

Volume 16 Issue 1

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OMNILORE NEWS

A publication of OMNILORE, a Learning in Retirement Organization affiliated with The Division of Extended & International Education of California State University Dominguez Hills

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Omnilore News is published six times annually. We welcome short feature articles and news stories. Please contact the editor with your contributions. C.O-F ditors Diana Cutler

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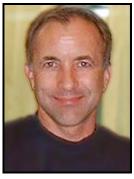
Skeptic Society Founder to Speak to Omniloreans

by Carol Kerster

If you think that skepticism is simply the dismissal of new ideas, if you confuse "skeptic" with "cynic," or if you think that skeptics are a bunch of "grumpy curmudgeons" who refuse any challenges to the status quo, fasten vour seat belts!

The **Omnilore** Forum Committee is proud to announce that Dr. Michael Shermer, Executive Director of the Skeptic Society, will be the guest speaker for the first Omnilore Forum Luncheon Meeting of 2007.

Michael Shermer was called "an important figure in American public life" by Stephen Jay Gould (America's unofficial evolutionist laureate), with good reason. Sher-



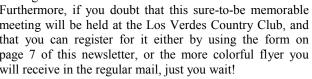
Dr. Michael Shermer

mer is founding publisher and editor-in-chief of the quarterly journal of the Skeptic Society. He's a public speaker (host of the Skeptics Distinguished Lecture Series at Caltech), producer (Fox Family television series, Exploring the Unknown), science correspondent for KPCC (NPR affiliate in Southern California), monthly columnist for Scientific American, former college professor (1979-1998), frequent guest on many popular TV shows, and not least, prolific author.

The Science of Good and Evil: Why People Cheat, Gossip, Share, Care, and Follow the Golden Rule, one of his many books, is the topic of his lecture to Omniloreans on Wednesday, January 31, 2007.

Whether you see yourself as a true skeptic, or just as a curmudgeon, you'll want to attend this Forum. It is there that you will discover the compelling evidence that **Omnilore** continues to provide extraordinary learning experiences for its most dis-

cerning members.

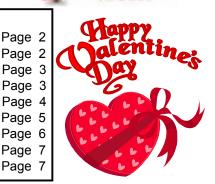


Furthermore, if you doubt that this sure-to-be memorable meeting will be held at the Los Verdes Country Club, and that you can register for it either by using the form on page 7 of this newsletter, or the more colorful flyer you will receive in the regular mail, just you wait!



DON'T MISS - IN THIS ISSUE

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT by Rick Spillane

The decorations are down; the cookies have been eaten, so we're ready for a great new year at Omnilore! I want to welcome all of our members, and especially new ones, to a great and healthy year of fun and intellectual challenges. Studies show that minds, like bodies, need exercise. While there are many beaches and exercise facilities in the South Bay, only Omnilore provides special exercises for the adult mind.

Our new trimester courses are slowly waking our minds up after festive greetings of the New Year. (Did any of us actually stay up late enough to greet it?) With a new start we can think about the basic elements that have made Omnilore a success.

The first is the great group of members who volunteer to ensure that all the diverse needs of this organization are more than met. They make every event from the Membership Committee, to the Curriculum Committee, to the Forum Committee, to Board meetings, fun while breaking the work load into manageable chunks.

The second element is great classes which come out of great discussions. To see that great discussions happen, let everyone know two weeks before your presentation what the presentation will be about, some references (if possible), and some points for them to mull over before class. This leads to better discussions, and Omniloreans certainly like discussions. With a little preparation time, the discussions can be more informed. Be sure to work with the coordinators as they will be, in their polite way, ensuring that both the soft spoken and the outspoken are allowed to have their say. Remember that listening is one of the great ways of learning.

Omnilore members are always learning. One of the things learned from our "Underwater Exploration" course is the damage done by Styrofoam to the environment. Styrofoam is a petroleum product that does not break down easily. It may last more than one-hundred years on our beaches, in our oceans, and in our landfills. Moreover, Styrene is considered a possible human carcinogen by the World Organization's Health International Agency for Research on Cancer. As pointed out by Omnilore members, these are ample reasons for our replacing Styrofoam cups with paper cups in our classrooms. Perhaps you'll consider bringing your own cup with you. Now you can feel virtuous and healthier when you have that extra

Welcome - New Members! by Kathleen Fitzgerald

Join me in welcoming our new members! We asked a few of them to tell us about themselves, and here is what we found out:

Kris Greer, who enjoys daily involvement with her four grandchildren, also volunteers at the Sea Lab in Redondo Beach and at Ride-to-Fly, a therapeutic horseback riding program in Palos Verdes. Also an enthusiastic member of a seniors' tap-dancing group – the Toe Tappers – Kris wonders if any *Omniloreans* would like to tap along with them?

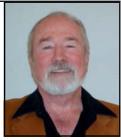
Sally Strehlke has retired after 26 years as professor of business at El Camino College. She is now coordinating a study trip to Ireland and Scotland for her church; her prep work includes enrollment in our Spring '07 class on the Celts. She belongs to Las Candalistas and is on the board of Harbor View House, a facility for the mentally ill.

Cory Tabb, who spent 35 years in Human Resources at TRW (now Northrop Grumman), was looking for mental stimulation after retirement four years ago and she found Omnilore! Cory dotes on her two dogs and enjoys reading, movies, concerts, lectures and time with friends. She has one grown son, who lives in the area.

Kay Whitehead began the parent education program of the South Bay Adult School in 1953, which has grown to a current total of 63 classes serving 1600 families. Her interests include theater, reading and music. Kay is married; her older daughter is a teacher in the adult school and the younger, an environmentalist, lives in Sonora.

cookie and coffee during breaks.

Our next Forum, at the end of January, should be exceptional. Michael Shermer, Publisher and Editor-in-



Chief of the magazine the "Skeptic" is the speaker. His talks are always interesting, informative, and many times controversial. This event will fill up fast, so I hope you have already made your reservation.

If you want to see how Omnilore works, or if you wish to bring an issue to the attention of the Omnilore Board, attend a Board meeting. All members are invited. The Omnilore Board meets at noon on the second Thursday of every month at the Franklin Center. As with all Omnilore schedules, you can check the Omnilore web site for the Board's schedule or to resolve other scheduling questions. The minutes of each Board meeting will now be posted on the Omnilore web site. A "must read" if I ever saw one! If you are not a regular visitor to the web site, you are missing one of the best Learning-in-Retirement web sites and a great source of information on Omnilore.



OMNILORE PROFILE – ARTHUR WERTHEIM

by Marilou Lieman

Arthur Wertheim was born in New York and raised in California. Arthur moved to California after his father died from cancer while serving in WW II. His mother remarried a prominent Hollywood agent who introduced Arthur to the world of radio, movies and the performing arts, experiences which later stimulated his interest in the history of popular entertainment.

As an undergraduate at Yale, he was further inspired by his American history and literature professors to pursue a Ph.D in American Studies at New York University. His dissertation on the literary and artistic renaissance occurring in Greenwich Village, from 1908 to 1917, formed the basis of the first of several books on twentieth century American culture, *The New*

WW ell, it's that time of year again. I'm getting ready to go "back East" for the holidays. The winter coat, gloves, and scarf are ready to be stuffed into my carry-on bag so that I can survive the weather that will greet me in Hartford, Connecticut. (Actually, it's pretty darn cold here too, *York Little Renaissance* (1976). His next book, *Radio Comedy*, (1976), a popular success, remains the definitive history of comedians on the airwaves. Arthur has also co-edited three volumes of the *Papers of Will Rogers* which include nearly every document pertaining to Rogers from his Cherokee heritage through his career in Wild West Shows and Vaudeville.

In addition to being an author, Arthur was an American history professor at the University of Southern California where he won an award for helping to organize the University's first Women's Studies Program. He also received a Fulbright Award to teach American Studies at the University of Indonesia. Most recently, he was an administrator at the University of California, Los Angeles. His newest book, *Vaudeville Wars* (2006), has been praised as "the only thorough and entertaining account of the vaudeville business from the ground up."

Arthur's varied interests include classical music, Omnilore, politics, hiking, yoga, tai chi, and Buddhism. Arthur's love of travel has taken him to Asia, Europe, South America, Botswana and Antarctica. He was in Tibet on 9/11 and was touched by the outpouring of compassion and sympathy by Tibetans. He currently makes trips to Boston where his son is a surgery resident. His newest interests are golf, bridge and the Point Vicente Interpretive Center, where he is a docent-in-training. Say hello to Arthur at the Whale Watch Site as he joins the other hardy souls doing the whale census during the annual Gray Whale migration.



History and Culture of the Middle East

by Jim Bouchard Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute College of Extended & International Education CSUDH



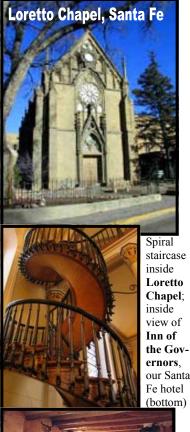
Jim Bouchard

now that I think of it!) This has been a great year. We had a presentation at the Palos Verdes Art Center. *Omnilorean* Dick Johnson and emeritus faculty OLLIonline presenter Abe Ravitz held an informational learning-in-retirement event at the Redondo Beach Library. **Rick Spillane** has taken over "the reins" as *Omnilore* president from **Dick Johnson**. We worked with the City of Redondo Beach Recreation Department to establish an OLLIonline learning group at Veterans' Park where attendees watched DVDs of OLLionline broadcasts, and participated in facilitated discussions following the programs.

I'm looking forward to our spring OLLIonline and Osher Lecture Series on the Middle East. The title of the series is *Connecting Continents, Divided Destinies: History and Culture of the Middle East.* We have been working to bring together a series that looks at the history and culture of the Middle East rather than focusing on the current conflicts. Therefore, we will have presentations on art, music, and dance of the Middle East. One of our presenters is an archaeologist who consults with directors of feature films; he will speak about the origins of writing. Another presenter is a historian who will discuss pre-Islamic history of the Middle East.

By the time this article is printed, I hope that everyone has had a safe and happy holiday season. Happy New Year Everyone!

Membership Upate	Change In Location & Meeting Time For
by Kathleen Fitzgerald	CSUDH Spring Lecture Series
Six enthusiastic new members joined <i>Omnilore</i> after attending one of the two "Introducing Omnilore" sessions held by the Membership Committee in De- cember in anticipation of the upcoming spring tri- mester. Thank you to all the committee members who found time during this busy season to assist at the sessions, and a special thank you to the <i>Omnilore</i> members who came to a meeting with their interested friends and introduced them. It certainly helped to make these prospective members feel welcome.	<i>by Lynn Taber</i> The Spring CSUDH lecture series, entitled, <i>An Overview of the History</i> & <i>Culture of the Middle East</i> , begins Wednesday, February 7. The class location has been changed to the second floor of the Redondo Beach Library: 303 North Pacific Coast Highway, Redondo Beach - (310) 318-0675. This PCH address is between Diamond and Carnelian, with entrances to the free, ample underground parking from each of these streets. The class time will be 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The li-





(immediate right).

On Our Way To Santa Fe!

by Mary Oran

The Omnilore Santa Fe, Taos and Los Alamos trip is gathering steam!

The trip will begin on Monday, April 23rd with a flight to Albuquerque followed by a motor coach ride to Santa Fe. From our hotel near the Plaza, we will have easy access to many of the sites, including several museums, the Loretto Chapel, St. Francis Cathedral, and Canyon Road. We will spend four nights in Santa Fe, and then with our own motor coach, take the high road to Taos, stopping at Los Alamos and Chimayo on the way. We will have two nights in Taos, and will have plenty of time to see the museums, haciendas, and pueblos in and near it. We will return to Los Angeles on Sunday evening, April 29th.

We are nearing completion in the planning, and while we want the trip to have some structure, we also want to leave some time for people to visit their special interests. The approximate price of the trip, which includes airfare, motor coach fees, hotels, all the Gov- breakfasts, some other meals, and some museum fees, is about \$1050. We are asking for a \$250 deour Santa posit as soon as possible.

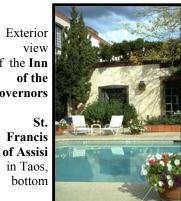
> We have many more people expressing an interest in the trip than space available, so the early bird definitely catches the red chile, so to speak. We will, of course, establish a waiting list if necessary. Please make out the deposit check to John or Lynn Taber and mail it to them at 37 Harbor Sight Drive, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274.

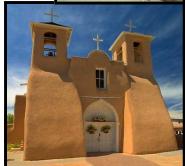
All Aboard!!!



Exterior of church in Chimayo, NM

Exterior view of the Inn of the Governors St. Francis









Is Vista in Your Future? With this presentation by Mary Barling, Computer Talks resume on **January 25, noon** to 1 p.m. in room 7. Vista is a successor to Windows XP, and will soon be available in stores. Vista is made by Mi-

crosoft, but will run on powerful Macs as well as PCs. For home use, Vista Premium's major new feature is an integrated entertainment system linking the computer with DVD and TV. Come and hear some reasons to consider a transition to Vista.

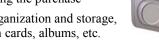
Digital Photography

by Ginger Engstrom

Are you ready to buy your first digital camera or ready to upgrade to a newer model? Are you swamped by all the pictures you have taken because you haven't gotten around to organizing them. Would you like to start creating some of the neat personalized gifts like those you receive; cards, calendars, scrapbooks, etc? On **February** 22. Ginger Engstrom will share information on



- Buying a camera: How to decide on type of camera, resolution, zoom capability and more.
- Some tips on actually making the purchase



Windows Vista

 Processing your photos: organization and storage. editing and sharing through cards, albums, etc.

There will be tips and information for everyone from the photographer who wants to point and shoot and have his photos processed at the drugstore to the individuals who want to combine their digital photos with their traditional film photos in some creative projects for friends and family. Come join us in room 7 on February 22 at 12 noon.

Coordinator Training – Fun!!

by Merle Culbert

Did you wonder what all the laughter was coming from Room 7 on November 30? It was your next trimester Coordinators exchanging quips and tips at the Coordinators' Workshop. Merle Culbert, V.P. of Academics, sitting in for Head Coordinator Laura Guneau, emceed the event. Helpers Emil Raulin, Mary Oran and Bob Beach ably supported her.

Omnilore's new president, Rick Spillane spoke briefly and the Vice President of Administration **Carol Simone** spoke on housekeeping rules such as not leaving cookies or other edibles in the room, turning off the lights and heat when leaving, etc. She also introduced Pat Stevens, Bob Beach and JoAnna Kerrigan. Pat is our calendar keeper, and was there to make room arrangements for premeetings. She asks that you call her to get on the official calendar for room use. Bob was there to explain the equipment and was available for one-on-one explanation of its use. JoAnna is our new supplies manager and keeper of the keys. She handed out key request forms and issued keys.

Housekeeping taken care of, the group moved on to tackle the basic responsibilities of the Coordinator and Co-coordinator. It worked its way through what to do about core books (love them or leave them?); how and when to set up expectations for presentations and discussion leaders (at the premeeting and the first S/DG session); and the use of open-ended questions to elicit better discussions.

With a room full of **Omniloreans** who are not shy in voicing opinions and wry observations, the air was filled with ideas and frequent laughter.

Laura Guneau has described this Workshop as "one-stop-shopping." You get your key, your room reservation, tips, all in one session. She could have added that you get camaraderie and fun as well. You get Omnilore at its best!

The Votes are Tallied and the Results Duly Noted! by Patricia Edie

Thank you to those who responded to the Course Feedback Survey distributed by email after the Summer Trimester of classes. We received 76 responses from the 224 members registered for classes.

Overall averages, on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being best were as follows:

- Overall average score: 3.5
- Presentations: 3.2
- Discussion: 3.3

Core Reading: 3.8

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The courses met the expectations of 82% of the respondees.

Respondees commented most positively on the energy of the discussions in the classes. The sharing of opinions in a spirited, respectful manner was noted. Presentations that were wellresearched and delivered in a personal way were preferred over those that were delivered by merely reading printed text.

Kudos go to the Great Decisions class with the highest scores and the largest number of responding members!



Wanted!!!

A volunteer(s) to edit the newsletter. It's just 6 times a year, and you don't have to be a journalist to do it - just an organizer with a bit of a nagging instinct! **Contact Mary Oran** 519-8630.

For information about the Hiking Group, contact Nancy Shannon at

NancySincl@aol.com

or John Taber at

831-4768.

Omnilore Business Cards Reprinted!

We now have a fresh supply of our business cards – located in the cabinet above the main locked one in Room 7. These are what we hand our friends and anyone we meet who asks about Omnilore. Printed on both sides, this card describes our organization and gives contact information. Pick some up and put in your

wallet for those unexpected times when you want to share with a prospective member.

Check It Out! Our wonderful Webmaster adds/changes/improves our website every month. Have you checked it out recently? www.Omnilore.Org—it's the place to be!

Website Links Has a "New Look" One of the special features of our Omnilore website (www.Omnilore.Org) is our links page. It has been revamped with a new look that makes it easy to locate links of interest. They have been categorized into seven groups: (1) Books and Other Publications, (2) General Interest, (3) History, (4) Research Tools, (5) Humor, (6) Calendar Events, (7) LIR Organizations. Within these groups you will find links to sites that help you identify email hoaxes, find online courses and book clubs, and links to various libraries. If there is a website you enjoy, send the link to Blanche Herring for possible inclusion on our links page.

Sounding Board Plus

Bored? Have the afterholiday blues? Go to www.omnilore.org. Get a good discussion started on the Sounding Board. Or read some of the newsletters from the past. Find a good book to read from the Bookshelf Booklist. Explore the site -you can get hints on presentations, computer tips and more!

Reservations Needed!

We love to see many Omniloreans at the Forum and Annual Meeting Luncheons. It's easy to make a reservation for them, but if you've forgotten to do this on time, it's even easy to make a "late" reservation. Just call the Forum Chairperson and tell her you'd like to come. This avoids the possibility of not having enough food to serve, and not having a place for you to sit.

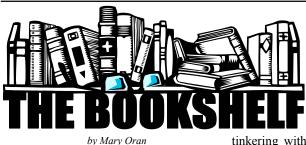
Please remember that walking in on these events without a reservation is tacky, in addition to being inconsiderate to those who have 'done the right thing.'

Diana Cutler (310) 541-8973

Newsletter in Color!

Remember—You can sign up to have the newsletter sent directly to your e-mail address in living color. You can also continue to receive it by mail at the same time, or you can choose to eliminate the paper version.

Contact Johan at johansmith@ca.rr.com if you would like e-mail delivery. You even get it faster that way!



Whether the weather is freezing or warm, one can always find a good excuse to get comfortable and read. Hopefully your 2007 resolutions include giving yourself time to explore the written word.

There are two nonfiction recommendations this month. The first, by <u>New York</u> <u>Times</u> journalist **Howard W. French**, is *A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa*. The author offers unforgettable eyewitness reportage on major 20th-21st century events, including the AIDS crisis, the Ebola crisis, the Rwanda genocide, and the child-soldiers of Liberia. Additionally, he writes of the corrupt tyrants of many African nations. Little hope and a lot of tragedy are reflected here, but it certainly offers a clear-eyed vision of the continent most Americans know so little about. His Brother's Keeper: A Story from the Edge of Medicine, by Jonathan Wiener, focuses on the ethical issues we must face in light of the many new gene therapies being developed. How much life should society be al-

lowed to do?

Not too many political thrillers have Tibet as a setting, and that is one of the features that makes *The Skull Mantra* by **Eliot Pattison** an exciting read. A forced labor camp where the Chinese have imprisoned Buddhist monks, local dissidents, and a former Inspector General of the Ministry of Economy in Beijing is the setting. When an important Chinese official turns up dead, the Inspector is called upon to solve the crime, or his prison friends will suffer. The story is a combination of excitement and enlightenment!

A recent original novel by **Ronlyn Domingue**, *The Mercy of Thin Air*, involves a "between" – a so-called "realm that exists after life and before whatever lies beyond it." The novel entwines two tragic love stories (1920s and end of 20^{th} century). Critics have praised the "clear and resilient" prose, and the ending is described as "breath-taking."

Nobel Prize winner Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup* has two settings – South Africa and a nameless, impoverished desert country. It is about a "pick-up", the two people involved (a wealthy young white woman and a black mechanic), and the realities they face. Immigration/emigration, love, power, and the world of today are all part of this gifted writer's involving prose.

Finally, a step back in time to a writer of "good yarns" – Nevil Shute. No Highway, originally published in 1948, features a scientist who is en route to Labrador to investigate a plane crash. His flight turns out to be dangerous as well. Shute was a World War I veteran who thought of himself as an engineer, and worked in the aerospace industry. He is thought to be the first to explore the concept of metal fatigue in planes, and this comes through in this novel.

(Our thanks go to Christine Rhodes and Midge Solomon for contributing to our list. Please send <u>your</u> titles, with author's name and a brief description, to <u>msoran@sbcglobal.net</u>. Please put "Omnilore Books" as the subject. We look forward to hearing from you.)

"Some people want it to happen, some wish it to happen, others make it happen."

Omnilore is a member-driven organization and it is only through the volunteer efforts of all members that we continue to enjoy the rich experience of our Learning-in-Retirement program. Included in your Spring Course selection results you will find the yellow annual Member Participation Opportunities form to sign up for ways you can contribute. Each member is asked to indicate areas of interest and availability and return the form to the Franklin Center, Room 7 (Membership Committee box) or by mail using the pre-addressed info on the back of the form. **Be Someone Who Makes It Happen!**

WHEN:	OMNILORE Forum Luncheo <i>Wednesday</i> , January 31st, 2007 – 11:30 a	a.m.
WHERE:	Los Verdes Country Club 7000 W. Los Verdes Drive Rancho Palos Verdes	a.m. Reservations are required by January 24th, required by January please!
Please make reservations for the Omnilore Annual Luncheon at \$17.50 each:		
Name(s):		Phone #:
	(Please Print)	
	(Please Print)	
	Enclosed is a check for:	\$17.50 Other
Please make checks Committee's box or	out to CSUDH , and put in the Forum send to:	Forum Committee, c/o Diana Cutler 10 Middleridge Lane S. Rolling Hills, CA 90274

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January	1	New Yerar's Day	OMNILORE	
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	11	Board of Directors Meeting - 12 Noon to 2 p.m Room 7	CALENDAR	
	15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	2007	
	19	Hiking Group - 10 a.m.	2007	
	25	Computer Talks - 12 Noon - 1 p.m Room 7 Is Vista In Your Future? - Mary Barling	0	
	31	Winter Forum		
February	8	Board of Directors Meeting - 12 Noon to 2 p.m Room 7		
-	12	Lincoln's Birthday		
	13	Membership Committee - 11:30 a.m 1 p.m Room 8		
	14	St. Valentine's Day	9 4 3	
	15	Input Deadline for March-April Newsletter	8 4	
	16	Hiking Group - 10 a.m. 📃 👢		
	19	President's Day		
	21	Ash Wednesday		
	22	Washington's Birthday		
	22	Computer Talks- 12 Noon - 1 p.m Room 7	100	
		Digital Photography - Ginger Engstrom		
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IMPORTANT:				
Calendar changes and additions are scheduled with				
Pat Stevens - (310) 548-3253 - p.t.stevens@cox.net				



Omnilore, CSUDH Division of Extended & International Education PMB 236 P.O. Box 7000 Redondo Beach, Ca. 90277-8710

