

BOOKS



The following are books by U of T faculty and staff. Where there is multiple authorship or editorship, staff are indicated with an asterisk.

The Day George Bush Stopped Drinking: Why Abstinence Matters to the Religious Right, by Jessica Warner (McClelland & Stewart; 288 pages; \$29.99). Over the last 200 years, Americans have sworn off alcohol, masturbation, spicy foods, fatty foods, pickles, coffee, tea, drugs, sex, meat and more. Even now, America is a country of abstainers: 80 per cent don't smoke, 40 per cent don't drink, three per cent don't eat meat and one-third of all public school students are taught abstinence-only sex education. This book examines why Americans abstain — and why they want you to abstain.

The External World and Our Knowledge of It: Hume's Critical Realism, an Exposition and a Defence, by Fred Wilson (U of T Press; 640 pages; \$100). David Hume is often considered to have been a skeptic, particularly in his conception of the individual's knowledge of the external world. This study argues that Hume was, in fact, a critical realist in the early 20th-century sense, a period in which the term was used to describe the epistemological and ontological theories of such philosophers as Roy Wood Sellars and Bertrand Russell.

The Strange Case of William Mumler, Spirit Photographer, by Louis Kaplan (University of Minnesota Press; 288 pages; \$75 US cloth, \$24.95 US paper). In the 1860s, William Mumler photographed ghosts — or so he claimed. Faint images of the dearly departed lurked in the background with the living. The practice came to be known as spirit photography. This book brings together Mumler's haunting images, his revealing memoir and rich primary sources, including newspaper articles and P.T. Barnum's famous indictment of Mumler in *Humbugs of the World*. Two essays offer a historical perspective of the Mumler phenomena and delve into the sociocultural and theoretical issues surrounding this story.

Whose University Is It, Anyway? Power and Privilege on Gendered Terrain, edited by Anne Wagner, Sandra Acker* and Kimine Mayuzumi* (Sumach Press; 265 pages; \$28.95). Over the past decades, Canadian universities have become increasingly diversified. Yet the means of achieving full equality for various groups working and learning within higher education are far from clear. The 14 essays in this collection convey the tensions, contradictions and possibilities involved in working and learning with the university and how equity and gender shape experiences. While gender is a central organizing theme, contributors integrate various other aspects of identity into their discussions.

Reinventing Gravity: A Physicist Goes Beyond Einstein, by John W. Moffat (Thomas Allen Publishers; 272 pages; \$32.95). Physicists have long known something is wrong with gravity. Both Newton and Einstein's theories are incompatible with what we know today: that dark matter exists. The modified gravity theory explained in this book, which can model the movements of the universe without recourse to dark matter, helps modify Einstein's extraordinary work. The author's theory, and his work on the varying speed of light, raises a stark challenge to the usual and accepted models of the first half-million years of the universe, promising to overturn everything we thought we knew about the origins and evolution of the universe.

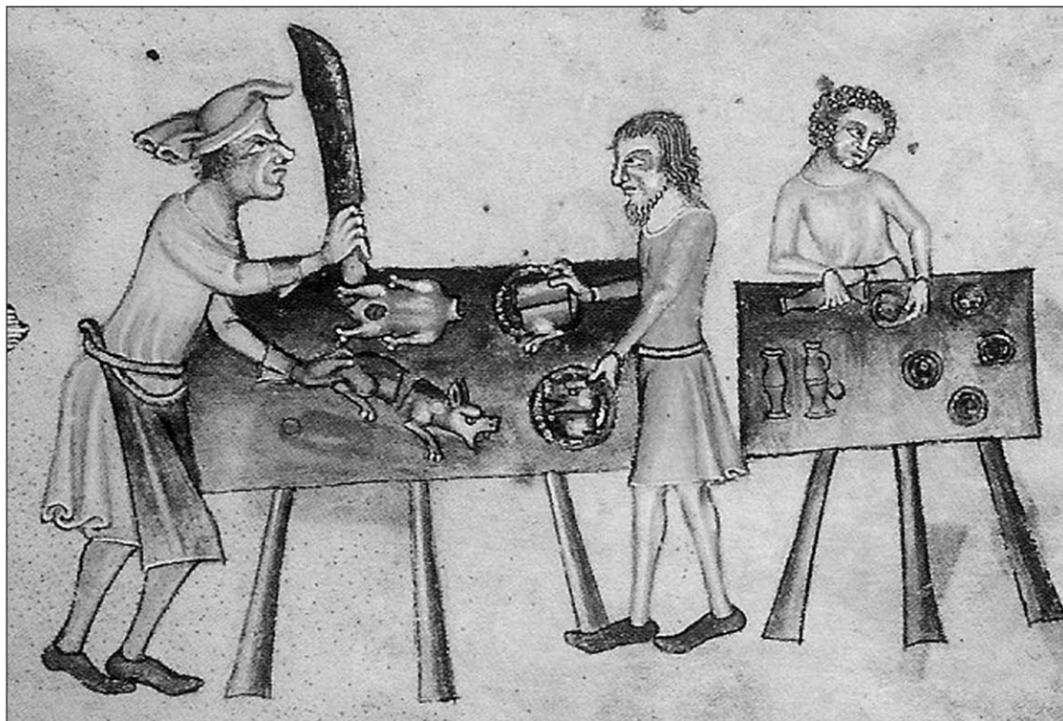
Moorings: Portuguese Expansion and the Writing of Africa, by Josiah Blackmore (University of Minnesota Press; 224 pages; \$75 U.S. cloth, \$25 U.S. paper). This first book to study Portuguese texts about Africa brings an important but little-known body of European writings to bear on contemporary colonial thought. Images of Africa as monstrous, dangerous and in need of taming were created in early Portuguese imperial writings and dominated its representation in European literature for centuries. This book establishes these key works in their proper place: foundational to western imperial discourse. It helps explain how concepts and myths — such as the “otherness” of Africa and African — originated, functioned and were perpetuated.

COMPILED BY AILSA FERGUSON

He Said **She Said**

Of ancient foods and small kitchens

BY CAZ ZYVATKAUSKAS



In response to well-intentioned inquiries about what I might serve when hosting my very first family Christmas dinner, I was somewhat flummoxed. My abode is well placed but not spectacularly large and the European galley-style kitchen is not equipped with more cutlery than could serve my modest immediate family of three. Yet at this time of the year my family's expectations for tradition are very strong. They like cooked birds with French-style stuffing or roast beasts accompanied with Yorkshire pudding. Side dishes are expected to have some important connotation and context — I come from a family of chefs and writers of historical cookbooks.

Then one morning while sitting in Professor Ruth Harvey's medieval English literature class it struck me, as it did many a character in ancient texts, to ask the question, What would Jesus do? Indeed, for Christmas dinner I only needed to determine what would Jesus eat? Surely the prophet didn't worry about cutlery and table settings. I was certain that even with my limited historical knowledge of ancient Middle Eastern cooking I could concoct a simple good old-fashioned biblical meal.

Loaves and fishes were the obvious menu items that came to mind but without enough forks it seemed that the filleting might be troublesome. Of course Jesus was a well-rounded sort who would not have limited his palate to modest fare. He dined with tax collectors and hobnobbed with Roman centurions. The menu selections began to broaden, and so did the historical context.

It struck me that diners in the Middle Ages were also adept at serving up meals without fancy place settings. It was not much of a leap, even counting for the several centuries, to concoct a menu evocative of biblical times and western holiday traditions. I called my sister Sonia, who was to help me in preparing the meal, and she was similarly enthused, although she did point out that the recipe I suggested from *Seven Hundred Years of English Cooking* for a saffron colored potato soup served in stale bread bowls was not authentic to the 13th century — the potato is a new world addition to the English menu.

The two of us envisioned medieval knights making their way through the Holy Land, mixing their western tastes with the bounty of the East. Soon we had devised a menu that consisted of: “Grete,” but modestly sized, “Pyes” for both the carnivores and vegetarians, distinguished with red and green crosses to indicate the contents; stuffed vine leaves; roast brussel sprouts and chestnuts; and plates filled with dates, olives and figs scattered about the table. But what about dessert?

Apparently intricate sculptures made from sugar and paste, sometimes gilded, were the crowning glory of the medieval banquet. If I start soon I am sure I can construct a simple Cistercian church in the Romanesque style before Christmas. My sister will work on making Turkish delights.

After we wandered quickly from the first century to the 13th, I finally had a moment for reflection and I began to question the original intent of this family dinner. Perhaps, Christmas, perhaps... means just a little bit more than impressing your relatives with fancy foods, either for their historical significance or their complex design.

Sonia and I will most certainly attempt to make the pies, less the cathedral. My sister Betty, the elder and the sage, has agreed to make the traditional pudding and my brother, the real chef, has agreed, as is also the tradition, to light the pudding on fire. Alas, sister Stephenie, taking care of forests in Banff, will miss the affair.

Yet I am tempted, in spite of all the good intentions, to seek inspiration from another favourite historical time period of mine — the early 1700s, known as the Golden Age of Piracy. After all, if captured on a ship, surely first century prophets, medieval knights or even 18th-century merchants would have consumed that staple of all galley-sized kitchen meals — Salmagundi — which in essence is nothing more than whatever is in the larder thrown into a big pot. Some meals never go out of style.

Caz Zyvatkaukas is a U of T history student who doubles as designer of the Bulletin. She shares this space with Paul Fraumeni.