



# CORNERSTONE

Journal of the Accredited Gemologists Association

## Dialogue

### Fracture-Filled Diamonds: To Grade or Not To Grade?

The Diamond Club West Coast Inc. is now requesting gem labs to restrain policy on diamond grading. The LA bourse asks that local gem labs certify only natural diamonds as to color and clarity, following the lead of GIA. In regards to "non-natural" stones, the bourse has asked labs to report on synthetic, as well as fracture-filled stones, simply by stating that the stones are synthetic or filled. In the case of fracture-filled stones, they ask that labs state clearly that the treatment is reversible. No other grading parameters are deemed appropriate by this industry group, which hopes that labs worldwide will adopt this "non-grading" stance for both synthetic and enhanced diamonds.

*Rapaport Diamond Report* (Jan 7, 1994 p. 34) and *National Jeweler* (Jan 1, 1994 p. 1) both carried stories on this first request to restrict diamond grading practices, made publicly by a major diamond trading group. In terms of industry impact and consumer concerns, the West Coast group likens both synthetics and enhanced diamonds to cubic zirconium. Further, the New York Diamond Dealers Club reportedly is attempting to root out fracture-filled diamonds from its exchange entirely. On the West Coast, it's "don't ask, don't tell"; on the East it's "don't ask, don't sell."

In the wake of consumer-panicking publicity in St. Louis, national chain merchant Helzberg's Diamond Shops has informed suppliers that it will not market clarity-enhanced diamonds (*National Jeweler*, Jan 16, 1994 p. 6). The sales prohi-

bition extends to laser-drilled stones as well, and contract agreements require that suppliers certify that all diamonds on each invoice have not been clarity enhanced by any method. This action and elevated disclosure demand is not an isolated incident.

Letters to the editors of both *Rapaport* and *NJ* have been exchanged with the speed and regularity of cannon volleys. Various viewpoints on the propriety of full disclosure of identity and enhanced diamond grading have been attacked, and defended. With all this controversy raging in our everyday business, *Cornerstone* wants to know what others think. So we asked. Here are some of our colleagues' replies to the following inquiry.

#### ■ Question

**Should gem laboratories issue reports of clarity grade for fracture-filled diamonds?**

#### European Gemological Laboratory

It appears to us, at the European Gemological Laboratory-Los Angeles, that by asking grading laboratories to certify only natural, non-enhanced diamonds, you are, in fact, trying to suggest to the buying public that fracture-filled diamonds are not worthy of purchase. We believe decisions

about what to purchase must be left to the consumer and, while we encourage all efforts to advise and educate the buying public, we are adamant that we not be asked to validate any one viewpoint. In the heat of the issue, we feel that many may not realize that requesting a lab not to grade fracture-filled stones asks it, in effect, to compromise its carefully preserved status as a mutually disinterested third party. We feel that a laboratory's ultimate responsibility should be to the final consumer and we take that responsibility very strongly. In essence, we believe that if the public has a choice as well as the knowledge to make an educated one, that choice will generally be for the best their money can buy.

However, we do realize that there are problems in the clarity grading of fracture-filled diamonds. For example:

- *different laboratories grade fracture-filled stones based on different criteria*
- *new treatment processes have been shown to be much less durable, and*
- *some those same newer processes appear to discolor over time*

Because of these reasons, EGL-LA has decided to declare a temporary moratorium on the clarity grading of fracture-filled diamonds. We will continue to certify these stones for clients who request it but, for clarity grade, we will state "clarity enhanced" and nothing further. Under the

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AGA is a nonprofit research, education and ethics organization, benefiting professional and avocational gemologists as well as the consumer interest. Membership programs include advanced gemological education seminars, professional computer software reviews and workshops, and the AGA-Certified Gemological Laboratory Program.



## CORNERSTONE

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## Editorial View Imaginary Friends with Real Problems\*

**G**loria, John and Francis, my imaginary friends, are battling on the front lines. Their struggle? Fracture-filled diamonds.

Gloria works as a diamond "grader" for a jewelry manufacturing company. Her job is to sort entire lots and large parcels of stones, checking that quality received matches that ordered. Within any given week, she "grades" about 10,000 carats: an average 250 carats per hour in a grueling eight-hour day. Most diamonds are melee. The finished goods will range from wedding sets to promotional items, from mass-production to special-order business and athletic awards. Gloria needs her job. Despite eyestrain, neckaches and the tension of byzantine security measures coupled with the ever-present threat of moving all factory operations overseas, she works hard and conscientiously

In fact, she is so concerned with the ultimate customer (and the health of her company) that she has taken it upon herself to study the issues surrounding fracture-filled diamonds. Her company doesn't order treated goods, but Gloria is nobody's fool. After discovering undisclosed treated stones in parcels from regular NY suppliers, Gloria went ballistic. Independently, she gathered reports on the manufacturing and distribution risks of fracture-filled stones: heat, light, misrepresentation claims from retailers, etc. Armed with information, she took on first her supervisors, and then the suppliers. At Gloria's company, supplier contracts now include a policy allowing for return of an entire parcel and cancellation of pending orders if even one treated stone is found. The disclosure ball is firmly in the supplier's court—or else.

After all, the company couldn't survive economically were it to engage "laboratory-level" quality analysis of all the stones set into its products. Their low

wage employees simply sort and set, round the clock. Neither could it survive misrepresentation litigation and declining retailer faith. Gloria may have saved her job, by protecting her company from the market risks of unenlightened misrepresentation. No raise, but she did get "Employee of the Month". And the company may afford to retain its US labor force for another year.

John wasn't so lucky. An irate customer complained to John's employer about the fracture-filled diamond John unknowingly sold in an engagement ring. Alerted by media reports in St. Louis, the groom-to-be had an independent appraiser examine his fiancée's ring. Too bad he had already placed it on her finger, because the appraiser determined that it was fracture-filled.

Management understood that their supplier, not the young sales clerk, had let them down: the semi-custom order came with absolutely no disclosure about treated stones. Until now, account relations had been great. Perhaps the ring manufacturer didn't even know the stone was filled—one clarity enhanced diamond might just have slipped past quality control. But none of this industry-insider defensiveness would satisfy the injured customer. He was threatening lawsuit, with emotional consequential damages.

To preserve community standing, this jeweler replaced the ring. A carefully selected replacement diamond was provided with GIA-GTL certification. John, new to jewelry sales and by no means a gemologist, was "let go". The jeweler might have been spared a lawsuit, but it is uncertain if she ever really "saved face".

John had no training, beyond a brief introduction to counter sales. Gloria has a diamond certificate, but her employer does not provide continuing education. Yet I know one other conscientious GG, highly educated—and very uncertain. Francis is examining a fracture-filled diamond for replacement insurance. Reporting identity, and disclosing infilling treatment, presents no problem. But what is the proper terminology for reporting current quality and condition?

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The insured wishes to have coverage for replacement with like kind and quality. The insurer is offering a contract for just such insurance coverage. How can both be apprised of "like quality" without some measured assessment of clarity, even though clarity is enhanced? Both parties to the insurance contract will want to replace any loss with a stone of comparable appearance and value—not with an untreated stone, and not with one of different apparent visual "quality". To these contractual parties, the condition of the diamond prior to treatment may be entirely beside the point. Comparable appearance and cost are at issue.

Francis reads this issue of *Cornerstone*, hoping to gain insight into the methodology, terminology and ethics of infilled diamond evaluation. Read on, and examine for yourself whether clarity is enhanced—or grows ever cloudier.

\* The persons and companies in this simplified account are fictional characters, used with "poetic license" to represent composite issues.

No resemblance to any actual individual or company is intended.

Ω CLARITAS Ω

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of *Cornerstone*,  
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for membership  
information.

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Dialogue

Fracture-Filled Diamonds: To Grade or Not To Grade?

(continued from page 1)

"Comments" section of our report, we will continue to fully disclose the nature of the treatment and will modify our declaration statement to read

**"Surface-reaching fractures have been filled with a laboratory-produced foreign substance to enhance the stone's appearance. The process is reversible and repeatable."**

We are exploring the idea of developing a different clarity grading scale, one that would be defined solely for the clarity grading of fracture-filled diamonds.

By placing a moratorium on the clarity grading of fracture-filled diamonds, we hope to give the trade time to discuss technological advances and their effect on the industry, including the development of universally accepted trade policies for the future. We welcome comment on these issues.

— Gary Roskin

Yehuda Diamond Company

As the company that introduced the US market to fracture-filled diamonds in 1988, Yehuda Diamond Company believes that these clarity-enhanced stones should be issued clarity grading reports by gem laboratories. The reasons are multifold:

First and foremost, clarity grading by gem laboratories is a benefit to retailers and consumers. Retailers and the public must understand exactly what they are getting and this report will offer an accurate description of the stone they are buying, while disclosing that the stone has been treated. There is no better way to guarantee disclosure at every level of distribution than with a grading report, in writing.

Second, clarity grade reports on fracture-filled stones are a benefit to the jewelry industry, in general. We acknowledge that fracture-filled stones need special care, but so do many other treated and

even non-treated stones. A consumer holding a lab report on her fracture-filled stone is more likely to tell her jeweler of the treatment whenever repairs are needed to her jewelry. The jeweler, in turn, is much more likely to take the proper precautions to avoid damaging the treatment during repair. In this way, it is less likely that the jeweler could make the embarrassing error of torching a fracture-filled stone and damaging the treatment.

We understand that some labs may be hesitant to do clarity grading on stones they consider "unstable." But, except for the effects of torching, Yehuda Clarity-Enhanced Diamonds are extremely stable under the most vigorous cleaning procedures, and these include steaming, ultrasonic cleaning and boiling in detergents. Even the *Gemstone Enhancement Manual* issued by Jewelers of America rated fracture-filled stones' stability as "very good." We at Yehuda Diamond Company are so confident in the lasting beauty of our treatment that we offer a lifetime guarantee on the Yehuda enhancement. Even if the jeweler damages the treatment after using excessive heat, Yehuda Diamond Company will retreat the stone at no charge.

Third. Fracture-filled diamonds should be graded by gem laboratories in the same way they grade laser-drilled diamonds or oiled emeralds. The latter two are commonly issued gem grading reports even though, in the case of laser-drilled diamonds, the structure of the stone has been altered and, in the case of oiled emeralds, the treatment is reversible. It is our opinion that the most logical way to grade a fracture-filled stone for clarity is for the gemologist to judge the stone based on the way the stone appears at the time of inspection. The grading report should state very specifically that the stone has been fracture-filled.

— Ron Yehuda

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## Dialogue

### Fracture-Filled Diamonds: To Grade or Not To Grade?

*(continued from page 1)*

#### GIA Gem Trade Laboratory

The GIA Gem Trade Laboratory has a policy of not issuing Diamond Grading Reports on diamonds determined to have had surface-reaching features in-filled. This policy is based on two concerns. First, the true—that is, untreated—color and clarity grades of such treated stones cannot be determined after filling. Second, due to durability and stability concerns, even the *apparent* color and clarity grades of treated stones may change.

With respect to the apparent color, initial research showed that at least some filling treatments may lower the apparent grade due to the inherent body color of the filling material. More recent research has indicated that some fillers may degrade after exposure to ultraviolet radiation like that contained in sunlight, resulting in a darkening of the filling material. As to the apparent clarity, it has been shown that the filling material may be damaged (thereby making the filled break more apparent) by extended ultrasonic cleaning—and, perhaps, by the cumulative effect of frequent shorter ultrasonic cleanings. Acid boiling, repolishing, and jewelry repair procedures involving heat have also been shown to affect the filling material adversely.

— Robert C. Kammerling,  
Director, Identification & Research

#### American Gemological Laboratories

Procedurally, American Gemological Laboratories has little difficulty addressing the issue of grading fracture-filled gem materials. Obviously, the question extends far beyond the limited scope of grading diamonds. Since much of AGL's activity for the last 20 years has been the quality assessment of Ruby, Emerald and Sapphire, grading clarity enhanced materi-

als in not a new experience. In fact, the gemological visionaries who claim that clarity grading of enhanced materials is not possible, will no doubt have to rewrite their courses dealing with the clarity assessment of Emerald and Ruby, once they refocus on the realization that a significant population of these materials are faithfully and methodically "juiced" to improve their appearance.

Rather than a rewrite of their colored stone grading system, they will probably redefine the issue, emphasizing the differences between clarity grading filled diamonds and colored stones. This is the same faulty logic that has led to difficulties in establishing a workable and consistent enhancement nomenclature. Rather than building on a solid foundation, nomenclature changes are frequently based on some obscure whim commonly characterized as "traditional" practice.

The ultimate imperative is to eliminate or substantially reduce confusion in the mind of the consuming public. Certainly, any clarity enhanced material can be assigned a clarity grade based on existing clarity grading procedures. Adding the appropriate enhancement or treatment identification, coupled with a statement of stability, leaves no ambiguity in the mind of the buyer concerning the specific nature of what they are acquiring. The intent is always to provide the buyer with sufficient information to make an informed, intelligent choice—especially when there are financial implications.

Enhancement and clarity grading nomenclature, like any other vocabulary, should be methodically constructed so that it can be expanded to include new techniques and variations without major changes in its basic foundation. Unfortunately, too much of our current enhancement terminology is being diluted by those who are willing to filter responsible decision making through their wallets.

—C. R. Beesley

#### D. Atlas & Company

Grading laboratories should not take a small class of items and simply say "We won't grade them". However, this is the case today. Being able to detect the treatment well enough to refuse to grade these goods is adequate evidence that the treating process could be properly disclosed to all concerned parties. By saying they will not grade such stones, the major labs are permitting these stones to only be sold without the real potential of full disclosure.

I understand the limitations in knowing how poor the actual clarity of the untreated stone is after a successful treatment and I also understand the possibility of limited durability of the treatment since glass is not going to be as stable as diamond no matter how it is attached and applied.

The big labs could better spend their time figuring out how to reveal the extent and durability of the treatment rather than a vain effort to kill the enhancement business. This is a business that will not just "go away". It won't go away no matter how much diamond dealers wish it would and no matter how unstable the treatment is on occasion.

My feeling is that the ultimate consumer and everyone else in the chain of owners needs the protection of grading labs. This can best be provided by giving full service, not withholding it.

When a lab issues a grade on a filled stone it should comment on the appearance of the present stone and hypothecate to the best of its ability on the original, untreated grade as well. Market data reasearch will lead to correct dollar valuations when required.

We presently do not make diamond quality reports on filled diamonds, but we have made several insurance appraisal documents on filled diamonds. We believe the consumer has left our offices knowing what they had and were made aware of the limitations of our ability to grade the material, and of its somewhat unstable nature.

I am opposed to a special clarity grad-

*(continued on page 5)*

(continued from page 4)

ing structure for filled diamonds. This is just further confusion in an already deep swamp.

—David Atlas

## Northwest Gemological Laboratory

Before addressing this question, we need to examine the operative verb: *To Grade*. To grade a diamond is to establish its qualities of color, clarity and cut. But remember: Identity is antecedent to grading.

To *identify* is to authenticate gemological species (diamond), origin (natural, synthetic, etc) and alterations (irradiated, filled, drilled, etc). That a diamond is filled is a component, not of its grade, but of its *identity*.

What, then, are the technical, ethical and legal implications of grading a diamond *identified* as fracture-filled? My research, supported by a growing body of other published data, clearly demonstrates: *It is impossible to determine the actual quality of a filled diamond without first removing the filler*. The degree of improvement is indeterminate when examining the product only *after* it is filled. Therefore, grading a filled diamond amounts to no more than a *guess*. Such a "grade" reflects the quality of enhancement, not the quality of the diamond.

We mislead: Implying our ability to meaningfully grade a filled diamond, when no such ability exists. What is worse: We imply that such a grade reflects the same validity and permanence as the grade of an unfilled stone. Existing evidence belies such an implication.

It is the relative instability of this treatment, compared to that of the host diamond, that precludes grading—not the fact that it is treated. Our industry aggressively promotes the public perception that "Diamonds are Forever". We jeopardize our individual reputations and the credibility of our profession by guessing the grade of a diamond whose true quality is masked by temporary treatment. We know the true

quality of the diamond will prevail, but we can't predict when. It could be next year, next week or tomorrow, depending upon environmental exposure over which we have no control.

We must fully disclose the **uncertainty** and **limiting conditions** of our conclusions. Given the known uncertainty of grading filled diamonds, how many clients are likely to value our *Quality Guess Report*? To imply that it is more constitutes constructive misrepresentation of the product, the grade and our gemological ability.

The essence of this issue is better appreciated by restating the question: **Fracture-Filled Diamonds: To Guess or Not To Guess?**

—Sharon Wakefield

**Next Dialogue: Is there an ideal cut? Do you think cut grade standards can be established for use throughout the gem industry? Do you grade diamond and colored gemstone cut? Which aspects of cut do you regularly include in gem quality reports?**

Send your responses to  
Cornerstone, POB 160906, Austin  
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*Whenever you try to remove something, you discover that it is attached to everything else in the universe.*



*Douros Flux-Grown Synthetic Ruby*

## "Made in Greece" The Douros Challenge

"Dr. Henry A. Hänni of Zurich, Switzerland, working with Dr. Karl Schmetzer of Germany, presented the results of their preliminary examination of the new Greek flux-grown synthetic ruby being marketed under the trade name Douros. In crystal form and as cut stones, from a gemological standpoint, these new synthetic rubies closely resemble the Ramaura flux-grown synthetic rubies. Chemical analysis showed a variable trace element composition in the Douros material, with no characteristic chemical profile. The major trace elements found in natural rubies—chromium, gallium, iron, titanium, and vanadium—are also added in variable amounts to the Douros synthetic rubies. Dr. Hänni concludes that, if inclusions and recognizable growth structures are not present, this new synthetic ruby will be extremely difficult to identify."

—*Gems & Gemology*, Vol. 29, Winter 1993

**D**r. Hänni, appearing at AGA's Tucson professional education conference "The Cutting Edge", presented samples of Douros ruby. Both crystal rough and faceted stones were examined. Hänni maintains that the material is difficult to identify, and often may be "undetectable". But at least two AGA members say "I don't think so". Thus began *The Douros Challenge*.

Anne Hawken purchased the cleanest, best color faceted Douros material available, and showed it to Kirk Root. Hawken challenged Root to detect determining characteristics for identification. Both being Texans in good standing, she bet him a steak dinner on the outcome. Root accepted the challenge, and upped the ante: he would win the bet within 24 hours. The stone was delivered to Kirk Root at his Austin design studio and gem lab at 1:30 pm CST, Thursday, February 24.

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## The Bet is On!

2.47 carats  
8.70mm x 6.72mm x 4.94mm oval faceted

### 2:20pm A Good Hard Look

Color—the stone appears medium dark tone red. It has a very slightly orangy-red hue with very strong dichroic purplish-pink color on the sides. Very slightest of an andalusite color effect.

Cut—typical Thai make, off center culet, no pattern to pavillion faceting arrangement. Crown is a modified brilliant cut. Approximately 40% table.

Clarity—no inclusions visible from the crown or pavilion views; very transparent.

### 2:30pm In the Microscope

Immediately obvious is poor cutting: all facets have very evident polishing lines. A zig-zag form of growth zoning is apparent through the center of the stone. At one o'clock there appears to be a flux type inclusion, orangy-yellow in color and globular in shape. At three o'clock on the outer edge a white fog of wispy veils are present. Upon closer examination of the veil cloud (30x), the majority of the veils appear long and thin, giving the appearance of numerous octopus tentacles. Polaroid filter shows strong dichroism: strongly purplish-pink and brownish-red.

### 3:00pm Raynor Dialdex Refractometer

0° rotation 1.762 to 1.770  
45° rotation 1.767 to 1.770  
90° rotation 1.770

### 3:20 pm Mineralite

Longwave—medium chalky orangy-red

Shortwave—faint red with a bluish-white surface reflection

### 3:30pm Immersion

Methylene Iodide—two bluish colored veils, a bluish zone to one end (along a growth), darker red crescent (opposite end from the blue zone), and the veil cloud appears brown. Dichroism is so strong that from the side the stone appears bluish-purple, while on its back it appears pinkish-red.

### 3:50pm Back to the Microscope

After immersion process, the stone was viewed again under 20x, looking exclusively for the blue veils. One such veil was visible, including the growth plane within which it was contained.

### Preliminary Examination Conclusion\*

Fortunately, this appears to be one of the easier forms of synthetic corundum to identify. It will be interesting to see if this stone is a typical sample of the Greek product.

Unique characteristics that were found in the stone that may help in the identification of this material are:

#### Eye

- 1) unusually strong dichroism. Stone appears very slightly orangy-red with purplish pink highlights (similar to andalusite).

#### Microscope

- 2) A tiny "Made in Greece" inclusion can be seen at 50x
- 3) Zig-zag growth zoning (not color zoning).
- 4) Orange flux inclusions
- 5) Typical synthetic type wispy veil inclusions (unique shape and form).
- 6) Blue growth zone at 20x

### Immersion

- 7) Blue growth zones viewed
- 8) Strongly bluish-purple in one direction; pinkish in the other

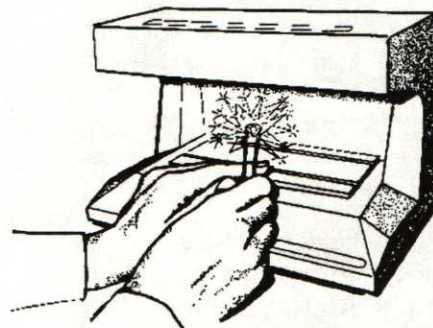
It is unlikely that all the above characteristics will be seen in all Greek synthetic rubies. However, it is my opinion that some of the above will be evident in almost all the Douros rubies, since they are evidence of the growth process.

## Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

Anne Hawken showed this same faceted stone to several dealers on the floor of the AGTA show. Dealers were in wide agreement that the stone was a very pleasing color and clarity. One dealer ventured that it compared directly with one of his better 2+ ct rubies (which he immediately pulled from his case, with great care not to confuse the two stones), and stated that he would have made a handsome offer on a stone of like quality in Bangkok.

**Kirk Root, however, has won a steak dinner at the restaurant of his choice. Not bad for an afternoon's work!**

\* Preliminary examination has yielded one set of results. These results need to be verified by further and repeated testing of this same material, and confirmed testing of other samples of Greek-origin synthetic ruby.



*We must view people not as empty bottles to be filled, but as candles to be lit.*

—Robert H. Shaffer

# Forum

## AGA News of Note

### From the Board of Directors

■ **Tucson** Another Tucson has come and gone, and once again AGA has demonstrated its capacity to produce outstanding programs that are characterized by quality and content. This year, AGA's international secretary and Tucson coordinator, **Joseph DuMouchelle**, produced an intense two day conference that focused on a gamut of relevant subjects. From new lab grown diamond, ruby and emerald, to the latest enhancement techniques, "The Cutting Edge" professional education seminars presented experts, reviewed recent studies and afforded hands-on examination. The slate of presenters read like a "Who's Who" of the gemological world, openly sharing their expertise and graciously offering their time.

AGA extends deep appreciation to our excellent Speakers, our active participant Members, and the Officers who have given their time and talents for the benefit of the gemological community—and the public we serve. Most especially, we are grateful to Joe DuMouchelle, who so capably orchestrated this valuable contribution to continuing education, and to past-President Cortney Balzan, who assisted Joe with programming. Our Association is sustained in its commitment to education and ethics by just such efforts, and the personal sacrifices often entailed, by volunteers. *Thank you.*

■ **Communication** While attending attending numerous committee and sub-committee meetings with other associations, a familiar pattern emerged. Members often complain of a *lack of communication* between the association's Board of Directors and the General Membership. AGA has attempted to address this perception in the past, and continues in efforts to improve communication with members at all levels.

We now publish *Cornerstone* quarter-

ly, and actively seek Letters to the Editor, Member News, and articles of interest by or about members and their professional activities. AGA also has our own **private network (AA) on Polygon Telecommunication Network.**

Membership has direct access to the Board and other Members; AA network is a year-round open forum to discuss membership activities, gemological issues, educational opportunities and industry challenges. And in what other Association can you simply pick up the phone and call a fellow gemologist for their views, professional guidance and research leads?

But many members are still missing out. If you are not receiving the full benefit of membership, it may be time to *get involved*. Committees are looking for volunteers—an excellent opportunity to meet fellow professionals across the country, and the world. Working with a group is not only great for connections, it's an opportunity to learn, to teach, and to develop individually while furthering shared goals.

■ **Membership Chair Stanley Cohen** of Fort Worth, Texas recently accepted the position of Membership Committee Chair. You will find Stanley's address and phone on the Membership Application form in this issue. Call or write if you have prospective members in your area, wish to join the Committee, or have ideas for member development. Former Membership Chair **Tom Seguin** of Florida stepped aside during the Tucson conference; he plans to participate with the Nominations Committee. AGA thanks Tom for his time and efforts, and looks forward to his contributions in new areas.

### Lab Notes

■ **New CGL Sue Whitaker, GG, CMG, ISA** has just qualified for the special AGA designation of Certified Gem Laboratory. Sue, owner of Carolina Gemological Services in Shelby, North Carolina, was the first AGA member to complete requirements of the Certified Master Gemologist (CMG) Program in 1993. She is also currently enrolled in the

FGA program offered by the Gemmological Association of Great Britain. The CGL program welcomes its newest member.

■ **Synthetic Diamond Update** An article in the current issue of *Gems & Gemology* (Winter 1993) focuses our attention on the ever-changing data base of synthetic diamond properties. The article deals with gemological properties of Russian gem quality synthetics, which are somewhat different than those previously reported for other manufacturers' products. It is important not only to understand these distinctive properties, but also to appreciate that the extent of our gemological knowledge is based upon a relatively small sample. With each new study, we add to and modify existing knowledge. What does this mean to us? Two words: Stay Current. Although Tom Chatham's delivery of synthetic diamonds to the jewelry industry has been delayed, *it is inevitable*. This brief respite allows valuable time for jewelers and gemologists to prepare for this new challenge.

■ **Designation Update** Good news for American Society of Appraisers-Master Gemologist Appraisers who have achieved AGA-CGL certification. The ASA Gems & Jewelry Committee has agreed to recognize those with AGA-CGL designation as fulfilling the requirements of ASA's Registered Laboratory designation. This resolution was approved by the ASA G&J Committee in Tucson, February 1994.

■ **Instrument Calibration** How often do you calibrate your carat and gram balances? Leveridge gauge? ColorMaster? Refractometer? We trust your answer isn't "Never". All laboratory instruments must be calibrated periodically to maintain accuracy. Most instruments are delivered with "How to Calibrate" instructions; if not, the manufacturer will provide this information or offer a calibration service. A regular calibration schedule should be established and monitored; otherwise, you may be inadvertently introducing error into your grading and measuring. **Look for an upcoming article in *Cornerstone* on metrology—the science of weights and measures.**

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Member News

■ **Published** Sharon Wakefield, Ron Yehuda and Daniel Koss seem to be holding a "debate-in-print" on the Letters to the Editor page of *Rapaport Diamond Report*. The issue: fracture-filled diamonds, of course. For an update on Sharon's views, read "Dialogue" in this edition.

**Larry Phillips** is quoted again, this time in *The Testifying Expert* (Nov 1993), in an article entitled "Appraisers Often Strike Gold in Bankruptcy Cases". Larry, an AGA-CGL and ASA-MGA also frequently contributes articles to the journal of the American Society of Appraisers.

**Richard Drucker** has published a clarification in his recent edition of *The Guide* (Volume 13, 1994-95), for which we thank him. This statement, in response to a letter from an irritated reader, made clear that the AGA does not endorse SI clarity grade. (Rather, AGA offers a free speech forum, with something to displease everyone. -ed.)

*The difference between a successful career and a mediocre one sometimes consists of leaving about four or five things a day unsaid.*

Have You Moved?

If you, or another AGA Member you know, have moved recently, please be sure to let us know. Alert both the Membership Chair, and the Director of any special program or committee with which you are involved (CGL, Education, Nominations, Membership, etc). We hate to see your issues of *Cornerstone* and other mail communications returned. And be sure to let us know your new fax and phone numbers, as soon as possible. Thanks!

AGA at Tucson

Computer Technology Seminars

When Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, an accomplished jewelry designer and maker, visits to experiment with CAD software, you must be doing something right.

Thom and Lynn Underwood once again hosted AGA software workshops and a technology showcase. This year, both were sponsored by *National Jeweler*. And the Senator was not alone in taking advantage of the opportunity. "Doing a Great Newsletter for Nearly Nothing" assisted 28 participants with advertising, client service and page layout. "Managing Your Day in the Store" helped 22 jewelers evaluate contact management (PIM: Personal Information Management) software. Attendance would have been even greater; the AGTA schedule dates for these sessions were incorrect, and many eager participants came the day after sessions had concluded. Both workshops were considered highly successful by participants, who value the time to work at a terminal with software and instruction targeted to their concerns.

The Computer Technology Showcase presented a variety of hardware and software, in interactive sessions, to 700-800 people. Exhibitors reported that attendance was down approximately 10% (again, a schedule error) from last year, but that the participants were actually of better quality—ready to computerize, and leaving with strong interest in the products offered. Most vendors expressed regret that there may not be a showcase next year.

AGA thanks **Thom and Lynn Underwood** for their ongoing and generous contributions to business development and computer literacy. Overall, approximately \$3,000 in funds were generated for AGA through the computer technology

sessions. And complimentary issues of *Cornerstone* were broadly distributed, along with AGA Membership applications. Thank you both!

*My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there.*

-Indira Gandhi





# Book Review

## *The Buyer's Guide to Affordable Antique Jewelry,*

by Anna Miller

Review by Karene Lorene

**T**he *Buyer's Guide to Affordable Antique Jewelry* offers information in small tasty bites. The anecdotal history accompanying each chapter adds just the right spice to keep readers aware of what is unique about antique jewelry. The mix of anecdote, advice and instruction is a solid base of knowledge upon which clients (and professionals lacking antique expertise) can build a collection of antique jewelry.

A generous selection of black and white photographs, as well as eight pages of colored plates, are included.

**Particularly helpful are photos of backs and fronts of jewelry pieces, illustrations of hard to recognize but commonly found stones, and line drawings of rose cut stones.** Group photos of brooches, bracelets and pins illustrate the broad range of antique jewelry.

Some photos appear gratuitous. On pages 32 and 87, photos show assorted groups with little detail and no direct relationship to the text. Noticeably lacking are illustrations of old-European-cut and old-mine-cut diamonds.

**Chapter Nine, "Lost Treasures You Can Find," is a delight. Written in the style of "Unsolved Mysteries," the treasures presented are those "finds" of which we who collect dream. Ms. Miller would be wise to consider another entire book on these delectable unsolved mysteries.**

The weak points of this volume are few:

- "Lists" in shaded boxes, "At a Glance," are neither complete enough nor specific enough to be

truly helpful. (The difficult to locate book by Margaret Flowers includes the same type of lists. It was a bad idea even in this rare "Bible" of every antique jewelry collector).

- Prices accompanying most photos already seem too low.
- On page 114, red amber is mentioned as "sought after and rare." No warning is given that "red amber" is, more often than not, plastic. This particular buying mistake is one of the more common and expensive traps for collectors seeking affordable antique jewelry.
- Warnings about shopping at "upscale" stores where staff are "often" arrogant seem particularly harsh. It might make a reader shy from the very place where the most learning is available, and which holds the "true find". Offensive arrogance in owners and staff, uncommon as it may be, usually indicates they don't know everything. The best finds may be right under their noses—a great opportunity for the informed buyer.

**What Ms. Miller does best is give a full overview of the myriad possibilities to be found in collecting antique jewelry. The author is a generous instructor of how to look at a piece of jewelry, how to avoid bad purchases, how to shop, and where to shop. Every collector, every store owner, should have this book at arms' reach.**

**Overview:** Items shown are under \$1500; four pages color photos; many B&W photos and illustrations; overview of historical periods; suggestions of where and how to buy. **Retail Price:** \$10; Citadel Press, Carol Publishing Group (ISBN 09-8065-14116).

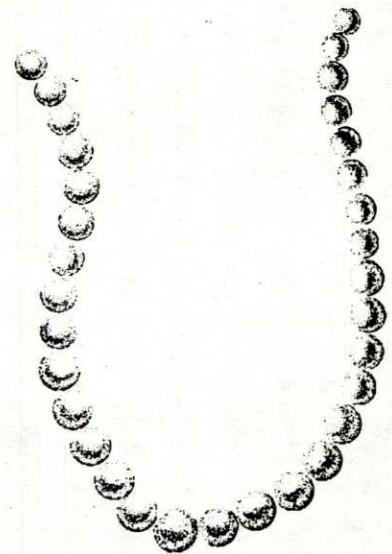
**Karen Lorene is author of *Buying Antique Jewelry: Skipping the Mistakes*, and owner of Facère Jewelry Art in Seattle, Washington.**

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*"Just as most issues are seldom black and white, so are most good solutions seldom black or white. Beware of the solution that requires one side to be totally the loser and the other side to be totally the winner. The reason there are two sides to begin with usually is because neither side has all the facts. Therefore, when the wise mediator effects a compromise, he is not acting from political motivation. Rather, he is acting from a deep sense of respect for the whole truth."*

— Stephen R. Schwambach

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**Please send me a membership application for Accredited Gemologists Association**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Guidelines**

Membership with full voting privileges is available to professionals holding gemological diplomas from accepted institutions. Associate Membership is available to students of gemology and avocational gemologists. Supplier Membership is available to providers of goods & services to the gem & jewelry industry.

**Membership Dues & Fees**

\$25 Processing Fee (one-time, non-refundable) will be retained by AGA.  
 \$125 Initial Voting Member Dues.  
 \$75 Initial Associate Member Dues.  
 \$175 Initial Supplier Member Dues.  
 Make checks payable to Accredited Gemologists Association, in US funds.  
 Membership is renewable annually (Voting \$100, Assoc. \$50, Supplier \$150).

**AGA will not discriminate against any applicant based upon race, creed, color, national origin, age or gender. Applicants are required to meet substantial member qualifications, and to adhere to the AGA Code of Ethics.**

**Return This Request To:**

Stanley Cohen, AGA Membership Chair  
 4747 South Hulen St. #109  
 Fort Worth, Texas 76132  
 (817) 346-2611

**ASK MR. SOFTWARE**

Free software suggestions  
 for your jewelry business!

*National Jeweler* and the Accredited Gemologists Association (AGA) are offering the jewelry industry a service to help jewelers computerize their business. Simply circle the number listed below. You will be sent a simple form to fill out and return. The AGA will send you a listing of relevant software options for your particular business needs.

The Accredited Gemologists Association (AGA) is a not-for-profit professional organization that promotes computerization for every aspect of the jewelry industry through software reviews, seminars and workshops around the country. The AGA offers advanced training in gemology and a certified Gem Laboratory Program. We advocate for ethical codes of conduct within the gemological appraisal business.

**Your "Ask Mr. Software" Request Form**

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**Product Category:**

- Retail Management
- Manufacturing Management
- Gem Brokerage
- Telecommunications
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- Pawn Shop Management
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**Hardware Platform: (circle one)**

IBM/DOS Windows Apple/Mac

**Desired price less than: (circle one)**

\$1,000 \$2,000 \$3,500 \$5,000 No Limit

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