Kolsky Blends Politics and Humor

By Tami Brunk

Mad applause burst from the bleachers, gawking New York Times reporters stepped aside and the "Great Sea" parted as Professor Thomas Kolsky entered the Science Center Theater on Wednesday, September 21. All right, All right, I'm exaggerating a bit, but only for the sake of humor; the major topic of Kolsky's lecture titled "Not so Odd a Couple: Reflections on the Marriage of Humor and Politics," demonstrated the vital role that humor has played in politics throughout the centuries.

Audience members were given handouts consisting of xeroxed political cartoons created throughout history, poking fun at such a variety of figures as King Louis XIV on up to Bush and even Perot. Kolsky began his presentation by bewailing the sorry choice of candidates in this year's election. "Clinton's biggest problem," complained Kolsky, "is that he never inhales."

"Bush, on the other hand, never exhaled." He also questioned the novelty of both Bush and Clinton's economic proposals.

"Basically, Bush wants to borrow and spend, and Clinton wants to tax and spend." In light of the obvious shortcomings of Bush and Clinton, Kolsky moved to nominate a new candidate. This man, Kolsky promised, was "a truly great American and humorist...Abe Lincoln."

According to Kolsky, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan were masters at harnessing the power of humor to win public favor. During their campaigns, both used a quick wit to cover up their flaws.

During Kennedy's 1960 campaign, he was often criticized for having come from a wealthy family. In response to that, Kennedy made fun of himself. "I received a telegram from my father today," he told a crowd. "He told me, 'don't buy one vote more than is necessary. I'll be damned if I'll pay for a landslide!'"

Reagan diffused criticism about his age during his campaign against Walter Mondale with this statement, "I am not going to make age an issue in this campaign. I will not hold my opponent's youth and...inexperience against him."

Perhaps because Clinton and Bush have not yet learned how to harness the power of humor, they have often become the target of it.

"Did you know the real reason that the U.S. Government so closely investigated Iraq's Department of Agriculture?" asked Kolsky. The answer, he asserted, was that they were secretly hoarding a huge stash of broccoli with which to bomb the White House.

"Thank God Bush caught it in time," Kolsky breathed with a sigh of relief.

Concluding his presentation, Kolsky assured Americans everywhere that "the marriage of humor and politics rests on solid ground. There is not much chance of a divorce." Finally, a return to family values.
Montgomery County Community College
presents

DR. TOM KOLSKY

"THE REIGN OF ERROR:
OBSERVATIONS ON THE MARRIAGE
OF POLITICS AND HUMOR"

Wednesday, October 13, 1993    12 noon - 1 p.m.
Thursday, October 14, 1993    7 - 8 p.m.

Science Center Lecture Hall (Room 214)

Free Admission

(215) 641-6505 for additional information
Montgomery County Community College
1994-1995 Lively Arts Series

THROUGHOUT OCTOBER 1994

**FOCUS ON POLITICS:**
A 5-PART INTERVIEW/TALK SHOW AT MCCC

♦ **Wednesday, October 5, 12:15 p.m.**

**Dr. Kolsky** opens the series with his talk "The Reign of Error Continued: Humorous Observations on the World of Politics."

♦ **Wednesday, October 12, 12:15 p.m.**

**Dr. Carmen Mayer**, Professor of Political Science at Charles University in Prague, addresses the topic "Russia and the former Soviet Bloc Nations at the Crossroads."

♦ **Wednesday, October 19, 12:15 p.m.**

**Professor George Phillips** of MCCC, expresses his views about the 1994 U.S. elections.

♦ **Wednesday, October 26, 12:15 p.m.**

**Dr. Thomas Ricks**, Professor of History at Villanova University shares his extensive knowledge of Middle Eastern history and politics in discussing "Israel and the Palestinians: The Difficult Road to Peace."

♦ **Thursday, October 27, 7:30 p.m.**

**Mr. Joseph Szabo**, editor of *The Finest International Political Cartoons of Our Time* (1994) and editor-in-chief of *Witty World*, an international journal of political cartoons, explores the world of political cartoons.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

presents

FOCUS ON POLITICS: ELECTIONS 1996
An Interview/Talk Show Spanning Four Sessions

HOST: TOM KOLSKY

Schedule and Guests

October 16  The Issues and the Candidates
Guests:  Professor Albert Mills
         Professor Kevin Baird
         Professor George Phillips

October 23  Party Spokespersons Talk About the
            Issues and the Candidates
Guests:  Ms. Rebecca Hunt, Executive
         Director of the Montgomery County
         Democratic Committee
         Mr. Frank Bartle, Chairman of the
         Montgomery County Republican
         Committee

October 30  Political Humor: How Cartoonists in
            the U.S. and Abroad View American
            Politics
            Demonstration and Dialogue with Host
            Guest:  Joseph Szabo, editor and publisher of
            Witty World

November 13 An Assessment of the Elections of
               1996
               Guests:  Professor Richard Marshall
                        Professor Carmen Mayer
                        Professor George Phillips

               12:20-1:30 p.m.

Science Center 214
Montgomery County Community College
Blue Bell, PA
FOCUS ON POLITICS
AN INTERVIEW/TALK SHOW AT MCCC
OCTOBER 1998

Dr. Tom Kolsky, professor of History and Political Science at Montgomery County Community College, will moderate Focus on Politics: Elections 1998, a four-part interview/talk show on political developments in 1998. The events are scheduled for three consecutive Wednesdays.

All will be in the Science Center Auditorium 214

October 7, 12:20 p.m.  The Presidency in Crisis

Angela Ambers-Henderson
an attorney and director of the Criminal Justice program at MCCC

John J. Lawn
former chairman of the division of Social Sciences at MCCC

October 14, 12:20 p.m.  The Russian Crisis

Carmen Mayer
a world traveler who has taught at the Charles University in Prague, and currently adjunct professor of History and Political Science at MCCC

Kevin Baird
professor of Economics at MCCC

October 14, 7:00 p.m.  The Presidency in Crisis

Angela Ambers-Henderson
John J. Lawn
George Phillips
former professor of History and Political Science at MCCC

October 21, 12:20 p.m.  Back to the Issues in 1998

George Phillips
Albert Mills
adjunct professor of Political Science at MCCC
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S
LIVELY ARTS SERIES 1999-2000
MILLENNIUM MAGIC

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OCTOBER 1999 INTERVIEW/TALK SHOW
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CENTRAL CAMPUS

HOSTED BY TOM KOLSKY

PROGRAM

PART I - OCTOBER 6
TAMING THE BEAST: VIOLENCE IN AMERICAN LIFE
GUEST PANEL

ANGELA M. AMBERS-HENDERSON, J.D.
Director, Criminal Justice and Fire Science Programs, MCCC

MARTIN GELMAN, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Anthropology, MCCC

ROBERT P. SANDS, M.S.
Police Sergeant and Criminal Justice Instructor, MCCC

PART II - OCTOBER 13
THE UNITED STATES AS THE SOLE SUPERPOWER:
THE GLORY AND THE BURDEN
GUEST PANEL

RICHARD MARSHALL, Ph.D.
Professor of History and Political Science
and former Dean of Academic Affairs, retired, MCCC

CARMEN MAYER, Ph.D.
Retired Professor of Political Science at Charles University, Prague,
and adjunct Professor of History and Political Science, MCCC

PART III - OCTOBER 20
RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE (I): OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION TODAY
GUEST PANEL

REVEREND TRUMAN THOMAS BROOKS III, M.Div.
Senior Pastor, Christ United Methodist Church, Lansdale, PA.

SISTER ELLEN MURRAY, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Gwynedd Mercy College

RABBI DAVID RABEEYA, Ph.D.
Specialist in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures and Professor of Hebrew and
Judaic Studies, Bryn Mawr College

PART IV - OCTOBER 27
RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE (II): THOUGHTS ABOUT THE MILLENNIUM
GUEST PANEL

REVEREND TRUMAN THOMAS BROOKS III, M.Div.
Senior Pastor, Christ United Methodist Church, Lansdale, PA.

MARTIN GELMAN, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Anthropology, MCCC