

LOGOS

Newsletter about the Swedenborg Foundation's Publications and Programs on the Spiritual Basis of Life

John R. Seekamp Remembered and Honored at 2006 Annual Meeting

To honor the dedication and grace of our exceptional colleague, John R. Seekamp, the board named the Foundation's library in his honor. To commemorate John's legacy, a portrait and commemorative plaque were commissioned to hang in the library. On May 12, they were unveiled and hung. The portrait so vividly brings to life John's presence that it actually feels he is smiling upon board proceedings.

THE WEATHER ANGELS WERE SMILING on West Chester the fine spring evening of May 12 for our annual meeting, an event for members to visit Swedenborg Foundation headquarters, meet and chat with members of the board and staff, and enjoy a convivial and delicious supper together. In addition to the important business of electing a new class, the members heard the highlights of the past year from the chairs of the various standing committees: Alice Skinner for Publications, Carol Lawson for Education and Outreach (these two now experimentally combined into the Program Committee), John Perry for the Finance Committee, and Jonathan Rose for the NCE Committee. The staff members were also introduced.

This year held a special commemoration for a beloved board member, who was the organizational equivalent of an amphibian in the animal kingdom, i.e., staff member as executive associate and board treasurer—John R. Seekamp.

John's widow Diane and a significant number of his children and grandchildren attended the commemoration to witness the Foundation



John R. Seekamp (1919–2005)

honor their husband, father, and grandfather.

Two new board members, Dr. Sylvia Shaw and Mr. Peter Toot, were voted in.

To cap a wonderful meeting, Dr. Kristen Schaffer delivered a fascinating lecture on the subject of the great Swedenborgian architect and city planner from Chicago, Daniel Burnham (*See pp. 2–3*). ♦



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Daniel H. Burnham

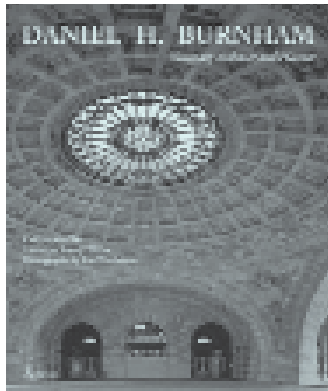
Visionary Architect and Planner

A Great Swedenborgian and a Great American

“The White City became a metaphor for the city laid up in heaven. . . . The ordered beauty so entranced some idealistic writers that they viewed the White City as the ‘Celestial City,’ the ‘model of an earthly heaven,’ and the ‘New Jerusalem.’”

—Irving F. Fisher, Ph.D. in “An Iconography of City Planning, the Chicago City Plan”

Dr. Kristen Schaffer, a leading Daniel Burnham scholar, gave the evening lecture after the annual meeting. Professor of Architectural History at North Carolina State University, her areas of expertise are nineteenth- and twentieth-century American architectural history.



In her book, *Daniel H. Burnham: Visionary Architect and Planner*, Schaffer discovers the foundations of twentieth-century American architecture in the life and work of Burnham, a Swedenborgian from Chicago, who dominated his era like few others: as an architect, city planner, businessman, philanthropist, and civic leader. Despite his importance to twentieth-century architecture, there are no monographs in print that cover the full

range of this extraordinary figure's work, making Dr. Schaffer's study truly ground-breaking.

Burnham helped create the Chicago school of architecture and built over two hundred buildings in the city.

With the famous Reliance Building, he heralded the glass skyscrapers of the twentieth century. His firm was one of the largest architectural firms in the world. D. H. Burnham and Company created such monumental buildings in Chicago as the famous Monadnock, Rand-McNally, and Rookery buildings, the Marshall Field store, and the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as the Flatiron building in New York and Union Station in Washington, D.C., all of which are fully illustrated in Dr. Schaffer's book and newly analyzed. Aside from his work as an architect, Burnham was one of the founders of the City Beautiful Movement.

However, much of the material that Dr. Schaffer shared in her talk came from her current work-in-progress on Daniel Burnham that will focus more closely on the role his understanding of and devotion to Swedenborg's theology played in his urban plan for greater Chicago, in his plan and design of the architecture for the White City of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, and in the

urban plan for San Francisco after the fire, as well as the Washington Mall. The dominant archetype that Burnham utilized from Swedenborg was that of the New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City. She makes the point that though beauty was supremely important for Burnham, it was not so in the same way as it was in the art-for-art's sake school of aesthetics. Rather it was beauty with a purpose—a use, in Swedenborg's terminology—namely, to morally uplift the souls of people who beheld it. She recounted that on the day of the World's Fair when people of Chicago from all classes of society were given free admission, Burnham witnessed the truth of his hypothesis. The masses filed in and were seen to fall en masse into stunned silence as their hearts drank in through their eyes the heavenly beauty that had been prepared for them.

The generous philanthropy of Daniel Burnham was boundless and almost difficult to grasp from the standpoint of the material age in which we live. He performed almost all of the above-mentioned projects as a service freely given, without pay. He was a titan in his professional field but a towering angel in the dimensions of his soul.

There were eight descendants of Daniel Burnham among the auditors of Dr. Schaffer's fine lecture that evening, and one can only imagine how simultaneously proud and humbled they were to descend from such an ancestor. For Swedenborgians generally, how fascinating it is to learn that some of America's greatest cities, parks, monuments, and buildings have imprinted Swedenborg's vision of the New Jerusalem in filigree within the landscape of our great country. ♦

*The White City at the
Chicago World's Fair of 1893*



“Under cover of a plan whose rhetoric purported to renovate and organize Chicago's transportation systems, create a harmonious, ordered, convenient city, and to beautify Chicago, Burnham devised a plan for Chicago whose contours he deliberately based upon the heavenly city described in *Heaven and its Wonders and Hell*. . .

Fundamentally, Burnham's Plan of Chicago is a massive blueprint for the ideal city derived from the eschatological writings of Swedenborg.

No critic has discerned this paradox.”

From Irving D. Fisher's “An Iconography of City Planning: The Chicago City Plan.”

—*Emanuel Swedenborg:
A Continuing Vision*

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Shining Soul – an Auspicious Roll-Out

Though *Shining Soul* was finished, premiered, and made available in preview copies starting in mid-November of 2005, the final version, complete with an open-caption option, new cover, and fine endorsements from academy-award winner Marlee Matlin and Evelyn Glennie, a deaf Officer of the British Empire who is renowned as a percussionist and motivational speaker, was only completed as of mid-May 2006 (see page 5 for complete endorsements).

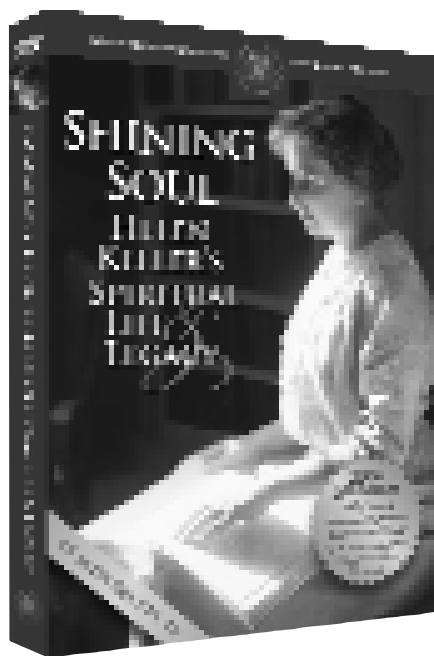
In the meantime, our documentary competed in three judged film festivals in which it came out shining with three splendid awards:

**The Telly Award;
Houston WorldFest Remi Award (gold);
U.S. International Film & Video
Festival.**

On May 21, *Shining Soul* was put up on satellite by the National Educational Television Association (NETA) for take-down by PBS television stations, which have the right to show it for two years without restriction. For a month prior to that date, our special PBS publicist, Blanco and Peace, campaigned by mail and telephone to station managers within the PBS network, even sending them VHS copies of the film to encourage them to view it and to take it down for broadcast. Just on the first results alone, Blanco and Peace's publicity campaign was a spectacular success.

The first report of PUB TV, an organization we have engaged to track airings, shows that, at the date of

writing this article, from the May 21 takedown to July 9, 2006, *Shining Soul* will be broadcast twenty times on PBS stations and seen sometimes on more than one occasion in the following markets: Washington, D.C. (2); Orlando, Daytona, Melbourne, FL (3); Pittsburgh, PA (1); Baltimore,



MD (3); Cincinnati, OH (1); Salt Lake City, UT (2); Albuquerque, Santa Fe, NM (1); Champaign, Springfield, Decatur, IL (2); Chattanooga, TN (3); Corpus Christi, TX (1); Salisbury, MD (1);

Because we can now obtain this prospective information, we will be creating a special page at <http://www.swedenborg.com/tv.asp> to display the PBS schedule where everyone can access it to check when it will be broadcast in a given market.

Helen Keller and disability festivals are other areas of activity, and in June

we will have representation at the following three events:

(1) *The Helen Keller Festival*, in Tuscumbia, AL, her place of birth, “celebrates the achievements of the remarkable woman who has come to be known as America’s First Lady of Courage, (www.helenkellerfestival.com). This festival is voted among the top 100 in America. Thousands of visitors gather in Tuscumbia each June for the Helen Keller Festival, a week-long event first held in 1979 to commemorate the lifetime accomplishments of the town’s most renowned native. The celebration includes a parade through downtown, stage entertainment, arts and crafts, an art auction, tour of historic sites, puppet shows, and a variety of sports tournaments and athletics events.”

Although we found out about this too late to have a screening included this year, we hope to be able to do so next year. Keller Johnson-Thompson, who is on the board of this festival, suggested she might be able to arrange a screening this fall when a sculpture of Helen is erected at the state capital. We contacted a local bookstore—Cold Water Books—which ordered a considerable quantity of DVDs and of *Light in My Darkness*, which will be available when Keller Johnson-Thompson speaks there during the festival.

(2) *Fox Theatre, Atlanta*, is hosting a screening of *The Miracle Worker* in conjunction with a disability conference being held there. We were contacted by the conference organizer, Carey Sipp, who discovered *Shining Soul* while researching on-line. She fell

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in love with the film and affirmed several times that she “planned to watch it every week for the rest of my life.” Once again, alas, it was too late to schedule a complete screening, but she will screen the first ten minutes or so before *The Miracle Worker*, and the last ten minutes or so after the feature film ends, preceding a panel discussion in which Dr. Ray Silverman will represent *Shining Soul* and *Light in My Darkness*, both of which will be on sale at this event.

3) *Disabilities Study Conference in Bethesda, MD.* —Too late to schedule a screening, we will be able to exhibit the book and DVD for sale. ♦

REVIEWS

Shining Soul has been fortunate in receiving an unusual number of good reviews for a DVD from a small independent. It received a boxed review earning three stars with a “recommended” from the prestigious *Video Librarian*. *Spirituality and Practice* concludes a long, positive review with “Price does a top-notch job conveying Keller’s spirituality that made her such an unforgettable person.” The very accurate and down-to-earth industry magazine *Home Media Retailing* states, “It does a decent job of covering the basics of Helen Keller’s early struggles and later triumphs without turning into a 60-minute commercial for The Swedenborg Foundation.” *Booklist*: “This stylish documentary focuses on the spiritual aspects of Helen Keller’s life.” *Wisconsin Bookwatch*: “A heart-warming and inspirational presentation.”

ENDORSEMENTS

“Regardless of one’s religious affiliation, the story of Helen Keller’s life is inspirational and moving. Her desire

to define herself not by her disability but by what lived in her heart speaks to all Gods, to all beliefs. As I have often said myself and which Helen so beautifully embodies, handicaps do not reside in the eye or ear, they reside in the mind. Yet Helen’s mind was unfettered from handicap. Instead it was Helen’s beautiful mind which speaks to us all still and which serves to illuminate forever.”

—MARLEE MATLIN, *Academy Award winner, recently in What the Bleep Do We Know!?*

“*Shining Soul: Helen Keller’s Spiritual Life and Legacy* gives a beautiful and profound account of a woman who truly changed the world for the better. This documentary allows us to view the human body as a forever-adaptable machine as one witnesses the lightning speed of the deaf/blind hand communication, and the human soul as an eternal living force that is consumed by child-like curiosity. That priceless ingredient of ‘curiosity’ brings down all barriers, it enhances respect in all that one encounters, and this is portrayed so eloquently throughout this documentary. This portrait of Helen Keller should be shown in every school, every workplace, and in every home across the world, no matter what our respective circumstances, intellect, or beliefs. Helen’s life is a gift to each and every one of us”.

—DR. EVELYN GLENNIE, *OBE musician, speaker*



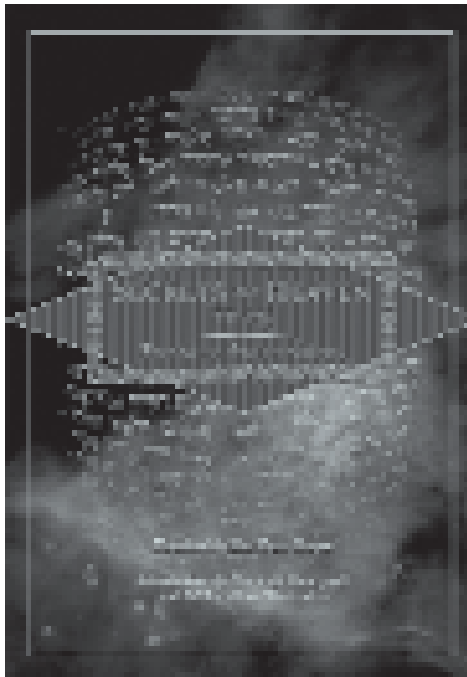
The Universality of the Hebrew Scriptures

Reflections on Secrets of Heaven

When Swedenborg wrote *Secrets of Heaven*, his largest theological work, which expounds the books of Genesis and Exodus, Scripture was a dominant force in the Western world. It was the chief sword used in many a doctrinal battle. Martin Luther, for example, rested his critique of the Catholic Church of his time on the Bible. The principle of *sola fides*, “faith alone,” was a corollary of the principle of *sola Scriptura*, “Scripture alone.” Luther saw the immense authority of the Catholic Church as outweighed—one might even say dwarfed—by the supreme authority of the Bible, which was not only the Word of God but the one and only Word, *the* Word. Small wonder, then, that when the spiritual world was opened to Swedenborg, he plunged into the study of Scripture, intent on disclosing as much as he could of the inner meaning that angels found in it.

As someone who had grown up and spent all his life in a Protestant world, what Swedenborg uncovered was probably very different from what he expected to find. This inner meaning turned out to lie deeper than the institutional and doctrinal divisions between Protestants and Protestants, deeper than the larger divisions between Protestants and Catholics, deeper than the divisions between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, deeper than the divisions between these “people of the book” and other religions. It proved that there was a common foundation for all the many

mansions of human belief on earth. What the inner meaning disclosed was that it is inherent in the nature of an infinitely wise and loving God that every religion be provided with the laws essential to life in heaven. In fact, in heaven itself Swedenborg found



many “gentiles”—those people for whom in their earthly lives the Word itself had been either beyond their knowledge or outside their belief. (In fact, Swedenborg implies that because of the sorry state of the Christian church, there may well have been more non-Christians than Christians going to heaven at that time.)

To comprehend “the spiritual sense of Scripture,” then, Swedenborg had to plumb a depth of meaning that showed cultural and religious differences were irrelevant to a life in heaven. His major work unfolding the

meaning of Scripture, *Secrets of Heaven*, therefore showed the universality of the Hebrew Scriptures. *Secrets of Heaven* calls us to go beyond literal form to spiritual substance, beyond the many forms that goodness may take to the essence that makes all these forms good. The necessity for us to understand one another and the Divine, the tension between spirit and matter, the constant process toward spiritual perfection—all these and other similar truths of our existence are essentially the same, regardless of language, culture, gender, and the like.

This lesson of universal truth is implicit in the most basic facts of faith. For example, we read in *Divine Providence* §255:3 that Islam was founded because of the need for a religion “appropriate to the character of the people of the Near East” who had not yet received a monotheistic revelation. Jesus, of course, was both a Hebrew and a Near Easterner. This leads to the somewhat startling question: In what way, then, is Islam appropriate to the character of Jesus? The simple answer is: It is appropriate in those deep, underlying truths that Islam shares with both Judaism and true Christianity.

In a symbolic manner of speaking, the effect of this approach to Scripture is to take it back toward its origin. Swedenborg’s homeland lay at the northwesternmost circumference drawn by the radius of Christianity in the western European world, about as remote as possible from the cultural heritages that inform the literal Bible story. In that sense we could perhaps say that

Sweden represented the remoteness of Christian belief at that time with respect to the deeper meaning of the Word. By contrast, the Holy Land, the stage on which the biblical drama occurred, is the only place on the face of the globe where three continents meet. In various acts of the Bible drama, Africa comes on stage in the form of Egypt, Asia in the form of Assyria and Babylonia, and Europe in the form of Greece and Rome. We could say that the Holy Land represented the deepest reading of the Word, the one that demonstrates the love and wisdom inherent, through Divine inflow, in all religion. It was Swedenborg's task to draw the reader back from the farthest circumference of the literal sense to the Holy Land that was the heart of the deeper meaning.

According to *Secrets of Heaven* §1401–§1424, God's call to Abram in Genesis 12:1–3 was more than a literal call to one person; it was and is a call to everyone. Swedenborg explains it as inwardly representing the call to Jesus to leave his merely human existence and become one with Divinity itself, with a love for the whole human race. The universality of that love makes all Jews and all non-Jews—the entire human race—God's "chosen people." We can go further. To say that God's Incarnation is "the definitive intersection between divinity and humanity" is also to say that it defines the intersection between each of us and our Creator. We can see this fact mirrored in the ease with which the explanation of the stories of the Bible patriarchs in *Secrets of Heaven* moves from a focus on Jesus' glorification to a focus on our regeneration. The two topics are, at a truly deep level, inextricably fused into one.

There is a consequence of this fusion that is so obvious it is easy to miss. Both

glorification and regeneration are *stories*, which means among other things that particular episodes or statements cannot be understood if they are lifted out of their narrative contexts and read apart from the sequence of events that gave rise to them or—most importantly for our future life—from the events that follow upon them. When we read in Revelation 20:12 about our books of life being opened and compared with the Book of Life, we may miss the point if we think of those books as ledgers, covered in individual pluses and minuses. Our deeds and intentions remain living stories written into our being and cannot be understood except in their entirety, including what they say about our life to come. Thus where we happen to be at any given moment of our own particular story is of less importance than where we are headed.

In this respect we are all exactly like everyone else. This is the global teaching of *Secrets of Heaven*. As it opens Scripture for us, it shows that those stories, with their basis in the deepest of all truths, are applicable to everyone who is, was, or ever will be. ♦

[The Lord's spiritual church] exists among nations far distant from the church. Many of the people in those nations . . . live according to their religion, loving . . . God and their neighbor. Their passion for goodness leads them to do deeds of neighborly kindness, and their passion for truth leads them to worship the Supreme Being. Non-Christians who are like this are those who are in the Lord's spiritual church.

—*Secrets of Heaven* §3263:2,
translated by Lisa Hyatt Cooper

PUBLICATION OF *Secrets of Heaven*

The next volume of our NCE series, *Secrets of Heaven*, v.1, will be available October 2006.
Backorders accepted.

Order your copy now!

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2006–2007 Lecture Schedule

September 15

Vaishali, media personality, and comedienne, author of *You Are What You Love*

October 13

Don Rose, editor of *Afterlife*, a new abridged version of *Heaven and Hell*

November

TBA

December 1

Swedenborg: *Mystical Cowboy* screening

January 12

Lisa Hyatt Cooper, translator of the NEW CENTURY EDITION *Secrets of Heaven*

Shining Soul broadcasts

For a PBS listing of current showings of *Shining Soul: Helen Keller's Spiritual Life and Legacy*, go to:
www.swedenborg.com/tv.asp

GRANT SCHNARR
at BEA



Grant Schnarr, author of the new book *You Can Believe!*, was an inspiring addition to BookExpo, the industry trade show that was held in Washington, D.C., from May 19 through May 21.

Grant participated in two book signings at the show on Sunday, May 21. The first was the “official” book signing, where authors from many of the most prestigious publishing houses are assigned an hour to meet the public and to sign their new books. Many bookstore buyers and librarians attend these signings, a wonderful way to get a book directly into the hands of influential people. Grant’s signing was a great success; his personality and marketing savvy attracted many attendees.

And later in the day, Grant hosted another signing at the Foundation booth in the main hall. This too was a wonderful success, with about another fifty copies personally signed and handed to interested readers.

New Alumni NCE Gift Program

Although we do not generally introduce new Foundation members, however distinguished they may be, in LOGOS, a recent member, who signed up at the Eighteenth Century Studies meeting in Montreal this April, deserves to be mentioned for the singularly good idea he presented to Executive Director Deborah Forman and immediately proceeded to model.

I am referring to Dr. Herbert Richardson, the editor-in-chief of the Edwin Mellen Press.

His excellent idea was to create a program inviting members to consider gifting libraries of the institutions of higher education where they studied with the NEW CENTURY EDITION OF THE WORKS OF EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

As Dr. Richardson is a successful publisher and marketer of scholarly books to academic libraries, he furnished some very savvy advice: never ship free works to libraries before getting their agreement to catalog and shelve them. This rule was embodied in the program he described by actually dictating a letter to his own alma mater Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio, and asking me to send it.

Dr. Richardson’s gift was formally accepted by Mr. Richard L. Densmore, head of Public Services reference librarian of Ritter Library, proof positive of the effectiveness of the program Dr. Richardson had outlined.

Any member interested in making a donation to a library should contact Deborah Forman, the Foundation’s

executive director, providing her with the name, title, and address of the head librarian of the designated institution. Before any monetary transaction, she will send a letter to the librarian presenting your generous offer and stating that if, and only if, the library agrees to catalog and shelve it, this edition, which retails for \$1,225, will be shipped as a gift for their library.

Would you like your college or graduate-school library to carry the NEW CENTURY EDITION? To facilitate this opportunity, the Swedenborg Foundation will offer the set through this program at 50% off the retail price, plus shipping, for only \$700.

Your generosity to your alma mater could allow future generations of young students to find Swedenborg’s works while browsing the stacks and discovering such inviting titles as *Secrets of Heaven*, *True Christianity*, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, etc. After all, the edition was planned not only to serve Swedenborgians, but newcomers and especially scholars and students.

If you’d like to participate in this program or if you have any questions, please contact Deborah Forman at 800-355-3222, ext. 12, or at director@swedenborg.com. ♦



Members receive 20% discount on all purchases. (See membership information on next page.)

order form no. 0606

Quantity/Item	Title	Price\$	Quantity/Item	Title	Price\$
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NEW CENTURY EDITION					
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___ 474-2	Scribe of Heaven, pb	NEW! 12.00	___ 241-3	Dole & Kirven/A Scientist Explores Spirit pb	10.95
___ 475-0	Heaven and Hell, Dole trans., NCE hc	49.00	___ 148-4	Dole/A Thoughtful Soul pb	12.95
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	Individual Volumes 1 through 12 hc each: 20.00		___ 389-4	Keck/Healing as a Sacred Path hc	24.95
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	7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10 ___ 11 ___ 12 ___		___ 398-3	Keller/Light in My Darkness, 2nd edition, pb	13.95
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___ 174-3	Conjugal Love hc*	20.00	___ 175-1	Kirven/Book About Dying pb	12.95
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A beautiful and outrageous non-church Swedenborgian—a free radical, so to speak—contacted us for permission to quote Swedenborg in her upcoming book *You Are What You Love*. Dang! That's got to be the best title ever for a contemporary book on Swedenborg's thought, I mused (admittedly somewhat greenly). How come I didn't think of that?

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She graduated magna cum laude from the Radio and Television department and magna cum laude from the Religious Philosophy of San Francisco State University department and has studied Ayurvedic, Chinese, and Tibetan-Ayurvedic medicine. And she's a kick-and-a-half.

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