



# PHI BETA KAPPA

THE KEY REPORTER

FALL 2006

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# Unmentionable Morality

It keeps coming up. Occasionally, we need to explain the stars on the Phi Beta Kappa key, and we disclose that one of them stands for morality. Article III of our constitution stipulates “good character” as a criterion of selection for membership. And there is this persistent notion — despite counter examples we could all cite — that education in the liberal arts and sciences should help us toward a life well lived, a life which, if not actually noble, is at least ethically respectable and decent.

Yet we argue endlessly about the cash value of talk about morality, ethics and character. “Who’s to say?” someone will ask, challenging whether these matters are useful to discuss at all. We might hope that this question is not the last word, when we look at the state of things in our nation and in the world. If anything matters, it matters that we should be able to deliberate reasonably about right and wrong, better and worse. If we let go of that, then we are left with Thucydides’ account of Athenian ruthlessness in the Peloponnesian War that has the Athenians telling the Melians: The strong do what they wish, and the weak suffer what they must.



*“Arguments aimed at developing and refining each other’s moral sensibilities have a peculiar feature. They are not won when one party gives up. They are won when one party comes to see things as the other does.”*

But how does such deliberation go? How does it start? As a matter of fact, *it just starts*. I make a claim about what is good or right, and you ask me why I think that. I give a reason. You weigh it and come back with a countervailing reason. I weigh that . . . and so on. The word “deliberation,” by the way, comes from *libra*, the Latin word for “scales,” and so the metaphor of weighing reasons is a deeply rooted one. This is what deliberation about values is like, until and unless we have been contaminated by sophisticated theories or wearied with the endlessness or ugliness of debates.

When we are exchanging reasons, we may not agree. We may not agree about what is true. We may not agree what it makes sense to bring up. We may not agree how strong this or that reason is. Disagreements notwithstanding, the back and forth of such exchanges presuppose that I want you to take my reasons as I do and that you want me to take yours as you do. I want my reasons to strike you as they strike me, and *vice versa*. In other words, when we are deliberating in disagreement, each of us is trying to shape the other’s moral sensibility. We do this by presenting facts, with the implication that the facts presented bear upon something that matters.

Arguments aimed at developing and refining each other’s moral sensibilities have a peculiar feature. They are not won when one party gives up. They are won when one party comes to see things as the other does. I don’t want you to say, “Okay, okay. I quit. You win.” I want you to say, “Oh! Now I see. Now I understand.” A conflict in ethics is won not by defeating the other side but by winning them over. Ideally, this is a process in which all parties enter imaginatively into the other side’s vision of the world, asking with sympathy, “How could they see it like that?” It is a process of seeking common humanity while respecting differences.

Suppose we thought of Phi Beta Kappa’s commitment to morality in this vein. The half-million and more of us will not agree on substantive issues. But we could agree that a deliberative approach, offering reasons to refine the moral sensibilities of our interlocutors and weighing their reasons to refine our own, is the way to handle disagreements over values. If we can agree on that, then Phi Beta Kappa can, without blushing, say something important about the place of morality in the public discourse of our nation and the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Churchill'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Churchill  
Secretary

# SPOTLIGHT



Karen and Howard Baldwin at the premiere of *Sahara* (2005), a film they produced

*"I've always had a passion for the humanities, and I use that knowledge constantly in my work. Acting, writing, psychology — believe me, all of the liberal arts come in extremely handy when you're trying to take a movie from the idea stage to the multiplex."*

— KAREN BALDWIN

As the producer of films like *Ray* (2004), which was nominated for Best Picture at the 77th Annual Academy Awards and which won a Best Actor Oscar for star Jamie Foxx, and the Matthew McConaughey and Penelope Cruz action hit *Sahara* (2005), Karen Baldwin is a Hollywood insider with a commitment to bringing smart, commercial motion pictures to the big screen.

She is also a member of Phi Beta Kappa, an achievement she considers just as impressive as her work in the entertainment business.

"Getting inducted into Phi Beta Kappa was a very proud moment for me," she says. "It's something I will always treasure."

Karen serves as Senior Vice President of Creative Affairs for Baldwin Entertainment Group, the independent development and production company she co-founded in 2004 with her husband and partner, producer Howard Baldwin.

Since attending Wellesley College and the College of the Holy Cross, where she was inducted into the Society in 1985, Karen has worked as a local sports talk show co-host, an actress with several feature film credits, a produced screenwriter and, most recently, an accomplished film producer.

In addition to *Ray* and *Sahara*, Karen has helped develop and produce films such as *Sudden Death* (1995), *Resurrection* (1999), *Mystery, Alaska* (1999), *Gideon* (1999), *Joshua* (2002), *Children on Their Birthdays* (2002), *Danny Deckchair* (2003), *Where the Red Fern Grows* (2003), *Swimming Upstream*

*Continued on 11*

## THE KEY REPORTER

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The spring and fall issues are mailed to every ΦBK member for whom the Membership Records office has an address. Newly initiated members receive all four issues for one year.

## On the Cover

Harkness Tower at Yale University  
Alpha of Connecticut, 1780

**The 41st Triennial Council of Phi Beta Kappa  
October 26-29, Atlanta, Ga.**

Delegates from 270 Phi Beta Kappa chapters and more than 60 associations are expected to attend the 41st Council of Phi Beta Kappa on Oct. 26-29, in Atlanta.

Delegates to the 41st Council will elect the Society's national leaders for the 2006-09 triennium and will vote on the chartering of new chapters.

This year's meeting will also celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Society's Visiting Scholar Program with special presentations by Elaine Fantham, Giger Professor of Latin, Emerita, Princeton University; Linda Greenhouse, Supreme Court Correspondent, *The New York Times*; N. Katherine Hayles, Hillis Professor of Literature, University of California, Los Angeles; Dennis O'Brien, President Emeritus, University of Rochester; Yi-Fu Tuan, J.K. Wright and Vilas Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin-Madison; and Michael S. Turner, Rauner Distinguished Service Professor, University of Chicago. All have served as scholars for Phi Beta Kappa's Visiting Scholar Program.

Charles Tilly, Joseph L. Bottenwieser Professor of Social Science at Columbia University, is the winner of the triennial Sidney S. Hook Memorial Award. He will address the Council banquet on Oct. 28. A special award will be given to Gerald Early, Merle King Professor of Modern Letters at Washington University in St. Louis, for distinguished service to the humanities. Recipients of both awards are selected by the ΦBK Senate from nominations received from chapters, associations and individual members.

The headquarters for the Council will be at the Westin Peachtree Plaza. On Friday, Oct. 27, the Council reception and the second session of speakers from the Visiting Scholar Program will be at the Carter Center.

If you are interested in attending any of the 41st Council events, please contact Cameron Curtis at (202) 745-3237 or [ccurtis@pbk.org](mailto:ccurtis@pbk.org). ■

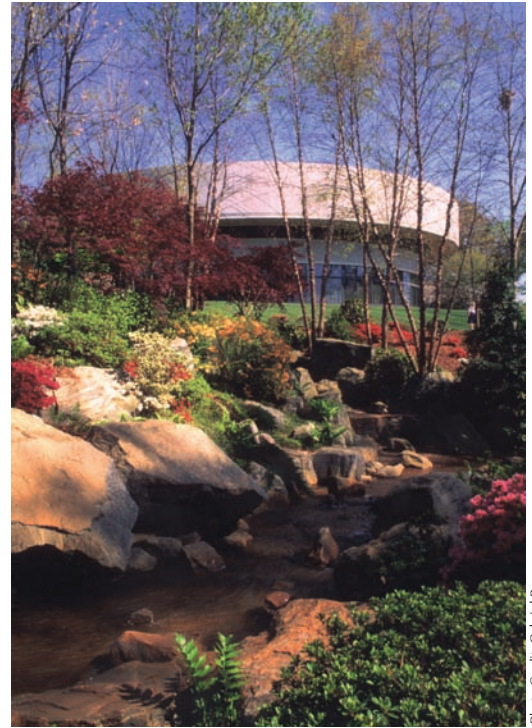


Photo Credit: Gabriel Benzur

The Carter Center is committed to advancing human rights and alleviating unnecessary human suffering. Founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, the Atlanta-based center has helped to improve the quality of life for people in more than 65 countries. Jimmy Carter is an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa (Kansas State University, 1991).

**Visiting Scholar Program  
Celebrates 50th Anniversary  
at 2006 Triennial Council**

Since 1956, Phi Beta Kappa has supported its chapters by making it possible for distinguished scholars in the liberal arts and sciences to visit ΦBK sheltering institutions, spend time with faculty and students there and offer a free public lecture open to the entire campus and the surrounding community.

"Although Phi Beta Kappa is generally thought of for what it is rather than what it does," a chapter officer from Clark University observed, "it clearly makes significant contributions to the intellectual richness of its member institutions through its Visiting Scholar Program."

The Society has received hundreds of such comments over the years testifying to the program's popularity and its success. This year, Phi Beta Kappa is proud to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the program.

The Visiting Scholar Program will be showcased at the 41st Council with three events featuring prominent scholars who have previously participated in the program.

For a complete schedule with times and exact locations, contact Kathy Navascues at (202) 745-3231 or [knavascues@pbk.org](mailto:knavascues@pbk.org). ■

**The Visiting Scholar Program  
50th Anniversary Celebration**

October 26-28, 2006  
Atlanta, Ga.

**Thursday, October 26, Westin Peachtree Plaza**

"American Higher Education: 50 Years Back, 50 Years Ahead" by Dennis O'Brien and N. Katherine Hayles

**Friday, October 27, Carter Center**

"The Transformation of the Roman Year" by Elaine Fantham

"A Problem in Human Geography: What If the Objects of Our Study Are Our Intellectual Peers?" by Yi-Fu Tuan

"From Before the Big Bang until the End of Time" by Michael S. Turner

**Saturday, October 28, Westin Peachtree Plaza**

"Change and Continuity on the Supreme Court" by Linda Greenhouse



## Teagle Foundation Awards \$100,000 "Fresh Thinking" Grant to Phi Beta Kappa for Teaching and Learning Deliberative Skills on College Campuses

The Phi Beta Kappa Society received a grant of \$100,000 from the Teagle Foundation to support "Deliberation about Things that Matter," a series of events for teaching and learning deliberative skills through the discussion of major issues of meaning or value. These events will be held on college and university campuses across the country.

For 230 years, ΦBK has advocated excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. "Deliberation about Things that Matter" emphasizes the first purpose of the Society: to encourage the application of learning and scholarship in the examination of important issues.

"When asked about the value of their liberal arts educations, our members consistently point to the cultivation of the skills of delibera-

tion," said John Churchill, ΦBK secretary. "This project will attempt to look more deeply into the art of teaching and learning these skills."

Ten colleges and universities will be selected to participate in "Deliberation about Things that Matter." At each location, a series of symposia, discussions, forums and other forms of instructional engagement will be organized by the Phi Beta Kappa chapter and incorporated into the school's curriculum. The program will be informed by the research of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and that of the Center of Inquiry in Liberal Arts of Wabash College.

The funding for "Deliberation about Things that Matter" extends the Teagle Foundation's Fresh Thinking

initiative, which supports projects intended to bring new ideas to the liberal arts.

"Our goal at the Teagle Foundation is to ensure that students obtaining a liberal arts education experience the most intellectually stimulating curricula possible," said W. Robert Connor, president of the Teagle Foundation. "This round of Fresh Thinking grants seeks to explore how the liberal arts can help students examine and deal with 'Big Questions' of meaning and value."

Over the last two years, the Teagle Foundation has made more than \$1.9 million in grants through its Fresh Thinking initiative. ■

### ΦBK in the News

♦ **James S. Tisch** (Cornell, 1975), president and CEO of Loews Corp., has been named chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Education Broadcasting Corporation (EBC). EBC is the parent company of public broadcasters Thirteen/WNET and WLIW21. Among the most watched public stations in the country, both are major producers of programming for the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). ("James S. Tisch Named Chairman of Education Broadcasting Corporation's Board of Trustees" *Business Wire, Inc.* 27 June 2006.)

♦ **Westley Moore** (Johns Hopkins, 2001) is one of 14 White House Fellows for 2006-2007. A former Rhodes Scholar, Moore is an investment banker with Deutsche Bank and a paratrooper with the U.S. Army Reserves. He is currently writing a book on the African-American involvement in international affairs. The non-partisan White House Fellows Program is among the nation's most prestigious public policy fellowship programs. ("City/ County Digest" *The Baltimore Sun* 20 June 2006: 3B.)

♦ St. Louis Circuit Judge **Barbara Ann Crancer** (Albion College, 1960) continues to search for her father, Jimmy Hoffa. Crancer pressured the FBI to open its file on Hoffa. "I need to know the end of his story," she said.

(Burke, Cathy. "Daughter's 19-Year Hunt for Hoffa A 'Labor' of Love" *The New York Post* 28 May 2006: 18.)

♦ **Patrick Fitzgerald** (Amherst College, 1981), special counsel for the Department of Justice, was named 2005 Lawyer of the Year by *National Law Journal*. (Jones, Leigh. "Lawyer of the Year Relentless Man on a Mission" *Palm Beach Daily Business Review* 29 Dec. 2005: 1.)

♦ William Ratliff donated \$100,000 to the University of Indianapolis to establish the annual "Katharine Ratliff Memorial Conference on Ethics, Values and Human Responsibility" to honor his daughter, a Phi Beta Kappan whose life was marked by achievement and service to others. **Katharine Ratliff** (University of Florida, 1978) was an assistant professor in psychology at the university when she died in 1990. ("U of I Gets \$100,000 Gift" *The Indianapolis Star* 17 Dec. 2005: 1S.)

♦ Former Presidents **George Bush** (Yale, 1948) and **Bill Clinton** (Georgetown, 1968) have raised more than \$100 million for the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund since the project began. On Dec. 7, 2005, they announced that \$30 million would go to 32 universities and colleges along the Gulf Coast. An additional \$60 million will support other rebuilding efforts in the region. (Salmon, Jacqueline L. "\$90 Million in Katrina Relief Awarded" *The Washington Post* 8 Dec. 2005: A16.)

♦ **Wan J. Kim** (Johns Hopkins, 1990) was confirmed on Nov. 4, 2005, as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Justice. Kim is the first immigrant, the first Korean American and the first Asian-Pacific American to serve in this position. ("Washington in Brief" *The Washington Post* 5 Nov. 2005, final ed.: A5.)

### ΦBK in Popular Culture

♦ **Carson Kressley** (Gettysburg College, 1991) is one of the five fabulous stars of Bravo's Emmy-winning show *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. In addition to his work in television, Kressley has acted on the big screen in *The Perfect Man* (2005) and is the author of *Off the Cuff: The Guy's Guide to Looking Good* (Dutton, 2004) and a book for children, *You're Different and That's Super*, with Jared Lee (Simon & Schuster, 2005). ("Carson Kressley: Fashion Savant" *BRAVO* 1 Aug. 2006 [www.bravotv.com/Queer\\_Eye/bio/Carson\\_Kressley](http://www.bravotv.com/Queer_Eye/bio/Carson_Kressley))

♦ **Madelyn "Maddy" Curley** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2003) plays rising-star gymnast Mina Hoyt in the Disney film *Stick It* (2006). ("UNC Grad to Star in Gymnastics Movie" *The News & Observer, Raleigh, N.C.* 2 April 2006: G10.)

*Continued on 7*



Priscilla Long holds the "Ellie" her essay won for *The American Scholar* at the National Magazine Awards in May. Following the award ceremony in New York City, the sculpture was given to her by *The American Scholar*.

## Priscilla Long Talks about Her Essay "Genome Tome," *The American Scholar* and the 2006 National Magazine Awards

Current events like war and global warming are unnerving. I do what I can but also — for whatever reason — find it comforting to peer into the deep past, to consider how long we *Homo sapiens* have been on earth.

"Genome Tome" took three years to write, and all of it was fascinating and, to me, revelatory. I discarded the first two versions, twice stripping it back to the title plus that haunting Linda Hogan epigraph ("Suddenly all my ancestors are behind me. Be still, they say. Watch and listen. You are the result of the love of thousands"). Some of it, actually all of it, is quite personal. I'm an identical twin, and it was my good fortune to draw as fellow-clone the brilliant Pamela O. Long. When I told her "Genome Tome" and *The American Scholar* won, she said, "Wow!! I'm completely wowed!" I can't say it better.

The piece required considerable reading on old bones, DNA, chimpanzees, language, human evolution, *et cetera*. It was catalyzed by a 2002 exhibition on the Human Genome Project at the University of Washington's Henry Art Gallery, curated by Robin Held and titled "Gene(sis): Contemporary Art Explores the Human Genome." For a time, Seattle was in a whirl over genomics, including readings at the Henry and at Open Books, the city's poetry-only bookstore. The proprietors of Open Books, Christine Deavel and John W. Marshall, got so excited, they even sponsored a PowerPoint lecture on DNA, deviating from their virtually unassailable poetry-only policy.

I consider "Genome Tome" one direct result.

I'm a poet, and I enjoy working with forms. I like the idea of a form taking the shape of its content. Our genomes have 23 pairs of chromosomes, and so it seemed fitting for "Genome Tome" to have 23 "chapters." The chapter titled "Questions" contains 23 questions. It took me a considerable amount of time to puzzle out what seemed to me to be the important questions bearing on who we are, given what we now know.

The *ghazal*, that ancient Arabian form of poem, deserves mention. In 2002, the Seattle Arts Commission contracted me to compose 10 *ghazals*, one of which you have in "Genome

Tome." Just when the *ghazal* project began mating with the "Genome Tome" project I can't really say. These things happen.

My long-running workshop of peer poets and visual artists is a great boon. It includes Jack Remick, M. Anne Sweet, Irene Drennan, and Geri Gale, as well as Gordon H. Wood, whose images grace the piece. Gordon's art reflecting on biologic and cosmic matters seemed to me (and to the *Scholar's* Robert Wilson) especially fitting.

It's also fitting that I serve as senior editor of *HistoryLink.org*, the online encyclopedia of Washington state history. Our staff's obsession with the past (going back as far as Kennewick Man's ancient bones unearthed in eastern Washington) also stimulated this work. Noam Chomsky graciously inspected its colorless green ideas, still sleeping furiously. Other insightful readers included my good friends Bethany Reid, Kit Oldham, Saul Slapikoff and Louis Kampf.

Above all, I'm grateful to Wilson and the staff of *The American Scholar* for seeing the worth of "Genome Tome," for getting its jokes, for appreciating its innovations, for liking its poem, for comprehending its funny-looking shape and for all their kindly support in shepherding it into print. And then, my goodness, how completely thrilling to go to Manhattan, to meet Wilson and Allen Freeman, to go to the perfectly amazing black-tie event at the Lincoln Center for Jazz. And then, to actually win! Well. It was the experience of a lifetime. I have yet to come down. ■

*Priscilla Long's essay "Genome Tome" from the Summer 2005 issue of The American Scholar won the 2006 National Magazine Award in the category of Feature Writing. The award was announced May 8 at a ceremony held by the American Society of Magazine Editors in New York City. News of the award was first shared with ΦBK members in the summer issue of The Key Reporter. This is the fourth time The American Scholar has been recognized with a National Magazine Award. To purchase back issues of The American Scholar, call (202) 265-3808.*

### ESSAYS FROM *The American Scholar*

CONTINUE TO  
RECEIVE PRAISE

Edward Hoagland's "The Glue Is Gone" (Winter 2005) has been selected for *The Best American Spiritual Writing 2006*, edited by Philip Zaleski.

Emily Bernard's "Teaching the N-Word" (Autumn 2005) will appear in *The Best American Essays 2006*, edited by Lauren Slater.

Brian Doyle's "Joyas Voladoras" (Autumn 2004) appears in *The Pushcart Prize XXX: Best of the Small Presses, 2006*, edited by Bill Henderson.



## Paul Humphreys Celebrates His 100th Birthday with Phi Beta Kappa Induction

It was a wonderful party surrounded by friends and several generations of family, including a number of Bucknell University graduates. But Paul's son, Richard Humphreys, Class of 1962, had a special surprise in store: membership in the nation's oldest academic honor society, Phi Beta Kappa.

Paul had graduated before a ΦBK chapter was established at Bucknell. But in May 1942 he received a letter from the newly established Mu of Pennsylvania chapter telling him that he was one of 20 members of the Class of 1928 to be nominated for membership. Such invitations were a common practice for new chapters.

As Richard tells the story, his father put the letter aside. The dark days of World War II were upon the nation. Pearl Harbor had been attacked only months earlier. Who could think about honor societies when the world was at war? "Everything was in turmoil, and other things seemed to take precedence," Richard quoted his father as saying when asked about the letter.

When Richard discovered the letter, it had been safely tucked away all these years in his father's personal papers. He wondered, was it too late to see his father presented with membership? An idea took hold. Wouldn't membership in ΦBK make a great 100th birthday surprise?

As Paul's birthday neared, Richard prepared the necessary documentation that showed "clear evidence of the possession of distinguished scholarly capacities" that would open the way for the present-day nominating committee to advance his nomination.

It is, indeed, a noteworthy career. After graduation from Bucknell, Paul continued his studies at the Crozer Theological Institute, where he was awarded bachelor's and master's degrees in theology.

His 43-year career as a minister took him to parishes in Philadelphia, Hightstown, N.J., and Waterbury, Conn., and he has written several books on church history. He taught religion at the Peddie School in Hightstown, N.J., and, among other honors, received the Bucknell University Alumni Award in 1960, was profiled in *Bucknell World* in 2001 and, along the way, served in numerous community volunteer capacities.

On Saturday, June 24, as he celebrated his 100th birthday (his actual birth date is June 28), Paul became the newest member of ΦBK and was presented with his official membership pin and certificate — more than 78 years after graduation and more than 64 years since he received the membership invitation. It made a milestone birthday celebration even more special.

"Phi Beta Kappa was a real surprise," said Paul from his home in Northampton, Mass. "My goodness. It was a real bump for me to hear that and to know that folks were interested in me. It made for a wonderful time."

Remembering that letter from 1942, Paul says, "I treasured it — that I was even considered. I've always had a profound respect for Phi Beta Kappa as a very important part of your life, if you were honored enough to receive the award."

Richard takes great pleasure in pulling off the birthday surprise for his father.

"It was just spectacular. Everyone had a marvelous time, and Dad was in great form," he says. "The ΦBK membership was a complete surprise and a big hit. He was absolutely delighted."

"The Mu of Pennsylvania chapter is honored to celebrate this remarkable man's life through membership in our society," says Chris Zappe, president of the Bucknell chapter of ΦBK and



Paul Humphreys poses with his ΦBK certificate following his induction on June 24.

interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "Rev. Paul M. Humphreys is a shining exemplar of ΦBK's motto: Love of wisdom is the guide of life." Zappe adds, "His life has continually affirmed the key aims of this honor society: friendship, morality and literature."

"Mr. Humphreys' membership in Phi Beta Kappa is both an unusual and a heart-warming story. To our knowledge, it is the first of its kind," says John Churchill, ΦBK secretary. "We welcome him to a society that has pursued its mission of fostering and recognizing excellence in the liberal arts since our country was founded."

Paul Humphreys is the oldest ΦBK inductee on record. ■

*This story was prepared and submitted by Sam Alcorn, Web editor in the Division of Communications at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pa.*

### ΦBK IN POPULAR CULTURE

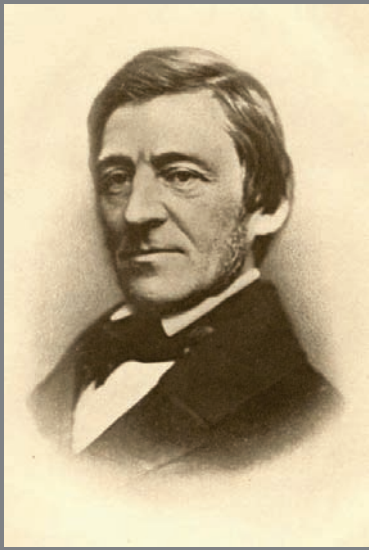
*Continued from 5*

♦ Producer **Gale Anne Hurd** (Stanford, 1976) has made nearly 30 movies, including three of the *Terminator* films, two of the *Alien* films and *Aeon Flux* (2005), a futuristic sci-fi thriller starring Charlize Theron. (Diamond, Jamie. "Inventing

the Future, but Anchored in the Past" *The New York Times* 8 Dec. 2005, late ed.: F6.)

♦ **Arlene Weiss Alda's** (Hunter College, CUNY, 1954) membership is noted by husband Alan Alda in his new autobiography, *Never Have Your Dog Stuffed: And Other Things I've Learned* (Random House, 2005). He writes: "I found out she was smart as

well as talented — Phi Beta Kappa, which they don't give out for negotiating with your teachers." Arlene Weiss Alda is a musician, photographer and celebrated author of children's books, including *Did You Say Pears?* (Tundra Books, 2006) and *The Book of ZZZs* (Tundra Books, 2005). *Submitted by Wendy J. Shadwell, New York, N.Y.* ■



Ralph Waldo Emerson  
1803-1882

Ralph Waldo Emerson, widely recognized and celebrated as the father of American Transcendentalism, was a philosopher, a poet, an essayist and one of the most powerful and inspiring orators of his day.

His 1837 Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard University, "The American Scholar," is an essential text for any student of the history of American letters. Oliver Wendell Holmes called "The American Scholar" "Our Intellectual Declaration of Independence."

Emerson's performance on this occasion has become the gold standard for all Phi Beta Kappa orators who have followed him in a tradition that our chapters across the country still maintain.

The Society's literary legacy is also a constant reminder of his influence. The title of his Phi Beta Kappa oration was later adopted as the name of the Society's award-winning literary and intellectual quarterly journal, *The American Scholar*.

*Image courtesy of the Joel Myerson Collection of Nineteenth-Century American Literature, Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina*

# Elizabeth Peabody

## *Transcendentalism's "first-rate academician"*

by MEGAN MARSHALL

The three Peabody sisters were an extraordinary group — our American Brontës, albeit a lot more outgoing. The youngest, Sophia, was an artist whose painting and sculpture were shown and sold at a time when few women practiced in the field; she married Nathaniel Hawthorne. The middle sister, Mary, was more politically inclined. An educator, writer and translator, she married her soul mate, the reformer Horace Mann. Elizabeth, the eldest, was the most extraordinary of all: an intellectual prodigy as a girl; a creative thinker among the New England Transcendentalists and a promoter of Transcendentalist causes in her 30s and 40s; and the founder of American kindergartens, a cause she promoted from her 50s until she died at almost 90 years old.

But above all and through it all, Elizabeth Peabody was a historian. Elizabeth was so much a historian by nature that the Transcendentalists — ever intent on cultivating "newness" — almost couldn't accept her as one of their own. After reading an essay Elizabeth Peabody had sent him, which happened to include the first use of the term "transcendentalism" in America, Ralph Waldo Emerson dismissed it because of her reliance on the ancient Biblical prophets to make her points. He told her that reading the essay had been a little like encountering "octogenarians at a young party." Yet Emerson also acknowledged Peabody's intellectual prowess, writing in his journal that, "of another sex, she would have been a first-rate academician; and, as it was, she had the ease and scope and authority of a learned professor."

*Of another sex.* Actually, Elizabeth Peabody never felt disadvantaged in her work as a historian by the fact of being female. One of her earliest childhood memories was of hearing her mother, a school teacher, tell the story of the Pilgrim settlement of New England. As Mrs. Peabody repeatedly evoked their Pilgrim "ancestors," Elizabeth began to imagine a "procession of fair women in white robes" who were "streaming along" from their

boat and onto Plymouth Rock. Elizabeth had mistaken her mother's term "ancestors" for one of her own devising, "Ann Sisters": a group of "sisters" who "strangely enough were all named Ann." As Elizabeth heard her mother's story, these sisters immediately built a school house and began teaching the children of the community. In Elizabeth's young mind, women were the founders of the new world; women were the educators of a new breed of citizen.

Margaret Fuller is well-known for her Conversations for women, held in Boston in the early 1840s, sometimes thought of as America's first consciousness-raising groups. But a full decade before Fuller attempted the project, Elizabeth Peabody was holding what she called Historical Conferences for women. These were year-long courses in which participants were held responsible for researching the history of an era or a civilization, under Elizabeth's supervision, and then reporting to the class, while also reading together historical works of great seriousness, or listening to Elizabeth's paraphrases if the books were written in German.

And now I think of Emerson's observation that Elizabeth might have been "a learned professor," if of another sex. By Elizabeth's account, there was not at this time (the 1830s) any professor of history at Harvard, the only college in the neighborhood. Many of her female students had brothers enrolled at Harvard, and some of them came to her, "*sub rosa*," she said, for instruction. As a woman, Elizabeth Peabody adopted a role she might not have been able to play even if she had been a man.

As the decade of fervent Transcendentalism arrived, Elizabeth's classes began to drift from history as a subject. The women raised larger questions: "What is character?" "What is the meaning of life?" They decided, as true proto-Transcendentalists, that cultivating an inner spiritual life was important. But, under Elizabeth's direction, they also reached the conclusion that "trying to do something our-



selves” was just as important. “We must act out our impulses,” for, in the end, “the measure of our Life is our Power.”

What did Elizabeth do? She opened a foreign language bookstore where many of her favorite history books were for sale. The Transcendentalists used the shop as a gathering place; the Brook Farm Association drew up its plans there; Margaret Fuller held her Conversations there. And then, as the era of “the newness” faded, Elizabeth found another way of imparting historical knowledge — a system of charts that purported to represent all of world history at a glance, if you knew how to read them. Students young and old were entranced. Mary Peabody Mann wrote that even her husband’s sister, Lydia — a cranky born-again Baptist — was attending “Elizabeth’s lesson in history twice a week, which she thinks the most interesting lesson she ever heard in anything.” Elizabeth traveled the East Coast during the 1850s, promoting the system and enjoying what she called her “rolling residence” in railway cars.

Of course, Elizabeth Peabody never attended college; in the 1820s, when she was in her late teens, women weren’t allowed as students, let alone professors. Her chief female mentor was her mother, who was also her only classroom teacher. But this lack of institutional connection worked to her advantage. Her mother’s curriculum featured books by and about women, with the result, Elizabeth once wrote, that “the idea that women were less capable of the highest education in literature and science, and of authorship on any subject, truly never entered my mind.” Indeed, even in an era that we think of as extremely limited in opportunities for women, Elizabeth grew up believing that “women could take and were allowed to take any course [in life] they were fitted for, if they chose.”

Elizabeth and her mother and sisters, and even many of the men in their circle, were essentially self-educated and, as we might call them today, “life-long learners.” One of Elizabeth’s first published works was a translation from the French (a language she taught herself) of the philosopher Baron Joseph Marie Degerando’s work of that very title: *Self-Education*. Emerson read her translation, and it informed his own thought as, early in his career, he resigned his pulpit and began to re-form himself as a lecturer, an essayist and a secular prophet.



Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804-1894) Courtesy of the Concord Free Public Library

Elizabeth Peabody’s prodigious intellectual drive led her to master many fields of learning — from linguistics to metaphysics — all on her own. But history was the subject that she felt everyone should make the effort to master. Writing 150 years ago on “The Place of History in the Education of Republican Men and Women” for the early feminist journal *The Una*, she expressed her concern that “people are not sufficiently instructed in the social science which history teaches, to be worthy of a government which is acknowledged to be the better the less it governs.” Women, she believed, “inevitably give [society] its character;” and for them the study was all the more crucial. “As the art of life is the universal vocation of woman,” Elizabeth wrote in a late reminiscence, “history is what woman

should read from youth to age, whatever else she does.” ■

*The Phi Beta Kappa Association of Boston hosts an annual lecture series engaging ΦBK Fellows lecturers and other renowned scholars. The Boston Association’s 2006 speaker was Megan Marshall. Her biography, The Peabody Sisters: Three Women Who Ignited American Romanticism (Houghton Mifflin, 2005), was awarded the 2006 Francis Parkman Prize, the Mark Lynton History Prize and the Massachusetts Book Award in non-fiction; it was also one of two finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in biography and memoir. Marshall majored in English and American Literature and Language at Harvard University, where she was elected to ΦBK in 1977.*

## Student Goes from No House to Morehouse

Donald Washington Jr. Graduates from Historically Black College after Spending Early College Life in Shelters

by Liza Gutierrez

Donald Washington Jr.'s life as a college graduate in Georgia is a far cry from his earlier years as a homeless student in Montgomery County, Md.

A full scholarship took him from local shelters and soup kitchens to Morehouse College, an all-male, historically black school in Atlanta, Ga.

During his time at Morehouse, Washington studied abroad in Ghana, traveled to Israel with a student group, and also saw Egypt — even more distant worlds away from his former life.

Washington celebrated his May 12 graduation with his mother, Harriet Wilkes, who also worked herself out of homelessness and is living in Gaithersburg, Md.

Washington, 23, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in African-American Studies, graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa, and received a Compton Mentor Fellowship to conduct a youth program in Atlanta until next summer.

Numerous people in the same situation would blame others and not succeed, said Marcellus Barksdale, director of the African-American Studies Program at Morehouse, but Washington is a shining example of how people can make a difference in their lives if they take the initiative.

"I concluded early that he was an outstanding student, and he proved to be just that," Barksdale said. "He's so brilliant and so intellectually gifted."

Washington was active in the community both on and off campus, Barksdale said, adding that he encouraged Washington to pace himself.

"You need a little social life, too," Barksdale would tell him.

Washington was among the better students when he entered Morehouse, he said. Many students at the school come from elite homes, and some do not do nearly as well as Washington did, he added.

Washington's past has not been "an anchor around his neck," Barksdale said. "He is not embarrassed by it."

After Washington's parents divorced around 2001, Wilkes worked hard to make ends meet, her son said. She worked several jobs to keep an apartment near Northwest High School in Germantown, Md., from which

Washington graduated. But she collapsed under it all while dealing with chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia — pains in the muscles, legs and ligaments.

"It was painful because my mother always wanted to be able to support me financially while I was going to school . . . to be able to help out with the basics," Washington said.

She still apologizes to him today for not having been able to do that, he said, "but it's all right. I find ways to make do."

It was during Washington's first year at Montgomery College in Rockville, Md., when the two found themselves without a home. And since men and women are kept separate in the county's shelter system, Washington was on his own.

He found himself in a homeless shelter for men in Rockville's East Gude Drive industrial zone.

"At the time, it was like walking through the valley of the shadow of death," he said. "It was difficult."

Washington encountered a myriad of people who influenced him in different ways during that tumultuous period of his life.

In the shelters, there are people with highly manipulative personalities who have spent their lives trying to get over on others, Washington said, so he had to learn how to discern what people's motivations were when he came into contact with them.

But, Washington emphasized, not all people in the shelter system are calculating.

One man named Kevin reached out to Washington and showed him how to get to a soup kitchen in Silver Spring, Md., that provided the types of meals the shelter was not always able to with reliance on donated food. Kevin also connected Washington with a case manager, he said.

Washington was placed in a transitional housing center, worked and attended school part time. He traveled more than three hours round-trip on public transportation to get to and from class, he said, and often could not study at night because the lights at the shelter were shut off at a certain time.

Although the center required residents to work in order to live there,



Donald Washington Jr. with his mother, Harriet Wilkes of Gaithersburg, Md., on graduation day at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga.

Washington knew that focusing on school and excelling academically could potentially lead to a scholarship. A staff member at the center advocated that Washington be allowed to study full time and released from the work requirement, and the center agreed, he said.

Washington's support system at Montgomery College worked like an extended family. People saw potential, and pitched in.

Different people from different circles at the school rallied around Washington to provide necessities like food and transportation to keep his spirits up, said Denise Simmons Graves, a professor and counselor at Montgomery College. When he needed to be appropriately dressed for an event, he was taken shopping for an outfit and also to the barbershop, she said.

"But he had an internal drive that bolstered him," she added.

Washington's scholarship plan worked. During his third year at Montgomery College in 2003 he earned a full scholarship that would cover education and housing expenses.

He was on his way to Morehouse. "It was real deep," Washington said about the moment he knew the scholarship was his. "I guess you could say that my cup of blessings was running over. That's how I felt."

For the next year, Morehouse Professor Angela Campbell will work as Washington's mentor on the project, "The Peacemakers: Redeem the

*Continued on 15*



## Asilomar — What is that?

by Jean James  
Northern California Association

Asilomar, which means “refuge by the sea,” is a California conference center and state park located on the Pacific Coast between Monterey and Carmel, Ca. Originally developed as a YWCA retreat in 1913 on land donated by Charles Crocker, Asilomar boasts 16 buildings designed by Arts and Crafts architect Julia Morgan.

Twenty years ago, our then president, Svetlana Thomson, inaugurated the Northern California Association’s first President’s Day conference at Asilomar. Through the years, the conference has grown into an annual event, offering our members the opportunity to enjoy themselves in a beautiful, historic setting and to hear an interesting array of speakers from all areas of the liberal arts and sciences.

In the early years of the conference, most of the programs were provided by our diverse and talented members and included a range of topics from the “Greatest Generation”

to the treatment of evolution in the science curriculum to the adventures of a single woman traveling alone in Russia.

Local universities and community colleges have become rich resources for outstanding speakers as well. Professors regularly join us at Asilomar to talk about topics as wide-ranging as genetically engineered crops, the importance of place in the work of John Steinbeck, shipwrecks and other disasters on the Monterey Peninsula, the history of wine making in California and the music of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven.

We have been able to attract outstanding speakers from a variety of fields not only because of Asilomar’s reputation but also because of the prestige of the Society. Speakers are often flattered to be invited and are willing to forgo their usual fees, especially when we emphasize that the purpose of the conference is to raise money for scholarships.

If the lineup of speakers is not enough to pique the interest of northern California’s Phi Beta Kappans, the location of Asilomar also provides

access to programs and activities our conference goers enjoy. In previous years, we have learned about the Monarch butterflies wintering in Pacific Grove, Ca., and heard about marine mammals and deep sea life; we have visited the nearby Defense Language Institute and the Naval Post Graduate School and traveled to the Steinbeck house and museum in Salinas, Ca. In addition, the site of Asilomar itself affords the opportunity for tide pool, nature and historic architectural walks.

The conference registration fee, brain child of former President Mel Shattuck, covers expenses beyond those of room and board and generates between eight and ten thousand dollars for our scholarship fund. In April, our association awarded twelve \$5,000 scholarships to outstanding graduate students from the northern California area.

The Asilomar conference is equally important to the administration of our association because it provides fertile ground for recruiting board and committee members. Years ago,

*Continued on 15*

BALDWIN *Continued from 3*

(2003), *A Sound of Thunder* (2005) and *The Game of Their Lives* (2005).

Baldwin Entertainment Group has numerous projects in various stages of development, including a biopic about the environmentalist Julia Butterfly Hill; a big-screen adaptation of Ayn Rand’s classic novel *Atlas Shrugged*, for Lionsgate Films; a film about the incredible true story of the integration of baseball, seen through the eyes of Jackie Robinson and Brooklyn Dodgers’ general manager Branch Rickey, to star Robert Redford as Rickey; a film adaptation of Frank McCourt’s memoir *Teacher Man*, to be written by Academy Award-winning screenwriter Ron Bass; and a stage musical based on the life of Ray Charles, with a book by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Suzan-Lori Parks.

“My work is incredibly challenging, but the rewards are immense,” Karen says. “I remain a very proud member of Phi Beta Kappa, and I would be more than willing to help and advise young people in Phi Beta Kappa who have an interest in the film industry.”

To learn more about Karen and Howard Baldwin’s work in films, visit Baldwin Entertainment Group on the Web at [baldwinent.com](http://baldwinent.com). ■

## Noteworthy Phi Beta Kappa Items



Phi Beta Kappa members may wish to take note of some distinctive items offered by the Society, including the desk set pen and note cards shown here. The Phi Beta Kappa desk set is made of heavy lucite with an embedded Phi Beta Kappa key. It includes a gold-plated Cross-style pen and is personalized with the member’s name, chapter and year of election. Informal note cards, engraved in gold with matching envelopes, are available in boxes of 20. The wall display combines a membership certificate and a large gold-plated key in a 12 x 16 inch walnut frame.

To order, complete the form below and mail it with your payment and a copy of your mailing label from the back cover showing your  $\Phi$ BK membership number to Hand & Hammer, 2610 Morse Lane, Woodbridge VA 22192. You can also place an order or request the complete product brochure by calling (703) 491-4866 or by faxing (703) 491-2031. You can also order online at [www.hand-hammer.com](http://www.hand-hammer.com). A three dollar shipping and handling fee is added to each order.

\_\_\_ Phi Beta Kappa Desk Set - black lucite, 3" w/pen.....\$35

\_\_\_ Phi Beta Kappa Note Cards - 20 cards w/ envelopes...\$14

\_\_\_ Wall Display - key and certificate framed, 12"x16".....\$89

Name, chapter and date for personalization\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_Check payable to Hand & Hammer is enclosed

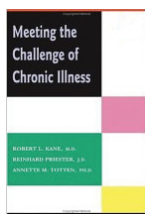
Charge my \_\_\_Visa \_\_\_MasterCard (VA residents add 5%)

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

# From Our Book Critics

By Germaine Cornelissen



## Meeting the Challenge of Chronic Illness.

Robert L. Kane,  
Reinhard Priester and  
Annette M. Totten. *The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.*  
\$55.00

Today's medical system is oriented primarily to attend to acute care. Acute conditions, such as infectious disease and injuries, tend to have a sudden onset, to last only a relatively short time and usually to be remedied by appropriate interventions without requiring ongoing treatment. The authors address the silent worldwide epidemic of chronic illnesses affecting nearly half of the American population, resulting from the increase in risk related to smoking, obesity and other lifestyle and environmental factors and from a longer average life span associated with the availability of preventive and therapeutic measures.

The authors provide a long needed comprehensive analysis of the problem of caring for chronic illnesses. The nearly \$1.5 trillion per year the United States now spends on a health care system, that is second to none in trauma, transplantation and other high-tech care, fails to address the needs of patients with chronic conditions such as arthritis, asthma, depression, diabetes, heart disease or Parkinson disease, who require long-term attention and management of their conditions. The task of restructuring a health care system centered on the patient rather than on the disease condition is masterfully addressed in this book.

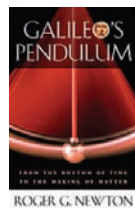
Fragmented and uncoordinated services at the root of the insufficiency and ineffectiveness of caring for chronic illnesses affecting individuals, families and society lead the authors to propose a better integrated health care system and to suggest directions to achieve this goal. To succeed in mitigating functional limitations and maximizing quality of life, the authors emphasize the interdependent nature of multiple conditions, paying particular attention to the need for a longitudinal follow-up best achieved by empowering patients to monitor their own health.

The authors advocate a greater emphasis on patient education and

consider group visits and community-based programs to provide patients with multidisciplinary information and support. Information technologies should facilitate communication between patients and health care providers, extending from clinicians to advanced practice nurses and other personnel who likely will see their responsibilities broaden.

Whereas the continued development and dissemination of new technologies, such as the integration of therapeutic devices with information capabilities or devices allowing the remote monitoring of patients, is likely to offer greater independence to patients with chronic illnesses, financial and other barriers still need to be addressed. Prevention and health promotion provide the means to avoid further functional decline and poor life quality. Also, adverse drug events must be considered, particularly when chronically ill patients take multiple medications.

Paying for chronic care should reinforce the goals of that care. Both the professional and lay communities need to be convinced that it is worthwhile to invest in better chronic care. The authors call on policymakers, health care providers and educators to address the challenges facing the health care system. In addition to a redistribution of resources, a reform is needed to align the health care system with the mounting reality of chronic illnesses. The book provides a much needed assessment of the greatest challenge in health care today, pointing to the fact that improving the system is not a choice but a necessity.



**Galileo's Pendulum:  
From the Rhythm of  
Time to the Making of  
Matter.** Roger G.  
Newton. *Harvard  
University Press, 2005;*  
paper \$13.95

This delightful short book addresses the problem of time measurement, viewed in its different aspects through history. It is centered on the keen observation made anecdotally in the cathedral of Pisa by Galileo Galilei, when he was only 17, that the time it took the hanging chandelier to complete one oscillation was independent of how far it was swinging. Surprising but quite fitting is the author's introduction dealing with biological time-

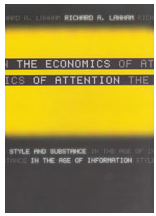
keeping. As a student and colleague of the father of chronobiology who coined circadian, I particularly appreciated seeing the topic included in the book, notably since evidence is accumulating for a much broader time structure shared by living organisms with their cosmos, far beyond circadian and circannual rhythms.

A review of different calendars and clock designs through the ages emphasizes how profound an effect Galileo's discovery of the simple pendulum's isochronism had: its suitability as a timing device became apparent. Eventually, it led to the first truly accurate mechanical timepiece, which in turn enabled John Harrison to solve the longitude problem, making the safe navigation of ocean-going ships possible. Scientific work, especially astronomy, could also flourish. Curiously, the designation of Greenwich Mean Time and the adoption of the coordinated universal time scale arose from the need by railroads for geographical uniformity in the telling of time.

The book would not be complete without a section devoted to the current definition of time based on atomic clocks and its implication for determining the coordinates of any point on the surface of the earth within a few feet via satellites of the Global Positioning System. The second is now the most precisely defined unit in physics, expected to reach an accuracy of one part in  $10^{16}$  in the next few years, with further improvement on the horizon threatening to upset what we mean by "keeping time" (*Physics Today* 2006; 59(3):10-11).

To wrap up this fascinating story, the author takes us on a tour of the basic physics of the pendulum's properties. From Sir Isaac Newton's equation of motion, Léon Foucault's pendulum and Joseph Fourier's decomposition of any function in terms of sine curves of different frequencies to the vibrations of sounds and light waves, and Albert Einstein's theory of relativity, quantum mechanics and quantum electrodynamics, the far-reaching and pervading properties of the harmonic oscillator are presented clearly and concisely as a crucial building block for our understanding of nature in this very interesting and engaging book.





**The Economics of Attention: Style and Substance in the Age of Information.** Richard A. Lanham. University of Chicago Press, 2006. \$29.00

It is ironic that Richard Lanham's newest book is a book at all because its central subject is what happens when our reading moves from books to computer screens. Unlike some English professors, Lanham has a cheery view of this move, believing that, once reading goes "off book" (to borrow an acting term), it should get even better. Potentially, text on a screen can regain some of the orality of speech that it lost with the advent of silent, solitary reading, and it can regain some of the graphic artistry that it lost with the advent of the printing press. Compared to printed text, electronic text can be readily augmented with image and sound.

This enriched mode of reading is demanding and requires an artful allocation of our limited attention, hence the title's allusion to an "economics of attention." Drawing on anthropology as well as aesthetics, Lanham posits two poles of human attention: attention to the substance of what one is reading and attention to its style, which includes aural and graphic elements. We read best, he says, when we attend alternately to substance and to style — and when we are conscious of the alternation. Leave it to the compiler of the *Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* to come up with a classical term for this trope: *oscillatio*.

Beyond trying to teach us how best to read, Lanham advocates a renewed emphasis on the study of rhetoric: "Rhetoric teachers . . . were, and still are, the primary economists of attention." In the tradition of apologists for rhetoric, he wants to redeem his profession, to rescue it from chronic neglect and misunderstanding and to return it to its historical position at the center of the educational curriculum: "At [the] core must stand some version of the discipline that for most of Western history supplied the 'economics' for the economics of attention: rhetoric."

Lanham's own prose is a pleasure to read: the substance is learned, yet hip and eclectic. The style is highly oral ("Aha!") and full of theatricality,

so much so that one chapter takes the form of a drawing room play. To read Lanham is rather like watching close-up as a sleeveless magician performs card tricks. As he explores the implications of *oscillatio* for all manner of human endeavor — art, morality, marketing, design, law, education and, of course, economics — again and again he surprises us with reversals and inversions of our expectations: "Foreground and background, stuff and nonstuff, begin to oscillate before our eyes, indeed have to oscillate, if we are to make sense of what is going on." If you are willing to be dizzyed, *The Economics of Attention* offers an exhilarating ride.



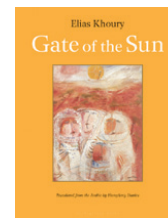
**Wider Than the Sky: The Phenomenal Gift of Consciousness.** Gerald M. Edelman. Yale University Press, 2005. \$24.00

Gerald Edelman is a highly honored research physician and neuroscientist best known for winning the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1972 in recognition of his discoveries regarding antibodies. In later research, among many other scientific achievements, he developed a theory of higher brain functioning and its development. In *Wider Than the Sky*, near the end of a long scientific career, he takes the role of his own popularizer. It is his effort to "present an account of consciousness to the general reader."

That account is compressed into 12 very short, dense chapters. Chapter three, for instance, is a detailed neurobiological tour of the structure and functioning of the human brain, which he introduces as "the most complicated material object in the known universe." Edelman defines consciousness as a process that depends on the brain, and he distinguishes primary consciousness from higher-order consciousness. Primary consciousness he describes as the state of being aware of the world; higher-order consciousness includes the consciousness of being conscious. Both, he insists, arise biologically: there is nothing "metaphysical or necessarily mysterious" about them.

As an account of consciousness suitable for the general reader, *Wider Than the Sky* unfortunately falls short. There are several reasons why. One is that, unlike the most effective popular-

izers, Edelman rarely provides analogies and metaphors that would connect our understanding of the brain's functions to other phenomena with which we are familiar. Instead, he relies on the scientific nomenclature to which he is accustomed (and some of which he may have originated). When a 148-page book has a 30 page glossary, that is a sure sign of trouble. Moreover, the structures and processes he describes are truly complex, and the few black and white drawings he provides to illustrate them are inadequate; sequences of graphics would have been more effective (and animation ideal). As a result of these shortcomings, this primer on consciousness is very difficult reading. Still, for some general readers, it may be worth the effort, because Edelman offers innovative perspectives on a fascinating subject.



**Gate of the Sun.** Elias Khoury. Translated from the Arabic by Humphrey Davies. Archipelago Books, 2006. \$26.00

Although marketed as a sort of Palestinian epic, *Gate of the Sun* is actually a tragicomic novel in the absurdist tradition of Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett and Joseph Heller.

The situation is comically absurd: in a dingy, almost deserted hospital within a Palestinian refugee camp near Beirut, a male nurse converses with a comatose patient. The patient is Yunes, an elderly Palestinian fighter who has been unconscious for three months. The male nurse is a 40-year-old Palestinian medic named Khalil, to whom Yunes has been like a father.

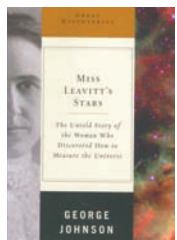
Believing he can restore Yunes to consciousness, Khalil talks to him constantly. The novel comprises his associative monologues over the course of four months talking about their lives and the lives of those like them who either fled or were forced from their villages in Galilee in 1948. Khalil struggles with the realization that their lives have become absurd, senseless, almost fictional: "This isn't a hospital, it just resembles a hospital. Everything here isn't itself but a simulacrum of itself."

There is surprisingly little of politics in this novel and less of religion. Through Khalil's often perplexed reminiscing, Khoury captures the sensitive complexity of a region filled with persons displaced by war and by religious

intolerance. Like many of the Palestinian characters, many of the Jewish ones are also displaced, refugees not only from Europe, but also from Islamic countries such as Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon.

Khoury's main interest lies in how being on the losing side of war has affected the relationships between Palestinian men and women. His major themes are loss, betrayal and love. He weaves these in stories that are ambiguous and layered. The result is a great and beautiful novel.

By Jay Pasachoff



**Miss Leavitt's Stars: The Untold Story of the Woman Who Discovered How to Measure the Universe.**  
George Johnson.  
W. W. Norton & Company, 2005;  
paper \$13.95

If you look at a star, you can see how bright it appears, but it is quite difficult to figure out how far away it is. The binocular vision your eye and brain use to judge nearby terrestrial distances can be extended to the nearest stars by taking advantage of the earth's orbit around the sun, but indirect methods must be used beyond that. George Johnson tells the fascinating story of how Henrietta Swan Leavitt, a human "computer" paid 30 cents per hour by the Harvard College Observatory about a hundred years ago, discovered how to measure the inherent brightness of a certain type of star. By comparing a star's inherent brightness to its apparent brightness, it is easy to find its distance. Indeed, if that star is in a galaxy outside our own Milky Way, the distance to that galaxy comes as a bonus.

Leavitt studied photographic plates taken by Harvard's telescopes. She realized that, in a satellite galaxy of our own, one type of star that varies in brightness — a Cepheid variable after an example in the constellation Cepheus — has a remarkable property. In a set of these stars at the same distance from us, the brighter ones take longer to vary. Once this relation is established, one can then simply measure the period of any Cepheid variable, and go back to the basic relation — a straight line on a graph of period versus luminosity — to deduce its intrinsic brightness. Once Edwin Hubble was able to apply the method to a near-

by galaxy, the size and scale of the universe was revealed for the first time. Cepheids are still at the basis of our understanding of the scale of the universe, and measuring their periods in dozens of nearby galaxies was a key project of the Hubble Space Telescope.

Johnson writes engagingly, bringing a view of the individuals involved in the story, even though little is known about Leavitt herself. The villain of the story is the observatory's eventual director, Harlow Shapley, who provided important measurements to "calibrate" Leavitt's period-luminosity relation by providing context, but who showed that he would have rather had the Nobel Prize for himself than have Leavitt receive it when a Swedish mathematician wrote for information. I think that Johnson is too hard on Shapley in the end, though, since he summarizes modern-day astronomers' views of his accomplishments too meagerly. Shapley indeed deserves credit for calibrating Leavitt's law (as we may call it, in parallel to the common use of the term "Hubble's law" for a dependent relation that carries Leavitt's work to the far reaches of the universe). And he deserves credit for realizing that our sun is not in the center of our galaxy, a Copernican step of removing our specialness.

Johnson brings the cosmic distance scale up to date, though he skimps on the current work (and, in a sign of minor ignorance, writes "Mount Palomar" instead of "Palomar Mountain"). Still, this charming book brings an important episode in the history of science into the hands of general readership. It is a book that all should read, if they care to broaden their knowledge into both of C. P. Snow's "Two Cultures."



**The Sun.** Steele Hill and Michael Carlowicz. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2006. \$19.95

Sunlight contains all the colors of the rainbow, and all these colors are put to good use in the six-inch by six-inch book entitled simply *The Sun*. About 200 photographs printed on heavy stock were selected by Steele Hill, a photo specialist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center who has worked with and manipulated solar images for many years. The pictures, with only occasional double-page spreads, appear with accompanying brief captions. Science writer

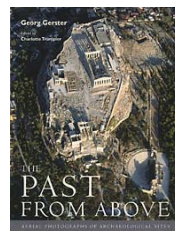
Michael Carlowicz, who once shared an office at Goddard with Hill, has written introductions to the seven chapters.

The introductory chapter shows a range of beautiful phenomena, from the distortions of the sun when seen low on the horizon to rainbows to space images. Chapter one shows a variety of solar effects from sunlight. Did you know that the street grid in Manhattan is aligned so that the sun shines down the streets each year on May 28 and July 12? We see the sun on one of those dates shining down past the Empire State Building. Chapter two shows fabulous rainbows plus related phenomena such as halos and sun dogs. I love the photos that are a series taken on single pieces of film, including an analemma over a Greek temple and the midnight sun seen from Ireland and from Antarctica. Chapter three's images range from archaeoastronomy to historic solar images to eclipses.

Chapter four's auroras demonstrate the sun-Earth interaction in the most beautiful way. Chapter five's fantastic set of images from current solar spacecraft from NASA and the European Space Agency are leavened by a couple of famous ground-based photographs of huge solar eruptions, one taken at the Big Bear Observatory in California just as I was finishing my postdoctoral work there. Chapter six includes mainly similar space solar images but with an emphasis on eruptions that can and do hit our Earth. Such eruptions are at the moment a major impediment to the possibility of sending astronauts to Mars. The final chapter includes a few astronomical views, among them an unusual analemma in the Martian sky and a Hubble image of a nebula beyond our solar system.

I can recommend Hill and Carlowicz's collection showing the sun to everyone of any age.

By Rebecca Resinski



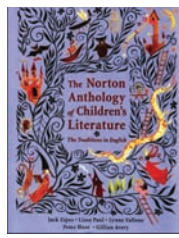
**The Past from Above: Aerial Photographs of Archaeological Sites.** Georg Gerster. Edited and with an introduction by Charlotte Trümpler. Getty Publications, 2005. \$65.00

This collection is culled from the work of Georg Gerster, who has pho-



tographed archaeological sites from the air for four decades. Charlotte Trümpler's introduction to the volume traces the intersection of aerial photography and archaeology, especially drawing out the relationship between aerial archaeological photography and the military during and after World War I. Gerster provides two essays for the volume: a collage of memories and an account of the relocation of the two temples at Abu Simbel in the 1960s. Through Gerster's pieces, we learn about the whims of pilots, the political hurdles facing aerial photographers, the quest for the right light and efforts to record a site before it disappears.

Although the introductory materials discuss some of the difficulties involved in aerial photography, Gerster is so masterful that his photographs convey no sense of effort. The more than 250 images selected for the volume run the global gamut — from Peru to Australia, from England to Iran — and give us a privileged view of sites. Sometimes the novelty of the perspective is refreshing: imagine seeing the outside of the Pantheon's dome, for instance. Other times the photographs lead us to reflect on the relationship between artificial structures and the natural environment. Still other photographs give us a sense of the whole unattainable on the ground (as with the geoglyphs of the Americas) or allow us to see the ghostly outlines of all but vanished sites. Each photograph is paired with commentary from an archaeologist or specialist in heritage management. While the commentaries vary in their effectiveness at explaining exactly what a reader is seeing, all of them provide general background information and offer suggestions for further reading. Photographs are grouped into basic categories, thus facilitating comparisons across time and space (of burial mounds around the globe, for example). Gerster and Trümpler conclude the volume with two especially sobering groups of photographs, one set showing the unmistakable marks of looters and the other commemorating sites now lost or on the verge of being lost. The last photograph in the series gives us a bird's eye view of houses in the marshes of the Euphrates; the commentary tells us that the ancient way of life that the houses represent came to an end only in the 1990s, when the course of the Euphrates was diverted. Gerster's glorious photographs remind us of both the monumentality and the ephemerality of human constructions.



**The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature: The Traditions in English.** Edited by Jack Zipes, Lissa Paul, Lynne Vallone, Peter Hunt and Gillian Avery. W. W.

Norton & Company, 2005. \$65.00

Etymologically speaking, an anthology is a "gathering of blossoms." *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* is quite a bouquet. Designed primarily as a textbook for college courses in children's literature, this volume is not intended for children. Rather, it provides students, scholars and serious leisure readers with a survey of various genres of literature written for children in English over the past three and a half centuries. The editors take a descriptive rather than normative approach: they do not set out to establish a canonical list of the best works for children but instead provide examples of significant trends in children's literature and its development.

The volume is divided into categories of children's literature, ranging from alphabet books and school stories to cross-over genres like comics and science fiction. Within each category, an introductory essay compactly provides social and literary background for the texts themselves, which are then presented chronologically. The "Texts and Contexts" section within some categories affords a sustained look at perennial favorites — such as "Little Red Riding Hood" or "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" — and their variations across time. Throughout the volume, the editors take pains to demonstrate the diversity of genres and voices in children's literature. Although the majority of texts are drawn from North America and Britain, New Zealand and Australia are represented, and many of the texts bear witness to the ways in which other traditions — Native American, Hispanic and Chinese, among others — have contributed to the traditions in English.

Format and illustration play special roles in the experience of reading children's literature. Although this anthology focuses primarily on words, it does pay tribute to these aspects of children's literature with a fair number of color plates and an even larger number of black-and-white illustrations.

Some publishers initially contacted by Norton did not give permission for their books to be included in the

anthology, and so you might be surprised not to find some of your favorites here. But you will certainly meet up with some old friends and make new ones. For those who still need to be convinced to give this volume a place on their bookshelves, I offer W. H. Auden's observation about children's verse and suggest that his remark pertains to all types of children's literature: "There are no good poems which are only for children." ■

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*MOREHOUSE Continued from 10*

Dream Youth Leadership Program."

As part of the program, he plans to train young adults in conflict resolution and nonviolent methodologies, she said.

"He's sincere. He's driven. He's motivated to really, really help humanity in very profound ways," Campbell said. "He has the makings of the next transformative leader, like a Dr. [Martin Luther] King Jr." ■

*Liza Gutierrez is a staff writer for The Gazette. The story originally appeared on July 12, 2006, and is reprinted with permission from The Rockville Gazette in Montgomery County, Md.*

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*ASILOMAR Continued from 11*

Svetlana Thomson took my arm at Asilomar and convinced me, with just a bit of twisting, that I could serve on the nominating committee. Who would have thought that little job would lead to being corresponding secretary, conference chair and, now, president? I, and others, have carried on the tradition of recruiting at Asilomar. As many of our members well know, it is difficult to decline a request for service to the association when one is surrounded by such natural beauty and intellectual company. After being in charge of the conference for six years, I have passed the torch to Jae Emehiser, whom we recruited — where else? — at Asilomar.

To learn more about the Northern California Association and the Asilomar conference, visit us on the Web at [www.pbknca.org](http://www.pbknca.org). ■

*Jean James (DePauw University, 1968) is the current president of the Northern California Association and past chair of the association's Asilomar conference.*

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We're now publishing fiction by such writers as Alice Munro, Ann Beattie, Steven Millhauser, Dennis McFarland, Louis Begley, and David Leavitt, in addition to the essays, articles, criticism, and poetry that have been mainstays of the magazine since its beginning.

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