

Thomas Moore's response to the news of Spirituality and Practice's move to Claremont, California

Hi, I'm Thomas Moore. I'm the author of *Care of the Soul* and a number of other books on spirituality, soul, sexuality, psychotherapy, mythology. I've been working with Fred and Mary Ann Brussat now for many years. I think it was 20 years ago that we met in New York City, and at that time they were beginning their work using media in many, many different ways in order to make the culture more spiritually literate. They have devoted their lives to this work. It's a very special work; they have found their niche, and they have created something of great importance, it seems to me. And I have enjoyed working with them over the years of being friends.

I've participated in several of the educational programs that Fred and Mary Ann have put together and have worked especially with Mary Ann. And I understand the way that they work. They pay a great deal of attention to details in whatever they do. They have an intimate approach. They're personal. They're not distant. They're very involved in everything they do. And they also create a sense of community. I've seen this especially in the online programs, because we get sometimes several hundred people taking these courses, and Mary Ann's very good at staying with them. I can tell the way people respond, that they feel a personal connection with her, and that creates community among each other.

So these are very powerful tools, if you want to call them [that], qualities that Fred and Mary Ann bring to their work. And I think that's why it's so effective.

Now Fred and Mary Ann both have decided to move from New York City and go to California and work with the Claremont School of Theology. I've been talking with them about this for quite a while now, and from the very beginning it has seemed to me to be something very good, a very good move to make for them. For one thing, it will renew their work and give them new life, and also it will connect them with an institution that will give them the support that they need.

And there's something else. These days, I'm writing a book on aging, and I'm quite aware of the issues involved in getting older -- for myself as well. Of course that's why I'm writing about aging now, because I'm also getting older. And it makes a difference, because what you want to do is keep your vitality at this time in life.

So I think that this move of Mary Ann and Fred to go to California is a good one to do now -- personally for them and for all of us -- because this is a time for them to reimagine what they're doing: to keep the basics there, of course, and to build on what they have, but to give it new life. That makes a great deal of sense to me.

When someone's work is really alive, you can expect that there'll be changes all along the way, and that's what I expect to come from this change: that there will be a new kind of vitality, that these changes will allow the work that Mary Ann and Fred have done have a foundation and will continue. Other people can learn about it and find out how to do this work, and it would be great if it could continue.

So in general, what I want to do is support the work that Fred and Mary Ann are doing now and to offer my backing, for what it's worth, and my participation. I hope that I can continue to work on their projects and to have my own little piece, my own place, in the work that they will be doing in the future. So I wish them well, and I hope that many more people will come to them and understand how important it is today to be spiritually literate, to be intelligent about your spirituality -- it's such an important thing.

And of course what I do -- and what Fred and Mary Ann understand -- is try to bring soul and spirit together: that is, to try to have your deep emotional life, your intimate life, and your great vision together, to have them working together.

I'm especially grateful to Fred over the years, writing his reviews of my books, to show so much understanding of what I'm trying to do. This is one of the issues: to bring the deep soul and not just the high spirit into everything that we do. Fred and Mary Ann both understand this at a very deep level. And I think this move to Claremont for them is part of that process of finding a home for themselves -- home is such an important aspect of the deep soul -- and at the same time to try to make their contribution to the world.

These two together are potent, and so I expect great things in the future.