



THE INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR VOL. 23, NO. 2 — SUMMER 2009

The newsletter of the National Coalition of Independent Scholars

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT Summer 2009

Dear NCIS Members,

As this issue of *The Independent Scholar* is being produced, the NCIS Board is convening for its 2009 Annual Meeting. A report on the meeting will be included in the next *TIS*. As always, the Board will be discussing ways of better serving its members and affiliates. On the agenda are discussions of how we can help send our members to their national disciplinary conferences, beyond the travel grants we already offer; what kinds of meetings for independent scholars are beneficial, how those might be convened, and what the goals of such meetings would be; how to link members with similar interests together; and how to encourage member involvement in NCIS. This last concern, I'll admit, is the toughest. I'll be blunt: we desperately need interested, engaged, and responsible members to help the organization out

by serving on committees to award grants and prizes, spread the word about NCIS and its affiliates, publicize the work of NCIS and its members, and help us gain more benefits for our members. If you're serious about being a part of NCIS and helping both yourself and other independent scholars, please consider volunteering. You can contact me directly at [<kendraprestonleonard@gmail.com>](mailto:kendraprestonleonard@gmail.com) to do so.

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FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

- ❖ NCIS Networking News
- ❖ ACLS Spring Meeting
- ❖ Independent Bookshops: Philadelphia
- ❖ Calls for Papers, Member News, and More!

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As the summer begins, keep in mind that this is the season of mostly empty academic libraries; many librarians and other staff are more easily able to talk with and assist independent scholars while classes are out for the season. If you need access, now's the time to go in person and talk with the staff at your closest academic library about their policies. Remember that you can always ask NCIS for a letter of recommendation for library or archive access—we're happy to provide these for members in good standing. Plus, without as many students around, summer means that most of the books are back on the shelves, ready and waiting for scholars like us to use them. ❖

—Kendra Leonard, *President*

More messages from the President are available through the NCIS mailing list on Google Groups. Visit <<http://groups.google.com/group/independentscholars/>> for more information on how to sign up for the mailing list.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I'm writing this letter in the majestic Main Reading Room of the Library of Congress, where I have been spending the afternoon of a warm and muggy Saturday taking notes from books and using the online resources available to download articles and files that will help me work on a conference paper I'm slated to present in early November. The paper is still in that disjointed and somewhat disorganized state, half scribbled notes and half large chunks of transcribed text, all of which is waiting to be edited and rewritten, compiled and footnoted, and generally put together into a set of pages that I will present to other scholars in a few months' time.

I'm pleased to be able to submit papers to conferences as an independent scholar, but I have to admit that I'm not very good at going up to other independent scholars at conferences and introducing myself. It's something I think I'm going to try to do more often when I can, because one of the major challenges facing independent scholars is the problem of isolation from peer networks—both from the peer networks in one's specific discipline, but also from the wider independent scholarly community. This is part of the reason why, as Kendra's message mentions, we need more people to serve on NCIS committees, contribute articles to the newsletter, review books and offer books for review, pass along more calls for papers or information about new and useful resources, and suggest opportunities for gatherings at conferences and other events to encourage us to get to know fellow independent scholars. Of course, this is the sort of thing that we tend to say all the time—but it doesn't become any less true the more often we say it.

Nearly time to get back to work, before the Library closes for the day. Thank you once again for reading, and for contributing to NCIS! ❖

— Shannon Granville

MORE ABOUT NCIS ONLINE NETWORKING

While the concept of “networking” may conjure up images of forced get-togethers and other awkward social gatherings, there is no denying that it is a vital part of keeping independent scholars active and functioning in their disciplines. With online networking, the connections are even easier to make. NCIS has provided a few options to overcome some of that initial awkwardness and encourage independent scholars to contact each other. Please take the time to explore these options and learn more about how you can help them work for you.

NCIS on Facebook and LinkedIn

NCIS has set up pages on the popular social networking sites Facebook and LinkedIn. If you are a Facebook member, joining the NCIS Facebook group is very simple: just use the top search box and enter “National Coalition of Independent Scholars” to find and join the open membership group. For LinkedIn members, the NCIS LinkedIn group is available at www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1779384. These groups are open membership, but if you do sign up, then please send a quick message to the group moderators to let them know that you found the link through the newsletter!

NCIS Google Groups Mailing List

The NCIS Google Groups mailing list is available at <http://groups.google.com/group/independentscholars>. If you have a Gmail account, signing up takes only a few moments, and you can arrange to have the list messages sent to your inbox or read them on the list page. However, you do not need to have a Gmail account to join the mailing list. Simply enter <http://groups.google.com/group/independentscholars/boxsubscribe?email=myid> in your browser’s URL bar, replace the “myid”

part at the end with your own full e-mail address, and click the button to submit. Follow the instructions in the confirmation e-mail that you receive, and you should be ready to go!

NCIS Member Web Sites

At the moment, 12 NCIS members have set up Web sites through the NCIS member home page: <http://ncis.org/memberWebPages.asp>. The Web sites can serve any particular purpose, but most seem to be using it as an online c.v., complete with contact information and detailed lists of publications and current or forthcoming scholarly projects. NCIS Web page hosting is open to all NCIS members, and it is available for \$15 per year. (By comparison, even some of the cheapest Web site hosting services and domain name purchases can start out for more than three times that initial cost.)

These networking opportunities are all online, but it should be stated that these sites can work best by encouraging members to meet up in person as well. If you would like to encourage NCIS members to meet up in your area, feel free to post suggestions for possible in-person meeting times: an open invitation for a get-together at a local restaurant or coffee shop; an announcement to let people know that you will be at a major conference in a particular city; or even a call for suggestions about where to stay, shop, study, or dine while traveling.

Your fellow NCIS members are a vital resource, one that often goes untapped. Online networking can help break down some of those initial barriers to communication with its more relaxed, casual atmosphere, a far cry from trying to juggle drinks and nibbles while fishing for a business card or a pen to jot down an e-mail address. If you have suggestions about things that NCIS can do to bridge the gaps, please feel free to pass them along through these very same networking sites. We hope to hear more—from all of you! ❖

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES – SPRING 2009 MEETING

The Spring 2009 meeting of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) took place in Philadelphia on May 7–9. Topics on the agenda included sessions on open access and journals finance; the survival of digital sources for research; emerging themes and methods of humanities research, with papers given by four ACLS fellows; scholarly judgments of academic achievement; and managing societies during the current economic climate. Additional sessions included the ACLS business meeting and a discussion of humanities philanthropy by Don Randel, the president of the Andrew Mellon Foundation.

The economy, not surprisingly, was a major point of discussion throughout the meeting. On average, the endowments of ACLS member organizations are down 30 percent from this time last year. Most organizations with paid staff have instituted salary freezes and are not hiring. Many have cut grants and awards this year as well in an effort to preserve financial stability. For independent scholars seeking disciplinary organization support to travel to and present at meetings, this represents some loss of opportunity; however, most executive directors I spoke with indicated that their groups were trying to provide support first for unemployed scholars or scholars without affiliation or institutional support and graduate students, and that many cuts were in programs that traditionally served senior scholars. Many member organizations, particularly those with interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary members, are also shifting their focus, as is NCIS, to functioning as service organizations rather than in the manner of disciplinary organizations. They are not holding conferences or publishing journals due to the wide range of interests and areas of research of their members, but are instead assisting their members to attend

appropriate disciplinary conferences and publish in appropriate journals.

The ACLS itself this year offered 57 fellowships, in contrast to last year's 65; their target number for any given year is 70 fellowships. Only 15 independent scholars applied for ACLS funding in 2008–09, making up 1.48 percent of the total applicants. No independent scholars received a fellowship for the coming year. I believe that the ACLS's language of compartmentalizing applicants into "junior" and "senior faculty" descriptions may be putting off some independent scholars from applying; however, if applicants read further, they will see that they do not need to be affiliated with an institution to be considered for funding. I have confirmed this with the ACLS and hope that this report will encourage members of NCIS to apply for these fellowships.

At the ACLS business meeting, the issue of dues increases was discussed. Most organizations, like NCIS, rely on an honor system of self-reporting income-based dues. The vast majority of societies stated that they raised their dues 3 percent each year as a standard action against inflation and the rising costs of maintaining a society. While NCIS members will no doubt protest the raising of dues on a regular basis, it will probably become necessary to do so, although perhaps at a slower pace than ACLS constituent organizations.

The job market was also a point of concern. ACLS member organizations are very much aware of the incredibly poor job market this year and are working to create programs to help unemployed scholars and scholars who have taken positions outside of the academy. The Modern Language Association (MLA), always a strong supporter of independent scholars, with its publication prize, is offering increased assistance for independent scholars to attend its national meeting, the major opportunity for presentations and job interviews in the discipline. The MLA and other large organizations expect the job market to continue to worsen through 2010

before it begins to improve. While the economy and what academics are terming the “jobless market” are certainly not good, these conditions are raising additional awareness of independent scholars as administrators and senior scholars in the academy suddenly find their students joining the ranks of independent scholars in the country. NCIS is in a unique position of being a strong and relevant resource for individuals currently working non-tenure-track positions or outside the academy, whether by choice or need.

In speaking with executive directors and representatives from ACLS member organizations, I found that the most common needs of their independent scholars members remain traditional ones: access to libraries and databases, health insurance, access to information on jobs appropriate for individuals with scholarly backgrounds, and assistance in preparing materials such as c.v.s and articles for dissemination and publication. NCIS now offers the Library Access Guide, which I believe helps our members find libraries welcoming to independent scholars where they can conduct research. It may be time to re-enter talks with JSTOR on an institutional level. JSTOR has, over time, become more accustomed to dealing with, and scaling to, smaller organizations and institutions and thus may be able to help us offer access to their collections for our members for a reasonable rate. Various writers’ groups and guilds offer group insurance, something else we might investigate for our members.

Based on my discussions at the ACLS meeting, I feel that continued increased outreach on the part of NCIS through the Web site is imperative. Such outreach would offer potential members access to information on jobs appropriate for individuals with scholarly backgrounds; and assistance in preparing materials such as c.v.s and articles for dissemination and publication. To help members from across a variety of disciplines, we need to provide what their own disciplinary organizations cannot in these areas. I suggest we link to listings of nonprofit jobs and other job lists where people

with advanced degrees might find appropriate employment. And although disciplinary societies often hold c.v. workshops or sessions on preparing articles for publication, we should investigate doing this too, via podcasts or webinars held live and in real-time on the website, perhaps once a month, for our members, to reach anyone not benefiting from their disciplinary organization's efforts. Finally, I believe that holding receptions for independent scholars at disciplinary conferences, not just for current members of NCIS but for all independent scholars who may be interested in NCIS, will help strengthen both our numbers and our name throughout the scholarly community. We are definitely developing a much stronger presence, thanks to the Web: there has been a continuing discussion on independent scholars with frequent mention of NCIS on the *Chronicle of Higher Education* Forum and an recent article in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*; we have a number of new members, all of whom have joined via the Web site; and I have received recent requests for independent scholars to speak at conferences and meetings.

The Fall meeting of the ACLS will take place November 5–8.

Respectfully submitted,
Kendra Leonard
NCIS Representative to ACLS

The American Council of Learned Societies is a private nonprofit federation of 70 national scholarly organizations, dedicated to advancing American scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. ACLS offers a number of fellowships and grants, many of which are accepting applications for a deadline of **September 30, 2009**. For more information, and to apply, please visit <http://www.acls.org>.

INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS SUPPORT INDEPENDENT BOOKSHOPS

Good as it is to inherit a library, it is better to collect one.

– Augustine Birrell (1850–1933), “Book Buying,”
Obiter Dicta (1888)

PHILADELPHIA

Shopping in Philadelphia’s independent bookstores is likely to conjure up thoughts of Benjamin Franklin’s printing presses (established in 1730), Library Company (founded in 1731), and other notable contributions to the literary history and culture of the United States. Today, the City of Brotherly Love is a bustling East Coast hub for plane and train travel, and visitors have no shortage of independent bookshops to browse in during a short visit or a longer stay.

The Philadelphia park known as Rittenhouse Square was originally planned by city founder William Penn and is named after a descendant of William Rittenhouse, Philadelphia’s first paper-maker. As such, it seems only fitting that the **Joseph Fox Bookshop** (1724 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103) should be located in this area. Joseph Fox established his bookstore in 1951, and the shop continues to provide new releases and author events for its loyal audience. The bookstore is located very close to the University of Pennsylvania main campus, and within walking distance of three SEPTA public transit stops, so visitors to the city should have very little trouble locating it. More information about the shop and its event calendar is available on its Web site at [<www.foxbookshop.com/>](http://www.foxbookshop.com/).

Also located in the Center City area of Philadelphia is **Giovanni’s Room** (345 South 12th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107), a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and feminist bookstore that has been around since 1973. Named after the 1956 James Baldwin novel that sympathetically explored

controversial topics of homosexuality and relationships within the gay community, Giovanni’s Room provides a wide selection of popular and scholarly literature, as well as large photographic books. Its Web site, [<www.giovannisroom.com>](http://www.giovannisroom.com), provides further information on author events, gift book selections, and special orders.

Two other noteworthy (and almost neighboring) independent bookstores are **Head House Books** (619 South 2nd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147) and **Brickbat Books** (709 South 4th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147). These bookshops, just south of Philadelphia’s popular South Street neighborhood, are barely five minutes’ walk away from each other—and their Web sites ([<http://headhousebooks.com/index.php>](http://headhousebooks.com/index.php) and [<http://brickbatbooks.blogspot.com/>](http://brickbatbooks.blogspot.com/)) encourage the sense of community in both their in-store events and online blog posts.

– Shannon Granville

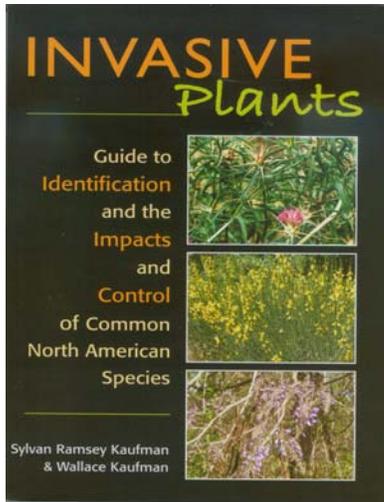
Previous articles in this column:

- *London – Fall 2008*
- *Washington, DC – Winter 2008*
- *Toronto – Spring 2009*

Are you interested in sharing information about your favorite independent bookshops with your fellow independent scholars? *TIS* invites you to e-mail [<slgranville@gmail.com>](mailto:slgranville@gmail.com) with a short description (preferably between 250 and 500 words) with your selections for independent bookshops that you think are especially worthy of note. Be sure to provide information about the location and the contents, and explain what makes the shop stand out to you. Readers are encouraged to submit information on multiple bookshops, especially for different shops in the same town or city. Submissions will be collected and included in forthcoming *TIS* issues. ❖

BOOK REVIEWS

Sylvan Ramsey Kaufman and Wallace Kaufman.
Invasive Plants: Guide to Identification and the Impacts and Control of Common North American Species
(Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2007).
458 pp., including index. ISBN-13: 978-0-8117-3365-6. \$39.95.



A book entitled *Invasive Plants: Guide to Identification and the Impacts and Control of Common North American Species* sounds anything but political. Surprise. Few nature field guides are forced to engage with large-scale controversy, but this one is. The topic of invasives has been debated hotly among the U.S. environmental community for years, and the current economic crisis has just raised the stakes. For example, among the environmental expenditures that state governors want to chop, funds to eradicate invasives tend to be first. That's not necessarily because governors think eradication programs are worthless: it's because, as politicians, they don't see consensus.

Thus, one of the best features of this guide by father-and-daughter Wallace and Sylvan Kaufman are four short sections right up front ("The Invasive Species Challenge," "The Invasives Landed Long Ago and Keep Arriving," "Invasives Changing Wild America," and "Managing the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly") that cover the

main controversies about invasives succinctly and fairly, with a lot of detail about dollars and cents. These small essays are worth a whole stack of environmental journals. They're filled with specific examples of both plants and politics, and embellished with bibliographies. An experienced nature writer and environmental advocate, Wallace Kaufman sees the "forest," so to speak, and, as a scientist and conservation curator, Sylvan Kaufman sees the "trees." It's good teamwork.

As to the bulk of the book, the guide, it's extremely well-done and helpful. It's a paperback, 5 1/2" x 8 1/4", a little too big for a pocket and a little heavy, because it's printed on thick, glossy paper. But a field-guide is all about illustrations, and oh, the illustrations! They're photographs, extremely well-presented and managed. That is, each plant is described with one or more photograph/s, a close-up of distinctive leaves/flowers/berries and a longer "habitus" shot. All the photographs are sized consistently across entries, so the user seldom has a problem with scale. Text and photographs are integrated: in other words, no flipping back and forth between text pages clustered in one place and illustration pages clustered in another. Moreover, the text is well-formatted and sized to be readable in the field.

The book is written at an intermediate level perfect for most environmentalists. Every entry is organized into sections on a plant's "name and family," "identifying features," "habitat and range," "what it does in the ecosystem," "how it came to North America," "management," and "further information." None of these is long or pretends to be comprehensive: all steer towards the practical. For instance, under "name and family" common names are given to help with local identification. "What [the invasive plant] does in the ecosystem" refers mainly to its individual growth pattern and its impacts on other plants. Although, considering the state of ecological knowledge today, some readers might expect to find more about how invasive plants

interact with, say, certain insects or birds, the Kaufmans doubtless had to restrict that level of complexity so as not to make the guide too long. Under “how [the invasive plant] came to North America” not only are historical details given as to how/when invasives were imported, but also nursery practices are described as to how invasives became established and spread. The “management” sections offer several alternative methods of management, in case one doesn’t work; and while herbicides are mentioned, they’re not emphasized, nor are the more dangerous herbicides advised. The “further information” sections are essentially scientific endnotes.

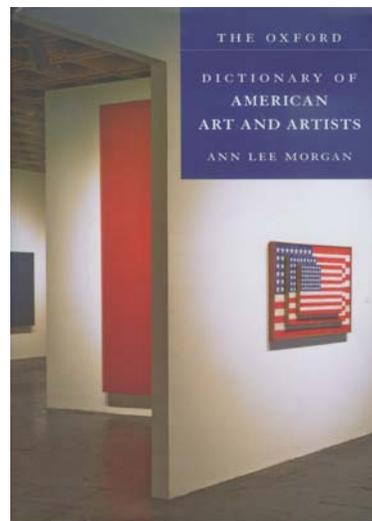
Since the guide covers invasives all over North America, since it’s written for a general audience, and since this reader is not herself a specialist, no professional evaluation can be offered here as to the guide’s accuracy. Nonetheless, any gardener, hiker, environmental activist, regulator, or careful observer of Nature in the Northeast can confirm the guide is “right on” for these environs.

Still, *caveat lector!* Be careful! You may find out that several of your best friends are invasives. If that dismays you, go back and re-read the essays at the front of this excellent, useful, and, surprisingly wise nature guide.

Reviewed by Barbara Currier Bell

Are you interested in submitting an article to *TIS*? If so, please e-mail a brief description of the article and a proposed length to <slgranville@gmail.com>. The submission deadline for the Fall 2009 issue is August 15—however, articles submitted for publication in a later issue are more than welcome.

Ann Lee Morgan. *The Oxford Dictionary of American Art and Artists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). pp. xiv, 537, intro. \$39.95



Ann Lee Morgan’s dictionary is a source of fundamental information on American art and artists, providing biographies of major figures and definitions of important movements, styles, and artistic processes. It includes entries on artists’ groups, critics, collectors, curators, and museums, along with institutions that produce or support art, such as the Tamarind Lithography Workshop or the National Academy of Design. It covers American art from its colonial beginnings (with an entry on John White’s 16th-century depictions of Virginia) through to contemporary figures such as Fred Wilson (b. 1954; African-American art) and Bill Viola (b. 1951; Video art). The dictionary excludes “the traditions of American Indians [and] of early Spanish influence in the Southwest” (xi), but does contain information on artists and photographers who took these as subjects or were influenced by these styles. Photography and various newer media such as video art or performance art appear, but not architecture or design (except in the context of other topics). No illustrations are present, but the introduction directs readers to the Internet, and the entries identify the specific locations where major works can be found.

The *Dictionary* is a remarkably exhaustive volume. Not everything is covered in great depth, of course, but nearly everything is at least mentioned so that a reader has some guidance for further research. Many subjects rate a separate bold-print entry with the name only and then a reference to a larger entry, such as feminist art, abstract expressionism, or artists' colonies. Joseph Kosuth (b. 1945), for example, has his own listing, but the reader is referred to the entry on Conceptual Art. Many topics are, however, discussed in impressive depth, especially given the length of the entry. The specialist will find a good overview of the topic and the general reader will find a wealth of accessible, focused information. Entries on some individuals contain information about marriages, divorces, remarriages, and families, providing an intriguing view of the social networks in the art world and of the impact of personal connections. The full titles of arts institutions are given (except for very well known ones where abbreviations are commonly recognized) and, usefully, Morgan also notes the former names of these institutions to clarify personal and institutional histories.

Naturally, the *Dictionary* provides specifics as to the biography of individuals and the origin, development, and influence of art topics. But it goes further to include what Morgan terms "analytical discussions" in which she "trie[s] to characterize the visual nature of [an artist's] work with descriptive and evaluative terminology that may in some cases stimulate readers to form different conclusions" (ix). She does recognize that any such endeavor as a dictionary, especially of art, is going to be subjective, and this book is, after all, the work of one person.

She excels at description, even of complex aesthetic experiences, and her precision of language is refreshing and should be an example to students learning how to write about arts and humanities. It is also encouraging to other historians who despair over the limits of language and who doubt that events, experiences, and developments can be quantified or defined. Recognizing some limitations, it can still be

claimed that her dictionary is remarkably evenhanded and objective and that she brings clarity and perspective to the careers of artists and to other matters in the art world. Her entries are precise and full of exacting explanations, suggesting to this reviewer that art historical writing can indeed define and express without being hopelessly freighted with personal, subjective tastes and interpretations. It is safe to assume that Morgan values some of these artists and movements more than others, but any sense of her preferences is not betrayed here.

A few examples will perhaps suffice to give some idea of Morgan's "analytical discussions" and "descriptive and evaluative terminology" (ix). Phillip Guston (1913–1980) was a painter who began his career in the 1930s with figurative works containing some social realist and surrealist elements, was then a prominent figure in the New York School with his abstract expressionist style, and then made an abrupt (or so it seemed at the time) break with the abstractionists to return to figurative work that was full of personal and political content. This last phase of Guston's career, though reviled at first, eventually became an important contribution and significantly influenced many artists. His was among the most complex, multilayered work of the period, and the idea of trying to capsule his achievement while acknowledging its importance is daunting. Here is Morgan's final sentence in the entry's first paragraph, the section which presents the most succinct assessment of the artist.

Guston's late style provided a fertile precedent to many younger painters, who took up the challenges posed by his raw self-appraisal, his openness to social and political concerns, his particularly overt dismay over the Vietnam War and his revulsion toward Richard Nixon, his responses to popular and demotic culture, the instability of meaning in his disturbing images, his tacit recognition that pop art had shifted the ground for contemporary art, his sardonic humor,

the bold unconventionality of his pictorial construction, and his deliberate violations of what remained a masterful painting technique. (196)

It takes a lot of nerve to put a sentence like that into a dictionary, not just because of its length (though its structure is not complex), but because of its range of issues and its assumption that the ups and downs of an artist's career, the path of the mind's development, and Guston's impact on subsequent art can be encompassed and quantified in a single sentence. We might have expected this sentence to go off-track at some point, but it remains readable, logical, and useful despite being packed with complex ideas and specific descriptions.

In an entry where subject matter and cultural comment is paramount, she addresses the work of Thomas Wilmer Dewing (1851–1938) whose late-19th-century depictions of women may seem at first insipid, but which deserve the more discerning assessment that Morgan supplies.

Inhabiting spare but atmospheric interiors or nebulous gardens, they nearly always dress in long, graceful gowns. These cultured, upper-class beings shun the competitive, activist spirit of industrial and commercial modernity, yet they nevertheless represent contemporary types. Usually no longer young, rarely conventionally pretty, and often cerebral, they involuntarily reveal the pressure of the exterior world they avoid. (120)

Morgan's entry on Benjamin West (1738–1820) is an example of her ability to pinpoint an artist's strengths while at the same time, elucidating a clear-sighted assessment of his limitations. West was the first American to gain an international reputation and to affect the development of western European art. He began the expatriate tradition while maintaining his identity as an American. He was a pioneer in Neoclassical painting, an innovator in history painting, an

early exponent of the Romantic sensibility, and a significant source of support and influence for aspiring American artists of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Yet, a portion of Morgan's entry is unsparing in her precision as to the qualities of West's painting that have led to his compromised reputation. "Although at its best his work excels within the academic tradition, some paintings suffer from flaccid draftsmanship, uninspired color, and little feeling for the sensuous quality of paint" (515). This roster of failings does not reflect the vagaries of taste and fashion but represents concrete formal assessments based on an unvarnished observation of his overall oeuvre. It is the sort of "critical analysis" that students and others may rely upon.

The *Dictionary* abounds in well-informed and interestingly written comments that show not only a depth of knowledge, but also a sense of discernment. The entries give a clear idea of what distinguishes one artist or subject from similar ones. For example, 19th-century American sculpture is a daunting prospect to organize and describe. With more than 40 entries, Morgan covers the topic from the halting neoclassicism of William Rush to the garden sculpture of Janet Scudder. The tone of similarity of American sculpture of that period, perhaps because of the dominating influence of European styles, often leaves people unable to make distinctions among even the major figures. Morgan demonstrates how each figure contributed his or her own specific quality. For Horatio Greenough (1805–1852), she notes at once his "fervid allegiance to the antique," then offers the piquant observation that his most famous work, the huge *George Washington*, is evidence of "the triumph of an abstract idea over common sense" (190). For William Wetmore Story (1819–1895), she shows how strongly this neoclassicism persisted in American sculpture, but adds "he achieved a personal variant emphasizing monumentality, restraint, and archeological or ethnographic exactitude" (469).

Morgan makes her way admirably among late 20th century movements such as postmodernism,

performance art, and installation art, and the artists who represent them. She recognizes that the criteria for American art—or any art—in the past may no longer apply to current practice now. For example, in the entry on Bruce Nauman (b. 1941), one of the more elusive figures in contemporary art, she announces what must be a problematic situation in critical art writing: “There is no Nauman visual style, nor much sense of technical progress” (335). In the preceding sentences, however, Morgan has already established a context for making such a statement.

Among the most mercurial, innovative, and controversial artists of recent decades, he has sustained a freewheeling, investigation into the limits of art and the role of the artist. His witty, disturbing, and profound challenges often interrogate art’s relationship to language, politics, technology, and human communication. Repetitive, crass, emotionally draining effects force viewers to confront the superabundance of such qualities in contemporary American life. (335)

What might usually be considered a deathly comment for most artists (no visual style) is here shown to be a strength of this particular artist.

Morgan’s volume replaces Matthew Baigell’s *Dictionary of American Art* of 1979, which has been a standard resource for decades. Baigell’s work contains some information that Morgan’s does not, so it will not entirely be disregarded, but Morgan’s will be more useful. Obviously, it is more up-to-date, but also it includes a greater variety of entries and, importantly, gives more specific descriptions of the characteristics of the art and artists covered. Morgan does not shy away from making strong but well-supported critical assessments. Baigell’s book did offer information on sources, and the fact that Morgan’s does not is a real detriment. It is regrettable that the publisher declined to include the extra pages that would have made her bibliography available to the reader. But Morgan

includes one kind of biographical information that other writers of such reference books do not always do: she cites the published writings of the artists themselves. Some of these are not widely known at all and, unless one were researching a topic in depth, one would not necessarily even know of their existence. Though certainly of uneven quality, these writings should always be consulted in any attempt to understand an artist. It is an insight to see how many artists did write about their lives and their work, and the fact that Morgan includes these is a sign of respect towards artists themselves. In the decades since Baigell’s dictionary, the study of American art has seen an explosion of new research, some of it directed to the theoretical underpinnings of American culture and issues such as patronage or links to broader cultural developments. Morgan’s cognizance of these evolutions seems to be part of the deep background on which she draws for her writing, but her focus is on more objective data. Theory is an aspect of some entries, but it is usually couched in language that is not discouraging to the general user.

In publications such as this one, one of the central issues is choices of inclusion and exclusion: who gets in, who is in but is denied an independent entry and is discussed in the context of something larger, and who doesn’t get in at all. For the most part, Morgan’s choices are understandable. Her stated goal is not only to include artists, but also to attend to all sorts of practitioners, institutions, and movements that have contributed to “American art.” A number of artists merit separate entries who are not widely known in overall histories of American art or who have not always been highly regarded. Morgan’s justification for including them is the recognition of their cultural prominence and influence in their own lifetimes, thereby providing a more accurate depiction of the past and one less colored by contemporary judgments. Lorado Taft (1860–1936), for example, is a sculptor whose work has been out of favor for some time and, no matter how reassessed his career might be, is never likely to be accorded the same status as

others of his time, such as, for example, Daniel Chester French (1850–1931) or early modern sculptors such as William Zorach (1889–1966) or John Flannagan (1895–1942). But Taft's entry is large, partly because of the esteem in which he was held during most of his lifetime, his prominence in the art world of his time, the amount of commissioned sculpture that remains accessible to the public, and his influential writing on the history of American sculpture.

As is to be expected in an immigrant nation, a great many American artists began their lives or careers elsewhere, but lived most of their creative lives here. Morgan also includes artists such as Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), an artist whose ties to France were never broken and who maintained a Gallic cultural character throughout his long sojourns in the United States (he became a citizen in 1955). Yet, his influence is stronger in American art, and it can be argued that American artists took up and accelerated his ideas earlier than Europeans. As is also to be expected in a nation with a long expatriate tradition, many American-born artists spent substantial parts of their lives abroad, such as John Singer Sargent (1856–1925) or Mary Cassatt (1844–1926), and were prominent in European art circles, but their cultural identification remained here. As for the international character of many contemporary artists' careers, Morgan recognizes the fluidity in today's art world, the plethora of international commissions, and the frequent changes of residence. Recognizing their "American presence," nevertheless, artists who "remain widely regarded as representatives of their birth nations" do not get into the dictionary. The American-born Cy Twombly (b. 1928), who has spent most of his career in Italy, has an entry as does, perhaps surprisingly, the British-born David Hockney (b. 1937), largely because of his long residence here and his identification with a certain slick representation of American Hollywood culture.

Every reviewer and user of this dictionary will have arguments with certain statements and choices. Most of my reservations are minor; for

example, Philip Evergood (1901–1973) should have been included in the discussion of Social Realism in the entry on the American Scene movement. I have two larger concerns, however, that I cannot reconcile. The first is the omission of Robert Arneson (1930–1992), California sculptor/ceramist who does not rate a separate entry, but is briefly discussed in the article on Funk art. Arneson's significance is well beyond the regional California identification as both a ceramist, a sculptor, and as a social commentator. If Peter Voulkos deserves his own entry, it is difficult to see why Arneson should be relegated to a portion (though a well-written portion) of an entry. I would argue that it was Arneson who pushed ceramics into a stronger sculptural direction that led to its current position as a major media in American art.

Morgan declares in her introduction that she will not deal with American Indian tribal art, an understandable decision. Yet, that position should not deflect her from recognizing the importance of contemporary artists of tribal heritage who have and continue to contribute to mainstream American art. If Kay WalkingStick (b. 1935) can be included in the massive Janson's *History of Art*, surely she should rate an entry in a dictionary of American art and artists. WalkingStick and other prominent artists do not represent tribal expressions only but easily join themselves to the larger currents of American art. Figures such as WalkingStick, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (b. 1940) and Edgar Heap of Birds (b. 1954), for example, are not esoteric artists but ones who can be and shall be regarded as contributors to American art both for the aesthetic quality of their works of art and for their distinctive cultural expression. Even Fritz Scholder (1937–2005), who is not universally well regarded, might have been included as a pioneering success in the recognition of contemporary Americans of tribal heritage. Should a second edition appear, an entry on contemporary tribal artists might be advisable. It would demonstrate the extent to which native Americans have integrated the artistic mainstream

of American art history while maintaining a distinct voice.

The hardback book uses matte-surfaced, off-white paper of substantial weight. Design elements are kept to a minimum, making the book a straightforward, highly legible volume that is easy to use. At a time when editing omissions and errors abound in published works, even from reputable presses, the *Oxford Dictionary of American Art and Artists*, is reliable and sensible.

I have two main areas of praise for *The Oxford Dictionary of American Art and Artists*. One is its exhaustive and accurate entries on well-chosen subjects and the other is its readability. Even a historian of American art, once beyond his or her specialization, will be educated or re-educated on issues and artists. And Morgan's writing makes the process appealing, since the *Dictionary* can be read simply for pleasure.

Reviewed by Lea Rosson DeLong

Are you interested in reviewing books for *The Independent Scholar*? Or, alternately, have you published a book that you would like to see reviewed by a fellow independent scholar? Please contact *TIS* book review editor David Sonenschein at <dsncis@gmail.com> for further information and other guidelines regarding book reviews. All book reviews printed in *TIS* are written by fellow NCIS members.

Book reviews printed in forthcoming issues will include photographs of the books in question, wherever possible. ❖

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PROFESSIONAL NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALLS FOR CONFERENCE PAPERS

Literature/Film Association Conference 2009
October 15–18, 2009
Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA

*Texts, Technologies, and Intertextualities:
Film Adaptation in a Postmodern World*

Paper proposals are invited from all areas of adaptation studies and film or media studies. Proposals relevant to the conference title above, including questions about graphic novels, comics, computer-generated imagery, HD/Blu-ray television, home theater, YouTube and other Internet media, adapted screenplays, and remakes, are especially encouraged. Also of significant interest are papers on literature and film theory, film and history, national cinemas, international cinematic influences, cultural and political issues related to film and media, and concepts of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation in literary and film contexts. We welcome comparisons of a film and its source text, individual film analyses, auteur studies, and fresh looks at traditional genres and subgenres like film noir, war films, Shakespeare films, romantic comedies, and so on.

Proposal abstracts should be 300 to 500 words in length (eventual papers must be read in no more than 20 minutes) and are due by **August 15, 2009**. Send by e-mail attachment to LFA 2009 Conference Director David Kranz at <kranz@dickinson.edu>. Proposals sent by regular mail should be addressed to David Kranz at Department of English, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013. Rolling notifications of acceptance will arrive over the summer and by **September 1, 2009**, at the latest.

Conference registration fees are \$100 before September 25, 2009, and \$125 thereafter. Fees for graduate students and retired professionals are

\$75 before September 25, 2009, and \$100 thereafter. Checks should be made payable to “Dickinson College” and mailed to David Kranz at the address above.

All conference attendees must be or soon become members of the Literature/Film Association. To join and pay 2009 dues (\$20), please go to <<http://alpha.dickinson.edu/departments/film/lfa/membership.htm>> and pay electronically.

2010 Film & History Conference
November 10–14, 2010
Hyatt Regency, Milwaukee, MN

Representations of Love in Film and Television

The 2010 *Film & History* conference will look at how love—as psychology, as dramatic principle, as historical agent, as cultural stage, as ethical standard—has been represented in film and television. How has the depiction of love defined a society or a period? Which people—or institutions or ideas or animals—have been promoted as subjects (or objects) of love, and which ones have not? In what ways do we love or not love because of film and television? How has the screen represented the love of country, the love of one's neighbor, the love of God, or the love of family? How has it represented the repudiation or reformulation of love, and what are the historical ramifications?

Questions about the nature of love define not just couples or parents and their children but whole communities and nations, shaping their religions, their economic policies, their media programming, their social values, their most powerful fears and ambitions. Love in each era defines the struggles worth enduring and the stories worth telling, from *Gone With the Wind*

and *Casablanca* to *Hamlet* and *Cleopatra*, from *The Jazz Singer* and *The Sound of Music* to *The Graduate* and *Boogie Nights*, from *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *The Ten Commandments* to *Easy Rider* and *The Right Stuff*, from *The 400 Blows* and *Life Is Beautiful* to *Amelie* and *Muriel's Wedding*. This conference will examine and assess the aesthetic representations of love on screen and their historical, cultural, and philosophical implications.

The Center for the Study of Film and History invites proposals from prospective chairpersons of topic areas (under which multiple panels will be organized). Chairs are encouraged either to propose their own areas or to propose versions of the areas suggested on the conference's Web site. Each area should be directly related to film or television. More information about the conference, including a full call for panels and proposals and accommodation information, is available on the conference's Web site at www.uwosh.edu/filmandhistory. Early entries will receive priority consideration.

Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS)
Annual Conference
April 7–11, 2010
University of Texas – Austin, TX

*Emergent Cartographies: Asian American Studies in the
Twenty-first Century*

The interdisciplinary Association for Asian American Studies invites presentation proposals from the fields of literature, geography, sociology, political science, history, cultural studies, the applied social sciences, education, anthropology, media and film, ethnic studies, public policy, psychology, and communications.

The 2010 conference site is lodged squarely between the East and West coasts and abutting Mexico. How might this location inspire us to reinscribe the terrain of Asian American Studies to capture twenty-first century realities and

subjectivities? For example, to the surprise of most, Texas now holds the third highest population of Asian Americans, surpassing even Hawai'i, Illinois, and New Jersey. Journeying away from the traditional AAS strongholds on the coasts and Hawai'i suggests the urgency of regional perspectives reflecting newer, post-1965 populations and communities that may fragment the field between its oldest and newest parts. We argue that a process of dismantling is necessary so that a twenty-first century vision of Asian American Studies might be reassembled from its many messy and morphing parts.

To encompass the full range of research on Asian Pacific Americans, we encourage contributions from scholars at every level of seniority and papers ranging from community studies, pedagogical strategies, and programmatic models to the most experimental, and integrative, of theoretical ponderings.

All proposals must be submitted online by **October 23, 2009**. For instructions on submitting proposals and other conference information, visit www.aaastudies.org/index.html. For more information, contact the AAAS Secretariat at piaseng@illinois.edu or the Center for Asian American Studies at UT Austin at kydawson@mail.utexas.edu.

Are you attending a conference that has issued a call for papers, with a deadline at least three months in the future? Send the appropriate information to the *TIS* editor at s.l.granville@gmail.com for publication in an upcoming newsletter. Please be sure to include as much information as possible about the conference—the text may be edited for length, but all pertinent details will be presented in this section.

Journal of Policy History
June 3–6, 2010
Columbus, OH

Conference on Policy History

The *Journal of Policy History* is hosting the 2010 Conference on Policy History at the Hyatt on Capitol Square in Columbus, Ohio from June 3 to June 6, 2010. Program chairs are David B. Robertson, Paula Baker, and Amy Bridges. We are currently accepting paper proposals on all topics regarding political and policy history, American political development, and comparative historical analysis. We encourage complete session submissions, but individual paper proposals are welcome. The editors of the *Journal of Policy History* encourage conference presenters to submit their papers for possible publication.

The deadline for proposal submission is **December 30, 2009**. Proposals should include one copy of the following materials:

1. Panel/Paper Description and Contact Information Page (template available at our Web site)
2. A one-page summary of each paper
3. A one-page C.V. of each panelist

Please send the materials to Policy History Conference, *Journal of Policy History*, Saint Louis University, 3800 Lindell Blvd., P.O. Box 56907, St. Louis, MO 63156-0907. Incomplete proposals and e-mailed submissions will not be considered. Please direct general inquiries to the conference coordinator, Cynthia Stachecki, at [<policyhistoryconference@gmail.com>](mailto:policyhistoryconference@gmail.com).

CALLS FOR COLLOQUIUM PROPOSALS

Women in the Archives
April 24, 2010
Brown University, Providence, RI

Brown University's Women Writers Project will coordinate a one-day colloquium, Women in the Archives, to explore the use of archival materials in the study of women's writing and the construction of disciplinary practices in archival research and pedagogy. This year's theme, "England/New England," focuses on periodization and regionality in women's writing during the colonial period. Papers might address themes such as the following:

- colonial perspectives on English culture and writing (and vice versa)
- gender and the emerging sense of regional or national identity
- literary periodization and its complications for colonial writing
- copyright, intellectual property, and gender

The larger concerns of the Women in the Archives series as a whole include:

- pedagogy and interdisciplinary pedagogies
- the construction of archival spaces
- material modes of textuality across disciplines
- technologies of research and teaching, and the impact of digital media on the archive
- new directions in archival research
- editing archival materials

Please submit 300-word proposals to [<WWP@brown.edu>](mailto:WWP@brown.edu) by **October 1, 2009**. For more information, please visit our Web site at [<www.wwp.brown.edu/about/activities/wia/>](http://www.wwp.brown.edu/about/activities/wia/).

CALLS FOR JOURNAL PAPERS AND SPECIAL ISSUE CONTRIBUTIONS

Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture

Volume 5, Issue 1 (2011)

Coloring the Environmental Lens:
Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Cinema, New Media, and Just Sustainability

We are seeking manuscript submissions on the role of cinema and new media in engaging environmental issues from the perspectives of traditionally marginalized groups (specifically socioeconomically depressed groups and racial and ethnic minorities in the American and global context). We deliberately conceive cinema broadly to include various moving images in documentary and fictional film, video, and television, -and are also interested in new media such as video games, Internet video shorts, blogs, and online games.

Recent scholarship has begun to actively highlight the importance of engaging different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic perspectives within the arena of environmental sustainability. However, relatively little comprehensive attention has been devoted to the way cinema and new media intersect with and highlight issues of environmental justice and sustainability. This issue hopes to fill this gap in environmental, cinema, and new media scholarship.

We invite essays from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary angles, and welcome analyses of films/videos/new media, filmmakers, film festivals, national cinemas, or classroom practices. We are particularly interested in readings of cinema that do not neatly fit traditional categories of nature or environmental films, and in articles that engage new media, such as online gaming, Internet video platforms (i.e. YouTube), and blogs that use social spaces in alternate ways. We are also interested in critiques of contemporary environmental cinema

and new media that omit the voices of various traditionally marginalized groups despite their relevance to the issues discussed.

Manuscripts should be prepared in English, and should not exceed 8,000 words including references. The journal adheres to APA style. Manuscripts must not be under review elsewhere or have appeared in any other published form. Please refer to the instructions for authors at <www.informworld.com/renc>. Upon notification of acceptance, authors must assign copyright to Taylor and Francis and provide copyright clearance for any copyrighted material. Send files to <smonani@gettysburg.edu> by **January 30, 2010**.

The Journal of American Ethnic History, the official journal of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society, announces its call for article submissions for a special issue on "Cold War Politics and American Ethnic Groups."

The overall goal of this special issue is to uncover the diverse ways in which American ethnic groups were affected by the foreign relations, intelligence, and defense strategies of both the United States and the communist regimes. This issue also aims to discuss the effect that certain ethnic groups had or tried to have on American foreign policy and what techniques they used for this. In addition, the issue explores how Cold War politics shaped internal dynamics within American ethnic and immigrant communities. The historical period covered in this volume spans from the late 1940s to the late 1980s.

We strongly encourage submissions that use sources from recently opened archives both in the United States and former communist countries. We are looking for studies that use primary materials from within the ethnic groups themselves. Submissions covering both European and non-European ethnic groups are welcome.

Manuscripts must be received by **December 1, 2009**. Please note that the journal does not accept previously published material. Prospective contributors are encouraged to join the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. Further information about the society and about the requirements for manuscript submissions can be found at <www.iehs.org> or by e-mailing editor John Bukowczyk at <aa2092@wayne.edu>.

Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals is a multidisciplinary journal for all aspects of handling, preserving, researching, and organizing collections. Practitioners and academics may turn to the journal for the most up-to-date research in collections management. In its pages, they will find both professional guidance and theoretical grounding, drawn from fields such as life science, art history, anthropology, history, conservation, law, museum studies, and library science.

Curators, archivists, collections managers, preparators, registrars, educators, students, and others are encouraged to submit their work. The journal accepts articles of 15–25 manuscript pages, along with 3- to 6-page opinion pieces, book reviews, and technical columns. *Collections* is published quarterly by AltaMira Press. For more information, e-mail editor Juilee Decker at <jdecker1@georgetowncollege.edu> or visit <www.altamirapress.com/RLA/journals/collections/Index.shtml>.

Museum Management and Curatorship (MMC) is a peer-reviewed, international journal for museum professionals, scholars, students, educators and consultants that examines current issues in-depth, and provides up-to-date research, analysis and commentary on developments in museum

practice. It is published quarterly and all submitted manuscripts will undergo double-blind review. The journal encourages a continuous reassessment of collections management, administration, archives, communications, conservation, diversity, ethics, globalization, governance, interpretation, leadership, management, purpose/mission, public service, new technology, and social responsibility.

The *MMC* is committed to an intelligent balance between theory and practice and is relevant to both academics and museum practitioners. It provides an authoritative forum for challenging and debating theories, models and practices that have significant implications for museology throughout the world. The Journal also strives to be as multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary as possible.

The journal invites submissions of original material for consideration as articles, usually 4,000–8,000 words in length. Shorter contributions are also invited for inclusion in the “Professional Notes” and “World of Museums.” These may include comments on articles previously published in the Journal, as well as news items. “Commentaries” are also invited, and they are intended to offer new, compelling and unconventional perspectives on museum policies, practices and issues. “Commentaries” may range in length from 1,000–3,000 words.

Manuscripts submitted to MMC should not be under consideration by any other publishers, nor may the manuscript have been previously published elsewhere. Manuscripts must be submitted by e-mail attachment, in either Microsoft Word or WordPerfect formats, to <eic.mmc@telus.net>. Prospective authors should consult the submission details available at <www.informaworld.com/rmmc>. Details concerning the submission of book reviews are also available at this site. ❖

MEMBER NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Have you recently changed your e-mail or postal address? Have you published a book or article, won a grant or fellowship, or have other news that you would like to share with your fellow NCIS members? Send it to <slgranville@gmail.com> for publication in our Member News and Announcements section.

New Members

No new member information available in this issue.

New Awards

Kendra Preston Leonard has been awarded a Visiting Fellowship from the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University to do research and work on her project on American composer Louise Talma. She will be in residence at Yale for a month working with the materials there.

New Presentations and Publications

Janet Wasserman has created “An Independent Scholar’s Voice,” a new Web site, available at <<http://www.janetwasserman.com/>>. The Web site provides information on published articles (available on the site), articles published and available elsewhere, and works in progress

David Sonenschein, NCIS Database Manager among other things, has been so busy updating everyone else’s records he’s neglected his own. His latest publications are his first (and probably last) piece of fiction, “Dust” in the *Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas* 39 (2008):77–80, and some historical background on a book he published 26 years ago, “Interviews and personal journeys: contingencies on writing,” *Issues in Writing* 17(1/2): in press, 2007–2008.

Harrison Solow has been invited to give an address at Downing College, University of Cambridge, in commemoration of F.R. Leavis for the 800th anniversary of Cambridge University in September 2009. The title of her talk is “Intellectual Legacy.” Individuals who are attending the conference are welcome to contact her in advance.

Larissa M. L. Zaleska Onyshkevych is the co-author and co-editor of *Contemporary Ukraine on the Cultural Map of Europe*, published by M.E. Sharpe (ISBN 9780765624000). This volume explores Ukraine’s European cultural connections, especially as they have been re-established since the country achieved independence in 1991.

In the Next Issue

- ❖ More independent bookshops for independent scholars
- ❖ An NCIS mini-grant helps fund new research in the Lower 48
- ❖ Funding announcements, calls for papers, and more!

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nonmembers on the condition that they become bona fide
members of NCIS.

Deadlines for submitting articles, essays, and papers

February 15
May 15
August 15
November 15

Comments and concerns

Kendra Leonard, president,
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