

UCSD'S PREUSS SCHOOL AND REFORM OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By Cecil W. Lytle
*Professor Emeritus of Music and
former Chair of the Preuss Board of
Directors*

For many decades, most American families and employers have equated the attainment of a college education with upward social and economic mobility. Given the increasing rapidity of changes in the workplace, the expectation has been that college will prepare the rising generations for productive lives in a future no one can predict. A college degree has also been taken as an indication not only that the holder has acquired advanced knowledge but also that he or she has learned perseverance and responsibility, and, we can hope, has internalized some of great ideas, books, and idealistic causes to which undergraduates are exposed.

Are there other, better ways young people can be prepared for the uncertain future? I don't think so. The "school of hard knocks" and "your mother's lap" have always been suspect launching pads. By contrast, the encounters of a university experience, in all its variety and challenges, impart learning and maturation, providing a foundation for adult life as well as ways of measuring and distinguishing personal attributes.

But while our colleges and universities are the envy of the world, the same cannot be said for America's system of compulsory public education, the institutional predicate for college. If a col-

lege degree (and all that goes with it) is the desirable outcome for the aspiring American family, the message appears to be, "Get there the best way you can." If you're poor, the path is difficult. If you're poor and a member of a historically disenfranchised "minority group," then the path is nearly nonexistent.

There is widespread agreement among educators and parents that the reform of public education requires a number of improvements: smaller class size, better trained and supported teachers, healthy and safe facilities, parental involvement, as well as more time on tasks. What seems to be absent is wide public trust and support to fund these necessities. While it has become popular sport to beat up and trash public education, its failures (and there are many) are not entirely self-inflicted.

The Role of Universities

The one institutional partner that has historically stood on the sidelines of school



reform has been higher education. Schools of education provide the basic research that underscores what is needed and train new teachers entering the profession, but schools of education, except for a precious few courageous programs, abhor wholesale change in the way K-12 education operates. The list of those universities directly taking on the challenge of running new kinds of urban schools is a "who's who" of elite campuses, including the University of Chicago, Stanford, Bard College, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, and the University of Pennsylvania. Others, like Harvard and UCLA, have developed close governing affiliations with selected local public and charter schools in the inner city.

Like most trends, the national clash over affirmative action began in California

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with regard to access to the premiere institutions of higher education in the state. Perhaps it is fitting, then, that the resolutions to the nagging issues of the affirmative action debate – the nature of access, equity, and excellence – are also being sought in California.

UCSD's Preuss School, founded in 1998 just two years after the passage of Proposition 209 (banning public institutions from taking account of race, sex, or gender), was the first university-run public school designed to raise the academic achievement of the disenfranchised low income students rarely admitted to the premiere institutions. Despite some early misgivings, Preuss enjoys widespread support because it aims to circumvent the argument over affirmative action by promoting academic excellence. The reason behind UCSD's decision to lead in urban education reform is obvious: Without such university-led interventions, the increasingly competitive admission standards of the top-tier universities assure that the social and economic divide between the better-prepared (the "haves") and the least-prepared (the "have nots") will continue to widen. This gulf is exacerbated every year universities raise their standards to new heights of selectivity.

Preuss as Petri Dish

As the first such university-sponsored school in the nation, Preuss has proven to be a productive Petri Dish for innovation and reform in public education. The ambition is to create, in an unfettered environment, model urban schools capable of implementing curricular and pedagogic innovations – at once, on one site – in order to help students and their families overcome the effects of intergenerational poverty and racism.

Because UCSD owns the charter, the Chancellor exercises ultimate authority over the governance of the school. That authority is delegated to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs with the advice and assistance of an advisory board of directors. But the school's budget does not detract from the university's main functions. About 90% of the annual operating expense for the school comes

from the school district's assigned funds for each student and 10-12% from active fundraising.

The "Scandal" That Wasn't

University personnel are eternal optimists; our hope has always been to create a model for what can go right in public education. As with any other human endeavor, however, we've also had to demonstrate how to handle affairs when things go wrong. In early May of 2007, I learned that there may have been grade reporting irregularities. As Chair of the Board of Directors, I summoned several members together to investigate the anonymous allegations. It quickly became clear that the complexity of the situation far exceeded our lay capacities; so I immediately called in **Stephanie Burke** and the UCSD Audit & Management Advisory Services (AMAS) for a more professional review of the situation. At the time, she thought that their review would just take a few weeks. However, the entanglement of conflicting stories, lost records, and disgruntled former employees made unraveling the truth a difficult task.

Their investigation found that, indeed, some grades from exotic courses (summer and online courses) were misattributed; some of the students' grades went up, some of the students' grades went down. They did not find a "smoking gun," but they did find sloppy office work that was the result of irritated former employees and a too casual approach to recording grades from summer and online classes. Despite the banner headlines that trumpeted "widespread grade

tampering" and "rampant" scandal, the audit found that about one-tenth of one percent of all Preuss School grading that year was suspect or wrongly reported. For such a visible and provocative national demonstration project, however, even that little is too high an error rate.

With the help of a second and independent audit team and the UCSD Registrar's Office, the Board of Directors has corrected office procedures to ensure that there is no repetition of this problem and cleansed the affected transcripts. I moved my office into Preuss as this story broke to assist the school's teachers and leadership group more directly in making the suggested revision in office procedures, and fend off reporters and looky-loos who daily pounced on the school yard to interview students and parents about the "controversy." (It was a bit like witnessing from the inside the slowing down of curious drivers as they pass the carnage of an auto accident.)

With great relief, the best colleges and universities in the nation trusted UCSD to get to the bottom of this situation and make necessary changes. Preuss graduating seniors in 2008 were accepted into the "A list" of distinguished institutions, including Harvard, Stanford, Oberlin, Dartmouth, Pomona, Reed, just about all of the UCs and CSUs, and many other fine institutions.

How the School Does Its Job

None of the pedagogic ideas that have made graduates of Preuss successful is new. A "Looped Advisor" assigns a teacher to a class of sixth-graders who remains their homeroom teacher for the next seven years; over this period, the teacher gets to know all the students, their families, their domestic situation, and their aspirations. A longer school day, week, and year permit more time to catch up and exceed appropriate grade level work. Similarly, smaller classes benefit from the placement of UCSD tutors in the classroom to individualize instruction and assist struggling students. In addition to deep parental involvement, research has shown that the single most influential factor in student outcome is a

Emeriti Website

The UCSD Emeriti Association maintains a website:

<http://emeriti.ucsd.edu>

Clicking the NEWS, PROGRAMS & MEETINGS button will allow you to view past issues of this newsletter. The website also provides the constitution and by-laws, lists of members, and minutes of meetings.

committed teaching and administration group continually developing their skills and knowledge base. Starting in the earliest grades, Preuss students are required to understand the material, not just regurgitate answers; the pedagogic theory behind instruction is to make students the owners of knowledge and to demonstrate that command on standardized tests, in *viva voce* presentations, in annual portfolios and internships, and in the taking of advanced courses.

What is new here is the re-commitment of modern public universities to their historic Land Grant mission. The Morrill Act, signed by President **Abraham Lincoln** on July 2, 1862, gave 3,000 acres of federal land to each of the states to establish mainly public institutions providing education in “agriculture and the mechanic arts” in order “to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes....” These became the land grant colleges. Like the other land grant colleges and other privately-funded colleges and universities, the University of California aimed to enhance both the natural and human resources of an emerging nation. In doing so, this network of higher education helped create the first sustainable middle class in the states and territories. The Preuss School and other similar efforts represent a reassertion of the land grant movement whose aim is to develop the untapped human resource of the urban core. As biomedical research responds to critical human and social needs, these educational reform efforts are higher education’s response to what nearly every thoughtful person believes to be the most pressing social problem facing America in the twenty-first century: raising and sustaining quality in public education.

Given the energetic and creative curriculum and pedagogy at Preuss, it is no surprise that its students have garnered nearly every available award in public education. Indeed, 2007 has come to be known as a “Season of Recognition.” In that year, the California Department of Education designated Preuss a “Distinguished School.” The Center for Education Reform recognized it as one of

the 53 best schools in the country. The graduating class of 2007 produced five Gates Millennium Scholars (full college scholarships through doctoral degree). And earlier this year, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked Preuss as the sixth best among the top 100 schools in the nation – up from tenth in 2007. In 2007, *Newsweek* ranked Preuss the ninth best school in the country; in late May of this year, Preuss had moved up in the *Newsweek* annual ranking to the number six spot.

Adapting the Model

Citing these many accolades is not meant to appear boastful. They are indications, rather, of what can be accomplished when the great public institutions pay attention to urgent national needs. In this regard, Preuss should not be seen as a boutique opportunity for 800 fortunate youngsters. The UCSD Center for Research on Educational Equity, Assessment and Teaching Excellence (CREATE, www.create.ucsd.edu) has undertaken the task of evaluating the implementation of reform elements at the school. CREATE has also begun to adapt and implant this web of best practices at area urban schools. Professor **Bud Mehan** and I were invited by parents to “take over” Gompers Middle School in the Chollas View community of Southeast San Diego. These were parents who had a child at Preuss and another child at Gompers; they had seen the change an invigorated school could make in the life of one of their children, and wanted the same for the others. CREATE helped the community to establish the 501c3 non-profit corporation and board of directors that successfully petitioned San Diego Unified School District to grant Gompers a charter. Gompers Charter Middle School opened September 2005 with much fanfare and promise. This past September, Lincoln High School reopened employing many of the proven practices of Preuss.

These next steps in the rollout of our model will be harder than creating the original. UCSD will not be in a position to control every aspect of these schools. UCSD CREATE has a major influence

on the GCMS Board of Directors, and the planning for Lincoln High School was led by UCSD personnel, but both schools reside in the haven of urban gangs and must endure all of the social conditions that plague the inner city.

Regarding the rollout of the idea, we are as philosophical as we are determined. The initial challenge for Preuss has already been successfully met; graduates are well prepared for and are accepted at major colleges and universities throughout the country. Research conducted by **Julian Betts** in the Economics Department shows that since 2004 Preuss’ graduating seniors rank ninth in terms of the statewide passage rate for Advanced Placement courses (ahead of Torrey Pines High and La Jolla High). It’s too early to tell how well Gompers and Lincoln will do by this standard, but early indications suggest that a turn around is taking place at Gompers. The question now is: Will the model work in real-time or is this a cure only for the laboratory?

Finding the answer to this question is certainly worth the creative energy of the University of California. With inspired leadership at the top, UC can lead the nation in testing the best practices for urban education on their own platforms, and then transfer that knowledge and know-how to selected local schools in the inner core. The model school at UC Davis, for instance, will and should look a lot different than the model school at, say, Berkeley. Like the UC Agricultural Field Stations that dot the state, these Urban Field Stations represent a major long term intervention on the part of the University of California that is rooted at the heart of a modern public research university’s mission. Over time, they will make similar contributions to the economic prosperity and social tranquility of the state: two commodities we could use a lot more of right now!

Lytle is the author of The Burden of Excellence: The Struggle to Establish the Preuss School and a Call for Urban Educational Field Stations, recently published and available from the UCSD Book Store.



Life Before UCSD: A Memoir

By Ralph Lewin

In the late 1950s I spent a year as a post-doctoral student under **Francis Haxo** at SIO and liked the place. I returned with my first wife **Joyce** after eleven years of the Far East (Woods Hole, etc.), where in winter we had dug snow out of drive-ways, scraped ice off windshields, and when necessary put chains on tires. Then one wintry day **Roger Revelle** phoned to suggest that I might apply for a research professorship at SIO, and I was pleased to do so. Apparently, a natty Italian, **Buzzati Traverso** (reputedly a baron) had conned the National Science Foundation into giving the place half a million dollars for research in marine biology. Part went towards a big international symposium on perspectives, in which experts from all over the world came to La Jolla for a week to review prospects in the field. We were divided into study groups of about five participants, each with a recording secretary (Joyce was one). Every evening, details of our celebrations were conveyed to typists, who recorded them on green foolscap sheets which regrettably have all been lost; all that remain are the texts of the talks that each of us was required to present. The rest of the money went to support five research professorships held by **William Fager**, **Benjamin Volcani**, **Per Scholander**, **Claude Zobell**, and me.

Fager had been associated with **Hans Gaffron** and **James Franck**, who were convinced that it would be biochemically impossible to determine the first steps of photosynthesis. When **Andrew Benson** and **Melvin Calvin**, using radioactive carbon, showed them to be wrong, Fager, perhaps out of frustration, chose to work on another doctorate, on bark beetle ecology, with **Charles Elton** at Oxford. When he came to Scripps he instituted a program of regular diving. Thea Schulz, his technician, kept the notes. After he went to Africa to look at big game (or perhaps on a trip to Mexico), he came back with meningitis. His wife, a Christian Scientist,

apparently ensured that he'd receive no normal medical attention until one day he collapsed in the house. Ultimately he was incapacitated for a couple of years and then died. His diving notes could not be deciphered.

Volcani came to SIO with a sample of Dead Sea water that he had collected in Israel in which he had shown that there was still microbial life. Noting that both carbon (C) and silicon (Si) are tetravalent, he postulated a kind of biochemistry in which Si replaced C. His idea didn't hold water, so he decided to work on diatoms. Joyce Lewin, who by nepotism rules



was disallowed from continuing to work with me, was assigned to Volcani's lab, but they didn't get along well together. Over a dispute about cell division synchrony, Volcani asserted that SIO was too small to employ both of them. They had many acrimonious arguments, until **Bill Nierenberg**, the Scripps Director, decreed that one of them would have to go. Volcani had tenure, Joyce didn't, so she left. After our reasonably amicable divorce, I drove her up to her new job as professor of oceanography at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Zobell, with his wife **Jean**, compiled a book on Marine Microbiology. He studied benthic bacteria, and showed how he could somehow "manipulate" culture tubes with his toes.

Scholander, having studied Greenland lichens, proposed a theory about the rise of sap in plants, invoking negative pressure (an idea that didn't go down well with physicists). He persuaded the NSF to support physiological marine biology and also to provide funding to build the research vessel "Alpha Helix," designed specifically for physiological research in near-shore waters.

I studied the genetics of *Chlamydomonas moewusii*, and later surveyed varieties of hitherto unstudied flexibacteria, to many of which I gave new names. Later, my second wife **Lanna Cheng** and I traveled worldwide and discovered a green symbiotic prokaryotic alga which I called *Prochloron*.

After five years as research professors we resumed teaching at what became UCLJ. Eminent scientists like **Harold Urey** were seduced from Chicago to join us. With two other ex-Hungarians, they studied moon dust supplied by Gustaf Arrhenius. Under the microscope bits of it looked like dinoflagellates, but I disabused them on that.

When UCLJ eventually became UCSD, I taught experimental phycology and marine microbiology, but only to graduate students – at that time we had no undergraduate students at SIO. ♦

Amazing Grapes

*Amazing grapes, how sweetly grown
In vineyards – mile on mile –
Along the valley of the Rhone
And on the banks of Rhine.
Amazing grapes are double blessed
In galleries discreet,
And trodden on, and gently pressed
By holy virgins' feet.
Amazing grapes, by warmth of sun
And miracle divine,
In vats fermented, ton on ton,
Transmute into a wine.*

♦ Ralph Lewin

Remembering Marge And Hugh Bradner

By Maxine and Colin Bloor

We are saddened to report the loss of two UCSD pioneers and Life Members of our Association, **Marge Bradner**, who died on April 10, 2008 and her husband, **Hugh**, who died on May 5, 2008. The Bradners were members of the University of California community for more than fifty years, and their family has been associated with the University for more than 100 years.

After graduating from UC Berkeley, Marge worked as a secretary at Los Alamos Laboratory where she met Hugh in 1943. **J. Robert Oppenheimer**, director of the famous wartime lab, was at their wedding at Los Alamos, but security restrictions prevented their parents from attending. In 1946 they moved to Berkeley where Hugh joined the Physics Department and Marge worked for the Dean of Women.

Marge accompanied her husband on his occasional research visits to SIO in the 1950s. It was on one of those visits that Hugh began experimenting with neoprene as material for a wet suit. He had prototype suits made for the entire family, including their daughter **Bari**. Although he never bothered to take out a patent on it, he is credited with having invented the suit. When they moved to San Diego in 1961, Hugh worked at Scripps while Marge began a career in real estate. Both the Bradners were accomplished sailors. In 1963, Hugh made the first set of seismic background measurements in the deep waters across the Pacific Ocean on a rented schooner, the *Dwyn Wen*. Marge went along and wrote a book entitled "Seismic Summer: The Story of Eleven Men and One Woman Sailing Across the South Pacific to Study the Quivering Sea Floor." It is now on the Scripps Archives Repository (<http://repositories.cdlib.org/sio/arch/biog/seismic-summer>).

A leader in almost all of Oceanids' activities, Marge was president of the orga-



nization in 1963-64 and received the Oceanid of the Year Award in 1994. She was also a member of the original WITS Investment Group that **Frieda Urey** started and was active in the second WITS group (started in 1983) until last summer. Marge was inspiring in the way that she excelled in whatever activities she engaged in and always fully enjoyed them.

On a personal note Marge and Brad were the best neighbors to have. They lived next door to us when we moved into our present home in 1977 and were there until about 2000 when they moved into a retirement community. We shared all of our family activities with them – weddings, births, deaths, and travels to Europe and Tahiti. In addition to all of Hugh's scientific contributions, he and Marge shared the pleasures of tennis, skiing, hiking, and swimming. Colin and I learned that we couldn't keep up with them but were delighted to take part with them in music in the La Jolla Symphony Chorus (Hugh a bass and Colin a tenor), in gardening (orchids and plumeria), and on our mutual enjoyment of football!

In 2005 the Bradners established two endowments at SIO, one unrestricted and one for Library Archives. The family now requests that gifts in their memory be sent to The Hugh and Marjorie Bradner Endowment at SIO or the Oceanid Memorial Fund. ♦

Mentoring

By Jack C. Fisher

Professor Emeritus of Surgery

"What on earth would I have to say that would be useful to an undergraduate?" This came from a professor emeritus asked to serve as a mentor. In fact, we all have lots to offer by way of advice and encouragement, based if nothing else on our own experiences. Surely, none of us can ever forget our formative years – and what we wish someone had explained to us then about how to make the most of them.

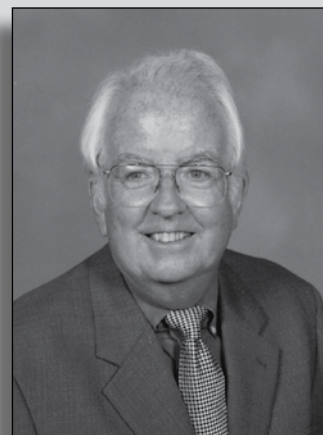
Nearly two dozen of us are now serving as mentors for nearly three dozen students. Special thanks to those able to serve more than one student! And there is still room for more of you, especially in fields like political science, economics, engineering, environmental studies, and the arts. Our coordinator, **Sharon Russakoff**, keeps her eye on everything, including how mentees evaluate their mentors. She reports that we are receiving rave reviews; requests for reassignment are rare, and primarily dictated by changes in field of interest. This has certainly been a learning opportunity for all of us.

Colin Bloor has asked me to oversee the project this year. In addition to learning about actual experiences, I will be seeking additional participation, assisting with "match-making," and planning for special events. These will include a reception for new mentees, a training seminar for mentors in October, and there will be a repeat of our highly successful seminar for pre-med students first held last year with representation from med school admissions counselors.

I invite you to get in touch with me (jcfisher@ucsd.edu) or Sharon (srussakoff@ucsd.edu) with your expressed interest and ideas.

President's Message

As we begin our new 2008-2009 academic year I am happy to say the UCSD Emeriti Association is active and well. Under the strong leadership of **Don Helinski** this past year we have continued to make significant accomplishments. With the unstinting support of Chancellor **Mary Anne Fox** a new UCSD Retirement Resource Center was opened to house the activities of both the Emeriti and Retirement Associations. Our membership continues to grow; as we enter the new academic year we have nearly 400 members who have renewed their annual membership, as well as a good number of Lifetime members. Other highlights during the past year included the launching of the Association's mentoring program under the leadership of **Mel Green**. The faculty who served as mentors enjoyed their roles and showed how we can contribute to the ongoing activities and needs of the UCSD campus. We had a variety of monthly programs during the year presenting the ongoing activities of key faculty members from nearly all major divisions of UCSD. Interest in these programs was high, as shown by the largest attendances in years at our monthly meetings. *Chronicles*, our bi-monthly newsletter, under the strong hand of editor **Sandy Lakoff**, continued to offer a wide variety of articles by emeriti and other faculty on topics of interest. For the first time we presented Dickson Awards (a system-wide award given to each UC campus) to two of our members recognizing their service to students, faculty development, emeriti, and community. The first two recipients were **Kurt Benirschke** and **Sandy Lakoff**. Late in the year Don initiated the process of establishing a UCSD Emeriti Association Undergraduate Scholarship Fund from contributions of emeriti faculty.



In my role as President this coming year I look forward to working with all of you. Our new Executive Committee has a number of members continuing from last year. The new members represent some different perspectives from other parts of the campus and we look forward to their stimulating contributions too. We do have some challenges as we enter the new year. Although the mentoring program is off to a good start we need to expand it more since it visibly demonstrates the significant contributions we Emeriti can provide to UCSD in our new roles. **Jack Fisher** is taking over the reins of directing our mentoring activities so I encourage you to contact him about your interest in becoming involved. The Emeriti Scholarship Fund is off to a good start and already an interesting development has occurred. We are considering inviting emeriti making contributions to the Fund to designate whether they prefer that their contributions go to an undergraduate or graduate scholarship. Since many of our members were primarily involved in graduate education this is an opportunity to contribute to the scholarship you believe in most strongly. Our web site is in the process of being updated and revised in format. We are most happy to hear from you with ideas we might consider and, when changes are made, how effective they are.

As with all organizations, it is the people involved that make it work well. We are blessed in the Emeriti Association with the active past and ongoing members. It is a special pleasure for me to be working with **Jackie Hanson**, our Vice-President/President-Elect, and **Suzann Cioffi**, UCSD Retirement Resource Center Executive Director. Jackie chairs our Program Committee. On page 8, you can see the excellent programs she already has lined up for our Fall Quarter. Suzann is a special person with high energy who motivates you to do your best at all times. I encourage all of you to invite more colleagues to take part in the rewarding activities of the Association. The more visible we are in our contributions to the UCSD campus activities the more we may enjoy the rewarding fellowship we have discovered amongst ourselves. I look forward to seeing you at our meetings this year.

✦ Colin Bloor



Anecdote

By **Sandy Lakoff**

Keeping Up With the Times

Each month, the serials division at Geisel kindly bundles and sends me its copies of the Times of London, once they are replaced by the microfilm versions – which is why I can share these vital reports on life across the pond.

♦ ♦ ♦

Cogito ergo dim sum? A wealthy property owner left almost ten million pounds to her favorite Chinese restaurant in Essex. She was especially fond of a dish served there made of pickled leeks and bean sprouts. Her relatives went to court to contest the will, claiming she had obviously been of unsound mind in drawing it up. The co-owner of the restaurant, one **Bee Lian Man**, told the court that his benefactor had been like part of the family for years and dismissed her relatives as a “bunch of hooligans” who were only after her money. The explanation of the woman’s behavior became plainer when it was revealed that she had also left money to Jewish charities. It brought to mind the oft-told tale of the exchange between a Jew and a Chinese friend. When the Chinese bragged that his civilization was four thousand years old, the Jew one-upped him by noting that his went back five thousand years. Puzzled, the Chinese asked, “Really? But what did your people eat for the first thousand years?”

♦ ♦ ♦

Out of a Molehill? **Tony Henry**, a British opera singer who agreed to belt out the Croatian national anthem before England’s soccer match with that visiting country’s team, confessed afterward that he hadn’t understood a word of the anthem. But his Croatian listeners got quite a rise out of it, in a manner of speaking. In one place he was supposed to have sung the words “Mila kuda si planina,” which mean roughly, “You know my dear how we love your mountains.” He actually sang, “Mila kura si planina,” or “My dear, my penis is a mountain.” He has

been invited to appear in western Croatia in recognition of his performance – as a singer, that is.

♦ ♦ ♦

One for all UCSD Women: Clue in the Times Cryptic crossword devoted to **Ian Fleming** and **James Bond**: “Special code Ian used for ‘nymph.’” (one word, seven letters.) Hint: The clue contains a hidden anagram.

♦ ♦ ♦

A Clerical Error? The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. **Rowan Williams**, presided at an unpublicized Eucharist for lesbian and gay clergy at an unannounced location in London. Secrecy was so tight that the list of attendees was sent to Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop’s residence, with orders that it be shredded as soon as he had read it. A spokeswoman said Dr. Williams was committed to “the listening process” agreed upon at an earlier church conference on human sexuality. Anglican evangelicals were highly critical. It all leaves one to wonder whether Dr. Williams devoted his sermon to the profound theological question once posed by **St. Anselm**: “Cur Deus homo?” (What were you thinking? It translates as “Why did God become man?”)

♦ ♦ ♦

Ancient Adages: An Egyptologist formerly of the British Museum, notes apropos an exhibit of ancient artifacts that tomb wall hieroglyphs and surviving papyri show that there was lots of *joie de vivre* in the good old days of the Fertile Crescent. For example, he points out, scribes composed manuals of proverbs and etiquette that include such eternal verities as these:

“Do not tell secrets to your wife unless you want the whole street to know them.”

“Teaching a woman is like a sack of sand with its side split open.”

“If you are going to say something to your boss, count on your hands up to ten.”

♦ ♦ ♦

“*Mind the Gaffe.*” An article so nicely titled tells why **Emma Clark**, for almost ten years the voice of Transport for London – famous for recording “Mind the Gap” – was fired after she produced some spoof announcements on the internet. London Underground admitted some of the cracks (n.b.) were funny but said others crossed the line, so to speak. What did she say that was so offensive? Three of the more egregious examples:

“Here we are crammed again into a sweaty Tube carriage . . . If you are female, smile at the bloke next to you and make his day. He’s probably not had sex for months.”

“We would like to remind our American tourist friends that you are almost certainly talking too loud.”

“Would passengers filling in their Su Dokus please accept that they are just crosswords for the unimaginative and are not more impressive just because they contain numbers?”

♦ ♦ ♦

Prime Minister **Gordon Brown** asked Britons to suggest a new slogan for the national seal – one that expressed the essence of the British spirit. Be careful what you wish for! Some entries:

- No Motto Please, We’re British
- Fancy a Cup of Tea?
- Sorry, Is This the Queue?
- At Least We’re Not French
- Once Great: Britain
- Americans Who Missed the Boat

It sets one to thinking. What would make a proper slogan for the good old USA? Some possibilities come to mind:

- America: Bled White and Blue
- USA! Got a Problem with That?
- Like Whatever . . .
- “No habla Espanol!”
- In God We Trust; All Others Pay Cash

Any better ideas?

♦ ♦ ♦

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Return Service Requested



Chronicles
September 2008

Mark Your Calendar!

Christopher Ashley

Artistic Director, La Jolla Playhouse

Behind the Footlights: What's On at the Playhouse

Wednesday, October 15, 4:00-5:30



Thad Kousser

Associate Professor of Political Science

Analyzing the Results of the 2008 Election

Wednesday, November 12, 4:00-5:30



Green Faculty Club

Chronicles

Newsletter of the UCSD Emeriti Association



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Jeff Calcara Layout and Design

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Paul Friedman Secretary-Treasurer

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Forward queries, changes in mailing/e-mail address to **Suzann Cioffi, Executive Director, UCSD Retirement Resource Center, 0020, UCSD, 9500 Gilman Drive, 92093-0020; telephone (858) 534-4724 • Emeriti@ucsd.edu**