

Got the Summertime Blues? Join us for...



Something **Old**...

For the last 60 years, the **President's Alumni Picnic** has afforded old friends an opportunity to gather together and share great memories. From its beginnings at Peony Park, the picnic has continually evolved.

Something **New**...

Again this year, we are planning some exciting changes — starting with a **new date**. The event will move from June to Saturday, July 29. (More details will be forthcoming.)

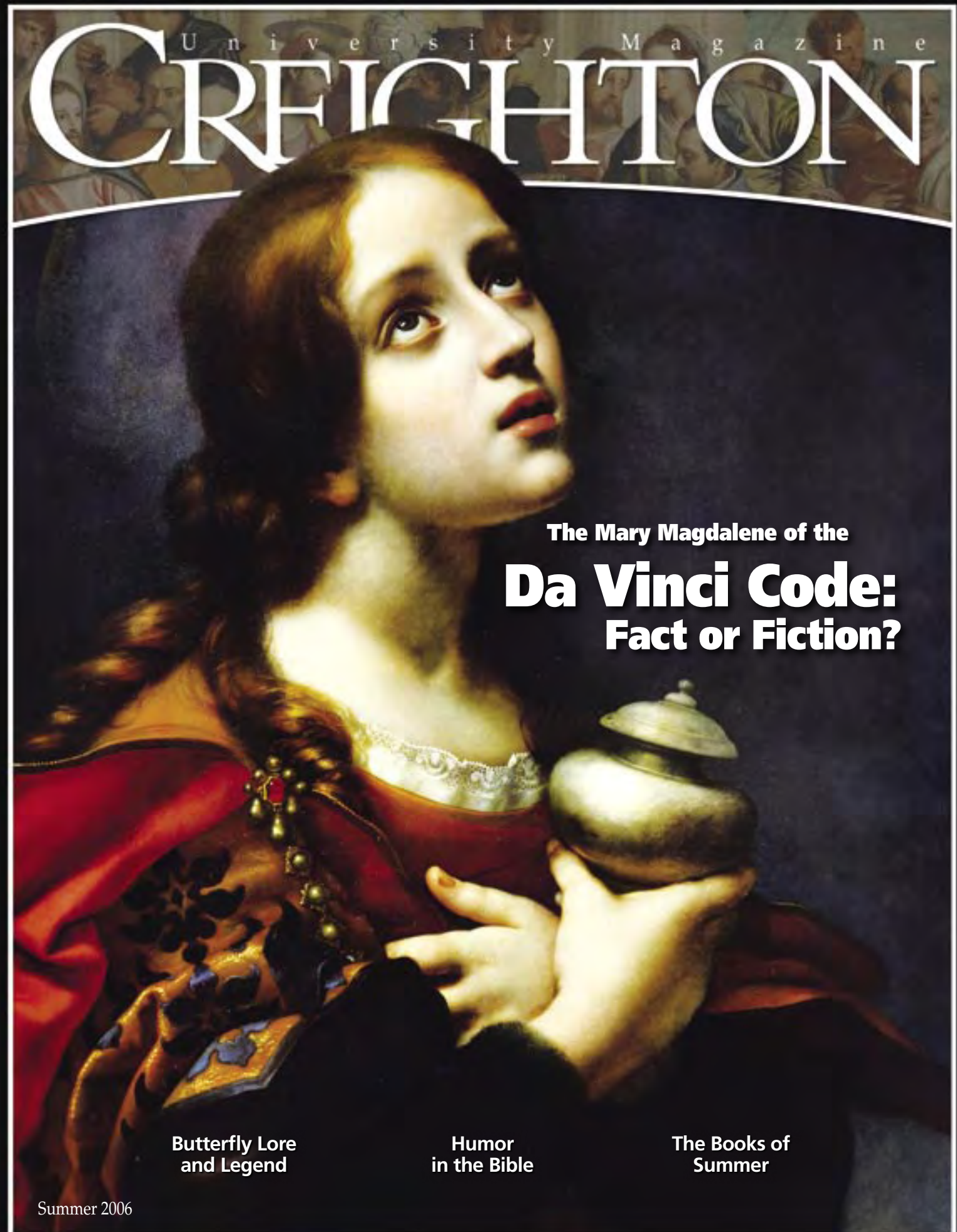
Something **Borrowed**...

As we wed the old with the new, we will borrow heavily upon Creighton's family atmosphere and warm hospitality. Remember, **you're always welcome here**.

Something **Blue**...

So join us this summer. And don't forget to **wear your blue!**

Creighton
UNIVERSITY



The Mary Magdalene of the
**Da Vinci Code:
Fact or Fiction?**

Butterfly Lore
and Legend

Humor
in the Bible

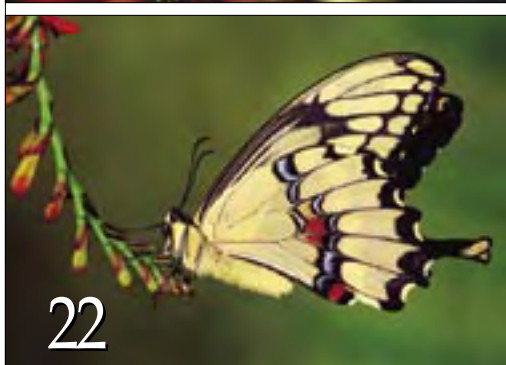
The Books of
Summer

Summer 2006



**The Mary Magdalene of *The Da Vinci Code*:
Fact or Fiction?16**

Was Mary Magdalene the "Holy Vessel," as the plot of the best-selling thriller *The Da Vinci Code* espouses? Creighton theology professor Susan Calef, Ph.D., unravels fact from fiction to reveal a clearer picture of this fascinating early follower of Christ.



Butterfly Lore and Legends22

It seems as if humans have always been fascinated by butterflies. From Lakota Indians to ancient Greeks, cultures and religions through the ages have attached mythical qualities to these beautiful, fluttering creatures. Creighton biologist Ted Burk, D.Phil., examines some of these legends.



Humor in the Bible26

While it's not exactly *Saturday Night Live*, the Bible offers some interesting plays on words and sounds that would have brought a smile, if not a chuckle, to ancient readers.



The Books of Summer32

With the lazy, hazy days of summer nearly upon us, we polled Creighton faculty and staff to get their recommendations for summertime reading.

University News4

Alumni News34

Reflections46

On the Cover:

"Mary Magdalene"
by Italian artist Carlo Dolci (1616-1686).

**Winner of 2006 CASE
Awards for Excellence in
Writing and Photography**



**Message
from the
University
President**

Creating Connections

Earlier this month, Creighton University celebrated its 115th spring commencement.

While we are proud of our graduates and their accomplishments, these ceremonies truly mark a new beginning. We ask our graduates to be leaders and agents of change in a complex world.

Much of this column focuses on our undergraduate students, but the same efforts are expended on our graduate and professional students, as well.

In all cases, we have a responsibility to educate our students to be comfortable in the world beyond the University. It's been noted that effective leaders must be able to make connections between academic learning, professional practice and important public questions. A Creighton education, then, provides the knowledge and ethical compass by which our graduates can pose their own meaningful questions and seek sustainable, appropriate solutions.

While we remain committed to our core principles, we realize that higher education is changing dramatically. We must be open to that change.

As I noted in my annual address to the University community in February, the future of academe is being shaped by several national trends. These include cuts in federal funding, modest endowment returns and increasing health care costs. We also face the prospect of fewer students from our traditional feeder states — Nebraska and Iowa.

To chart our future, we must continue to facilitate meaningful connections for our students.

According to the latest research, students today thirst for an education that integrates traditional pedagogy with an examination of moral and ethical values, spirituality, social responsibility, self-awareness and faith.

In the book *Putting Students First: How Colleges Develop Students Purposefully*, which prominently features Creighton, the authors argue that "an effective and ideal undergraduate college education is one that centers on holistic student development, including the search for meaning and purpose in life."

At Creighton, we have an obligation to maintain an atmosphere and culture that fosters this connection — a place "where the Gospel is in dialogue with culture" and "where faith meets reason." In an age of increasing secularization, Creighton must not be afraid to hold in tension the best of what a university is and the best of what Jesuit and Catholic bring to the academy.

While today's "millennium" students are technologically savvy and idealistic, they also come to America's campuses with great vulnerability bred from our increasingly fast-paced, stressful world. With this backdrop, the task of mentoring and guiding our students academically, emotionally and spiritually falls squarely upon our shoulders. Whether it's through our counseling center, retention efforts or programs within our residence halls, we must connect with our students.

A Creighton education also challenges students to connect with the wider community and the world, especially with the poor and the marginalized. To that end, our Center for Service and Justice sent a record 192 students to volunteer around the country during spring break — to such places as the hurricane affected region of the gulf. We also continue to offer students opportunities for service and reflection in the Dominican Republic, as well as locally, through other outreach efforts.

Creighton is animated by its Jesuit tradition. This year, the Society of Jesus is celebrating a jubilee year — 450 years since the death of founder St. Ignatius Loyola and 500 years since the birth of two of the order's early followers, St. Francis Xavier and Blessed Pierre Favre. This fall, we will offer our undergraduate freshmen a unique program to connect with the culture of study within our Jesuit institution — the *Ratio Studiorum* Program, an allusion to the Jesuits' original "plan of studies" adopted in 1599.

To ensure Creighton's future viability, the University also must connect with a wider, more diverse population of prospective students, especially in light of the declining demographics in Nebraska and Iowa. Creating a diverse human community of students, faculty and staff is one of our institutional priorities. In our global society, connecting with and understanding cultures different from our own is critical to our students' success. To promote and facilitate that effort, we held our first University-wide Diversity Forum in March. You can read my address from the forum online at: <http://www2.creighton.edu/administration/president/speeches/diversityforum2006/>.

Creating these connections is a vital part of a Creighton education, for it is in these connections that we grow more fully, seek truth and justice more passionately, know God more intimately and live more completely.

Enjoy your summer, and may God bless and keep you and your family.

John P. Schlegel, S.J.



CREIGHTON

Publisher: Creighton University; Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., President; Lisa Calvert, Vice President for University Relations. *Creighton University Magazine* staff: Kim Barnes Manning, Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Public Relations; Rick Davis, Editor; Sheila Swanson, Associate Editor; Pamela A. Vaughn, Features Editor. Editorial Advisers: Cam Enarson, M.D., M.B.A.; Christine Wiseman, J.D.; Richard O'Brien, M.D.; Diane Dougherty; Rev. Donald A. Doll, S.J.; Tamara Buffalohead-McGill; and Jayne Schram.

Creighton University Magazine (USPS728-070) is published quarterly in February, May, August and November by Creighton University, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178-0001. Periodicals postage paid at Omaha, Nebraska, and additional entry points. Address all mail to Marketing and Public Relations, Omaha, NE 68178. Postmaster: Send change of address to *Creighton University Magazine*, P.O. Box 3266, Omaha, NE 68103-0078.

For more enrollment information, contact the Undergraduate Admissions Office at 1-800-282-5835, admissions@creighton.edu.

To make a gift to the University, contact the Office of Development at 1-800-334-8794.

For the latest on alumni gatherings, contact the Alumni Relations Office at 1-800-CU-ALUMS (800-282-5867) or check online at www.creighton.edu/alumni.

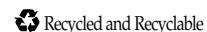
Send letters to the editor to Rick Davis at rcd@creighton.edu; fax, (402) 280-2549; Creighton University, Marketing and Public Relations, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178.

Update your mailing address or send alumni news (births, weddings, promotions, etc.) electronically through www.creighton.edu/alumni, call 1-800-334-8794 or mail to Office of Development, Creighton University, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178.

View the magazine online at www.creightonmagazine.org

www.creighton.edu

Copyright © 2006 by Creighton University



Printed with Soy Ink

Creighton University Magazine's Purpose

Creighton University Magazine, like the University itself, is committed to excellence and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in all its forms. The magazine will be comprehensive in nature. It will support the University's mission of education through thoughtful and compelling feature articles on a variety of topics. It will feature the brightest, the most stimulating, the most inspirational thinking that Creighton offers. The magazine also will promote Creighton, and its Jesuit, Catholic identity, to a broad public and serve as a vital link between the University and its constituents. The magazine will be guided by the core values of Creighton: the inalienable worth of each individual, respect for all of God's creation, a special concern for the poor, and the promotion of justice.

Recognizing African American Glaucoma Experts

Creighton's Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, M.D., is the author of a new book, *Maintaining the Target Intraocular Pressure: African American Glaucoma Specialists* — a celebration of the accomplishments and contributions of the leading 21st century African American glaucoma specialists to the field of ophthalmology.

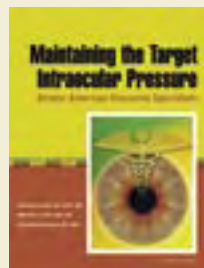
Kosoko-Lasaki, herself an African American and a leading expert in the treatment and prevention of glaucoma, co-authored the book with Mildred Olivier, M.D., and Edward Burney, M.D. At Creighton, Kosoko-Lasaki serves as associate vice president for Health Sciences, associate professor of surgery (ophthalmology), and associate professor of preventive medicine and public health.

Nipper Appointed to Federal Drug Testing Board

Henry Nipper, Ph.D., director of clinical chemistry and toxicology in Creighton's Department of Pathology, has been appointed to the Drug Testing Advisory Board for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The board makes recommendations to the agency regarding the direction, scope, balance and emphasis of federal drug testing activities and the federal drug testing laboratory certification program. These recommendations are generally followed by state agencies and the private sector for non-federally regulated drug testing.

Nipper was appointed to serve a four-year term on the board, comprised of individuals who are recognized as experts in analytical forensic toxicology, specimen collection procedures or interpretation of drug testing results. Nipper also serves Creighton as associate professor of pathology and assistant dean for admissions in the School of Medicine.



New Book Offers Tips for Alzheimer's Caregivers

Creighton's Patricia Callone and Roger Brumback, M.D., are co-authors of a new book titled *A Caregiver's Guide to Alzheimer's Disease: 300 Tips for Making Life Easier*. They are also the authors of *Alzheimer's Disease: A Handbook for Caregivers, Family, and Friends*, published in 2004.

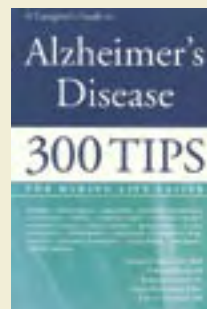
Callone serves as vice president for Institutional Relations at Creighton and is a past president of the Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter. Brumback is chair of the Department of Pathology and a professor of pathology and psychiatry. He is a noted expert on Alzheimer's and has educated groups across the country about the disease.

The book's other authors are Connie Kudlacek, executive director of the Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter; Janaan Manternach, co-director of Life, Love, Joy Associates, a company specializing in writing educational and religious materials; and Barbara Vasiloff, co-founder and president of Discipline with Purpose, Inc., and an Omaha teacher for more than 25 years.

More than 5 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's, a debilitating disease that affects the brain's nerve cells and causes memory loss. The book is designed to educate patients, their families and caregivers about the physical changes taking place in the brain of someone with Alzheimer's.

"By understanding what is physically happening to the brain, caregivers like me can learn to apply our own special skills and talents throughout the disease process," Callone said. "My experience of being a caregiver to three family members has been a wonder-filled and life-altering experience and gave me insight that I wanted to share with others."

Also contributing to the book were Siobhan Champ-Blackwell and Judith Bergjord of Creighton's Health Sciences Library, and Helene Lohman, O.T.D., associate professor of occupational therapy at Creighton.



McGovern Kicks Off Horning Lecture

At Creighton on April 11 to inaugurate the first annual Ross Horning Lecture was fellow South Dakota native, Democrat and historian George McGovern, longtime friend of the late Creighton professor.

Horning, beloved professor of history at Creighton for 41 years, died last April following a brief illness.

McGovern, 83, spoke on the theme "America: The Road Ahead" to a near-capacity audience at Creighton's Lied Education Center for the Arts. Long known for his stance against the Vietnam War, McGovern also gave listeners a glimpse into the history of America at war.

"The highest patriotism is not a blind acceptance of official policy, but a love of one's country deep enough to call her to a higher standard."

— George McGovern

Five times elected to political office, McGovern flew a total of 32 combat missions as a B-24 bomber pilot in World War II.

But he said that the courage it took to fly those missions "was nothing compared to the courage it took for me to stand up in the Senate and to tell my president (fellow Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson) that the Vietnam War was wrong."

"I was fed up to the ears with old men dreaming up wars for young men to die in." He still is.

Calling World War II "the last war I believed in," McGovern drew comparisons between the American involvement in Vietnam and our involvement in Iraq today.

"Like Vietnam, Iraq was no threat to us," McGovern said. "But we went into Iraq without the United Nations, without the European Union, without the Arab League."



Photo by Dave Weaver

Former U.S. senator and one-time presidential candidate George McGovern inaugurated the Ross Horning Lecture, named for the late Creighton history professor.

The McGovern File

- U.S. Representative, 1956-60
- U.S. Senator, 1962-1980
- U.S. Democratic Presidential Candidate, 1972

Because we did so, we are virtually standing alone, he said. "I think the time has come for us to bring our people home."

McGovern then went on to outline his vision for America's future, which he says must include an end both to unilateral interventions and "going after whoever disagrees with us." Taking the work of the United Nations more seriously; comprehensive health care for every American; a new take on the GI Bill that would open up college to all Americans who can benefit by higher education; an energy policy not written by oil company executives; an efficient railway system; and election funding taken out of private hands and put into the hands of the taxpayers round out McGovern's list for his country's future.

The lecture series in Horning's honor is made possible by donations to Creighton's WILLING TO LEAD CAMPAIGN. For more information on the Ross Horning Lecture Series, contact the Office of Development, (402) 280-2740.

New Program Caters to Working Adults

Creighton is offering a new accelerated degree program for adult learners beginning this fall through University College.

Through *AcceleratedCreighton*, working adults can earn a bachelor of arts degree in organizational communication or creative writing in four years or less.

The program condenses the normal semester into an intense eight-week schedule. Evening classes cater to the working adult. Students will be able to take up to four accelerated courses per semester by coming to campus two nights a week. Some requirements can be completed online or through independent study, and summer classes will also be offered.

Students enrolled in other majors — besides organizational communication and creative writing — can complete their core requirements in the *AcceleratedCreighton* program with a reduced tuition rate.

An associate degree and a certificate also are offered as part of the program. For more information, call (402) 280-2424 or visit <http://adultdegrees.creighton.edu>.



Artist of the Year

The Rev. Don Doll, S.J., professor of journalism and mass communication and the Heider Jesuit Chair at Creighton University, was presented with the Nebraska Arts Council's Artist of the Year Award in January.



Creighton students, from left, Brian Oszakiewski, Matthew Manning, Brian Travis and Rachel Knust lived, worked and studied in Washington, D.C., during the spring semester as part of the Capitol Hill Internship Program (CHIP).

Program Gives Students Capitol Hill Experience

By Eugene Curtin

About 1,200 miles from the serenity of Creighton University's campus lies the bustling maze of Capitol Hill. There, in the nation's capital, while lobbyists maneuver for advantage, politicians write and rewrite laws, and justices mull the great issues of the day, four Creighton students have themselves stepped into the arena.

Rachel Knust, Matthew Manning, Brian Oszakiewski and Brian Travis are among the small army of college students who annually flock to Washington, D.C., to take unpaid jobs serving members of Congress, justices and presidents. It's an opportunity to be at the center of national and global affairs and an introduction to the wheeling and dealing of the real world.

Oszakiewski works in the office of Rep. Daniel Lipinski, a first-term Democrat from Illinois. He has found that his time on Capitol Hill is far from token.

"My boss gives me actual, legitimate work to do, and I often attend hearings and briefings," he said.

Knust works at the White House, Travis at the Democratic National Committee and Manning at the Supreme Court. They are part of the Capitol Hill Internship Program (CHIP), a program involving 10 schools in seven states. The program connects students to Washington, D.C., internships and gives them four days work a week — not to mention invaluable contacts and a better understanding of the opportunities available in the seat of the most powerful government in the world. The fifth day is classroom time.

Manning sounds as though he can hardly believe his luck. He works for the Clerk of the Supreme Court, where he helps the admissions director handle applications from lawyers wishing to be members of the Supreme Court Bar. His work has allowed him to meet Chief Justice John Roberts as well as Associate Justices Clarence Thomas, Anthony Kennedy, David Souter, Samuel Alito, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez.

And, oh yes, Anna Nicole Smith, the former *Playboy* "playmate" whose legal effort to secure a portion of her late husband's billion-dollar

estate found itself before the high court. "I actually talked with her for a few minutes at the court on the day of her case," Manning said.

Knust works at the White House, in the Office of White House Personnel, which is responsible for hiring the approximately 450 people who work there. The integrity of the administration of President George W. Bush has been much called into question lately, Knust said, but things look different from the inside. "It has been inspiring during this difficult time to see how the people here work with such integrity and respect for their work," she said.

Travis, who describes himself as a political junkie, said there is no better place to be.

"This is the epicenter of political life in the United States," he said. "Where else would you want to be? Where else can you just casually stroll about the centers of power?"

His work at the Democratic National Committee has brought Travis into fairly frequent contact with Democratic Party Chairman Howard Dean, the former governor of Vermont. "I have met Gov. Dean several times," Travis said. "He's very laid back."

Primarily, Travis helps research issues in preparation for the 2008 presidential campaign but has also briefed Dean about issues in a Virginia race during a breakfast with Dean and Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill.

Travis said his involvement in the program has been rewarding. "I saw the advertisement for this program on the bulletin boards (at Creighton) and would think how awesome it would be," he said. "But I was sure in the back of my mind that it would never happen."

That it did has much to do with Graham Ramsden, Ph.D., associate professor of political science at Creighton.

Ramsden is currently the president of the 10-school, seven-state consortium that matches about 19 students per semester with Washington internships. He said the program was founded in 2000 by professor Robert Manzer at Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Neb.

Ramsden said consortium students live in a three-story townhome in Washington, with the bottom floor used for classrooms, the third floor housing the male students and the second floor housing the female students.

The internships last one semester and are funded by the students themselves who apply funds they would have spent on housing at Creighton to their Washington expenses.

"This is the epicenter of political life in the United States. Where else would you want to be? Where else can you just casually stroll about the centers of power?"

— Brian Travis

"We try to keep the cost as close as possible to their usual expenses," Ramsden said, although the cost of living inevitably will be higher in Washington, D.C., than in Omaha.

Manning said the experience has provided him with opportunities he would have never had otherwise.

"Living in this city allows you to meet and network with so many different people. Not only have I met countless law school deans, but I have received enormous insight into the law profession and what I may want to do with my future."

Further information on the program is available at www.umcwc.com.
About the author: Curtin is a freelance writer in Omaha.



Creighton's Tanya Warren, right, congratulates Olive Circo on receiving the first Leaders for Life Award.

Circo Receives Leaders for Life Award

Olive (Odorisio) Circo, PhBjrn'41, Creighton's first female cheerleader, was honored with the University's first Leaders for Life Award at the Leaders for Life luncheon for women's athletics on May 5.

The luncheon was a fundraiser for Creighton's women's athletic programs. Headlining the event was Creighton Hall of Fame athlete and associate head women's basketball coach Tanya Warren.

Circo joined Creighton's formerly all-male pep squad in 1937 and was an advocate for women's rights. She and her late husband, Sebastian, founded Precision Bearing Service in Omaha in 1945. Now Precision Industries, the company is the largest family-owned industrial distribution and supply chain services provider in the United States.

Olive's son, Dennis, established the Olive Odorisio Circo Endowed Spirit Scholarship at Creighton in her honor in 2005. The scholarship assists student members of the Creighton Dance Team who are in need of financial aid to continue their education.



Haddad

Haddad Works on Pandemic Planning

Amy Haddad, Ph.D., director of Creighton's Center for Health Policy and Ethics, has been invited by the World Health Organization to participate in one of five working groups discussing influenza pandemic plans worldwide.

Her group will focus on ethical issues associated with the roles and responsibilities of health care workers in dealing with a pandemic. Participants meet this month in Geneva, Switzerland, and plan to offer recommendations in June.



Bakewell

Creighton Professor Wins Award for Teaching Excellence

Geoff Bakewell, Ph.D., the Michael W. Barry Professor and associate professor in the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies, recently received the Award for Excellence in College Teaching from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South.

Bakewell has been with the University for 12 years and directs the Honors Program in the College of Arts and Sciences. He has written extensively on ancient Greek history and literature.

The Classical Association of the Middle West and South is an organization of university, college, secondary and elementary teachers of Latin, Greek and all other studies that focus on the world of classical antiquity.



Photo by Mark Romesser

Medical student Cindy Paul listens to a lecture on her iPod.

Medical School Begins Podcasting

Shhh! Don't disturb that student intently listening to her iPod. She may be studying for an upcoming test on anatomy or for one on infectious diseases.

Thanks to the new MedCast system, Creighton's first- and second-year medical students can now download course lectures onto their iPods.

Lectures are recorded digitally and are available for download the same day. Students also can subscribe to have the lectures automatically "pushed" to their iPods or computers.

"This is the next generation of communication for Creighton's School of Medicine. We are reaching the students where they are," said Bill Jeffries, Ph.D., associate dean for medical education.

"Many of our students are auditory learners," he continued. "They can review lectures at their convenience to reinforce understanding of the curriculum."

Early usage statistics indicate that this form of learning is very popular. The amount of network traffic for the School of Medicine website has doubled since podcasting began in January.

"I still attend the lectures," said first-year medical student Cindy Paul, "but the podcast allows me to be exposed to the material again. I can listen to the entire lecture again and take notes on things I didn't catch in class."

Student Organizes NAACP Chapter at Creighton

Creighton junior Kirsten Treadwell has taken to heart the NAACP slogan: "Don't talk about it, be about it."

The political science major has started the first NAACP college chapter in the state of Nebraska at Creighton.

"I feel it's important because of the historical and current success of the national chapter in equal rights for the poor and oppressed from all races," Treadwell said.

"At Creighton, we will be advocates for all students, as well as the community," she continued. "We would like to show people that there are still inequalities among class, race and gender, and that we, as students, can do something about it."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, organized in 1909, is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization, with a half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world.

Treadwell was active in the NAACP youth division as a student at Omaha Northwest High School. In addition to serving as chapter president at Creighton, Treadwell also performs with the University's African American Student Association choir and works as a tutor coordinator with Classic Upward Bound, which helps high school students from low-income families prepare for college.



Photo by Mark Romesser

Treadwell, standing, tutors Omaha high school students Amber King, left, and Sydney Powe.

Creighton Text Messages Admitted Students

Creighton was featured on *CNN Headline News* and in newspapers across the country for its newest admissions strategy — text messaging admitted students.

Creighton is among the first colleges nationwide to text message students. An informal poll by the *Omaha World-Herald* found no other colleges or universities in Iowa or Nebraska doing anything similar.

Since Creighton added the option on application forms last fall, about 44 percent of admitted students have been notified through personal messages flashing on their cell-phone screens:

"Barb, congratulations. You've been admitted to Creighton."

The technology allows the University to respond to the needs of its students for "instant information," said Mary Chase, director of admissions and scholarships. A national survey found 63 percent of cell-phone users ages 18 to 27 regularly text message. With text messaging, successful applicants can know the University's decision up to a week earlier than before.

Sr. Joan Mueller Receives National Points of Light Award

Sr. Joan Mueller, OSC, Ph.D., professor of theology, was honored by the national Points of Light Foundation in April for her work with the Sudanese community in Omaha.

Mueller is founder and executive director of Project Welcome. Begun in 2002 to respond to the desperate needs of Sudanese refugees and their families, the program now funds a full-time social service director, a summer school, summer math, vocabulary and prep camps, and at-school tutoring. A recent independent report found that "Project Welcome's educational programs are effective and could be used as a model for other at-risk school children."



Mueller

Project Welcome has raised more than \$70,000 to help Sudanese immigrants repay the cost of their airfare to the United States. In addition, the program has helped families find affordable housing and assisted with job searches, transportation and emergency assistance. Mueller coordinates a network of hundreds of volunteers to fund and staff the program that operates on donations and small grants. Project Welcome's aim is to help Sudanese refugee families in the Omaha area, with a special emphasis on working with children to promote academic excellence.

"Without Project Welcome, these children would be at grave risk," Mueller said. "We cannot lose this first generation of Sudanese children to poverty and violence."

The Daily Points of Light Award honors individuals or organizations making a positive, lasting difference in the lives of others. It focuses on the goals for children and youth set by the President's Summit for America's Future. The awards program was initiated in 1998 by former President George H.W. Bush.

Medical Center Names CEO

Linda Ollis was named chief executive officer of Creighton University Medical Center in March. She succeeds Phil Gustafson, who stepped down in September to take a job in Arizona. Ollis had been serving as the hospital's chief operating officer. Ollis, a 25-year veteran of the health care field, is the first woman to hold the CEO post.



Photo by Mike Kleveiter

Creighton law professor Edward Morse, left, receives congratulations from Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., after being installed as the first holder of the McGrath North Mullin & Kratz Endowed Chair in Business Law.

Morse First Holder of McGrath North Chair

Creighton University law professor Edward Morse was installed as the first holder of the McGrath North Mullin & Kratz Endowed Chair in Business Law in the Creighton University School of Law on Feb. 15. Endowed chairs are one of the main priorities of *WILLING TO LEAD: THE CAMPAIGN FOR CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY*.

"The creation of this chair is testament to the tremendous relationship [between] the McGrath North law firm and the Creighton law school."

— Patrick Borchers, J.D.
Dean, School of Law

"As a University, Creighton must constantly renew itself so that we can prepare students to better serve the fluctuating needs of society. One way we are able to fulfill this mission is through endowed chairs," said Creighton President the

Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J. "I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to the members of the McGrath North Mullin & Kratz firm. We note your gift with immense gratitude and unmitigated pride and thank the firm for its ongoing partnership with Creighton University."

The Omaha-based law firm McGrath North Mullin & Kratz pledged \$1 million to fund the new endowed chair. McGrath North has been a longtime supporter of the University, establishing the largest scholarship fund for Creighton law students and the McGrath North Mullin & Kratz Legal Research Center at the law school. Today the scholarship fund stands at nearly \$900,000 and provides support for 10 to 12 students per year.

"The creation of this chair is testament to the tremendous relationship that the McGrath North law firm and the Creighton law school have enjoyed over the course of almost six decades," said Patrick Borchers, J.D., dean of the Creighton University School of Law. "McGrath North has helped Creighton students with scholarships; they have helped us with our facilities with their gift to the law library renovations; and now, the firm is helping us with our faculty with the creation of the endowed chair. The firm understands the importance that all three areas — students, faculty and facilities — play in providing quality education. We are grateful for the overwhelming support we continue to receive from our friends at McGrath North."

David Hefflinger, BA'69, JD'72, president

of McGrath North Mullin & Kratz, P.C., said the chair was a logical step in the firm's commitment to the Creighton law school.

"The scholarship fund benefits students. The legal research center involves bricks and mortar and books. The endowed chair recognizes the importance of law school faculty," Hefflinger said. "The majority of our attorneys are Creighton law graduates. Many of them can tell you stories of how a particular law school professor positively impacted their legal education and their legal career. The endowed chair is our way of thanking the past and current law school faculty. The Business Law Chair also reflects our firm's practice, and Ed Morse is an excellent choice as the first chairholder."

Morse has served as associate dean for academic affairs for the law school. He is noted for his expertise on taxation and business issues, and is the author of many papers and studies that have appeared in various state and national publications. Most recently, he has teamed with Creighton economics professor Ernie Goss, Ph.D., on studies on casino gambling in America and on the attorney general's task force on motor fuel pricing. His current research includes papers on tax reform; farmers and employment taxes; and the impact of casino gambling on individual bankruptcy rates. He is also a certified public accountant.



Photo by Mike Kleveiter

Morse meets with David Hefflinger, BA'69, JD'72, president of McGrath North Mullin & Kratz, P.C.

"Our law school is privileged to have loyal and dedicated alumni who devote time, treasure and talent for the benefit of our students. In this sense, the Jesuit message of becoming 'men and women for others' is alive and well," Morse said. "The McGrath North gift reflects an optimistic and enthusiastic vision about the future of legal education and the kind of law school that we are to become. I am grateful to the McGrath North firm for their support."

Grant Funds Study of Antipsychotic Medication

Creighton professor Daniel Wilson, M.D., Ph.D., has been awarded a \$1.1 million, five-year grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to study medication for the treatment of psychosis.

Researchers will evaluate the direct clinical and economic impact of the first available long-acting, injectable medication for the treatment of psychosis. Despite advances in treatment of psychoses such as schizophrenia, patients still experience relapse or incomplete recovery and significant side effects. The study will focus on how well the medication addresses these problems, with a concern for the patient's well-being.

"The study represents a real opportunity to evaluate the total impact of consumer choice and medication compliance in a new era of both oral and long-acting second generation antipsychotics," said Wilson, professor and chair of psychiatry at Creighton.

Michael Hogan, Ph.D., chair of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, endorsed the study.

"This research is of exceptional importance to determine whether such treatment can substantially reduce the enormous cost — both human and economic — that inadequate adherence to optimal treatment engenders," he said.

Other local researchers involved in this study include Fred Petty, M.D., Ph.D., professor of psychiatry and biomedical sciences at Creighton University and chief of mental health research at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center; Praveen Fernandes, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry at Creighton University; Sriram Ramaswamy, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry at Creighton University; Sid Kauzlarich, M.D., chief of psychiatry at Douglas County Health Center and assistant professor of psychiatry at Creighton and UNMC; and Zak Siddiqi, M.D., assistant professor of psychiatry at Creighton University and director of research at Douglas County Health Center.



Photo by Mike Malone

Jariel Rendell, Ryan McDonough, psychology professor Isabelle Cherney and Leah Skovran stand in front of the posters they presented at the prestigious "Posters on the Hill" conference in Washington, D.C.

Students Present Research in Washington

For the fifth consecutive year, undergraduate students working in Isabelle Cherney's psychology research laboratory at Creighton were selected to participate in the prestigious "Posters on the Hill" conference in Washington, D.C., this spring.

Only 60 student posters are selected annually for display at the U.S. Capitol as part of the event, sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research. Cherney submitted two student posters for this year's April conference; both were accepted.

They were "It's All in the Family: Children's and Parents' Perceptions of Children's Rights" by Leah Skovran and Emily Polacheck and "Bridging the Gender Gap: Increasing Women's Performance on a Visual-Spatial Task" by Jariel Rendell and Ryan McDonough.

Skovran and Polacheck's research was funded by a grant from the American Psychological Foundation and the Council on Undergraduate Research. They interviewed parents and their 10- through 16-year-old

children to examine their perceptions of children's rights. What they found might shock a few parents. In each case, children were more reluctant than their parents to advocate for the right to choose a class, to see a movie, to decorate their room, to choose with whom to live, to consume alcohol and to pay for their own clothing. Despite some differences, parents and adolescents interviewed held similar views on what children should and shouldn't be allowed to do.

Rendell and McDonough's research was funded by a National Science Foundation EPSCoR grant. Previous studies have found that males outperform females on visual-spatial tests, which have been used to predict success in engineering courses. Among the individuals they studied, Rendell and McDonough found that those with "previous spatial and computer play scored significantly higher," leading them to hypothesize that "females' performance [on these tests] may benefit from involvement in more spatial activities."



Photo by Dave Weaver

Poet Laureate Comes to Creighton

U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser read from a selection of his works during a visit to Creighton in April. Creighton's World Literature Program sponsored the event. Kooser, an author of 10 collections of poetry, received the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for poetry for "Delights and Shadows." Born in Ames, Iowa, he is a visiting professor in the English department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and holds numerous other awards and poetry prizes.



The St. Louis Jesuits perform in Washington D.C. Pictured on stage, from left, are the Rev. Roc O'Connor, the Rev. Bob Dufford, the Rev. John Foley and Dan Schutte.

St. Louis Jesuits Reunite

Creighton Jesuit the Rev. Roc O'Connor, S.J., sees the recent reunion of the St. Louis Jesuits — described by one writer as the Beatles of contemporary liturgical music — as more than just a walk down memory lane.



The St. Louis Jesuits in 1979: Front row, from left, Roc O'Connor and Dan Schutte. Back row, from left, Bob Dufford, John Foley and Tim Manion.

"We feel like we have new energy," said Fr. O'Connor, one of the original five seminarians who met at St. Louis University in the early 1970s and formed the St. Louis Jesuits. The friends composed and recorded 130 songs from 1973 to 1984, including "Lift Up Your Hearts," "One Bread, One Body" and "Be Not Afraid."

The group reunited last year to record *Morning Light*, their first album/CD in more than 20 years.

"It was a lot of very hard work," said Fr. O'Connor, who teaches theology at Creighton and serves as a liturgist and associate pastor at St. John's Church. "But we also had fun together. Everything clicked."



Morning Light is the group's first album/CD in more than 20 years.

The group is just completing a four-city tour that had stops in Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Anaheim, Calif., and Chicago.

"People have been very kind and lavish in their responses," Fr. O'Connor said. "It's been very delightful."

Morning Light features 12 newly written songs, including three by Fr. O'Connor. His "O Beauty, Ever Ancient" — a call to find renewal and "new life" in God — is based on a text by St. Augustine.

Creighton University honored four of the original five members at May commencement, for their 30 years of ministry, with an honorary Doctor of Music degree.

So what does the future hold for the St. Louis Jesuits? Are more songs in the offing?

"I think we need to take time to listen to what God is saying to us in this experience," Fr. O'Connor said. "But this has to be about more than nostalgia. Given the discernment that comes with growing up, what do we have to say about the future? I think if we have something to say, we need to say it."



Photo by Dave Weaver

Native Americans Gather at Creighton

Gabriel Strangeowl from Lame Deer, Mont., (pictured above) performs at Creighton's second annual All-Nations Powwow, held this spring in conjunction with the University's 10th annual Native American Retreat and the American Indian Student Leadership Conference.

Through the Native American Retreat, Native American high school students from across the country come to Creighton to experience college life. This marked the first year Creighton has hosted the American Indian Student Leadership Conference, formerly the Big XII American Indian Student Leadership Conference. This national conference attracted nearly 80 Native American college students to Creighton, with the theme "Revitalizing American Indian Thought."



Photo by Mike Kleveiter

Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., with George Haddix, MA'66, Ph.D., Sally Hansen Haddix and professor John Mordeson at the inauguration of the John N. Mordeson, Ph.D. Endowed Chair in Mathematics.

Endowed Chair Honors Longtime Math Professor

Creighton University mathematics professor John Mordeson, Ph.D., was installed as the first holder of the John N. Mordeson, Ph.D. Endowed Chair in Mathematics on May 1. Endowed chairs are one of the main priorities of *WILLING TO LEAD: THE CAMPAIGN FOR CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY*.

Mordeson is the first professor at Creighton to have a chair endowed in his name and the first to hold a chair established by a former student.

The Mordeson Chair was funded by a \$1.5 million gift from George Haddix, MA'66, Ph.D., and his wife, Sally Hansen Haddix, of Ralston, Neb. George Haddix is chairman and CEO of PKW Acquisitions Corp. and its subsidiary, PKWare, a security software company based in Milwaukee. He was a student of professor Mordeson's in the 1960s — earning a master's degree in mathematics from Creighton in 1966 and writing his thesis under Mordeson's direction. Haddix also taught mathematics at Creighton from 1969 to 1971, before using his talents to find success in industry. His love for education is shared by his wife, Sally Hansen Haddix, who served as a third-grade teacher in Springfield, Neb., for 12 years.

"There is nothing more inspiring than a former student honoring a gifted teacher

who nurtured and guided him or her," said Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J. "Creighton University is tremendously grateful for the leadership and generosity of George and Sally Haddix. This endowed chair will help establish Creighton as a leader in the study and application of mathematics of uncertainty."

The new chair will provide significant support to the Center for Research in Fuzzy Mathematics and Computer Science. George and Sally Haddix helped found the center in 1994 and have provided continuous support. Mordeson has served as the center's first and sole director.

At its inception, the center was one of only a handful at U.S. institutions to concentrate on research in "fuzzy math," or the science of mathematical uncertainty. Today, the center promotes research around the world, as well as the application of mathematics of uncertainty theories to a wide range of medical, technological and social sciences fields.

"Mathematics has always been a critical element in Jesuit, Catholic education in the liberal arts," said Timothy Austin, Ph.D., dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "One cannot claim to be a competent citizen in the 21st century without a firm grasp of mathematical principles."

Haddix used his mathematics background to help develop data compression and encryption software that has changed the way businesses operate. His talents also contributed

to the ATM machines that transformed Americans' banking habits.

"George was an awesome student, one of the finest I ever had," recalled Mordeson, who has taught at Creighton for more than 40 years.

Mordeson, who came to Creighton in 1963, has served as director of the University's graduate program in mathematics and its computer science program. A noted scholar and researcher, he was recently elected president of the newly formed international Society for Mathematics of Uncertainty. Mordeson has worked with colleagues in Third World countries and has been instrumental in bringing to Creighton's campus visiting scholars from China, India, Korea, Japan and Saudi Arabia.

"The creation of this chair is our way of honoring the tremendous work of Dr. Mordeson as a mathematician, a teacher and a member of the Creighton community," said George Haddix, who also serves on Creighton's Board of Directors. "One of the great wheels that turn the U.S. engine of opportunity and prosperity is the education system. The Jesuit universities and colleges are perhaps the finest examples of the type of higher education required to keep the entire system in balance."

"We owe it to George and Sally to make the best use of their support," Mordeson said. "There is a movement to use fuzzy math in the social sciences, including philosophy and political science. We have a chance to put Creighton University in the forefront of this research."



Photo by Dave Weaver

Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., (left) and College of Arts and Sciences Dean Timothy Austin, Ph.D., (right) confer upon Lech Walesa Creighton's highest honorary degree — a Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Walesa Focuses on Democracy in Public Address Sponsored by Creighton

In a speech laced with humor, former president of Poland and 1983 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Lech Walesa told a capacity crowd at Omaha's Civic Auditorium Music Hall of his country's serious struggle for freedom and democracy.

The public lecture was sponsored by Creighton's Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the College of Arts and Sciences.

"The Holy Father gave us the word, and the working people transformed this word into flesh."

— Lech Walesa

Walesa, an electrician by trade, led Poland's anti-communist Solidarity movement in the 1980s, which began as a union of shipyard workers and would usher in the fall of communism in Poland and, eventually, elsewhere in Europe.

"Poland kicked the teeth out of the bear's mouth," Walesa said, referring to the former Soviet Union. "And once the bear was unable to bite you, people could go about bringing the Berlin Wall down."

Walesa, who became Poland's first democratically elected president in 1990, credited the late Pope John Paul II, a fellow Pole, for much of the success in bringing democracy to Poland and Eastern Europe.

"The year after his election (as pope), he came over to Poland," Walesa said, speaking through a translator in his native tongue. "Suddenly, all the Polish people attend Masses

with the Holy Father."

While the pope did not encourage a revolution, Walesa said, "The Holy Father gave us the word, and the working people transformed this word into flesh."

On a humorous note, he said he would give "more than 50 percent" of the credit for communism's demise to the pope and "30 percent to Solidarity and Lech Walesa" — adding tongue-in-cheek: "Of course, I could give more credit to myself, but I want to be on good terms with the one up there."

Moving forward, Walesa said the world has entered a new era, one less defined by borders and territories and more defined — thanks to technology, such as the Internet — by globalization. This interconnectedness comes with some new challenges.

"What economic system will be sustainable in the globalized world?" Walesa said. "Certainly not the one we have in today's world. In today's economic system, less than 10 percent of mankind owns 90 percent of the world's wealth."

Walesa ended with a plea for greater public participation in national and world affairs.

"This world is so beautiful," he said. "I'm here to beg you, please be more committed and involved."

Borrowing language from a proposed European constitution, Walesa added: "Let us base ourselves on freedoms only. Freedom of individual, freedom of association of any kind, economic freedom."

He then closed with a smile: "If you fail to find the right solutions, if you don't want to be the superpower, share it with Poland. We'll know what to do with it."

Creighton Scholars Discuss 'Lost' Gospel of Judas

Thanks to the National Geographic Society's rescue of the Gospel of Judas from 1,700 years of obscurity this spring, many Christians are contemplating the possibility that Judas was not a notorious betrayer of Jesus but a willing collaborator.

Among those analyzing this new view on April 24 were the Rev. William Harmless, S.J., and John O'Keefe, Ph.D., both of Creighton's Department of Theology. They spoke at a forum sponsored by Creighton's Rabbi Myer and Dorothy Kripke Center for the Study of Religion and Society.

The two specialists in the history and theology of early Christianity said that they sought "to cut through the media hype and the hoopla and take a good, clear look at the text itself, not only the fascinating story of its discovery and reconstruction, but also its Gnostic origins, contents and context."

Their conclusion? Both O'Keefe and Fr. Harmless agreed that the document, discovered in the late 1970s in Egypt, held by a series of antiquities dealers, and painstakingly restored by a leading Coptic scholar, "tells us nothing new about Judas and Jesus."

True to its Gnostic roots, say the Creighton scholars, the Book of Judas portrays the world as a "grand cosmic mistake," replete with an emphasis on secret actions and words of Jesus and a concept of Jesus as not human.

The Creighton theologians added that the emergence of the Gospel of Judas for study also sheds light on how the Christian canon as we know it evolved in the first place. By the late second century, the books selected for inclusion in the canon had essentially evolved, based on several criteria, among them what the bishops of the most important cities at the time were teaching, and the rule of faith, that is, the concept that one God created everything and that Christ died for us.

WorldCom Whistleblower Speaks at Creighton Symposium

Cynthia Cooper, who blew the whistle on corporate fraud while working as an internal auditor at WorldCom in 2002, stressed the importance of ethical decision-making during a visit to Omaha. Cooper was the featured speaker at Creighton's 2006 Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Symposium, held April 21 at the Qwest Center Omaha.

"It's important to practice ethical decision-making every day," Cooper told the audience of approximately 800 students, faculty and business executives, adding that even "small decisions matter."

"I believe character is built decision by decision, brick by brick, throughout our lives. People don't wake up and say, 'Hey, I think I'd like to become a criminal today.' Instead, it's often a slippery slope. As



Photo by Dave Weaver

WorldCom whistleblower Cynthia Cooper speaks at Creighton's Beta Alpha Psi Symposium on April 21.

people begin to push their ethical boundaries, those decisions that may have seemed very black and white begin to fade to shades of gray."

In June 2002, WorldCom acknowledged \$3.8 billion worth of accounting fraud — a number that has since grown to \$11 billion. WorldCom's CEO, Bernie Ebbers, was later convicted of fraud and sentenced to 25 years in prison (he is currently free on appeal); CFO Scott Sullivan pleaded guilty to fraud and is serving a five-year prison sentence; and controller David Myers received a one-year sentence. The fraud scheme uncovered by Cooper ultimately drove the No. 2 U.S. long-distance company — "the pride of Mississippi" (WorldCom's headquarters) — into bankruptcy.

"These people weren't just numbers to us," Cooper said. "These were people we had worked with for years, people we trusted and respected."

Cooper said her decision to come forward was "easy," but the aftereffects were often overwhelming — meetings with FBI and SEC officials, the hot glare of the media spotlight. She lost weight, and battled depression. "Sometimes I struggled just to get out of bed." But she feels compelled to tell her story so that others may learn something from the tragic events.

"In the end, each of us has an opportunity to help ensure that the moral fabric of our country and our world is strong," Cooper said. "It doesn't matter our position. We can all make a difference."

Seeking Peace Through Poetry and Politics

Asian poetry and politics took center stage during Creighton's second annual Non-Western Culture Event in April, which featured Chinese poet Luye and visiting political scientist Dae-Sook Suh. This year's theme was "Seeking Peace: Poetic and Political Visions of the Asian World."

Luye, who teaches literature at Jinan University in China, recently was named China's top young poet by the Chinese Writers Association. Suh is currently teaching at UCLA. His research focuses on comparative politics of Asia and issues of reunification, particularly in Korea.

While at Creighton, Luye participated in a two-week residency, visiting creative writing classes and working with Creighton students on the translation of several of her poems. She also took part in a poetry reading with Susan Aizenberg, associate professor of English. (Luye and Aizenberg have been



Photo by Dave Weaver

Political scientist Dae-Sook Suh (foreground) and poet Luye discuss visions of peace for China, Korea and the United States.

translating one another's poems.)

Suh, the author of several books on Korea, presented a talk on "Conflict and Peace in the Korean Peninsula." He also joined Luye for a talk-show style discussion on the relationship between poetic and political visions of peace in China, Korea and the United States.

The event was sponsored by Creighton's Non-Western Culture Committee with support from the Department of English and the Justice and Peace Studies Program.

Creighton Medical Experts Named to Health Care Commission

Creighton's Daniel Wilson, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chair of psychiatry, and Chris Bradberry, Pharm.D., dean of the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, were named to a 10-member, expert commission organized by U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., to examine and make recommendations on a wide range of health care issues — from access to care to rising costs to the role of technology in improving quality of care.

"It's important to look at new approaches to health care in this country," Bradberry said. "At Creighton, we are committed to responding creatively to changing times to provide health care in an equitable manner."

Bradberry and Wilson join officials from other medical centers, physicians, insurance executives and consultants on the one-year effort.



Heidi Geier Woodard, BA'99, Mike Heathcott, BSBA'91, and Shannon Struby, BA'95, with Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., at the Athletic Hall of Fame dinner on April 11.

Creighton Inducts Three into Athletic Hall of Fame

Former student-athletes Mike Heathcott, BSBA'91, Shannon Struby, BA'95, and Heidi Geier Woodard, BA'99, were inducted into the Creighton University Athletic Hall of Fame on April 11. In addition, Leo Knowles, JD'76, and his wife, Mary Ellen, were honored as the 2006 Joseph J. Vinardi "Jaybackers of the Year" for their support of Creighton athletics.



Heathcott holds the school record for career wins, with 33.

Heathcott was the top pitcher on the best team in Creighton baseball history and still owns the school records for wins in a season (15, 1991) and career (33, 1988-91). The Chicago native went 15-3 during the 1991 season and



Struby's 824 career rebounds still rank second in school history.

From 1990 to 1994, Struby helped Creighton's women's basketball team to two Western Athletic Conference (WAC) regular-season

titles ('90-91, '91-92) and two appearances in the NCAA Tournament ('92, '94). She remains ranked in Creighton's career top-10 in rebounding, scoring, scoring average (13), field goals (625) and field goal percentage (.553). Her 824 career rebounds still rank second in school history. A WAC Freshman of the Year, a first-team all-WAC performer as a sophomore and a first-team all-Missouri Valley Conference player as a junior, Struby concluded her career ranked fifth in school history with 1,459 points. Struby is currently a physical therapy assistant at Methodist Hospital/OrthoSport Therapy and Rehab and serves as the assistant women's basketball coach at Dana College in Blair, Neb.



Woodard was the first Creighton softball player to record two 70-hit seasons.

Woodard, an infielder on Creighton's softball team from 1996 to 1999, twice earned Academic All-American honors and was named a second-team Easton All-American in 1999. She holds the school record for career stolen bases, with 83. She also ranks second in school history in career hits (243) and third in career batting average (.358) and runs scored (129). She holds the distinction of being the first player in school history to record two 70-hit seasons. Woodard was a three-time first-team all-MVC selection and scholar-athlete honoree. She was twice named to the MVC all-tournament team, including in 1999, when the Bluejays captured their first MVC Tournament title. Woodard is currently the executive assistant to the president at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. She lives in Omaha with her husband and two children.



THE MARY MAGDALENE OF THE DA VINCI CODE: FACT OR FICTION?

By Susan A. Calef, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Theology

MONTHS BEFORE MEL GIBSON'S MOVIE BLOCKBUSTER *THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST* HIT THEATERS, DAN BROWN'S *THE DA VINCI CODE* THRUST JESUS, MARY MAGDALENE AND A PASSION OF ANOTHER SORT INTO THE SPOTLIGHT OF POPULAR CULTURE.



The whodunit plotline of this murder-mystery thriller, which begins with the discovery of a dead body in the Louvre, lures the reader, by labyrinthine twists and turns, into a far more sinister plot involving churchmen hell-bent on preserving their patriarchal power. To that end, so the story goes, they reduced Mary Magdalene, the true "holy grail," to the status of whore and, in cahoots with the emperor Constantine, elevated Jesus to divine status at the Council of Nicaea. Ah, the plot thickens, and with it, readership and controversy.

Because the theories espoused by Brown's cast of erudite characters, Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon, royal historian Sir Leigh Teabing and French cryptologist Sophie Neveu, call

into question central tenets of Christian faith and theology, not surprisingly, the book has provoked the ire of Christians and the scrutiny of scholars. At the center of the controversy stands the figure of Mary Magdalene and the characters' claims about her. With the movie directed by Ron Howard released this month, it is well to sort fact from fiction.

Much of the fuss over the book concerns what Teabing calls "the greatest cover-up in human history," namely, "Not only was Jesus Christ married, but He was a father. . . . Mary Magdalene was the Holy Vessel. . . . the chalice that bore the royal bloodline of Jesus Christ." Claiming to know of "countless references to Jesus and Magdalene's union" that have "been

explored ad nauseam by modern historians," he declares their marriage "a matter of historical record."

The character's suggestion that "Jesus as a married man makes infinitely more sense than our standard view of Jesus as a bachelor" because "the social decorum during that time virtually forbid a Jewish man to be unmarried" hardly amounts to "historical record." Granted, most Jewish men of Jesus' day would have married and done their divinely mandated duty to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). But to conclude that Jesus must have married because he was expected to marry is a move no responsible historian would make. Furthermore, among Jews of the period, there were exceptions to the

◀ Mary Magdalene is shown at the foot of the cross in this early 16th century oil painting by Italian artist Luca Signorelli.

marital norm. For example, Philo of Alexandria, a first century Jewish writer, describes a group known as the Essenes, some of whom repudiated marriage as they awaited end-time events.

As evidence of his theory about Mary Magdalene's marriage to Jesus, Teabing cites the Gospel of Philip and the Gospel of Mary, two extra-canonical Gnostic texts written in the late second or early third centuries. Nowhere in these Gospels, however, is it stated that Mary Magdalene is the wife of Jesus or the mother of his child. These works contain nothing more than a passing reference to Mary as the "companion" of Jesus and another to Jesus kissing her. Neither of these references

establishes a romantic relationship, let alone marriage. Furthermore, the mere mention of a kiss hardly proves that their relationship was of an erotic nature. In Gnostic literature, kissing symbolizes the reception of spiritual teaching, as Jesus himself points out, "For this reason we kiss one another. We receive conception from the grace which is in one another" (Gospel of Philip 58.34 – 59.6).

Finally, if the Gnostic Gospels assume a marriage between Mary Magdalene and Jesus, as Teabing claims, then Jesus' closing remark to the disciples in another Gnostic text, the Gospel of Thomas, "I myself shall lead her [Mary] in order to make her male," is peculiar

indeed. In sum, even scholars who have no inclination to defend the Christian faith, as well as those who confess that they wish (for various reasons) that Jesus had been married, conclude that there is, in fact, no reliable historical evidence in either canonical or extra-canonical texts, including the Gnostic Gospels cited by Brown's characters, that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene or anyone else.

Teabing further claims "it was not Peter to whom Christ gave directions with which to establish the Christian Church. It was Mary Magdalene," and "Jesus was the original feminist. He intended for the future of His Church to be in the hands of Mary Magdalene."



Is the sinner described in Luke 7:36-50, as weeping at Jesus' feet, wiping her tears with her hair and anointing Jesus with ointment, Mary Magdalene? Most scholars believe they are different women. This detailed close-up of a 16th century painting by Paolo Veronese is one of many pieces of art that depict this Gospel scene.

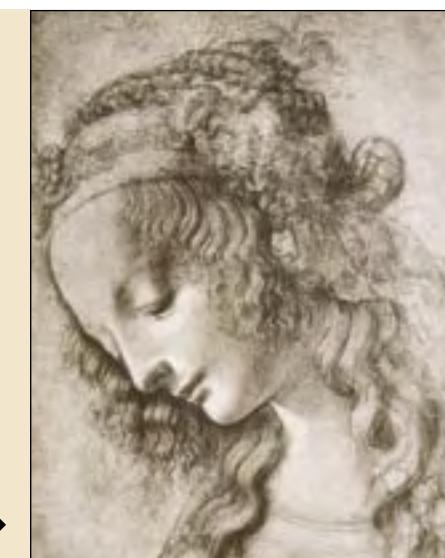
Creighton Seeks Endowment for the Study of Catholic Thought

Creighton aspires to be on the forefront of new developments in Catholic intellectual studies that apply the historic wisdom of the Church to contemporary issues.

One of the goals for the Campaign for Creighton University is to fund an Endowment for the Center for the Study of Catholic Thought. Through endowment support, this center would attract scholars who would further enhance Creighton's contributions to practical theology and expand the horizons of students as they consider their roles as citizens of today's world.

To learn more about WILLING TO LEAD: THE CAMPAIGN FOR CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY, visit: www.creighton.edu/development.

A study for the head of Mary Magdalene by Leonardo da Vinci. ▶



Anyone who has studied the emergence of feminist consciousness knows that to dub Jesus a "feminist" is dreadfully anachronistic. Moreover, Brown once again misreads the Gnostic literature on which he prefers to rely for his characters' theories. Granted, in many Gnostic texts, by virtue of the special revelations she receives from the risen Jesus, Mary Magdalene enjoys prominence over male disciples, including Peter, who appears threatened by her spiritual insight.

These depictions, however, are not historically accurate reflections of interactions between Mary Magdalene and Peter after the death of Jesus in the first century. They reflect, rather, a struggle occurring among Christian communities of the second and third centuries over women's authority and leadership, with Peter and Mary Magdalene, both of whom received individual visions of the risen Jesus (1 Cor. 15:5; Luke 24:34; John 20: 11-18), represented as contentious rivals. Due to the paucity and nature of our sources, the matter of Jesus' intentions regarding the structures and future leadership of his movement continues to elude historians.

If Mary was not the "bride of Christ" and "holy grail" nor Jesus' leader-designate of the Church, then who was she?

Unfortunately, any "quest for the

historical Mary Magdalene" is severely hampered by the scarcity of sources of information. The earliest and most reliable are the four canonical Gospels, and yet, as narrative proclamations of the good news of and about Jesus, these texts are only incidentally about the supporting cast of characters, including Mary Magdalene. Not surprisingly, then, the Gospels contain only 12 references to her, 11 of them confined to the story of Jesus' passion and resurrection. Thus, we can know far less than we might wish about her role during his ministry. Nevertheless, from these incidental references an impressionistic sketch emerges.

If Mary was not the "bride of Christ" and "holy grail" nor Jesus' leader-designate of the Church, then who was she?

The four Gospels refer to her as Mary the Magdalene, or in Luke, Mary who "was called the Magdalene" (Luke 8:2). The surname "the Magdalene," which is assumed to derive from her place of origin, Magdala, distinguishes her from

the other Marys (Miriams) who are frequent companions in Gospel scenes. Magdala is thought to be the same town that goes by the Greek name Tarichaea on the Sea of Galilee. Its location between Nazareth, Jesus' hometown, and Capernaum, his apparent base of operations, might suggest that Mary was among his first followers, having encountered him even before the movement was based in Capernaum. That she is identified solely by place of origin and not by relationship to a man, as other women are (Mary the wife of Clopas, Mary the mother of Joses), indicates that she was an independent woman. Unfortunately, we know nothing of the circumstances that led to what would have been for a woman in that time and culture an unconventional status, independent of a husband, father or son.

That status might have had something to do with what Luke alone tells us about her. In what is the sole reference to Mary Magdalene outside of the passion and resurrection narratives, Luke describes her as one "from whom seven demons had gone out" (8:2). There is no evidence that this suggests sexual promiscuity, but possession by demons might well account for her lack of marital and familial ties, as the Old Testament text Tobit 3:7-17 confirms. It is not difficult to imagine that what Jesus did for her in freeing her from this

affliction, led her to devote herself to his cause, as apparently she did, even to his death and burial. Luke further informs us that, along with the Twelve, she and other women traveled with Jesus from village to village, providing for him out of their resources (8:1-3; Mark 15:40-41).

It is above all the Magdalene's presence at the cross and tomb that the Gospel tradition preserves for us. Hers is the first among the names of a group of women who, after following Jesus and providing for him in Galilee, went with him to Jerusalem, where they witnessed his crucifixion and death (Mark 15:40-41; Matthew 27:56).

John alone places her at the foot of the

cross with Jesus' mother, the beloved disciple and other blood kin (John 19:25). Both Mark and Matthew report that after the crucifixion, she went with one or more other women to visit the grave (Mark 15:47; Matt 27:61; 28:1), returning after the Sabbath was over to anoint him (Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1).

That she is consistently named first in these scenes suggests her prominence among Jesus' women followers. While at the tomb, she and the other women were the first to experience a vision in which a heavenly messenger announces the good news of Jesus' resurrection (Mark 16:1-8; Matt 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-10). In John, Mary Magdalene is the first recipient of a resurrection appearance

and the first to be sent to the disciples with a message from the risen Christ (20:1-18). It is this tradition that earned her the designation *apostolorum apostola*, apostle of the apostles, a title repeated as late as Thomas Aquinas in the Middle Ages and recently revived.

Early Christian sources contain no evidence that Mary Magdalene was the penitent prostitute with whom many Christians remain familiar.

Although most modern Christians, when asked to identify the apostles, conjure up an image of 12 men, analysis of early Christian literature, including the New Testament, indicates that in the first few centuries the term "apostle" was not reserved solely for the Twelve; moreover, that in some Christian circles women were considered "apostles." In his discussion of the resurrection, Paul, for example, affirms that the risen Christ "appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the Twelve" and later "to all the apostles" (1 Cor 15:5-8). Elsewhere he refers to a woman Junia who, along with a man named Andronicus, is "prominent among the apostles" (Rom. 16:7). In his commentary on *The Song of Songs* in the Old Testament, the third century bishop and martyr Hippolytus wrote: "Lest the female apostles doubt the angels, Christ himself came to them so that the women would be apostles of Christ."

Early Christian sources contain no evidence that Mary Magdalene was the penitent prostitute with whom many Christians remain familiar. This begs the question, how and why did this popular misconception come to dominate the Christian imagination? Dan Brown's explanation — that it "is the legacy of a smear campaign launched by the early



Scholars trace the image of Mary Magdalene as the repentant sinner — as depicted in this painting by Domenico Tintoretto — to a sermon by Pope Gregory the Great, in which Mary Magdalene was mistakenly merged with the anonymous sinful woman in Luke's Gospel and the adulterous woman in the Gospel of John. In 1970, the Catholic Church corrected the mistake, removing Mary Magdalene's "penitent" designation.

Church," concocted to cover up her true role as the holy grail — does not bear up under scrutiny.

Scholars researching the "harlotization" of Mary Magdalene acknowledge the role played by a sermon preached by Pope Gregory the Great in the late sixth century in disseminating the misconception. There is no evidence, however, that Gregory or other churchmen branded her with, in effect, the scarlet letter of prostitution in order to cover up her imagined role as "the holy grail." The explanation is far less sinister: a faulty reading of the Gospels that conflated Mary Magdalene, the anonymous sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50) and the adulterous woman (John 8:3-11). Regrettably, this long-standing confusion obscured her role as "apostle of the apostles" for some 1,500 years.

The Catholic Church, however, rectified the mistake in its 1970 revision

of the Roman missal, removing the designation "penitent" and changing the Gospel reading for her feast from the story of the sinful woman to that of her vision of the risen Lord at the tomb (John 20:1-18). That the Church's official correction of this case of mistaken identity has, unfortunately, gone largely unnoticed is evidenced by Mel Gibson's recent depiction of Mary Magdalene as the adulterous woman.

Thanks to its blockbuster sales and media coverage, it may be hoped that *The Da Vinci Code* will accomplish what Church and Academy have not managed: putting an end to the image in the popular imagination of Mary Magdalene as sexual sinner. Because her reputation as penitent prostitute has for far too long eclipsed her witness to the resurrection and her role as "apostle of the apostles," Christian readers, especially women, have reason to rejoice at this accomplishment.

Dan Brown's Mary Magdalene, however, is far more fiction than fact, a fiction that does her little justice. Even in their minimalist rendering of her, the canonical Gospels, which Brown dismisses as inaccurate and misleading, do her far greater justice; for they preserve both her words of testimony "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18) and the precious memory of a woman who, as apostle of the apostles, was about not a secret in her womb but witness in the world.

About the author: Calef teaches New Testament at Creighton, including a course on "Women and the Bible," which is one of her research interests. Her publications have focused on women in Pauline communities, *Mary Magdalene and Thecla*. Currently she is working on a book, *Willing Spirit, Weak Flesh: A Markan Spirituality of Discipleship*, and a set of audio-CDs, *Gospel Women: Their Stories, Our Stories*.



In this 17th century painting by Laurent de La Hyre, the risen Christ appears to Mary Magdalene, the Virgin Mary and Salome. In the Gospel of John, Mary Magdalene is the first recipient of a resurrection appearance — earning her the designation *apostolorum apostola*, apostle of the apostles.

Butterfly

Lore and Legends

The world's first city, so far as we know, was Catal Huyuk, founded around 6500 B.C.E. in what is now Turkey. As archaeologists have studied the ruins of Catal Huyuk, they have found that the people who lived there over 8,000 years ago, like people today, adorned their walls with images of things important in their lives. At Catal Huyuk, the images include ones of gods and goddesses, horned beasts and serpents, the sun and moon, and ... butterflies.

As an entomologist, I am fascinated with the lives of the small and six-legged. But it is a constant uphill struggle to get the general public to care as much as I do about these non-charismatic microfauna. There is one group of insects, however, that does seem to pique everyone's interest — butterflies. People who couldn't care less about saving Nebraska's highly-endangered Salt Creek tiger beetle work up a passionate indignation about threats to the monarch butterfly. And this fascination with the scaled and beautiful is not a recent phenomenon of Western culture — it seems that most if not all human cultures, no matter when or where, have developed a rich set of myths and legends around butterflies.

Butterfly Biology

Along with their drab nocturnal relatives — moths — butterflies belong to the insect order *Lepidoptera*. The name means "scale wings"; if you have ever rubbed your fingers on the wings of a butterfly or moth, you have picked up a

dusting of the scales that cover the wings (and bodies) of "leps." In the day-active butterflies, the scales can be variously colored so as to produce the bright tints and patterns that make butterflies so beautiful.

Butterflies, like most "higher insects," exhibit complete metamorphosis, a life cycle of four stages (egg, larva, pupa, adult) that in butterflies features the incredible transformation of the gluttonous eating-machine caterpillar into the beautiful, vulnerable, ethereal adult. The voracious caterpillar devours enough leafy matter to grow by a factor of as much as 3,000 in as little as a week or two, while the dainty adult flits about, occasionally stopping to take a well-mannered sip of nectar from a flower. Many butterfly myths and legends are built around that transformation and the airy and almost insubstantial nature of the adult.

Another highly relevant aspect of butterfly biology is that the adults are usually seen only in the warmer months of the year, and even then are seen most often in the heat of the middle of the day. I tell

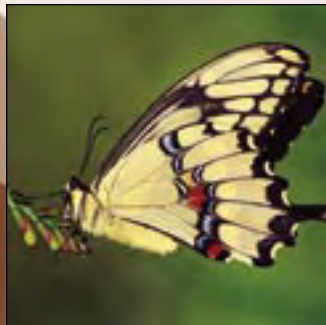
my students, "You can add one to the list: mad dogs, Englishmen ... and butterflies, come out in the noonday sun."

Butterflies, Botervliegs, Schmetterlings

A good place to begin exploring butterfly myths and legends is with the common names of these creatures in languages around the world, as is done in Maraleen Manos-Jones's wonderful book *The Spirit of Butterflies*.

In English, of course, we call them "butterflies"; this is mirrored in the Dutch name *botervlieg*. I always assumed this was a reference to the yellow color of the commonest butterflies, in Europe as in North America, but one source states that the term may actually refer to their excretory droplets resembling the color of butter! The dairy connection continues in German, where they are called *schmetterlings*, which refers to cream. This is said to refer to butterflies' proclivity for hovering around milkpails, supporting a folk belief that they are cream-stealing witches.

By Theodore Burk, D. Phil.
Professor of Biology



In Latin, the name for a butterfly was *papilio*, leading to today's French name *papillon* (and the Monarch butterfly symbol for the Nebraska town of Papillion, near Omaha). In France, modern parking tickets take the form of folded pieces of yellow paper, the slang term for which is *papillons*.



A statue of a winged Psyche from the Musei Capitolini in Rome. Psyche was the ancient Greek word for butterfly — and referred to the soul and breath of life.

Butterflies' Lakota Indian name translates into "fluttering wings," much like the familiar children's alteration of butterfly into "flutterby." Norwegian *sommerfugl* and Yiddish *zomerfeygele* are apt names, translating as "summerbirds" or "summerfliers." One of the modern Mexican names for butterflies is especially beautiful, comparing them to the Virgin Mary: *mariposas*, a condensation of "la Santa Maria posa" or "the Virgin Mary alights." The Italian "bowtie pasta," *farfalle*, actually refers back not to bowties but to the Italian for butterflies, *farfalla* (the bowtie shape being the shape of a butterfly's spread wings).

In China, butterflies are named *hu-tieh*, and the flitting about of butterflies is associated with beautiful young maidens and young men seeking a lover. If a

newlywed couple sees two butterflies together, that is an omen for a long and happy marriage. But in Chinese the word "*tieh*" refers to 70 (as in 70 years old), so butterflies are also punning reminders that young lovers grow old.

Although it is a little off-topic, I can never think of butterflies and China without recalling the famous poem by the great fourth century poet Chuang Tsu:

I dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither,

To all intents and purposes a butterfly.

I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly

And was unconscious of my individuality as a man.

Suddenly I awoke and there I lay myself again.

Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly,

Or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.

Good for the Soul

In ancient Greek, the word for butterflies was Psyche, which also referred to the soul and to the breath of life (and, of course, comes down to us as the mind or consciousness). In Russia, butterflies are called *babochkas*, or "little souls," a term also used for babies. In many cultures, the light and ethereal nature of butterflies, so beautiful and liberated from the mundane earth, has independently led to this association of butterflies with souls. Here are a few more examples.

In ancient Rome, butterflies were associated with the souls of dead people. In Ireland, butterflies, especially white butterflies, represent the souls or spirits of the newly-departed on their way to their next destination. If the butterfly is clear and spotless, the soul is on its way to Heaven, but if the butterfly is spotted, the next stop is Purgatory. I regret that entomological accuracy forces me to comment that almost all white butterflies have some spots — I draw no theological conclusions!

In southern Germany, some said the dead are reborn as children who fly about

seeking a new body, leading to the belief that butterflies predict an upcoming pregnancy. Reincarnation features in the beliefs of Solomon Islanders, too — a good person may choose which animal to become in the next life, and a butterfly is a common choice.

To the Nagas people of India, dead spirits are reincarnated in a succession of creatures over a series of lifetimes, but the final destination of the soul is to enter a butterfly. In Scandinavia, the belief existed that dreams represented the wanderings in other realms of our soul-butterfly when we were asleep.

Lore and Legends

In his study "The Butterfly and Moth as Symbols in Western Art," Ronald A. Gagliardi discovered that butterflies were associated with dozens of different themes. Those included: the sexes, weather, powers such as flight, qualities such as "flightiness" or fickleness, states of being such as happiness, upcoming events such as births or deaths, appearances such as beauty or symmetry, phases of life such as youth or old age, and processes of change or metamorphosis, among many others.

Mexico, with its diverse native groups and infusions of Western cultural ideas and associations, has a rich variety of butterfly myths and legends. We've already seen the association in modern Mexico of butterflies with the Virgin Mary.

In Aztec culture, two goddesses were represented by lepidopteran images. Xochiquetzal ("Precious Flower") was represented by a large swallowtail butterfly; she was regarded as a mother goddess, patron of the arts and symbol of beauty, fire, and the spirits of the dead, the patron of domestic laborers and of warriors killed in battle. Itz'papatl ("Obsidian Butterfly"), technically represented by a giant silkworm moth rather than a butterfly, was the goddess associated with obsidian knives and human sacrifice, the patron of war itself, but also of the Earth and of women who died in childbirth. Early Spanish chronicles state that when the god Quetzlcoatl banned human sacrifice, in response to Spanish demands, butterflies were burnt alive in the place of sacrificial humans.

To the Maya of Central America, butterflies were the souls of dead warriors returning to earth from the sky, where they had originally ascended upon death. To the Aztecs, too, butterflies were the spirits of dead ancestors (not just warriors) who visit their living relatives from time to time to reassure them that all is well with them in the afterlife.

If a butterfly other than the "Death Butterfly" lands on you, it represents "the kiss of an angel" and predicts peace, happiness and good luck.

Special banquets were held regularly in honor of the ancestor butterflies, in which men of high rank carried special bouquets to put out for butterflies to visit. And this explains why even today it is considered rude and ill-mannered to lean over a flower and sniff it from above — you are blocking the path of the ancestor-butterfly trying to alight!

The association of butterflies with death expresses itself in other ways in Mexico. The appearance of a particular all-black butterfly, the "Death Butterfly," is an ill omen of impending mortality. And it is probably not at all a coincidence that the rituals associated with the "Dia de los Muertes" or "Day of the Dead" occur around Nov. 1, the time when millions of Monarch butterflies are streaming into central Mexico from their birthplaces farther north in Mexico, the United States and Canada. But butterflies can mean good luck, too. If a butterfly other than the "Death Butterfly" lands on you, it represents "the kiss of an angel" and predicts peace, happiness and good luck.

The Native Americans of what is now the United States had a variety of interesting butterfly beliefs. To the Zuni, arrival of white butterflies meant the coming of favorable weather. To the Blackfeet, butterflies are the creatures that bring us our dreams when we sleep. If a Blackfoot mother has a baby that won't go to sleep, the solution is to tie to the

baby a piece of buckskin with butterfly images on it, to put the baby to sleep and allow the dream butterfly to visit.

Butterflies have served as Christian symbols, too, in at least three ways. First, the transformation from the gluttonous caterpillar to the beautiful butterfly is symbolic of the transformation undergone by the sinner who repents and accepts Christ. Second, the metamorphosis of the butterfly serves as a symbol of the resurrection of souls at the End of Days. Finally, and as you may have suspected, the metamorphosis of the butterfly, emerging from the enclosing pupa, is symbolic of the resurrection of Jesus.

A Papago Legend

I'd like to finish with a favorite butterfly legend, from the Papago Indians of the American Southwest:

One day the Creator was resting, watching some children at play. The children laughed and sang; yet as he watched them, the Creator's heart was sad. He thought, "One day these children will grow old, their skin will become wrinkled, their hair will turn gray. Their teeth will fall out, the hunters' arms will fail, the girls will grow fat and ugly. Even these lovely flowers around them — yellow and blue, red and purple — will fade."

Thus the Creator grew sadder and sadder. Suddenly he smiled. "All those colors, they ought to be preserved," he thought. "I'll make something to gladden my heart, something for the children to look at and enjoy." So the Creator took out his bag and started collecting things: a spot of sunlight, a

handful of blue sky, the whiteness of cornmeal, the blackness of a beautiful girl's hair, the yellow of fallen leaves, the green of the pine needles, the red, purple and orange of the flowers. All these he put in his bag. And, as an afterthought, he put in the songs of birds, too.

Then he walked over to where the children were playing and said, "Children, little Children, this is for you," and gave them the bag. "Open it; there's something nice inside."

The children opened the bag, and at once hundreds of brilliantly colored butterflies flew out and circled around the children, alighting on them or fluttering up again. The children were enchanted; they had never seen anything so beautiful. And then the butterflies sang, and the children had never heard anything so sweet.

But a songbird flew up, and chastised the Creator. "It's not right to give our songs to these new pretty things. You told us when you made us that every bird would have its own song, and now you've given them to these." The Creator said, "You are right. I shouldn't have given away what belongs to you." So he took away the songs from the butterflies, but they were allowed to keep their glorious colors. And that is why butterflies are silent even today.

Therefore, if anyone wants a wish to come true, one must capture a butterfly and whisper the wish in the butterfly's ear. Since a butterfly can make no sound, the butterfly cannot reveal the wish to anyone but the Great Spirit, who hears and sees all. And in gratitude for releasing the butterfly and restoring its freedom, the Great Spirit always makes the wish come true.

Creighton a National Leader in Biology

Creighton University's biology department ranks in the top 4 percent among 1,110 undergraduate institutions, and nearly half of Creighton's undergraduates major in science — five times the national average.

A national leader in aligning undergraduate and graduate science education, Creighton launched major projects in 2003 to improve its science facilities — with construction of the Hixson-Lied Science Building and renovations to Rigge and Criss. The result: research capacity has been increased by one-third and modernized laboratories offer the latest in high-tech equipment.

These facilities allow undergraduate science majors to work side-by-side with faculty as research partners as never before, a fact that has gained national attention. *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked Creighton among the top 66 universities nationwide for undergraduate research opportunities.



Ehud's killing of Eglon, as written in the Book of Judges, includes plays on words and sounds that likely would have amused ancient readers or hearers.

By Leonard Greenspoon, Ph.D.

Philip M. and Ethel Klutznick Chair in Jewish Civilization

HUMOR IN THE BIBLE

Reaching with his left hand, Ehud drew the dagger from his right side and drove it into Eglon's belly. The fat closed over the blade and the hilt went in after the blade... and the filth came out.

At first glance, most readers of the *Creighton Magazine* will not find much humor in the above passage, which comes from the third chapter of the biblical Book of Judges. It is simply too violent.

For different reasons, an earlier verse from the same biblical chapter also seems distinctly devoid of anything to laugh about: "The Lord raised up a champion for the Israelites; the Benjaminite Ehud, son of Gera, a left-handed man." What's funny about this mini-genealogy?

In spite of such initial impressions, it is my contention that these texts convey what lies at the heart of much biblical humor: (1) a justified sense of vengeful pleasure at the downfall of Israel's enemies and (2) a delight in plays on words and sounds. This section of Judges manages to combine both.

As is well known, no translation task is easy; where the sounds of words, in addition to their meanings, are involved, it becomes especially tricky.

Let us look first at the way the

biblical writers introduce the hero of this story. Instead of translating it, as I did above, I will provide a transliteration; that is, I will attempt to convey the sounds of the Hebrew using English characters for the second part of the citation, starting with "Ehud": *ehud ben-gera ben-ha-yemini ish itair yad yemino*; literally, "Ehud, son of Gera, son of the south or the right (hand), a man constricted as to his right hand."

This identification of Ehud plays on the word for right (hand): "Benjaminite" literally means "son of the south or the right (hand)." Ironically, but perhaps also providentially, this Benjaminite, Ehud, is left-handed (the simpler "left-handed" is found in almost all English versions, but the Hebrew literally means, as I indicated above, "constricted as to his right hand").

Now, I'm not suggesting that ancient readers or hearers would have burst out in laughter at this, but the little detail about which hand he used, in for example drawing a sword, becomes

very important in this narrative — and the play on words would alert Hebrew readers to this fact.

In what immediately follows, Ehud is able to gain entry into the private quarters of the Moabite king, Eglon, because the monarch's bodyguards (bodyguards are no modern invention) patted him down on the left side of his body, since that's where weapons would have been hidden by right-handers. Ehud, as we learn, "girded his two-edge dagger on his right side under his cloak."

Returning to Ehud's assassination of King Eglon, who controlled the Israelites at this time, we note what we might call an excess of gory details about the trajectory of the dagger and its very bloody aftermath. But ancient Israelites apparently drew from such descriptions the important lesson that God was fighting on their side when they were faithful to their deity.

In this case, another play on words drives the point home: Eglon's name is formed from the same root as the



In the Book of Judges, Yael — whose name means “the Lord is God” — delivers Israel from the Canaanites by killing the Canaanite commander Sisera with a tent pin. That Sisera was slain by a woman added insult to injury. The artwork is by French painter James Tissot (1836-1902).

Hebrew word, *egel*, with the addition of an “n” at the end. In biblical Hebrew, *egel* refers to a calf, often one fattened for sacrifice by the priests in the Temple. Ancient, as well as modern, readers or hearers of the Hebrew text would, I submit, make this connection quite easily, thereby equating what could otherwise be seen as a random or personal act of violence with a justified killing to liberate Israel from an onerous overlord.

Can I be sure that this passage contained the humor I think it conveys? I can’t, as I readily admit.

In addition to an overall observation that humor is often tied to a particular time, place and societal context, I need to point out that ancient biblical manuscripts (to a large extent, this is true for those in Greek, as well as in Hebrew or Aramaic) could not convey any of the clues by which writers, say of English, can make their intentions,

humorous or otherwise, known; so, for example, a Hebrew manuscript lacks all punctuation marks, quotation marks, underlining, and the distinction between capital and small letters. Any one of these, alone or in combination with the others, allows a contemporary writer to indicate humor, sarcasm, irony, etc.

The arsenal of rhetorical weapons available today grows even larger when oral performance, rather than written presentation, can be brought in. Therefore, modern interpreters are constrained to use all their wit, as well as their wits, to discern humor that actually does reside in the biblical text as opposed to what we might read into it.

With this extended discussion in mind, let us now look more briefly at some other biblical passages that I believe would have struck ancient readers or hearers as humorous.

Chapters 4 and 5 of the Book of Judges contain accounts of a great battle that took place between the Israelites and the forces of the Canaanites. The Canaanite commander was Sisera; the Israelites were led by the prophet Deborah and her reluctant general Barak — in passing, we should note that although Barak’s name (which means “lightning” in Hebrew) conveys a take-charge attitude, in fact, he was willing to lead the troops of Israel only if Deborah would go with him. However, at the human level (the Israelites, along with all other ancient Near Eastern peoples, believed that warfare occurred both on terrestrial and celestial planes), the hero was neither Deborah nor Barak, but a woman named Yael. The name Yael, which can be translated “the Lord is God,” is most appropriate for someone who delivers Israel from its enemies. Sisera stormed into Yael’s tent, seeking refuge and safety. Here is what he got instead:

*Yael’s [left] hand reached
for the tent pin,*

*Her right for the
workmen’s hammer.*

*She struck Sisera,
crushed his head,*

*Smashed and pierced
his temple.*

*At her feet he sank,
lay outstretched,*

*At her feet he sank,
lay still;*

*Where he sank, there
he lay — destroyed.*

(Judges 5:26-27)

Although we might think of this lengthy, albeit poetic, description as rhetorical overkill, I think it brought a real sigh of relief, and a knowing smile, to ancient readers.

A broadening smile, if not more, would have been elicited by the continuation of the narrative. Sisera’s mother looks anxiously out her window, wondering what could be keeping her son. She imagined that, after the Canaanite victory, he was spending much of his time with “a damsel or two.” Yes, indeed, her son had been passing a bit of time with one particular damsel — Yael, by name — but, as a result of that encounter, he would not be returning home, as his mother imagined, loaded with treasure.

Because being killed by a woman added “insult to injury,” these scenes, in my opinion, would have exposed Israel’s enemies for what they were: powerless when on the attack against God’s people. This is made clear by the first part of verse 31: “So may all Your enemies perish, O Lord!”

The idea that God often turns carefully planned human endeavors toward his own ends, which is found throughout the Hebrew Bible, is one of the leading and most humorous motifs in the Book of Esther.

One example must suffice: The villain of the story, Haman, is bent on destroying all of the Jews in the vast Persian Empire. In chapter 6, the king asks his confidant Haman, “What

should be done for a man whom the king desires to honor?”

Haman, certain that the king is speaking of no one other than Haman himself, devises an elaborate “honor”: He should be garbed in royal robes and led through the city on a royal steed, with a royal proclamation read throughout his route.

Imagine then how dejected Haman must have felt — and, conversely, what joy elated readers of Esther would have experienced — when the king informs Haman that not he, but his rival “Mordecai the Jew,” is to be honored — in exactly the manner Haman had envisioned for himself. To make matters worse for Haman, he himself would have to lead the way for Mordecai throughout the city square. As even Haman’s wife recognized, this was the beginning of the end for Haman — and the beginning of victory for Mordecai,

The idea that God often turns carefully planned human endeavors toward his own ends, which is found throughout the Hebrew Bible, is one of the leading and most humorous motifs in the Book of Esther.

his cousin Esther and all of the rest of Persia’s Jews.

A story recounted in 1 Samuel 25 unfolds on a somewhat less grand scale. David, already anointed as Israel’s king but not yet on the throne (Saul was still the reigning monarch), encounters a wealthy man whose wife was Abigail.

The man’s very name, as it turns out, sealed his fate: He was called Nabal, from a Hebrew root meaning “senseless folly or disgraceful foolishness.”

Perhaps the height, or depth, of



“Mordecai’s Triumph” by James Tissot depicts the story in Esther wherein Haman, bent on destroying the Jews, is forced by the king to honor his rival Mordecai, a Jewish leader, in a celebration he had hoped for himself — even to the point of leading his steed.

Nabal’s folly was “paying David back evil for good.” Such an action, aimed at God’s anointed, was equivalent to a declaration of hostility against God himself. In a verse filled with alliteration and assonance, “The Lord brought Nabal’s wrongdoing down on his own head.”

As David and Abigail ride off into the sunset (well, actually, this probably took place in the morning), soon to be husband and wife, readers of this text would surely have chuckled that all of the characters here got exactly what they deserved.

Throughout this article, we have been looking at the text, especially in its original language, of the Hebrew Bible. It seems to me that my observations are not at all dependent on whether these accounts “tell it like it was,” embellish historical memory or represent creative (that is, fictional) narratives. My last example takes us closer to such questions, and also demonstrates that the recognition of humor in the Bible can lead to new solutions to old problems.

As is fairly well known, the first half of the Book of Daniel contains some historical difficulties; so, in Chapter 5, Belshazzar is portrayed as the son and



The "Meeting of David and Abigail" by Nicolas Vleughels. In the Book of Samuel, David takes Abigail from her hapless husband Nabal — whose name in Hebrew means disgraceful foolishness — and makes her his wife.

successor of Nebuchadnezzar as king of Babylonia, and in Chapter 6, Darius the Mede is said to have taken over immediately upon Belshazzar's demise.

When faced with the contradictions between this line of succession and what is found in the Babylonian and Persian records themselves, some individuals try "every trick in the book" to reconcile the data. Instead, it seems to me, it makes more sense to recognize that the writer of Daniel intentionally played loose with or garbled the historical record, as if to say, "It doesn't really matter who the foreign monarch was." If he goes against Israel, God will go against him. The same point is made, but in a very different way, in the early chapters of the Book of Exodus, where the Pharaohs of that period are unnamed — they are essentially interchangeable when they persecute God's people.

Parallel to Daniel, but even more egregious, are references in the Book of Judith to Nebuchadnezzar as an Assyrian monarch, as in the very first

verse of this book: "It was the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh." Can we really imagine an ancient author unfamiliar with the well-known fact that Nebuchadnezzar ruled over the Babylonians, not the earlier Assyrians?

The Book of Judith is different from the other "biblical" material cited in this article because this book is not part of the Protestant Old Testament or the Hebrew Bible that is canonical for Jews. It does appear in the Old Testament of Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, however. Although it has been preserved in Greek rather than Hebrew or Aramaic, the Book of Judith is a product of the same Jewish communities, and the same interest in humor, that we have located throughout the Hebrew Bible.

It is unlikely that any of the writers of the Bible, or the characters they portray, would be at home in stand-up comedy or on *Saturday Night Live*. But we have many different venues for, and types of,

comedy these days, and just possibly, the writers of the Bible would find a home with Garrison Keillor, of *Prairie Home Companion* fame, or Mark Russell, who skewers politicians and plays the piano at the same time.

Be that as it may, "humor" and "religion" are not (or, not necessarily) at odds with each other. This is just one of many lessons from *The Good Book*.

About the author: Greenspoon holds the Klutznick Chair in Jewish Civilization at Creighton and is a professor of Classical & Near Eastern Studies and of Theology. He frequently lectures on topics related to religion in popular culture and Bible translation, having been invited to institutions throughout the United States, Western Europe and Eastern Europe. He also has authored more than 70 articles, chapters and encyclopedia entries on these and related topics. His column, "The Bible in the News," appears in Bible Review and Biblical Archaeology Review, and he is presently at work on a study of Bible translations and translators.



The "Birth of Jacob and Esau" by Phillip Ratner. Was Jacob, by virtue of his name, a "real heel"?

Note on Translations of the Bible

Today's English-language readers of the Bible are beneficiaries of the unprecedented increase in the number of modern versions produced over the past few decades. For the most part, I prefer to remain descriptive in my analysis and discussion of these versions; see, for example, my recent article, "The Holy Bible: A Buyer's Guide," in *Bible Review* 21.4 (2005), 37-44. In discussing almost two dozen versions, from the most literal to the freest, I allowed each group of translators to determine its own criteria, and it is on the basis of those criteria, rather than any set of standards predetermined by me, that I judged these English-language versions.

However, I need to be more evaluative or directive if our goal is to enable readers to perceive the humor, including word plays, inherent in the Hebrew original. In this case, I direct readers to translations that are more literal (often called formal equivalence) in their approach. Perhaps the best version for this purpose is the *Schocken Bible*, produced by Everett Fox. At present, this covers only the Five Books of Moses or the Torah.

Look, for example, at his rendering of Genesis 25:26, which narrates the birth of Esau (called here, Esav, a spelling that more closely replicates the sounds of the Hebrew) and Jacob (here, Yaakov): "After that his brother came out, his hand grasping Esav's heel, so they called his name: Yaakov/Heel-holder." The reader immediately sees that Jacob's (Yaakov's) name comes from the same Hebrew root as the word for heel.

But there is even more, as Fox makes clear in his translation of Genesis 27:36: "He [Esav] said: Is that why his name was called Yaakov/Heel-sneak? For he has now sneaked against me twice: My firstborn-right he took, and now he has taken my blessing! And he said: Haven't you reserved a blessing for me?"

The Hebrew root that yields the noun heel and the proper name Yaakov also produced a verb meaning to sneak or, more specifically, to supplant. Or, as we might say in English, Jacob was a real heel!

— Leonard Greenspoon, Ph.D.

THE BOOKS OF SUMMER

By Pamela A. Vaughn

Summer reading: Even the sound of it conjures the image of a mosquito-free afternoon on the screened porch, with only the sound of birds and the rustle of green, sunshine-dappled leaves as company.

With many Americans working harder and longer than ever before, time off in the summer seems more and more to be treasured.

So, we took a poll of Creighton faculty and staff as to their picks for your summer reading — or theirs — and below are some ideas.

One quick note: There's a good reason for encouraging our alumni to tap this Creighton expertise. Our comprehensive and values-centered education prepares people to be citizens of the world, people who are lifelong learners.

What better way to engage in this process than to curl up with a good book, recommended by Creighton's community of scholars?

Good reading to you!

The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom.

Publisher: Hyperion (September 2003). Recommended by Joy Voltz, ODT'03, grant coordinator, Office of Interprofessional Scholarship, Service and Education, who says, "It is a quick but beautiful read."



Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World by Margaret MacMillan, publisher: Random House (2001), and *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* by Thomas Friedman, publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (2004). Both recommended by Michael Kelly, professor, Creighton University School of Law.

And Brian Young, vice president for Information Technology, seconds the motion: Friedman's *The World Is Flat* is his pick, as well.

Creighton's Center for Health Policy and Ethics (CHPE) will be reading several Jodi Picoult novels over the summer, says CHPE's Technical Specialist Justin Herrick. (Bestselling author Picoult will deliver CHPE's 17th Annual Women and Health Lecture, free and open to the public, on Sept. 12 at Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha.) Top picks for Herrick? They include Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper*, as well as her newest novel, *The Tenth Circle*. Publisher: Atria Books (2004 and 2006, respectively).

"I like to use summers to catch up on recent Latin American literature," confides Richard Super, Ph.D., associate professor of history. Topping his reading for 2006 are "recent works by three of the most well known in the field." They are: Isabel Allende's retelling of a popular story, *Zorro: A Novel*, publisher: HarperCollins (2005), and two memoirs, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *Memories of My Melancholy Whores*, publisher: Knopf (2005), and Carlos Fuentes, *This I Believe: An A to Z of a Life*, publisher: Random House (2005).



Big Fat Lies: The Truth about Your Weight and Your Health is a top pick for Anthony Bull of Creighton's Department of Exercise Science. Bull says that author Glenn Gaesser, Ph.D., of the University of Virginia explains "the very complicated relationships between our body weight, our physical fitness, and our health" in this summer reading pick. Gaesser's theory: the relationship between your fitness and your health is stronger than the relationship between your weight and your health. While the author never advocates "letting yourself go," Bull explains, nor being "totally unconcerned about your weight, he instead promotes becoming more active no matter what your weight. I hope everyone will enjoy it!" Publisher: Gürze Books (2002).

Two tomes top the summer list for Bob Whipple, Ph.D., who holds Creighton's A.F. Jacobson Chair in Communication. They are *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper* by Nicholson Baker, publisher: Vintage Books (2002), and *Hypertext 2.0: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology* by George P. Landow, publisher: The Johns Hopkins University Press (1997). Whipple likes the first for portraying, "the mad dash to microfilm, and then to discarding archived newspapers," while the second delves into "the effects of hypertext and digital media on literacy."

"One of the most powerful novels I have read," says Vice President for Academic Affairs Christine Wiseman,

"is *The Kite Runner*. I would recommend that as summer reading." Khaled Hosseini's first novel (Riverhead Books, 2003) takes the reader from Afghanistan to the United States and back, while its psychological journey spans the decades and forever links two childhoods.

Flags of Our Fathers by James Bradley (Bantam Books, 2000) is the choice for a summer read for Cam Enarson, M.D. Enarson, vice president for Health Sciences and dean of the School of Medicine at Creighton, picks a book that traces the lives of the young men who raised the American flag on Iwo Jima nearly 60 years ago.



Meanwhile, Timothy Austin, Ph.D., dean of the Creighton College of Arts and Sciences, recommends *Gilead*, by Marilynne Robinson; publisher: Picador (reprint edition, January 2006). "I have enormously enjoyed reading *Gilead*," writes Austin. "It's a wonderful summer book, too, because it moves slowly, building its characters and its story line very gradually, until you find you are 'hooked.' Set in the Heartland, it should have a wide appeal to readers of the *Creighton Magazine*."



Share your own picks for summer reading online at *Creighton University Magazine's* website: www.creightonmagazine.org.



“Dude, say more,” was a friendly, informal imperative voiced from an unsuspecting character at an unlikely time.

In the week of final exams of my first semester of teaching in the Department of Philosophy, a generally disinterested student of my Tuesday-Thursday 107 class said it at the conclusion of a prayer service in St. John’s. I had given a reflection, telling those gathered about an instance where God had been present to me: a moment that had taught me something about myself but, more importantly, the way a savvy God had sneaked into my life and shaken me up.

With this student at the back of the church

savvy God some time.”

In the new semester we talked. A lot.

I’m no longer at Creighton. I was there for the three full and fast years of my Jesuit regency, an important time within the long formation program of Jesuits for working — usually as teachers — in a Jesuit institution. Upon its completion, I went back to graduate school, studying at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley (JSTB). Three years later, I’m now ending my time at JSTB. And I’m also ending that long formation program. The Creighton years, those preceding it, and these recent ones total 12. I am to be ordained to the priesthood,

I think it means to be a priest. And what he said — his “say more” — was often echoed in all sorts of ways by other students.

It represents those big questions: about who any of us are individually, how we are in relationship with a world of others, and who God is. About becoming an adult, of bigger ideas brand new, with newly discovered friends or in romance, from unhealed hurts or hopes happening, in science labs or city streets and shelters, Creighton students wanted serious conversation. “Say more” was about what I

could possibly share, but also about what others wanted to say. For some, it was about God maybe gone away and, for others, grace so great.

Priests are in the business of pointing to God. A lot of others are, too. As theologians, poets and activists (to name a few) do this in special ways, so do Jesuit priests. That Creighton

students so often said “say more” is significant because once, a long time ago, the Word dwelt among us. And among them it dwells.

About the author: Hendrickson taught philosophy at Creighton from 2000 to 2003. He will be ordained at St. John’s Church in June, and will travel to Morogoro, Tanzania, East Africa, in August to teach philosophy for one year at the Salvatorian Institute of Philosophy and Theology.



Reflections

My Jesuit Journey

By Daniel Hendrickson, S.J.

An invitation: Join Hendrickson for his ordination to the priesthood and First Mass, both at St. John’s Church. The ordination is Friday, June 9, at 7:30 p.m., with his First Mass on Saturday, June 10, at 6:30 p.m. “I hope to enjoy these ceremonies with the many Creighton students who impacted me so profoundly.”

I was stunned for a couple of reasons. Unlike some groups through the next several semesters, the classmates this guy sat with twice each week were quite engaged, always excited, argumentative and exploratory of the philosophy we were working on. He wasn’t, and each Tuesday and Thursday seemed to communicate an apparent apathy burgeoning more boldly with each successive session. That he was at the prayer service, that he approached me afterward, and that he addressed me so casually were gestures well beyond the normative interaction of the 12 or more prior weeks.

“About what ... dude?” I asked.

“The story. I want to hear more about that

finally — at Creighton, happily! — this June.

In my training to be a Jesuit priest, I’m acutely aware of an expansiveness, a global program that stretches from the Badlands to Bombay to learn something or just live, to write, work and wonder in privileged ivory towers or poor tea estates: to find God or be found by him. Mentors of all sorts — Jesuits, the women and men of professions and ministries where I have been, the familiar and the foreign, the affluent and God’s poorest — have taught me much about Jesuit priesthood. There’s a lot to say alone of a world that blisters always but blossoms, too: a constant play of Christic suffering and the Easter Alleluia. But the freshman kid of the Class of 2000 sums up what

Looking for more spiritual inspiration? Visit Creighton Online Ministries at: www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html

Willing to Excel

Professor Christine Wiseman and Cam Enarson, M.D., in Creighton’s Reinert Alumni Memorial Library, head an academic leadership team dedicated to and focused on students. Their thoughts, below, reflect a continuing dialogue with colleagues here and elsewhere on the value of Jesuit education.



“Our core curriculum is not random but specifically designed so that our students can examine the world, engage the world and then work to transform the world.”

Christine M. Wiseman, J.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs

“We expect our students to graduate with an ability to transform their academic study into a broader commitment to the life of the mind, heart, imagination and spirit.”

Cam Enarson, M.D.
Vice President for Health Sciences
Dean, School of Medicine

Life of the Mind

The Jesuit tradition has dominated values-based education for more than 400 years — and at Creighton since our founding in 1878. It is characterized by an essential understanding of God, the human person and society. It is designed to ensure that students gain certain fundamental skills in reasoning and expression. It is collaborative — enabling students to reach across the traditional lines that typically divide students and faculty, undergraduates and graduates.

Life of the Heart, Life of the Imagination

Creighton University typifies the development of the heart and the imagination. We challenge our students to explore the complexities of persons and societies in our increasingly globalized culture.

Life of the Spirit

Creighton students are challenged to move beyond descriptive knowledge to normative and spiritual reflection, asking the ultimate question: How does one act humanely in today’s world? The rationale is simple: Students are empowered first to examine the world, then to engage the world, and, finally, to evaluate and change the world.

Our Willingness to Excel

Today, more than ever, the world longs for people with the commitment that Creighton University instills: leaders who are “committed to shaping public opinion for the common good.”

To further our mission, Creighton has embarked on a \$350 million capital campaign. More than half of that goal funds critical academic needs: scholarships, fellowships and research; endowed chairs, deanships and visiting professorships; student support services, libraries and technology.

Your response to the campaign has been overwhelming, with \$246 million raised to date. Together, we are realizing a bold vision: one that positions Creighton at the forefront as one of the finest Jesuit, Catholic universities in the United States.



WILLING TO LEAD

THE CAMPAIGN FOR CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

www.creighton.edu/development