

Natural Selection

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Vox Clamantis in Urbe

Occupy Wall Street or Popular Movements Destroying Any Meaningful Conversation on Reform Part 2

JACOB OPPENHEIM

It's hard to read any report about Occupy Wall Street (OWS) without smirking. Those interviewed are frequently the ne plus ultra of any parody of today's over-educated, underemployed, faux avant-garde who dwell in Williamsburg, the Mission (San Francisco), or wherever the creative class is deemed to have settled. OWS makes *Portlandia* look like a serious documentary. And now that the demonstrators' trust funds have been cut off, they've taken to the streets, determined to protest the injustices forced upon them by the system.

While some of you readers may be more tolerant of these cultural predilections, it is difficult to view OWS as anything more than self-indulgent foolishness. Never mind that of 100 protesters surveyed by *New York Magazine*, 55 didn't bother to vote in the last election. Never mind their bizarre, conflicting demands that evince the knowledge of a student who barely scraped by with Ds in high school civics.

This original hipster-esque encampment in Zuccotti Park was soon swelled by aging lefties, who've been waiting for a good protest for nearly half a century now; those generally unwilling to exert themselves in an actual occupation; and the Transit Workers' Union (TWU). The support of this last group runs counter to everything the protestors get right. Just as the financial services industry games the political process to ensure under-regulation and implicit guarantees, so does the TWU to ensure that we massively overpay for our subway system to support overemployment, overpayment, and eye-bogglingly generous pensions.

Schade.

This country does need a groundswell of public opinion for a thorough cleansing of the nexus of government and private industry. But just as the Tea Party only paid attention to the first and ended up as an intransigent wing of the Republican Party, OWS only pays attention to the latter with similarly deleterious effects. We are told capitalism is the problem by protestors with iPads. The problem is not too much capitalism; it is too little. It is the lack of free and open markets that brought us into our current parlous state of affairs. At least the Tea Party acknowledged this basic fact.

If one were a benevolent social planner, assigning people to jobs based on talents alone, it would be an obvious choice to seed the financial services industry with some of the best business talent. The hardest problem in business, and likely in all human endeavors, is the allocation of capital to its most efficient uses. The top-down planning of economies simply does not work. The ge-



Photo courtesy of weaselzipers.com

nius of the market, however, is nearly impossible to bring to bear upon the earliest stages of formation of firms, where publicity is limited, knowledge is poor, and understanding is parlous. Even when firms mature and stocks are publicly traded, the decisions about what and when to invest are extremely difficult. Thus, the evils of the financial services industry lie not in its existence and its strength, but in its immunity from the ordinary processes of creative destruction.

Regulatory capture and crony capitalism, as outlined in my previous column, have left the financial services industry under-regulated and able to abuse its clients and its shareholders, to say nothing of causing the subprime mortgage crisis. While under-regulation may provide a short-term shield, poor business practices and the wreaking of economy-wide devastation would lead to a massive cull of the industry, were it not for the implicit government guarantee behind the largest banks. Call it "too big to fail," or the necessity of credit to the economic system, the point remains the same; the banks (and associated operations) cannot be allowed to collapse entirely. The ordinary laws of capitalism do not apply to such an industry.

Thus we see cartelization in the initial public offering (IPO) market, where fees were always seven percent for every IPO issued in the past decade, versus a wide dispersion in the two to four percent range in Europe. Thus we see those who lie best getting the most business (anecdotes abound, just ask any investment banker.) Thus we see firms like Goldman Sachs, advising their clients on one investment and institutionally betting against it.

Such are the pathologies of markets free from capitalism.

Immunity from creative destruction, the driving force of capitalist economies, allows the financial services industry to capitalize on the best talent it can, far in excess of the demands of the business that it would reasonably conduct under a regime of properly free markets. It should not shock us that many top students, be they in physics or in economics, go to work on Wall Street—this is an effective allocation of talent. What should scare us, though, is that entire universities of students end up in finance, from the very top schools to the mediocre ones, depriving the rest of the economy of talented people. Is it such a surprise, then, that economic stagnation has been our fate over the past decade?

Any serious attempt at reform must acknowledge that government is part of the problem. We have overregulated industries by writing needlessly complex rules that leave regulators with so much data that they cannot see the forest for the trees. When regulatory capture and crony capitalism cause economic malaise, the only solution is fundamental reform. Bring true capitalism back into the financial services marketplace. The place for regulation is to ensure free and open markets by reducing barriers to entry (which includes regulation), combating asymmetrical information (e.g. by requiring robust disclosures), and by removing implicit government guarantees—a step that likely requires a breakup of the largest banks, at least between proprietary trading and retail banking and likely until they are small enough not to pose systemic risk.

You won't hear any of this from OWS, however. Camping in Zuccotti Park and denouncing capitalism on Twitter using your iPad are a clear indication of a lack of levelheaded thinking. As with the Tea Party, a groundswell in favor of reform has broken upon the rocks of partisan politics and petty human nature. For shame. •

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selections.rockefeller.edu
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Occupy Wall Street: Personal Experiences...

SASHA DE WITT

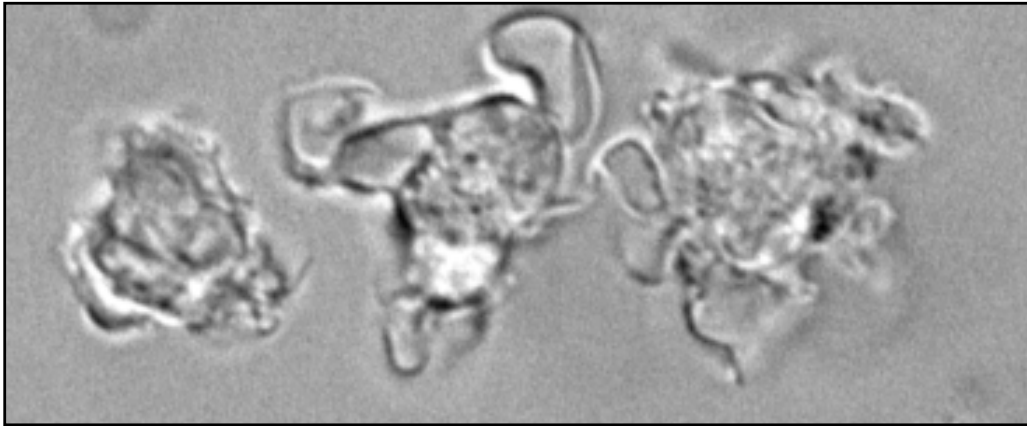
Since the protests began on September 17, 2011, the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement has been gaining attention and momentum in the news and across the Web. At the time of this writing, the demands of the protesters have been vague and undefined, causing the entire movement to be called into question. The open-ended nature of the protests has led to discussions and debates amongst friends and family as to what we believe the protesters sitting in Zuccotti Park are trying to accomplish. Are the protests against income inequality? Nine percent unemployment rates? Corrupt political campaign financing? Fracking? Or are they lazy hippies camping in a park? Online research did not answer these questions. In hopes of gaining a better insight into the protests, my friends and I decided we should head down to Zuccotti Park and check out OWS for ourselves.

Our trip downtown happened on Thursday night, October 13. We arrived around 7 p.m., right as the protesters were congregating for their general assembly. Earlier that day Mayor Bloomberg announced that Friday morning at

7 a.m. there would be a mandatory evacuation of the park to allow for sanitation crews to come in and clean. This was the major topic of discussion during the assembly. In an effort to avoid being evicted from their new home, the protesters offered to clean the park themselves. As we walked around the area we saw teams of people scrubbing the sidewalks and collecting trash bags. Other groups were pruning the trampled chrysanthemums and replacing mulch on the flower beds. From the moment we walked into the park the mood was very clear; these were people who wanted to work together for something better. The person speaking to the crowd announced that, should eviction occur, they would work together to find housing. Another person spoke about the importance of maintaining the sustainability of the movement and how they all needed to work hard to remain in the park. Everyone seemed to be getting along and looking out for one another. A library was set up so people could find books to read, as well as a makeshift kitchen where people were handing out dinner to lines of protesters. OWS seemed to be

more of an exercise in communal living than evidence of any real political movement. Our visit to Zuccotti Park did not prove to be fruitful in answering any of our questions about what exactly the protesters were trying to protest. Nevertheless, having seen first-hand what was going on, we left with a sense that people wanted to work together to make things better. There were definitely people pointing fingers and blaming the "one percent," or corporations, or Republicans for their problems, and there will always be people like that. However, the people who I think had the loudest message and will have the most impact in the long run are those who are above laying blame on others. They are the ones organizing the kitchens and libraries and cleaning up the park. They are proving that people can work together for something better. We don't have to fight and hate one another; instead, we can act like rational adults and accomplish something bigger and better in the end. The actions of some of the protesters speak louder than any of the whiny posters or blog posts. We're all in this together, so why not work together, too? •

In Memoriam: Dr. Ralph Steinman (1943-2011)



“Swimming” dendritic cells from experiments ongoing in the Steinman lab. The impact of his discoveries related to dendritic cells and immunity, as well as his ability to teach and inspire young scientists, will live on. Credit: Cheolho Cheong

Rockefeller University: Laboratory of Cellular Physiology and Immunology Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2011

Book Review: *My Prizes: An Accounting*, and other works by Thomas Bernhard

BERNIE LANGS

In the era of blockbuster bestsellers, I wonder if the genre of literature may find itself at risk of extinction. Could literature as an inspiring art form possibly disappear? It would be as if classical music vanished, to be replaced by film scores or pops orchestrations. The great writers of the late twentieth century who deeply influenced my own forays into writing fiction include such literary masters as Vladimir Nabokov, Saul Bellow, and Jorge Luis Borges. I no longer read fiction, with one exception—I will still read the prose of the late Thomas Bernhard (d. 1989). This Austrian writer is a craftsman, a wordsmith, an impassioned painter of dark moods, who can construct a sentence as many aspire to and few accomplish.

As a teenager in the 1970s, I was an avid tennis player, and after going to the US Open to watch masters such as Rod Laver or Arthur Ashe, I'd rush home, grab a racket, and head out to the court. When I finished reading the novel *Woodcutters* by Bernhard, I was inspired to hurry to my computer to write fiction in much the same way. The novel ends with the narrator running through the city streets, then heading home to commit to paper his thoughts and exploits. When I closed the book, I was inspired to write as well. Bernhard had truly captured the racing thoughts and creative energy it takes to put these kinds of things down in a poetic way, one that allows others to understand, learn, and become excited by their own mental constructions and keen observation of the human condition.

Bernhard, an Austrian, is not an easy read. He does not use paragraphs and his sentences are often convoluted statements of passion and anger. Much of *Woodcutters* finds the narrator sitting in a chair, stewing over the dinner party he has been invited to by former art world friends. Half of his great book *Extinction* takes place as the main character looks out of a window, mulling over the news of his parents' deaths.

My Prizes, written in 1980 and published in English in 2010, is a nonfiction piece of Bernhard's. It is a small book of 130 pages, in

which he recounts receiving literary and other prizes for his work through the years and the ceremonies given in his honor. It must be noted that Bernhard famously put in his will that none of his plays or other works could be reproduced in Austria until their copyrights ran out; his anger at his home country is always at the forefront. Basically, he suffers through the awards for the collection of the prize money. The anecdotes are often hilarious and entertaining and, as an added bonus, one also learns nice tidbits about the author's life.

I believe that ultimately, the humor of Bernhard is what makes his works accessible. His anger is so deep that if he weren't so genuinely funny, it would be oppressive. Bernhard often writes on two realms that I myself would never touch as an author: blatant hate and suicide. Though I can pepper my characters with anger and deep sarcasm, they will always be blessed with a redeeming positive quality. With Bernhard, his narrators seethe with uncompromising hatred for selfish, hypocritical people, or those who are untrue to true artistic inclination, or cruel in their behavior. Death and suicide of secondary or main characters are often found in his writing. It should be noted that Bernhard suffered most of his life from terrible, debilitating lung ailments, so death was always on his mind.

My favorite novels of his are *Old Masters* and the book published just before his passing, *Extinction*. The final rush of ideas in the closing pages of *Extinction* is an incredible and cathartic end to his literary career and serves as a last dig at his country. *Old Masters* is a lighter book, easier on the angst, but even the sun itself is not spared an amusing tirade of angry barbs. The main character is an old musicologist who spends hours each day in a Vienna museum sitting in front of a portrait of a bearded man painted by Tintoretto. This was the first book I'd read by Bernhard and it is wonderful literature. If you haven't read Bernhard, I recommend both *Old Masters* and *My Prizes* as a good introduction to him, especially in light of some of his hilarious recollections in the latter. ◉

Historic Instrument of the Month—The Porter-Blum Ultramicrotome

JOSEPH LUNA

The foundations of many fields of science are often considered as sound and eternal as Manhattan schist. Modern cell biology is a good example. Organelles such as nuclei, the endoplasmic reticulum (ER), mitochondria, and the Golgi apparatus aren't just terms in a biology textbook; they are structures that have preoccupied entire institutes and scores of researchers for over half a century. They are the bedrock upon which the molecular workings of the cell are revealed. Yet, we often forget that confidence in a scientific discipline is always hard fought, especially at the beginning, when truly novel findings are often interpreted as artifacts, shackled by previous dogma, and generally considered on shaky ground. This is the story of one such beginning.

In 1945, Albert Claude and Keith Porter of the Rockefeller Institute, working with Ernest Fullam of the Interchemical Corporation, published a paper describing the use of electronic microscopy (EM) to observe an intact eukaryotic cell.¹ This singular achievement is cited as the founding event of modern cell biology, and as distinct from the older, though still microscopically intense, disciplines of pathology and histology. Many at the time had attempted EM on various biological samples (diatoms, virus crystals, etc.), but had failed with whole cells, which were too thick to image with EM using standard histological techniques. Claude and Porter initially took advantage of the fact that chick fibroblast cells—among the few that could be grown in the lab—spread out very thinly in the petri dish. By placing cells on a wire mesh, allowing them to spread out, and then fixing and drying them, Claude and Porter reasoned that the cell could flatten out enough for EM. They took their samples to Fullam, who operated Interchemical's electron microscope on

Manhattan's west side, the only one in the US at the time, to make some images.

The views were illuminating. They quickly noticed a "lace-like reticulum" that had never been seen before; though without the ability to look at cells other than chick fibroblasts, this structure was hard to interpret. Some argued that it was an artifact of how the cells were prepared, or perhaps it was something specific to chick fibroblasts. In either case, it was clear that this new structure didn't quite fit with observations

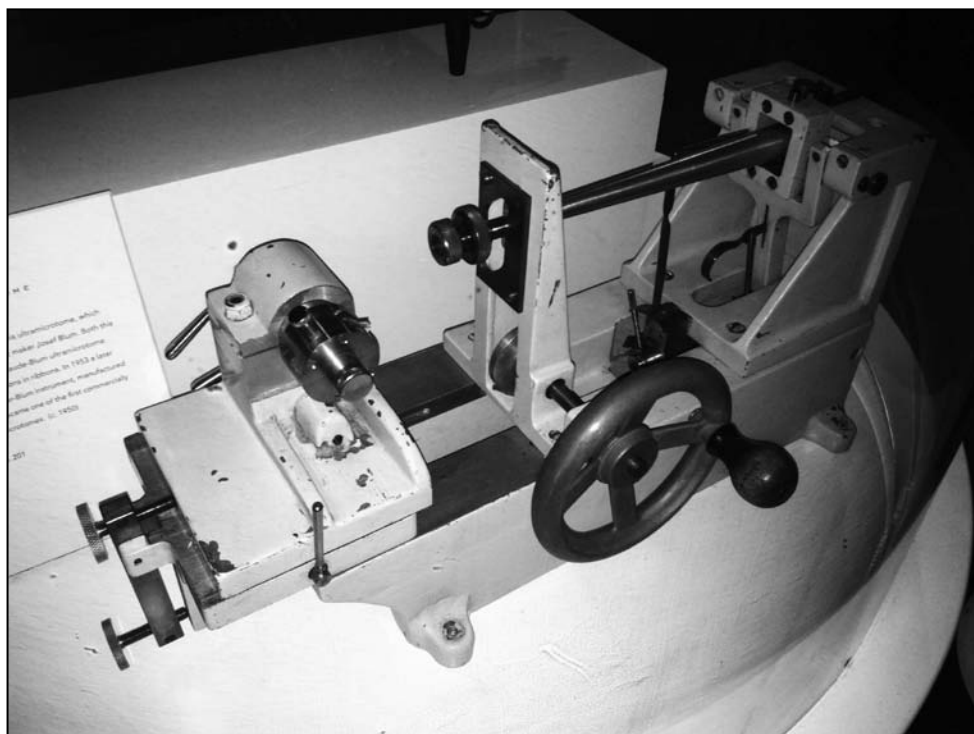
known as "Palade's pickle" procedure) that the reach of EM exploded.³ Throughout the 1950s, Porter, Palade, and co-workers used the ultra-microtome with EM to look at dozens of cell types and tissues, and in almost all instances found the ER, in addition to discovering a number of organelles. Their seeming ubiquity suggested that these previously unknown organelles performed important functions. In the case of the ER, they interestingly noted that cells involved in secreting proteins (hepatocytes, Langerhans cells, etc.)

seemed to have lots of ER, whereas cells that didn't secrete much (skin, muscle) had less. Erythrocytes were the only cells that had no ER. These observations immediately hinted at a function for the ER in making protein, a finding later shown to be correct. It was for this sort of pioneering EM work in revealing the internal organization of the cell, all made possible by this microtome, that Palade, Claude and Christian De Duve (who discovered the lysosome) shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1974.

While EM tends to get the majority of attention due to its stunning visual output, the microtome remains just as critical in its role in founding modern cell biology. And it remains a pillar upon which we continue to build and explore. ◊

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The Porter-Blum Ultramicrotome. Caspary Hall exhibit, October 2011. Photograph by the author.

made with traditional microscopes. Other than the nucleus, the Golgi, and mitochondria—all organelles that could be seen readily—the general consensus was that the cytoplasm (then known as the "endoplasm") was largely devoid of any larger structures. Consequently, the "endoplasmic reticulum" presented a puzzle for the new field.

It was here that this month's instrument became critically important. Working with Joseph Blum of the Rockefeller Instrument shop, Porter developed a microtome now known as the "ultramicrotome" (accession no. 201), capable of making slices of cells or tissues thin enough for EM.² But this was only half of the equation. It was only when George Palade, who joined the group in 1946, developed and standardized techniques for preparing samples (colloquially



This Month Natural Selections interviews Halina Korsun, Administrative Manager in the Harold and Margaret Milliken Hatch Laboratory of Neuroendocrinology.
Country of origin: Germany

New York State of Mind

- 1. How long have you been living in the New York area?** Since I was two years old.
- 2. Where do you live?** Midtown, east side.
- 3. Which is your favorite neighborhood?** Don't really have a favorite.
- 4. What do you think is the most overrated thing in the city? And underrated?** Overrated: I don't know if I would say there is anything overrated about New York. There is a lot going on in this city and whether or not something is overrated depends on your expectations. If you have reasonable expectations then nothing is really overrated. Underrated: New Yorkers.
- 5. What do you miss most when you are out of town?** Nothing really.
- 6. If you could change one thing about NYC, what would that be?** Improve the streets and traffic flow.
- 7. Describe a perfect weekend in NYC.** Getting together with friends to explore a new neighborhood, a new museum, an art show, a show or a concert; and then having dinner at a new restaurant.

- 8. What is the most memorable experience you have had in NYC?**

Having my picture on the front page of the Sunday *New York Times*: there was a mayoral election going on and one of the candidates was campaigning at my swim club. I was talking to the candidate and shaking hands with him and I guess they took our picture. This was a long time ago and I'm not too sure who the candidate was. They didn't win.

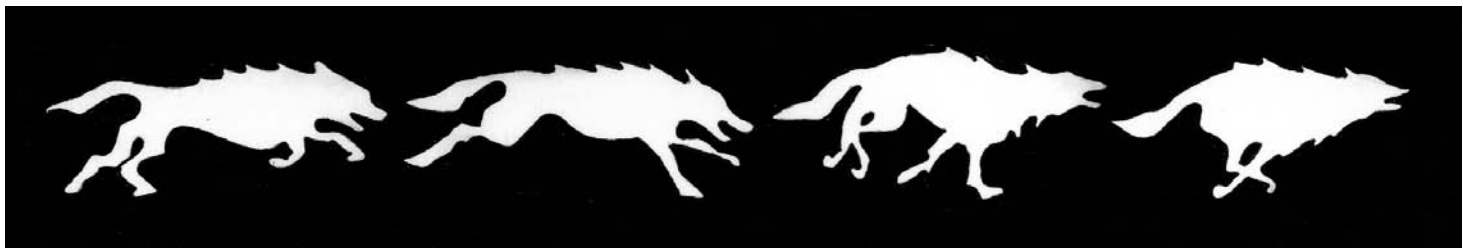
- 9. If you could live anywhere else, where would that be?** Charlottesville, VA, or Sedona, AZ.

- 10. Do you think of yourself as a New Yorker?** Yes, because I've lived here practically my whole life, and I enjoy and partake in the many things that this city has to offer. ☺



Bonding with Wolves

ZEENA NACKERDIEN



Cartoon by Rossana Henriques

Autumn will soon give way to the chill of winter and with it will come snow and long periods of darkness. Some animals seem to be symbolic of winter. The wolf immediately comes to mind. In April 2009, the US Fish and Wildlife Service removed the northern Rocky Mountain population of gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) from protections provided under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).¹ Does this mean that human attitudes towards wolves have changed? Native American folklore, fairy tales, Hollywood movies, and aerial wolf-killing excursions suggest that our attitudes remain rooted in a mixture of fascination and fear. If the latest cinematic installment of the *Twilight* saga is anything to go by, Jacob, one of the lead characters, will continue to be a symbol of our interest in werewolves.

Back in the real world, The Lakota Wolf Preserve in Columbia, New Jersey, provides visitors seeking a break from city life with an opportunity to experience wolves in a more natural setting. Located just east of the Delaware Water Gap and hidden at the back of the Camp Taylor Campground, this ten-acre preserve houses its star attractions: four packs of white tundra wolves from Alaska, gray or timber wolves from North America, and Arctic wolves from Greenland. The beautiful and varied coat colors reflect their varying habitats, with the most dramatic differences observable between wolves of the high tundra who are migratory and follow caribou to their breeding area, and wolves in the nearby boreal forest who hunt nonmigratory prey.

Dark-coated wolves are not commonly found in the tundra, but do increase in frequency towards forested areas.³

While the New Jersey tour includes viewings of bobcats and foxes, it is the calm manner in which Jim Stein, the animal handler, moves among his stars and relays stories about raising them as pups that draws in the crowds. There is an implicit trust between Jim and the wolves that one rarely sees among men, let alone man and beast. The highlight is hearing the entire pack howl on Jim's cue, although, on my visit, the idle thought did cross my mind that the campers might not appreciate daily choruses disturbing their peace and quiet. Avid wildlife photographers are encouraged to return for special one-on-one photography sessions managed by animal handlers. Other would-be-naturalists who cannot take time off from the laboratory can keep up to date with events and information about the wolves via Facebook. ☺

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The Day of the Dead: Cultural Lessons from Mexico

CARLOS RICO

For many of us, Halloween represents that time of the year when we dress in costumes imitating supernatural beings, go trick-or-treating around the neighborhood, and carve pumpkins to display on our front lawns. Halloween has its roots in Celtic and Roman traditions, but it has slowly lost its original significance due to the increasing consumerism surrounding the holiday. Despite this, Halloween has become a special day for many children, and even adults, all over America. To an outsider like me, Halloween reminds me of *El día de los muertos*, or the



Families adorning the tombs of their deceased relatives with *ofrendas*.

Credit: Wikipedia.

Day of the Dead, a Mexican holiday that parallels Halloween but with very different customs. The Day of the Dead is celebrated on November 1 and 2, with children and adults honored during those days. The holiday originates in ancient Aztec rituals and in beliefs about the fate of the dead. The Aztecs believed that the soul of the deceased was destined for a specific place based on the way the person died. For instance, warriors who perished in combat dwelled in *Omeyocan*, or paradise of the sun, where they would accompany the sun throughout its daily journey. On the other hand, people who died of natural causes were destined to *Mictlán*, a dark place from which escape was impossible.

After the arrival of the Spanish, Catholic missionaries attempted to eradicate those beliefs. Instead, the indigenous population assimilated the Catholic traditions into their own beliefs. The Day of the Dead is a prime example of *Mestizaje*, the hybridization of indigenous and Spanish cultures into what constitutes modern Mexican culture. Today, families commemorate their loved ones by visiting the cemeteries where their relatives are buried and decorating their graves with *ofrendas*, or offerings. *Ofrendas* are elaborate crowns

made of flowers, mainly *Cempaxóchitl* (flower of the dead), which is believed to attract and guide the souls of the dead.

Some families also build altars in their homes to remember their deceased relatives. The altars have a picture of the person being remembered surrounded by religious artifacts such as crosses and pictures of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Families also place the person's favorite food and beverages as a welcoming gesture. People believe that on November 2, the spirits of the dead descend down to earth to

visit their families. The altar is supposed to guide them through this journey, and the food is left so that the spirits can consume it after their long journey. Even though the food remains physically intact the following day, people believe that it lacks flavor and/or nutritional value, which is taken as a sign of a supernatural visit. For children, relatives will place toys on the altar, *alfeñiques* (candy made of sugar and lemon juice shaped as skulls), and *pan de muerto* (bread of the dead), sweet egg-based bread shaped as a bone.

In Mexico, people welcome and accept death, and in certain cases, even worship the dead as a religious saint. Death imagery pervades the holiday, emphasizing its significance in Mexican culture and beliefs. To an outsider, Mexicans' warm welcoming of the dead may seem strange and bizarre. Whether it is Halloween or Day of the Dead, it is that time of the year when we mortals recognize the central role death plays in our lives. And whether we accept or fear death, it is an inevitable part of life, which we may not realize until one of our loved ones departs. However, instead of mourning our loss, we should remember the good moments we shared with them and praise that they lived a good life. ◉

Natural Confections ...visits Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks

CARLY GELFOND

It was by pure chance that I happened to discover Bonnie Slotnick one clear day in September, when the right set of circumstances landed me in Greenwich Village on the stoop of 163 West 10th Street. I had been killing time, moseying slowly northward in the direction of a dinner reservation later that evening. As I neared the end of a mostly residential block, an old yellow wooden sign hooked over the railing of a low staircase came into view. "OPEN," it said in giant black letters, as if whoever had put it there feared that the open thing—whatever it was, so small and tucked away—would slide unnoticed into oblivion were its ex-

istence not announced to every passerby. And in fact, even with such a sign, it was a wonder I myself happened to be looking up at all, what with my habit of reading books while walking. But look up I did, and soon I was standing in front of a brownstone building with a large window to one side of the door.

On the window was printed the name, "Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks." *Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks*, I might have exclaimed out loud. A tiny shop just for cookbooks! I could hardly believe my luck that such a magical place existed, and that I should have landed on its very stoop. The front door was propped open,

and so I climbed up the stairs and went in.

Inside, I found myself in a dim little hallway. A light was coming from an open door near the end, and I went towards it, turning into a miniscule cave-like shop. And there she was!—Bonnie Slotnick herself. As I write this, I don't know why I was so sure, but somehow I was. She was standing near the back of the room, her nose hovering before a wall of books, like a mouse who smells crumbs but can't quite locate them. Hearing me come in, Bonnie Slotnick whizzed around and eyed me, kindly. "Hello, there. Can I help you? Are you

looking for something specific?" she asked, in a small voice only someone named Bonnie Slotnick would have.

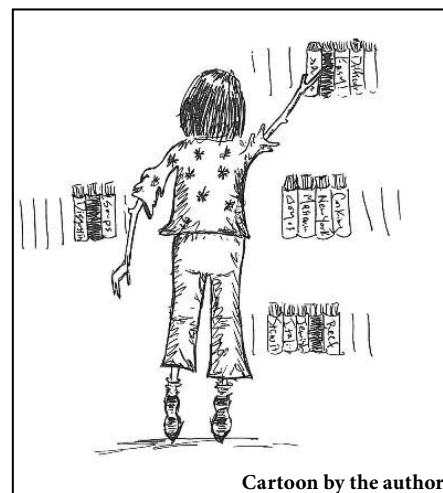
"No," I said. "Just saw your sign and thought I'd stop in." Bonnie Slotnick was a sliver of a woman and of indecipherable age, with short, flat brown hair. She fit perfectly in the warm, rickety little room, with its floor to ceiling bookshelves, in the same way an elf fits into an overgrown woodland.

"Well!" she chirped. "You've stopped into the right place." It was clear to me that I had. Bonnie Slotnick, I quickly learned, specialized in old cookbooks. Her collection ranged from the rare and out-of-print to the timeless classics (think Julia Child and *The New York Times'* Craig Claiborne). And while cookbooks—old or new—might not pique just anyone's interest, cookbooks as artifacts of time and place may hold some appeal. Far beyond simply providing instruction, many provide a wealth of cultural insights, too.

But Bonnie Slotnick knew she had someone in her shop who needed no convincing. (Could it have been that I admitted I read cookbooks like novels?

"People are so embarrassed to say that!" Bonnie Slotnick told me. "Anyone who has read a recipe for lobster can tell you that cookbooks are often high on drama.") Before I knew it, she was showing me all manner of cookbook relics. A booklet from the 1940s gave tips for stretching ingredients—or substituting for them altogether—that were hard to come by during WWII. Another featured stick drawings engaging in various cooking endeavors, an effort to appeal to children. This last was a prized possession, handed down to Bonnie Slotnick by her mother many years prior, and tattered from so much use. Of course, a cookbook can be a record of personal history as well, tattooed with the scribbles of its owner. In the margins of my own mother's well-worn cookbooks are the tell-tale notes of family dinners gone by: "Carly loved!" or "Omit raisins—Rich hated" or the ubiquitous: "Needs salt."

I left Bonnie Slotnick's shop (promising to return on a day when I had hours rather than moments to kill) with a book called, *Home Cooking*, published in 1988 by the late writer and cook, Laurie Col-



Cartoon by the author

win. Part memoir and part cookbook, it is a time capsule from a decade when organic products were procured via mail order, when people cooked their own fried chicken, and when vegetables were disguised for children in such a way as to not appear to be vegetables at all. Well, some things never change. •

If you go:

Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks

163 West Tenth Street

New York, New York 10014

Bonnieslotnickcookbooks.com

RUArt No. 5: PHIL/MANIPULATED

JEANNE GARBARINO

I am not sure what it is about PHIL/MANIPULATED—the amazing example of photorealism hanging in the lobby of the Abby. Created by the Washington state native, Chuck Close (born July 5, 1940), this piece of art draws me in. In fact, I might go so far as to say that it is my most favorite artwork on The Rockefeller University (RU) campus. Maybe it's the facial expression or the way shadow is incorporated or perhaps the way his hair is totally unkempt. I can't put my finger on it, but there is some reason why I love it so.

It might just be that I am a huge fan of photorealism, a modality that brought fame to Chuck Close. With his massively scaled portraits, Chuck has been able to represent human expression in a way that lies on the edge of reality. PHIL/MANIPULATED (1982) is one such example. Gifted to RU by David



Photograph by Jeanne Garbarino

Rockefeller in 2001 as part of the university's centennial anniversary, the por-

trait is of the contemporary composer Phillip Glass—a subject whom Chuck used for at least 20 compositions between 1969 and 1996. We set our gaze upon edition 20, which uses an underlying grid work to hold together "manipulated" paper.

Though Chuck suffered a debilitating seizure in 1988 that left him paralyzed from the neck down, an occurrence dubbed "The Event" by Chuck himself, he was not deterred. "The Event" was actually an episode of spinal cord collapse and after rehab and physical therapy, Chuck is able to move his arms, but still needs a wheelchair. He continues to produce pieces of art that are highly coveted by museums everywhere. In addition to RU, you can find artwork by Chuck Close featured at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and at the Museum of Modern Art. •

Life on a Roll



Life Writer by Carolina Prando



Positano Pause by Carly Gelfond



Dreaming in Central Park by Elodie Pauwels

