



THE KEY REPORTER

SAN FRANCISCO TO HOST 37TH TRIENNIAL COUNCIL IN AUGUST; JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN TO GIVE SIDNEY HOOK LECTURE AT BANQUET

Phi Beta Kappa will hold its 37th triennial Council on August 11-14 in San Francisco, with headquarters for the meetings at the Grand Hyatt Hotel on Union Square. A highlight of the weekend will be the presentation of the second Sidney Hook Award to John Hope Franklin, James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of History and professor of legal history in the Law School at Duke University. Franklin, a past president of Phi Beta Kappa (1973-76) and of the American Historical Association (1979), will deliver a lecture at the Council banquet on August 13.



John Hope Franklin

The \$5,000 triennial Hook Award recognizes a scholar who has had extensive and distinguished experience in undergraduate teaching, has published research that contributed to the advancement of his or her academic discipline, and has demon-

SENATE APPROVES CHARTERS FOR EIGHT ASSOCIATIONS

The Phi Beta Kappa Senate recently granted charters to eight previously unchartered associations: Northeast Alabama; Phoenix, Arizona; Denver, Colorado; Sarasota-Manatee, Florida; Coastal Georgia-Carolina; East Central Illinois; Southwestern Louisiana; and Inland Empire (Washington). This action brings the total number of chartered associations to 44.

strated leadership in the cause of liberal arts education.

The proceedings will open on August 11 with an afternoon panel discussion (see the box on page 7), followed by early evening meetings of district representatives. The full Council, the legislative body of the Society, will meet in general sessions on August 12, 13, and 14. The Council will consider and vote on the Senate's recommendations for the establishment of new chapters at American University, Carnegie-Mellon University, Fairfield University, Loyola College (Baltimore), Loyola University of Chicago, North Carolina State University, and Southwestern University (Georgetown, Texas).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

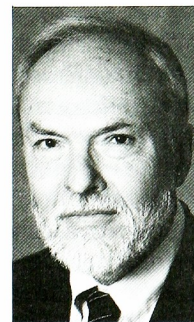
WILLIAM AND MARY CHAPTER RECEIVES GENEROUS GIFT

A Phi Beta Kappa member recently made an anonymous gift of stock, which has been sold for \$108,000, to her chapter at the College of William and Mary. The chapter is to use 80 percent of the gift to provide assistance to undergraduates in financial need; this proportion of the total is eligible for matching funds from the state at the rate of 49 percent. The recipients need not be members of Phi Beta Kappa. The remaining 20 percent of the gift is to be spent at the chapter's discretion.

Ludwell Johnson, chapter historian, reports that the donor was prompted to make the gift after reading the annual listing of awards by chapters in the Autumn 1993 *Key Reporter*.

BEDAU NAMED '94-95 ROMANELL PROFESSOR; MC MULLIN GIVES TALKS

Hugo Bedau, Fletcher Professor of Philosophy, Tufts University, has been named the Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professor in Philosophy for 1994-95. The award, established 10 years ago, carries a stipend of \$6,000.



Hugo Bedau

The 1993-94 awardee, Ernan Mc Mullin, director of the Program in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Notre Dame, presented three public lectures on "Imagining the Real" at that university in March. The titles of the lectures were "Enlarging the Imagination," "But Is It for Real?," and "A Good Theory Is Hard to Find."

KEY NOTES

- '94-95 Visiting Scholars Named
PAGE 3
- Key Reporter* Consolidates Printing, Mailing Operations
PAGE 3
- Life Outside Academe
by James A. Michener
PAGE 4
- Members in Australia Discuss Organizing an Association
PAGE 5
- Letters to the Editor
PAGE 5
- Panel Discussion at Council
PAGE 7
- Wilderness, Myth, and American Character, by Marvin Henberg
PAGE 7
- Recommended Reading
PAGE 11

TRIENNIAL COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In addition, the Council will consider amendments to the Society's constitution and bylaws and will elect officers, senators, and members of the Council's Nominating Committee for the coming triennium.

Nominated for president is Charles Blitzer, director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and currently vice president of the Society. Nominated for vice president is Frederick J. Crosson, Cavanaugh Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of Notre Dame and currently a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Senate.

Nine senators at large and three district senators will be elected for six-year terms. The nominees for at-large seats are as follows (asterisks denote senators nominated for reelection):

Svetlana L. Alpers, professor of art history, University of California, Berkeley; Allison Blakely, professor of European history and comparative history, Howard University; *Charles Blitzer; Eloise E. Clark, vice president for academic affairs and professor of biological sciences, Bowling Green State University; *Frederick J. Crosson; Andrew P. Debicki, University Distinguished Professor, vice chancellor for research, graduate studies, and public service, and dean of the graduate school, University of Kansas; Rita F. Dove, professor of English, University of Virginia; Werner L. Gundersheimer, director, Folger Shakespeare Library; *Vera Kistiakowsky, professor of physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Judith F. Krug, director, Office for Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association, and executive director, Freedom to Read Foundation; Emma Coburn Norris, associate professor of English, university archivist, and director of the honors program, Troy State University; Stephen Stamas, investment executive, Windcrest Partners, and chairman, New York Philharmonic; *Burton M. Wheeler, professor of English, Washington University; and *Eugen Weber, Palevsky Professor of Modern European History, University of California, Los Angeles.

One senator is to be elected from



The Grand Hyatt San Francisco, facing Union Square, is headquarters for the 37th triennial Council.

each of the following districts:

New England: Joseph W. Gordon, dean of undergraduate studies, Yale University; and Hilda Weyl Sokol, associate professor of liberal studies, Dartmouth College.

South Atlantic: James L. Crenshaw, Flowers Professor of Old Testament, Duke Divinity School; and Niall W. Slater, professor of classics, Emory University.

South Central: Aubrey M. Farb, retired CPA; and *David W. Hart, professor of English and associate dean of the graduate school, University of Arkansas.

Edgar F. Shannon Jr. chaired the Nominating Committee. Other members were Nina Z. Baym, Anna J. Coble, Kenneth M. Greene, F. Carter Philips, Catherine S. Sims, Helen Vendler, and Aileen Ward.

Four persons are to be elected to the Nominating Committee for the term ending in 1997 from the following slate: Hanna Holborn Gray, professor of history, University of Chicago; Sondra G. Myers, special assistant to the chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities for institutional relations; Marjorie G. Perloff, Patek Professor of Humanities, Stanford University; Andre Schiffrin, director and editor in chief, The New Press, New York; Daniel C. Snell, professor of history, University of Oklahoma; James L. Sobieski, senior vice president and director, Jardine Insurance Brokers, Inc., Los Angeles.

the American Scholar

Wherever you're planning to go this summer, we'd like to suggest that you take along *The American Scholar*. This quarterly journal has been described as "the only magazine that regularly delivers what it promises" (Jonathan Yardley, *The Washington Post*). Our forthcoming Summer 1994 issue is no exception, offering the serious reader a fine selection of feature articles, essays, poems, and book reviews. Among the articles scheduled to appear are "The Bulldog and the Butterfly: The Friendship of Edmund Wilson and Vladimir Nabokov," by Jeffrey Meyers; "Les Roses, Mademoiselle," by Renée Fox; "How Not to Make a Stradivarius," by Thomas Levenson; and "Meanwhile, Back on the Ward . . ." by Jay Neugeboren. Also appearing will be "A Mamma's Boy," by Joseph Epstein, well-known essayist and editor of the *Scholar*.

Discover reading at its finest — send for the *Scholar* today and begin looking forward to hours of pleasurable reading in the year ahead. You can begin your subscription by completing and returning the coupon below. The Summer 1994 issue will be mailed in early June.

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EIGHT MEN, FIVE WOMEN NAMED TO 1994-95 VISITING SCHOLAR PANEL

Phi Beta Kappa has named a panel of 13 Visiting Scholars for 1994-95. The Society established its Visiting Scholar Program in 1956 to enable undergraduates to meet and talk with distinguished scholars in a variety of disciplines. In the upcoming academic year, members of the panel will make two-day visits to a total of about 100 campuses nationwide.

Members of the panel are as follows:

Leon Eisenberg, Presley Professor of Social Medicine and professor of psychiatry, emeritus, Harvard Medical School. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and recipient of the Aldrich and Richmond Awards from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Helen E. Fisher, research associate, department of anthropology, American Museum of Natural History. She is a fellow of the American Anthropological Association and recipient of its Distinguished Service Award. Her books include *Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery, and Divorce*, and *The Sex Contract: The Evolution of Human Behavior*.

Michael E. Fisher, Elkins Distinguished Professor, Institute for Physical Science and Technology, University of Maryland. He is a fellow of the Royal Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a foreign associate of the National Academy of Sciences, and a member of the American Philosophical Society. Among his awards are the Guthrie Medal and the Wolf Prize in Physics.

Marjorie Perloff, Patek Professor of Humanities, Stanford University. President of the American Comparative Literature Association, she is the author of *Radical Artifice: Writing Poetry in the Age of Media*; *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant-Guerre, and the Language of Rupture*; *The Poetics of Indeterminancy: Rimbaud to Cage*; and *Frank O'Hara: Poet Among Painters*.

Vera Pless, professor of mathematics, University of Illinois at Chi-

cago. She is the author of a college textbook titled *Introduction to the Theory of Error Correcting*, as well as some 100 papers on coding theory and combinatorics. She was named a Senior University Scholar at Illinois for 1989-92.

David H. Porter, president and professor of classics, Skidmore College. Past president of Carleton College, he is the author of "*Only Connect*": *Three Studies in Greek Tragedy and Horace's Poetic Journey: A Reading of Odes 1-3*. As a concert pianist and lecturer, he has appeared at colleges and universities throughout the United States and in Britain.

Michael C. J. Putnam, MacMillan Professor of Classics, Brown University. His writings include *The Poetry of Aeneid; Virgil's Pastoral Art; Tibullus; Essays on Latin Lyric, Elegy, and Epic*; and *Artifices of Eternity: Horace's Fourth Book of Odes*. Past president of the American Philological Association, he is a trustee of the American Academy in Rome.

Stuart A. Rice, Hixon Distinguished Service Professor, University of Chicago. Former director of the James Franck Institute, he was elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has received four awards from the American Chemical Society, and is co-editor of *Advances in Chemical Physics*.

Linda Seidel, professor of art history, University of Chicago. She is the author of *Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait, Songs of Glory: The Romanesque Facades of Aquitaine, and Romanesque Sculpture from the Cathedral of Saint-Etienne, Toulouse*. She was editor of *Gesta* and a former councillor of the Medieval Academy of America.

Frederic E. Wakeman Jr., Haas Professor of Asian Studies and director, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley. He is past president of the Social Science Research Council and the American Historical Association. He is author of *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu*

Reconstruction of Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China and History and Will: Philosophical Perspectives of the Thought of Mao Tse-Tung.

Alan Walker, professor of cell biology and anatomy, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and the 1992 Distinguished Scientist Award of the Center for the Study of Evolution and the Origin of Life. He is former director of the Foundation for Research into the Origin of Man and associate editor of the *Journal of Human Evolution*.

Burns H. Weston, Murray Distinguished Professor of Law, University of Iowa. Associate dean for international and comparative legal studies, he is founding director of the Center for World Order Studies at Iowa. His publications include *Human Rights in the World Community, International Law and World Order, and International Claims*.

Caroline Whitbeck, senior lecturer and senior research scholar, School of Engineering, MIT. She is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a member of the advisory board of *Professional Ethics: A Multidisciplinary Journal*. She is author of *Understanding Ethical Problems in Engineering and in Scientific Research* (forthcoming).

Key Reporter Consolidates Printing, Mailing Operations

With this issue *The Key Reporter* has moved all its publications operations to Richmond, Virginia, where the William Byrd Press handles the production of the newsletter from typesetting through mailing, in one continuous process. The overall size has been reduced by ¼ inch in order to fit on Byrd's "double-round" 48-page web presses.

This consolidation promises substantial savings over the previous process in which the mechanicals were produced by Garamond/Pridemark Press in Baltimore and the newsletter was printed by Byrd in Richmond and distributed in southern Maryland. Both Garamond/Pridemark, which produced *The Key Reporter* for three decades, and Byrd are autonomous parts of Cadmus Communications Company.

LIFE OUTSIDE ACADEME

Editor's note: *With this issue we inaugurate a new department in The Key Reporter featuring brief articles written by members of Phi Beta Kappa who have achieved prominence outside academe. We are asking contributors to describe the role that their education played in their career success, or to discuss any other topic they wish to bring before our readers. The first article is by author James A. Michener (ΦBK, Swarthmore, 1929).*

A keystone in my life was not only that I attended a splendid college, Swarthmore, which stressed a liberal education, but also that the college in those days had an honors program into which at the end of their sophomore year, after they had established the fact that they could handle rigorous demands, would-be scholars were admitted to a wonderful learning process. They were excused from all regularly scheduled classes, put into groups of five or six, and taught on the tutorial system of seminars conducted by brilliant professors.

Term papers were required about every three weeks, so we did a lot of research and writing, but the discussion sessions were equally rewarding, for when we entered the seminar, which met once a week in each subject, we knew that the other students were at least as intelligent as we were and able to detect any attempt on our part to "wing it" without proper preparation.

I read for honors in three subjects—history, philosophy, and English—and it would be difficult for me to estimate which of the three proved most useful to me in adult life. The important factor was that at my age then, 20, I could not possibly have imagined the wild changes my career would take. I taught English in fine private schools; I served as an editor at the prestigious Macmillan Publishing Company; I taught history in Colorado and at Harvard; and I wrote some 40 books in which philosophy and logic played a major role. So each of the specialties I studied in college played a major part in my adult life, but I also profited from two ancillary studies or activities.

By merest chance I played the lead male role in four college theatrical productions and unknowingly prepared myself for later activity in the theater, in motion pictures, and especially in television. The lessons I learned on stage proved invaluable.



Photo by John Kings

James A. Michener

But I also went into Philadelphia frequently to see the great art museums there and gave myself what amounted to a self-conducted graduate course in European art, especially painting. In later years this interest would not only persist but grow, so that I would, with the help of my wife, make two rather large collections of American paintings and Japanese woodblock prints, each of which we would give to public art museums, the American paintings to the University of Texas, the Japanese prints to the Honolulu Academy of Art.

I think this brief summary of what my adult life has been like more than proves the point that a college student who does not intend to follow one of the life-courses involving an established body of information, say, law or medicine, or one of the arcane sciences, cannot possibly anticipate what body of learning will be useful to her or him. The prudent strategy is to acquire the best possible education in the liberal arts, for they pro-

vide a solid basis from which to strike out in any one of a wide variety of later specializations.

It would be tempting for me to rationalize: Because I spent much of my life writing books it had been the seminars in English and history which were salient, because it was there that I learned what research was and what the writing of a long paper involved. But it could well have been the rigorous logic seminar that Brand Blanshard conducted which straightened out my thought processes and established patterns which I follow to this day. And certainly my extracurricular activities modified my subsequent behavior.

For such reasons I find myself at age 87 more convinced than ever that a well-rounded liberal arts course is the one that provides the best foundation for whatever twists and turns one's life is going to take.

During the last quarter of a century I had the opportunity to serve our federal and state governments in a wide range of activity, including the writing of a new Constitution for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In all such activity I noticed that my fellow members of this committee or that one were overwhelmingly likely to be women and men with broad

If I were again 25, with whatever talents I had at that age, I would write for the movies, on the principle that they communicate ideas with maximum effectiveness and in doing so reach a vast audience.

general educations. Scientists, physicians, and tightly trained business executives were conspicuous by their absence, from which I concluded that the business of governing our democracy is usually left in the hands of those with a liberal education.

I think we suffered, on every committee in which I participated, from not having physicians and scientists on our boards, and it is possible that those specialists were so intensely involved in their specialties that they could not spare the time. But they did

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

leave the great business of governance to the liberal arts graduates, who discharged their duties rather capably.

I do not denigrate the scientists. When people ask me what my definition of an orderly society is, I reply: "A body of people who can supply their community with potable drinking water, proper sewage disposal, and someone skilled enough in radio transmission to bring huge airplanes to safe landings." We cannot survive without such specialists. But I also know that we require philosophers and moralists to keep us headed in the right direction, and we certainly need artists to entertain us, and writers who can record and evaluate our historical roots and accomplishments.

If I were again 25, with whatever talents I had at that age, I would write for the movies, on the principle that they communicate ideas with maximum effectiveness and in doing so reach a vast audience. For subject matter I would stress the radical changes in the American patterns of courtship and marriage. And for my collateral interest, for I have learned that I always require one to keep my brain activated, I would choose recombinant genetics, in which miracles are about to happen.

I must leave such projects to others, but I hope the young people who tackle them have as varied and exciting an education as I did.

James A. Michener
Texas Center for Writers, Austin

Our chapter at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has just completed the first phase of an endowment drive in which we raised \$6,000 by soliciting contributions from faculty members and student alumni. The second phase, scheduled for 1994-95, is expected to bring the total to \$10,000. The fund will be used to help pay for the Visiting Scholar Program and the annual spring induction at a time when state support for public higher education is declining precipitously.

The Key Reporter's report in the Autumn 1993 issue on the various chapters and their activities was most welcome, and we urge the Society to encourage other chapters to raise endowments. We were pleasantly surprised by the warm response we received from alumni who graduated from an institution that in the past rarely solicited funds from its former students.

David Grose, Amherst, Mass.

Editor's note: *All the comments that follow relate to the provocative anonymous letter quoted in President Ferrante's column in the Autumn 1993 issue:*

I found the letter you published in the Autumn 1993 issue of *The Key Reporter* both interesting and troubling. The concept of Φ BK embracing "scholarship that shakes its own foundations" is as misleading as is the

reference to the "quiet drift to a conservative stance" of which the writer complains.

I have always conceived of Φ BK as a learned society concerned with what is best in serious scholarship in any and all fields of academic endeavor. As new trends in areas of learning have come and gone, Φ BK has wisely refrained from becoming involved in the politics of such trends. As long as new perspectives in literary, social, and scientific studies remained on the intellectual-theoretical level, Φ BK did not hesitate to address and even further scholarship in the areas. Semiotics, Structuralism, Post-Modernism, Deconstruction, the New Historicism, etc., have often been dealt with on the pages of *The Key Reporter* and *The American Scholar*. But this is not what your correspondent is looking for. S/He is more interested in the "new, invigorating perspectives" offered by "gender, race, class, and post-colonial inquiry."

Unfortunately, the moment s/he writes about "the real and provocative confrontation that is taking place between Western civilization *privilege and prejudice* [italics added] and the rest of the world's experience. . . , s/he reveals a personal bias as well as a clearly political agenda.

Would the writer want Φ BK simply to "champion" the new perspectives as Φ BK, in his/her opinion, seems to have been doing with "past models"? Or does s/he really mean to shake the Society's foundations by allowing into the debate arguments against the inclusion of the "new perspectives," since they have provided only political controversy and serious divisiveness within the academic community by insisting that there is no true academic pursuit, and indeed no unpolitical "truth" in scholarly research? Would s/he admit into the debate consideration of the writings of such authors as D. D'Souza, W. Bennett, C. Sykes, G. Will, R. Kimball, and Allan Bloom? Or does s/he want the "shaking" to consist simply of the glorification of the "new perspectives?" In either case what would distinguish the Φ BK

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIA DISCUSS ORGANIZING AN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

In what amounts to the first effort in some years to organize a Phi Beta Kappa association of alumni abroad, six Φ BK members in Australia gathered for a dinner meeting on March 4 at the American Club, overlooking Sydney's Botanical Gardens. The initial impetus for the meeting stemmed from a query by Laurie Clark David (Φ BK, University of Santa Clara, 1979), of Greenwich, New South Wales, to the national headquarters about what the Society was doing to counteract the confusion of Phi Beta Kappa with a promotion of the

"Golden Key Society" in Australia. The national office encouraged the efforts to organize by sending information about the activities of existing associations in the United States and providing addresses of Φ BK members in Australia.

The organizing meeting was attended largely by faculty from the University of Sydney. Laurie Clark David has invited all Φ BK members in Australia who are interested in participating in a Φ BK alumni association to contact her at 6 Kingslingley Road, Greenwich, NSW 2065.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

battlefield from the battles being waged in the marketplace?

Isn't it more in keeping with ΦBK principles to wait until the smoke has cleared before entering the lists? If the study of gender, race, class, and post-colonial inquiry is truly worth pursuing, it can be done well only after each has justified its existence as a legitimate academic pursuit. In their present form, they still smack too much of trendy political fads. In time this may change, but for now the question remains: Should ΦBK become involved with passing ideologies that have apparently emerged from the "destruction" of Western civilization—a "good thing" in the correspondent's opinion?

ΦBK's foundation may need shaking, but not for the reasons given by the correspondent. Rather, ΦBK must start seriously considering what it can continue to stand for now that grade inflation and the general decadence of academia (brought on in part by the "new perspectives") are emasculating (if I may use the term!) the concepts of excellence, knowledge, and wisdom. Should it indeed continue to exist in the face of the collapse of academic standards? Or should it start determining which institutions are truly worthy of a chapter after examining the shameful grading practices and distribution at each one? Is it perhaps time for ΦBK to go into "remission" until the terrible cancerous growths plaguing academia are cured? Or has the time come for ΦBK to change its orientation from strictly academic to political, since it too is, after all, guilty of "privilege and prejudice"? This is truly "questioning what matters," if that is what your correspondent really wants.

*Aldo S. Bernardo,
Binghamton, N.Y.*

The feeling of being initiated into Phi Beta Kappa many years ago was one of awe in the knowledge that here was an organization which was synonymous with excellence, both in education and in accomplishments following school years. Our speakers had done magnificent things. There was a high calling for those who would answer the call. Western civilization, which the author wishes to

do away with, has produced a freedom in which more people than ever can answer that high calling.

It is regrettable that any organization becomes political. This has transformed many a fine professional association, pursuing the common good, into a political tool which mouths slogans not applicable to the individual members. They often meet the slime pit firsthand. "Conservative" and "liberal" are words which have no business in a society like Phi Beta Kappa. A careful search into recorded history shows us that truth does not change. What prospers the common good in one age will do so in another, and vice versa. Scholarship that shakes its own foundations would be well advised to have a BETTER foundation in mind.

*Marianne S. Gwinn,
Dallas, Tex.*

... The purpose of ΦBK is to recognize and encourage academic achievement. To say ΦBK is a Society "devoted to intellectual *investigation*" seems to change the Society into a *research* group, which it is not. It may recognize outstanding research in various fields, but I do not believe the Society is "devoted to intellectual *investigation*" of its own.

I have found, in the Recommended Reading section of *The Key Reporter*, recommended books by and about feminists and their movement (gender), various aspects of race and ethnic culture, poverty (class?) and what the author calls "post-colonial inquiry"—So I do not think these subjects are being ignored by the Society.

If none of these subjects has won a book award, perhaps it is because their degree of scholarship is not quite what is required for an award.

Furthermore, I believe the book awards are made in specified fields. If this is what the author is calling into question (not awarding in the "right" fields), I would hate to see ΦBK become an advocacy group for any of the current so-called politically correct causes. . . .

The *American Scholar* magazine, as representative of the Society, certainly, in my opinion, engages in "the current debates" and presents "new invigorating perspectives." It is anything but a "dinosaur clinging to the edge of the slime pit"!

I am concerned about a current tendency to rush to embrace "new perspectives" and regard "old perspectives" as wrong. New perspectives can be just as slanted and biased as old perspectives. . . .

*Helen I. Tucker,
Detroit, Mich.*

This letter concerns the letter published in the Autumn 1993 issue of *The Key Reporter*. I think *The Key Reporter* is one of the most worthwhile items I receive in the mail. . . . I like the new format, and I usually read the entire issue. I cannot imagine improving on the articles that appeared in the last two issues of *The Key Reporter*, which tell me what new members of Phi Beta Kappa are hearing at their initiations, describe the experiences of a visiting scholar, and present an (apparently) unbiased discussion of a current, real issue (organ transplantation).

If the foundation of Phi Beta Kappa is "Philosophy, the pilot of life," I cannot believe that it has anything to fear from scholarship. I am assuming that scholarship includes measured and *objective* evaluation of ideas, as well as the ideas themselves. (Now, if Phi Beta Kappa is led to replace "philosophy" with, say, "self-esteem," you will shake the foundations, but I will no longer care.)

I do not think Phi Beta Kappa needs an affirmative action program for ideas. Phi Beta Kappa has no obligation to embrace, or even to present, an idea just because it is popular on some campus or in some political circle.

Judging from topics discussed at alumni chapters, as reported in the Autumn 1993 issue, I'd say alumni share my concern with current, real issues, contrasted with, say, how bad a guy Columbus may have been. This is not to say that Phi Beta Kappa publications should not present new and/or controversial ideas from time to time. I'd hope that such presentations would be informative and constructive, rather than merely angry. . . .

*Dale Sappenfield,
Los Alamos, N. Mex.*

I was just perusing the winter issue of *The Key Reporter* and a long-standing problem I have had with Phi Beta Kappa spilled over. Here it is.

ΦBK stands for excellence in the

liberal arts and sciences, yet it does next to nothing to promote arts and sciences at the local level, and not much at the national level. When curriculum issues arise on local campuses, is ΦBK there with a statement? Does ΦBK lobby the local campus "powers" to promote the liberal arts? I think the answer is no.

Is ΦBK proactive on local campuses in introducing policies that would put the arts and sciences more significantly into student programs? Again I think the answer is no.

On most, if not all, campuses ΦBK is a membership initiation club. Once the new candidates are admitted, the club folds its tent and wanders off into obscurity. I think the liberal arts and sciences are worth fighting for. In times when every student is in college to get a good job, the arts and sciences programs begin to get pressure in favor of the market-oriented departments. Someone must hold the line for arts and sciences. Surely ΦBK is one of the organizations that should be on guard and attacking where the crass interests are grabbing the lead!

How about some leadership in *The Key Reporter* to that end?

*Clint Chase,
Bloomington, Ind.*

Panel to Address Issues Discussed in Newsletter

The issues raised by the letter to the Society's president, Joan M. Ferrante, printed in the Autumn 1993 issue of *The Key Reporter* and addressed by readers in subsequent issues, will be explored by a panel on the opening afternoon of the triennial Council in San Francisco. Among the persons expected to participate are the letter writer herself, Barbara Carlisle, associate professor of theater arts at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; two ΦBK senators: David Levering Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr. Professor of History, Rutgers University, and winner of the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for biography and Bancroft Prize in American history for his book *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Biography of a Race, 1868-1919*, and Catharine R. Stimpson, University Professor, Rutgers University; and two respondents to the original letter in the newsletter.

WILDERNESS, MYTH, AND AMERICAN CHARACTER

BY MARVIN HENBERG

THERE IS A JOKE AMONG U.S. Forest Service employees—many of whom opposed the 1964 Wilderness Act—that prior to 1964 only God could make wilderness but now only the U.S. Congress can. The joke refers to the act's prohibiting release of potential wilderness land to other use or designation until Congress has judged its suitability for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. That language has resulted in great fuss and fury over public lands. In the coterminous United States, some 57 million acres still await congressional determination of their potential wilderness value. That is considerably more than the approximately 34 million acres, excluding Alaska, now officially designated American wilderness. Most of the disputed land lies west of the Mississippi River; in my own state of Idaho, for instance, approximately 9 million acres await release from the language of the Wilderness Act.

These figures indicate the extent to which wilderness designation is a political hot potato. It is also a philosophical hot potato, replete with paradox. Some philosophers hold the idea of wilderness to be purely an invention of the mind, a time-bound product of humanity's triumph in successfully inhabiting all but the most inhospitable portions of the earth's landmass. Others hold it to be something real and palpable, as suggested by its Old English etymology—"wilddeornness," a place of wild beasts.

Much of the difficulty in conceiving of wilderness stems from the paradox that is human nature. How do we account for ourselves? Are we the dark angels of our various religious conceptions or the natural bodies of Darwinian evolution—bodies that through a fluke of gambling nature happened to stumble upon consciousness? To what extent are our activities and actions "natural"? If *Homo sapiens* is, as Jared Diamond argues, simply a third species of chimpanzee, we have, no matter what we do, wilderness all about us.

If we are one kind of beast, the literal "place of the beasts" contains us and all we have wrought—our art and poetry no less than our skyscrapers and sewage systems.

Our kinship with other animals aside, most conceptions of wilderness distinguish sharply between humans and the other "beasts." This line of thinking resolves one paradox only to create another. Wilderness lands become, in the words of the Wilderness Act, areas "untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." Thanks to the attractions of this idea, some areas are so popular as sanctuaries from the hazards and trials of urban life that it is difficult to find solitude, a prime value of wilderness recreation.

Wilderness designation is a political hot potato. It is also a philosophical hot potato, replete with paradox.

The four federal agencies responsible for administering wilderness lands have been forced into "wilderness management"—a paradox if ever there was one. It doesn't take a philosopher to point out that "managing" a wild species risks its eventual domestication. For instance, winter feeding of elk and deer—a widespread policy of many state wildlife agencies—may, over time, tame animals whose present attraction is that they are wild. Someday perhaps the sole large mammal to be genetically wild—that is, whose procreation is left to the spontaneity of nature—will be *Homo sapiens*. Perhaps, though, not even we will remain genetically wild, given our increasing ability to intervene in the human genome.

In mentioning the air of paradox surrounding both the idea of wilderness and the practice of "managing" wilderness, I invite you to think of the role of metaphor in articulating diverse conceptions of wilderness. The phrase "wilderness as" comes naturally to our lips: wilderness as a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



wasteland, as a gymnasium, as a playground, as a prison, and as a pharmacy—to name but a few of the images defended in wilderness literature. Often wilderness is conceived as a proving ground to test for valuable personal and social traits. I shall here consider a specific case under the idea of wilderness as proving ground, examining the claim that the received wilderness idea bears a special connection to American character. That connection is expressed by Wallace Stegner:

Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from the noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste. . . . We need wilderness preserved—as much of it as is still left, and as many kinds—because it was the challenge against which our character as a people was formed.¹

As with most claims related to wilderness, this one generates its share of controversy. Supporters of what I shall henceforth call the *character thesis* point to the pride we in the United States take in our wilderness heritage. They point to our leadership in conservation and preservation—our historic firsts in establishing the National Park System and, later, the National Wilderness Preservation System. They point to the spread of the wilderness idea to countries ranging from New Zealand to Zimbabwe. Finally, they find in contemporary wilderness experience manifold echoes of good char-

acter—honesty, self-reliance, and simplification of wants, to name but a few.

Changing Attitudes

Critics of connecting the wilderness idea to our national character point first to historical relativism in America's attitudes toward untamed nature. Less than a century and a half before Stegner waxed eloquent on the importance of wilderness to American character, Alexis de Tocqueville told a different story:

In Europe people talk a great deal about the wilds of America, but the Americans themselves never think about them; they are insensible to the wonders of inanimate nature and they may be said not to perceive the mighty forests that surround them till they fall beneath the hatchet.²

Ultimately, historical differences between contemporary Americans and their ancestors need not trouble defenders of the character thesis. National character, like individual character, takes on the craggy lines of wisdom because of, rather than in spite of, turmoil and reversal of fortune. Ideals shift—that which is lost (or nearly so) gets appreciated when we no longer have it: innocence for one, wilderness for another.

In addition, Tocqueville's remarks are generalized and composite; could he, for instance, have had the privilege of meeting Virginia's own William Byrd II nearly a hundred years earlier, he would have found a man in whom wilderness sensibility was highly developed. The reversal in American appreciation of wilderness, a story so ably told by historian Roderick Nash, was not created *ex nihilo*. It had seeds, most dying on the hard granitic soil of public indifference, but a few nurtured against extinction until a field could be cultivated for them.

Whose Character?

A second and more intractable problem for the character thesis lies in its ethnic exclusivity. Whom do we conceive as having their char-

acters formed by the "challenge" of wilderness? Not American Indians; according to Standing Bear, an Oglala Sioux, the land of North America was never wild in conception, but tame. Not African Americans, first enslaved on plantations of the New World and later confined, many of them, to urban ghettos—"city wildernesses" in the parlance of Robert A. Woods' turn-of-the-century book, *The City Wilderness*. Not Polly Beamis, a young woman kidnapped in her native China and carried off to Oregon Territory. Her character was formed by fending off lustful drunks in saloons, where she served as a hostess and eventually purchased her way to freedom by surreptitiously sweeping and collecting gold dust from the floors.

For these and other diverse peoples of America, wilderness as conceived in the mainstream preservation movement played little role in shaping character. Relatively few people experienced the frontier, whose "closing" Frederick Jackson Turner turned into a powerful metaphor for America's first inward glance—our first hint that we might have to reinvent ourselves by, among other things, protecting wildlands and wildlife. Fewer people still—at least according to Patricia Limerick, Patrick White, and other revisionist historians currently challenging the Turner thesis—had reason to care about the frontier, its wilderness edge, or its supposed vanishing. According to the revisionists, the idea that wilderness was a strong force in shaping the American character is a "myth" as in a false and misleading tale.



Marvin
Henberg

Which Virtues?

If the ethnocentrism of the character thesis is a second problem, its vagueness as to the traits engendered by wilderness experience is a third. Theodore Roosevelt, for instance, thought of the wilds as a proving ground for virility, male camaraderie, and the honing of a warrior caste.

¹Wallace Stegner, "The Wilderness Idea," in David Brower, ed., *Wilderness: America's Living Heritage* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1961), 97.

²Alexis de Tocqueville, *Journey to America*, J.P. Mayer, ed., George Lawrence, trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 335.

Such a view is less than palatable in these decades of deep ecology and ecofeminism. Why virility and aggressiveness over placidity and nurture?

Character and Self-Concept

Fundamentally, then, the character thesis is in serious philosophical trouble. The main difficulty lies in selective readings both of character and of wild nature. Human character runs the gamut from the virtuous to the vicious, with numerous shades of each. In addition, some of our favored virtues may be inconsistent with each other. As Isaiah Berlin observes, the honor of Achilles cannot be harmonized with the mercy of Christ. These two species of virtue are incommensurable, as only disturbing figures like Machiavelli and Nietzsche have dared to proclaim.

When our own dark image is glimpsed in the supposed mirror of wild nature, the difficulty is compounded. Wild nature may be, with Tennyson, "red in tooth and claw" or, with Annie Dillard, gentle as a spring day on Tinker Creek, the epitome of harmony and symbiosis. We search in wildness for what we want and, unsurprisingly, find it exactly as it "ought" to have been.

Yet for all its cultural exclusivity, its vagueness as to what constitutes a virtue, and its tendency to shape wild nature after its own favored image, there remains something to be said for the character thesis. It has a ring that many Americans harken to—a ring, if not of truth, at least of innocently faithful self-conception. Conceive the point this way: Suppose the Liberty Bell were to be rung and we as a people were to hear it. Thanks to the bell's famous crack, the sound would not be faithful to its original—its "true" sound. But would that matter? Would it even be relevant to the spirit the bell represents? We have, of course, detractors of the ideal of liberty represented by the bell, and many of their criticisms are apt, pointed. Freedom has not been equally extended to all within the fabric of our nation, and that is a criticism whose measure we must take. It is not to be ignored, but neither is it to be made into the whole story.

Let us ask the critic this: With what would you rather take your chances,

a political system whose ideal is sounded by the cracked knell of the Liberty Bell or a political system with no such symbol? I, for one, fervently believe in the positive power of ideals. Their appeal is nonrational, even ritualistic; but as an aspirant to philosophy, I have concluded that concepts alone mainly divide rather than unite human beings. We need symbols and their emotive associations. Among the symbols we need most is wilderness.

Stegner's words thus emphasize that, culturally rather than ethnically or personally, to be American is to conceive of ourselves as a wilderness people. The flaws in this thesis are both as prominent and as irrelevant as the crack in the Liberty Bell. Review the political struggle leading to passage of the Wilderness Act and you will find a robust populism stirred from the depths of our national self-conception.



Sometimes, thankfully, our ideals—erroneous and unflattering as they may appear under some lights—stir us to prefer the social good to the getting and spending by which we lay waste our powers. Because we must believe something about ourselves, I submit that belief in ourselves as a people shaped by wilderness is productive of greater good than of ill. In this light the character thesis becomes a different kind of myth—not a false and misleading tale, but a symbolic means of uniting us in celebration of something larger than ourselves.

My defense of this thesis, however, is fideistic rather than rationalistic. Reason alone is incompetent to penetrate and sufficiently articulate the mysteries of wild nature. Reason concocts its arguments with judicious concern for the other side. For every Wallace Stegner lamenting production of plastic cigarette cases, we have a Martin Krieger making the case for plastic trees. Reason can carry us into the realm of computer-generated virtual realities to ask, "Why not extinguish the real thing so

long as the wilderness experience can be provided in surrogate?" Quickly forgotten when reason exerts its generalizing, abstracting sway is the joy of particularity—a dimension of experience open only to the "inherent imbecility of feeling," in George Eliot's wonderful phrase. It is the joy of knowing a specific place or person, as opposed to grasping a generalized category or purpose.

Here is Rockbridge County native and wilderness philosopher Holmes Rolston III, on the importance of particularity:

Wildness is nature in what philosophers call idiographic form. Each wilderness is one of a kind, so we give it a proper name—the Rawahs, the Dismal Swamp. We climb Mount Ida or canoe on the Congaree River. Even when exploring some nameless canyon or camping at a spring, one experiences a concrete locus never duplicated in idiosyncratic detail. In culture, there is but one Virginia and each Virginian has a proper name. The human differences include conscious self-affirmations and heritages for which nature provides little precedent. But nature first is never twice the same. Always in the understory there are distinctive landscape features—the Shenandoah Valley or the Chesapeake Bay—with which the Virginians interact, each with a unique genetic set. Before culture emerges, nature is already endlessly variable. This feature is crucial to what we mean by wildness.³

Thanks to its endless variability, the best way of capturing the particularity of wilderness lands is through narrative. As Rolston observes, "There is no narrative in biology text, but a trip into wildness is always a story."⁴ Each parcel in the National Wilderness Preservation System features stories with multiple plots and restless casts of plant, animal, and human characters wandering through a unique geography. Drama

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

³Holmes Rolston III, "Values Gone Wild" in *Philosophy Gone Wild* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1986), 137-38.

⁴*Ibid.*, 140.



lies in the pure contingency of relations.

Wilderness understanding depends on emotional singularity and kinesthetic presence more than on abstract generalization. It has more the imprint of natural history than of molecular biology. Please do not misunderstand: We need molecular biology too, for, among other things, it tests the contingent relations described in wild nature, just as it does similar work in paleontology to test the integrity of claims in natural history. But the history itself—for instance, the evolutionary mixing some 70 million years ago of fauna from North and South America known to paleontologists as the Great American Interchange—cannot be replicated. We trace it in the fossil record, speculating about cause and effect, but our understanding is always in the form of a story, a narrative. Narratives of natural history abound in reconstructed details of climate, predation, birth and rearing of young, migration, cataclysm, evolutionary branching, and extinction. As a complement, narratives of wilderness offer up miniature slices within the grander narratives of natural history.

Introducing 'The Frank'

Let me observe the particularity of wilderness by acquainting you with Idaho's Frank Church River of No Return area. Begin with the name and its particularity. Frank Church was floor manager of the 1964 Wilderness Act in the U.S. Senate. "River of No Return" dates to the Lewis and Clark expedition's exploration of the Salmon River. After following the river into one of its spectacular canyons, William Clark pronounced the steep cliffs and fierce rapids to be impassable.

Continue to the particularity of the area. "The Frank," as it is called by its partisans, is the largest official wilderness area outside Alaska—over 2.3 million acres. Located in central Idaho, it is contiguous with two other wilderness areas, the 200,000-acre Gospel Hump and the 1.1-million-acre Selway-Bitterroot. Sheer size gives the River of No Return area outstanding wilderness qualities of

remoteness and isolation. Its ecosystem is as undisturbed as can be found in the continental United States. Ecologists and wildlife biologists regard The Frank and its environs as unique for containing wholly within its borders both the summer and the winter ranges of all its large mammals.

Following procedures outlined in the Wilderness Act, Congress created The Frank in 1980. Special conditions apply, creating special peculiarities of management. For example, although banned in most wilderness areas outside Alaska, planes may fly into The Frank, using any of 18 primitive airstrips. Power boats, also generally banned from wilderness, are allowed on the Main Salmon River, which forms the 86-mile-long northern boundary. On the pristine Middle Fork of the Salmon—105 miles through the heart of the wilderness—only nonmotorized watercraft are allowed. There are many small inholdings of private land, most along the two rivers and in the larger

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wildly in some few remaining
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creek drainages. Finally, there is a special mining reserve where, in a national emergency, extraction of cobalt, a strategic mineral, may be authorized.

Lest you are tempted to accept the view perpetuated by foes of wilderness designation that wilderness areas "lock up" the land so it receives no use, let me reassure you to the contrary. In 1992 more than 20,000 people rafted the combined Middle Fork and Main Salmon rivers. Thousands more traveled the Main Salmon in their jet boats—the only craft powerful enough to ply the rapids of the river. There were 10,000 registered back-country users, traveling by foot or pack animal (llamas are now common), while in September and October alone—hunting season—there were some 9,000 plane landings.

The periphery of the wilderness is growing rapidly, with thousands of people moving each year into the Treasure and Magic valleys of Idaho and the Bitterroot Valley of Montana.

Many of these people are attracted precisely because of the proximity of The Frank and other wilderness lands. A recent survey by Gundars Rudzitis and Harley Johansen shows that migration into counties containing wilderness is heavily influenced by environmental quality and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Seventy-two percent of recent immigrants cited proximity to wilderness as a special amenity influencing their relocation. In contrast, only 55 percent of longtime residents thought the nearby wilderness a special amenity. Presuming that the new arrivals act on their expressed preferences, wilderness lands will be more heavily used as in-migration continues.

All these particularities create management headaches for the Forest Service. The wilderness portion of the agency's budget is minuscule. For instance, the North Fork Ranger District, responsible for management of one-fifth of The Frank, has a total wilderness budget, including overhead, of only \$100,000. Even this paltry sum is considerably larger than the wilderness budget for the other four ranger districts with responsibility in The Frank, for the North Fork district patrols the Main Salmon River, where most human impact is concentrated.

Somehow, despite pressure from those who love it too well and from others who abuse it by poaching or littering, The Frank remains a magnificent political achievement, because as a place it is exactly that—magnificent.

Defenders of wilderness often point to the millions of people who, though they will never visit a particular place, are happy simply knowing it is there, protected. This argument would be toothless if nonvisitors were reduced to knowing a place by name alone. Even 10,000 scenic photographs, each worth its proverbial thousand words, would make little difference. Names and pictures come fully to life only when animated by the storyteller's art. Wild places, from Thomas Hardy's Egdon Heath to Jack London's Yukon, are known best when woven into narrative. So also for the beasts, mythical and real: They too are known best when endowed with character and related to each other by incident.



RECOMMENDED READING

BOOK COMMITTEE

Humanities: Svetlana L. Alpers, Frederick J. Crosson, Simon W. McVeigh,

Robert P. Sonkowsky, Jean Sudrann, Lawrence Willson

Social Sciences: Earl W. Count, Louis F. Harlan,

Thomas McNaugher, Catherine E. Rudder, Anna J. Schwartz

Natural Sciences: Ronald Geballe, Russell B. Stevens

Ronald Geballe

Chemistry Imagined: Reflections on Science. *Roald Hoffmann and Vivian Torrence. Smithsonian, 1993. \$19.95.*

Imagination is indeed the heart and spirit of this book. Few have ever imagined chemistry in the way presented here. Chemistry, the science, is likened and connected to art, to history, to poetry, to music, and to humanistic achievement by means of brief, pungent essays and poems by Hoffmann and provocative paintings by Torrence. Scientists, artists, and the general public will be delighted and enlightened by this book.

Humphry Davy: Science and Power. *David Knight. Blackwell, 1992. \$29.95.*

Humphry Davy is best known for his pioneering chemistry, his use of

Big Creek, washed into the Middle Fork by April torrents. But what is magnificent and enduring is the wilderness itself, complete with the ennobling thought that somewhere in this great continent of ours, nature can still be so prodigal as to waste the life of a lithe, fierce, full-grown cougar.

Such stories as may be woven together from silent cougar tracks are more magnificent for being imagined than observed, for imagination is unobtrusive. It extends human experience while keeping for wild animals the essential condition of their wilderness—freedom from thoughtless incursion.

If wilderness is about the mythic American character, it is equally about characters who live their natural lives apart from us. Stories told on errands outside the wilderness are scripted by powers larger than human. Nature and narrative fit hand and glove. If we will let nature abide

the Voltaic pile soon after its announcement for the isolation and identification of sodium and potassium, his invention of the safety lamp for miners, his work on laughing gas and the arc lamp—and for his willingness to employ and encourage the young Michael Faraday. Through his electrochemical researches, Davy took electricity, formerly noteworthy mainly because of thunderstorms and its use in vivid demonstrations, to a central place in understanding chemical affinity and, consequently, among the forces of nature. In 1800, at the age of 22, his reputation was such that Count Rumford invited him to take a post at the newly established Royal Institution. A year later Davy became professor of chemistry; in 1803 he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society, and in 1812 he was knighted.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

wildly in some few remaining portions of the earth, we will be immeasurably richer for it. We will not only secure a future for coming generations, we will secure stories for them—stories of wonder, of kinship with other living beings, and of richness and fecundity from a prodigal source.

While love of narrative for its own sake may be exclusively a human trait, the characters we enjoy are drawn from life. Animals are unequivocally the favorite characters of our young. (Imagine, for a moment, children's literature without animals.) Will we have wild animals for our storylines of the future? Not unless we protect their habitat and freedom.

Marvin Henberg, professor of philosophy at the University of Idaho, delivered the lecture from which this article is adapted at his alma mater, Washington and Lee University, in March 1993. □

In winter, the Frank Church wilderness is virtually empty of human presence, yet the animals remain. Every creek drainage is a scene for timeless stories of birth and death, play and predation, nurture and starvation. In February 1993 I was witness in The Frank to the mute testimony of fresh blood alternately lavished and trickled across a mile or more of glistening white snow. A 400-foot slide down a steep canyon, four wide, bloody, fur-strewn depressions, and a trail of crimson cougar prints told a dramatic story.

One male cougar, lurking in the rocks above snowline, had pounced on a second male traversing the slope. They slid down together, biting and clawing for a hundred feet, at which point one of them sank tooth or claw into an artery of the other. The bleeding began, dyeing the snow, spurting blood a full five meters downwind. The cougars crashed into the bottom of the canyon. The wounded one lay below; the other, its belly matted with blood from its rival, lay 10 feet above. They hissed and snarled, keeping their distance. The wounded male fled upstream along the trail. The rival followed.

They battled once again at a precipice a mile upstream from their first encounter. Both fell onto the frozen shore of Big Creek, 60 feet below. They paced uphill alongside each other, snarling but apart. One of them shredded a mountain mahogany bush, seeking to intimidate the other. Again they fought, again both fell—this time into the creek. Only one of them, as the tracks clearly showed, swam out. The other, dazed, perhaps already dead from lack of blood, slid under the ice to await the spring thaw. The victor returned to the scene of the two battles above the precipice, then headed upslope to resume its furtive, solitary existence.

At the time I encountered these tracks and pieced together their meaning with the able assistance of two wildlife biologists, I was one of only four people within a 50-mile radius. Surrounding me in each of hundreds of other creek drainages were the tracks, the evidence, the leavings from thousands of similar stories. All of them will be gone with the thaw, as will the cougar carcass in

RECOMMENDED READING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Davy was a many-sided figure; he wrote poetry and was a friend of Coleridge, Wordsworth, and other literary lights. He loved nature. As president of the Royal Society, he tried to move it away from electing people who were not outstanding scientists. Science proved a path from obscurity to high social position. He traveled widely in Europe, and his reputation gave him easy contact with the great scientists there. Not always a congenial person, he overreacted to criticism, had worldly ambitions, and did not always treat others kindly. But he was a brilliant scientist driven to understand nature, and he had a strong desire to make his knowledge useful to all.

Visit to a Small Universe. *Virginia Trimble. American Institute of Physics, 1992. \$24.95.*

In this collection of delightful essays, an astronomer articulates for the general public a view of our understanding of the universe and of unanswered questions that confront us. Some essays relate the results of Trimble's own investigations, others explain the work of her colleagues. She writes about the astronomy of the past and about several persons who have set the tone for present-day astronomy and astrophysics.

In the Wake of Galileo. *Michael Segre. Rutgers, 1993. \$14.*

Galileo, Courtier: The Practice of Science in the Culture of Absolutism. *Mario Biagioli. Univ. of Chicago, 1993. \$29.95.*

Galileo's life and works continue to provide a fertile field for scholars. Segre deals with his followers—and with Italian science as continued by them for several years after Galileo's death. Torricelli, for example, is commonly remembered only for his barometer and vacuum, Viviani only as a young man who wrote the earliest biography of Galileo. Both were active scientists, and, with others, formed a Galilean School. Biagioli shows how Galileo, who began his career as a lowly mathematician, through his willingness to play the courtier game, cre-

ated an identity for which there were no well-established social roles or images. The author reconstructs the culture and codes of courtly behavior that constrained Galileo's writings, presentations, and daily behavior and his interactions with others.

Science and Anti-Science. *Gerald Holton. Harvard, 1993. \$24.95.*

Holton, in a collection of essays, provides his usual, carefully thought-out insights that delve into the far-reaching influence of Ernst Mach, the role of rhetoric in the reception of Relativity and Quantum Theory, Thomas Jefferson as scientist, and the controversies over the purported "End of Science" and the antiscience phenomena of the past and today.

The Science Matrix: Past, Present, and Future. *Frederick Seitz. Springer-Verlag, 1991. \$39.50.*

Seitz, a former president of Rockefeller University and of the National Academy of Sciences, and holder of many other high positions inside and outside government, offers his views of the way in which the natural sciences arose and of their importance as we face the difficult social problems of today and the future.

The Broken Dice and Other Mathematical Tales of Chance. *Ivar Ekeland. Univ. of Chicago, 1993. \$19.95.*

Ekeland has chosen the 13th-century Scandinavian saga of King Olaf (which as a boy I read about in Longfellow's *Tales of a Wayside Inn*) as a setting for exploring chance and contingency, fate, anticipation, chaos, risk, and statistics. Improbable as it might seem, Ekeland finds the setting amply rich for a playful, yet searching and instructive, treatment of these topics.

Thomas McNaugher

The Highest Stakes: The Economic Foundations of the Next Security System. *Wayne Sandholtz et al. Oxford, 1992. \$29.95.*

Strategic Capitalism: Private Business and Public Purpose in Japanese Industrial Finance. *Kent E. Calder. Princeton, 1993. \$35.*

To Wayne Sandholtz and his colleagues at the Berkeley Roundtable on the International Economy (BRIE),

economics is war by other means. They argue that while the United States naively pursues free trade in the name of "interdependence" and global economic gains, it has come under attack from "friends" like Japan and Germany, whose governments have mastered the art of protecting key technologies, subsidizing exports, and generally winning "quality" hi-tech jobs for their citizens at U.S. expense. Because technological advances tend to accumulate to the winners of this economic war, they are able to propel themselves along advantageous "technology trajectories" toward technological (and hence military) dominance. The United States can no longer rely on its defense sector to restore its competitiveness, they say, because the Pentagon can no longer keep up with the newest fast-moving technologies (mostly in the electronics field). The country needs new policies to foster U.S. competitiveness, lest it be left to make potato chips (to borrow a metaphor from the Clinton campaign) while East Asia and Europe make computer chips.

Virtually every word of this argument is debatable, the more so now that Japan and Germany are gripped by serious economic problems while high-technology U.S. industries seem to be regaining their edge. Yet obviously the argument is topical at a time when President Clinton spouts the jargon of competitiveness and listens to BRIE-alumna Laura D'Andrea Tyson, his chief economic adviser. Sandholtz and his colleagues articulate and document their argument exceptionally well, and go beyond others in spinning out what they see as its political and military implications. For those tracking the post-cold war debate on the nature of the global order and international competition, this book deserves a careful reading.

Like *The Highest Stakes*, virtually all contributions to the ever-growing (and ever-contentious) literature on the emerging global economy must confront Japan's economic behavior, because, alone among the advanced industrialized states, Japan seems able to participate in the global economy without sacrificing its independence and insularity. Sandholtz, his colleagues, and many others explain

this behavior as the outcome of government policies—the success of “industrial policy” abroad.

Kent Calder’s *Strategic Capitalism* sharply and credibly challenges this view. In a careful study of Japan’s credit industry, Calder highlights a Japanese government split into factions, hesitant to act and often ill-advised when it finally does so. It has been able to do little more than create a reasonably stable economic environment for Japan’s development, at least until recently. Within that environment Japan’s large industrial firms make unusually long term and coordinated strategic choices, often manipulating the government to achieve their ends. It is not Japan’s government but rather the peculiar cohesiveness of its private sector, with its “unusual sense of a shared national destiny,” that brings us Japan’s brand of “strategic capitalism.”

Calder’s book is well documented, lucid, and convincing—truly a landmark study. Its conclusions are hardly comforting, however, because they locate the source of Japan’s economic behavior at the level of culture rather than government policy. Calder’s conclusions are oriented less toward policy than toward suggestions for further research. Yet one policy path he presumably would reject is the one the United States is now taking, beating on Japan’s government either to exercise the economic control Calder would suggest it does not have or to take control of an economy the United States would rather see freed from government involvement.

Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War. Rick Atkinson. Houghton Mifflin, 1993. \$24.95.

If you have time to read only one book on the Gulf War, make it this one. Atkinson has mastered the art of weaving grand history out of the personal stories of those enmeshed in it. In his earlier and much-praised *Long Gray Line*, he covered the Army’s Vietnam trauma and its post-Vietnam decline and recovery through the lives of various members of West Point’s class of 1966. In *Crusade* he captures the drama of America’s response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait by weaving together the stories of an immense and diverse

cast of characters, stretching from President Bush to privates in the field. No doubt his respectful but persistent hammering on General Norman Schwarzkopf’s teddy bear-like TV persona (“Stormin’ Norman” was more grizzly than teddy!) will be the most remembered of these, but it is hardly the most memorable or the most telling. Interspersed among the vignettes are brief summaries of historical, strategic, and military operational issues that, while perhaps not up to the standards of historians or strategists, make the required points in a readable way. The result is a book that covers the Gulf War more thoroughly and readably than any other book on the crisis now in print.

Anna J. Schwartz

Irving Fisher: A Biography. Robert Loring Allen. Blackwell, 1993. \$39.95.

As a young Yale Ph.D., Irving Fisher (1867-1947) established his reputation as the first American to use mathematics in economics. He distinguished himself at an early date by his contributions to economic theory and his proposals to stabilize the price level. The fascination of his life is that he was not only a scientific economist but also an unflagging promoter of a potpourri of social causes.

His initial excursion in this direction apparently was the result of a bout with tuberculosis beginning in 1898, the year he was appointed a full professor at Yale. For the next three years he gave up work to conquer the disease. He then became an evangelist for health, espousing health foods, cold remedies, vitamins, mechanical exercise machines, and eugenics. He supported prohibition of alcohol, and opposed consumption of tobacco, tea, refined sugar, and bleached white flour. He edited a book, *How to Live*, that became the standard hygiene textbook for schools and colleges, and remained in use long after his death. Fisher also promoted calendar reform, simplified spelling, Esperanto, conservation of natural resources, and U.S. membership in the League of Nations.

Fisher’s life is also fascinating because he derived his analysis of the Great Depression from his own ex-

perience. His debt-deflation theory of great depressions emphasizes that falling prices increase the real value of nominal debts, causing insolvency of borrowers, financial distress, and economic contraction.

In 1925 Fisher sold to a concern that eventually became Remington Rand a small manufacturing business that he had established to exploit a visible card index system of his invention. The value of his stock soared as the New York bull market took off, and he bought heavily on margin the stock of small or medium-size enterprises producing innovative products. The market crash of 1929 left him bankrupt. He borrowed well over a million dollars from a wealthy sister-in-law, and the burden of the debt, which he was never in a position to repay, became heavier as the price level and his nominal income fell. The sister-in-law forgave the debt in her will.

The Winner’s Curse: Paradoxes and Anomalies of Economic Life. Richard H. Thaler. Princeton, 1994. \$12.95.

The 13 anomalies presented in this collection are facts that seem to contradict the predictions of various economic theories. Each chapter starts with a scenario based on the implications of a current economic hypothesis, then discusses findings that show a divergence between market outcomes and the predictions of the theory. The scenarios are amusing and the reviews of the literature are informative. Before one concludes that market failures abound, it is worthwhile recalling an observation by Adelman, in his book just described: “Markets are interesting only because they work imperfectly. They are . . . the worst form of economic organization, except by comparison with all the rest.”

Russian Currency and Finance: A Currency Board Approach to Reform. Steve H. Hanke, Lars Jonung, and Kurt Schuler. Routledge, 1993. \$49.95.

This book describes inflationary conditions in Russia as of April 1993, and explains how that country can end inflation by establishing a currency board. A currency board would issue rubles backed by reserves of a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

RECOMMENDED READING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

foreign currency, say, the U.S. dollar, equal to 100 percent or more of its circulation. Because currency board rubles would be a sound money, Russians would willingly exchange the foreign currency they now hold for rubles that would be convertible on demand into dollars at a fixed exchange rate. The authors believe a currency board would promote other essential reforms, including forcing the government to balance the budget and to impose constraints on state enterprises.

Yet some economists oppose a rule-bound currency board system, because they favor discretionary monetary policy, are troubled by the absence of a lender of last resort under a currency board system, and find a fixed exchange rate objectionable. The authors counter these and other objections, but there is no evidence of political support for a currency board in Russia, although inflationary conditions have worsened since the book went to press.

The Economics of Petroleum Supply. *M. A. Adelman. MIT, 1993. \$49.50.*

Written in a lively fashion over a period of 30 years, the essays in this volume explain how the price of oil has been determined. The author, a distinguished authority, notes that there is no fixed stock of minerals. Increasing knowledge has overcome diminishing returns, evidenced by a sixfold increase in oil output and a nearly 80 percent decline in prices from 1945 to 1970. A joint monopoly of high-cost producers, who sold all they could produce, and low-cost producers, who restricted output, then succeeded in raising prices. The author calls this anomaly an example of "leader's curse" in a collusive organization. Smaller members cheat but, to prevent the cartel's collapse, larger ones do not retaliate or expand output. The OPEC nations traded a higher price for a lower market share.

According to Adelman, the consensus views—that the current price does not differ much from the long-run competitive prices and that the price must rise over time because of growing scarcity—are false. He is

opposed to cooperation with OPEC nations because they cannot be held to any agreement. In any case, they will work to maximize the value of any price-output combination that they can arrange.

Monetary Policy in the United States: An Intellectual and Institutional History. *Richard H. Timberlake. Univ. of Chicago, 1993. \$65; paper, \$28.95.*

This work is an expansion of an earlier study that dealt with the period before the creation of the Federal Reserve System. It now covers the evolution of the U.S. monetary and banking system beginning with the constitutional discussions that led to the establishment of the First Bank of the United States down to the present time. The intellectual question at the heart of the work is why the provision of money has not been the exclusive domain of competitive banks but has universally occasioned state intervention, regulation, and monopoly privilege for state-sponsored institutions. The author examines monetary policy developments in this country in light of the objectives of the promoters of individual institutions and the institutional record.

To Sow One Acre More. *Lee A. Craig. Johns Hopkins, 1993. \$28.50.*

This study focuses on the economics of the farm household from Maine to Kansas in 1860. Using census, wage, and other data, the author finds that the northern American farm in 1860 had 25 percent fewer children than in 1790. He attributes differences in fertility among regions in part to western migration, which affected the mix of agricultural products in the Northeast, the Midwest, and the frontier, and influenced northeastern parents to have fewer children. Changes in the regional pattern of agricultural production induced children in the Northeast to migrate on reaching adulthood, lessening their value to parents relative to children in other regions. Mechanization made children more productive but less essential. As farm wealth increased, parents had less need to rely on children for old age security.

The author concludes that on the eve of the Civil War, children were probably a net cost at birth to their

parents in every region, ranging from \$300 in the Northeast to less than \$100 in the other regions, differences that correspond roughly to regional differences in birthrates.

Earl W. Count

Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Biblical Research. *William G. Dever. Univ. of Washington, 1993. \$14.95.*

Its biblical implications have invested Palestine archaeology with both an obvious advantage and a handicap. It began, so to say, as the illustrations to a text. Sometimes it vindicated an account, frequently it did not. Meanwhile, archaeology elsewhere lacked this constraint—it was free to build its logic and paradigms. Lately, Palestinian archaeology has emancipated itself from its trammel, for as between written document and spade the latter has the final word.

Such is the theme of this brief but highly informative work, and its conclusion is worth the entire overview. (I daresay it was the hardest part to compose.) Suffice it to say here that "the Bible is not history, but rather an account of God's miraculous intervention in human history." Archaeology digs without fear or favor and solicits no converts. You may take it from there.

Aztec: The World of Moctezuma. *Jane S. Day and Eduardo M. Moctezuma. Denver Museum of Natural History and Roberts Rinehart, 1992. \$16.95.*

The Fall of the Aztec Empire: The Drawings of Keith Henderson. *Essay by Jane S. Day, Denver Museum of Natural History and Roberts Rinehart, 1993. \$14.95.*

These two works make companion pieces. In both, Day's simple and powerful prose conjoins the life of the people and the quick demolition of their supportive policy. The first work is a dazzling array of polychromes from the codices, the artifacts, and the reconstructions of public buildings, the landscape of Tenochtitlan, and the fabulous marketplace of Tlatelolco by a Mexican painter. Here are the bold peasantry who fought the wars and the meaning of the religious system, not to the priests but to the people.

The second work resuscitates the powerful and once-famous pen-and-inks of Keith Henderson: the soldiery of Spain confronts the aristocrats and commoners of a world scarcely less spectacular than the one the soldiers have left behind.

Legend has it that the Aztec came south from their northern home about 1000 A.D., and at first were rude subordinates of the more cultured indigenes around them. By ca. 1325 they dominated, having borrowed much from their neighbors. They built Tenochtitlan where an eagle was perching on a cactus. In less than two centuries more, they had built their fabulous empire. The Aztec melded with their European conquerors; the Mexican flag is a European tricolor emblazoned with an eagle perching on a cactus. The outcome of the most epical event known to the tragedy of man is not a pretty story, but it has produced a unique and virile people.

The Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphics in European Tradition.

Erik Iversen. Princeton, 2nd ed., 1993. \$16.95.

This is one of the noblest works I have ever reviewed. Egypt is a rare, superlative exploit in the geste of mankind; the author, an unassuming authority who walks with poise through more than three self-contained Nilotic millennia, then through the less than two millennia of Europe's not very insightful treatment of them. When in the early 19th century Champollion deciphered the Rosetta stone, unearthed by rough chance (1799), at last the hieroglyphics broke forth. Iversen begins his epic by giving us an artless primer of them. Then follows the myth of Egypt, and its code for speaking to itself. The code never ceased being ideographic, allegoric; some units eventually added phonetics. Hence the hieroglyphic scheme did not become exportable like the Mesopotamian cuneiform or Phoenician alphabet. Still it complemented pyramid, obelisk, sculpture, wall-painting. At long last the ageless world view aged to naught, but its mystique lingered. Yet in its senescence, it imbued the Mediterranean world with its powerful Osiris-Isis cult when a welter of cults (including Christianity) were

requiring initiation as the price of membership.

The Greeks in their free-minded way learned from Egypt. But the Egyptians attributed cause and effect to the deeds of their many gods and goddesses, whereas the Greeks transcended their myths of deities as they engendered an abstractive logic of cause and effect. They made some effort to restate Egyptian thought in logical terms, which, of course, was impossible. The Romans fancied Egyptian spatial lines. To them, obelisks and hieroglyphs were decorative. Still a hoary inscrutability enhanced the myths of Egypt and its hieroglyphs—a lost wisdom. So ended an era.

Christianity conquered Egypt. A polytheistic world view was anathema and was to be destroyed. Yet there lingered a vague veneration of ancient wisdom. In the seventh century A.D., a Christian Egypt was submerged by the Arabic flood, and Egypt passed permanently from European world view. Medieval Christian Europe made no attempt to recover Egyptian thought but infused what went for such thought with a neo-Platonism that persisted through its philosophical schemata into the 18th century.

The Renaissance produced a number of fresh conjectures about things Egyptian, but its interest was not antiquarian but in newfound creativity. Art sought to fixate the quintessence of Christendom's cherished values, for art without such seeking was mere craftsmanship. Egyptian "art" revealed no such intent; its craftsmanship could do no more than suggest.

The European cultural tradition found itself, in great part, in the 17th and 18th centuries, as it engendered modern "science" and stumbled to formulate its problems. Iversen considers the demise of the neo-Platonic undercurrent as crucial in the philosophical perspective of the West. Thinkers discontinued their attempts to rationalize the tenets of their own day from ancient views. (Modern biblical criticism is another example of this.) The student of Egypt began to ask, What actually did the Egyptians believe and say? How may we find out? Over the past two centuries, the hieroglyphs first deciphered by

Champollion have spilled forth their meaning.

Iversen fleshes out his story with thumbnail biographies and works of the scholars who have made European tradition. It's important to note that Iversen the Dane has an amazing (if not quite perfect) command of English, and his research is prodigious. His book—*multum in parvo*—measures up to its stupendous subject.

The People: Indians of the American Southwest.

Stephen Trimble. School of American Research, Sante Fe/Univ. of Washington, 1993. \$50; paper, \$29.95.

This immensely old, variegated land cuts you down to size. You cannot own it, but it can own you. This sensitive and self-disciplined author is a celebrated photographer, not handicapped by being an anthropologist (the reviewer is an anthropologist); he surveys piecemeal all the vernacular peoples from Utah to Mexico, and from west Texas to southeast California. Despite the Anglo inroads, which inevitably have entailed adjustments, the land still possesses the peoples. They are rooted and they know it—a hard thing for land-hungry whites to understand or appreciate.

Pueblos, Navajo, Walapai, Havasupai, Yavapai, Apache, Utes, Southern Paiutes, O'odham (Pima, Papago, et al.), Maricopa, Colorado River tribes, Yaqui—their earliest history and their subsequent experiences of incursive whites are described in this "hefty" (author's term), and welcome, volume.

Russell B. Stevens

Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage. *William Rathje and Cullen Murphy. HarperCollins, 1992. \$23.*

It is a pleasant surprise to discover that this book is as appealing as its title. Virtually alone, for two decades or more, the Garbage Project at the University of Arizona has been finding out what is *really* represented by solid waste and how we deal with it. It is surprising, to say the least, how many widely held and vigorously defended points of view turn out, when the hard data become available, to be

CONTINUED ON BACK COVER



RECOMMENDED READING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

dead wrong. As the authors put it at one point, "Once again the American consumer has proved capable of dashing the fondest of hopes . . . and the American household has demonstrated its unwitting capacity to subvert public purpose."

Making Silent Stones Speak: Human Evolution and the Dawn of Technology. *Kathy D. Schick and Nicholas Toth. Simon & Schuster, 1993. \$25.*

To the nonspecialist, much of archaeology tends to seem rather dry stuff. It is therefore to the credit of the authors that their effort, as they phrase it, to make silent stones speak is largely successful. In well-written prose they show how a wide array of disciplines now cooperate in seeking to understand very early human evolution and how crucial has been the role of tools and technology in setting the patterns of that evolution. Finally, the seeming oxymoron "experimental archaeology" turns out, quite to the contrary, to be a creative way of

adding to our knowledge about our very early ancestors—not only how stone tools were made and used, but how the evidence is to be interpreted in deciphering cultural patterns.

The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination. *Donald Worster. Oxford, 1993. \$25.*

Collected here are 16 essays, published in a variety of journals or books or given as public lectures in recent years. Most are both informative and thought provoking, but their special appeal lies in the fact that the author is a historian who has come to realize the paucity of environmental insights in the great preponderance of historical writings, to the detriment of their value. Historians and environmental scientists would profit from a far closer acquaintance with each other's knowledge and point of view.

In the Rainforest: Report from a Strange, Beautiful, Imperiled World. *Catherine Caufield. Univ. of Chicago, 1991. \$11.95.*

E. O. Wilson has said that Caufield's book is "scientific journal-

ism at its best" and "the one book to read to become informed about the tropical crisis." I agree. This edition is a reprinting of a 1984 volume, with a brief afterword. Most readers will be alarmed at what is happening to this vast and remarkable ecosystem. Many will be depressed and even angered by the motivations of those most immediately responsible for the destruction.



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