Hello again fellow Explorers and welcome to the Spring 2018 Semester! By now, you have probably started your classes or will be starting them soon. This spring we again have a great lineup of interesting and stimulating classes plus an outstanding group of Book Club selections and Friday Coffees to choose from.

As always, special thanks to all the volunteer instructors and to the Curriculum Committee for their efforts. Members—you might want to consider putting together a course on a topic you find interesting and exciting and that you can share with other Explorers! Think about it...

Frank Hawke did his usual outstanding job of putting together great Intersession offerings.

**Pat Franklin**

**President’s Column**

A year or so ago I came across a Netflix movie, Never Let Me Go. It was the film version of a dystopian science fiction book that Time magazine hailed as the best novel of 2005. The plot line follows a group of young people who, strictly speaking, are not people. They are human clones created as organ donors. Their raison d’être is to supply organs to human beings. They live very short lives.

A chick flick it was not. But it was that kind of a movie that can keep you thinking long after the credits roll. I guess you could call it a horror film but it was more than that. It touched upon a very serious life-and-death issue: the dearth of organ donors needed to save human lives. Every hour of the day, six people in the U.S. are added to the national waiting list for organ transplants. In 2016 there were 119,362 people on the waiting list but only 15,947 donors and 33,612 transplants. Every year the number of people waiting for a donor far exceeds the number of donors and transplants. Interestingly, 95% of American adults support organ donation but only 54% sign up as donors.

Back to the movie. Obviously, human clones are not the answer to the organ donation dilemma. However, scientists and medical researchers in the real world are looking at cutting-edge solutions, such as 3D printing of organs and artificial, mechanical organs. Recently, they’ve added something else to the mix—human-animal hybrids known as “chimera.”

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**By Jane Casler**

**CHIMERA, HUMAN-ANIMAL HYBRIDS... STRANGER THAN FICTION**

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If you have not attended any Intersessions or been on campus since December, you are in for a big surprise! The Board has been busy following up on the carpet replacement upgrade with an effort to replace all the chairs and tables in the Common Room. The new arrangement is designed to increase the number of seats comfortably around round tables for greater discussion and fellowship by members.

We hope you enjoy—and appreciate—the improvements. As with the new carpet we ask all members to do your part in keeping the Common Room clean and tidy. If you make a mess, please clean up after yourself. That’s a lesson we all learned in kindergarten!

I’m very excited to begin the spring semester and grateful to the friend who first encouraged me to consider taking classes at Explorers several years ago. I encourage everyone to suggest your friends join you in your voyage of learning and social engagement. Think of how much fun it would be having them share in your learning experience!

Enjoy the spring semester!

Pat

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CHIMERA, HUMAN-ANIMAL HYBRIDS...STRANGER THAN FICTION (continued)

 successfully developed the first human-sheep hybrid. This announcement followed on the heels of another breakthrough. Almost exactly one year earlier, the Salk Institute had successfully developed human-pig hybrids.

Chimera, mixed-species hybrids, are aimed at creating human organs in an animal’s body and harvesting them for transplant into human beings. Sheep and pigs are a good match for this type of research because some of their organs are similar to human organs. (Interestingly, the first clone ever developed was a sheep.) To create the human-sheep hybrid, a team of cell biologists genetically engineered a sheep embryo, disabling it from growing a pancreas. They then implanted human stem cells in the embryo with the potential to grow a human pancreas. Stem cells are unique in that they can develop into many different types of cells in the body and they can reproduce quickly.

Both the pig and the sheep embryos were destroyed after about three or four weeks due to current laws. And, scientists concede that it could take years to perfect the process and create functioning human organs. Nevertheless, chimera researchers believe they are on the right track.

But is it ethical? Not surprisingly, many patients on the transplant waiting list support the research. So do many in academia. But there are clearly ethical concerns. Animal rights activists, for example, have condemned chimera research as immoral, a crime against both animals and human beings.

Then there’s the ick factor! How would you feel about getting an organ transplant from a sheep or a pig? Or what about the creepy concept of an animal with human body parts? Many scientists consider this possibility to be as mythical as the satyr, the creature from Greek myth who is part goat, part man. But not all of them do. “What if the embryo that develops is mostly human?” This question was posed in 2016 by Dr. Pablo Ross, a veterinarian and developmental biologist at the University of California, Davis. Dr. Ross is himself one of the researchers working on developing chimera for organ transplants. “It’s something that we don’t expect,” he added, “but no one has done this experiment, so we can’t rule it out.” That’s because experiments to date have implanted only a fraction of the number of human stem cells required to actually grow human organs in animals.

And the jury is still out. Even if proven viable, is chimera development a crime or a life-saving breakthrough for the human race? Only time will tell.
By Suzanne Kiley

I had thought that margarine was invented in the 1940s in response to wartime butter shortages. Guess not! As far back as 1813, a French chemist had discovered a new fatty acid that caused pearly deposits. In 1869, Louis Napoleon III offered a prize to the inventor of a cheap edible fat that could be used by the military and the lower classes.

The winner was Hippolyte Mege-Mouries who combined beef tallow, milk, and other ingredients to form margarine, named from the Greek margarites which means pearl. He was using the same kind of deposits that the earlier chemist had used. The Dutch improved on his recipe, and a Dutch manufacturer, the Jurgens company, became very successful. (Mouries died a pauper!) Their product was also known as oleomargarine from the Latin oleum (oil).

By the time oleomargarine reached the United States in the early 1870s, production had increased, and the price had dropped. In response, the American dairy industry lobbied Congress to protect them. They launched a propaganda campaign that resulted in federal and state laws that did everything from banning sales to requiring that margarine be dyed black.

Courts shot down the most egregious of these laws, but taxes and color bans did a lot of harm. The dairy industry pretended that they were concerned for consumers who would be fooled into thinking they were buying butter if margarine were colored, but the real reason was to be sure that margarine looked unappetizingly like lard. Some states even required it to be colored pink to turn customers away.

The Pure Food movement of the 1920s resulted in a law making it illegal to add ingredients to butter to make it spread more easily. Margarine, made from vegetable oils, was more easily spread in addition to being cheaper. This along with methods for home coloring and WWII rationing of butter increased sales of margarine, as did positive health findings from the National Nutrition Conference of 1941. Until there were plastic bags, housewives had to mix in packets of color by hand which many found unpleasant. Do you remember squeezing the color capsule and kneading the plastic bag to distribute it evenly?

After the war, most federal and state bans against colored margarine ended. In 1950, the tax on margarine was repealed. By 1955, only two states still forbade the sale of yellow margarine. Wisconsin’s ban lasted until 1967 although it was still necessary to request margarine in restaurants and public buildings until 2011.

In the 1950s, Canada had its own bans on margarine, explaining that, without a demand for butter, there would be fewer cows. Fewer cows would mean less manure, and that would result in soil degradation. This proved a “golden” opportunity for “runners” to smuggle margarine into Canada from Maine in hidden compartments in their cars.

In 2010, new directives from the American Heart Association, the USDA, and the Department of Health and Human Services favored soft-spread margarine as did the Harvard School of Public Health. The reasons: today’s margarine has no trans fats and is low in calories. Butter has the additional health risks that cows live in polluted environments and are given hormones and antibiotics.

What’s in your refrigerator?
MEMBER PROFILE—
LINDA ANDROS, JD, LLM

By Judy Selesnick

Some of us may already know Linda Andros because she sat next to us in an Explorers class or because we took one of the challenging classes that she has given as an Explorers class leader. She is also on the Explorers Board of Trustees.

Linda is a “local,” a product of the Lynn public school system. After finishing high school, she went on to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst where she received a B.A. degree in English Literature. Linda then taught school in Lynn and began going part-time to Suffolk Law where she finished in three years instead of the usual four because she went during the summers.

Linda continued her public-sector work by interning at the Essex County District Attorney’s Office where she was exposed to a very interesting, high-profile murder trial. It was then that she realized how much she loved courtroom work. So, after passing the Bar that summer, she moved on to the DA’s office as an ADA (Assistant District Attorney). Her mission was to manage the ADAs/courtrooms in Salem, Lynn, and Haverhill District Courts. During her four years as an ADA, and after 70 jury trials, she took note that there were hardly any women judges and/or litigators. Defense attorneys were almost all male, and her evening law school classes had only five or six women.

Next, Linda transferred to Boston and worked in the Attorney General’s office as an Assistant Attorney General. While there she practiced civil litigation against large law firms and private businesses/companies. After trying five large trials in one year, she found civil litigation more difficult than criminal trials. (She even litigated a case against President Nixon’s attorney and other famous lawyers). During her six years as an Assistant AG, Linda tried 30 civil jury trials throughout the Commonwealth. Combining her work for the DA and AG, she scored 100 jury trials over 10 years of courtroom experience. Says Linda, “It was excellent legal experience.”

Although she enjoyed working in the offices of both the DA and AG, a change was in order. With a growing interest in foreign affairs and not a career “on the bench,” Linda moved to Washington, DC and enrolled in Georgetown Law School. At Georgetown she earned an LLM—a specialized Masters Degree in International Trade Law. It encompassed all of her interests—economics, law, and local, national, and international politics and policies. She loved the work and atmosphere in DC! Her next move was to the US Department of Commerce as an Attorney Adviser and Senior Adviser working on international trade cases and policy. Her job brought her to interesting places like the Ukraine, China, Albania, and India. She served on a team that negotiated trade agreements with various high-level foreign government officials and foreign corporate CEOs.

Following her time with the federal government, Linda moved on to the DC office of a prestigious NY-based law firm where she handled the same trade advising/negotiating for non-governmental clients. She then went to work for six years at a large industrial union as a legislative counselor. She specialized in trade policy, politics, law, and lobbying Congress, the Executive Branch, including DOJ and the US Treasury. This entailed working with a variety of groups—unions as well as environmental and other law firms.

Throughout this demanding work schedule, Linda was asked to speak at numerous events in DC. She also testified many times in front of federal entities and gave briefings to Congress on a wide range of trade issues. Linda says she ended her professional career with awesome experience in a myriad of venues—Executive Branch, Congressional Branch, Judicial Branch as well as unions and private law firms.

Retirement brought Linda home. And, through “word of mouth” from friends, she discovered Explorers. Today, luckily for Explorers, she is employing her expertise and interests in teaching and becoming an Explorers class leader. To date, Linda has taught courses in economic and political history; Aftermath of WW1 to the 1929 Crash; Philosophy: Six Great Ideas; and Economic and Political History: Populism and Tyranny. This spring, her course is Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity which will run from March 7 through April 11. On a more personal note, Linda likes golf, bridge, chess, and traveling!
Anthony Amore’s lecture, “Stealing Rembrandts,” was a standout performance at a recent Explorers Intersession. He amazed and startled us by sharing his 15 years of experience in national security, law, intelligence, and crisis management with federal government agencies. Amore is now an accomplished expert on museum security, fakes, frauds and forgeries. As Director of Security and chief investigator at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, he’s definitely been through the drill.

In the last 100 years, 80 Rembrandts have been stolen, some more than once. In fact, one has become known as “the Takeaway Rembrandt” because it was stolen four times between 1966 and 1983 from the small Dulwich Picture Gallery in South London. That got Amore’s attention.

Anthony Amore entered the professional world of art when he answered a tiny jobs ad placed by the Gardner Museum in 2005. He said he wouldn’t have answered it if he didn’t think he would someday recover the 13 paintings stolen from the Museum on the night of March 18, 1990.

Amazingly, says Amore, little do most art thieves know how difficult it will be to sell well-known paintings. News stories of record-setting prices paid at art auctions grab the attention of thieves. That can lead them to “art-nap,” thinking that they can ransom the goods. Or they hope to make millions selling a painting. Yet almost always, that zillion-dollar painting in their minds turns into something they can’t even get rid of.

Amore charmed us with deadpan wit—he had us laughing frequently. To demonstrate just how hard it is to steal famous artists’ paintings, he told us about the Worcester Art Museum heist of a Rembrandt, a Picasso, and two Gauguins. Unlike most ordinary crooks who attempt to steal art, the thief, Florian “Al” Monday, had learned about fine art from his mother in Rhode Island. He’d visited WAM while an art major at Assumption College. He was even known to brag that stealing great art, even that museum’s only Rembrandt, St. Bartholomew, was a “no-brainer.”

So Monday decided to make it happen. He shrewdly hired two local crooks and a driver to do it. After thoroughly scoping out his plan, he gave them very thorough instructions. The driver should steal a station wagon for the getaway. The other two were to purloin the paintings—on the second floor near the entrance of the beautiful classical courtyard. All three were to wear identical blue blazers, to look “official.”

But, unlike today, there were no guns. Like experienced thieves, Amore’s henchmen said there would be no robbery without guns. So he gave them one after putting a single bullet in it. What’s more, he told them not to use it. Armed with these marching orders, they set out.

When they entered the museum’s courtyard, two young women were sitting on a bench. One cautioned them to stay put because something big was about to happen. Well, yes. When they returned to the courtyard with the paintings, an old guard got suspicious. They shot him in the hip and got out of Dodge.

So what’s the real deal? The point of stealing a station wagon was to accommodate the largest painting, but the crooks put it on top of the wagon, and the driver held it down. When they delivered the goods to Monday, he hid the paintings in a false ceiling. Not long after the delivery, the police came but left without finding anything. By then the thieves had gone to a bar. Other people in the bar overheard them boast that the local news was about their heist! The fortuitous eavesdroppers conveyed that information to Worcester TV.

So with that in mind, Mr. Monday, knowing that a museum guard had been wounded, moved the paintings to a pig farm dump in Rhode Island. The aftermath: the entire gang went to jail.

Monday told Amore, “I was a local crook. I didn’t have international connections to get me out of this.”
She was an avant-garde painter, a photographic model, a naturalist, a wife, a collector of bones, a minimalist, an individualist, a designer, and a mysterious androgynous woman. Yes, Georgia O’Keeffe was all of these and more. Her style of dress, use of color and design, and illumination of the smallest detail was how she defined herself. She lived to be ninety-eight years old and died in New Mexico, an area of the country she loved. She traveled the world while staunchly guarding her privacy. Consistency was her mantra and her story inspirational.

Georgia O’Keeffe was born in 1887 on a farm in rural Wisconsin. She lived in an era when a woman’s role was drastically changing. As one of seven children, she learned skills related to living on a farm. Even though the family was financially challenged, Georgia and her siblings were formally educated. Her parents recognized her desire to draw and paint and allowed her to pursue art education. Georgia saw this as her initial calling. She was quoted as saying that she knew all along that becoming an artist was to be her life’s work.

She honed the skill of sewing as a child, and judging from the intricacy of her clothing detail (on display at the Peabody Essex Museum), this task was not seen as drudgery. The beauty of her clothing was in the detail. She used little or no accessories other than perhaps buttons. She embellished her clothing with fine stitches, discarded the bustle (fashion of the day) corset and sewed for comfort. Rarely were there any colors other than black and white. She fashioned her own self image and throughout her life she communicated her persona through her dress and design.

Georgia’s style of dress and art separated her from the mainstream. Her art was considered audacious, and her manner of dress caused many to question her morals. Her black dresses trimmed with white along with flat shoes and thick stockings caused tongues to wag. She wore a v-neck style of clothing and wrapped herself in black. It wasn’t until she moved to New Mexico that her dress changed to jeans and shirts. Still, whenever she was photographed, she was either wearing a black wraparound coat or black and white attire. She controlled how photographers portrayed her.

Georgia’s formal studies of art technique began at the age of eighteen. Her art education at this time was traditional and focused on either teaching or graphic design. Women were not encouraged to go beyond these skills because the expectation was to become a mother and wife. As she studied, she first worked as an independent commercial designer and later pursued a teaching career. She studied under her mentor, Arthur Wesley Dow (a painter, printer, and teacher). His approach to art was more modernistic, and Georgia was influenced by his style of painting. So she gravitated towards this genre. She steered away from landscape and still life design and began painting in an impressionist style. Unlike many artists of her time, she did not go abroad to study. She considered herself an American trained artist, never to be referred to as a female artist. She followed her instincts to paint as she wanted to. Her art consistently used lines, shapes, and tonal values.

During her time in school Georgia O’Keeffe projected an image that others wished to paint. She did not shy away from this attention and allowed herself to be drawn. She started to draw abstract shapes using charcoal. These drawings found their way into the world of Alfred Stieglitz, a renowned photographer, purveyor of art, and publisher. His art gallery exhibited and vended painting, sculpture, and drawings by artists that were nontraditional such as Cezanne, Matisse, and Picasso. Stieglitz became her promoter. He photographed her over a period of twenty years in black and white. He also established her austere and androgynous persona which is how the public viewed her. Stieglitz was married at the time when he first met Georgia, but eventually he divorced his wife and married Georgia. She never took his name.

Georgia O’Keeffe painted from familiarity. She studied and painted the subjects she felt most comfortable with. Her venues included New York City, Lake George, and New Mexico. New York was transforming itself into a congested, vibrant city dotted with skyscrapers. Lake George was a refuge from the city. When Georgia experienced New Mexico she knew that she had found her Eden. After her husband died she moved there permanently.

Georgia O’Keeffe was an exceptional woman and artist. Her life’s work and her iconic image have been on display at PEM this year.

The Georgia O’Keeffe exhibit, Art, Image and Style, at the Peabody Essex Museum through April 8, 2018. Paintings, photographs, and clothing delineate her life.
CATCHING UP ON LLI
NETWORK ACTIVITIES

By Don Tritschler, Liaison to the Road Scholar Network

Every month the LLI Resource Network publishes a newsletter delivered electronically. It features best practices, life-long learning news, articles, submissions, and curriculum suggestions. The information is gleaned from various LLI programs’ course catalogs, newsletters, and other materials. You can read these newsletters and learn much more about Road Scholar at network@roadscholar.org.

RS elaborates, “The LLI Resource Network discussion board allows LLIs to do just that—Discuss! Currently, this key feature of the website is underutilized. Are you thinking about ways to recruit volunteers and increase your membership or trying to solve a scheduling dilemma? Ask your fellow LLIs….If you do not remember your password, email us—we’re happy to assist you. Just log into our website, place a check mark in the box, and you will remain logged in. That will give you quick access to the members-only content of the website. As a result, you can view and readily post comments on the discussion board.”

Another item in the January RS newsletter is #AgeAdventurously. It depicts a number of elders’ amazing activities in retirement. The newsletter also contains a glowing account of a Private Group Charter, which the LLI at University of Alabama Huntsville took to Washington, DC.

Recently in February, the Network newsletter profiled courses offered by the LLI at the University of Vermont. They dealt with today’s critical topics—fake news, women’s voices and where they are going, conflict and cooperation in the South China Sea.

Now, just a heads up. The American Society on Aging put out its last call to register for its annual conference on Aging in America—San Francisco, March 26-29. If you are a professional involved in education for older adults, this conference is for you. The ASA has produced a 48-page publication on what you can expect in San Francisco. It includes all the programs, networking, and special events from the 2018 Aging in America Conference (http://bit.ly/2F3b4Wm).

GEORGIA O’KEEFFE TO
ANITA POLLITZER (2)

A Poem by Claire Keyes

Steiglitz, as you can imagine, is not happy that I’m returning to New Mexico this spring and I’m sad that I’m causing him any pain, but, you know what, he’s a tough old hombre—not that he’d have the guts to restrict my travel. Not after I caved and gave into his obsession with my body. Just the photographs he’s taken of my hands meant a week that I never entered my studio. Not the smooth, delicate hands of a lady. Maybe the hands of a laborer, for that’s what I am and the place where I labor best is where my soul can be free and that’s in Abiquiu. Without him hovering, I can stay out all day in the dry heat to gather the right shape and spread of cattle bones, or sleep on a tarpaulin under the stars and not worry about being home on time for dinner and drinks with his friends. Stiggy has a roaming eye for the ladies. Let him roam as long as I know he’s there for me. And I’m here for him even though we’re apart. Without my painting I wouldn’t be me, Georgia. Stiggy gets this. Remember how he said he married me for my paintings and my hands? My eloquent hands and their ability to communicate both feeling and experience as they press into one another or the way I can fold my fingers, intersecting them to suggest the way my paint brush interacts with the particular images I’m painting: not detached, not abstract. Enough about me. Remember to meet me in Taos on the 2nd of April and I’ll introduce you to Mabel Dodge and possibly, just possibly, D. H. Lawrence and Frieda.

Yours,
Georgia
By Jane Casler

At my age, my bucket list—things to do before I croak—is more like a pressure cooker. So much to savor, so little time! And so, this January I finally checked off #1 on my list—an African safari.

I didn’t go solo. I’m not that brave. I went with my dear friend, Judy. She’d already done the “safari thing,” as she calls it, five times. And, Judy is 83 years old. That gave me courage. If she could do it, I could too, even if it meant vaccinations. Yellow Fever shot—ouch!

We opted for Judy’s “go-to” tour company, Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT). It bills itself as “the leader in small groups on the road less traveled.” There’d be at most 16 of us on the tour. From Boston to Tanzania, we flew the friendly skies for about 18 hours, not counting a three-hour layover in Amsterdam. A long haul but so worth it. Our OAT tour leader, Good Luck Kombe (yes, that’s his real name) met us at Kilimanjaro Airport. It took us only 15 minutes or so to go through Customs. It helped that we had already gotten our visas before leaving home.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, these photos will give you at least a glimmer of our breathtaking adventure.
I took a swig of fresh cow’s blood at a Maasai village. All of the tribe’s food needs are met by their cattle. They eat the meat, drink the milk daily, and blood on occasion.

This Maasai man appeared to appreciate my imbibing cow’s blood.

Honing my newly acquired grandma skills! My first grandchild was just a few weeks old when I left for Africa.

Recently circumcised Maasai boys celebrate their first step toward manhood by wearing black and painting their faces white.

We loved time spent with children and teachers at a local primary school. Students wear uniforms and walk miles to get to and from school every day.

African elephants live in tight-knit matriarchal family groups. When a calf is born, it is nurtured by the entire matriarchal herd. Males leave the herd when they are 12 to 15 years old.

This Maasai man came out of nowhere in the Serengeti plains when he hailed our land cruiser. He spoke perfect English with a British accent!

This witch doctor (in blue jeans!) described his craft to us. It is entirely “white magic,” including love spells. Black magic is illegal in Tanzania.
In the Ngorongoro Highlands, we experienced “a day in the life” of a Maasai village. We danced and sang, then some of us went to work slapping on mud and dung to secure the walls of a village hut.

Judy entering our tent (complete with flush toilet) at the OAT campsite in Serengeti National Park. Serengeti is the Maasai word for “endless plain.”

Mosquito nets were de rigueur whether we stayed in luxury lodges with all the amenities or in tents. The risk of malaria from tsetse flies was remote but why take chances?
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