interpretation of fascism and fascist culture to racism, nationalism and mass mobilization, memory and national memorials, gender and sexuality, social and cultural respectability, and central European Jewish history. His first two research books dealt with the religious and intellectual aftermath of the English Reformation, but his greatest fame and influence derived from his work in modern continental European politico-intellectual and socio-cultural history.

Mosse was one of the principal pioneers in the comparative analysis of fascism, especially the ideology and culture of fascism. Such works as *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (1964) and *Nazi Culture* (1966) broadly expanded the horizon of research on fascism, to the degree that it is no exaggeration to say that Mosse pioneered what have become some of the main trends of research in this area at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The same might be said of much of the new research on European racism, stimulated by his *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (1977).

His research proved equally original on such themes as political symbolism and mass mobilization, and on nationalism and memory, producing such innovative new works as *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars Through the Third Reich* (1975) and *Fallen Soldiers* (1990). Mosse had an uncanny capacity to anticipate new research trends even before they had clearly emerged among other scholars. This was highlighted in the latter part of his career by his movement into the new areas of nationalism and sexuality, and gender and respectability. These later investigations produced such key works as *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (1985) and *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (1996).

"Mosse had an uncanny capacity to anticipate new research trends even before they had clearly emerged among other scholars. This was highlighted in the latter part of his career by his movement into the new areas of nationalism and sexuality, and gender and respectability."

Mosse's legacy to research and interpretation in modern history was not by any means limited to his publications, for he trained an entire generation of graduate students at Wisconsin and at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he taught half-time during the 1970s and '80s. The published research of these former students is itself voluminous. Equally important was his editorial work, for he was the founding co-editor of *The Journal of Contemporary History*. Since its inception in 1966 it has become the leading journal published in English in the field of twentieth-century European history, and Mosse devoted much energy to it down to his final months.

In the twenty-first century, students and research scholars in the field of modern European history will remember George L. Mosse above all for his innovative research on fascism and nationalism, and on the interrelationship between cultural and social history in key areas of modern culture. His is a rich legacy that will continue to inspire and stimulate creative research well into the future. ❧

which he knew little, had wanted to test my presence of mind. The manner in which he had judged me for promotion was equally unorthodox. However, this was, after all, not so different from my promotion at Iowa, which had also been unconventional, as Dean McGrath had been frightened by my threat to abandon the Western Civilization course. Both promotions had been due to my teaching rather than my scholarship.

Socializing among the faculty did not mean the absence of tension or controversy; on the contrary, among the American historians in particular, each of whom was a recognized authority in his field, strife was rampant. And all of them were dominating personalities with strong opinions, likes and dislikes. The differences between them not only concerned appointments to new positions, but were based upon different approaches to history. These men cared deeply about the writing of history—it was their lifeblood—and since that time I have rarely witnessed such departmental disputes about fundamentals. My early years in Madison were lived in the shadow of this remarkable group of men, who influenced my own attitude toward my profession and kept an undue presentism at bay. They deserve notice as a group, for their time seems long past.

Here was an American nationalism which was based on democracy, strength, restlessness, and a virile energy. Nostalgia for a simpler past was part of this, as of most modern nationalisms.

American history at Wisconsin had an antiestablishment thrust, and I used to characterize it as history from the viewpoint of South Dakota (where Merrill Jensen, the colonial historian, grew up), in contrast to the conventional view from New England. By now I had lived for over a decade in the American Middle West and was familiar with its vast open spaces, which had caused me so much despair when I first arrived in Iowa City. Moreover, I had seen something of its life during my Iowa travels. But now I encountered it intellectually, and as history is usually at the center of regional or national identity, so here the Wisconsin historians developed a distinctly regional point of view.

The patron saint of the department was Frederick Jackson Turner, whose large portrait hung in the departmental office, and whose thesis about the importance of the frontier in American history, written late in the nineteenth century, while he taught in Madison, found its echo among my fellow historians. Their criticism of American expansion was related to his work, and so was their emphasis on the American heartland. Here was an American nationalism which was based on democracy, strength, restlessness, and a virile energy. Nostalgia for a simpler past was part of this, as of most modern nationalisms. The closing of the frontier, an end to the wide-open spaces, which Turner had proclaimed, would lead to the kind of crowded and overdeveloped nation which the American East Coast symbolized. The utopian past was not long gone. I well remember being charmed by Merrill Jensen's description of how a literate farmer in rural South Dakota taught him a love for books.

The criticism of the American establishment and, above all, of American foreign policy by these historians was related to Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis. The expansion from coast to coast had been democratic and had served to define the American character, but further expansion into the outside world, and especially Asia, was imperialist and capitalist, undertaken solely for consideration of economic gain. Their nationalism was isolationist.

❦

How did I fit in here, a Jew, a former refugee, whose ties were with Europe and the eastern United States? To be sure, I was always uneasy with the anti-Semitic undercurrent which was part of the nationalism I have mentioned, and which could already be found in Frederick Jackson Turner's fear of the East European Jewish immigration and how it could deform the national character. Here anti-Semitism meant, in reality, opposition to the eastern establishment. I was totally opposed to the isolationism of these historians and said so often enough. Still, I regarded my relationship with them, apart from personal friendship, as a journey of discovery into a different and for me a very "American" world. Moreover, the discussion about history which informed our conversations never touched upon the so-called Jewish Question, and their condemnation of National Socialism and fascism was unequivocal. Perhaps a certain diffidence which I have always shown toward those I consider of a higher status than myself may well have come into play. I blame this diffidence principally on my education in Germany, which made me extremely shy when approaching people in authority. Moreover, I have always assumed half-consciously that a certain level of prejudice is latent in most men and women. And here what may have been latent never confronted me with its actual consequences.

Perhaps another attitude played its role here as well. Jews were used to being diffident about their Jewishness in what had been so often during my life an unfriendly environment. Though my basic attitudes were already changing, I was no exception, and it was only from the mid-sixties onward that I was prominently involved in Jewish concerns on campus. I should add that my other outsiderdom, being gay, presented no such problems. The closet door had to be tightly closed, and was so even with the members of this group whom I knew to have had some gay adventures when younger. Looking back, it is true that despite my friendships with the Wisconsin historians, diffidence was sometimes combined with unease, though the intellectual stimulation I received far outweighed any prejudice or any difference in outlook between them and me. ❧

From the chapter "Finally Home."

"It was as if his voice came alive again."

John Tortorice, a development specialist for the UW–Madison library system, was George Mosse's life partner and is now executor of the Mosse estate. We talked with him about Mosse's life, his work, and his last great project, his memoir.

Interview by Joan Fischer

Wisconsin Academy Review: How did it feel, as Mosse's partner, to read his memoir? What elements about it surprised you?

John Tortorice: The circumstances of his finishing the memoir made it all the more poignant to read. He was working on it at the time of his death, and did in fact work on it after he was diagnosed with liver cancer. He lived less than a month after he was diagnosed, and had just returned from a trip to Germany, where he'd received two honorary degrees. And before that, we'd celebrated his eightieth birthday, and before that, we were on a long, extended trip to Europe. And so the end of his life was a blur of activity. When I finally sat down to read what he'd left, his memoir, it was as if his voice came alive again. I really feel that George's voice comes through in this memoir.

What struck me was that if you read between the lines, he does reveal a great deal about himself. He was not the kind of person who would throw everything out at you about his inner feelings or things that had wounded him in life. But if you read it closely, it's there. He'll throw off a certain passage that's very insightful of his character and revealing of how he thought of his life and how he conceived of his life as he approached its end. I do think he approached it as a summing up of his life, although he was still so much in the world, so active, that he certainly would have greatly enjoyed promoting the book and experiencing the reaction.

"At the end of his life he was a contented man," says Mosse's life partner John Tortorice, shown here with Mosse at their home in Madison in 1996. "I eventually lived in an open union accepted by all my academic friends," wrote Mosse in his memoir, describing his "slow edge" out of the closet.

Wisconsin Academy Review: What things about him did you learn in reading the memoir?

Tortorice: What a great impact the experiences of his life had on his work as a historian—that his experiences of being a Jew in exile and gay shaped the direction of his

work. He was a historian who, unlike many historians, did not specialize in one aspect of history his whole career. In fact, his career was really an extraordinary example of a historian who is comfortable in many different areas of history. And I think the impetus to move into other areas was very much driven by his own concerns and experiences in his life, that he used history almost to understand himself.

He was a very kind, humane, generous person who spent most of his life studying and confronting the darker side of history.

Wisconsin Academy Review: What role would you say Madison played in Mosse's life? How did he feel about this city, and why?

Tortorice: I think that he did, in the end, consider this his home, as a person who always said that he never really had a home. This was expressed on a personal level as a commitment to the department of history and his many colleagues and students—he had a strong commitment and loyalty to individuals, and also to the university, as evidenced by his extraordinary bequest. He felt that the university had supported him in his great career. And although he had offers from many other universities, his sense of loyalty and commitment to Wisconsin kept him here.

And of course he had many friends from all walks of life. He was very able to relate to people from many different backgrounds. He wasn't "academic" in the sense that he was isolated from the larger community.

Wisconsin Academy Review: Did he have any feelings about Wisconsin as a landscape?

Tortorice: Really not. I think the south German landscape of his boyhood was the landscape that he responded to. He always said Madison was "in the country." He really liked the small-town atmosphere here because it allowed him to work very intensively. For a child of Berlin who was very comfortable in the cosmopolitan world of the great metropolises, Madison did seem a bit of a backwater. But he did come to appreciate what Madison had to offer and the fact that he was able to work very intensely, with the help of our great university libraries.

Wisconsin Academy Review: What things about him do you miss the most?

Tortorice: George was so alive and full of energy. He took such joy in all aspects of life. George was always completely involved in the world and had no bitterness or sense of nostalgia about the past. And he was much more open and flexible in his views than some young people. I think this was the key to his great ability to connect with the young. His immense energy and joy in living is hard to duplicate.

He was also a challenging presence with strong beliefs and opinions. He kept me on my toes. He was very intelligent, of course, and very involved in the issues of the day, and he didn't allow for fuzzy thinking or slacking off or anything like that. You were always on your toes with George, and yet he was also a very amusing and charming person.

Wisconsin Academy Review: For what things—and these can be accomplishments or characteristics—do you think Mosse would most like to be remembered?

Tortorice: He hoped he would be remembered as a historian first, for his work redefining the study of mass movements, and for his pioneering work as a founder of the field of cultural history and the study of sexuality and gender roles. And his contribution to Jewish history, which should probably come first and foremost—his study of the origins of the Holocaust.

But then he would also want to be remembered as a teacher. He took great pride in his students and their accomplishments, and the many letters he received over the years that said, "You've changed my life. You're the reason that I studied history, you helped me greatly in finding myself or finding my path in life." There are literally hundreds of letters like these in his files.

George was a very kind, generous person, a humane person, who spent most of his life studying and confronting the darker side of history. This was very courageous. He had an impetus to get to the heart of what had happened to him and to the Jews of Europe. For him, this was absolutely essential to his ability to function in this world. In a sense it was a tragedy that he had to spend his life studying such an unpleasant subject, but he had the courage to do it.

Wisconsin Academy Review: In what ways do you think Mosse's life "came full circle," which is a phrase he uses in his memoir?

Tortorice: At the end of his life he was a contented man. He felt that he had made a contribution to the world and that he

had lived his life in an honorable way. Like all great teachers, his life was lived enriching the lives of others. This brought him immense satisfaction.

But for him to be the last person of his family alive when his family's property was returned was an amazing and intense experience. He was an unsentimental man about these things, but it still did give his life a shape, made him feel like he had come full circle from his early life as a very rich and privileged child. It brought a resolution to the end of his life that it wouldn't have had if those [East Bloc] regimes hadn't collapsed. It was an extraordinary experience to go back and visit the places where he had spent his childhood. ❧

The Great Bequest

George Mosse left $12.5 million dollars to the University of Wisconsin–Madison, the main beneficiary in his will. This bequest—apparently the largest contribution by an individual in the university's history—will enrich the UW–Madison history department to an extraordinary degree and further extend cultural exchange between Madison and institutions in Europe and Israel.

Here is how some of that money is to be spent, according to his executor, or personal representative, John Tortorice:

- $1 million for the George L. Mosse Professsorship in American Jewish History;
- Funding for the Mosse Teaching Fellowships;
- $1 million for scholarships in modern Jewish and in modern European cultural history;
- $500,000 for study of gay and lesbian history; and
- $8.5 million for the Mosse Exchange Program in History, which calls for the exchange of UW–Madison students and faculty with counterparts at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem; funding for The Mosse Lecture Series, which will occur every two years and alternate with Hebrew University; funding for a series of workshops with faculty members and students of UW–Madison and Hebrew University, to take place in various cities in the United States, Israel, and Europe; and a visiting scholars program to bring distinguished scholars of European history to Madison to give lectures and seminars and consult with faculty and students.

Not part of "the great bequest" as such, but still a large part of the Mosse legacy, are the many reminders and programs of the Mosse family in Berlin. Schenkendorf, the family estate outside Berlin, was returned to the Mosse family after the fall of East Germany and sold to, and lovingly restored by, a descendent of Count Dracula (really). The former Mosse Haus publishing company, once headquarters of the influential *Berliner Tageblatt* newspaper and other publications founded by Mosse's grandfather Rudolf, was remodeled and renamed the Mosse-Zentrum, or Mosse Center. It houses media businesses as well as Humboldt University's German Institute, which sponsors a Mosse Lecture Series. The Mosse Palais, or mansion, in Berlin, once the home of Mosse's grandparents, serves as the European headquarters of the American Jewish Committee.

Mosse's bequest included contributions to the Jewish Museum in Berlin, mainly portraits of family members and other valuable art works.

By Joan Fischer

Blues, Bebop, and Bulldozers

Why Milwaukee never became a Motown.

By Alexander Shashko

The roots of rock and roll are in the American South, but the music blossomed in the industrial Midwest. In the '50s, Chicago's Chess Records introduced Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, John Lee Hooker, the Moonglows, and Chuck Berry to the world, while Windy City residents Sam Cooke and Curtis Mayfield shaped the sound of '60s and '70s soul. Cincinnati was the home of the Isley Brothers, and King Records produced a vibrant array of artists including such vocal groups as the Platters and the Dominoes, blues guitarists Albert King and Johnny "Guitar" Watson, songwriter Hank Ballard, and soul singer James Brown. Cleveland was home to deejay Alan Freed, who played a crucial role in popularizing rhythm and blues among white audiences.

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum

When Dinah Washington stepped up to the microphone, everybody listened. Washington was one of the many greats—along with such musicians as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, and Billie Holiday—to play the clubs of Walnut Street.

And, of course, there was Detroit, home to Berry Gordy's Motown Records, which assembled a remarkable constellation of stars including Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, the Jackson Five, and the Supremes. Detroit also produced many seminal rockers in the '60s and '70s, including the MC5 and the Stooges. In the '80s and '90s, Chicago and Detroit gave birth to house and techno dance music, which has since become an international phenomenon, while Minneapolis rose to prominence with the emergence of Prince, R&B producers Jimmie Jam and Terry Lewis, and alternative rock groups like Husker Du and the Replacements. By any measure, the cities of the industrial Midwest formed vital musical communities in the second half of the twentieth century.

All of them, that is, except Milwaukee. Unique among its urban neighbors along the Great Lakes, Milwaukee never produced a popular music reputation of significant proportions dur-

ing the rock era's heyday. Throughout this period, Milwaukee had no artist, record label, or major music district to rival its Midwestern peers. Milwaukee emerged from the '50s and '60s without an active, interracial music community that produced artists of international renown and cultural significance, like those from Chicago, Detroit, or even such similar-sized Midwestern cities as Cincinnati or Minneapolis.

Milwaukee does have a popular music legacy. The city was a center for the production and consumption of polka and other ethnic European music during much of the twentieth century. Paramount Records in Grafton and Port Washington produced many historically significant "race records" by blues singer Ma Rainey at its studios during the 1920s. At the dawn of the rock era, Waukesha native Les Paul introduced many of the technical and sonic innovations that popularized the electric guitar. The echoes of rockabilly's powerful influence on Milwaukee in the late 1950s can still be heard in the contemporary sounds of the city's most successful bands, the rootsy Bodeans, whose sound honors the arrangements and themes of early rock and roll, and the Violent Femmes—arguably Milwaukee's most influential musical export—whose acoustic folk-punk honors rockabilly's rebellious politics. The rockabilly aesthetic also lives on, in transmuted form, through the angry punk and heavy metal music for which Milwaukee is a minor but significant center.

What is interesting about Milwaukee's postwar legacy is how different it is from other cities in the Midwest. Without idealizing race relations in other cities, black communities were sturdier and more inventive in cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland than they were in Milwaukee. Not coincidentally, most industrial Midwestern cities saw much greater interaction between whites and blacks, especially in the arts, enabling the exchange of musical ideas and traditions that has been the hallmark of rock and roll. By comparison, Milwaukee's postwar music culture has been small, segregated, and relatively insignificant.

A musical center destroyed

Why did Milwaukee's musical culture evolve so differently from its neighbors? The answer can be unraveled through a story of lost opportunity at the dawn of postwar America, when one neighborhood in Milwaukee struggled to create an environment for local blues and jazz musicians, only to be destroyed by political and social forces swirling around the city just as the era of rock and soul began.

What is interesting about Milwaukee's postwar legacy is how different it is from other cities in the Midwest. Without idealizing race relations in other cities, black communities were sturdier and more inventive in cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland. Not coincidentally, most industrial Midwestern cities saw much greater interaction between whites and blacks, especially in the arts.

Walnut Street was Milwaukee's "Bronzeville." From just after World War One until the late '50s, a six-block stretch of Walnut Street north of downtown was black Milwaukee's economic and social center. For Milwaukee's small, heavily segregated African-American community, Walnut Street's grocery stores, doctors' offices, restaurants, taverns, law offices, and clubs not only offered local goods and services, but provided employment and capital for a community often strapped for both.

Walnut Street's jazz and blues clubs were the cultural heart of the black community. Club owners provided entertainment, gave housing to visiting artists, and offered space for local musicians to organize unions. Often the music clubs were connected to social clubs, which raised money for the needy while providing daytime social space for locals. In addition, music clubs were the first institutions to bring significant white money into the black community, dating back to Dixieland jazz clubs in the 1920s. This was important not only as a source of capital, but as a precedent for creating social interaction between blacks and whites that was rare outside of the city's factories.

Starting with the Metropole club in the late 1920s, the Walnut Street area dominated Milwaukee's jazz and blues scene. By the 1930s and '40s, the names had changed—the Club Congo, the Flame, Art's, and Moon Glow took turns as the place to be—but the environment remained the same. Most weeknights, local bands played in concerts or dances. Several local artists went on to careers as side players in some of jazz's biggest bands. And national stars showed up at least once a week. *Everyone* who mattered in jazz and blues played Walnut Street. Duke Ellington, Louis Jordan, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Jimmy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Billie Holiday, Nat "King" Cole, Cab Calloway, "Gator Mouth" Moore, Louis Armstrong, Earl Hines, Lionel Hampton, and Gene Krupa all performed on Walnut Street on numerous occasions. Ellington was particularly fond of Walnut Street, playing often at the Flame, including a 1957 concert for the club's anniversary.

Jazz and blues drew whites into an otherwise deeply segregated black neighborhood. On weekends local kids from such suburbs as Bayside, Whitefish Bay, and Shorewood swarmed onto Walnut Street to eat, drink, listen to music, and patronize the blues and jazz record shelves at local shops. Stores like Arthur Gibson's and The Bop Shop spun records for black and white teens, and occasionally Harlem Record's owner Mannie Maudlin Jr. would deejay for WEMP live from

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum

The Club Congo, the Flame, Art's, Moon Glow ... the Walnut Street hot spots changed, but during the '30s and '40s, they all had their time in the spotlight. This shot of the Regal, another Walnut Street club, dates from the late 1940s.

his store. Walnut Street was unique in the city's history: a place where blacks and whites not only worked together on stage, but relaxed and enjoyed their free time together as well.

Unfortunately, the growth of Walnut Street's music scene—and Milwaukee's music scene as a whole—was dramatically affected by demographic and geographic factors. African Americans lived in Milwaukee since the city's founding, but in comparison to other Midwestern cities their numbers remained small well into the twentieth century. In 1930, only 7,501 blacks lived in Milwaukee, and by 1945, the height of the Great Migration of southern blacks to northern cities, there were still only 13,000 African Americans in the city. Milwaukee had its Great Migration belatedly, as the city's black population exploded to more than 105,000 by 1970. Still, even this delayed migration was largely due to secondary migration from Chicago to Milwaukee. And Milwaukee's black middle class remained miniscule. Finding capital to finance institutions in the black community was almost impossible, particularly for clubs and musicians who often relied on the gray and black markets to raise money.

Milwaukee's satellite relationship to Chicago played an important role in its cultural development. Since World War I, when nationwide anti-German sentiment crushed the unique German-American arts culture in the city, Milwaukee looked south for culture. This was as true in both the fine and popular arts: the Chicago Symphony traveled to Milwaukee annually for performances until 1959. With Chicago only ninety miles away, musicians—especially black musicians—had little incentive to live in Milwaukee. African Americans made up only 3.4 percent of Milwaukee's population in 1950. In Chicago, the figure was 13.6 percent. Even musicians who made a living playing in Wisconsin could easily commute from Chicago, where they were supported both culturally and economically by a vibrant community of musicians, both black and white.

The black community dismantled

But it took more than geography and demography to destroy Walnut Street. In the 1950s and '60s, Bronzeville was demolished by a combination of national and local political decisions, some malicious and others benign. These decisions denied a future for such traditional downtown neighborhoods as Walnut Street and brought an end to the multiracial musical culture Walnut Street fostered.

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum

The Music Café on West Walnut: Even when no music was playing, the clubs and cafes provided a comfortable gathering place.

Urban renewal practices played a crucial role in the destruction of Walnut Street. First codified into federal law under the Housing Act of 1937, urban renewal programs provided assistance to local governments for slum clearance and low-rent public housing construction. By the Housing Act of 1949, millions of federal dollars were provided to clear away slums. As a result of ignorance or thoughtlessness, however, few government officials distinguished between vibrant inner-city communities and blighted ones. Even fewer considered the consequences of demolishing local institutions to make way for low-rent government housing.

In Milwaukee and across the nation, urban renewal led to the destruction of self-sustaining neighborhoods in the name of improving living conditions. Local urban renewal efforts focused on Walnut Street after the *Milwaukee Journal* ran a series of articles in 1954 entitled "The Blight Within Us." The series targeted the 98 percent black Hillside area adjacent to the Walnut Street business district as the most blighted part of the city. Black leaders and musicians, sensing danger, organized the Walnut Street Advancement Association to protest the imposition of urban renewal plans without community involvement. Their efforts culminated in an eighty-person demonstration at city hall. But their voices were not heard, and three years later the Hillside Redevelopment Project was underway. The project was in the heart of the black business district, where more than 100 black businesses and 1,400 African Americans resided. By the time Elvis Presley burst upon the national scene in 1957, Walnut Street was under siege, no longer a place frequented by whites and blacks, but a symbol—in the white community, at least—of civic shame.

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum

"Good mornin' blues/Blues, how do you do?" Louis Jordan and Tympany Five graced Walnut Street with "Hard Lovin' Blues" and other classics.

Walnut Street was unique in the city's history: a place where blacks and whites not only worked together on stage, but relaxed and enjoyed their free time together as well.

Walnut Street was devastated by urban renewal. Better housing was built, but there were fewer places to live, forcing many black homeowners to move. The racist practices of local real estate dealers and the surge of local neighborhood associations around the city with restrictive covenants made relocation a nearly impossible task. Ultimately, the housing shortage scattered the black population, its talent, and its capital. By the time a more liberal relocation payment plan was enacted in the late '60s, most families were already displaced. In addition, urban renewal destroyed the economic base of Walnut Street. Local businesses were held responsible for moving or selling their own businesses, and since they often had nowhere to move and no way to pay for it, most businesses failed instead. The small but growing black community of Milwaukee was being dismantled.

Urban renewal displaced thousands of households in Milwaukee's core. Still, Walnut Street struggled on until another symbol of postwar progress—the interstate highway—dealt it a mortal blow. The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 authorized the federal government to provide up to 90 percent of the cost of building highways across the nation, highways intended to serve the needs of commerce and defense in addition to clearing the increasingly congested roads in urban areas. Despite public complaints from Mayor Frank Zeidler that freeway construction was progressing without any plan for the displaced, ground was broken in 1952 for the construction of Milwaukee's segments of the interstate freeway system. By 1959, construction of the North-South freeway began. This segment ran directly through the heart of the black commercial district, through West Walnut Street along Seventh and Eighth Streets. Construction lasted into the '70s, but it did not take that long for the freeway—which later became known as Interstate 43—to destroy Bronzeville.

The damage was extensive. According to historian William Vick, "Four hundred twenty-six businesses were displaced for

the North-South Freeway, including 57 taverns, 34 grocery stores, 28 furniture stores, 26 automobile shops, 16 restaurants; 106 service retailers, 22 small manufacturers and 9 wholesale firms, along with 33 vacant buildings. Borchert Field, used by an Afro-American semipro baseball team, the Milwaukee Brown Brewers, was taken out, along with portions of Carver Park and many other playgrounds." The last music club, the Moon Glow, was razed in 1966. Walnut Street, and all of its possibilities for the future of Milwaukee's music culture and race relations, was gone.

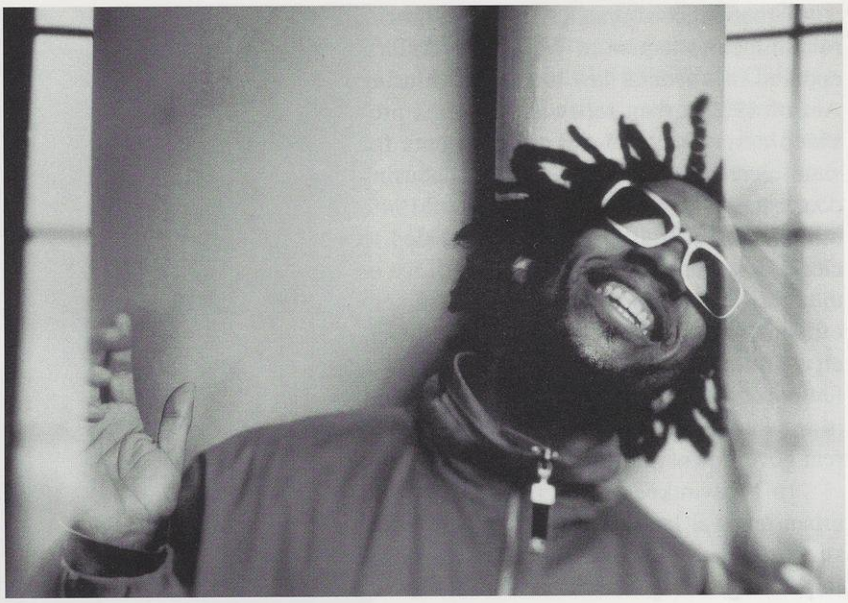

Photo courtesy of TVT Records.

Milwaukee still breeds good music—but the top musicians don't tend to stay there. Milwaukee native Todd Thomas, otherwise known as "Speech," moved from Milwaukee to Atlanta in 1987. There he formed the rap group Arrested Development, and produced their 1992 critical and commercial hit album , 3 Years, 5 Months, and 2 Days in the Life of..., *which won several Grammys and helped usher in an entire genre of hip-hop. (Speech's latest: an album called* Hoopla.*) Other renowned Milwaukee natives include Al Jarreau and Eric Benet.*

Reconstructing the past?

One can only speculate about how Milwaukee's music scene would have been different had Walnut Street survived. But we do know what happened in its absence. The factors that initially stunted Milwaukee's music culture prevented it from flourishing in the '60s and '70s. The combination of Milwaukee's relatively small black population, the city's segregated housing situation—severe even by the standards of the North— and the destruction of the Walnut Street district created a vicious pattern of destruction even more pernicious than elsewhere in the Midwest, where black communities, no matter how devastated, had relative geographic flexibility and capital to rebuild. In Milwaukee, there were no longer black lending associations, banks, or middle-class citizens to underwrite a revival of Bronzeville elsewhere in the city. Even if money had been available, there was nowhere to build it. Until the fair housing protests of the late '60s, African Americans were red-lined into an area controlled by federal bureaucrats and freeway planners. With little to see or do in the city, whites stopped visiting, inflaming their fears and stereotypes, while many in Milwaukee's black middle class—including many musicians—fled for greener pastures.

That's what happened to Milwaukee native Todd Thomas, otherwise known as "Speech," who moved from Milwaukee to Atlanta in 1987. There he formed the rap group Arrested Development, and produced their 1992 critical and commercial hit album *3 Years, 5 Months, and 2 Days in the Life of...*, which won several Grammys and helped usher in an entire genre of hip-hop. Milwaukee does create talent—Al Jarreau and Eric Benet are other examples—but, like Speech, they had to leave to nurture their careers.

Their departures and subsequent success are emblematic of the exodus that Milwaukee's civic leaders are now trying to confront—by returning to the ideals of Walnut Street. In February, several Milwaukee redevelopment groups announced plans for a "21st Century Bronzeville" to be located between Fourth and Seventh Streets along West North Avenue. Using private funding and supported by influential politicians, the goal is to create a black entertainment district filled with black-owned nightclubs, taverns, restaurants, and theaters, which would revive both local and tourist interest in the central city. The planners' intent is clear: to revive the spirit—and avoid the tragedy—of Walnut Street. By providing a place where Milwaukee's blacks might once again have a cultural district to call their own, and where blacks and whites might come together to share musical ideas, then perhaps someday Milwaukee will join its neighbors in the pantheon of Midwestern musical culture. ❧

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Why Ask "Why"?

The truth is out there. A web site called The Why Files makes learning about science both easy and accessible.

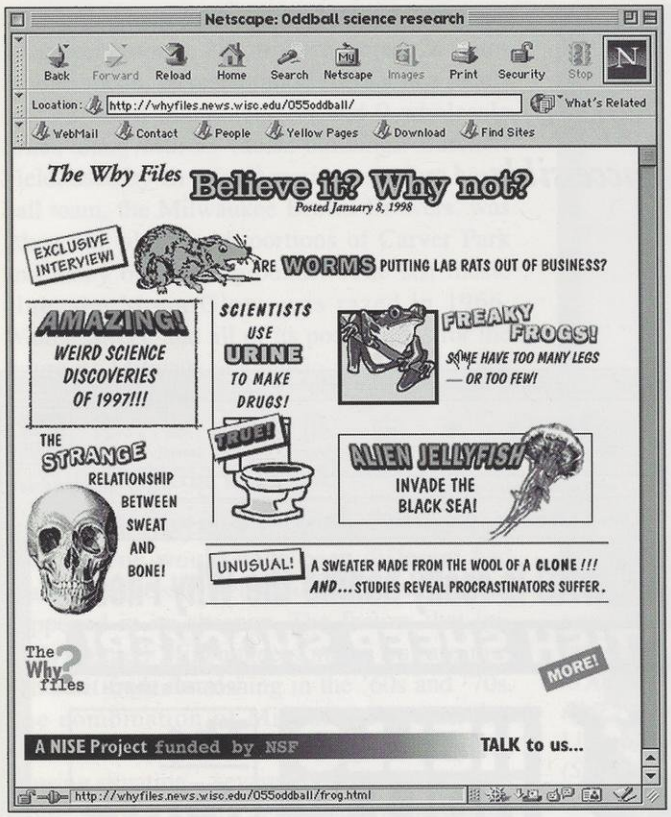
By Terry Devitt

The call was unexpected and disconcerting: Could we help with a site visit? The National Science Foundation (NSF) was coming to town to assess the University of Wisconsin–Madison's potential to become the home of a premier national institute dedicated to fostering and understanding science education. The NSF site visitors, we were told, were keen to know if some aspect of what would become the National Institute for Science Education could be devoted to exploring how most people get information about science and technology—through the news and popular media.

The Why Files takes a playful approach toward the obviously serious topic of cloning.

It was a stunning request because, as a science writer in a busy university news office, my role, typically, was to bring up the rear, to write about the results of scientific research and spread the word through the lens and filter of modern mass media: newspapers, magazines, radio, television. Happily, that is still a role I play, but added to my responsibilities is oversight of a project that evolved from the convergence of that phone call, the blossoming of a new mass medium in the World Wide Web, some creative thinking, and, importantly, the willingness of NSF and a few faculty and university administrators to roll the dice and take a chance on a risky idea.

The upshot is a project known as The Why Files. First published on the web four and a half years ago, The Why Files is a popular exploration of the science behind the news. In its short life, The Why Files has become one of the web's leading science destinations, a virtual wayside for people of all ages who want to dig beneath the veneer of the news and learn more about science, how it works, its limitations, its influence on our lives and why we should care about it. Every week, The Why Files produces a new feature on some aspect of science, math, or technology, often with a healthy dose of humor and irreverence, but always with a deference for facts, context, and accuracy. The Why Files routinely takes on topics like cloning, political polling, climate change, genetic engineering, the search for extraterrestrial life, fad diets, alternative medicine, nicotine addiction, the science of love, and killer asteroids. It has a serious side, too, and deals openly with such problems as AIDS, cancer, crashing airplanes, and environmental catastrophe.



"Alien jellyfish invade the Black Sea!" The Why Files uses tried-and-true shocker headlines to catch the reader's attention.

The king of science content

On the path to popularity and critical success, The Why Files became a pioneer and a model of how to wring the most out of the World Wide Web. The Why Files product depends on the close collaboration of a team that includes writer David Tenenbaum, graphic designer Sue Medaris, and web god Darrell Schulte. The considerable skills of each team member represent the necessary ingredients—a voice, a well-defined look, and Internet and technical savvy—for the successful delivery of information through the still-evolving medium of the World Wide Web.

And like the World Wide Web itself, The Why Files continues to grow and move in new and unexpected directions, with the overarching purpose of unmasking science for what it is: a process, a way of looking at nature, and a very human endeavor, the results of which are transforming our world at breakneck speed.

For example, this past year The Why Files took a big step from the realm of popular science web site to the world of formal distance education. With the help and direction of UW–Madison geology professors Jillian Banfield and Phillip Brown, nearly a score of Why Files articles in the physical sciences were organized and supplemented to create a new UW–Madison on-line course in geoscience for non-science majors. Taught for the first time this spring, the course attracted a three-figure enrollment. Plans are being made to develop similar courses in biology and atmospheric science. On another front, The Why Files is part of a new collaboration between scientists, education researchers, and K–12 science teachers and administrators to develop new web tools for science-learning in the classroom.

Opening a door to science

But the *raison d'être* for The Why Files remains the demystification of science for mass audiences through a free, easily navigated web site: http://whyfiles.news.wisc.edu.

Over the decades, scientists have done a pretty good job, deliberately or not, of excluding the rest of us from science. A chief obstacle is the barrier of language. While scientific lingo is critically important for precisely communicating with one's scientist peers, it is often completely incomprehensible to people outside the narrow confines of a scientific discipline. Additional barriers, such as level of education and the exclusive nature of the research scientist's world, tend to thwart public curiosity. And far too often, science is simply inaccessible; its many wonderful stories are served up straight in the daily media as the science story *du jour*—or they are never told at all. It is a sad reality, then, in a world awash in science and technology, that most people know little about science, its methods, its checks and balances, and how scientific results become the drivers of modern technology.

We know that most people learn about new things in science through the news, a fact that should scare the pants off scientists. It's not that science journalists do a bad job. More often than not, they do a commendable job of presenting developments or issues in science. But the imperfections of daily journalism—breadth over depth, lack of context, and a general unwillingness on the part of most media organizations to invest in adequate coverage of science and technology—conspire to provide an interested public with an incomplete and skewed picture of the scientific enterprise. Moreover, in the din of competing voices represented in the media, ideas, results, and even entire technologies can be transformed in the public mind into a confusing mash, where scientific outcomes are hyped or, alternatively, become threats to our way of life, food supply, health, or even our genetic identity.

Marvelous mutton

It is within this context that The Why Files attempts to sort fact from fiction, clarify, rectify, and *make accessible* a scientific development, natural phenomenon, or new technology. These are things that generate high levels of public interest, but the public is often confused about developments in science not because people are incapable of understanding the subtleties and arcane nature of the business. People are confused because, generally, they do not have ready access to information that is well conceived, well researched and written, well illustrated,

The wild, wild web

Learning about science on the web can be a risky proposition. How are Why Files users doing it?

By Sharon Dunwoody and William Eveland

The World Wide Web could be the greatest place for science learning since Mr. Wizard attempted his first kitchen experiment on network television back in the 1950s. Or it could be the worst. How do you tell who's paying attention to science on the web and what they're learning? And is the web a better informal channel for learning about science than our more traditional newspapers, magazines, TV, or radio?

We are tackling those questions by turning The Why Files into a laboratory. In the past five years, we have:

- Surveyed frequent users of The Why Files;
- Followed the electronic footprints of individuals as they moved through the site;
- Watched a number of individuals roam the site while speaking their thoughts aloud; and
- Experimentally varied different characteristics of the site to see how those elements influenced learning.

What follows are a few of the questions we have posed, along with our best answers so far.

Question: Is the ubiquity of the WWW making science available to a broader array of individuals than just those highly educated guys who dominate the subscriber lists of popular science magazines and the audiences of such TV programs as NOVA?

Answer: So far, the answer seems to be no. Or, perhaps more accurately, not yet. The typical repeat visitor to The Why Files is a lot like the typical subscriber to such magazines as *Discover* or *Popular Science*: a well-educated male with a strong interest in science. But remember, the typical user of the WWW is a highly educated guy, too. So we need to repeat our survey at some time in the future when use of the web has become more democratic. If our Why Files audience has also become more variegated at that point, we'll consider the possibility that the WWW can make science accessible to all.

Question: Do Why Files users move linearly or nonlinearly through the site? Proponents of the WWW tout it as a vast information cafeteria that permits the user to forage in any way she wishes, plucking bits of information from many locations and, perhaps, creating her own understanding of a topic or issue. Do site users move in such nonlinear ways, or do they behave as if they are reading a magazine, moving from page 1 to page 2 to page 3?

Answer: We found that Why Files users move linearly through the site. If an individual on, say, page 2 of a Why Files story chooses another page on the site, it is overwhelmingly likely that the next stop will be page 3. Put another way, our users are treating the site much as they would a magazine.

Is this good or bad? And is such behavior temporary? The WWW is still a novel world for many people, and greater familiarity with it may bring about more adventurous coping mechanisms. On the other hand, we humans seem to rely on narratives to give meaning to information. That reliance may make a linear narrative just as important on the WWW as in any other information channel. Repeated studies of site use over time will tell the tale.

Question: Is the WWW a better science teacher than more traditional informal channels such as newspapers, magazines, or television?

Answer: So far, our experiments have shown that individuals can learn equally well from the WWW and from print. Put another way, someone reading a science story on screen at The Why Files site by and large learns as much as a person reading the same story on paper. Whether the opportunities provided by the WWW to increase user interaction with information or to display information in a variety of visual ways will enhance learning in the long run are questions we are asking in a current series of experiments.

To read more about these research projects, please go to the web site of the National Institute for Science Education—http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/—and click on "Communicating with Mass Audiences."

timely, and engaging. And more often than not, the reading and viewing public is inundated with information that can be contradictory, misleading, inaccurate, and outright false.

An example of a technology and issue that continues to befuddle the public is cloning. Shortly after Dolly the cloned lamb was introduced to the world in early 1997, The Why Files produced a multifaceted feature on cloning explaining how the feat was accomplished, its genetic basis, and even including instructions on how to clone your own lamb. But to me, the most important substory within the Dolly package was an explanation of why it is not possible to make a clone that walks, talks, thinks, and behaves in *exactly* the same way as its genetic parent. Unfortunately, the image of a clone as the exact physical and cognitive replica of its genetic parent is one of the most indelible public fallacies of cloning—except perhaps for the nearly 100,000 people who traverse The Why Files site each month.

The story of the science behind Dolly was fun, too, because the very topic lent itself to the kind of graphic representation that tends to give people strange ideas about science. What better way to lure a busy reader into the science of cloning than to wrap it in the familiar cloak of the supermarket tabloid? The feature is one of the most popular in the long menu of Why File features. The tactic of using a tabloid format to create an irresistible lure to expose readers to some very important science was impossible to resist. And cloning itself has proved to be as durable a topic as we've explored. The technology, especially as it could be applied to humans, is littered with ethical conundrums, and new discoveries and advances are keeping cloning in the public eye. To revisit the topic, as we have, is an opportunity to rummage through cloning's social baggage and give interested readers a context that might otherwise gain only surface treatment in traditional media. Why Files coverage avoids rehashing the old and instead relies on the power of the web to simply link to original coverage for "nuts and bolts" details.

Evidence for evolution: Taking some heat

Polarities engendered by scientific research, or even by the different ways we look at or interpret the world around us, tend to be ideal topics for The Why Files because they represent a chance to present good information to people who are genuinely interested. Such a topic was served up last summer when the Kansas State Board of Education, as Why Files writer David Tenenbaum put it, "fired another salvo in the long battle between religion and science by removing evolution from the high school curriculum."

Jumping into the creationism-evolution debate was important, we felt, because the issue, when subjected to straight reporting, tended to reflect a pathological evenhandedness that editors and news directors sometimes mistake for balance. In other words, the gory details of the renewed conflict between a religious perspective and the dogma of science were, for the most part, being left out of the media picture. The news hook of the controversy in Kansas provided The Why Files with the opportunity to lay out the debate, give it important context, and detail the accumulating evidence that favors the idea of evolution. Moreover, the multipage package included a profile of what appears to be one workable solution to including the subject in the K–12 curriculum without offending people who happen to take a more literal view of the Bible.

To be sure, The Why Files approach to evolution versus creationism was done from a point of view favoring evolutionary science. We are, after all, a web site devoted to fostering a better public understanding of science. But point of view notwithstanding, The Why Files provided a level of detail and context that most traditional media simply couldn't or wouldn't. Here, in one neat package, was a chance to lay out the arguments that can be made from the fossil and geologic records as well as a mountain of new evidence emanating from modern molecular biology. Presented with the context of the history of the debate over evolutionary science, The Why Files feature attempted to answer the very questions posed by creationists.

Of course, those answers were not satisfactory to all readers. The feature prompted the largest volume of e-mail on any topic we've covered to date, and with the exception of one threat and a smattering of notes simply dismissing evolution out of hand, the critical response from readers was generally informed, thoughtful, and polite.

Most topics covered by The Why Files tend to be less noisy than the argument between strict creationists and the scientific establishment. But even without controversy, and most often without the other popular media lures of sex and violence, The Why Files continues to draw a consistent and dedicated readership, mostly from the United States, but increasingly from countries in Europe, Asia, and Latin America as well.

Based at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in the Office of News and Public Affairs, The Why Files is now supported by the UW–Madison Graduate School because a mature, proven program is no longer the kind of experiment the National Science Foundation typically supports. That UW–Madison provides such support to a web venue that is not parochial—that is, not focused exclusively on Wisconsin science—is extraordinary. With the exception of MIT's *Technology Review*, I know of no other university-based science communication program that is not limited to covering its own programs of scientific research.

But The Why Files model is one that other research institutions might do well to consider. The influence of science and technology on our lives is pervasive. The kind of information provided by The Why Files—broadly sourced, as accurate as our fact-checkers can make it, engaging and accessible—is, therefore, no longer an informational frill. People require good information from many sources and many perspectives to reach informed conclusions. The Why Files is one source that we hope offers a better grip on some of the key forces reshaping our world. ❧

The "Outsiders" Are In

Wisconsin's self-taught artists are finally getting some respect.

By Ann Parker

From the 1940s to the 1960s, Fred Smith created a North Woods wonderland of concrete and glass in a wooded area near Phillips, between his farm and the Pebble Tavern. The sculptures in his Concrete Park—more than two hundred of them—included fish and birds of the Wisconsin north country as well as humorous figures of camera-toting tourists, beer distributors, loggers, fishermen, and hunters.

For a long time, the work of self-taught artists like Smith was not recognized by the art establishment as serious art. Recently, however, a movement to recognize the accomplishments of such artists has been gaining steam. So-called "outsider art" has begun to come in: into museums, into art books, and into galleries. Discovering it, seeing it, and learning about it is an adventure waiting for those open to the creative spirit.

Photo : Ann Parker

Fred Smith, Concrete Park. *Smith, a farmer and logger, began making cement sculptures in 1950, when he was sixty-five. After Smith's death, the Kohler Foundation bought the site, restored it (with assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Wisconsin Arts Board) , and, in 1978, gave it to Price County for a public park.*

Photo : Ann Parker

Paul Hefti, yard environment. *Like many yard art sites around the world, Paul Hefti's ongoing environment in La Crosse started as a small display built for the enjoyment of Hefti and his immediate neighbors. Made of materials readily at hand and donations from passersby, the site has grown to fill the whole available yard. It has also brought Hefti thousands of visitors and has become his main occupation in retirement.*

While many of the early exhibits and publications on self-taught art in the United States focused on works done in the East, the Southeast, and the South, the extraordinary artists of the Midwest, and especially of Wisconsin, are beginning to receive the recognition they deserve. The Wisconsin Academy and Edgewood College in Madison regularly mount shows featuring nonacademically trained artists, and the Madison Art Center occasionally includes their work in group shows. The Cedarburg Art Center, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, the Milwaukee Art Museum, and the Haggerty Museum at Marquette University are all dedicated to exhibiting this type of work.

"Outsider art" is only one of several labels that have been attached to creations like Fred Smith's Concrete Park. In 1945, the artist Jean Dubuffet coined the term "Art Brut," or "raw art," for a strictly defined subset of nonacademic art. More recently, critics have argued about the definitions and boundaries of the categories visionary, intuitive, folk, vernacular, self-taught, and outsider art. One of the best working definitions I have seen was given by Russell Bowman, of the Milwaukee Art Museum, at a panel discussion on outsider art held in Chicago in August 1999:

> There's a key difference between trained art and self-taught art. I think the difference is that trained artists . . . are looking at a whole history of art, somewhat critically, and they're staking out their position. . . . They certainly are influenced by popular culture and their own psychological insights and all of those things. But I think they still make art in dialogue with other parts of the culture. Self-taught artists do that too, but in a different way. They're not necessarily . . . making their art to respond to some other art or to move beyond it or change it or have it evolve. They're making art because they have some idea or some mission almost . . . some need to communicate. . . . They're making their art in a less self-critical way. This is not to suggest that they don't think of themselves as artists; I think many of them do. But I think that the way they think of art is a little different. There's a statement to get out, a message to get out, rather than being a part of this dialogue.

Bob Donnelley of the Art Institute of Chicago added an insight from Plato:

> [Plato] said that what really makes art is inspiration. You can have the greatest techniques in the world and it's not art. It's art

> because of this other thing that we cannot explain. Plato talks about how art is inspired by the gods ... And to me this is what outsider art represents. It's a direct inspiration. (Quoted in Watterson and Cory, *Is Anybody Outside Anymore?*)

The hallmarks of outsider art, it seems, are communication and inspiration; and Wisconsin is rich in inspired people with creative visions to communicate. These artists' creations fall into several different categories within the broader one of outsider art, including traditional folk art, visionary, idiosyncratic, and environmental art, all of which have been the focus of important exhibitions starting in the 1970s.

The diversity of ethnically based folk art in Wisconsin derives from a combination of the culture of the native peoples and that of the immigrant groups who brought with them the treasured pastime rituals and family heirlooms that constituted their culture's traditional arts. Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) reed baskets and beadwork, African American quilts and walking canes, Swiss lace, Latvian patterned mittens, Ukrainian pysanky eggs, Slovenian wood carvings, sturgeon decoys, intricate Polish papercuts (Wycinanki), Finnish "bucksaws in a bottle" and rag rugs, Italian bobbin lace, Scandinavian kubbestol (log chairs), Norwegian fiddles, German concertinas—these are only a few examples of the aesthetic bounty evident on Wisconsin's cultural terrain. Anyone wishing to see the beautiful cultural products of traditional ethnic heritage in Wisconsin has many resources to plumb. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison, the Cedarburg Cultural Center, the Milwaukee Public Museum, and the Kohler Arts Center hold impressive collections and often stage exhibitions on specific topics. "Grass Roots Art: Wisconsin," a 1978 exhibit that was shown in Oshkosh, Milwaukee, and Madison, featured fishing lures, whirligigs, woodcarvings, and other folk arts. Folk arts were also celebrated during the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial Folklife Festival held in Madison in 1998. Folklore Village Farm near Dodgeville sponsors classes and exhibits throughout the year.

Where folk art reflects *community* traditions, *individual inspiration* has driven the many creative "environment" builders in Wisconsin. The lineage started with grotto-builder Father Paul Dobberstein, who constructed several grottoes in Iowa and Wisconsin, including the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto (St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee, 1894), the Grotto of the Holy Family (St. Joseph, 1925–30 with Frank Donsky), and the Grotto of the Blessed Virgin (St. Rose Convent, La Crosse, 1940s, demolished 1994). The grotto that most inspired subsequent environmental works was built by Father Mathias Wernerus and dedicated in 1930. Commonly known as the Dickeyville Grotto (Holy Ghost Park), this site received thousands of visitors each weekend in its early years. Postcards of it circulated around the country, attracting more visitors and inspiring a few adventurous souls, like Mollie Jenson in River Falls, to build yard constructions of their own.

Purely religious environments gave way to those combining religious and secular themes in Paul and Matilda Wegner's yard site (World Peace Monument, 1930s). The Wegners dealt with religious, social, political, and patriotic themes in the concrete/glass/found-object sculptures they started after a trip to Dickeyville in 1929. This use of materials was continued by Nick Engelbert, Fred Smith, Herman Rusch, and others, although motivations for each environment varied.

In Hollandale, Nick Engelbert (Grandview, 1930s–1950s) decorated the yard of his farmhouse with sculptures, animals, and people in patriotic, mythological, and historical clusters.

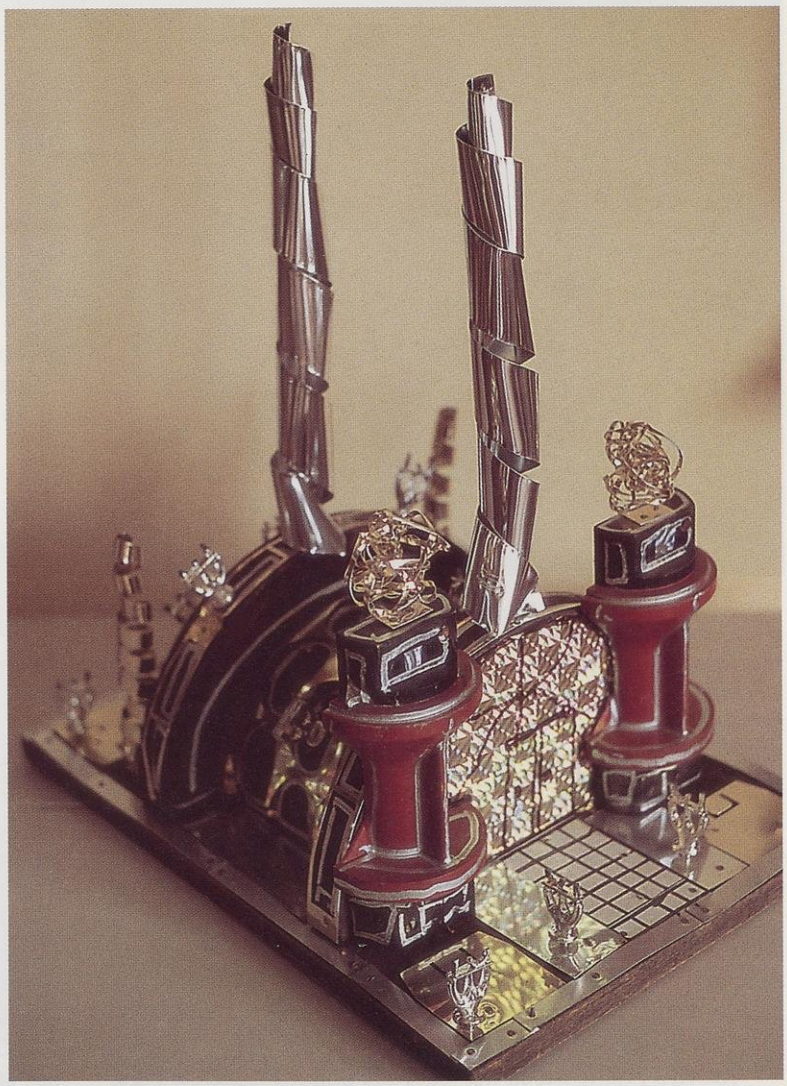


Photo : Ann Parker

This piece, The House of the Lord, *was made in 1995 of trophy metals, wood, mirrors , and felt markers. Rudy Rotter grew up in a close family that valued hard work, spiritual development, and education. Rotter was a dentist until his retirement, but created sculpture whenever he could find the time. Recurring themes of love and family permeate his work.*

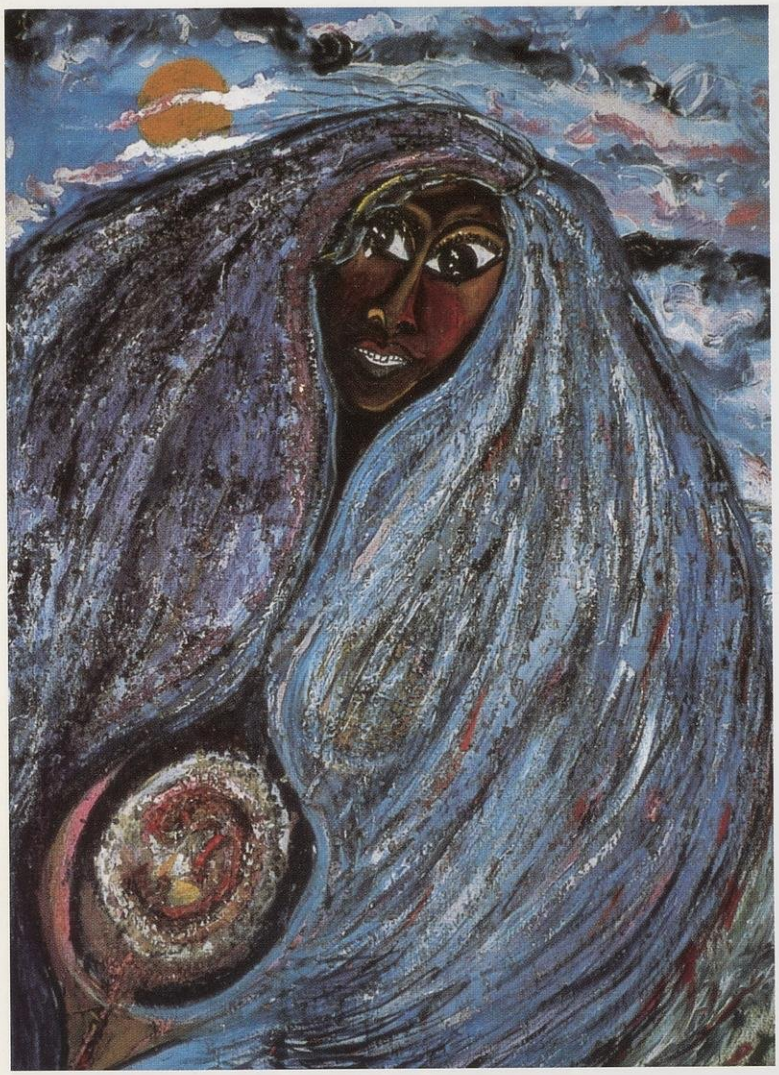


Photo : Ann Parker

Mona Webb, Untitled. *Acrylic, 54 x 44 inches, undated. Mona Webb was born into a sophisticated, highly educated family. College-educated (but not in art), she moved to Madison with her husband, who was a respected professor at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She started painting and sculpting when one of her daughters was studying art in Mexico. Webb's house/studio/gallery was a hub of spiritual and artistic thought on Madison's east side until her recent death.*

Engelbert took this style of creating to a new level by using a combination of surfaces, some embedded with decorative objects and some smoothly finished and painted.

In the 1950s, Herman Rusch, a retired farmer, rented a local dance hall near Cochrane to display his collection of antiques and objects from nature. To enhance the grounds of his Prairie Moon Museum, he too began to construct concrete, glass, and natural-object assemblages.

Rusch's Prairie Moon Museum and Smith's Concrete Park came to national attention in the groundbreaking exhibition "Naives and Visionaries" (Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1974). This show, which featured environments constructed by nine artists from across the United States, announced to the established art world that works by nonacademically trained artists were of significant enough value to be shown in a museum of international stature.

It recognized inspiration and scale as common threads that united the artists and encouraged viewers to look at their communities with newly appreciative eyes. A landmark in the evolution of interest in self-taught, visionary, and outsider arts, this exhibition was an important incentive for subsequent documentation and preservation of such sites.

Environment building by artists such as Riana de Raad, Tony Flatoff, Paul Hefti, Mary Nohl, John Ree, Lester Schwartz, and Dr. Evermor continues to constitute some of the most exciting work being done in Wisconsin today. Evermor, featured in the upcoming *Guinness Book of World Records* as the creator of the largest scrap metal sculpture (near Sauk City), is at work on a giant "Mirror Eye," a "time binding" earthwork intended to be seen from space.

Several of Wisconsin's environments were built inside. Eugene Von Bruenchenhein and Mona Webb filled their houses and yards with hundreds of pieces of individual art, then adorned walls, ceilings, and furniture until the buildings became part of the art. Von Bruenchenhein's work caused a sensation when it was discovered after his death in 1983.

"I was unprepared for what I saw," said Ruth Kohler, director of the Kohler Arts Center, describing that moment of discovery. "Large concrete masks stood guard in the moonlit snow around the pink, turquoise, and yellow painted house. Inside, Von Bruenchenhein's prodigious body of works spilled out of every room from basement to attic. The intensity of his vision was awesome. Then and there, the preservation, documentation, and exposure of this extraordinary artist's work became an imperative mission for the John Michael Kohler Arts Center." (Quoted in *Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: Obsessive Visionary.*)

Rudy Rotter has also created an impressive interior environment; since 1987 he has been filling a multi-level warehouse with collages, assemblages, drawings, stone and wood sculptures, and an astounding variety of the creative outpourings that he began producing in the 1950s (well over 10,000 pieces). As Rotter's mind accepts and processes new ideas and materials with amazing speed, room after room of the museum fills up with his humanistic statements on love, family, and faith.

Growing attention to religious and visionary art and artists has attracted attention to several Wisconsin self-taught artists. In 1991, the Kohler Art Museum installed the groundbreaking exhibition "Religious Visionaries," which featured the work of Wisconsin's Simon Sparrow and Norbert Kox, along with Californian Mary Le Ravin. The exhibition brought overdue

national recognition that helped these artists focus full time on their careers.

Sparrow, a street evangelist who is now in failing health, had one-person shows as well as gallery representation in Milwaukee, Madison, and Chicago. Norbert Kox's apocalyptic visions have regularly been displayed at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore. He has had many one-person shows since 1991 all over the United States (including the Wisconsin Academy Gallery in 1998) and has appeared in numerous national and international books and magazines.

Two other important visionary artists are Prophet Blackmon and Mona Webb. Blackmon, who runs a street ministry in the inner city of Milwaukee, was the focus of a major exhibition in 1999 at the Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University. The exhibition (accompanied by an outstanding catalog) will travel to The City Museum (St. Louis) and Valparaiso University (Indiana) in 2000. Mona Webb experienced growing recognition before her death in 1998 with an exhibition at Edgewood College (1993) and a video by Niels Nielsen shown on PBS in 1995.

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Beyond folk arts, environments, and visionary/spiritual arts, there are dozens of inspired idiosyncratic artists creating all manner of works from all manner of readily available Wisconsin materials. Since the 1980s, Ellis Nelson has used recycled metal objects from nearby factories to create dinosaurs, grim reapers, bats, and, as, he puts it, "Prehistoric Life Forms." (See back cover of this issue for Nelson's work

Photo : Ann Parker

Wally Keller with Peg-Leg the Pirate *in Mt. Horeb. Like Dr. Evermor and Ellis Nelson, Wally Keller uses cast-off machine parts, often from farm implements, to create a growing menagerie of large-scale metal creatures that greet visitors along the long driveway to his home. Wally's first major sculpture (20 feet tall),* Peg-Leg the Pirate, *"walks the plank" (bridge) over a runoff ditch in Keller's driveway. Although Keller enjoys making small colorful metallic "critters" for art fairs and local galleries, his elegant and inspired style is most evident in his large-scale pieces. Three very large new dinosaurs in the yard have beautiful animated curving lines and strong detail. Keller has also made mechanized "monsters" that he can ride on in local parades with his grandchildren.*

Photo : Ann Parker

John Tio has had a lifelong fascination with projects using large numbers of items. Using aluminum pull tabs (which he could acquire economically), he invented a system of tab display that eventually covered his weekend retreat and adjacent outbuildings. This display in Rome, Wisconsin, was recently dismantled and now is in storage, although Tio does not rule out reassembly at a later date.

Dinosaurs.) Nelson's facility as a welder, as well as his tendency to think outside of the grid of small-town life, has brought him adoring fans from college sculpture departments and visitors from all over the world. Nelson has invented and tooled machines to help him fabricate his fantasies and has occasionally branched into abstract forms that rely on complex balances and wind movement. Nelson's work has been chronicled in news sources throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest, and he has appeared on *Good Morning America*. Two grim reapers graced the American Visionary Art Museum's "The End is Near" exhibition in 1998.

Photo: Ann Parker

Hope Atkinson's papier-mâché and wire sculpture is entitled e, *ca. 1990s. Near Lake Superior in northwest Wisconsin, Hope Atkinson creates "toys" of papier-mâché, wire, cardboard, and paint. Atkinson's art tells stories, pokes fun, gives hope, and lambasts corruption, bigotry, prejudice, and all-around evil behavior. Her work is beginning to be seen nationwide. She has exhibited at the "Outsider Art Fair" in New York for several years.*

There are many more inspired, idiosyncratic, nonacademically trained artists all over the state of Wisconsin today. Exhibitions of their work are becoming more common. Many artists welcome visitors to their homes. A flood of recent books on "outsider artists" has begun to recognize the most visible of the artists mentioned in this article.

As might be expected, this recognition has produced a variety of effects on these makers. Some of the artists feel pressure to reproduce popular pieces to the exclusion of new designs, while others find that they are unable to get work done because so many people come to visit. These two issues also plague trained artists.

Most of the artists, though, are pleased with the added income and with visits by interested and enthusiastic supporters. Many of them have been able to leave their "day jobs" and work more on creative endeavors. ❧

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"The best job in the world"

Life could be very bleak back in rural 1930s Wisconsin, where impoverished mothers often had no access to the health-care system. Dedicated public health nurses provided that crucial connection.

By Rima D. Apple

"The baby in a box of rags; a rusty barrel for a stove; no windows; rain leaking through the roof; two rooms and eight children; and the chickens picking at the bread which is rising on the table": scenes that were etched in Nathalie Voge's mind as she evaluated her life as the County Demonstration Nurse of rural Marinette County, Wisconsin, in the 1930s. Recalling these scenes in 1942, she also remembered the roller-coaster ride of her emotions—from despair to elation—during her tenure in northeastern Wisconsin: "There were many a day when I would return home wondering, 'Will I ever be able to teach that family anything?' And then there were days when I thought a public health nurse had the best job in the world."

Ultimately she was sad to leave the work because "Each day as a county nurse brings joy, sorrow, and always something new and unexpected, but all in all the joy greatly outweighs the sorrows." Voge was not alone in her assessment of the joys and sorrows of the rural nursing.

With commitment and creativity, public health nurses, sent from the state's Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, conscientiously brought the message of good health and well-baby care to residents of rural Wisconsin who were in need of adequate medical care. Often these Wisconsin residents lacked the money to pay health-care providers, or the time or means to travel to medical offices. Some were unaware of the potential benefits of modern medicine; others preferred to trust their health and the health of their children to more traditional methods. The "County Demonstration Nurses," as they were called, sought to serve all of these people in a state-funded program designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of public health nursing.

Courtesy of NewYork Weill Cornell Medical Center Archives.

Cod-liver oil and a good scrubbing—that's what baby needs. "Standing Orders" for public health nurses reflected middle-class standards of the day. They included the importance of cod-liver oil and orange for young infants, the need to begin bowel training at three months, and the importance of bathing and cleanliness.

The nurses located and counseled Wisconsin families in a variety of places. Sometimes they met their clients at temporary health centers, which were run by the physicians of the bureau with the assistance of local social and charitable organizations.

But these centers were held only infrequently in any given locality. Most often County Demonstration Nurses would attend their clients in their homes, where they could observe domestic conditions that could limit successful application of medical advice. When they returned to their offices, they would write up their visits in monthly reports submitted to the bureau office in Madison. These reports provide a revealing lens for viewing rural life and health care concerns in this period.

When she first arrived in the community, the nurse would need to identify potential clients: pregnant women, new mothers, and preschool children. One source of clients was the intermittent health centers. The nurse would make follow-up visits to mothers who had attended one of the state-run health centers if one had been held recently. If another nurse had preceded her in the county, she could start with the records of previous patients. Elizabeth Murrisy in Marathon County was gratified that her predecessor "had built up the prenatal case load. Wherever I went, it seemed noticeable that maternal work is so much easier to do." Local physicians could and did make referrals as well. A nurse new to a community would attempt to visit all the local physicians individually, discussing the program and consulting with them.

Because of the medical profession's insistence on the separation of "public health" and "private medicine," a national as well as local controversy, the nurses as employees of the state's public health system were particularly careful to reinforce and not challenge the physician's message with referred patients. For instance, physicians were given the choice of either endorsing the nurse's Standing Orders, or modifying them as necessary for their practices. (Typically, "Standing Orders" reflected intensive middle-class standards of the day, emphasizing, for example, the significance of cod-liver oil and orange for young infants, the need to begin bowel training at three months, and the importance of bathing and cleanliness.) Despite the efforts of nurses to placate doctors, some physicians continued to worry that the program was drawing patients away from them. One concerned Tomah physician demanded that the nurse come to his office to describe the routines used to refer patients to private physicians. He was pleased to learn that "the decision was left to the patient." In interactions such as these, the nurses sought to reassure medical practitioners that they were there to support, not detract from, the practice of the private physician.

Nurses combed through newly registered birth and death certificates to locate infants and mothers. In some cases, nurses learned of women in need from acquaintances.

But health centers, predecessor reports, and medical referrals were of only limited use in identifying clients. Nurses also combed through newly registered birth and death certificates to locate infants and mothers. In some cases, nurses learned of women in need from acquaintances. That is how Grace M. Connors met one of her clients. "Mrs. L. reported by neighbor—twin boys, 1 mo. old, makes 4 children and the oldest will not be 3 until Christmas Day. . . . Much

State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Whi (X3) 52543, PH 2253

A cozy chat with mothers and babies back in '37. Public health nurses, or "County Demonstration Nurses," as they were called, brought the message of good health and well-baby care to rural Wisconsin residents who were in need of adequate medical care. The nurses identified and counseled Wisconsin families in a variety of places. Sometimes they met their clients at temporary health centers. More often, they met in clients' homes.

instruction needed here, but I'll have to go easy, give a little at a time." Hazel Nordley, who worked in northern Wisconsin in 1940, also found neighbors crucial in developing her case load. Moreover, Nordley recognized that the early days following birth are critical "teaching moments," or, as she explained, "The mothers have so many questions to ask about the new babies and it always seems as if there is so much information to be given at this time." Therefore, she devised a unique system for reaching new mothers promptly: she distributed to each pregnant woman she saw a mimeographed postcard, asking her to complete and mail the card immediately after birthing. Mothers appreciated her consideration and within months of beginning the program, Nordley reported that many of the cards were being returned quickly. Nurses were also often called upon to lecture at local Homemakers Council, Girl Scout troop, or high school classes. They used these opportunities to identify other potential patients in the community.

Public health in a public setting. Here, a nurse goes over charts on infant mortality, demonstrating that proper infant care really could be a matter of life and death. Often mothers had many children at a very young age. To be twenty-one years old and pregnant with a fourth child was no exception.

In addition to these specific actions designed to locate pregnant women, new mothers, and young children, there was also serendipity. In October 1936 in Pulaski, Mildred Cook found Mrs. J. B. while looking for another address. The woman was due in March, yet she had not seen her doctor; Cook urged her to do so. The next day the nurse was gratified to learn that the woman had followed her advice and had visited the physician. Moreover, "Doctor was very pleased with this work." Thus, through her counsel, Cook had accomplished two important goals of the State Health Department. She had convinced a client of the importance of prenatal medical examinations and she had cemented a particularly positive relationship with the local physician.

Nearly all the nurses related anecdotes about finding patients while simply driving about the countryside, and their stories provide critical descriptions of the Depression rural life. Connors wrote with particular delight in October 1936:

> Mrs H: Saw baby washing on the line. Peeked at mail box for name, and went in, and lo and behold she was expecting me, as she had heard that I called on all new babies. Was I glad ever that I had taken the name from the mail box, so that I could call her by name. She had two preschoolers also, and had a number of questions saved up to ask. I find quite a few families by watching for washings on lines on my way to and from some place.

Mrs. H. was typical of patients described in the nurses' reports. For one thing, she had several young children. Nurse after nurse described such mothers: nineteen years old and third pregnancy; sixteen and pregnant; twenty-one years old, fourth pregnancy; seven months pregnant, with three children already, the oldest one four years old.

Mrs. H. was also typical in that she wanted, and according to the nurses she needed, instruction on child-care. The nurses were always pleased to note when mothers asked for their advice. Connors recounted a few weeks later that Mrs. H. "took instructions graciously and I believe will follow them." In the case of Mrs. J., a mother with an infant and three preschoolers, Connors reported: "Very poor family. Mother very responsive. Food charts that I gave her before, she keeps on the kitchen wall

where she can refer to them frequently, and follows them as closely as possible."

But for each patient who "took instructions graciously," there were others who were not compliant. Nurses encountered patients who either would not or could not cope with the advice given them. Wisconsin farmers were hard-hit during the Depression and families utilized the labor of all able-bodied, and perhaps less than able-bodied members. Most commonly mothers' inability to act on the nurse's instructions resulted from economic and social conditions beyond their control. In September 1937, Sadie Engesether movingly described one family she frequently visited: "Called at the J. S. house; guess conditions will never improve. Mrs. S. was out in the hay field and baby being cared for by 12-year-old girl. House filthy. Did not give her advice re. the poor puny baby as she looked too worn-out to care what happened."

Poor, rural Wisconsin was no easy environment in which to raise children, as this home in Black River Falls demonstrates. Nurses would find women who were to deliver shortly but lacked the most rudimentary elements of supplies for home birth. Some families stretched two quarts of milk per day for a family of four, five, or more, and there were ramshackle houses without such basic utilities as running water and indoor plumbing. This photo dates to the turn of the century, but such conditions prevailed in many rural '30s homes as well.

Nurses often reported that mothers needed to leave their children in order to find food or to work for wages. During a visit to a Black River Falls family in western Wisconsin, the nurse found a five-month-old baby in the care of a blind grandmother and the mother out picking blueberries. The baby slept in a large bed with a bottle propped beside her. There were flies everywhere. "Explained to grandmother that flies were disease carriers, and every effort should be made to keep the flies away from the baby," the nurse wrote later. "Grandmother said this was very difficult as there are no screen doors and the screens on the windows are very poor." In this case, the mother had won $5 in a community drawing and planned to purchase a baby carriage with some of the winnings. The nurse advised them to buy the carriage and also netting to cover the baby to protect her from flies.

Not all residents of rural Wisconsin were as hard-pressed economically. Nurses sometimes encountered better-off and better-educated women. In Taylor, a town in western Wisconsin, in 1938, the nurse was pleased to report about her visit with Mrs. H. O. Mr. O. was principal of the school in Taylor and the family had a two-and-a-half-month-old daughter. Significantly, Mrs. O. had been reading and carefully following the instruction in *Infant Care*, the popular baby-care manual distributed by the U.S. Children's Bureau. Her baby was breast-fed on a regular schedule and given cod-liver oil and orange juice daily. Both regularity of feeding and the administration of cod-liver oil and orange juice were keynotes of the advice of state nurses, reflective of the advice found in much of the popular and medical literature of the day. Not surprisingly, the nurse had a very high opinion of this case: "Baby is apparently on an ideal schedule and appears to be in excellent condition."

But more often, the reports were filled with sad stories of lack of resources, lack of knowledge, lack of emotion and energy. In the homes of Polish and Irish immigrants and native-born residents, nurses would find women who were to deliver shortly but lacked the most rudimentary elements of layette and supplies for home birth. There were families who stretched two quarts of milk per day for a family of four, five, or more, and there were ramshackle houses without such basic utilities as running water and indoor plumbing.

Connors cogently explained why many women were not getting prenatal care: "Cannot pay M.D. any more than $15.00 and that is on time. Relief pays only $15.00 for delivery. M.D. can'st [sic] have anywhere from 8 to 16 prenatal visits, delivery, driving anywhere from 5 to 40 miles, post-natal visits, and post-natal examinations for $15.00 a case and not lost [sic] money. These mothers can't have proper food, cod liver oil, and calcium."

Lack of economic resources in many cases made it difficult for these rural women and their children to heed the well-meaning advice of the public health nurses who visited them.

Frequently, nurses described the trials and tribulations of simply reaching potential patients. Nurse Louise Steffens recognized that her ignorance of rural conditions made her task more arduous. Concerned that many families lived on country roads which made them difficult to reach, she astutely remarked, "The conditions of the roads is nothing new to the residents of the country, but is very new to me." Catherine McLetchie colorfully recounted making a call on a family living deep in the woods:

> It was necessary to leave the car at a neighbor's, and walk through several fields, in one of which a bull was tethered. He seemed only mildly interested in the nurse, who luckily was wearing blue, not red! After walking through woods, up and down hills, and crawling under two fences, in twenty minutes or so the house was reached. Then the whole process was repeated on the return journey. It was a very hot, tired, and perspiring nurse that finally reached the car and relaxed somewhat behind the wheel.

Though written from the perspective of nurses who understood that travelling conditions impeded their ability to deliver optimal health care, such reports are indicative of the problems faced by rural families as well. If dedicated public health nurses had difficulties getting to these women and their children, how likely was it that a private physician would make frequent calls? That food and other supplies could be delivered regularly and easily? That families could maintain easy contact with the larger world?

But despite these geographic and economic obstacles, or perhaps because of them, many women were as eager as Mrs. H. to hear about the latest medical advice and be reassured by medical professionals that their children were healthy and normal.

Particularly popular with nurses and mothers were bath demonstrations. Ruth Exner, working in Grant County in 1940, made special efforts to speak to mothers in the early postpartum period because she realized that "young mothers are anxious to learn simpler ways of taking care of their new babies. One thing in particular is the baby's bath tray, which has appealed to so many." Hazel Nordley found that among young mothers "this service is appreciated a great deal" and even "mothers who have children have asked for the bath demonstration." The "appropriate" infant bath was modeled on middle-class standards and required extensive material resources, including sterile cotton, separate washcloth and basin, and special "mild baby soap." Moreover, it was a complex and time-consuming procedure, beginning with the mother scrubbing her hands and arms up to the elbows, then washing the infant's eyes and ears with dampened sterile cotton, then weighing the baby, then washing the infant's face with a washcloth, then soaping the baby on a changing table, then placing the baby in a basin and rinsing her, then drying the baby, and then oiling her, before dressing her in a light shirt and diaper.

It is doubtful that many of the poor, exhausted mothers could continue similar routines daily. Yet whether they could follow through on the nurse's instructions or merely wanted to have another pair of hands helping in the family, mothers' interest in infant bathing indicates the value they placed on the assistance of health-care experts.

Consequently, many nurses apparently used the demonstration of a bath as an opening wedge to initiate discussion of other aspects of child care. Thelma Burke understood that a mother could use this practical instruction to learn more. "I've given one infant demonstration bath where the mother 'fired' questions at me," she reported from north central Wisconsin in 1939. "If I can get over the road, I'll return next week to see how much they have been able to follow." Despite the eagerness of this young mother to hear about modern concepts, Burke despaired of her practicing them because "Since Grandma, who came from Poland, lives there, too, it might be very difficult for the mother to do what she really wants."

The County Demonstration Nurse Project was not a permanent function of the State Health Department, spanning primarily from the 1930s to the early years of World War II. Yet despite of, or perhaps because of, the transient nature of their work in the community and their inherently middle-class, professional outlook, the nurses sent reports back to the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health that detail a unique and revealing picture of rural health. The County Demonstration Nurses knew that they came into their counties as strangers. They knew they needed to quickly and efficiently identify women and children who required their services and expertise and to bring them into the health-care system. The nurses were typically idealistic, sometimes naive, often rigid in their faith in modern medicine, but always determined. They were convinced that they could be, and should be, of service. Their efforts to bring modern health care to the struggling mothers and children of the rural counties of Wisconsin provide a critical perspective on rural life in Wisconsin before World War II. ❧

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The reports from County Demonstration Nurses can be found in records of the Wisconsin Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, Series 2253. Most useful are Boxes 11–13, located in the Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. A full history of the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health remains to be written. For a similar study of a somewhat earlier period, see Lynne Curry, *Modern Mothers in the Heartland: Gender, Health, and Progress in Illinois, 1900–1930* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999). For information about government efforts in the area of health care during the Depression, see Michael R. Grey, *New Deal Medicine: The Rural Health Programs of the Farm Security Administration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

What the Bulbs Are Doing Beneath the Dirt

By Juliet Vosnos Skuldt

Ruth died right there at lunch, falling straight into her bowl of soup. Not quite the death scene you picture after more than fifty years of marriage, but that's how it happened and that's exactly how Wilmot Reiter told it anytime he got a chance. Most often at church—friendly audience. He didn't mention, though, how he had called Martin, their only son, at his office seconds after she had slumped, and the boy had repeated three times, "Dad, call the paramedics."

Shortly after Ruth died, Satan began stealing stuff. Being a Midwesterner and a Lutheran on top of that, Wilmot was a down-to-earth man. Safely fastened to the middle of a continent, he was not prone to improbable thoughts, like the devil pilfering his possessions. But then he had also imagined a more mundane parting with his beloved wife—a lingering cancer or something of that nature. Not to be mid-sentence, and then gone, vegetable broth staining the cornflower tablecloth. She may as well have been taken up in a cloud of fire.

The first thing Satan stole was Wilmot's wallet, which disappeared days after the funeral, the first one at their church for the new pastor. Wilmot had turned the house inside out and the wallet was certainly not physically present in the place. He checked the empty flour canister where they hid excess cash and the pocket-watch Wilmot's grandfather had given him on their wedding day. Even unlikely places such as his workbench were searched, the orderly arrangement of his tools scattered in a frantic disarray. Sitting on the floor before the open closet in the bedroom surrounded by clothes, shoes, and several of Ruth's old handbags, it occurred to Wilmot that the wallet was not in the house and that he had not been out of the house since the funeral. His white hair, yellowed at the edges, hung in his face instead of slicked straight back against his head as usual. Clutching a brown alligator-skin bag to his chest, he realized something beyond his control was happening.

How many times had Wilmot come into the dark kitchen after supper to see her at the sink, cleaning up by the dim light above her? How many times had he been struck by that sight, so that he would encircle her with his arms and press his face against her neck?

He couldn't name the experience though, until the following Sunday when he decided to go to church, requiring the will and resolve that had seen him through years of business and a changing world just to get his body out the door. A few rows from the front he sat, his light brown shirt—pulled reluctantly from a pile of laundered and pressed clothes that had remained untouched until that morning—tucked neatly into a pair of chocolate-colored polyester pants, the buttoned front of the shirt and the waistband of the slacks stretched smooth across his slightly rounded belly. There in a pew he hadn't sat in alone as long as he could remember, he heard the words. An encroaching darkness, cold and dank like the crawl space beneath his house, crept over him, his palms began to sweat, and words that he had probably heard a hundred times in his life touched a spot of understanding that had never existed in him before. *The devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.* Suddenly a lifetime of words took shape, became real.

That the wallet turned up days later in the pocket of a pair of pants only verified that it was indeed the devil himself, rather than one of the little miscreants in Wilmot's neighborhood. He was tormenting Wilmot, and returning the wallet was merely a way of showing the old man could be played with. It was difficult for Wilmot to understand why the devil would choose him, but it certainly made sense that he'd wait until Ruth's death. The woman who wouldn't let children with muddy feet in her

house would by no means allow in Evil himself. Even the little delinquents wandering the neighborhood parentless, mouthing off to adults, riding bikes on grass, she had an amazing effect on; the same children often stopped and talked to her from the sidewalk as she pruned a bush or dug in her flower beds. He remembered once a little girl stopping for a long time to show Ruth the violin she had gotten—a battered old thing. When the child left Wilmot had made a comment about how she'd probably stolen it.

"Oh, Wilmot," Ruth had said, slightly disgusted with him, "she got it on loan from school—they do that for kids who can't afford an instrument. Besides you shouldn't talk like that, because the truth is that you or me or someone who'll loan 'em an instrument *are* the only things between them and stealing or that sort of thing. These kids have to fight terrible things—you should know, you watch enough of that rotten news." At the time he had been irritated that she criticized his watching the news, but her good wishes never bothered him. Ruth was the best woman Wilmot had ever known, and goodness emanated from her, filled the house. She had glowed with it, like a lit lampshade, a pink lampshade.

Voices, by Kelly Parks Snider

How many times had Wilmot come into the dark kitchen after supper to see her at the sink, cleaning up by the dim light above her? How many times had he been struck by that sight, so that he would encircle her with his arms and press his face against her neck? Corn niblets. Ruth smelled like canned corn niblets. She wouldn't like to be told that, but it was the truth and it was a wonderful smell to Wilmot. That scent alone could keep any intentional harm from their home. A week or so after she had gone and her scent had faded from her pillow, Wilmot had found a can in the cupboard, cranked the opener around the top, and inhaled deeply. At bedtime he placed the open can on his nightstand.

He didn't tell anyone at first that Satan had stolen his wallet. It made him walk through the house carefully, suddenly more aware of himself sitting at the table, at the sink brushing his teeth, or watching TV. And not just the things missing, but the things he'd find—a half-full mug of coffee left on the washing machine, reading glasses tucked into a magazine. Items she left leapt out at him unexpectedly, inflicting new wounds. Between this and things being taken, Wilmot felt stalked, afraid to turn corners. Though these ideas had steadily grown in his own mind, he assumed others would not understand. Selling insurance for more than forty years made him certain of the practicality possessed by the people he knew. Mostly farmers. Wheat grew because of the right combination of nitrogen and manure.

And for another thing, before he had gone to church and before the wallet turned up again, he thought maybe the parents of the kids next door had taken it. Drug dealers. He had always suspected it. Wilmot's son, Martin, had told him he was crazy to think drug dealers lived next door to old men in quiet old neighborhoods in rural Minnesota. What did Martin know though? Assorted types were always coming and going. Wilmot could see them from behind the sheer curtains in the front room. At all times of night. Wilmot saw this, too. He didn't sleep much. The curse of growing older—first time in your life you don't have to get up for work or children or church and you can't sleep, don't need to. Nothing in this life made much sense.

Wilmot considered mentioning to Martin that things were going missing when the berries disappeared from the freezer. Martin was a good son, and he had married a nice girl. Wilmot had always been glad of that, had known that they would take care of Ruth when he died—but he was still unsure of Martin comprehending the significance of missing berries. Wilmot didn't notice their absence until nearly a month after the funeral. For weeks, he would not go into the freezer except for ice—would not open those bundles of frozen food, couldn't bear to. He could not bear to see them tidily wrapped, labeled,

and dated in Ruth's hand. But then hunger has a painful edge of its own, and an old man can't be eating at Perkins every night of his life or expect the ladies from church to be bringing hot meals forever either. Nor was he up to the task of learning to cook just yet. A scrambled egg, sure, but dinner—not even close.

So after pulling the foil away and eating a turkey pot pie that he had heated too much, Wilmot thought, wouldn't it be nice to have some berries on top of ice cream? He emptied the entire contents of the freezer onto the kitchen table, sorted through the chicken breasts, loaves of banana bread, and Ziploc bags full of chopped pecans and walnuts. The berries were definitely gone. He ate his ice cream plain, a huge bowl and then another, even though it felt cold and tasteless in his mouth. He and Ruth had picked the berries just that summer. Not as many as most years, because the heat and pushing through the brambles got to them. That's what Ruth called the thorny berry bushes—brambles. Silly word. Silly girl.

A week later they had not returned as Wilmot had assumed they would, just as the wallet had—and the laundry detergent, and the remote control, and his favorite necktie (Ruth had chosen it to go with the suit he bought for Martin's wedding years ago), and the socket wrench. All of which had turned up eventually. He had seriously contemplated telling Martin, but the thought of ending up with nothing more than a couple new deadbolts and a humoring smile put Wilmot off the idea.

When the taped sermons of Charles Stanley vanished one day, Wilmot agonized over the options, staring down between his legs at the plaid upholstery of the couch beneath him, now utterly convinced that it was Satan stealing these things. That the tapes of the renowned theologian's sermons were taken only made him more certain. It was a terrible progression. All the other items were disposable or replaceable, but not these. They were expensive in the first place; he couldn't simply buy another set. And yet, he needed those tapes. They were edifying, uplifting even. If he had eighty dollars to spare, he'd have gone ahead and ordered another set.

Traversing his living room from corner to corner and back again, his very brain felt like it was swelling and hot, and he persevered in this agitated motion until he could decide some other action, until lack of cash decided his action for him—that he should speak to the pastor about this. The pastor, not Martin. Of course a minister would understand both the importance of the tapes and the operations of the Armies of Darkness. Stopped in the middle of the room, thoughts paced in his head out of order and out of his control; he could only watch them stride across his mind as he gazed at the wood grain of the paneling on the opposite wall. His hands rubbed one another, pulling at the loose and spotted skin. Wilmot could relay all the events to Reverend Eriksen in a couple of days at the Wednesday meeting for the old folks' group. The Sixty Years and Better club. Who named that group anyway? Definitely not anyone sixty or better. If nothing else, Reverend Eriksen could write the publishing company, explain the extenuating circumstances, and request a complimentary replacement. Certainly they would honor that. From a man in his position. Certainly they would.

With that decision, that definitive action, Wilmot almost felt peaceful. Remaining calm had been difficult the past couple months—things going missing and all. When the day arrived Wilmot watched from the front window for the church van. Ready by four in the afternoon, he had a while to wait for the six o'clock meeting. Perched on the edge of his easy chair by the window, he peered out at his yard thinking of exactly what he would say to the minister.

Wilmot could relay all the events to Reverend Eriksen in a couple of days at the Wednesday meeting for the old folks' group. The Sixty Years and Better club. Who named that group anyway? Definitely not anyone sixty or better.

Thoughts wound carefully in his head so that he stared at the children for some time before he really noticed they were there. The neighbors' kids, or at least some of them, were running and playing on his front lawn. He saw this like a scene very far away from him: children, grass, and the pale autumn sky like blue wrapping paper unrolled across the horizon. Their small bodies hunched over the bare flower beds startled him from his stare. They were digging in the dirt. He watched for a moment longer as they dug with spoons, pulled out bulbs, and gathered them in outstretched sweaters. Ruth's tulips, crocuses, and daffodils. He stood up, ignored painful knees, and hustled to the door.

"What the heck are you doing?" Wilmot hollered out at the children from behind the screen door.

"We're farmers. We're harvesting potatoes," the largest child answered, a little girl not more than seven. She was the one with the violin. The others continued digging without even noticing the old man. That's how children are raised now, not even polite to an old man when they're digging up his flowers.

"Those ain't potatoes."

"Carrots, then." The same girl answered, chewing on a damp chunk of her blond hair.

"Get the heck outta there," he exclaimed, more amazed than angry. He flung open the screen door and the children scattered, dropping the tubers all over the grass. When the church van arrived, Wilmot was stomping around picking up bulbs and tossing them gently into the flower beds, grumbling about the state of children today.

Wilmot sat next to Judith Sandstrom at the meeting, a woman whose face had retreated and frozen into a perpetual scowl. Her face had always been a challenge to Wilmot. He'd

count how many jokes it would take until a smile shoved all the wrinkles to the sides of her face like a drawn curtain.

"Why don't you sit on the couch, Judith?" was all he thought to say that evening.

"Oh no, those new couches aren't good for my back. Plus, once you're in they suck you right up. Take four of this group to pry me outta there." Delivered without a smile.

"Burglars often target older individuals living alone," the chief of police said solemnly to the twenty-five senior citizens gathered in a circle of card chairs. The topic of this month's speaker was home safety and burglary prevention. Any other day Wilmot would have been intensely interested. Instead he watched Pastor Eriksen's wife skirt around the room filling coffee and distributing plates of dessert. Every so often she would hand off an empty cup or plate to her husband, who stood in the doorway to the kitchen. Not as hugsy-kissy as other pastors' wives, but who needs that anyway? None of them needed to be kissed and patted like children. They had been through wars, all of them, lost parents, spouses, even children, had survived the Depression.

Katie, by Kelly Parks Snider

Still, she was in the business of attending to wounds, and for the first time surveying the room he was aware of those around him, left torn and ragged by the devouring of a lifetime or a moment. Even Sonia Eriksen, who was only Martin's age. Wilmot decided he would help her clean up after the meeting. He also decided that'd be the best time to speak to the reverend. Remembering his mission eased Wilmot.

"Outdoor lamps with motion detectors are excellent deterrents for break-ins, and they can be easily found at most hardware stores." The chief of police in his uniform held up an enormous lightbulb. Before he finished, he held up timers for indoor lighting, bars that wedge into sliding patio doors, and an unpickable deadbolt.

When the policeman was concluding, Wilmot turned to Judith Sandstrom and asked, "Are you finished?"

"Oh . . . yes, I am." She handed him a paper cup with a small puddle of creamy coffee in the bottom and a plate smeared with the remains of pumpkin pie and whipped topping. Both trembled in her hands as she passed them to him, and he caught the fork with his thumb before it fell to the carpet.

He inched past Pastor Eriksen in the kitchen doorway and began wiping plates already soaking in the sink. Wilmot didn't bother asking if he could help, nor did he mention to James Eriksen that he wanted to speak with him; he submerged his hands in the hot, soapy water and patiently waited for the minister to come into the room. Wanting to appear as casual as possible, Wilmot waited to broach the subject even after Eriksen had thanked him for the help and had begun to dry the dishes. The running faucet whispered peacefully, constant as the long-suffering.

"I have a matter I thought I might discuss with you, pastor," Wilmot finally broke in when he was nearly out of plates.

"Really? What might that be?" Eriksen responded. Interest was in his voice and it encouraged Wilmot to continue. The cotton towel squeaked on the clean surface of the saucer the minister held.

"It's a spiritual matter, actually, which is why I thought I ought to run it past a man like yourself, if you know what I mean."

"Certainly, Wilmot, go right ahead."

"Well, it's just that things have gone missing and doggoned if I don't know it's the devil himself that's taking them."

The eyebrows of the minister arched. Surprise, but not ridicule. Wilmot launched then into the whole episode about the Charles Stanley tapes, how they hadn't been returned like the other things and how he needed James Eriksen, man of the cloth, to intercede. Wilmot meant to keep the conversation to the tapes, only mentioning the other items briefly to establish the pattern, show the evidence. Yet without realizing what he was doing, Wilmot continued pouring out each incident, scrub-

bing more vigorously as he did, clanking the porcelain dangerously.

"Ruth had planned on making pies with those berries. She kept a few pies always on hand ... in the freezer, you know, to bring to a neighbor or church function or whatever. Now there are no pies. Not even berries," Wilmot finished. His emphatic eyes puddled with emotion incongruent with missing berries.

"Are you certain it's the devil?" James Eriksen asked after a time.

"What do you mean?"

"Well ... do you suppose maybe those things could've just been misplaced?" The minister carefully laid the words out, stacked another dry plate, then added, "It's something we all do from time to time."

"Are you saying you don't believe in Satan?"

"No, that isn't it at all. But perhaps you're forgetting."

"Pastor, I have turned the house upside down searching for those tapes. Now I know the neighbors as rotten as they are wouldn't want those tapes. You don't think evil forces work in this world?"

"Oh, but I do. And I think Satan is evil in this world. Certainly we are susceptible to that. And suffering, I believe, is a consequence of it. I don't know, Wilmot, we spend our lives being *reasonable*, gulping down tragedy with our coffee and taking the birth of our children for granted because they're all a part of life. No wonder we're sometimes stunned by life and what's horrible about it. Maybe we're not stunned enough. All I can say is, you have not had to bear small things, Wilmot."

I don't know, Wilmot, we spend our lives being reasonable, gulping down tragedy with our coffee and taking the birth of our children for granted because they're all a part of life. No wonder we're sometimes stunned by life and what's horrible about it. Maybe we're not stunned enough.

There was a long pause as Wilmot tried to sort out what to say or think. His head felt hot, and it was as if all response had been scorched away, blown from his head like papery, blackened embers.

"I'll write the letter for you, Wilmot." Man of faith taking Wilmot on faith.

He saw Ruth as she'd been that last day, slumped at the table as if she had broken away invisibly, leaving only the nonessential skin of herself. Then one thought still burning, producing light before turning black, "You haven't had one of Ruth's pies, have you, pastor? You will never taste a berry pie Ruth made."

❦

When the church van dropped Wilmot home, the front lawn and painted exterior of the house hummed with the blue light of nighttime objects. Autumn chilled these forms and the air was tight with the fragrance of fall. On the front steps he paused to observe the lumps in the flower beds and knew right then was the time to plant them. From the house next door, the painful screeches of a seven-year-old playing violin peeled through the air, and his first thought was what was such a small child doing up at 9:30. But there was a diligence in the arch, cracking notes as if they could cut through the night completely, split it at the seams. He could've waited until morning to replant the bulbs, but didn't. He stepped inside for a minute to get his plaid jacket with the quilted lining. Pulling open the trunk in the entryway where it was kept, he saw the tapes resting on top of folded afghans. Staring down into the trunk, he had a clear vision of himself putting them there when he hastily straightened up for all the guests the week after the funeral. The flannel jacket was beneath the afghans, and he took it out along with the tapes, set the tapes on the closed trunk lid, and put on the jacket.

Bent over the flower beds, his hands glowed above the blackness of the dirt. He dug with his fingers in the holes the children left, then felt each bulb to place it pointy side up. They were like shriveled, dead onions. At one time they had been arranged in a particular order. Wilmot couldn't restore the organization of the original plan, but he continued planting nonetheless. All the bulbs in holes, he pushed the soil, hands spread, knowing the dried tubers would sleep coldly for the rest of this season, and then another colder one, and finally break themselves like the faithful into a different life. ❧

No Answer

By Ron Wallace

If only she hadn't been so pink and steamy. I think that was it, the pink and the steam, the glow of her nude body in the tub as she lay gazing somewhere beyond me, the way women who should wear glasses, but don't, look through you dreamily. Perhaps it was the pink and the steam and the heat in the white-tiled bathroom, our five-year-old daughter, Jennifer, sitting on the edge of the closed toilet, watching us watch each other, saying, "Mommy's naked, Daddy. Why are you staring?"

The phone in the bedroom was ringing. It was Andrea. She was calling from the cabin she'd rented in the Adirondacks, to see if I could get free. After twenty-five years she'd written me from Paris to say she loved me after all, and she'd be in the States this weekend. For twenty-five years I'd dreamed of her, and how the full moon had shown through the open back window of my father's old Ford on her small breasts. And now she was back, wanting me.

"The phone's ringing," my daughter said.

"Aren't you going to answer it?" my wife smiled dreamily.

"Yes," I said, mesmerized by the steamy scene, the glow of her blurred nudity.

"Wash my back," she pouted.

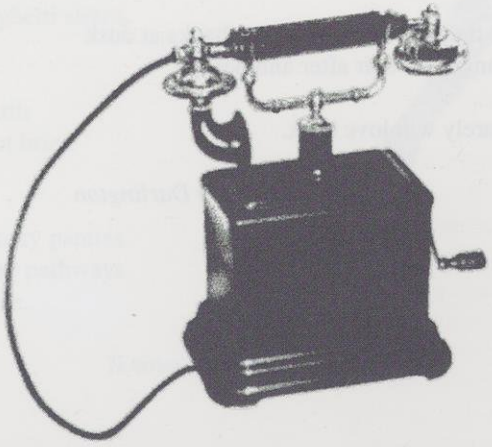
The phone rang on through the pink and the steam and the old Ford and the moon.

"Now beat it, you big buffoon,," she laughed, "so I can get out of the tub."

"Beat it," my daughter crooned.

I stood in the drafty hallway, musing. What was I doing? The phone rang on, desire still fast in its cradle.

When Christine stepped out in the hall fully clothed, her mouth in its thin set line, her languor and loveliness gone, our daughter hard behind her, the phone stopped ringing. And the phone rang on. ❧



 For more information about the book, please see Book Notes on page 46.

Monona Gives Me Vertigo

Boulders along the canal form a buck-tooth shore.
A man carrying his leather jacket

is a man whose hand has become a crow.
Along the opposite shore, a sailboat is anchored

at an empty table—
one plate with an expertly-folded napkin.

Women in bikinis, like old hors d'oeuvres
garnished with slivers of radish, look up

as a distant motor boat approaches: an otter
drags a lost veil, the light toppling.

So the nest above me is a brain craving a body.
The trees and their shadows reminisce about dark,

tangled bedding, but the waves—
they bring the undergarments back:

scarves, slips, all that we have lost
wading. At this hour,

the columbines have not been lit;
reeds along the shore stir

like hats of submerged women
drinking port below the surface.

Even the fishermen along the banks at dusk
reel in one long clear hair after another

but rarely win love back.

Tenaya Darlington

These poems will appear in the book *Madame Deluxe*, to be published by Coffee House Press in August. For more information, please see Book Notes on page 46.

The Student Asks the Poet Basho: What Is Victoria's Secret?

1.
Tonight to drown my longing
I drink Sake
from your seamless cups.

2.
Crows lift from the limbs.
One, black thong
Two, black thong.

3.
White birches
along the water.
Women in matching coordinates.

4.
Straw sandals
along the road.
Silk slippers discounted.

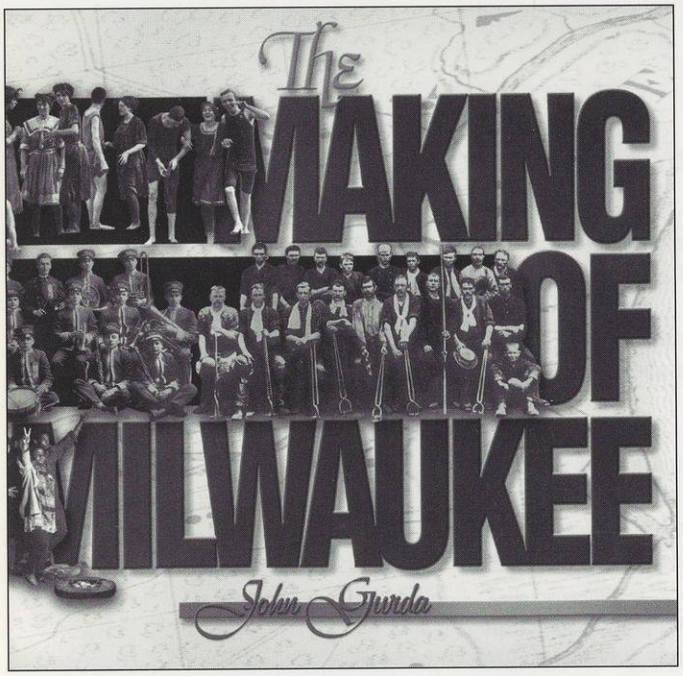
5.
From this planet,
the stars only come
in small and extra small.

6.
The bamboo
has two new shoots,
my lover's spaghetti straps.

7.
Our time on earth
high-cut brief.

8.
Eight pairs of sexy panties.
So many pathways
to the cherry tree.

Tenaya Darlington



THE MAKING OF MILWAUKEE by John Gurda. Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1999. 468 pages. $24.95, cloth, jacketed. ISBN 0–938076–14–0.

By Alexander Shashko

John Gurda's *The Making of Milwaukee* is the first comprehensive history of Wisconsin's largest city published since 1948. Given the 51-year lull, even the most pedestrian new history would be essential reading for anyone interested in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, or the Midwest. Fortunately, this book is anything but pedestrian, providing a vibrant, accessible, and comprehensive chronicle of the Cream City. Written in relaxed prose and adorned with hundreds of illuminating photos, Gurda's book provides a much-needed primer for those unfamiliar with Milwaukee's past and a useful synthesis for those who are.

Gurda's choice of a title is telling, for *The Making of Milwaukee* reflects the theme of development at the heart of the book. He uses changes in Milwaukee's economy as the city evolved from French trading post to wheat distributor to brewer to machine manufacturer to explain the city's successes and failures. But the book is not an economic history. Gurda uses economics to frame a broader assessment of Milwaukee's social and cultural development, pitting Milwaukeeans' need for growth against a desire to reinforce neighborhood and community.

Gurda covers the entire landscape of urban life, but his discussions of urban development best reveal the tension between growth and community. From the earliest Native American residents to post-World War II era suburbanites, Milwaukeeans searched for the appropriate balance between expanding their city, improving existing institutions, and preserving a useable past. With admirable but not excessive dispassion, Gurda takes stock of each era, noting the social and cultural tradeoffs accompanying each transformation of the city's landscape. European immigration and industrialization, for example, brought Milwaukee's trademark socialism; xenophobia during World War I destroyed the city's unique German arts culture; urban renewal, freeway construction and suburbanization crippled, then demonized, the nascent African-American community. Piece by piece, Gurda takes stock of each era in Milwaukee's history and describes the legacy of that era for Milwaukee today.

Although Gurda's analysis fits comfortably within recent academic work on cities, it neither attempts nor offers contributions to scholarly debates about urban, political, or cultural history. The research is largely based on secondary works, which befits a synthesis of this magnitude but nonetheless reflects gaps in the existing literature, particularly in the post-World War II period. Still, the book deftly integrates local, state, national, and international history to sketch an engaging vision of Milwaukee's past. For anyone curious about Milwaukee's role in Wisconsin and American history—or invested in Milwaukee's future—*The Making of Milwaukee* is indispensable.

Alexander Shashko is a doctoral candidate in American history at the University of Michigan. He is a Milwaukee native and currently lives in Madison. A freelance music writer, Shashko contributed this issue's historical piece on the black music scene in Milwaukee.

PROGRESSIVE PRINTMAKERS: Wisconsin Artists and the Print Renaissance by Warrington Colescott and Arthur Hove. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999. 221 pages. $39.99, hardcover, jacketed. ISBN 0–299–16110–2.

By James Auer

Golden ages of any sort—cultural, scientific, economic, political—have a way of being recognizable to their participants only after they have been melted down by time and recast, sadly but surely, into gleaming memory.

The imperfections of everyday life, coupled with an obtuseness that seems to be an integral part of the human condition, almost invariably obscure our collective vision, preventing us from appreciating what we have until we have lost it.

An exception to this depressing rule of thumb may well be the post-World War II flowering of printmaking which brought national attention and a brilliant cadre of skilled printmakers to the campus of the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Not only were these artists—Raymond Gloeckler, Dean Meeker, Warrington Colescott, Jack Damer, Alfred Sessler, Walter Hamady, and David Becker, to name a few—progressive technically, but they were progressive politically as well.

Hence, the appropriateness of the title, *Progressive Printmakers*, that authors Warrington Colescott and Arthur

Hove have given to their copiously illustrated memoir of the time when Madison was a key player in the printmaking renaissance.

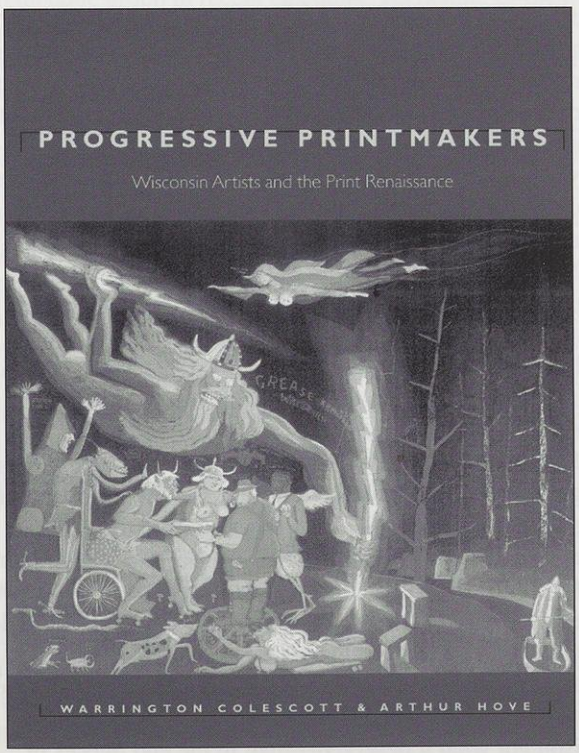
I use the word "memoir" advisedly, for this is not, technically speaking, a history. It is selective, personal, occasionally opinionated. It is also fragmentary. It is, in the truest sense of the word, a collage—of words, pictures, reflections, recollections.

It is, in other words, very much a family scrapbook. As such, it will prove invaluable for future generations of Madison-trained printmakers, as well as for print collectors and nonspecialized appreciators of art who relish color, line, mass, and visual wit.

The writers are fortunate that James Watrous, the art historian who is generally credited with having been the father of UW–Madison's Elvehjem Museum of Art, was able to complete a concise overview of printmaking there prior to his death in 1998.

In his introductory chapter, "An Era of Excellence," Watrous notes that "in 1940 no one in America foresaw that printmaking would flourish in this country as never before..." Still, it happened. The United States, scarcely a hive of printmaking, exploded with vitality.

At almost the same time that the Argentinian artist Mauricio Lasansky was carrying the gospel of intaglio printing to the University of Iowa, young Alfred Sessler, a protege of Robert von Neumann at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, was bringing etching and lithography to Madison.



A master of many graphic media, from wood engraving to block printing, Sessler set a tone of tolerance, humanism, and liberality in the studio and classroom that found an echo in the teaching and artmaking of such subsequent arrivals as Colescott, Meeker, Damer, and William Weege.

Before long the UW–Madison department of art had a specialist teaching each well-defined, and often maddeningly complicated, aspect of printmaking, and students were issuing forth into the worlds of art and academia bearing fully professional portfolios of finished work. Excellence was assumed.

It was the heyday of experimentation in the graphic media—and of unfettered political commentary as well. Sessler, whose humanism reflected the values of many in Milwaukee's Jewish community, movingly portrayed the poor, the hopeless, the marginalized, and the dispossessed.

Colescott, an etcher, was a living link between the campus and such eminent satirists out of the past as Goya, Hogarth, and Cruikshank. He kept alive FDR's New Deal via scathing, if well-researched, historical reconstructions. Gloeckler, a relief printer, turned a critical eye on human foibles.

Later on the department's creative exertions cast a magnetic spell over such emergent figures as the virtuoso typographer Walter Hamady, a Cranbrook Academy graduate who set up his Perishable Press ltd. at Mount Horeb, and Frances Myers, who subtly but firmly introduced women's issues into the mix.

Hamady, as skilled at creative collaboration as he was at page design, attracted top-quality illustrations by fine artists of the caliber of Jack Beal, Sondra Freckelton, Sam Gilliam, Ellen Lanyon, and John Wilde. He addressed both the theoretical nature and the practical substance of the book.

Weege, a painter/printmaker who metamorphosed into a cultural entrepreneur, set up his Jones Road Print Shop and Stable, first at Barneveld, later at Arena. An ardent crusader against war and violence of all sorts, he explored the potential of hand-made paper in the company of Gilliam and others.

Subsequently, Weege took over the directorship of the newly established Tandem Press, a successful effort by the university and its resident image-makers, to set up a Wisconsin-based printmaking atelier that would draw top talent from all over the nation and produce marketable prints as well.

As if telling all of this to us were not enough of a task, Colescott and Hove include chapters on long-term visitors to the campus studios—Misch Kohn, Claire Van Vliet, and Birgit Skiold, among them—and the "monthlies," short-term drop-ins like William T. Wiley, Wayne Thiebaud, and Jack Beal.

There are also mentions of notable art-department alumni: Robert Burkert, Richard Callner, David Pease, Karin Broker, Phyllis Galembo, Diogenes Ballester, and Ann Marie Karlsen. Necessary? Most likely. But such minutiae, no matter how intriguing, make for hard going for the casual reader.

Indeed, this is a book which yields its close-packed richness best when it is sampled at intervals, like a box of fine chocolates, rather than in one or two evenings, like an epic

novel. To try to read it front to back, as if it were Kafka or Joyce, does it an injustice. It's best when enjoyed in small, juicy bites.

Ironically, the most interesting and affecting of the artist profiles is that of Alfred Sessler, who died in 1963. Perhaps because his life is viewed primarily through the eyes of knowledgeable and caring observers, including his daughter, Karen Sessler Stein, this particular sketch is brought vividly to life.

Other profiles, which are a homogenized blending of interview, research, and, in some instances, the artist's own revisions, resemble biography as written by a committee. They are, doubtless, truthful and informative, and they needed to be done. But they lack, on occasion, the characterizing spark.

In sum, however, this is a beautifully designed and thoughtfully researched and written homage to an era which is, even now, passing away on the Madison campus. It deserves a place in every university-level art department in the nation, and in libraries abroad as well. It is a book that truly conveys the Wisconsin spirit.

James Auer is art critic for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. *He recently wrote and narrated a one-hour documentary for public television entitled "Etched in Acid: Warrington Colescott."*

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S MONONA TERRACE: The Enduring Power of A Civic Vision by David V. Mollenhoff and Mary Jane Hamilton. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999. 323 pages. Cloth. ISBN 0–299–15500–5.

By Anthony M. Orum

In 1997, architect Frank Gehry, today's hot architect, completed a new Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain. Displaying great splashes of metal criss-crossing an open sky, the Museum has become the conversation piece of the art and urban worlds, much like Frank Lloyd Wright's earlier Guggenheim in New York City. Bilbao has suddenly become an important spot on the map. Recent estimates suggest that there has been a threefold increase in tourist traffic to Bilbao since the completion of this museum. It should not be surprising that architecture and various other monuments mean so much to the life of a city or community. Can anyone imagine New York Harbor without the Statue of Liberty? The very sight of it has inspired thousands of new immigrants, coming into the harbor, with the hopes of freedom and opportunity in America.

It is because the life of a place and its architecture are so completely intertwined that the plans for a place come to be invested with a great deal of meaning and politics. There probably are few stories so fascinating about these matters as the story told in this book. It is about the construction of Monona Terrace, a striking building that looms gently over Lake Monona in Madison. Completed in 1997, the design began actually much earlier. The building is a graceful curving form, adorned with various flourishes from the original pen and mind of Frank Lloyd Wright. It lies at the end of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, a short distance from the State Capitol. Who would have thought that this rather small yet graceful piece of architecture could inspire so much debate over a six-decade period? But it did. And in doing so, it says much about the life of Wright and of modern Madison.

This book, written by David Mollenhoff and Mary Jane Hamilton, is a big coffeetable book. It is filled with beautifully detailed architectural designs and maps. It calls itself a history of Monona Terrace, but it really is a history of the overlapping lives of Madison and Wright. Wright is visibly the most interesting character in the story. Convinced by a friend in the 1930s to put together a plan at the foot of Monona Avenue, Wright produced several project designs over a two-decade period. His first plan was rather grandiose, with fountains, large parking deck, auditorium, and roadways. It was a multi-function structure, intended to house parking, railroad depot, offices for city and county governments, a convention center, and a large auditorium. What, in the end, was built was a convention center, much along the lines of Wright's last rendering of the space.

In between there were vicious struggles between Wright and a host of local residents. A Bohemian by nature, Wright seemed to take pleasure in condemning the mundane. He went through several well-publicized marriages and love affairs, lost the love of his life in a fire at Taliesin, remarried, traveled to Europe and Japan, and then periodically made his way back to Madison. By the mid-1930s he was a world-famous figure. When he sat down to imagine a structure for Lake Monona, Madison was lucky to have a man of his genius at work for it. Yet he had offended so many people—Joe Jackson, a longtime community leader among them—that there was little Wright could do to convince the community to undertake construction of his plan. More than that, his first plan was undoable, certainly too costly. But his last plans, in the 1950s, were more doable. Yet his opponents and the continuing lack of finances prevented any construction until well after his death.

Mollenhoff and Hamilton tell a wonderful history. Wright's story is the most fascinating, but so are those of countless other figures in and around Madison who were involved with the plans for construction. They would include Paul Soglin, the Madison Mayor in the 1990s, as well as Tommy Thompson, Wisconsin's current governor.

I have few quibbles with the book. Sometimes it seems as though too much detail is spent on years of the infighting after Wright's death. The most interesting details to the general reader will, of course, concern Wright, and how his work and life were intertwined with those of Madison. At the end, what I am left to conclude is how the original design might have done for Madison what the Guggenheim has done for Bilbao. Certainly that is what Wright and his supporters hoped. One thinks, when looking at the entire history, that perhaps Madison got what it deserved—that, in the end, pieces of

urban architecture are an authentic reflection of a community's spirit. Madison appears as a provincial city, populated by leaders who generally were unwilling to take the risks of putting Monona Terrace on the map. One imagines that if there had been more inspired leadership early on, Madison might have become what Wright hoped it would: a beacon of urban progress and architectural promise.

Anthony M. Orum is a professor of sociology and political science at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is the editor of City & Community, *a new journal of the American Sociological Association.*

BOOK NOTES

By Dean Bakopoulos

***America's Forgotten Majority: Why The White Working Class Still Matters*, by Joel Rogers and Ruy Teixiera. New York: Basic Books (a division of HarperCollins), June 2000. 232 pages.**

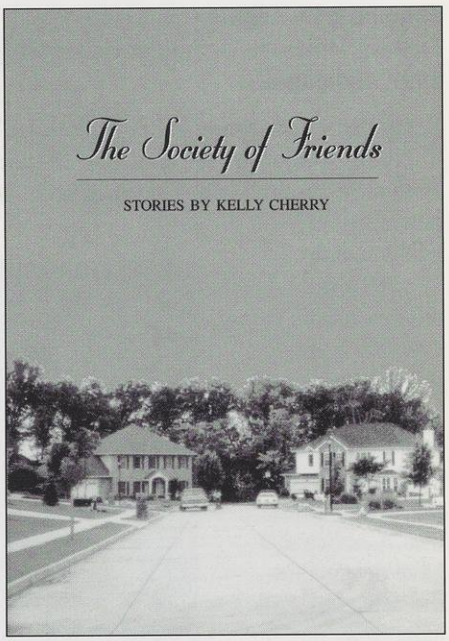
This thoughtful new book explores a strange trend in American electoral politics: Why do both parties ignore the needs and opinions of one of America's largest demographics—the white working class, which makes up 55 percent of the voting population?

Once a stronghold of the Democratic Party, the white working class, victims of declining prosperity, have become an unpredictable group in recent elections. Yet neither of the major political parties focus on the group's concerns, and so this large segment of the electorate—which has played a decisive role in most federal elections—votes with an unstable loyalty.

Written by two of the nation's most brilliant scholars on American politics and the working class—Joel D. Rogers is a professor of law, political science, and sociology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the author of a number of books, including the recent *What Workers Want*; Ruy Teixara is a senior fellow at The Century Foundation and author of *Why Americans Don't Vote* and *The Disappearing American Voter—America's Forgotten Majority* takes seriously the often marginalized and ignored, but still powerful influence of America's working class. The book also argues for why and how politicians should attempt to reach this large group in the new century.

***The Society of Friends,* by Kelly Cherry. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999. 192 pages.**

Kelly Cherry, until recently a UW–Madison Eudora Welty Professor of English, is a versatile writer. Her published works include fiction, poetry and memoirs, as well as a recently staged translation of *Antigone*. Her newest work, *The Society of Friends* is a collection of related short stories focusing on Nina Bryant and her neighbors, residents of Joss Court, a fictional Madison neighborhood.



The stories in *The Society of Friends* portray characters who are confronted with sudden chaos—large and obvious or small and hidden—and must strive to overcome new obstacles in their worlds. Sometimes their easy and peaceful lives in this quiet neighborhood become suddenly tragic. Other times an assumption they've made about their loved ones or themselves is proven false. The stories are threaded together by a character named Nina Bryant—author, professor, and adoptive mother. Other characters in these stories include a commodities broker, a performance artist, a high school teacher, a medical librarian, and an independent bookstore owner.

***True North,* by Kimberly Kafka. New York: Dutton (a division of Penguin Putnam), 2000. 273 pages.**

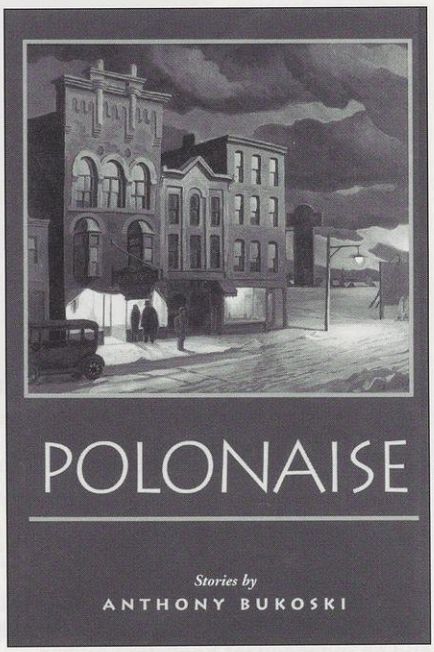
Kimberly Kafka, who teaches English at UW–Whitewater, divides her time between Alaska and Wisconsin. In reading her debut novel, *True North*, it's unmistakable that Kafka is someone who knows the physical landscape about which she is writing.

The story of Bailey Lockhart, who has spent six years in near isolation in the Alaskan Bush, is full of confrontations. When her peaceful existence with her native neighbors and the haunting natural world around her is threatened by two newcomers, Bailey must face the tentative racial balance in the region and the fragile relationship between nature and the influence of humans. In addition, Bailey eventually must confront the tragedy that sent her fleeing to the silence of the Alaskan wilderness in the first place.

With vividly rendered detail and moving insight, Kafka writes about the Alaskan wilderness with a fresh eye infused with traditions as varied as Jack London and Wallace Stegner. *True North* is a book that signals a bright future for this young writer.

***Polonaise,* by Anthony Bukoski.**
Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1999. 180 pages.

Set in the Polish-American neighborhood of East End in Superior, Wisconsin, the stories in Anthony Bukoski's *Polonaise* chronicle those left behind in an America with a new economy and a new vision.



Bukoski, who teaches English at UW–Superior, deftly illustrates an underside of American progress, those pockets of industrial America that have decayed in the wake of expansion, and in doing so have decimated the spirit of those people and places who have not secured a foothold in the new order of things.

But all is not bleak in *Polonaise*. Bukoski manages to weave through the rough edges of Superior a quiet sense of dignity, and as the characters struggle to makes sense of a world changing mysteriously and rapidly, they emerge with grace and sense of humor intact.

Bukoski, a three-time nominee for the Pushcart Prize and winner of two Outstanding Achievement Awards by the Wisconsin Library Association, has authored two other books of short fiction entitled *Twelve Below Zero* and *Children of Strangers.*

***Quick Bright Things,* by Ron Wallace.**
Minneapolis: Mid-List Press, 2000. 180 pages.

Ron Wallace, the director of the creative writing department at UW–Madison, has long been respected for his poetry, both locally and nationally. But with his newest work, Wallace crosses genres and moves into the world of short fiction with the release *of Quick Bright Things*, his first collection of short stories.

The stories, many of which have been published in different periodicals and anthologies, chronicle the lives of Peterson and Christine Kingsley and their daughters Jennifer and Phoebe. The title of the collection comes from Lysander's lament in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*: "So quick bright things come to confusion."

Wallace's poetry is well-acclaimed among critics and other poets, and he's earned his reputation as one of the Midwest's finest poets. His prose lives up to the same artistic standards set in his poetry. All of Wallace's trademark elements—calm understatement, somber wisdom, perfect detail, joy shadowed with worry—grace these stories, but the fictive realm allows Wallace to flex some new literary muscles: Wallace writes with a beaming compassion; the worries of his characters, which range from tiny to insurmountable, deftly illustrate the fragility of our domestic lives and inner balance.

Short-shorts like *Worry* and *Yogurt* ring true with their ability to illustrate the ease with which our emotional terrain can change. As an example of the "short-short's" power, we offer the haunting piece *No Answer* on page 39. Longer stories, such as *Topless in Tucson*, are bruising with their honest gazes into our secret lives.

***Madame Deluxe,* by Tenaya Darlington.**
Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, August 2000. 85 pages.

Tenaya Darlington is quickly becoming one of the most promising young writers in the region, as well as one of the most versatile. Her fiction has appeared in *Scribner's Best of the Fiction Workshops 1998* (Scribner 1998) and her nonfiction in the anthology *In Brief: Short Takes on the Personal* (Norton 1999). Now her poetry collection, *Madame Deluxe*, has won the National Poetry Series Award sponsored by Coffee House Press.

A stylish and erudite writer, Darlington's work, particularly her poetry, is a mix of limitless language and playful themes. Darlington is by no means a pastoral or romantic poet. Her themes are loud and sparkling and push all kinds of envelopes. For some examples, see pages 40 and 41.

Madame Deluxe is the persona who dominates this accomplished collection. Inspired by years of watching drag shows, Darlington's "Madame" wanders the outskirts of gender roles in a hilarious and hard-hitting, sometimes shocking, always thoughtful, examination of tradition, femininity, and sensuality.

In this debut collection of poetry, Darlington seduces and intrigues us, spurring us to rethink our ideas about women and femininity. And perhaps more importantly, she pushes the limits of poetry past the "acceptable" parameters of the genre, and in doing so, is dazzling and original and new.

Genetically Modified Foods: Risks, Rewards, & Realities

By Michael A. Goodman

Until very recently, the pace of agricultural change has been slow enough that most changes went unnoticed. Countless generations of farmers developed the berry-sized wild tomato into the many varieties and sizes that exist today. But with revolutionary breakthroughs in technology and understanding of the building blocks of life, developments that would have taken lifetimes are occurring seemingly overnight.

Recent announcements have included beta-carotene-enhanced rice (much needed in regions where vitamin A deficiency is the leading cause of blindness), herbicide-resistant wheat, pest-resistant soybeans, and even a plant designed to produce biodegradable plastic. Despite this accelerated pace and enthusiasm, or possibly because of it, concerns about safety, demands for labeling, questions of corporate dominance in farming, and overall moral concerns have led to increasing polarization of opinions.

In response to changing attitudes toward genetically modified foods (GMFs), many companies are abandoning the technology as quickly as they once embraced it. In recent months the nation's largest health food stores—Whole Foods and Wild Oats—have announced a ban on sales of GMFs in their stores. Gerber has banned GMFs in its baby food. And McDonald's has guaranteed a GMF-free french fry. Governments worldwide are beginning to set trade and labeling restrictions on GMF imports. This is starting to take its toll on the marketplace. In the United States, for the first time since they were introduced, there will be a marked decrease in genetically modified crops planted this year, and there will likely be a premium placed on traditional (unmodified) crops.

Protests, labeling campaigns, test-crop destruction—issues that many people thought would stay European—are now daily news in the U.S. We are all asking questions about this new technology: When did agriculture suddenly become so dependent on genetically modified crops? Why do we need them? Are they safe to eat? What dangers to the environment do they pose, if any?

Answers cover the spectrum of interests and concerns, and often serve to compound frustration rather than reduce it. On one side we hear that humans have been adapting and modifying food since agriculture began, that GMFs are a natural continuation of that process, and that we can be confident of the results being safe and beneficial. On the other hand, we hear there is a significant risk for unexpected results, a real possibility for the destruction of fragile ecosystems, and the likelihood of creating super-resistant pests.

The Wisconsin Academy's conference, "Genetically Modified Food: Risks, Rewards, & Realities," is designed to give participants a foundation upon which to begin understanding this complex discussion, one that encompasses a wide spectrum of disciplines. Among them: genetics, agriculture, ecology, politics, journalism, economics, and ethics.

Carrying forth from the Wisconsin Academy's 1999 Aldo Leopold conference, the Academy is again creating a model for bringing together as many points of view as possible on a subject of ever-growing concern. This is in perfect accordance with the Academy's mission: interdisciplinary study and the examination and dissemination of knowledge. The conference will allow a thoughtful, critical examination of the subject, and be accessible not only to "experts" in the field, but to all people wishing to educate themselves on this important issue.

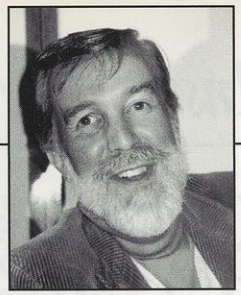
The conference will be held Friday, November 3 at Madison's Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, and it will feature leading researchers, farmers, journalists, and ethicists from the state and the nation. Academy members will receive registration information in the mail. Please contact the Academy at (608) 263–1692 with any comments or questions. ❧

Art beyond the trendy

This July the Academy will pay tribute to Wisconsin artists whose work is imbued with a distinctly independent spirit. The show *Singular Visions: Ten Wisconsin Painters at the Academy* features Wisconsin painters who have consistently followed their own visions, relatively independently of trends in great art centers elsewhere. These artists have nevertheless made names for themselves well beyond Wisconsin's borders: Barry Carlsen, Warrington Colescott, Sally Hutchison, Nancy Mladenoff, Charles Munch, Dan O'Neal, Fred Stonehouse, Tom Uttech, Lee Weiss, and John Wilde. By almost any criteria, these artists must be considered among Wisconsin's finest. This exhibit will provide an intimate atmosphere—a salon gathering—in which to experience their works.

"With each artist, I have looked for a kernel of truth about the origins of their vision, a little golden nugget of revelation to bring the viewer closer to them and their work," says gallery curator Randall Berndt. "This is a paradoxical task because good art has mystery at its core, and so much art made in Wisconsin has mystery as part of its expression."

For more information about some of these artists, as well as a view of their works, look at the Academy's web site (*www.wisconsinacademy.org*). Berndt is available for more information about the show at (608) 263–1692. ❧



The Wisconsin Academy and Our Public Schools

Many of the women in my family are public school teachers and have taught all across America in all kinds of public schools. These women are all most impressive. However, I am even more impressed by the fact that they have participated in one of America's preeminent contributions to the modern world: a system of free and open public education financed by the body politic for the purpose of educating all of our young, based on the assumption that education is a vital and necessary good for the successful operation of society.

So at the outset, I say a heartfelt thanks to my Grandmother Driggs, who taught Greek and Latin in a small rural Michigan schoolhouse in the early 1900s; to my mother, who taught Home Economics and American History and coached the girls' basketball team in Dufer, Oregon, in the 1940s; to my sister Sue, who for more than twenty years ran one of the most successful "talented and gifted" programs for inner city public school students in Minneapolis; to my wife, Mary, who gets preschoolers ready for kindergarten in Madison's Head Start program; and to my daughter Morgan, who tutors middle-school students in the public schools of New Orleans.

I know, I know. Bad, bad public schools. Teachers' unions. Violence. Students who can't read, can't do basic math and won't learn. Teachers who can't teach. Huge classes. Special-needs children. No discipline. Controversial and/or terribly outdated textbooks. Peer influence of "undesirable" kids. Unbelievable property taxes—and for what?! The list could go on and on.

Winston Churchill has the answer for us in his famous remark about democracy: "It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

Certainly, the public schools are beset with problems. But there are enough good points to counterbalance every negative noted above and then some. The public schools are attempting what no other social institution is trying to do: educate, civilize, and prepare all of our young to take over from the adult generation and lead society into the future. Such teachers as my family members—and many comparable teachers all over America—are doing this indispensable work.

The incessant nibbling away at the base of support for public schools concerns me greatly, and I find both the left and right political extremes engaged in this process. Public schools are just that—public! They are a creation of the public, funded by the public, and serve the public. Where would we be as a people without our public school system? All the alternative school systems combined would not give us the security and civilization we have today thanks to the public schools and the teachers who work there.

Of course, America has been enriched by the graduates of alternative school systems, both parochial and other private schools. However, the public school system provides the bulk of education that allows graduates of alternative schools to thrive in an educated, civilized society.

Ever since the Northwest Ordinance was promulgated in 1787, Wisconsin has supported public education. Article III of the Ordinance states "schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged" and spells out a property-based means for supporting public education. Kenosha created the first public school system in 1849. And the 1870 founding of the Wisconsin Academy was at least in part the creation of a publicly educated populace.

So what does this have to do with the Wisconsin Academy today?

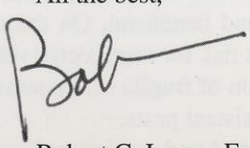
For the last fifteen years, the Wisconsin Academy has been engaged in a teacher education program known as the Wisconsin Academy Staff Development Initiative (WASDI), funded by a major grant from the National Science Foundation. The program's goal has been to work with K–12 public school teachers to increase their knowledge of science and technology. This highly regarded program has done an excellent job helping teachers meet their ongoing professional training requirements.

But grant-funded programs often come to an end, and WASDI was no exception. The grant supporting it is ending this year, casting WASDI's future into doubt. However, I see an opportunity. Because of the central importance of public schools to democracy, it is my hope that the Academy will not only find a way to continue some version of WASDI for science education, but expand it to include other areas in the arts and letters.

After all, the Academy's mission is to "investigate and disseminate knowledge in the sciences, arts and letters for the benefit of the citizens of Wisconsin." And who is more centrally engaged in the dissemination of knowledge to the vast majority of our young but our teachers in the public schools?

If you share my commitment to public schools, and are interested in becoming involved in expanding the Academy's teacher education program, please let me know. I would be delighted to be in touch with you. And not only do I thank you—so does my grandmother, my mother, my sister, my wife, and my daughter!

All the best,



Robert G. Lange, Executive Director

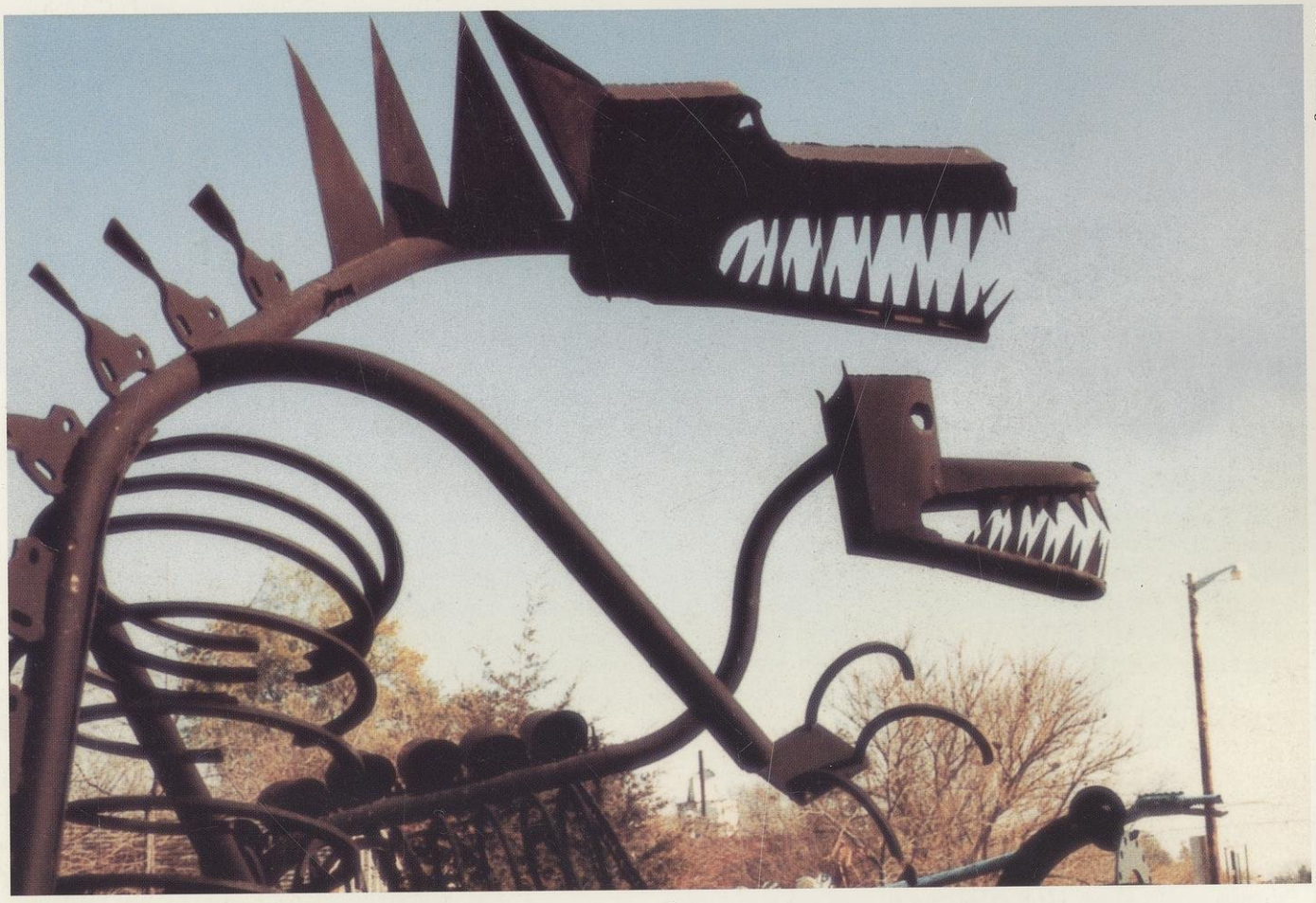


Photo : Don Krug

The "Outsiders" Are In

Outsider artist Ellis Nelson's Dinosaurs *were made of metal in the late 1980s. Once disdained by the art establishment, work by such self-taught artists as Nelson and others is gaining new popularity and respectability. Read more about it in our "Galleria" section inside.*

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