

Natural Selections

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

WORLD SCIENCE FESTIVAL

The first World Science Festival made its debut in New York City from May 28 to June 1, 2008. Although not widely reported in the mass media, the festival was a huge success—all the events were sold out in advance. *Natural Selections* reports on a few of the events, as well as experience from a Rockefeller volunteer and an interview with President Paul Nurse, who helped organize the festival.

Finding Feynman

Inside both, the Nobel prize winning physicist and the Emmy winning actor, is a bubbling curiosity about our world and a genuine love for science; Alan Alda was able to tap into his, in order to bring Richard Feynman's to life.

On May 31, 2008 Alan Alda performed a staged reading of *QED* as part of the World Science Festival. *QED* is an encapsulation of the life of physicist Richard Feynman through the dramatization of one day of his life. While Feynman tries to busy himself with physics, life keeps pulling him towards the anecdotes that best illustrate how his curiosity drove his decisions in science and in life.

The decision to create this play was Alda's; he fell in love with the character and went on a quest to find the real Feynman. After reading the book *Tuva or Bust*, by Ralph Leighton, he began a collaboration that six years later would result in the creation of *QED*, a play written by Peter Parnell. It turned out Feynman's life would not so easily be wrestled into a play in one act.

We are introduced to Feynman escaping to his office to do some work. However, the world is chasing after him: trying to get a moment of his time through answering machines, telephone calls, and personal visits that besiege him in his own office; he is needed for an opinion on a physics matter, a talk on "What We Know," a performance on the bongos, for help in welcoming visiting dignitar-

ies, and his doctor needs him to come to terms with the diagnosis that his cancer has returned. But, what does Feynman want? He wants to do physics...and he wants to visit the throat singing peoples of Tuva.

His desk reflects his interests; the Challenger report shares space with *The Story of the Wood Grouse and the Drake*, just as physics shared time with drums and painting in his life. When Feynman

to host *Scientific American Frontiers*, and to work with St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Following the play, Alda interviewed a panel of physicists to get them to share their Feynman encounters and to touch on the legacy that Feynman left for the world. With a gleam in his eye, Alda volleyed questions on dark matter and matters of Feynman. It was easy to see why someone like him would want to introduce the world to someone like Feynman.

—Anna Magracheva

No Monkeying Around With Morality

If we were chimps, I learned, there would have been instant warfare in the auditorium. Lucky for us, we had morality. As part of the first annual World Science Festival, on May 29, 2008, philosophers Patricia Churchland and Daniel Dennett, neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, and evolutionary biologist Marc Hauser met at the 92nd Street Y to discuss the science of morality from their varying perspectives.

The discussion was led by *Newsweek* editor Jon Meacham and followed by questions from the audience. Titles like "Co-director of the Mind, Brain, and Behavior Program at Harvard, Director of the Cognitive Evolution Lab, and Adjunct Professor in the Graduate School of Education and the Program in Neurosciences" make for "very large business cards," as Meacham noted, but that evening they made for an expansive discussion of morality, where Aristotle was cited next to science papers. Meacham kept the mood light amidst talk of prairie vole mating habits and the role of religion in society.

Dan Dennett argued that the human species is the only one capable of "full fledged moral and immoral activity." It is a good start that the auditorium did not descend into a primate battleground, but

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Image by Adria Le Boeuf

The dream response to the World Science Festival

found himself the lone dissenter on the Challenger Commission, he forced NASA to face their mistakes as he would later force himself to face terminal cancer. If the truth was out there, he wouldn't allow anyone, especially himself, to walk away from it. After the news that his cancer is back, Feynman is hounded by his doctor to make a choice between a risky surgery and living out what time remains. He finally agrees to the operation, saying to his doctor "If during the operation I start to go...bring me out of it...because I want to see what it's like...to die...It'll be an interesting experiment."

Alda's interest in science has led him

then what is morality? The answer is that it is either decisions that maximize the interests of the group, decisions based on punishment and reward, or decisions that the brain is hardwired to make; or all of the above; or a nature/nurture balancing act of the three. Fortunately, the goal of the science festival was to introduce science to the public, and even for that, two hours was barely enough time.

—Anna Magracheva

Math is Magic

Have you ever calculated the squares of two-digit numbers in your head, or tried to figure out which day of the week your birthday falls on this year without checking the calendar? On May 31, 2008, during the show *Mathemagician*—part of the World Science Festival 2008—Professor Arthur Benjamin, who called himself a mathemagician, performed mental calculations such as squares of 5-digit numbers and computing which days of the week people were born on. Perhaps specifically designed for the festival, during the second half of the show, he explained some basic ideas behind the calculations. Not only did Benjamin

present how mathematics could be so interesting and amazing just like magic, but also how the calculation could be so easy once you’ve realized the tricks behind it.

Benjamin interacted with the audience; children were especially excited about the show and enjoyed participating in it. After the show, I saw several kids still happily discussing it with their parents, asking them about some of the tricks Benjamin did not explain. Like magic, Benjamin had now rooted mathematics in the children’s hearts.

—Chung Chang

Volunteering for the World Science Festival

I applied to volunteer at the World Science Festival (WSF) during the weekend, and my duties ranged from manning the information desk (“Yes, this is the last day of the festival, but we’ll be back next year!” and “The lecture is right up those stairs.”) to running errands (“Laura, could you please go to the Upper West Side to pick up this bag...”). By far, my favorite volunteer activity was the Saturday

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An Interview with Paul Nurse

Natural Selections (NS): What was the impetus of the World Science Festival?

Paul Nurse (PN): The original idea came from Brian Greene, the organizer, a physicist who wrote several physics text books. He asked me to be on the advisory board and also to participate in a number of events. So, I was involved quite early on in giving some support for it. I think the object of the World Science Festival was to bring science to the general public. I think it’s important because we are supported by the general public. If we don’t have good relations with them, and they don’t appreciate science, that support will be lost. Not only will that be bad for us in doing our work, but it’s also bad to the society because science is important for running and advancing society. The purpose of the World Science Festival was to educate and entertain. The education part was often presented in ways that could have entertaining elements to it.

NS: Was this a truly world event? Is it going to happen again?

PN: It is New York Science Festival. It drew on the world for people to come. It

will be a yearly event in New York.

NS: What will be changed next year?

PN: Every event was sold out, twice or three times over in some cases... So in my opinion, bigger venues and more complicated multi-media forms.

NS: What was Rockefeller University’s role in the World Science Festival?

PN: The Rockefeller University did provide financial support... We did offer Rockefeller venues if they wished to hold things. They didn’t because we were a bit separate from the main centers, NYU and Columbia... They were very interested in the Rockefeller connection. They are also interested in personal connection because they know that I personally am very supportive of public interactions on science.

NS: What were your favorite events?

PN: I only went to the ones that I was involved in. I did three things. I chaired a discussion on how human genomes affect our lives, our health, and how we think about ourselves. I chaired another one on big physics questions, on the ultimate structure and matter of the universe. I was a panel discussant on a

discussion on what it is to be a human. I think the last one was the least successful for me. I didn’t have much to say, quite frankly, and there were nine people on the panel, so big that little could happen. I like the other two. The one on genomes is close to my own interest, and I participated in a scholarly way; I participated in the physics one in an amateurish way. So I enjoyed both of them.

NS: How did all this fit in our larger goals (if we have them) to interest and to educate the public on science?

PN: At Rockefeller, we are primarily a research institute. We have some responsibilities of teaching and training graduate students and postdocs. But, I do think all research institutions have a responsibility for interacting with the public in different ways. We do put on public lectures. We started a series of public lectures, and that will become part of what we do at Rockefeller. Rockefeller’s support for the World Science Festival is part of that. I actually think this is quite an important thing for us to do and to continue doing it.

—Jiabin Chen and Jennifer Bussell ©

How Green is Your Cafeteria?

An Interview with Chad Ethier

AILEEN MARSHALL

Last September, *Natural Selections* reported on the green initiative in the Weiss Café (<http://selections.rockefeller.edu/cms/campus-life/weiss-is-green.html>). Several months have passed, and one may wonder whether those environmentally friendly measures have brought any positive effects.

With this question in mind, *Natural Selections* recently talked to Chad Ethier, Director of Food Services.

In September, it was reported that during a typical week, the cafeteria served 1500 breakfasts and 5000 lunches, for a total of 6500 meals per week. Now, the cafeteria reports 1700 breakfasts and 4500 lunches, making the current total 6200 meals served per week. All of that eating can generate a lot of waste.

Last August's raffle in the cafeteria revealed that 24,000 napkins were used weekly. The new napkin dispensers, which allow single napkin release, have brought that number down to 18,000, a 25% decrease. Chad says that the "overall paper/takeout container usage decreased 28% from fiscal year 2006 to 2007 and an additional 14% from fiscal year 2007 to 2008."

Although the Styrofoam containers are not oil based, Restaurant Associates is currently talking with the University about changing the containers in the cafeteria to something even more environmentally friendly. However, the difficulty is that any container would stay in a landfill just as long as the Styrofoam, unless arrangements are made to bring them to a

composting facility where they can be exposed to air.

In the meantime, several new green initiatives are going on in the cafeteria. Eco Cards will give you 30% off your 11th meal using china instead of disposables. Cardboard boxes have been stamped "Please Reuse Me" to encourage users to bring it back the next day to be reused.

You get 10% off coffee for using a mug. The coffee is Fair Trade—it certifies only farmers who uphold specified social and environmental standards, and guarantees prices that make it possible to sustain farms—so it helps fight poverty and create sustainable communities. The cafeteria uses non-hydrogenated, zero trans-fat oil for cooking and dairy products free of recombinant bovine growth hormone. Seafood is from sustainable sources whenever possible. Eco-Lab brand cleaners are used in the cafeteria, which are environmentally sound and are free of noxious, volatile organic compounds.

There has been significant improvement in reducing the waste generated by the cafeteria, especially paper products. This is part of the broader efforts that The Rockefeller University is trying to make. We can all do our part by disposing of recyclable trash in the correct receptacles.

For a complete list of the green initiatives in the Weiss Café, go to the Natural Selections Web site. ☉



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street fair for the children.

I chose to volunteer at the New York Botanical Garden's tent. Kids and parents could dissect seeds, help plant a large garden, plant a small polka dot plant to take home, or grind wheat berries into flour. I'll admit, showing kids how to use a mortar and pestle for four hours while worrying about an approaching thunderstorm was not so stimulating to me, but seeing the children's rapt attention and excitement for science made those four

hours seem like four minutes.

The street fair had Disney imagineers, stilt-walkers, jugglers, air-brush wielding face-painters, a robotic dinosaur, a mathematician, anatomy presentations, a seminar detailing how Segways work, and tents from the major science museums in the tri-state area. It was inspiring to be reminded of the many ways science is all around us. I'd like to think that some of the kids in attendance may go on to be scientists themselves.

In all, 120,000 people came to the WSF's events in 2008, according to the official Web site www.worldsciencefestival.com. The planning for the 2009 festival is underway, and you can sign up for e-mail updates at the Web site above. If you don't have the time to volunteer next year, I strongly encourage attending any of the events. I was amazed this year by the festival, so I can't wait to see the improvements and additions for next year.

—Laura Winzenread ☉

Case Studies of Two Renaissance Men: Thomas Young and Vladimir Nabokov

ZEENA NACKERDIEN

To many scientists the words “interdisciplinary research” refer to cross-fertilization of ideas and experiments within subcategories of their chosen field, or alternatively collaborating with clinicians, engineers, and physicists. Usually, when scientists strayed into areas of music, film, and literature, or when artists strayed into science, it was within the framework of communicating the latest discoveries to laymen or using creative images to transmit the impact of the latest breakthroughs. Another possibility is simply demonstrating the beauty of nature for its own sake. By and large, the motto seems to be “to each his own.”

History has provided us with figures that break the traditional mold, either in the breadth of their scientific expertise or by their achievements in the seemingly separate worlds of science and literature. Thomas Young, an English polymath (1773-1829), is an example of the former, and Vladimir Nabokov, a Russian-American author (1899-1977), is an example of the latter.

Nabokov is, of course, widely known for his novel, *Lolita*, composed while on butterfly collecting trips in the western United States. He combined teaching “all things Russian” with his interest in lepidoptery at both Wellesley College and Harvard University. Harvard students may be familiar with Nabokov’s collection of male butterfly genitalia stored at the university’s Museum of Natural History and his expertise in microscopic comparisons of these specimens. Several butterfly and moth species, as well as the genus *Nabokovia* were named in his honor.

Thomas Young broke boundaries in many areas of science. He established the wave theory of light, overcoming a century-old view that light was a particle—an assessment made by Sir Isaac Newton. The roll call of his achievements includes founding the field of physiological optics, establishing the theory of capillary phenomena based on the principle of surface tension as well as related equations, making contributions to haemodynamics, medical writings on consumptive diseases, and developing a rule for children’s drug dosages. Young’s interest in Egyptian hieroglyphics was evidence that this genius did not only confine his mind to scientific matters. His publication, *Account of the Recent Discoveries in Hieroglyphic Literature and Egyptian Antiquities*, may have influenced the Frenchman, Jean-François Champollion, who deciphered the Rosetta Stone.

Although Young and Nabokov were completely different in terms of temperament, interests, and accomplishments, one might argue that both flourished as creative individuals because interests and success in one field stimulated success and further accomplishments in other areas. Stephen Jay Gould, noted paleontologist and essayist, held an alternative view that may apply to both Nabokov and Young, namely, success in science and other fields may be rooted in a love of detail, contemplation, and symmetry. ☉

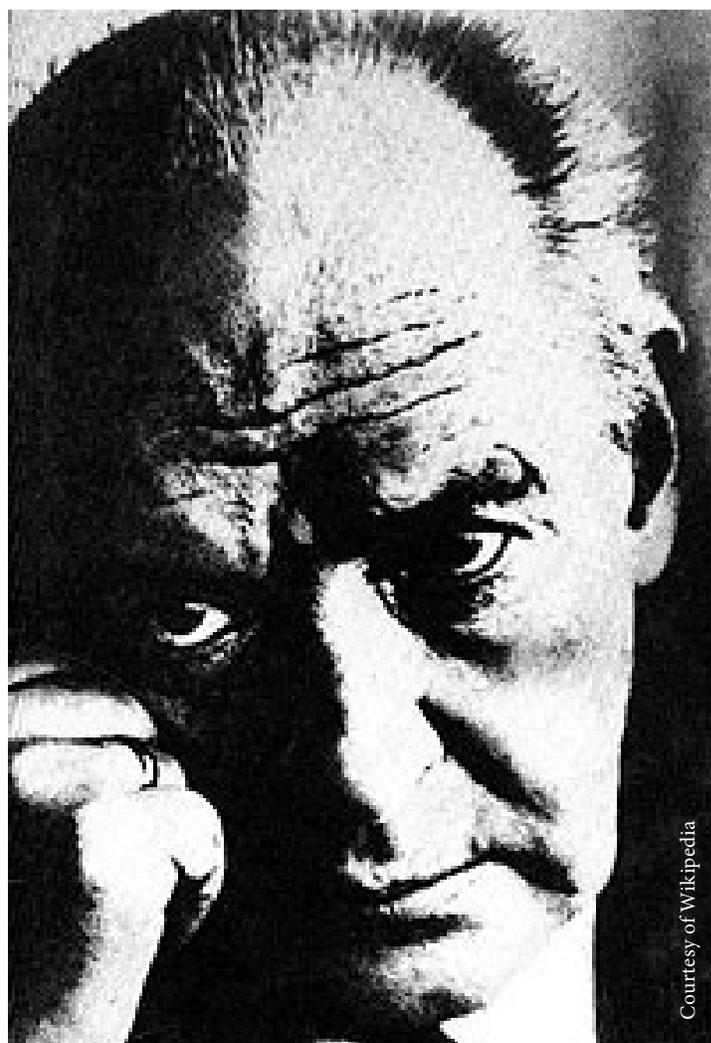
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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Young_%28scientist%29
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Nabokov



Thomas Young

Courtesy of Wikipedia



Vladimir Nabokov

Courtesy of Wikipedia



This month, *Natural Selections* features Cristian Rosario, Dean's Office Assistant
Country of Origin: USA

New York State of Mind

1. **How long have you been living in New York?** One word: Conception.
2. **Where do you live?** Currently in Spanish Harlem (but have lived most of my life in the Lower East Side).
3. **Which is your favorite neighborhood?** The Lower East Side. I have fond childhood memories growing up there and know the neighborhood and community well. It also doesn't hurt that the Lower East Side is teeming with bars.
4. **What do you think is the most overrated thing in the city? And underrated?** Overrated: Driving. But it may be time to renew my driver's permit and apply for a license. Underrated: New York Public Libraries. There's no point to renting movies when you can see them for free.
5. **What do you miss most when you are out of town?** Bodegas. Where else can you find six "corner stores" on the same block?
6. **If you could change one thing about NYC, what would that be?** The cost of living (need I say more?).
7. **Describe a perfect weekend in NYC.** Catching an unpacked and on-time (yeah, right) train to the Lower East Side, drinking a few brews on the roof of my building, barbecues in the East River Park, playing dominoes with the old-timers on my block.
8. **What is the most memorable experience you have had in NYC?**

Too many to list, but will go with one of the most recent. I attended David Paterson's swearing-in ceremony as Lieutenant Governor (who knew the man would succeed Eliot Spitzer as Governor shortly thereafter). I also got to mingle with some prominent political figures.



9. **If you could live anywhere else, where would that be?** Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Wouldn't want to live too far from Manhattan (especially, the Lower East Side).
10. **Do you think of yourself as a New Yorker? Why?** Yes. You can't fake the accent. ☺

Life on a Roll



Arrival



Takeoff

The Travel and Travails of Coffee

REVATHY U. CHOTTEKALAPANDA

We have come a long way by a process of “trial and error” finding new sources of food and beverage. Coffee is one such commodity, which has an elegant travelogue. Here is an outline on the evolution of coffee, as to when and how it travels through the barriers of religion, culture, and community, and has managed to reach different parts of the world.

The time around 850 AD marks the discovery of the first coffee berries. The goatherd Kaldi, member of the Galla tribe of Ethiopia noticed that his goats displayed some excitement after eating red berries from a local shrub. He ate the berries himself and frolicked with the goats. The tribe ground berries with animal fat and ate them.

1100 AD: Arab traders bring coffee to their homeland and cultivate for the first time. They are the first to boil the beans, and they creat a drink called *qahwa*—that which prevents sleep.

1453: Coffee travels to Mecca and Medina. The Ottoman Turks bring coffee to Constantinople.

1475: The Turks open the world’s first coffee shop. Turkish law makes it legal for a woman to divorce her husband if he fails to provide her with her daily quota of coffee.

1600: Coffee is smuggled into southern India by a Muslim pilgrim named Baba Budan, who carries beans under his belly.

1616: Coffee enters Holland from the Arabian port of Mocha.

1645: The Italian traders transport coffee from Constantinople to Venice. The Pope is urged by his advisers to consider this Ottoman drink to be an infidel threat. Still, coffee becomes an acceptable drink.

1652: The first coffeehouse opens in England. They multiply and become popular forums for learned and not-so-learned discussions, called “penny universities,” —one pays a penny for a cup of coffee.

1668: Coffee comes to North America. It replaces beer as New York City’s breakfast drink.

1669: Coffee travels to Paris through a Turkish ambassador, to the court of Louis XIV.

1670: Coffee is introduced in Germany.

1675: King Charles II orders the closing of all London coffeehouses, calling them places of sedition.

1679: The physicians of Marseilles attempt to discredit coffee by claiming it to be harmful

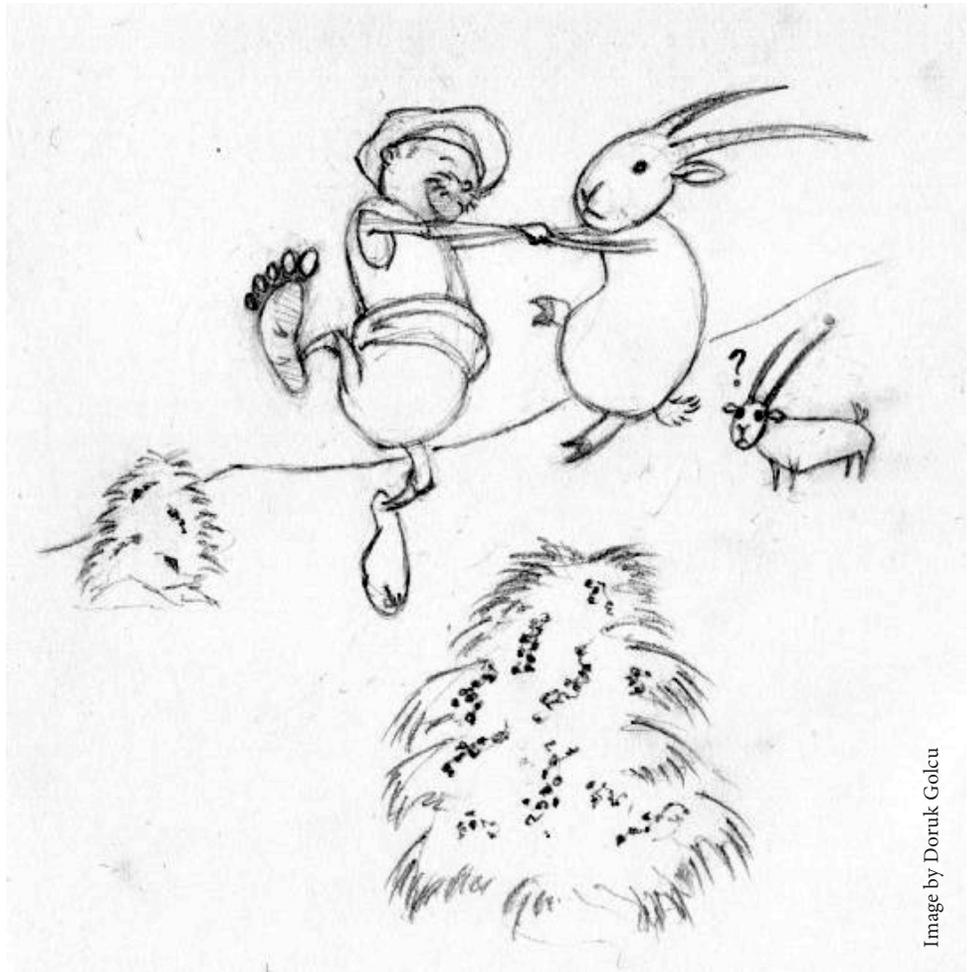


Image by Doruk Golcu

to health.

1683: Franz Georg Kolschitzky opens the first coffee house in Vienna using the “dry black fodder,” left behind by the defeated, fleeing Turks. He establishes the process of refining the brew by filtering out the grounds, sweetening it, and adding a dash of milk.

1688: Edward Lloyd’s coffeehouse opens in England, which becomes the Lloyd’s of London. The word “TIPS” is coined in an English coffee house: A sign reading “To Insure Prompt Service” (TIPS) is placed by a cup. To get prompt service and better seating, one has to throw a coin into the cup.

1690: The Dutch transport coffee from Mocha for cultivation in Ceylon and Java.

1713: The Dutch present a coffee shrub to Louis XIV, which is preserved in the Jardin Des Plantes in Paris. Sugar is first used as an additive in his court.

1723: Coffee plants are introduced in the Americas by Gabriel DeClieu, a French naval officer, who transports a seedling from Paris to Martinique.

1727: The Brazilian coffee industry gets

its start by Lieutenant Colonel Francisco de Melo Palheta, who is sent to arbitrate a border dispute between the French and the Dutch colonies in French Guiana. He settles the dispute and strikes up a secret liaison with the wife of the governor, transferring cuttings and fertile seeds of coffee in a bouquet of flowers. In less than a century, Brazil harvests 97% of the world’s coffee.

1730: The English begin coffee cultivation in Jamaica.

1732: Johann Sebastian Bach composes *Kaffeekantate*. It is partly an ode to coffee and partly a stab at the movement in Germany to prevent women from drinking coffee.

1773: The Boston Tea Party makes drinking coffee a patriotic duty in America.

1885: The process of using natural gas and hot air becomes the popular method of roasting coffee.

1900: *Kaffeeklatsch*, the afternoon coffee, becomes popular in Germany. The name was coined to describe women’s gossip at these affairs. Since then, it is broadened to mean a general, relaxed conversation. In the same year, Hills Bros. begin packing

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The NIH Compliance Guidelines: Who, What, Why & How

CAROL FELTES

In January 2008, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) adopted a revised “public access policy.” Many may be familiar with the term “open access,” commonly used by researchers to promote free exchange of scientific and technical information among them. The term “public access” refers to the efforts to make research developments that were publicly funded available to the general public, not just the research community. Medical research has been the primary issue, and the one of most interest to the public.

Because of this demand and discussion in Congress that endorsed the rights of the public to access research they have funded, the NIH instituted and promoted a recommendation that researchers voluntarily deposit copies of their scientific papers in the PubMed Central archive. Response to these recommendations was very low—less than 4%. Congress reviewed the NIH report of this low rate of response. They enacted the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008¹ that included a provision, making the NIH policy and guidelines mandatory rather than voluntary.

The new mandatory requirement to deposit NIH funded published research in the public archive caused immediate confusion among authors, PIs, publishers, and libraries. The new statutory requirements include:

- All investigators funded by the NIH must submit, or have submitted for them, to the National Library of Medicine’s PubMed Central archive, an electronic version of the final, peer-reviewed manuscripts.

- They shall be submitted upon accep-

ance for publication.

- They will be made available to the public no later than twelve months after the official date of publication.

- Implementation of the guidelines must be consistent with copyright law.

- The guidelines apply to all manuscripts submitted for publication after April 7, 2008 and funded by an NIH grant that was active on or after October 1, 2007.

The traditional publication process for a peer-reviewed journal requires that the author sign a copyright agreement with the publisher. These agreements give the publishers broad rights to re-distribute and re-use the content that they publish in their journals. Copyright law, and the assigned rights of the publishers under these agreements, are not necessarily consistent with the NIH mandate.

Most publishers recognize that it is in their own best interest to facilitate compliance with the NIH guidelines. Many have already modified their copyright agreements, or are in the process of doing so. Some publishers will even submit the accepted, peer-reviewed manuscript to the PubMed Central on behalf of the author, thus encouraging authors to view them as “preferred” publishers. A list of these journals is available on the NIH Web site.

Other publishers who will not submit on behalf of the authors will agree to having the manuscript—and in some cases the final pdf version—made publicly available in the archive at the twelve month deadline required in the policy. In these cases, the PI, or an agent acting on behalf of the PI such as the library, must submit the manuscript

to the archive. A few publishers have not addressed these issues.

All manuscripts submitted for publication, which were NIH funded research and involved a Rockefeller PI, must also be reported to the Markus Library. The library will track the manuscript, report them to the Office of General Counsel of the university for review of copyright, and submit manuscripts when required to the repository. The counsel office will notify PIs when it is appropriate and approved for them to sign the copyright release to the publisher. Rockefeller authors should not sign any copyright forms pertaining to NIH funded manuscripts until they have received this approval. When necessary, the counsel office may negotiate terms with the publisher that will allow compliance with the NIH mandate for public access.

A white paper on the new mandatory guidelines and compliance policy was prepared in February 2008 by the Scholarly Publishing & Association Resources Coalition (SPARC), Science Commons, and the Association of Research Libraries. It is available at <http://www.arl.org/sparc/>

The Rockefeller Web site has important information and links to additional sources, including the university’s statement on Rockefeller Compliance by Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Michael Young, at http://www.rockefeller.edu/sr-pd/index.php?page=NIH_PublicAccessPolicy ☉

Reference:

1. Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, Public Law No. 110-161, Division G, Title II, Paragraph 218.

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roast coffee in vacuum tins.

1901: The first soluble “instant” coffee is invented by Japanese-American chemist Satori Kato in Chicago.

1903: The German researchers perfect the process of removing caffeine from the beans without destroying the flavor, and market it with the brand name Sanka.

1905: The first commercial espresso machine is manufactured in Italy.

1906: Brazil attempts to increase world coffee prices by withholding some from the market through the “Valorization of Coffee.”

1908: The world’s first drip coffeemaker is invented.

1938: Nestle invents freeze-dried “Nescafé instant coffee,” assisting the Brazilian government in solving their coffee surplus problem.

1942: American soldiers are issued instant Maxwell House coffee in their ration kits. They bring instant coffee to a global audience.

1945: Achilles Gaggia perfects the espresso machine with a piston

that creates a high pressure to produce a thick layer of cream. Cappuccino is named for the resemblance of its color to the robes of the monks of the Capuchin order.

1959: Juan Valdez becomes the face of Colombian Coffee.

1971: The first Starbucks opens in Seattle.

1975: Brazil suffers a severe frost that sends coffee prices skyrocketing.

Early 1990s: Organic coffee becomes the fastest growing segment of the specialty coffee industry in the United States.

The twenty-first century: Coffee is the world’s most popular beverage. It is a world commodity that is second only to oil. ☉

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_coffee

Come, Catch Some Plays in the City This Summer

REVATHY U. CHOTTEKALAPANDA

Shakespeare in the Park just finished performing *Hamlet* all through June. To sit by the Turtle Pond at dusk, to watch a fabulous play in the Delacorte Theater, to watch the streaks in the sky made by the passing jet planes, and to be with the New York crowd is truly a memorable experience. The Public Theater is coming back with *Hair*, the American tribal love-rock musical, running from July 22 through August 31.

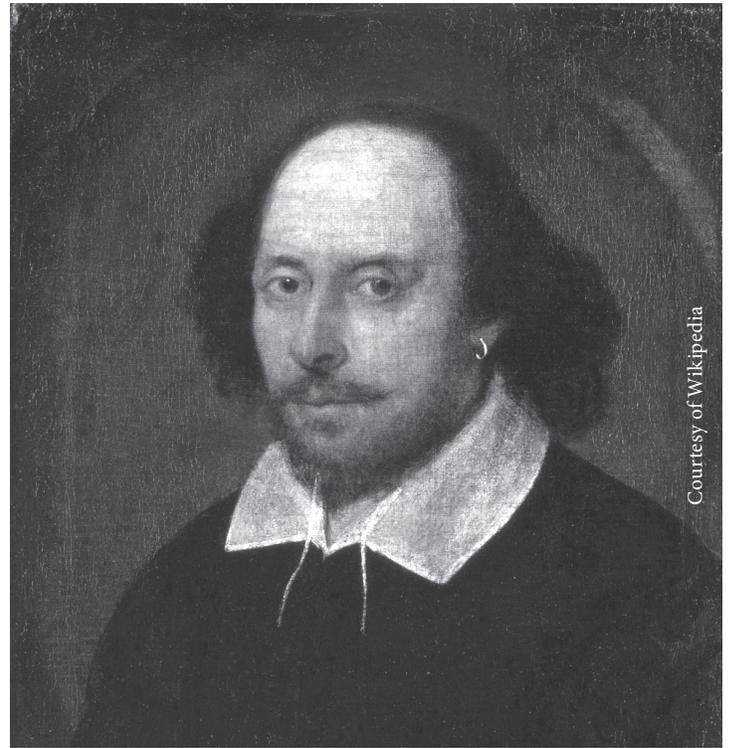
TIPS: Create a log-in to request free tickets at www.publictheater.org instead of lining up at the park.

The New York Classical Theater performed *Cymbeline* all through June in Central Park West. They work with an eco-friendly concept called environmental theater, where one literally runs behind the actors to catch the scenes. Each scene therefore has a unique background and setting that features the park. If you love plays, you can still catch some in the city all through summer. The New York Classical Theater performs *The Tragedy of Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, at Castle Clinton in Battery Park (Lower Manhattan) July 1-2, 5-9 and 11-12 at 7:00 p.m. In August they are performing *Misalliance* by George Bernard Shaw at 103 Central Park West, Thursday through Sunday, July 31 through August 24 at 7:00 p.m.

TIPS: Bring a mat to sit on. Check out www.newyorkclassical.org/current.php.

The Drilling Company puts together *Shakespeare in the Parking Lot*. They are performing *Twelfth Night* from July 3 through 19, *Henry V* from July 24 through August 10, at the Municipal Parking Lot at the intersection of Ludlow and Broome Streets, Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.

TIPS: Appear fifteen minutes early to ensure better seating, and



Courtesy of Wikipedia

William Shakespeare

bring a mat for sitting on the hard ground of the parking lot. See www.drillingcompany.org/nowplaying.html.

All the above performances are free. ☉

In Our Good Books

The reading suggestions have been kindly provided by staff members of the downtown bookstore McNally Robinson.

Maps and Legends, by Michael Chabon

Some of these essays are mere autobiographical fillips; some are semi-sinister trickster tales that mix truth and lies; some are heady considerations of the successes and failings of contemporary literature. All are written with Chabon's unparalleled wit and richness of language and engage his favorite themes of genre fiction and Jewishness. Buy it now, if only to possess the astonishingly complex and beautiful book design by cartoonist Jordan Crane; once this print run is gone, it'll be a plain old book again, like magic ending after the stroke of midnight.

Ours, by Cole Swensen

Not because I have a feeble garden of my own, or because this throbbing spring

has made me miss the smell of sun on ripe earth as no other before it. Rather, because Cole Swensen is a poet so assured that she can put the lie to romanticism: take a topic (gardens in this case), bend her craft to it with persistence and careful thought and, still, have the resulting book be inspired.

Incognegro, by Mat Johnson

My favorite kind of book is one that both moves and challenges me taking me on a thrill ride of story and character. Mat Johnson's new graphic novel rides that dangerous edge between heavy issues and heavy-hitting action, with the black-and-white story of a black man passing for white in the lynching-plagued 1930s South. It pulls it off in the way only a comic can, and manages to work gender politics, family dynamics, and some darned funny dialogue into a suspenseful mystery. An important (and enjoyable) moment in the history of literary comics.

The Age of Lulu, by Almudena Grandes

Warning: This is not your mother's erotica. *The Ages of Lulu* is literature whipped with lawless lust and the type of human contact that had to be witnessed to be written about. Think Marquis de Sade and mean it. That said, Maria "Lulu" Luisa's journey begins at fifteen. Lulu's first lover, her brother's twenty-seven year old friend, charms her out of her chastity into marriage and mindful acts of pleasure and possession. This lasts well into her thirties. Lulu loves it. She can't get enough of it. And her wiles, eventually, turn her out in an unthinkable manner. ☉

McNally Robinson independent bookstore is well worth a visit; they have a fantastic selection of books on their shelves. The store is located in NoLiTa at 52 Prince Street between Lafayette and Mulberry. Visit them on the Web at <http://www.mcnallyrobinsonnyc.com/>.



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