

ARF NOTES

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: TIM FOX

Unfortunately, COVID is still with us and probably will be throughout the year. Fortunately, ZOOM came to the rescue, and ARF is up and running. Our First meeting of the year featured Dr. Hillary Kaplowitz, CSUN Technology and Education, with a hands-on introduction to ZOOM and its features. Following her presentation, breakout groups were created where we experienced small group discussions. Participant response was positive, and the session was a great success. If you missed it, the September issue of *ARF Notes* provides guidance to using ZOOM (www.csun.edu/arf).

Our October meeting focused on the history of the Women's Suffrage Movement from the 1850's forward. The session was well-attended, and we accomplished one of our ZOOM objectives – enabling remote participation. Hawaii, Washington, and New York were represented. Following the panel presentation, there was a lively, open, ZOOM discussion of the issues presented.

John Szabo, head Librarian for the city of Los Angeles, is our featured speaker for November. He had planned to meet with us during our Spring Tour of the LA Central Library; a tour that was canceled due to the COVID outbreak. Please note the November meeting will be on the 3rd Wednesday (the 18th), since Veterans Day, a national holiday, falls on the 2nd Wednesday this year.

Expecting that COVID will be with us throughout the year, we continue to explore options for our traditional post holidays banquet in January, the Spring Memorial Awards Brunch, and the annual June picnic/meeting. Stay tuned for updates.

Of course outings for our dining groups, SCCARF and YUM-YUM, are now silent; instead of exploring the delights of local restaurants, we are exploring the delights of

our kitchens! And the Tuesday Film Group is on hiatus. However, the Monday Film Group and two Book Groups continue with ZOOM discussions. In fact, participation in these groups is up! So, think about getting involved; the group coordinators are: (Film) – Diane Schwartz and Robert Hanna, (Science Book Group) – Heidemarie Lundblad, and (Monday Book Group) – Robbie Schaeffer. ARF Membership renewals are on track to match last year's results. Thank you for your timely responses, and if you haven't yet responded, please do so. Our plan is to publish the annual membership directory in November, and we'd like it to be as accurate and complete as possible.

Each year, ARF awards \$2000 to each of four outstanding graduate students, campus wide, to help offset expenses associated with graduate theses and projects. Funds for these awards come from member donations to ARF's Memorial Awards fund, in memory of deceased faculty. Increasing the awards to \$2500 is under consideration. Please consider contributing to ARF's Memorial Awards Endowment Fund. If you've already contributed – Thank You! And if you haven't, please review your plans for 2020 contributions and think about ARF's graduate student Memorial Awards.

And a last note, if you haven't voted, please do so; everyone's input is essential to our future.

Tim Fox, ARF President, 2020/2021

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NEWS FROM CSUN AND THE CSU

Faculty Senate Meeting, Sept. 2020: Highlights

Joseph I. Castro, President of CSU Fresno, has been named Chancellor of the CSU, beginning in January 2020.

President Dianne Harrison announced that the Spring 2021 Semester will be mostly virtual classes. The campus plans to search for a small number (< 20) tenure-track hires for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Provost Mary Beth Walker announced that there are minimal reports of COVID 19 on our campus. Fall semester 2020 enrollment is 33,000 FTES. She reports that 83.5% of the Fall 2019 FTF have returned to CSUN in Fall 2020.

VP Colin Donahue reports that the \$491M CSUN budget is as expected, with a \$33M shortfall due to loss of revenue, new costs, and a state allocation cut. Student housing has taken a massive hit in revenue. The campus expects to deal with this through reductions in operating expenses, use of reserves, and reduced labor costs (partly through FERP).

CSUN Students Have Opportunity to Discuss and Analyze National Issues

As mail-in ballots were about to arrive in registered voters' mailboxes, California voters joined the more than 65 million viewers who tuned in to the highly anticipated debate between President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden.

There was a lot to digest during and after the Sept. 29 debate, which covered the Supreme Court and the nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett, the ongoing fight against COVID-19, the economy, racial tension, climate change and questions of election integrity. But CSUN communication studies professors John Kephart III and Joel Lemuel helped unpack the heated arguments for Matadors who attended the first session of "Debate Watch!" — an online series for CSUN students, faculty and staff to view and discuss the debate together. "[Presidential debates] are central to decision making, and they are really important for voters," Kephart said. "But even if you can't vote ... these are still phenomenal ways for you to stay informed and to participate in civic engagement."

Kephart and Lemuel gave their assessments on Trump's and Biden's performances, summarized the night's most

important moments, and led a Q&A discussion with the audience and panelists for just over an hour after the debate. The event "had tremendous student engagement," said Kephart, who hopes to give audience members more opportunities to interact with each other in future sessions. Debate Watch! was only one of the many online events in the campus initiative dubbed [CSUN Act Now](#), leading up to Election Day on Nov. 3. CSUN Act Now is a collaboration between students, professors and administrators to increase voter engagement and organize civic education events. It is led by the We the People Campus Team, a group of students, staff, faculty and community members across campus who encourage Matadors to actively participate in the democratic process and in their communities. Anyone is welcome to join this team.

"People often want to be more civically engaged, but they're just not sure where to start," said Julia Heinen, CSUN interim director of community engagement. "And while voting in the election is a very important way, it's just one of the ways to be engaged. The CSUN Act Now events will help Matadors get involved in contemporary issues facing our society, to highlight the strong connection between civic engagement and the classroom."



ARF's Home for Tomorrow, An Update

As if you didn't know, our ARF World is changing

along with everything else - as of today, here is what we do know. Our home of many years, the Faculty Center (FC) to sooo many of us or, the Orange Grove Bistro (OGB) to the newer, is both in need of substantial repair, and is on the site of the planned Hilton Garden Inn Hotel. The Hotel is scheduled to be built just west of the corner of Nordhoff Street and Zelzah Ave. After the hard work of many of you long ago, the FC/OGB will be demolished. But - the famed "CSUN" sign on the corner, Monterey Hall, and the historic Orange Grove are to remain untouched. <https://www.csun.edu/tuc/csunhotel>

In spring 2017, Ron McIntyre charged Dan Blake, as Chair, with Patrick Nicholson and me, to find a new home for ARF. Since then, Dan walked us all over this campus more than once seeking the perfect new home. Dan is younger, Sigh! No one location was as good as the FC/OGB. We found a temporary home on the second floor of the Sierra Center, the Corporation Office Building immediately west of Jerome Richfield Hall (Old Sierra North). The

Colleagues Room above the Food Court was reserved for ARF's future meetings until the new "Orchard Conference Center and Catering" (OCC&C) facility is ready. The old South Annex to the Campus Bookstore Complex is currently renovating into a modern Conference Center with food facilities for catering campus needs. The scheduled completion of the OCC&C is March/April 2021, but it will remain closed until the Chancellor opens the campus; <https://www.csun.edu/node/296506>

Catering by whom? A decision was made to outsource management of Food Services at CSUN. All Food Services on campus, fast food locations as well as the OCC&C, are to be under oversight of "Chartwells Higher Education." At this writing, Geronimo's, the Mercado @ Geronimo's and El Pollo Loco are the only open food sources on campus. <http://chartwellshighered.com/who-we-are/>

A major concern of the Ad-Hoc Committee was parking that has been very convenient at the FC/OGB. We are not getting younger. Just trucking on down the Lane is getting tougher for some. The answer was Parking Lot F2, the one-way two-sided Parking Lot running from the back of the Bookstore on Lindley Ave/East University Drive to the East past Jeanne Chisholm Hall. It was to be expanded to the north into the existing Green Lawn in front of the Hall.

This is how we understood the plan as it was. Then, the Virus Pandemic Covid-19 struck. Today the Hilton Garden Inn has been placed on hold because CSUN is closed by Chancellor's decree for the entire Academic Year 2020/2021. Funding for the expanded parking in F2 is not available. However, construction of the OCC&C goes on to completion as scheduled. Are our existing agreements on space and schedule still in place with Chartwells? The Jury is out until we have a contract; that may not be anytime soon.

To be sure, Life at ARF goes on through the tireless and excellent efforts of Sharon Klein, Program Chair, and the Board under President Tim Fox. We believe that these times provide opportunities to reach far beyond Programs on-site and can include many more of you through Zoom. But that is another story left best to Sharon and Board Cohorts. Hope to see ya in person again real soon . . . ?

Bob Kiddoo



From the Program Committee

Recognizing these Monumental Women, as depicted in a bronze statue recently placed in New York's Central Park (and

the first statue in the park depicting women!), a few exceptional contemporary women joined ARF on October 14th to commemorate the work of Women's Suffrage pioneers and many others who joined them, and later

stood on their shoulders. We commemorated the centennial of the 19th Amendment by looking at its complex history in the US and elsewhere, at the legacy of feminism (a French word, already used in the late 19th century in France and in The Netherlands), and at the critical work addressing the human rights that remain unsettlingly inaccessible to many. Speaking of shoulders, it's one of our prior distinguished ARF speakers, Dr. Cynthia Rawitch, whose idea it originally was to organize an ARF program commemorating the 19th's ratification. Thanks, Cynthia!



Joining us in "Zoom-person" were Dr. Ellen Carol DuBois, Distinguished Research Professor Emerita from UCLA, whose most recent book, *Suffrage: Women's long battle for the vote*, provides a comprehensive and elegantly detailed history of the movement, and CSUN's own, and treasured, Dr. Jane Bays

who talked in detail about the gender and politics involved the 20th century struggle to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment--a stunningly less successful struggle. Our third guest



was Gina Clayton-Johnson, Esq., founder and director of The Essie Justice Group, who provided us with a vital example of the sustained battles women wage

against the injustices and inequalities continuing to affect so many lives. It was wonderful to have these people in "the same room"--and "among us," thanks to the technology of Zoom, as they were able to speak with one another, as well as with us! And although she could not attend in person, Alex Cohen, anchor and reporter for "Inside the Issues," started us off with an introductory video--at once personal and issue-focused.

All that challenges, and--(yes) literally--plagues us these days is softened by such platforms as "Zoom", allowing our gatherings in ways that transportation more conventional than Zooming would not typically enable. We saw, and could talk, not only with these guests (Jane and Ellen were able to "hang around" even after 3:30, to chat, informally with us), but importantly, also with colleagues and friends who otherwise could not likely--certainly not easily--attend. Kind of nifty, yes? Of the 35 attendees, three were from out of the area, which is almost 10% of the attendees: one each from Hawaii, Washington, and New York. So, Zoom is working to get non-local members joining us for meetings!

And hasn't ended! We're planning for another "trip" on November 18th, again at 2:00 pm. Joining us will be John Szabo, the City Librarian of the Los Angeles Public Library and head of the board of Online Computer Library Center. In 2015, he was awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Service, the highest honor for library

service in the United States. Whatever else happens between now and then, the LAPL continues to provide light and support, steadying us in what is undeniably uncertain territory. So! We'll all gather--that we can gather also steadies us--to listen and discuss...and also to schmooze a bit.

What we'll do about January's traditional TGTHAO gala, and some of our important gatherings in 2021--notably the Field Trip, the Memorial Graduate Student Project Awards brunch, and our annual picnic--awaits more consideration, and we welcome suggestions; there are ideas afloat, but the knowledge, insight, and creativity of ARF members would come in handy, here...as would more suggestions for improving our monthly gatherings. The Program Committee will be grateful. *Sharon Klein.*



EMERITI: RETIREMENT ACTIVITIES

Jim Allen (Geography). In pre-Covid times, Nancy and I completed an excellent archeological tour of the northern Yucatan, seeing many ancient Mayan sites interpreted by an archeologist working in that area. Now we stay at home, and I'm doing much reading and running in the early morning. Nancy is reading a lot on YouTube. We've gathered occasionally for lunch outdoors - in our backyard, not a restaurant. We will probably fly to Boston in late October to see our daughter Laura and her family plus celebrate Halloween, Nancy's favorite holiday.

Irene Cota (Elementary Education). I completed the 5th year of my FERP employment, and am now an Emeritus Professor of Elementary Education.

Timothy Fox (Engineering and Computer Science). My wife Phyllis Russell and I enjoyed virtual cocktail hours with remotely located friends and family, something we haven't done in the past. This permits more frequent contact with non-local family and friends.

Joyce Linden (Special Education). I will be supervising 2 Student Teachers working with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students in American Samoa for the college of CMI (College of the Commonwealth of the Mariana)

Jody Myers (Religious Studies). I am currently writing about food history and eating practices across religious cultures. I'm completing a book on foodways and community among American Orthodox Jews, using the diverse Orthodox communities in the West L.A. Pico-Robertson neighborhood.

Pamela Perez (Spanish). Though officially I was a Spanish Instructor for 21 years at CSUN, my PhD dissertation was on environmental studies. I was published in a book by Common Ground Scholar entitled "The Tourism Life Cycle: Its Application for the Costa del Sol."

Kathleen Rowlands. We have moved to Hawaii to be close to family. For Kathy, this is a return after 21 years

on the mainland. For Denny, it is a new adventure. We will be house hunting when out of quarantine.

Harvey Rich (Sociology). We now reside half a year in Portland, Oregon.

Warren Willig (Mathematics). My beloved wife of seventy years, Anne, passed away at age 98 on August 9th.



IN MEMORIAM

Richard Abcarian (English)
1929-2020

In 1959 Dick Abcarian joined the fledgling English Department of twelve tenure-track professors at San Fernando Valley State College. He stayed at CSUN throughout his career, a popular teacher and faculty leader for more than thirty years, retiring in the 1992.

Born and raised in Fresno, part of a working-class immigrant Armenian-American community that included William Saroyan, he went to UC Berkeley as an undergraduate and there he completed all three degrees: B.A., 1952; M.A., 1955; and Ph.D. 1961. But Dick was never finished learning. While teaching fulltime he entered law school and earned a J.D. in 1976. He also took up Spanish and by the 1980s he was fluent. Along the way he won two Fulbrights, the first one to the University of Pau in France (1967-68) and the second one, thanks in part to his fluency in Spanish, to Argentina (1978-79). He was also musically talented; having learned the trumpet as a teenager, he played in the Northridge faculty-staff dance band in the '60s, and after retiring he picked up his horn and joined a seniors' big band in Culver City.

In some ways Dick lived the exemplary academic life. Innovative in teaching, never content to just sit back and do the same-old-same-old, he was remarkable in reinventing his specialties. He taught one of our first courses in African American literature and edited a collection of essays on Richard Wright's *Native Son*. But Dick is probably best known for the textbook, now in its thirteenth edition, he edited with Marvin Klotz, *Literature: The Human Experience*. Their introduction to literature eschews the traditional approach to its subject, focusing on timeless themes, particularly oppositional themes: innocence and experience, conformity and rebellion, culture and identity, love and hate, life and death. This fresh approach—and the expertise of the editors—made this book enormously popular, widely adopted in colleges and universities nationwide.

Dick had a profound longing for peace and justice. A champion of underdogs and outcasts, he always stood up fearlessly against hawks and bigots. On one occasion he was arrested on campus and served a year on probation for defying authority, refusing with other faculty members to disperse when their assembly was declared

“unauthorized.” He was frequently on the line with protestors during the anti-war years. In his neighborhood in Northridge, he was active in the Fair Housing Council. But perhaps most of all, he was a union guy, one of the



first to rally for faculty rights in the workplace, fairness in the RPT process, benefits, and collective bargaining. In 1967, shown at left, Abcarian spoke on the steps of the Capitol in Sacramento to protest

then-Governor Reagan’s proposed education budget cuts.

A ruggedly good-looking man, with a rich, often bawdy, sense of humor, he had tons of real friends who filled a restaurant on his 90th birthday. On that occasion he was fully alive, the Dick we always knew and loved. Although in the last year, his health—both physically and mentally—failed and he became progressively more depressed, he was still defiant. My last phone call with him a few weeks before he died was painful, but I will always remember one thing he said repeatedly: he just wanted “to live long enough to see that soulless son-of-a-bitch in the White House get his comeuppance.” Too bad he didn’t make it. (1929-2020). *John Clendenning*



Malcolm Sillars (Speech) 1928-2020.

Malcolm Sillars—to his friends, always “Mal”—was a founding member of the CSUN faculty. How that happened is an interesting story. In 1955 a blond, crew-cutted “kid” (see college yearbook picture at left)—an assistant professor of speech at LA State College, still in his twenties, was picked with about three dozen others

To open a branch in the San Fernando Valley. They were the ones who, as they often proudly said, “came over on the Ark.” Mal was not only “the kid”—he was the one-man speech department. In 1958 the branch of LA State independently became San Fernando Valley State College, and Mal became the chair of a somewhat larger speech department which then included drama, speech pathology, and radio-tv-film. By the late-Sixties he was dean of Letters and Sciences. At the same time he wrote a number of essays on religion, politics, and public affairs that were published in national journals, and, with Charles Mudd, he published a popular textbook: an introduction to public speaking.

Mal was born in New Jersey in 1928, but his family moved to Southern California with that wave of WWII

vets in the late Forties. In high school he excelled in public speaking and debate, winning a statewide championship as a junior. As an undergraduate at Redlands College he won a national championship. After earning a master’s degree at Redlands in 1949, he entered the doctoral program at the University of Iowa, completing his PhD in 1955. By the time he came to LA State he was married with three children.

At Northridge Mal will probably be remembered chiefly for his brief stint as interim president. In 1968 several members of the Black Student Union, demanding that an assistant football coach be fired for racist abuse of a fellow student, seized control and for several hours occupied the top floor of the Administration Building. The LAPD arrested the protesting students. These events set off a period of extreme unrest on campus. For the first time in its short history the Northridge campus became the focus of national media. When the administration failed to control the situation, they turned to Mal Sillars who effectively brought an end to the chaos. Violence subsided and dialog was opened. *Life* magazine covered the story. Under Mal’s leadership mutual respect prevailed, and eventually minority students, with newly established academic departments, were integrated into campus life.

In 1971, just as SFVSC was redefining itself as California State University, Northridge, Mal left us to become dean at U Mass Amherst. That was not a happy move for anyone. Not only did CSUN lose a key professor and administrator, but for three years Mal was miserable. In 1974 he resigned to become dean of humanities at the University of Utah and there he remained. In some ways his highest professional achievements came about through his years at Utah. On the other hand, many of us here will always remember Mal for his remarkable service to our campus during its nascent and turbulent years. Nor did he forget us: he was a long term member of **ARF**. *John Clendenning*



BOOK GROUPS

At the September 23rd meeting of the **Science Book Group**, we discussed *Handprints on Hubble – An Astronaut’s Story of Invention* by Kathryn D. Sullivan (2019). There was general agreement that Sullivan’s book is well written and easy to read. It includes a great deal of detail about astronaut selection and training. Particularly interesting is the detailed discussion of the time and effort put into the design of the Hubble telescope, and the years spent developing tools and procedures for potential repair issues. The key word for this effort is “maintainability.” As explained by the author, adjustments and repairs to the telescope had to be anticipated, and the telescope had to be designed to be accessible in space by astronauts who would have only limited time to perform required maintenance or repairs. This meant that the design team, which included Sullivan, had to under-

stand what might have to be done, help to design appropriate tools, and evaluate how well they would work in a real space situation. For example, a crisis occurred when the Hubble was first deployed and found to be slightly blurry. One part of the lens had been ground incorrectly by a microscopic amount, and the team was able to correct this by a procedure which might be compared to putting a contact lens in an eye. All in all, an enjoyable and instructive book.

At the **October 21st meeting** we discussed *How Innovation Works* by Matt Ridley (2020). This book is a very readable exploration of its subject. Ridley not only provides a plethora of innovation examples, but also makes it clear that in many cases a number of people “played” with an idea and developed a workable model even if in the end only one person was credited with the innovation. Not all of us were enamored by Ridley’s overriding premise “why it flourishes in freedom”. He repeatedly expounds on his opposition to “too many” rules and regulations which he considers to be impediments to innovation. This, of course, raises the question of what is “too much”? I found it interesting that thalidomide, a major failure of pharmaceuticals testing, is mentioned only en passant and not mentioned at all in the index.

Please **note** that the November meeting will be on the 11th due to the **ARF** meeting on 11/16. On **November 11th** we will discuss *The Idea of the Brain: The Past and Future of Neuroscience*, by Matthew Cobb (2020). For thousands of years, thinkers and scientists have tried to understand what the brain does. Yet, despite the astonishing discoveries of science, we still have only the vaguest idea of how the brain works. In *The Idea of the Brain*, scientist and historian Matthew Cobb traces how our conception of the brain has evolved over the centuries. The selection for the **December 16th meeting** is *Swerve - how the world became modern* by Stephen Greenblatt. (2011) One of the world's most celebrated scholars, Stephen Greenblatt has crafted both an innovative work of history and a thrilling story of discovery, in which one manuscript, plucked from a thousand years of neglect, changed the course of human thought and made possible the world as we know it.

All meetings will be on Zoom until the covid-19 virus goes away. Zoom meeting dates for the academic year 2020/21: 12/16; 1/20; 2/17; 3/17; 4/21; 5/19; 6/16; 7/21; 8/18. *Heidemarie Lundblad*

The Wednesday Book Group

At our August Zoom meeting the **Wednesday Book Group** discussed Isabel Allende’s *A Long Petal of the Sea*. The title, referring to the country Chile, is from a poem by the poet Pablo Neruda. The author is Chilean but now resides in the United States.

This novel takes place during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s and in Chile during subsequent decades up through the 1980s and is anchored by the stories of Victor and Roser. Victor's family fights against Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Roser's love, Victor's brother Guillem, is killed in the war while Victor serves as a medic. As that debacle gradually ends, Roser, now with Guillem's baby,

and Victor meet outside a French refugee camp. Victor wants to take care of Roser and her baby; he hears about a refugee ship organized by Neruda and headed to Chile. After he learns that married couples are preferred by Neruda, he proposes a marriage of convenience to Roser. That gets them selected for the passage.

In Chile, they slowly create their new lives and remain tightly bonded. Roser makes use of her talent as a pianist and is outgoing and positive. Victor completes his medical training and they become valuable members of Chilean society, as Neruda had hoped when he chose those permitted to come to Chile.

The author creates a believable but not too predictable plot and interweaves the stories of many characters. Although this novel's main characters are fictional, political struggles and cultural and social class tensions in both countries mirror what are significant factors in many people's lives. Thus, in addition to the usual satisfactions of stories and characters we like in a good novel, the reader learns about the political histories of two countries that many of us are not very familiar with. The writing about the war in Spain, when Franco asserted his power, is compelling. Equally powerful is the author's portrayal of Chile, especially in the 1970s when the elected socialist government of Salvador Allende is taken down in a U.S.-aided military coup that installed the brutal dictatorship of Pinochet. Pinochet retained power for seventeen years. In answer to the natural question, Isabel Allende is the goddaughter of Salvador Allende, who was her father's cousin.

The writing did not call attention to itself and made the book very accessible, perhaps partly due to the excellent work of two translators. In summary, Allende's intricate plot and characterization, with people's gradual recognition of their need for one another, combined with her treatment of modern Latin history, class and politics made this an especially rewarding book that everyone liked a lot. Several of us are now reading other works by this author.

The **Wednesday Book Group's** September reading was Erik Larson's *The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz*. This is a suspenseful history of Britain's resistance to Hitler's bombing and potential invasion of Britain during the single year beginning May 1940. Hitler had just conquered the Low Countries and advanced on France. Because the U.S. did not enter the war until December 1941, the book covers important personalities and events not so well known to most Americans. Our book group liked this book a lot and recommends it strongly.

The book focuses on Winston Churchill, his family, assistants, and trusted advisors, as they cope with the bombings and the unknown future. We get an insider's look at Churchill's dilemmas and decisions. Churchill's behavior was decisive and unrelenting; he understood the threat of imperialistic Germa-

ny and Britain's need to resist it. He appointed many able men to build the war effort as fast as they could. In particular Churchill put his close but undiplomatic friend, Lord Beaverbrook, in charge of aircraft production, which led to a great increase in the production of the Spitfire fighters, whose pilots fought aggressively and well against the German bombers. Those intense raids, most involving hundreds of bombers, between September 1940 and May 1941 — the Blitz — killed over 44,000 civilians, well over half of them in London. Thanks to Beaverbrook's buildup of the air force the British were able to bomb Germany, thus demonstrating some early measure of resistance. In his speeches Churchill told the truth about the destruction and lives lost in the raids but combined this awful news with statements of his faith in the British people's courage and steadfastness, a practice that worked well.

Although there is coverage of some military strategies and technology, especially the role of the new German ability to follow a radar navigational beam to find their targets in Britain, most of the book is about people. We get intimate looks at Winston, so often with a cigar and brandy, as he hosts many lunches and dinners with family and his and Clementine's wide circle of friends. This includes Churchill's steady courtship of FDR and his emissaries in hopes of bringing the US on board as an ally. Churchill does have strange dressing and working habits which were amusing news to us. Larson writes a lot about their loving daughter Mary, with her social life, and their son Randolph, who was addicted to alcohol and gambling. Randolph's wife Pamela also received coverage, both before their divorce and in her later affairs.

Chapters on the British are interspersed with shorter chapters on the thinking of German leaders at the same time, based on diaries of German military figures. We get a sense of the personalities and strategic thinking of key leaders on both sides, including Hermann Goering, second in Nazi command and head of the Luftwaffe. Some Americans may not realize that Britain may have come close to defeat in the last half of 1941. Despite the advice of other Nazi leaders, Hitler chose to stop his bombing of Britain in mid-May, 1941, so that he would have the men and equipment for his ultimately disastrous invasion of the Soviet Union. Had Hitler not chosen to create this second attack front, he could have continued bombing Britain, perhaps forcing surrender in the seven months before the U.S. entered the war. *Joel Zeitlin and Jim Allen*



FILM GROUPS

The **Monday Film Group** met on 9/14/20 remotely, using Zoom. The Club discussed the films *Unorthodox* and *The Young Offenders*.

Unorthodox was a short 4-episode series that tells the story of a young newly married Ultra-Orthodox Jewish woman who escapes the suffocating environment of her closed New York Community. The central character, Esther Shapiro, was extremely well played by Shira Haas. The supporting cast included some good acting and, in particular, the role of Esther's weak and confused husband Yanky was well played by Amit Rahav. The film showed an amazing combination of sensitivity and bravery and depicted the

suppression of woman in the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities. Our entire group loved this production and the rating by the club members of *Unorthodox* was **9.5/10** where all scores were above 9.0.

The Young Offenders (2016) was a movie telling the story of two Irish delinquent teens who travel 160 km on stolen bikes to try to retrieve a bale of cocaine that was said to have floated to shore. The boys are followed closely, in a slapstick manner, by a rather inept policeman. This "boy's road trip" was entertaining with quite good photographic work. However, the two teens did not seem to evolve during the film and the film was considered un-exceptional by the club members. The overall rating by the club members for *The Young Offenders* was 5.6/10, with scores ranging from a low of 2.0 to a high of 8.0.

For the month of October, the club plans to discuss the two films: *The Social Dilemma* (available on Netflix) and *Short Term 12* (available on Prime Streaming).

The **Monday Film Group** met remotely on 10/19/20 using Zoom. The Club discussed the films *The Social Dilemma* and *Short Term 12*.

The Social Dilemma highlights the dangers to society created by the ubiquitous presence of social media in our lives. The film includes interviews with numerous social media developers, most of whom have moved on from direct involvement in the industry. It also creates some likely imaginary family interactions associated with social media. The film tries to depict, again using simulated "media master" dialogues, the explicit manipulation of users by such apparently innocuous platforms as search engines. Neither the acting nor the interviews were truly exceptional. Nevertheless, the film did spark an extensive discussion of how frightening the issues presented are for everyone. It was also noted that the film presented problems but no solutions. Although our group found this production interesting, the rating by the club members of *The Social Dilemma* was only **7.4/10** where all scores were either 7 or 8.

Short Term 12 depicts the counselors and the residents in a group home for troubled teenagers. The film centers on the counselor supervisor Grace, played by the now famous Brie Larson. Larson does a great job with her part and is well supported by an excellent cast, several of whom have become major film stars themselves. The film shows the great challenges of working in a care environment. Most of the club felt that the movie was very well filmed. We also thought it clearly showed the difficulty for the counselors in dealing with both their own life problems and the difficult issues surrounding the teenagers in their care. The overall rating by the club members was **8.6/10**, with scores ranging from a low of 8.0 to a high of 9.5.

For the month of November, the club plans to discuss the two films: *The Trial of the Chicago 7* (available on Netflix) and *The Peanut Butter Falcon* (available on Prime Streaming). *David Schwartz*.

ARF EXECUTIVE BOARD, 2020—2021

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