The Audacity of Despair

David Simon is best known as the creator of the highly acclaimed HBO series *The Wire*, which aired from 2002 to 2008 and chronicled with graphic reality and memorable characters Baltimore’s streets, politics, police department, schools, and newspaper. In April, hundreds filled Gaston Hall to hear Mr. Simon talk about *The Audacity of Despair: The Decline of American Empire and What’s In It For You*. His was the second annual Ellen Catherine Gstalder (C’98) Memorial Lecture, established in memory of a Georgetown alumna. The Gstalder family’s generosity has enabled us to continue Ellen’s legacy by bringing thought-provoking speakers to Georgetown whose ideas and work provide insight and focus on significant social and economic issues.

Mr. Simon forcefully put forward the suggestion that the laissez-faire capitalism of the past 40 years has broken the social compact between our society and the individual, and that the dramatic increase in income inequality is but one indicator. He proposed that institutions established to protect the most vulnerable are often more concerned with their own survival than in addressing the issues for which they were created. He dramatized this theme of despair and hopelessness in *The Wire* through the depiction of repeated failures on the part of police, schools, and other institutions. Our only hope, he suggested, is that the situation deteriorates to such an extent that we are forced to reconfigure the status quo and create new mechanisms for addressing our most pressing issues.

The visible enthusiasm of the largely student audience, however, suggests there may be less cause for despair than Mr. Simon proposed. Ellen Gstalder expected to continue to teach in Washington, D.C.’s Anacostia neighborhood after her two-year commitment to Teach for America. She had been accepted into New York University’s Master’s degree program in public health education, and was determined to throw her energy into reforming two of the societal ills that most appalled her: the U.S. education system and the nutrition available to lower-income children. The audience response indicated that many of them share her zeal for change and her passion to be “men and women for others.”

To view the entire lecture online please visit www.library.georgetown.edu/advancement/events/archive9.htm.--MJ
One of the major functions of a university library is to support with its collections the teaching, learning and research of its parent institution. A library’s collections budget can be represented as a pie, and its allocations to existing programs as slices. Each slice is commensurate in size with the breadth and depth of a particular discipline’s literature, publishing productivity and format, size and scope of the field at the university, and actual costs of materials.

As long as the library’s budget is able to grow according to inflationary indices, it can sustain a constant level of support for each program. Whenever a university introduces new degree programs or new research centers into its portfolio, however, a library must anticipate what it will need to sustain that new program while maintaining its accustomed level of support for all existing programs. Therefore, when a major curricular initiative is proposed by the university, our library’s bibliographers work with faculty to prepare a Library Impact Statement. The Impact Statement shows an evaluation of our research holdings, reviews of the resources of our consortium partners, and a budget for new needs. Otherwise, those other slices of the budget pie would have to shrink to accommodate a new wedge.

Over the last six years, our talented staff has prepared more than 30 Impact Statements for such diverse programs as Islamic Studies, a Theology Ph.D. program, American Musical Culture, and a Master’s program in Italian. Another major function of a university library is to provide sufficient and suitable spaces in which students, faculty, researchers and staff may perform their work to a high level of excellence. In 2010 the Joseph Mark Lauinger Memorial Library reaches the age of 40 years, and spaces that were sufficient and suitable in 1970 are less so now—just because of obvious advances in technology but also because of new learning styles and collaborations.

In anticipation of continuing advances and changes, we have worked during the past year with our architectural team on a Master Space Plan for the Lauinger Library. The Plan will serve as an appropriate birthday tribute to our iconic building, and its vision of a renovated and rejuvenated building will have an enormous impact on our constituents for decades to come.

To write about library impact only in these terms, however, misses a huge point: the impact of donors’ gifts on the library. It is donors’ gifts which allow us to respond with agility to future trends in education and to acquire those special items—such as new additions to our stellar Graham Greene and Catholic Studies collections—that continue to distinguish Georgetown from its peers. Increases to an operating budget will sustain our progress and impact statements will support new programs. But the biggest impact of all is made when your gifts help us rise to a higher level. With thanks, and with your continued help, we will continue to do so.--AGK
Peter J. Sullivan (1821-1883), whose papers in the Library’s Special Collections Research Center are now fully catalogued and open for research, served as a Civil War officer in the Union army and then as the U.S. Minister to Colombia from 1867 to 1869. In this newly-opened collection are a few documents relating to the Civil War, but the bulk consists of diplomatic dispatches to and from Sullivan recounting his efforts to obtain a treaty with Colombia for the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Darien. Interestingly enough, Darien, and for that matter Panama, were part of the nation of Colombia at the time. In the end, Sullivan’s efforts did not succeed, and the canal was not built across Darien. However, Sullivan captures in his papers the turmoil in Colombian politics and society at that time. His efforts can also be seen as a small part of the larger story of the construction of the Panama Canal.

President Andrew Johnson appointed Peter J. Sullivan as U.S. Minister to Colombia. The Sullivan Papers contain a large run of letters to and from U.S. Secretary of State William H. Seward. Other correspondents include Hamilton Fish and notable Colombian politicians and leaders, such as Santos Acosta, Santos Gutiérrez, Rudecindo López, Carlos Martín, Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera, Santiago Pérez, and Miguel Samper.

The Peter J. Sullivan Papers will supplement the Library’s extensive holdings documenting the history of Panama and the Panama Canal.--ST
Is there a connection between Shakespeare and English Roman Catholics, the Jesuits in particular? Thomas M. McCoog, S.J., member of the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus, discussed this question at the Ninth Annual Casey·McIlvane Lecture. Since 1991 he has shuttled between London, where he is archivist of the British Province of the Society of Jesus, and Rome, where he is director of publications at the Jesuit Historical Institute.

Elizabethan Jesuits were consistently portrayed as Machiavellian religious fanatics, according to McCoog, so intoxicated by Satan that they would employ any tactic to seduce innocent, God-fearing English people to subservience to the Roman pontiff. Recent attempts to prove William Shakespeare’s Catholicism by connecting him, through the purported “spiritual testament” of his father, to the Society of Jesus has freshly introduced the concept of the “evil Jesuit” into scholarly discussion.

Fr. McCoog reviewed the portrayal of Jesuits in English history and literature, noting that the “evil Jesuit” still occasionally surfaces to the present day. He went on to propose the unlikelihood that William Shakespeare was an active participant in Jesuit-fostered Counter-Reformation Catholicism. The argument rests primarily on the supposed discovery, during renovations at Shakespeare’s birthplace in 1767, of a handwritten copy of Cardinal Borromeo’s 16th-century spiritual testament signed on each page by William’s father John Shakespeare. Unfortunately, the original was soon lost. Fr. McCoog proposed that the connections between Cardinal Borromeo and those who might have come into contact with John Shakespeare are tenuous at best. Recent scholarship strongly suggests that the testament was an antiquarian forgery. Shakespeare may have articulated a generalized nostalgia for the Catholicism of earlier days but he does not appear to have been an active participant in an effort to reverse the religious direction of England.

The Casey·McIlvane Endowed Library Lecture Fund was established in memory of Francis L. Casey, Jr., C’50, L’53, and in honor of the Reverend Donald W. McIlvane, F’46 through the generous joint gift of Nancy McIlvane Del Genio, F’82 and the late Roseanne McIlvane Casey, S’79.--MJ

Some would argue that New York City is the cultural capital of the United States - the center of literature, music, art, architecture, and fashion. It has also been a focal point for political debates on the viability of cities, on immigration, and often as the symbol of the United States to the rest of the world.

As part of Georgetown University’s John Carroll Weekend in April, the Library Associates welcomed Dr. Maureen Corrigan, Georgetown Professor and NPR book critic,

Fr. Murphy’s highly original analysis, well received by critics and academics, has been called “a treasure of a book combining literary criticism, natural philosophy, and history with a sophisticated and rigorous theology of art” (Rachel Fulton, author of *Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200*) and is the recipient of several awards. The large Reunion Weekend crowd listened as Fr. Murphy recounted his study of Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Middle High German *Parzival* (c. 1210), and how it led him on a quest to confirm that the medieval romance provided not only insight into love, loyalty and human endeavor, but also into the true nature of the Holy Grail itself. His lengthy travels to sites related to the story led to his final destination, the Bamberg Diocesan Museum, where he would complete his quest to find Wolfram’s vision of the Holy Grail and inspiration for his “great Christian ecumenical masterpiece,” not a mystical serving dish or chalice but a green gemstone embedded in a highly decorated and beautiful medieval portable altar.--LM

This spring Lauinger Library’s Gunlocke Room featured the exhibition *David Jones: A Painter of Words and His Circle*, assembling materials from a number of collections to shed light on the life of this important artist and poet. Most often compared to the work of William Blake, due to its mastery of visual art, poetic expression, and consistency of vision, the work of David Jones spanned painting, engraving, and perhaps most importantly, poetry. His work has continued to fascinate a devoted following since his death in 1974.

Jones’ idiosyncratic and colorful letters were well represented with correspondence exchanged with his close friends and admirers, including Eric Gill, Harman Grisewood and Michael Richey. Complementing the correspondence were examples of Jones’ engravings, from his earliest work for St. Dominic’s Press at Ditchling to his masterful illustrations for *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1929); manuscripts and published editions of his writing; and a selection of his unique “painted inscriptions” as he most often employed them—photographed and sent to his friends as Christmas cards. The experiences and themes that informed Jones’ work echo throughout the exhibit: the life of the frontline soldier in the Great War (World War I), the archaeology and folk history of Britain, and the sacramental nature of art as exemplified in the Catholic Mass. Also exhibited were an original drawing by Jones, *The Cat at 1 Victoria Square* (1947), and a large painted inscription, *EXTENSIS MANIBUS*, as published for the ordination of the poet Peter Levi in 1964.

The opening of the exhibition coincided with a weekend conference, jointly sponsored by Georgetown University Library and the Cathedral College at Washington National Cathedral, focused on the works of David Jones, including a screening of *In Search of David Jones: Artist, Soldier, Poet*, a 2008 documentary by artist and David Jones scholar Derek Shiel. An online version of the exhibition can be viewed at [www.library.georgetown.edu/dept/speccoll/jones_09/](http://www.library.georgetown.edu/dept/speccoll/jones_09/).--TJ
The Library’s Special Collections Research Center recently opened the Ames W. Williams Papers to interested scholars.

Ames W. Williams (1912-1991) is best remembered as a bibliographer of Stephen Crane. Together with Vincent Starrett, Williams co-authored *Stephen Crane: A Bibliography* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1948), a classic in the field. Williams’ personal papers contain extensive and substantial correspondence regarding Crane’s life. Williams’ correspondents include Crane scholars, such as noted poet John Berryman as well as Edwin Emerson, Lillian B. Gilkes, Melvin Schoberlin, R.W. Stallman, Starrett, and Louis Zara.

Williams’ other interests are reflected in his personal papers as well. An avid railroad enthusiast, Williams saved many rare printed items about railroad history. In 1970 he authored a book on a local Virginia railway entitled *The Washington and Old Dominion Railroad*. He also studied steamboats, and his papers include some printed materials concerning their history. He also studied steamboats, and his papers include some printed materials concerning their history, as well as numerous photographs related to Maryland and Virginia history on the water.--ST

> Photograph taken in August 1944 of Stephen Crane’s house in England.

Where does our love of reading come from? Studies have long suggested that when parents or others read to us as children, it fuels our passion for books and reading throughout our lives. If there are connections between reading, knowledge formation and success in life, we owe a debt of gratitude to the people and institutions that introduce us to the wonders of the written word and who ignite our inquisitiveness. And each of us holds the power to pass that gift along to future generations.

Many of us enjoy swapping great books with friends. We have the good fortune to procure our own materials from an overabundance of sources. But as the economy shrinks incomes, the importance of libraries rises significantly for many—just at the time when libraries are likewise challenged fiscally to restrain spending on new materials and technologies. As you consider the impact of reading in your own life and the important role of libraries throughout your education, please remember the Georgetown Libraries. From Riggs to Lauinger, generations of Georgetown students have expanded their understanding of the world, history, philosophy and a host of other topics by poring over our vast holdings.

Today, the Libraries are required to stretch their offerings to meet the most current technological advances while at the same time preserving priceless documents and other media entrusted to their Special Collections. Your financial support of this Herculean task is deeply appreciated.

For more information on how you may include the Georgetown Libraries in your giving plans and inspire new generations of readers and learners, contact:

Stephen Link, Director of Gift Planning
202-687-3697, 800-347-8067
giftplanning@georgetown.edu
And thank you in advance for passing on the gift of reading.
The Library’s Special Collections Research Center staff members often have the opportunity to teach from the collections at the request of University faculty. Generally, a class will visit the Library for one class session and participate in an interactive discussion on items pulled to provide context on topics such as the Harlem Renaissance, Life in the Early Republic, Latin American Literature, and Introduction to Social Sciences. Recently, I pulled Thomas Bewick’s *A General History of Quadrupeds* from the rare book room for a group of graduate students in English literature, and in that process rediscovered Thomas Bewick (1753-1828), wood engraver and pictorial storyteller.

Thomas Bewick became interested in natural history at an early age, and according to his *Memoir* enjoyed the countryside over the classroom, and drawing in his schoolbooks over writing in them. In his early teens he was apprenticed to engraver Ralph Beilby, and his artistry flourished under the tutelage of his master.

Bewick preferred the wood engraving work that came into Beilby’s workshop over copper engraving, and he helped vitalize an art form that would in the 19th century become increasingly important to the proliferation of affordable illustrated texts. Wood engraving, unlike woodcut, uses the copper engraver’s tool to carve printable images from hard woods such as boxwood. Unlike intaglio copperplate engravings that incise dark lines into a light background, wood engravings are printed in relief, carving the light away from the dark lines. And unlike copper engravings that needed a roll press—that is, a separate press—to produce images, wood engravings can be made from a letterpress. This meant that illustration, decoration and printing of text could be done simultaneously, speeding the printing process considerably.

Initially, after finishing his apprenticeship, Bewick traveled to London to pursue his craft. But he was happier in Newcastle and in 1777 partnered successfully with his former master, Beilby. Illustrating children’s books became a specialty; Bewick wished to improve the quality of illustrated works for children. To this end, he conceived of *Quadrupeds* and began working on it in 1781; the book was first published in 1790. Ralph Beilby wrote the textual descriptions for the animals; Bewick edited them. Bewick contributed wood engravings to describe the animals pictorially, often including humorous vignettes at the ends of sections, such as a joyfully trumpeting elephant or a hair-raised cat being chased by its natural dog enemy. Critics enjoyed the book, as did the reading public, and it went to seven editions and thousands of copies. In October, 1790, *The Critical Review* remarked: “We never heard of Mr. Bewick or his history, yet perhaps both deserve to be better known…” (414) and “[i]t is perhaps one of the best systems to be put in the hands of the school-boy, not only to excite his curiosity, but in a great measure to gratify it.” (418) The success of *Quadrupeds* led to other projects, such as the 1797 *History of British Birds* that the fictional young Jane Eyre so enjoyed.

I chose Bewick’s *Quadrupeds* among others to provide context for a 19th-century literature class reading novels like *Jane Eyre*. It did not take long for *Quadrupeds* to speak to the class on its own behalf. The students were captivated by its images and its safari-like arrangements; they were able to page through the book, to gain a broader view of the culture that surrounded Jane, and to experience the thrill of discovery that books, no matter their age, can bring.--KOC
NEW YORK STORIES, continued

...to the Intercontinental The Barclay New York, where she led a distinguished panel of New York authors through an exploration of the city as embodied in popular imagination. Borrowing from a class she teaches at Georgetown University entitled New York Stories, Dr. Corrigan approached the authors Linda Fairstein, Meryl Gordon, Nicola Kraus, and Jonathan Rosen with two questions, “Is New York City ‘America’ or is it someplace else?” and “What defines a New York story?” Panel responses varied widely, but there was consensus that New York City can represent America, but it frequently anticipates changes that surface later in other regions. As for defining characteristics, the New York story often shares common themes (money and power, for example) but reflects the immense diversity of its origins. Just within our own panel’s works were books that explore murder in the New York Public Library, inside stories of New York’s preeminent families, and engaging with nature through bird-watching in Central Park. The panel discussion was followed by a lively audience question-and-answer period, where a popular topic was advice on how new authors can find an agent or publisher.--LM