



Leading the Way to Lifelong Learning

Conductor

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of MPC

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November/December 2023

President's Corner

Mary Pendlay, President



Welcome to our new and returning students to the Western Civilization Gentrain class for this fall term.

I title this piece "New Folks Coming" because it's a favorite line from my favorite (one of many)

children's books, "Rabbit Hill" pictured in my hand. The story relates how the generosity and consideration of people to animals can make a better world. In connection to this theme, I am so thankful for the advice, help and knowledge of MPC staff and students who have helped us navigate our sign-ups for our class. In addition, the warm feelings of eager and receptive students walking on campus and returning to the new school year, is a good feeling. I personally experienced grateful information about registering as an MPC student, which is required by the state, before any class registration can be done. The new WELCOME CENTER in the administration building guided us through the process and made it so much easier. The **Lobo Day** was delightful with its colorful booths, good food and welcoming smiles and faces. There are so many ways that students can engage with a variety of activities. The new MPC president, Dr. Fullbright, greeted me warmly as I introduced myself. I hope all of us are looking forward to a new year of positive experiences, great learning and building new ties. I, for one, welcome "New Folks" and I hope you do the same!



Gentrain Society Board Meetings

The next Gentrain Society Board meeting will be held on campus on **November 15** at 2:45 pm in MPC Social Sciences 104. There will be no Board meeting in

December. Meetings are open to all Gentrain Society Members.

Membership Report

Merry Nolte, Membership Chair

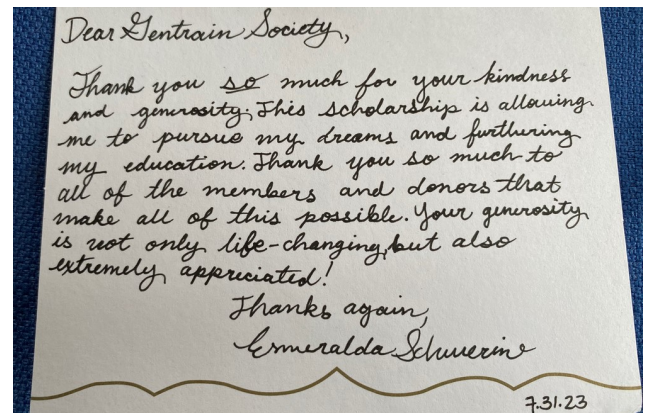
Welcome to these new Gentrain members: **Dara Dobry, Richard Ekker, William C. & Lolly Lanska Morin, Charles Skupniewicz, and Christian & Karee Stanley.**

Thanks to the Gentrainers who have renewed their memberships. I'll be sending out a final reminder in November. Please save me another stamp by sending in your renewal now!

Scholarship Report

Vikki Logan, Scholarship Chair

The power of a hand written thank you note. This month I want to share a note written by **Esmeralda Schwerin**. She is a psychology Major at MPC and we featured her in the last Conductor.



Meet Ashlin Habes, winner of the Lynn Swerrie Memorial Scholarship. I hardly know where to start when listing Ashlin's incredible accomplishments! First of all, I would mention that she has been recognized by the California State Legislature for her creation and management of the Monterey Peninsula College's Nursing and Pre-nursing Students Support Group which is dedicated to representing the student's voice through advocacy and leadership development at MPC! Ashlin is currently enrolled in the Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing, and one of her teachers, Jillian Castor, has this to say about her: "Ashlin consistently demonstrates a sincere interest for professional and development growth. She has been accepted into San Jose State University in their RN, BSN program and is

concurrently completing her Associates degree in Translation in Spanish Medical Interpretation to further close the gap and limit barriers to safe patient care. Ashlin has high inspirations to be an advanced practice provider, eventually earning her Doctorate in nursing practice."

Meet Kaly Mariano: Kaly plans to earn a BA in Collaborative Health and Human Services with a Minor in Psychology from CSUMB and then earn a Master's in Social Work and eventually become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. The road to obtaining this has not been an easy one due to financial constraints, and Kaly is thrilled to receive a scholarship from The Gentrain Society. She returned to MPC after a ten year absence and is a first generation college student. She returned to MPC full of drive, goals and passion and expresses gratitude for the resources that have been provided for her.

Welcome MPC's New Interim Director of Continuing and Professional Education



During the 2022-2023 academic year, MPC made the decision to hire an interim director who would oversee the development and expansion of MPC's Continuing and Professional Education program. With a passion for lifelong learning, Alexis Bollin brings a fresh perspective and is committed to finding opportunities that meet the needs of community members living on the

Monterey Peninsula. Alexis is dedicated to providing access to innovative and equitable learning opportunities, empowering individuals to enrich their lives and enhance their careers through lifelong learning, professional skill development, and personal development opportunities.

Alexis holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Arizona State University and is currently attending Cal State Monterey Bay where she is pursuing a Master's Degree in Instructional Science Technology. Alexis has been with the college for six years, serving as an Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Liberal Arts, as well as the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Prior to her time with MPC, she managed college bookstores at neighboring community colleges. In her free time, Alexis enjoys spending time with her four children, reading, and being in the outdoors.

Currently, Alexis is exploring class offerings in the areas of art, humanities, fitness, culinary, travel, and youth programs. She is establishing partnerships with

various campus departments, community members, and organizations in an effort to provide the community with a wide range of classes, with the goal of launching the first set of classes in mid to late spring of 2024. Alexis looks forward to building a partnership with The Gentrain Society, to explore ways in which the Continuing and Professional Education program can support current class offerings.

Feel free to reach out to Alexis at abollin@mpc.edu or 831-646-3009, introduce yourself and share your thoughts and ideas on how we can better support the lifelong learning community.

"I look forward to providing the lifelong learning community with classes that fuel their passions and interests. Lifelong learning is not just a concept; it's a philosophy that I wholeheartedly embrace."
Alexis Bollin

The Gentrain Book Club

Gerard Kapolka

The Gentrain Book Club will take a break November through December and begin again in the new year with a new book, yet to be determined. Anyone interested in joining our group should contact Gerry Kapolka, at gkapolka@gmail.com. He will put you on the mailing list for reading assignments and Zoom invitations. The Club meets through Zoom at 7:00 pm on Wednesday evenings. The discussions last about an hour.

Gentrain Society Program Wednesday Lectures

Gentrain Wednesday Lectures are held in LF 103 from 1:30 to 2:30 pm. Visitors are welcome; no charge or registration is required.

November 1, 2023 - 1:30 pm The Magnificent Sarah Bernhardt



This one-woman staged reading features the one and only Sarah Bernhardt, speaking from the grave. It has been 100 years since her death in Paris. In this dramatic reading, Sarah emerges from her tomb at the Pere Lachaise Cemetery to remind us that during her life, she was the greatest

actress in the world. Sarah recounts her daring, death-defying adventures, her world tours (seven tours in North America alone), her famous dramatic scenes of murder and suicide, her many lovers and her apology that she was not a perfect person who led a perfect life. Sarah lived until she was 79 and wanted to die on the stage. Unfortunately, she died in bed of uremic poisoning. But the legend of the magnificent Sarah Bernhardt lives on.



Playwright Carol Marquart has written and produced staged readings of famous and infamous persons of the 20th century. These readings have taken place all over the Monterey Peninsula. The subjects of her plays have included Carol Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Frank Lloyd Wright, Bette Davis, William Randolph Hearst and even Rasputin.

**November 15, 2023 - 1:30 pm
Southern Pacific Railroad and the
Steinbeck Boys From Hollister**



Donald Kohrs

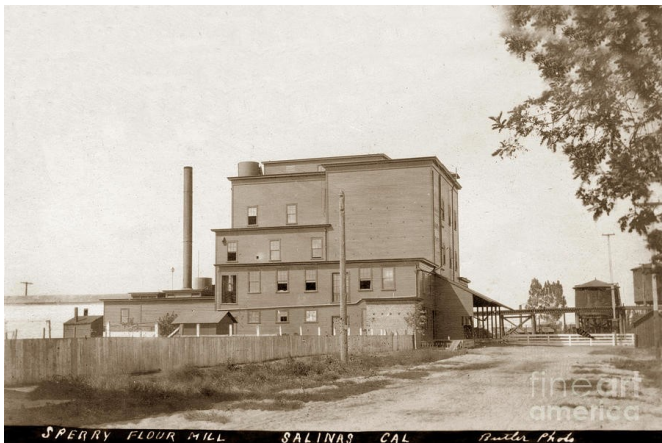
Historian Donald Kohrs will be talking about John Steinbeck's ancestors. Don is a historian and Branch Library Specialist at the Miller Library of Stanford University's Hopkins Marine Station in Pacific Grove. For this lecture, he will share his recent findings about John

Steinbeck's paternal ancestors, his father and four uncles, each of whom established decade-long careers



John Ernst and Olive Steinbeck, John Steinbeck's parents

working for companies established as business extensions of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company. Don will explain the Southern Pacific Railroad



Sperry Flour Mill, Salinas

Company's close association with the grain milling companies and lumber yards, with whom John Steinbeck's father and four uncles worked as sales

agents / bookkeepers. These grain milling companies and lumber yards, located beside the railroad tracks in various townships stretching from Hollister to San Luis Obispo. Don will not only cover this bit of history, but many other interesting findings about John Steinbeck's ancestors.

**December 6, 2023 - 1:30 pm
A Sacred Light in the Darkness**



Archaeologist Rubén G. Mendoza was party to an accidental discovery years ago at a mission church. In this worship space and many others that Catholic missionaries built during the Spanish colonial period, he realized that the winter solstice triggers an

extraordinarily rare and fascinating event: a sunbeam enters each of these churches and bathes an important religious object, altar, crucifix or saint's statue in brilliant light.

These missions were built to convert Native Americans to Catholicism - people whose cultures had already, for thousands of years, celebrated the solstice sun's seeming victory over darkness. The missions incorporated those traditions in a new way, channeling the sun's symbolism into a Christian message. Since that initial discovery in 1997, Mendoza has documented scores of similar such sites throughout the American hemisphere.



Royal Presidio Chapel

Dr. Rubén G. Mendoza is an archaeologist, writer, photographer and founding faculty member of CSUMB. He has directed major archaeological investigations at the Spanish and Indian missions of San Juan Bautista, San Carlos Borromeo, San Miguel Arcángel, and La Soledad. His groundbreaking work at the Spanish Royal Presidio of Monterey resulted in the discovery of the Serra Chapels of 1770 and 1772. He retired from CSUMB in December 2022.

MPC Fall Gentrain Program

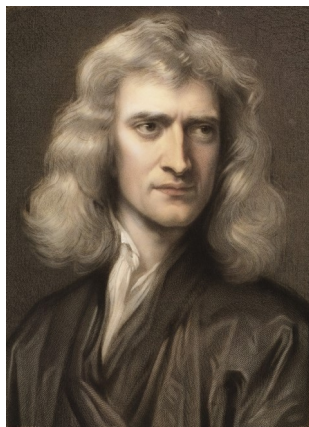
October 17, 19, 24, 26, 31 November 2, 7, 9

GENT 10/410: AGE OF REASON (1690-1775 AD)

The course deals with the age of rationalism in Western history, based on the philosophies of Leibniz, Locke, Hume, and Berkeley. It also examines the triumph of the bourgeoisie in English politics in the modifications of the social contract theory (which likewise becomes the basis for the American Declaration of Independence), the beginnings of the novel, the reaction to all of this in the great Evangelical Movements across Europe and America, and the foundations - in war and economics - for the French Revolution.



Gottfried Wilhelm
Leibniz



Isaac Newton

November 14, 16, 21, 28, 30 December 5, 7, 12, 14
GENT 11/411: Reaction and Revolution (1775-1815)

The course studies the causes, events, central figures and consequences of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Age. Additionally, it examines the connections between this historical foundation and the philosophy, literature and art, including such figures as Rousseau, Kant, Wordsworth, Goethe, Goya and Beethoven. The Romantic Movement ties together both the political and cultural events of the period.



Raft of the Medusa by Theodore Gericault



Oath of the Horatii by Jacques-Louis David

VIRTUAL EVENTS

In person Special Events have been limited because of Covid-19, and many organizations are filling in the gap locally and at a distance with an amazing array of creative online presentations, both live and recorded. **We will be using the Special Events space to share some "events" we have found that will be available in 2023.** Some are direct links and some are links to websites with information of interest.

Monterey County Theatre Alliance

Monterey County Theatre Alliance (MCTA) website: theatremonterey.org has regular updates on local live theatre events, primarily virtually. Here are the MCTA Virtual Live Theatre presentations created and presented by Howard Burnham and Carol Marquart. **For more information about these shows, go to TheatreMonterey.org** or email Andrea McDonald at admin@TheatreMonterey.org

You may register to attend any or all of these presentations at theatremonterey.org. Once registered you will be sent a Zoom link to a live webinar of the presentation. No fee for each performance, but a link to an optional shared donation to the presenter and the MCTA (to help pay for tech and presentation costs) will be available at the conclusion of each presentation.

Nov 11 *A Cigarette in the Anteroom: Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Great War* (For Veterans Day) - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Dec 2 *A Hat Worth Forty Thousand Men: Wellington on Napoleon* (For Coronation and Austerlitz anniversaries) - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

Dec 23 Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* - Howard Burnham & MCTA Virtual Theatre, (831) 915-1968

SOME CLASSIC HOLIDAY POEMS

Thanksgiving by *Edgar Albert Guest*

Gettin' together to smile an' rejoice,
An' eatin' an' laughin' with folks of your choice;
An' kissin' the girls an' declarin' that they
Are growin' more beautiful day after day;
Chattin' an' braggin' a bit with the men,
Buildin' the old family circle again;
Livin' the wholesome an' old-fashioned cheer,
Just for awhile at the end of the year.

Greetings fly fast as we crowd through the door
And under the old roof we gather once more
Just as we did when the youngsters were small;
Mother's a little bit grayer, that's all.
Father's a little bit older, but still
Ready to romp an' to laugh with a will.
Here we are back at the table again
Tellin' our stories as women an' men.

Bowed are our heads for a moment in prayer;
Oh, but we're grateful an' glad to be there.
Home from the east land an' home from the west,
Home with the folks that are dearest an' best.
Out of the sham of the cities afar
We've come for a time to be just what we are.
Here we can talk of ourselves an' be frank,
Forgettin' position an' station an' rank.

Give me the end of the year an' its fun
When most of the plannin' an' toilin' is done;
Bring all the wanderers home to the nest,
Let me sit down with the ones I love best,
Hear the old voices still ringin' with song,
See the old faces unblemished by wrong,
See the old table with all of its chairs
An' I'll put soul in my Thanksgivin' prayers.

A Visit from St. Nicholas by *Clement Clarke Moore*

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the
house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-deer,
With a little old driver so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now Prancer and Vixen!

On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"
As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too—
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight—
Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

Chanukah Lights Tonight by *Steven Schneider*

Our annual prairie Chanukah party—
latkes, kugel, cherry blintzes.
Friends arrive from nearby towns
and dance the twist to Chanukah Lights Tonight,
spin like a dreidel to a klezmer hit.

The candles flicker in the window.
Outside, ponderosa pines are tied in red bows.
If you squint,
the neighbors' Christmas lights
look like the Omaha skyline.

The smell of oil is in the air.
We drift off to childhood
where we spent our gelt
on baseball cards and matinees,
cream sodas and potato knishes.

No delis in our neighborhood,
only the wind howling over the crushed corn stalks.
Inside, we try to sweep the darkness out,
waiting for the Messiah to knock,
wanting to know if he can join the party.

November 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 lect1	2 unit10	3	4
5	6	7 unit10	8	9 unit10	10	11
12	13	14 unit11	15 Lect2 meet	16 unit11	17	18
19	20	21 unit11	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 unit11	29	30 unit11		

December 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 unit11	6 lect3	7 unit11	8	9
10	11	12 unit11	13	14 unit11	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Key to Calendar

**lect1= LECTURE - THE
MAGNIFICENT SARAH
BERNHARDT**

**lect2 = LECTURE - SOUTHERN
PACIFIC RAILROAD AND THE
STEINBECK BOYS FROM
HOLLISTER**

**lect3 = LECTURE - A SACRED LIGHT
IN THE DARKNESS**

**meet = GENTRAIN SOCIETY BOARD
MEETING**

**unit10 = GENT 10: AGE OF REASON
(1690-1775 AD)**

**unit11 = GENT 11: REACTION AND
REVOLUTION (1775-1815)**



Invitation to Join

Dues: \$35 per year, \$50 Couples
Send your check payable to the *MPC/Gentrain Society*

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ **Telephone:** _____

E-mail address: _____

Please clip out and send to:
Membership, *Gentrain Society* - MPC
980 Fremont St., Monterey CA 93940

Yes, I would like to contribute to the

Gentrain Society Scholarship Fund

980 Fremont Street, Monterey CA 93940

(Please make your checks payable to MPC/Gentrain Society)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

GENTRAIN INSTRUCTORS

Alan Haffa (Literature)

Alan grew up in Minnesota and is a first generation college student. He went to St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, which has a "great books" program. At St. John's he decided that his career path was to become a professor. Alan got married before his junior year at St. John's to his wife, Arlene, They moved to Wisconsin where Arlene had a research assistantship, and Alan got a job teaching seventh grade English and Science at a Catholic boarding school for Mexican boys. The next year he went to graduate school and joined the Comparative Literature Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He earned an MA in Comparative Literature and then an MA in Classics. The Haffas moved to Arizona where Alan taught History, Literature, and Philosophy in the Liberal Arts Department at Phoenix College, and after one year he ran the Honors Program and a Classical Studies Program.

Tom Logan (History)

Tom Logan's childhood, with a mother at home, a sister six years younger than himself and a geologist father, was relatively normal until the family moved to the Belgian Congo when he was eleven. At the age of 13 they visited Egypt before going on to live in Turkey. "That just blew me away," he said excitedly..."all those great ruins and then the Hittites! I knew I wanted to be an ancient historian." "I read a book that said the University of Colorado was the most beautiful school in the world. I went there as a freshman. It was too big. I opted into Foothill Junior College for a couple of years, and then Berkeley where I graduated in History with a minor in Anthropology. Then I went to the University of Chicago." While at UC Tom worked as a curator at the Oriental Institute. After teaching Ancient History in New York City for three years, he moved to the venerable Metropolitan Museum of Art. "There, as an Egyptologist, I did the installation of five galleries, from Dynasty 19 to Dynasty 30." In 1981 Tom came to Carmel as Director of the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art. And he is still pursuing his dream - discovering ancient Egyptian ruins.

Stephanie Spoto (Philosophy)

Stephanie Spoto teaches Humanities at California State University, Monterey Bay and Philosophy at Monterey Peninsula College. She holds a PhD in English Literature from The University of Edinburgh, with her doctoral work exploring the influence of esoteric and occult philosophy on early modern literature and politics. In 2013 she was an International Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre for Advance Study - Sofia (Bulgaria), with support for her project "William Lithgow (1582-1645) and Early Modern Scottish Journeys to Eastern Europe". Stephanie has talked literature and philosophy on The SRB Podcast and Not Radio, and has been the coordinator of a community philosophy reading group at Old Capitol Books in downtown Monterey for four years.

Gamble Madsen (Art/Architecture)

Gamble Madsen is originally from Claremont, California and specializes in the visualization of Christian theology in Medieval and Renaissance contexts. She attended the University of Southern California as an undergraduate and graduate student, ultimately earning a PhD in Medieval Art History. She also holds a degree in Museum Studies from George Washington University, and has worked in collections management for institutions in New York (Lowy Fine Art) and Los Angeles (LACMA). She came to MPC in 2012 and currently teaches surveys in Western and Asian Art along with a course focused on the Renaissance period.

**The Gentrain Society of MPC
2023 - 2024
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GENTRAIN SOCIETY NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

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