

Rutgers AARP

Emeriti

Reporter

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THE CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

Donald Borchardt, Chair

Professor Emeritus, Visual & Performing Arts

Our mission to sustain and enhance the personal, intellectual and University interests of retired faculty will continue. We thank Richard Quaintance for his term as Chairperson to schedule meetings and events during the past two years.

Rutgers president Richard McCormick has asked that I serve on the newly formed Rutgers University Faculty and Staff Retiree Advisory Council. The Council will focus on ways in which the University can: (1) avail itself more effectively of the rich resources retirees (both faculty and staff) represent; (2) enhance further the experience of individual retirees, (3) create formal mechanisms for involving retired faculty and staff; and (4) assist the administration in creating a strong, coordinated program for retired faculty and staff. The new Council will be chaired by Gustav W. Friedrich, Dean & Professor II Emeritus, School of Communication and Information. I will look forward to the first meeting in March. Please feel free to offer any suggestions that might help fulfill the goals of the new Council.

Congratulations to Ray Bodnar for receiving the 2011 Richard Wasson Leadership Award!

SAVING CAPITALISM

A discussion entitled "Saving Capitalism from the Capitalists" was held by the Emeriti Assembly on November 22, 2011. It was moderated by Shanti Tangri who had researched the topic which had been written about in a number of published articles. He agreed to be a resource person, and would help to introduce topics, but it was not to be considered a lecture, or even a seminar. It was an open discussion of a complicated

subject with a variety of viewpoints. Ben Beede reports on the discussion as it took place.

Economic theory is based on a Newtonian balance. Equilibrium develops through various mechanism. Externalities (third parties) are left out of the equilibrium, however. Monopolies slow economic activity, but monopoly is not much of an issue for economists these days. The stock market can rise at a time when productivity is stagnant or diminishing.

An early comment was that the serious consequences of increasing income inequalities are not understood by the Republicans, who also view government jobs as undesirable and private sector jobs as desirable. One objective is to cut social services, and David Stockman was referenced as having made explicit comments of this kind.

The New Deal experience was briefly reviewed. The years 1933 to 1935 saw classic Keynesian approaches to recovery, that is, heavy spending by the federal government. Then, a depression occurred in 1937 as spending decreased. For FDR, jobs took priority over deficit reduction, despite his campaign statements in 1932 that federal spending needed to be reduced. Today, government is cutting when it should be spending. Tax cuts do not help in a recession. Defense spending remains quite high, prompting the possibility of a "garrison state" to use political scientist Harold D. Lasswell's phrase.

Balancing the budget is a highly popular concept, especially at present, but is there really a limit to steady deficits? There is a consensus among economists that deficits can lead to national bankruptcy. Deficits are different for governmental bodies and individuals, however. There is uncertainty about what bankruptcy would mean. Although the concept of the "national gross product," as identified by John Maynard Keynes and others, is widely accepted, many are uninformed about what is really involved. Debt service at some level is an important issue, but the proportion of the gross national product devoted to debt service is not really that significant. The use of numbers for debt reduction are really matters of politics and psychology, not economics.

Forgiving debts was and is anathema to conservatives. The possibility of repudiating debts was mentioned. There are precedents, such as the closing of banks and the departure from the gold standard in 1933.

Who is responsible for decisions? One response was that it is a matter of ideologies. There is no leadership in congress. There is an unwillingness to deal with environmental issues, for example, although a sustainable economy is needed. There can be redevelopment of older areas. The concept of "growth" needs to be redefined. There is a "psychology of growth."

We need to ask what legislation is needed to move out of the recession. Strategies of all kinds can be challenged. We tend to reject solutions. Economic planning is needed at the national and international levels. How can we promote philanthropy, which is much needed under current conditions?

Reference was made to the possibility of conditions developing that might resemble feudalism. Similar analogies to feudalism were made during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States. One view expressed was a need for transnational alliances of progressives. Others suggested starting with limited goals and determining what can be done locally, at Rutgers, for example.

The group agreed to continue this discussion at the next Emeriti Assembly meeting. The discussion continued the next meeting when the Keynesian economics theory was considered.

ABSTRACT PAINTING

"Abstract Painting: A Personal Perspective" was the title of a presentation given by Donald A. Borchardt at the Emeriti Assembly meeting on January 31, 2012. Photos of original works were projected on the wall from a computer projector with the assistance of AAUP-AFT secretary Denise Borusewicz. The following notes on this event were written by Benjamin Beede.

Don Borchardt emphasized that abstract painting looks at the "intrinsic form" of an image. Inspiration seems to come from the subconscious mind. It is "subjective." The intent with a still life is to put together size, colors, and arrangement, in order to make the material "interesting to see."

The presentation permitted comments by the viewers, who often expressed varied interpretations of the images. The third painting, for example, was viewed by some as sea birds or pages in a notebook. It was really

a female dancer. Members of the audience can also be observed.

He said that many of his paintings portray "human activity in an abstract fashion." French impressionists and "abstract impressionists" have inspired him, as has Hiram Williams in this country.

Most of the paintings were still life treatments, or images of dancers, often with some inclusion of an audience. The still life paintings were generally fruit or flowers. A few scenes were from Moose Lake in Wisconsin, with a cabin and a boathouse. Another recurring pattern was pages from a book. Sometimes the motif was a combination of a still life and pages or a figure, such as a dancer, and pages. In one instance, a dancer seemed to be trying to escape from the pages. Another showed a figure in front of a page. Still another depicted a conflict between a figure and pages.

Interpretations continued to be varied. Stylized birds, for example, can be viewed as either attacking, or attracting one another.

Many paintings used relatively subdued colors, but a picture of a clown wearing a mask was highly colored. Another showed a dancer in yellow amidst fiery colors. Still another intriguing human figure was a man's head with no features except a smirk.

A painting which consisted of a white sheet with a red circle might be interpreted as half the sun.

Most of the paintings have a horizontal perspective, but some emphasized a vertical approach. Several paintings with the latter views pictured houses.

Don Borchardt expressed dissatisfaction with a few paintings because he considered their "childish" appearance, and he has discarded some of them. One of the paintings so characterized presented an insect gathering honey.

Several paintings were derived originally from photographs, such as a little girl playing with pigeons on the stone plaza in front of St. Marks Cathedral in Venice.

The frequent comments from members of the group reflected a considerable interest in the presentation.

The next meeting of the Emeriti Assembly is scheduled for 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at the AAUP-AFT Office, 11 Stone Street, New Brunswick. Watch for the flyer announcing the speaker and topic.

**AN INTERVIEW WITH HIROSHI OBAYASHI,
Member AAUP-AFT Emeriti Assembly
By Isabel Wolock, Treasurer,
AAUP-AFT Emeriti Assembly**



Tell me a little about your position at Rutgers before you retired.

I was Professor & Chair, Department of Religion, right up to the time I retired as of July 1, 2010.

What did you do?

Teaching, research, administration, writing, etc.

Combination of all of these. In the last 6 years before I retired I served as the chair. Consequently I was extremely busy with running the department. "Religion" being a relatively small department, the job of chairmanship was extremely onerous. In large departments you have more available faculty members to delegate chair's responsibilities, but in small departments the chair has to do everything while chair's duties are the same in all departments. Nonetheless I had the largest student load (not necessarily the course load) in teaching in the department year in year out. Though as the chair I had a reduced course load (only one course), my course always had the largest student registration in the department (always over 300 students). For decades my course, "Death and Afterlife," remained the most popular course in the department.

How long were you there?

From 1967 to 2010 (43 years)

What were your major accomplishments and sources of satisfaction while you were at Rutgers?

All together 6 authored and edited books and 54 scholarly journal articles are credited to me, but none sold as many copies as "Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions" published in 1992 by Greenwood Press and later taken over by Praeger Publishing. It sold nearly 20 thousand copies, which is a lot for academic publishing, partly because it was

adopted by many institutions across the country either as a textbook or as a major reference book.

Did you do any community service work?

I always participated in community service in the way of giving lectures to civic groups, religious organizations such as churches and synagogues as well as retirement communities throughout my tenure at Rutgers either through the Speaker's Bureau or through personal contacts. I continue to do so even after my retirement.

Did you receive any award/honors before or after retirement?

None, I'm afraid, at the national level, though I was honored as the "Professor of the Year" of Rutgers College in 1996 and received an official commendation from the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, Trenton, as well as a letter from Rep. Dick Zimmer from Washington, D.C.

What did you do before coming to Rutgers?

I came directly from finishing my graduate work at University of Pennsylvania in 1967. But before my Ph.D. program I had worked as a minister for a Protestant church in Japan. I was born and grew up in Japan. I did my undergraduate (not to mention primary and secondary schools) as well as seminary degree in Japan and worked briefly as a Protestant minister in Osaka, Japan, before coming to the US to do Ph.D. work.

Going back to earlier days, had you always planned on having an academic career?

I somehow knew I would be pursuing an academic career, though not necessarily in the US. The primary purpose of pursuing Ph.D. was to embark on an academic career in Japan. There was a position waiting for me in Japan. But, one thing leading to another, I ended up spending my entire academic life at Rutgers.

What kinds of experiences or situations led to your decision to pursue an academic career?

It was a natural progression from getting graduate theological (seminary) training to an academic career in the field of "Religion." Though our Department of Religion at Rutgers is a strictly academic department pursuing the study of "the religious dimension of human culture," as well as all the major world religions, hence we have specialists in Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism as well as Judeo-Christian religions (Hebrew Scriptures,

Byzantine Studies, Christian History, Ethics and Psychology of Religion), I was the specialist in Christian Theology. However, if you ask how I decided to choose a seminary training in the first place, then I must say that there was a person in my youthful days (high school) who had an important impact on the future course of my life. He was the pastor of the church I was attending. His “character,” “intelligence” and “way of life” helped me choose a course of life that lead to a specific undergraduate college and graduate theological training in Japan.

What type of prior training/education did you have?

Graduate Theological (Seminary) training: School of Theology, Doshisha University, in Kyoto, Japan, as well as Andover-Newton Theological School, Newton, Massachusetts.

If you were to do it all over again, would you pursue the same career or would you choose another one?

I would have to think twice on this.

What did you do after you retired?

Nothing particular, except for community service in the way of lectures to the audience of retirement community. One of the reasons why I chose to retire in 2010 was my wife’s health situation. She was diagnosed to be a “Parkinson’s” patient and also had to undergo a major surgery of “hip-replacement.” To suffer from Parkinson’s, a debilitating disease, is bad enough; my wife also had to undergo “hip-replacement” surgery which was followed by a lengthy “in-patient” and “out-patient” rehab treatment. There is nobody else around to help us. I had to retire from a full-time academic work to a full-time care-giver’s work. So, the last year and half has been “staying home” to be with my wife and occasionally baby-sitting two grand daughters of 5 and 2 who live in Morristown. Incidentally this is the 52nd year of our marriage. We celebrated our Golden Anniversary in 2010.

What do you see as the best thing about retirement?

It hasn’t been long enough to savor the joy of retirement, particularly because I had to retire to look after my wife, which gives me a different kind of gratification.

Any personal information you’d care to share:

Hobbies and interests

Nothing worthwhile to mention. My hobby used to be travelling. My wife and I covered Ireland, England, Netherland, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, China, not to mention Japan. Of these, travels through England (particularly London) Italy and Israel were substantial (extended stay). During 1990s we traveled back and forth to Japan every year, covering different parts in each trip. Unfortunately, it is no longer possible for my wife to endure long flights.

Spouse

Kimiko, my source of inspiration and pillar of strength for the last 52 years who is the mother of our three children

Children

Two sons, Hal, age 49 (a Roman Catholic priest serving in the diocese of Boston) and John, would have been 47 (he died at the age of 25 in a traffic accident on a NJ highway). Daughter, Anna, 46 years old, who after her Columbia Law School and NY bar, worked for a large international law firm in NY and later as in-house corporate attorney for a US company working in Tokyo and London, before settling into being a full-time mother in her 40s to our beautiful grand-daughters of 5 and 2.

What advice, if any, do you have to give to others who are planning to retire?

I’m not in a position to give advice to anybody on retirement because my retirement life so far has been quite atypical.

How did you come to be involved in the AAUP Emeriti Assembly? Is there anything in particular you like about being part of this group?

I’m wondering how and why.

<p>EDITOR: DONALD BORCHARDT</p> 
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LEADERSHIP AWARD

At the January 31st meeting of 2012 Isabel Wolock presented the 2011 Richard Wasson Leadership Award to Professor Emeritus Ray Bodnar. Professor Bodnar was recognized for his leadership at Rutgers University. Among the many evidences are his many years as a University Senator and his chairing of the Rutgers University Retired Faculty Association. He was on the Bureau of Government Research which later became the Center for Government Services, a unit in the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy with responsibilities in applied research, continuing education and public services for local government elected and appointed officials.

Ray was one of the founders of the Emeriti Assembly, established by Dick Wasson in 1996.

Dick Wasson encouraged Ray to become a grievance counselor. As chairperson or member he worked on several grievance committees.

Around this time Ray was invited to serve on a task force appointed by the RU administration to plan for the organization that became the Retired Faculty Association of Rutgers University (RFA). Once the RFA was established, he served as chairperson of the organization working closely with its Executive Director Todd Hunt. He is still the chairperson of the organization.

In the beginning of 2010, Ray was appointed to a new University task force, convened by Sherrie Trompe, Associate Director for the University Center for Organizational Development and Leadership (ODL) at Rutgers, the State University of NJ. The task force sought to strengthen and unify the benefits to retired faculty and staff. A strategic plan was formulated which is captured in a report "Strengthening Rutgers University Faculty & Staff, Programs, Services and Facilities".

As a member of the University Senate, starting in that role many years before retirement in 1991, and continuing through today, he represented the Center for Government Services and the Rutgers University Alumni Association.

He has been active in the AAUP Emeriti Assembly, serving in the past as secretary and on several subcommittees.

Professor Bodnar accepted the award with thanks and praised Richard Wasson for having proposed the establishment of the AAUP Emeriti Assembly in the 1990s.

Below is a list of organizations and their contact information including web sites you may find useful:

Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters, AAUP-AFT

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New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1113
Phone: 732-964-1000
Fax: 732-964-1032
E-mail: aaup@rutgersaaup.org
www.rutgersaaup.org

American Association of University Professors

1133 Nineteenth Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-737-5900
Fax: 202-737-5526
E-mail: aaup@aaup.org
www.aaup.org

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-879-4400
www.aft.org

AFT's Web Page for Retirees:

<http://www.aft.org/yourwork/retirees/>

Rutgers University's Web Page on Retiree Services:

<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/ben/RetireeServices.htm>

AARP

601 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20049
Phone: 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277)
www.aarp.org

AARP NJ

Forrestal Village
101 Rockingham Row
Princeton, NJ 08540
Phone: 1-866-542-8165 (toll-free)
Fax: 609-987-4634
E-mail: njaarp@aarp.org
Web site: <http://www.aarp.org/states/nj/>

NJ Department of Treasury Division of Pension & Benefits

Links for retirees:
<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/retiree-home.htm>