

Eckmann Journal
February 2007

I always like February. This is the month of my anniversary. Jim and I have been married 21 years this year. Both of us have been married before so perhaps that is why this 21 year mark of success feels so important to me. We celebrated by uncharacteristically going to dinner at a “fancy” restaurant. Typically we don’t like spending money on expensive restaurants – it just feels like a double waste/waist – we spend money and get fat.

Jim bought me two small pieces of jewelry that I wanted and I gave him something he wanted but I can’t write it here (he is an introvert and doesn’t like to have his stories told; but it’s decent).

Currently, I have a real pull (actually it feels like a “calling”) to learn sign language and have purchased place mats with the alphabet on them so while I eat my oatmeal in the morning I’m finger spelling words (like oatmeal).

What I’m reading

This month I am reading *Galileo’s Daughter* by Dava Sobel (she also wrote *Longitude* – which is a book I enjoyed on how navigation was improved through the discovery of the clock). *Galileo’s Daughter* has been out for a few years and frankly has been sitting on my nightstand for most of that time. Most of the book surrounds the tension between the Catholic Church and Galileo. The church held a belief that the earth was the center of the universe. Galileo found, after inventing the telescope, evidence in the universe that the earth was circling the sun.

“The cosmology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries founded on the fourth-century B.C. teaching of Aristotle and made Earth the immobile hub. Around it, the Sun, the Moon, the five planets, and the stars spun eternally, carried in perfectly circular paths by the motions of nested crystalline celestial spheres. This heavenly machinery, like the gearwork of a great clock, turned day to night and back to day again” (pg. 49).

Galileo’s daughter was placed in the Convent of the Poor Clare’s by her father when she was just eight years old. However, she corresponded with her father for decades from the convent. Many of her letters to him have survived. Galileo’s daughter is a very devout and caring daughter. The following is a blessing written in the thirteenth century by St. Clare the founder of the Poor Clare’s. I think it is a beautiful blessing that I would like to pass on to you, my children and grandchildren.

“I bless you during my life and after my death as much as I am able and even more than I am able, with all the blessings by which the Father of mercies has blessed and will bless his spiritual sons and daughters in Heaven and on Earth. Amen.”

My next book to read is *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho.

What I'm working on

This month I continue with my research for the paper I'm working on (*The Brain Drain and the Digital Divide*). The research consists of regular library-type research and seven hour long interviews. As of the end of February I will have completed six of the seven interviews. Companies that are participating so far are, SAIC, Qualcomm, Sony, Clorox, Goodrich and Northrop Grumman. The library research and the interviews are proceeding nicely.

I'm working with Simon to teach a Sustainable & Socially Responsible Extended Enterprise. This is an undergraduate class and I always have to be careful to not expect as much as I do from you graduate students. (Of the approximately 2,500 students I've taught 90% have been graduates).

I have several speaking engagements coming up. I am the guest speaker for a large event in the School of Engineering on February 22 for the Society of Women Engineers. I continue to work at Camp Pendleton helping those who are retiring to find a job (I work with about 150 individuals every six weeks for the past 24 years).

I will start teaching the SCMI leadership course on March 19 and I can hardly wait.

What this all means to me

I continue the process of continuous personal improvement. I want to learn new things and become more engaged in the world around me. On the down side, I sometimes feel like I am a mile wide and an inch deep. But I continue to want to learn new things so perhaps this is causing me to become a mile and half wide and a half inch deep.

I am fascinated how Galileo had difficulty in getting his point across to the establishment. I wonder how many people around me have new, true and fresh ways of thinking about things – and how many times I am stuck in my old thinking.

I look forward to reading each of your journals!

Blessings to each of you,

Helen