The Message, Inspiration and Gift of a Friend

As an undergraduate college student at Dickinson College in 1961, Dean C. Pappas underwent “a transformational experience” when he heard the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speak to the student body.

“Until that point I was sort of drifting my way through college, but Dr. King’s message was very impressive. It made me start to think more seriously about my future. Basically, his message was to act responsibly. It was a moment that changed my life.”

Mr. Pappas, a member of the Stockton College Board of Trustees since 2006, wanted students at the College to have similar access to outstanding visiting scholars. To that end, Mr. Pappas and his wife, Zoe S. Pappas, have donated $1 million to establish the Dean C. and Zoe S. Pappas Visiting Scholar Endowment Fund and $150,000 to establish the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies (ICHS) Endowment Fund. The Pappas Visiting Scholar Fund will be used to bring noted scholars and thought leaders to the College for classes, workshops, and public events. The ICHS Fund will help support faculty research, student educational opportunity, study abroad programs, and other initiatives, under the umbrella of the ICHS.

Zoe Pappas, who works as a guide at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, said education has always been a priority in the family. “We are believers that education gives anyone a chance to be successful,” she said.

“I recently attended a conference for foreign language educators. It looked, for all the world, like an orientation session for new hires at the United Nations. The people and the clothes they were wearing were as colorful as the flags and maps they had decorated their booths with. I carefully scanned and re-scanned the floor map, in search of the Greek booths. I found none.

To see the myriad of publishers and language companies peddling methods, flash cards, books, discs and entire curricula, without so much as a Greek letter, was to be dismayed. One would have thought that the language had disappeared from this world altogether.

Eventually, I located some Greek names on the program of guest speakers, and, within minutes, I was in an adjacent building, in a room surrounded by many of the most active people in Modern Greek pedagogy in this country. The room was packed and alive with discussion. I listened with great interest to stories of vibrant Modern Greek language programs (from elementary to college), and left, markedly relieved, that I was not some dying breed of teacher.

As I left the conference I had not paid to enter (Why pay if there might not be any Greek!), I thought that this language needed neither a sugar-coating nor a candy-wrapping; no booths, marquees or free packs of tissues to announce its presence, because visible or not, it is always there. Be it in a Greek School classroom on a weekday afternoon, a Summer Greek class at Stockton or an online lesson with a Philhellen in Japan, Greek rolls on, on its millennia-long trajectory (one simply needs to look for it).
Message, Inspiration... continued from cover

Dr. Philip T. Ellmore, Chief Development Officer added, "A gift of this magnitude ensures our ability to regularly host a well-known and respected scholar or thought leader for the benefit of Stockton students, faculty, staff and the local community, and the ICHS Endowment will help ensure the strength and expansion of the ICHS program." The Pappas gift provides a tremendous boost to the College’s first-ever comprehensive fundraising campaign known as You Make the Difference: The Campaign for Stockton College. “The campaign has a goal to raise $20 million by the end of June 2014,” said Dr. Ellmore.

Mr. Pappas said the desire to form the ICHS endowment dates back to his earliest involvement at Stockton. A member of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, he enjoys a long association with Dr. Demetrios Constantelos, Stockton Distinguished Professor Emeritus, and a Greek Orthodox clergyman.

“I first became aware of all the great things happening at Stockton through Father Constantelos,” he said. “The more I learned about the College, the more impressed I became, and that has continued to be the case throughout my years serving on the Board of Trustees,” he said.

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Letter from A Grateful Student

My name is Natalie Jones, and I was blessed with the opportunity to travel from June 23rd-30th to Rhodes and Athens to workshop Dean Robert Gregg’s script for Frogs Re-Imagined.

I would like to offer my sincerest and most heartfelt thanks for the ICHS’s support of this trip. I knew that this opportunity was a fantastic one to begin with, but it proved to be even more productive, educational, and wonderful than I could have imagined. I have been wanting to travel abroad for a second time ever since I went to Spain my junior year of high school. The fact that I got both to travel to the stunning country that is Greece and do something theatrically-related meant so much to me.

While I ultimately feel so grateful for the chance to see Rhodes and Athens, I feel even more proud of the work that we accomplished while we were abroad. In just three and a half days we were able to take a script that had so much potential and turn it into something that we all find to be witty, funny, entertaining, relevant in today’s world, and ever-true to its Greek counterpart. The workshop sessions were incredible. There was never a sense of rivalry between faculty and student - it was merely a group of artists coming together to make something great. To have that sort of atmosphere in a workshop is essential and greatly appreciated amongst professionals. What a learning experience, what a rarity!

Outside of the workshop, exploring the part of the world from which the original Frogs sprung was unbelievably enriching. At one point Professor Roessel, whose research funds he generously donated to help make this trip possible, said that part of the reason he wanted to bring the workshop to Greece was so that we would have an understanding of the country and atmosphere from which our story developed. By day we’d workshop, by night we’d climb the Rhodes Acropolis. By day we’d walk the Theater of Dionysus in Athens, by night we’d do a reading of our theatrical work at a local drama studio. It was one of the busiest, most productive and rewarding weeks of my life, and I treasure every moment of it.

So, ultimately, I say to you: thank you. Thank you for this amazing opportunity as a student, theatrical artist, and person. More importantly, I ask that you continue to support and provide opportunities like these to Stockton students because we do not take them lightly. Believe in the students. If you set the standard, they will work to match it. Have high expectations and they will fight to reach it.

Thank you so much again, and I look forward to future collaborations.
Sincerely,
Natalie Jones

Συγχαρητήρια

At a college, new publications usually pertain to professors, but there was a very special exception recently. Linda Feeney, PhD (see: preceding article) and EllenBeth Nappen (a former Examined Life fellow), two of our most enthusiastic Summer Greek students have illustrated (respectively) a children’s book entitled Τι χρώμα είσαι; (What Color are You?) The Friends of Hellenic Studies and the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies congratulate both on the extraordinary achievement. Their energy and enthusiasm are inspiring, to say the least. και σ’ανώτερα.

(For information on the book, and when it will be available, please contact us at hellenicstudies@stockton.edu)
Welcome to my Farewell Party for I have already met Hades and I am about to cross and drink water from the River Lethe or Forgetfulness, as my Hellenic ancestors assumed for a person immediately after his death. But those imaginative ancient Greeks had other rivers for the Underworld as well: The River of Acheron or Sadness and the River Cocytus or Lamentation. As for the rivers Phlegethon or Fire and Styx or Hate, I will not touch them with a 10-foot pole!

Today I bid good bye to my beloved wife, my children and grandchildren and all my relatives and friends, regardless of whether they could be present to my party or not. It is natural to feel sad or even lament as the rivers of Acheron and Cocytus already mentioned imply. However, today I have been recycled as the law of nature orders. Death seems to be part of life too! My only regret is that by the time I began to understand what life is all about, it passed me by; and today it is over! Regardless of how natural death is, no one chooses it. In my case, I would never have chosen the distinction to die from anaplastic cancer cell, the rarest form of cancers!

I thank all of you, and all those with whom I interacted in the past and those who may have passed onto eternity, for making my life worth living. I can say that I came, I saw, I acted my part with you, and now it is time to collect my tools, that is my Logos and my Senses, and be biodegraded to the basic elements from which the Creative process started me. As for my personal spirit, that is not in my hands.

However, the spirit that I want to pass on to all of you, and especially to my children and grandchildren, is that of trying to live a balanced life--doing honest work to secure the essentials for life itself, doing good things for others and work for good collective causes. These constitute the basis for any happiness in life. Our eternal Hellenic Heritage and Culture is common for those who carry the biological Hellenic genes and those who only carry its cultural DNA. The unique Hellenic accomplishments in human history and the marvelous Greek literature provide much direction for optimizing life’s goals and processes. It is the source for guidance and inspiration for all civilized persons and serves as a measure for all activities. Hellenic paideia in all levels of education is the only means by which the depth and breadth of life can be appreciated and its limits further elevated.

For whatever progress I made in my life as a person and a professional, I’m indebted to those relatives and many others in academia and business world who took a chance on me. To those who implanted me with values and helped me cultivate my background; and to those who sacrificed to bring me to USA, the land of opportunity, as a displaced person. In USA, I was enabled to develop my life as I could not have done in any other place. I am indebted to my native Hellas and to my adopted USA, for different reasons; they acted synergistically to give me form and a platform for living. It is my hope that my children and grandchildren will see the same spiritual and intellectual treasures that I saw and that they will be resourced by these two unmatched fountains of culture and opportunity—Hellenic and American.

Do I have any advice? Who needs advice from a dead man anyway? However, I’m itching to give a couple: One, as mentioned above, is: Read, internalize and live the intellectual and spiritual treasures of Hellas and of the Founders of America. My second advice is: Live, not simply within your financial means, but below your means! It provides for a more peaceful and secure life. Spend less than you are earning!

And now we must part, you to live and I to cross the river of no return. Recalling Socrates in his last moments, only God knows which is best.
My Greek Odyssey
By Linda Feeney, Ed.D.

For the past two summers I have taken advantage of the free classes offered by the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies at Richard Stockton College. I have been studying Modern Greek. When asked by friends and family, “Why Greek?” I often give the flip answer, “Because it’s there.” However, the real answer goes far deeper than that.

I have always loved learning, especially languages, but my experience with Greek has been surprising. The challenge has given me a fascinating opportunity to observe the learning process.

One of the most important learning tasks for a young child is language acquisition. Family, friends, and caregivers provide informal instruction, teaching new words and correcting grammar and pronunciation. Our schools formalize the process with specific instruction in phonics, spelling, grammar, reading, and writing. Through all this, children don’t really think about how they learn, they just do it.

As an adult, it is a different story. For me, learning a new alphabet meant learning how to read all over again. I felt dyslexic. I just couldn’t seem to keep the Greek letters straight. Eventually I made a poster of the Greek alphabet and digraphs and taped it to my office wall. Every time I walked into the office I took a minute to review. Within a few weeks, I finally felt comfortable with the alphabet.

To master the physical skill of writing the Greek letters, I wrote out words and phrases in a small notebook and copied them over again and again while watching television or waiting in line to buy gas or coffee. It worked.

I was hooked. It seemed like parts of my brain that had lain fallow were energized. Words and phrases from languages I had studied in the past were suddenly on the tip of my tongue. Searching for creative ways to include Greek in my existing knowledge base spilled over into my personal and professional pursuits, increasing intuitive connections.

I asked myself how I had learned new words in English and realized that I had learned most of them by reading, so I purchased a popular English language novel that had been translated into Greek. Although the work is slow and sometimes frustrating, I am enjoying the process of translating it back into English.

Finally, I wanted to reinforce my new language skills by communicating original ideas. My Greek is still at an elementary level so I wrote a children’s story and translated it into Greek. It was so much fun that I have three more stories under development.

So, “Why Greek?” Because it challenges me. Because it makes me reflect on the learning process. Because it makes me more creative. And, of course, “Because it’s there.”

Linda Feeney is a former public school music, math, and computer science teacher. She is currently Director of Computer Services at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

A Reflection on Rhodes and Frogs
by Robert Gregg, Dean of Arts and Humanities

The trip to Rhodes and Athens to workshop Frogs—Reimagined went very well, I believe. At first glance it may seem like a little bit of a crazy idea. Why take students and professors to Greece to do something that they could do, potentially, just as easily if they were all locked up in the Experimental Theatre for the same amount of time?

Last summer’s experience demonstrates the value of this kind of endeavor. There are several reasons why this achieved more than the same workshop held in the Experimental Theater: First, it really is difficult, when there isn’t distance from other concerns for participants to carve out the kind of time that we were able to devote to working on the play. If people were just taking a few hours off from their jobs, they would not have come together to concentrate in such a focused way on the work in question – so not nearly as much would have been accomplished. Second, students need to broaden their experiences so that they are in a position to contribute more to such ventures – drawing on a wider understanding of the world in order to shape their comments and their ideas. As this play (written by Aristophanes) originated in Ancient Athens, it helped to give students the opportunity to see and learn about Greece firsthand. Third, students who work hard, above and beyond the college requirements, should be rewarded – and a trip that includes great mental exertion and time commitment, but also some benefits – and a trip that includes great mental exertion and time commitment, but also some benefits from visiting another country, is a great way to accomplish this. Finally, by going to Greece we were able to involve others in this project, my brother Al Gregg (from London), who is co-author and primary composer and arranger of the music, Constance Rivemale (from Rhodes), and Demetres Tryphonopoulos (University of New Brunswick, Canada), both of whom have been involved in translations previously.

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What Shall I Call You?

Presented by Father Demetrios J. Constantelos at the Celebration Honoring the Presbyteres, past and present, of the Holy Trinity Church
Wilmington, DE, October 20th, 2012

What shall I call you, and how should I address you?
Papadia or kyra papadia as they knew you in years past?
Many Greek Orthodox Christians call you papadia even today
It is an honorable name, as Mother of the Church think of you
And the Community’s First Lady they consider you

But I think that presbytera is the name you prefer
Perhaps presbytida, as St Paul and early Christians used to say
Presbytida or presbytera is a priest’s wife, an “elderly” and pious lady
A divinely elected person of virtue for young women to follow
A model of piety and motherhood, as Church fathers write

For the ancient Greeks Presbytida was called the priestess in god’s temple
Presbytida and presbytera are synonyms used by the Bible and the early Church
Whatever they called you in the past, presbytera is the name we use today
An honorable name that has become an established and respected tradition
Presbytera, elderly lady, is the wife of a clergyman in the rank of presbyteros

But how is it that a young woman married to a priest should be called old?
Even in her 30s, 40s and 70s I do not dare to call her old woman
Not even in her 80s a presbytera dislikes to be called old lady
But papadia or kyra papadia, presbytida or presbytera all mean the same
Rich is the language of our forefathers, fathers and mothers, in synonyms

What is a presbytera that deserves to be honored as we are doing tonight?
Admirable and creative, a silent and unknown, modest and unassuming
Housewife and mother, telephone operator and always alert and busy
A presbytera is all things to her household family and the Community
Her husband’s helpmate, her children guide, present at home and the Church
Always at good and sad times, an example for other mothers to imitate

A presbytera is a star in her own right, with a light of her own to shine
Presbytera said so we hear, it is the presbytera’s opinion, the faithful women say
Patient and tolerant, a listener and understanding of human thought and behavior
Never giving up when adverse circumstances besiege her husband’s ministry, or her family’s life and the Church’s problems. Faith and commitment sustains her Compassion and understanding support her husband difficult diakonia

The presbyteras I have known for the last sixty years are in that way
In different times and in various places, small or large Communities
All are commendable, women of love, patience and strong in faith
What can I add here for those presbyteras who volunteer and serve Sunday and Community Schools, teaching our faith and ancestral language
The language of the Bible, the Greek classics and our immigrant parents
Others that train and direct choirs, volunteer in hospitals and philanthropies
Who with patience and compassion care at home for handicapped loved ones
A presbytera’s patience has no equals-dare I ask how much patience presbyteras that we honor tonight have?-no offence is intend to husbands present!

Fortunate is the presbyter to have such a loving and understanding wife
Certainly he appreciates and thanks his presbytera for her love and help
In gratitude he thanks God for the blessing he has received to have such a wife
Both with love and cooperation for the good upbringing of their children, the “children that God has given them” as the Scriptures say

Presbytera and presbyteros become co-creators with God the Creator
One is the minister of God in Christ, the other mother of God’s people
Fugal in their way of life, content with what they have, strong in faith,
In difficult times they never give up hope - love is able to endure all things
They are two bodies but one soul and one mind in the service of God’s people

Now, your advice please:
What shall we call a presbytera’s wife?
Papadia, meaning mother as called in times past?
Or presbytera, meaning elderly-old, but without wrinkles and painful joints
It seems to me that more appropriately we should consider a presbytera
A heroine, the epitome of many virtues and various tasks
Strong and sincere faith, hope that sustains, and sacrificial love that rewards
That is how I, too, knew my own presbytera.

Translated from the original Greek by Ioanna-Joan Ganiaris
Upcoming Events

Ajax Goes To Greece

In the second week of April 2013, the ICHS and Stockton’s Theater department, with the support of the Friends of Hellenic Studies, took their stage production of Sophocles’ Ajax to the Universities of Thessalonike and Ioannina for a series of performances.

Stockton Theatre’s production of Sophocles’ Ajax is a wrenching exploration of the effects of prolonged war and poor leadership on the minds and souls of warriors and their families in this original translation. Second only to Achilles in valor and courage, the legendary hero Ajax is victorious on the battlefield, yet his identity, his dignity and ultimately his sanity are fatally challenged when his compatriots cheat him of his honor as the war nears an end. This moral tale of loss, rewards, and fairness speaks directly to our own times, and ultimately that leads the audience to question what defines honor.

Exploring Cretan Culture with Maria Hnaraki

On November 9th, 2013, the Friends of Hellenic Studies will host the first installment in a new series entitled Exploring Hellenism. The goal of the annual event is to focus on the music, food, history and culture of the different parts of the Hellenic world, from Pontus to the Peloponnes and beyond. The inaugural event will focus solely on Crete There will be authentic Cretan food, wine, music and dance.

Taking attendees through the land of Kazantzakis and El Greco is Maria Hnaraki, Director of Greek Studies and Associate Teaching Professor at Drexel University, Philadelphia.

A professor of anthropology, folklore and ethnomusicology and a well-established scholar in the field, Maria Hnaraki has extensively researched cultural identity expressions, traditions and customs, such as music and dance events in the Mediterranean, as well as investigated topics in nissology, experiential learning and hybrid educational environments. She favors investigating who people are and how they behave through the arts they create and the customs they observe, coming to the conclusion that “we are all amalgams of many influences and that the same things happen all over the world in different ways.”

She is an accomplished author, essayist, musician, as well as the founder of a study abroad program in Crete-Greece, which she has been expanding and enriching since then. At Drexel University, she has created more than

Constantine: Religious Faith and Imperial Policy

A Symposium of the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies
October 4-5 2013

Celebrating the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan, the ICHS, in conjunction with Fordham University’s Orthodox Christian Studies Center, will be sponsoring a symposium on the Emperor Constantine and his relationship to the Christian Church. An international collection of scholars will gather at Stockton for two days of lectures and discussion concerning the impact of the Edict of Milan on the development of both Christianity and the Empire itself. The opening lecture on Friday evening (October 4th) will be in honor of Rev. Dr. Demetrios J. Constantelos, founder of the ICHS and a leading scholar in the field of early Christianity.

Continued on next page
30 university courses, several of which are unique in the USA, with the educational purpose of implementing an integral, holistic, interdisciplinary, academic approach to the Greek and Mediterranean reality.

Her wide-ranging circle of activities includes, among others, presentations in international conferences on several topics such as contemporary Greek society and its diasporas, cultural identities in the Mediterranean, learning pedagogy, cultural aspects of the Greek language, literature and the other arts, music and dance, publications of book reviews and articles in journals and periodicals, translations, instruction of folk songs and dances, co-organization and performance in music and dance ensembles as well as coordination of various events such as lectures, concerts, theatrical performances, movie showings, and Mediterranean Diet symposia. Due to her almost inherited abilities in researching and using archives, she keeps enriching a patrilineal collection of audio-visual as well as written sources. Last, but not least, she constantly pursues collaborations with multiple organizations and significantly outreaches to innovative Greek businesses.

Her 2007 book, Cretan Music: Unraveling Ariadne’s Thread, has received the “Young Academic Writer and Researcher” prize from the Pancretan Association. Her second book, “Sing In Me, Muse, and Through Me Tell the Story…”: Greek Culture Performed, is currently being printed. Both books will be available at the event.

The goal of the annual event is to focus on the music, food, history and culture of the different parts of the Hellenic world, from Pontus to the Peloponnese and beyond. The inaugural event will focus solely on Crete. There will be authentic Cretan food, wine, music and dance.

It is part of the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies’ (ICHS) formula for success to give as many students as possible these “Hellenic Moments,” but this was also the brainchild of David Roessel, who understands both the collaborative process of writing plays, and the value of giving students the opportunity to travel abroad. David had worked collaboratively on a number of other plays, and had attended one such ‘translation’ workshop on Rhodes before. He had also recently translated and adapted Ajax for the stage, so he knew the value of this endeavor, and had this in mind when he suggested building such a workshop around Frogs, and, very generously, offering his research money to help fund it. He also was confident that Mark Mallett would lead a professional style workshop that would be able to produce results (which he most certainly did). The only questions, I suppose, were whether the text would be up to snuff, and whether the students would be able to rise to the challenge of working in the manner required of such a workshop. Such things, after all (I was informed by Demetres, who regularly teaches graduate students), were more frequently expected of graduates than of undergraduates.

I am happy to say that on both scores we passed the test (and I believe even David was quite surprised by what was accomplished during the week). The students immediately produced a great number of questions and criticisms of the play as it stood, pointing out its many weaknesses, and we all set about very diligently trying to make it a better piece of work. Yet, while I was quite surprised by the degree to which the play was transformed, and the number of improvements that were made, in the end, these tended to confirm that the idea itself was a good one, and that as an adaptation of Frogs this play would work. I think that both Mark and David believed that the result was something that could make its way to the Stockton stage, and that it would fare quite well there.

But the key ingredient was the work of the students. They came up with a great many important suggestions, and worked both during the sessions and between them on examining different parts of the text and the music (including the degree to which it was sufficiently representative of all the genres of modern music). I think we were all surprised by how hard they were willing to work. I know that I was a little concerned myself that they were not getting enough time off, because even when they were not in the workshop they were being shown important sites in Rhodes and Athens, and being provided with a significant amount of information about Greece from David.

The confidence with regard to the fortunes of the play may have resulted from the reading of Frogs we performed at the National Theatre of Greece Drama School in Athens. This was a difficult audience to present in front of, for a couple of reasons: one because we were messing with one of the most (if not the most) significant of Greek comedies, and so it needed to be clear that in spite of all the changes – and there have been a great many – we were still paying homage (and were in some way faithful) to the original. It is difficult performing a reading while constantly worrying about whether the audience might be insulted in some way (but they seemed to respond very well in the end). The other reason was that the play was not in Greek, and while all the members of the audience understood and spoke English, some of the humor was clearly embedded in Anglo-American comic traditions. That said, several members of the audience found a good deal to laugh at, which augurs well for future productions.