



THE KEY REPORTER

Olney, Greene, and Midelfort Win 1999 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

At the annual Senate banquet in Washington, D.C., held on December 10, 1999, at the Doyle Washington Hotel, Phi Beta Kappa honored the authors of three books that represent outstanding contributions to humanistic learning. Each of the authors received a check for \$2,500 and gave a brief talk about the prizewinning book.

James Olney won the Christian Gauss Award for *Memory and Narrative: The Weave of Life-Writing*, published by the University of Chicago Press. Olney, the Voorhies Professor of English and of French and Italian at Louisiana State University, is the author of numerous other books and coeditor of the *Southern Review*.

Brian Greene won the Science Award for *The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory*, published by W. W. Norton and Co. Greene is professor of physics and mathematics at Columbia University.

H. C. Erik Midelfort won the Emerson Award for *A History of Madness in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, published by Stanford University Press. Midelfort is C. Julian Bishko Professor of History at the University of Virginia.

The three book award committees were chaired by Lewis Perry, Saint Louis University; Henry Horn, Princeton University; and Karen Lawrence, University of California, Irvine.



Book award winners at the reception before the Senate banquet in December (from the left): James Olney (Christian Gauss Award), Brian Greene (Science Award), and H. C. Erik Midelfort (Emerson Award).

ΦBK 'National Symposium' Attracts 300 Members, Guests to Hunter College

More than 300 members of Phi Beta Kappa and their guests attended a "national symposium" at Hunter College, sponsored by the chapters and associations of the Middle Atlantic District and Hunter College, on Saturday, October 23, 1999. Four main speakers addressed the theme, "Liberal Learning at the Millennium: Ideological and Technological Revolution in the Academy." Afterward, members of the audience participated in a spirited discussion.

Frederick Crosson, national ΦBK president and Cavanaugh Professor

Emeritus of the Humanities at the University of Notre Dame, talked about the importance of the study of the liberal arts in an increasingly technical society. He noted that "less than a quarter of the bachelor's degrees nationally are now awarded in liberal studies. In part, this is because going to college is increasingly perceived, and presented, in terms of its economic benefits." Nevertheless, he continued, one of the central aims of liberal education is to "help us become more thoughtful persons."

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'NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM' ATTRACTS 300 TO HUNTER COLLEGE

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Crosson identified three essential components of liberal education:

1. Going beyond the information about what the facts are, what the text or the teacher tells us, and trying to understand the implications of the text or the data.

2. Increasing the range of people we can listen to and learn from.

3. Acquiring the skills necessary for thinking about the texts and data in various ways.

He noted that formal liberal education is not the only way to "foster the development of such qualities of mind and heart," but it's a path more likely than others to do so.



ΦBK President Frederick Crosson (left) and C. Howard Krukofsky at the symposium.

Catharine R. Stimpson, a member of the ΦBK Senate and dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at New York University, expressed relief that the day's topic was not being framed in apocalyptic terms. "Bosnia and Rwanda are having a crisis. We in the liberal arts are not; we're having a change." She maintained that there is no collision between traditional and nontraditional learning, but a blending. She also asserted that the humanities "provide us with a set of papers" to get through the postmodern (since 1945) age. While maintaining that "the humanities are too important to be left to the academic humanists," Stimpson said that those academic disciplines are becoming more interdisciplinary and accessible.

Lynn A. Fontana, vice president for education at Nobel Learning Communities, Inc., agreed that technology and the humanities are not at war with each other, but said that because of the abundance of information today, thinking and learning skills are more important than ever. For that reason she suggested that "we need new modes of teaching" that will encourage collaborative and nonlinear thinking, and be "student-centered." The so-called virtual

university was a step in that direction, but in time, she said, these transitional institutions will evolve into "on-line learning communities," within which scholars will "serve as guides to this universe of information," providing context.

John Brademas, president emeritus of New York University and a former U.S. Congressman from Indiana, recalled his inaugural address at NYU 18 years earlier, in which he had said that "liberal education must be at the heart of any university that aspires to greatness," adding: "It is through the requirements of a first-class liberal arts education that our colleges and universities provide society its most valuable resource: people who can think logically and write lucidly. It is the arts and sciences that prepare men and women not only to enter the world equipped to practice their professions but also to act as intelligent, creative, and honorable human beings."

Brademas agreed with Fontana that distance learning or virtual universities should not be regarded as inherently antithetical to liberal learning, but he

raised some practical questions about the technology that needed to be addressed, including, How are online courses to be accredited? Will steps be taken, especially where the university program is linked to a for-profit company, to prevent conflicts of interest and protect the institution's academic integrity? How can faculty learn to use the new tools and keep up with the changes in them?

The symposium was organized by C. Howard Krukofsky, president of the Middle Atlantic District and of the Hunter College chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. James Lusardi, a member of the ΦBK Senate and Francis March Professor of English at Lafayette College, served as moderator. Hunter College offered breakfast and lunch to all participants at no charge.

Member Donates Ancestor's 1792 ΦBK Medal to Society

Catherine Carey Abbott (ΦBK, Florida State University, 1949) has donated to the Society the Phi Beta Kappa medal that belonged to her ancestor, Abiel Abbott, who received it at Harvard in 1792.

Do You Know the Difference between Phi Beta Kappa's Chapters and Associations?

Each member of Phi Beta Kappa is elected to lifetime membership by a *chapter*; each of the 255 chapters is located on a college or university campus. After graduation, members may join an *association* in areas where such groups exist. Nationwide there are 58 active associations, and their members represent a broad range of professions and perspectives. Their aims are to promote friendship and learning, offer stimulating social and cultural programs, and serve the community.

For several years the winter issue of the *Key Reporter* has published highlights from the annual reports submitted to the national office by both the chapters and the associations. This year, in addition to summarizing that news, we are publishing a membership application form for readers who wish to join an association. You may reproduce or clip the application form and mail it directly to the secretary of the association nearest you. The amount of annual dues each association charges is included on the list of association secretaries' addresses on page 7.

ΦBK Association Membership Application

Name _____

Elected to Phi Beta Kappa at _____ in 19 _____

Mailing address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (home) _____ (work) _____

E-mail _____ Dues enclosed: \$ _____

Make check payable to the association and mail it to the secretary listed on page 7.



Chapter News

Anniversary Celebrations

The **Haverford College** chapter celebrated its centennial on October 30, 1998, with more than 100 members and friends in attendance. Hershel Shanks, editor of the *Biblical Archaeology Review*, presented a talk on "What the Dead Sea Scrolls Actually Tell Us," and ΦBK Secretary Douglas Foard brought greetings from the national office.

The chapter at **San Diego State University** last year observed its 25th anniversary, in honor of which the San Diego ΦBK association donated \$1,000 to the chapter's scholarship fund.

The chapter at **State University of New York at Albany** celebrated its 25th anniversary in May 1999. The chapter organized an exhibit in the university library with various letters, documents, programs, and newspaper articles from the chapter's archives. The chapter secretary credited the anniversary celebration with having reinvigorated the chapter, which had "nearly collapsed" because the secretary had had no assistance with the work. This year the office of the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences provided some assistance with mailings and programs, and helped to defray the expense of correspondence and initiation receptions. The chapter secretary was granted a one-semester reduction of one course from her teaching load, in order to try to reorganize the chapter's records and procedures.

Awards

The chapter at the **University of Alabama** has established an endowed lectureship in honor of its "long-time mentor and benefactor," Allen J. Going. The first recipient of the lectureship was Martin Marty, of the Public Religion Project at the University of Chicago, who presented his lecture in February 1999.

The chapter at the **University of North Carolina at Greensboro** presented the Josephine E. Hege Award of \$2,000 to Scott Thomason, a history major who used the money to explore a collection of papers at the University of Liverpool, England.

The chapter at **Louisiana State University** gave \$500 scholarships to two

juniors at the initiation ceremony this year. Recipients were Christy A. Ledet, English, and Gitanjali Srivastava, biochemistry.

The **SUNY at Albany** chapter awarded its ΦBK Prize for Academic Excellence to the senior with the highest grade-point average, Elizabeth M. Lynch. This prize, which was endowed in 1992 by several members of the chapter, amounted to \$1,000 in 1999.

Activities

Each year the **Case Western Reserve University** chapter allocates \$5,000 for grants to student projects; proposals are solicited each semester.

The chapter at the **University of New Hampshire** sponsors an annual General Education Essay Competition open to all undergraduates.

Last year the chapter at **Hobart and William Smith Colleges** sponsored a showcase of independent work by two juniors and two seniors. The program was so successful that the chapter plans to sponsor it again this year.

The chapter at **Ripon College** voted to support the college's annual Liberal Arts Symposium, a three-day event in which faculty and student speakers address a selected theme and their scholarly research connected with it.

The **Colorado College** chapter sponsored a workshop on academic excellence for sophomores and juniors, attended by some 40 students. There was a brief description of Phi Beta Kappa and its aims during the session.

The **Cornell College** (Iowa) chapter has moved its election of new members to February so that initiation can take place in early April, on Student Symposium Day, when selected students talk about their research projects. On commencement day, certificates and keys are presented at a reception. The chapter is planning to have Phi Beta Kappa seniors wear a special stole during commencement activities in 2000, and is discussing a project to put the names of all ΦBK members on plaques in the college library. The college president, Les Garner, is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Last April the **New York University** chapter cosponsored the dean's Undergraduate Research Conference in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences, in which some 70 students participated. This year the chapter is helping to fund the college's *Undergraduate Research Journal*, which publishes abstracts of the conference papers and of six Phi Beta Kappa/Albert Borgman prizewinning honors theses.

Acceptance Rates

A large proportion of chapters continue to initiate 95 to 100 percent of all persons invited to join. As a general rule, the smaller the institution, the higher the acceptance rate. For example, the chapter secretary at **Mary Baldwin College** reported that only one student had rejected membership over the past 18 years, although he added that "some haven't a clue as to what Phi Beta Kappa is; they are also pretty tardy in returning cards and jewelry forms, so the secretary has to call, e-mail, send reminder notes, etc." He noted that "many otherwise qualified teacher certification students have failed to get in because our education discipline does not insist they have a foreign language. The studio art courses have been redesigned to give them more

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CHAPTER NEWS

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of an emphasis on liberal arts work, so that more art majors qualify. The dean reads the names of Φ BK initiates at commencement."

The secretary of **Lehigh University** (91 percent acceptance rate) commented similarly: (1) "Some students have no idea what Phi Beta Kappa is. . . . They think it's yet another organization where they have to pay dues, go to meetings, and perform services." (2) Some students are unable to show up for the initiation because of previous commitments or study abroad. In three cases this year, students were elected and paid their dues but never filled out membership cards.

The chapter at **Ohio University**, which used to average a 90 percent acceptance rate, reported that it has encountered acceptance problems in the past two years. It has started a reception for sophomores during the fall quarter to acquaint them with Phi Beta Kappa, and sent out a letter of information about the chapter and requirements for election to juniors and seniors in the Arts and Sciences and Honors Tutorial Colleges with grade-point averages above 3.5. Nonetheless, only about one-third of the students elected in May 1999 attended a meeting to submit membership cards and dues.

As a result, the chapter sent e-mail messages to all nonrespondents who had not yet graduated, and sent more information about Phi Beta Kappa to those who responded. Members of the Executive Committee then telephoned the remaining nonrespondents, not to make a "hard sell" but to explain the meaning and importance of Phi Beta Kappa. Only one person in this group so contacted positively declined membership. Among the students elected after graduation, only one person off campus responded favorably. Most could not be reached. According to the secretary, the responses of local students included these: Why should I join? I am already a member of other honor societies. I have been admitted to grad school, so why do I need it? What does Phi Beta Kappa do? The secretary reported that the final acceptance rate was increased to 75 percent, but at a "considerable sacrifice of time" on the part of the chapter members.

Among the lowest acceptance rates reported were those of **Washington State University** (38 percent), **University of Utah** (41 percent), and **George Washington University** (47 percent). Other chapters reporting rates below 70 percent included the **University of Ar-**

izona; University of California, Los Angeles and Riverside; Colorado State University; University of Colorado; Florida State University; Iowa State University; Louisiana State University; University of New Hampshire; University of New Mexico; University of Oregon; Pennsylvania State University; Purdue University; Virginia Tech; University of Washington; Wayne State University; and University of Wisconsin—Madison.

The **University of New Hampshire** initiated only about half of the students invited to join in the past two years. The secretary reported, "It is not that the others turn down membership; they simply don't respond. We inform department chairs of their majors elected to the Society and ask them to urge their eligible majors to join. This has had some success, but the percentage accepting election remains low. . . . The question of making Phi Beta Kappa more visible is still a burning one for us, as is the whole question of activities that have helped other chapters to make themselves more visible on their campuses."

The chapter at **Pennsylvania State University** reported that it is continuing efforts to boost membership and visibility (its rate of acceptance went up from 51 percent last year to 56 percent this year). For the first time the chapter completed a dues solicitation to persons in the State College area, rather than simply to faculty and students. In addition, several faculty emeriti and other local residents attended campus events. At the same time the university administration has urged the chapter to broaden its membership to include students who complete a degree on other Penn State campuses. The chapter has formed an ad hoc committee to examine the chapter's membership criteria and compare them with those of other Phi Beta Kappa chapters, and "to set in place new criteria and a process for ongoing assessment of our criteria." The chapter "looks forward to developments at the next triennial Council which will allow us to reward outstanding liberal arts study regardless of the location within the Penn State system."

The secretary at **Florida State University** named four interrelated reasons why some students do not join Phi Beta Kappa there: (1) The campus population is very large, and those elected represent a group with very diverse backgrounds and expectations. (2) It is hard to get accurate addresses for students now that the university no longer mails out reports of grades. (The chapter has tried to counter this problem by publishing the

list of invitees in the campus newspaper and by having members in various departments contact the students.) (3) Many students do not see the importance of belonging to Phi Beta Kappa because they regard it simply as padding for their résumés. (4) A large state university like FSU tends to emphasize professional preparation. The FSU chapter secretary noted that the chapter sends out follow-up letters and e-mails to students who do not initially respond, as well as making telephone calls. "We have one member who, when she calls trying to contact the students, delights in talking to the parents of the invitees instead." As a result, students who had not initially intended to join decide to do so.

Improving Visibility

To coincide with the election of members, the chapter at the **University of North Carolina at Greensboro** set up at the entrance to the library a display that included a large replica of the key, a copy of the *American Scholar*, the brochures sent to persons invited to join Phi Beta Kappa, and a picture of the previous year's initiates. The Executive Committee also sponsored an afternoon social to introduce new initiates to resident Φ BK members before initiation. The chapter secretary noted that the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the director of the Honors Program, and the director of the Honors Residential Dorms are all members of the chapter and promote Φ BK activities and presence. "The chapter continues to identify strong students early in their careers and make sure that they know about Phi Beta Kappa."

The **University of Arizona** chapter reported that it is working to improve its visibility on campus by publishing names of students elected to membership in the campus newsletter and by providing information about Phi Beta Kappa to advisers so that they can use it to advise students at an earlier stage in their studies.

Attention, Readers (Particularly Female Ones)

Does your address label reflect the way you wish to be addressed in Society mailings? Do you get two copies of the newsletter at one address, but prefer to receive only one? Please clip or copy your address label as necessary, and send corrections to the Records Department at Phi Beta Kappa, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Fourth Floor, Washington, DC 20036.

Association News

Central Region

The **North Texas** association (288 members) celebrated its 50th anniversary with a dinner at a Dallas country club on February 27, 1999. The principal speaker was Frederick Crosson, national ΦBK president, whose talk was titled "Citizens and Phi Beta Kappas." Other speakers were Aubrey Farb of the Greater Houston Association, chairman of the Conference of Association Delegates, and Lennart Larson, a charter member of the association, now retired from the law faculty of Southern Methodist University. At its spring meeting, the association presented three \$1,000 scholarships to high school students who submitted the best essays on the subject "Books Change Lives."

The **Milwaukee** association (71 members) has named its scholarship fund, which each year awards three scholarships—totaling \$4,500—to ΦBK members for graduate study, in honor of George Gay, a charter member of the association and past president.

The **Oklahoma City** association (84 members) gave three scholarships of \$1,000 each to high school seniors.

The **Chicago** area association (445 members) sponsored numerous events ranging from a monthly book club to tapas tasting and a panel discussion on global warming.

The **Greater Austin** association, which was organized in mid-1998 and already has 229 members, gave \$500 scholarships to two high school seniors.

The **Southwestern Louisiana** association not only gives awards of \$350 to two top graduate students and \$250 to a graduating senior at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, but also maintains a fund established with a \$5,000 donation from a former student of Kathleen Mahaffey to help "students with emergencies they have no other resources to meet."

The **Northeastern Missouri** association (42 members) gave medals to the 16 Truman State University students receiving general honors.

The **East Central Illinois** association (41 members) sponsors an essay contest for high school juniors with three prizes totaling \$465. The essay topics were "My (Hypothetical) Dinner Conversation with



Helping the North Texas association observe its 50th anniversary are ΦBK President Frederick Crosson (to the left of the charter) and Aubrey Farb, the head of the Conference of Association Delegates (first on the left, back row).

a Famous Mathematician or Scientist, Living or Dead," "A Book That Helped Me See Something in a New Way," and "My Experience Studying a Second Language."

Western Region

The **Southern California** association (2,325 members) gave three types of scholarships: A total of 21 international graduate students received awards of varying amounts for a total of \$29,000; ΦBK initiates at 10 institutions received awards of \$1,800 each; and 16 high school seniors received awards of \$250 each. In addition, the group held three dinners or luncheons at which speakers lectured on documentary film making, graduate education, and Native American art.

The **Northern California** association (1,623 members) sponsored nine events, including a Black Diamond Mines hike and a California Culinary Academy brunch. The group presented \$500 awards for teaching excellence to four professors: Thomas H. Lee and Barbara Tversky, Stanford University; Rachele Waksler, San Francisco State University; and Quentin Williams, University of California at Santa Cruz. In addition, the association gave \$3,500 scholarships to 12 graduate students.

The **West Texas and Eastern New Mexico** association (72 members) gave certificates of achievement to 24 high school seniors.

The **Denver** association (251 members) sponsored eight events ranging from a lecture on "Inca Civilization" to attendance at opera and symphony rehearsals, plus a summer discussion group on "What Is an Educated Person?" The group also gave \$1,000 scholarships to two ΦBK graduate students.

The **Puget Sound** association (600 members) sponsored four events, including a train tour and a tour of the Microsoft plant. This group also gave book awards to 250 high school students and \$1,500 scholarships to five undergraduates.

The **San Diego** association (298 members) gave books to 52 juniors in the public high schools, scholarships of \$500 each to six ΦBK initiates from San Diego universities for graduate study, and graduate fellowships of \$3,000 each to two ΦBK members enrolled at a San Diego institution. The association also sponsored a champagne brunch at which a theater group read short stories (90 attended); three "Sunday salons" with speakers; and a "study circle," which meets every other week to discuss readings on a selected subject (most recently, "The Politics of Latin America").

The **Phoenix** association (103 members), which formerly presented scholarships of \$600 each to eight high school seniors, has decided to make its awards

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instead to first-year college students enrolled in liberal arts programs at Arizona's three state universities. The Phoenix group also sponsors several activities, including a monthly "lunch bunch" gathering.

Eastern Region

The **Delaware Valley** association (409 members) sponsored four dinners with speakers, including two museum curators. In addition, the association presented book awards to 122 high school seniors, and 35 members served as judges for the annual Philadelphia Academic Decathlon for high school seniors.

The **Sarasota-Manatee** association (145 members) sponsored three luncheons with speakers. The meeting in February was the group's third annual teacher appreciation lunch, attended by 22 science teachers. The group also presented certificates of commendation to 188 high school seniors with grade-point averages of 3.75 or higher.

The **Upper Hudson** group (69 members) sponsored three dinners with speakers and gave scholarships of \$500 each to two high school seniors.

The **Washington, D.C.**, area association (200 members) sponsored eight dinners or luncheons with speakers and gave scholarships of \$500 each to two public school seniors. In addition, one area student received tuition credits of \$1,000 per semester for four years toward fees at George Washington University, and a \$500 grant for summer school.

The **Scarsdale/Westchester** association (315 members) held five dinners with roundtable discussions on subjects that included the war on tobacco and the case for and against Microsoft.

At its annual joint dinner with the chapter at the University of Richmond, the **Richmond** association (204 members) heard a talk by John Kuykendall, former president of Davidson College. The association each year gives engraved Jefferson cups to 30 high school valedictorians in the area.

The **Greater Hartford** association (130 members) sponsored four dinners with lectures and gave book awards to 19 high school seniors.

The **South Florida** association (52 members) gave \$250 scholarships to two "turn-around" high school students.

The **Northeast Alabama** association (32 members) sponsored fall and spring meetings with speakers, and presented two scholarships to university juniors, the Theron Montgomery Scholarship of \$1,500 and an unnamed \$200 award. ■

Letters to the Editor

The Symposium

I was privileged to attend the recent Phi Beta Kappa symposium at Hunter College. Since I had to come to New York City for a press day on the following Monday, I decided to come two days early and take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

As a professional needlework designer, I was especially heartened to discover that numerous members of the audience had also chosen to pursue non-academic careers. But as the discussion made clear, we all have similar concerns about the impact of education and technology upon our lives and the future of our respective communities.

Many thanks to Professor Krukofsky and the distinguished speakers for their enlightening and thought-provoking presentations.

Carol Krob, Iowa City, Iowa

'Our Key and Its Imitators'

I was surprised to learn that Phi Theta Kappa was patterned after Phi Beta Kappa [*Key Reporter*, Autumn 1999], but upon reflection I see that both honor societies nurture and prepare students for the future. I was a nontraditional college student, and Phi Theta Kappa inspired me to continue my education beyond the community college—because someone finally told me that I was intelligent.

I had always known about Phi Beta Kappa, but I never thought that I would one day be elected into this prestigious honor society. Phi Theta Kappa served as a springboard that catapulted me first to Phi Beta Kappa and then to graduate school, where I am a doctoral candidate in Hispanic studies.

David Diego Rodriguez, Chicago, Ill.

As a member of Phi Beta Kappa, I suppose I should share the concern expressed by Phi Theta Kappa's director that "community colleges are meeting a need by building a technical workforce—yet I'm fearful that we're selling them short. Phi Theta Kappa needs to strive for continued and broadly based learning." Instead, I find this fear reminiscent of the discussion heard 40 years ago when I began teaching economics and social sciences at Chicago City Junior College. I have subsequently become an advocate of occupational education curricula for several reasons:

- Many high school graduates came through the open door of the junior college with deficiencies in the basic skills that were prerequisites for general education courses.

- Many students were much more interested in job opportunities than in the theories of great thinkers.

- Many employers were seeking two-year graduates who had the skills to meet their needs.

- College administrators were experimenting with alternatives to address the high dropout and failure rates that accompanied the open-door philosophy.

Today, students choose to pursue occupational education for many reasons, employers have increasingly supported such curricula, and occupational educators have improved their offerings. Forty years ago there was reason to be skeptical about contamination of the junior college curricula with occupational education, but I believe that the evolution of comprehensive community colleges constitutes the most significant structural change in American education in the past century.

Andrew S. Korim, Sarver, Penna.

Golden Key National Honor Society proudly recognizes and encourages academic excellence in higher education. I have long admired Phi Beta Kappa as a leader in our industry and enjoyed our organizations' friendship.

Golden Key receives numerous charter requests from colleges and universities each year; however, only those accredited institutions with the highest admissions and academic standards receive approval by the Society's council. There is no fee charged to an institution to charter a chapter of Golden Key; however, there is the highest expectation that each chapter will make a significant impact on the campus and on the community.

James W. Lewis, Executive Director, Atlanta, Ga.

More Readers' Stories

A Phi Beta Kappa key was my engagement ring. My late husband, Joseph B. Gavrin (CCNY, 1938) was elected to Phi Beta Kappa during the Great Depression. Diamonds were out of the question.

He ordered the smallest key and presented it to me on a chain. I protested that I was not entitled to wear it and that he, who had earned it, would be without a

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Phi Beta Kappa Association Secretaries, 2000

(Annual dues follow each address.)

- Alabama**
* Northeast Alabama—Dr. George E. Whitesel, 907 Second St. NE, Jacksonville, AL 36265. \$10
* Southeast Alabama—Dr. James Sherry, Department of Foreign Languages, Troy State University, Troy, AL 36082. \$10
- Arizona**
* Phoenix Area—Mrs. Doris Krigbaum, 1230 E. Loyola Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282-3946. \$10
- California**
* Northern California—Mrs. Jean Gossard James, 8 San Ardo Ct., Novato, CA 94945-1234. \$25
* San Diego—Mr. Hal K. St. Clair, 17187 Prado Pl., San Diego, CA 92128. \$15
* Southern California—Ms. Jean Paule, 2130 Fair Park Ave. #301, Los Angeles, CA 90041. \$25
- Colorado**
* Denver—Ms. Barbara Berryman, 2068 Elm St., Denver, CO 80207. \$20
- Connecticut**
* Greater Hartford—Ms. Marilyn Pet, 235 E. River Dr., #1601, East Hartford, CT 06108. \$7
- District of Columbia**
* District of Columbia Area (Washington, Southern Maryland, and Northern Virginia)—Dr. Karen R. Stern, 909 Cottage St. SW, Vienna, VA 22180. \$15
- Florida**
* Northeast Florida—Prof. John Garrigus, Division of Social Science, Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, FL 32211. \$12
* Sarasota-Manatee—Rev. Dr. R. E. Nygren, 1049 Greystone Ln., Sarasota, FL 34232-2165. \$10
* South Florida—Mrs. Edith Ann Gilson, 6701 S.W. 120th St., Miami, FL 33156-5453. \$10
* Tampa Bay—Prof. James B. Halsted, 4024 Bell Grande Dr., Valrico, FL 33594. \$25
- Georgia-Carolina**
* Atlanta—Ms. Susan Welden Carlisle, One Buckhead Plaza, Suite 800, 3060 Peachtree Rd. NW, Atlanta, GA 30304. \$25
* Coastal Georgia-Carolina—Dr. George B. Pruden, 13 Old Mill Ct., Savannah, GA 31419-2824. \$10
* Middle Georgia—Dr. Douglas Steeples, Dean, College of Liberal Arts, Mercer University, 1400 Coleman Ave., Macon, GA 31207-0001. \$25
- Illinois**
* Chicago—Ms. Lisa Godde Kerr, 7117 N. Keystone Ave., Lincolnwood, IL 60646. \$25
* East Central Illinois—Dr. Karen Taylor, Dept. of Foreign Languages, Eastern Illinois University, 600 Lincoln Ave., Charleston, IL 61920. \$0.50
* Southern Illinois—Dr. Elizabeth Singleton Gammon, 11119 Adams Acres Dr., Marion, IL 62959-9362. \$10
- Indiana**
* Eastern Indiana—Dr. Cheryl Adams, 2510 N. Morrison Rd., Muncie, IN 47304. \$10
* Indianapolis—Dr. Carole Sue Stewart, 3001 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, IN 46220-2945. \$20
- Kentucky**
* Kentuckiana—Prof. Scott D. Johnson, 4129 Brentler Rd., Louisville, KY 40241. \$10
- Louisiana**
* Southwestern Louisiana—Dr. Mary R. Meredith, Department of Management, USL Box 43570, Lafayette, LA 70504. \$10
- Maryland**
* Greater Baltimore—Ms. Maria E. Rey, 207 Ridgemoor Rd., Baltimore, MD 21210. \$25
Southern Maryland—(see D.C. Area).
- Michigan**
* Detroit—Ms. Carol Pooch Klein, 31720 Franklin Rd., Franklin, MI 48025. \$15
* Southwestern Michigan—Dr. John Petro, 2521 Parkwyn, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. \$5
- Minnesota**
* Minneapolis—Mr. George A. Warp, 4824 Thomas Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55410. \$5
- Missouri-Kansas**
* Greater Kansas City—Ms. Rhonda Smiley, 10526 Richland Ave., Kansas City, KS 66111. \$0
Metropolitan St. Louis—Mr. Stanley L. Waxelman, 2131 Yale Ave., Apt. 302, Maplewood, MO 63143-1424. \$0
* Northeast Missouri—Ms. Carol Race, Rte. 3, Box 38, Kirksville, MO 63501. \$5
- Nebraska**
* Omaha—Dr. Jacqueline D. St. John, 1805 N. 58th St., Omaha, NE 68104-4825. \$0
- New Mexico**
* Los Alamos—Mrs. Rosalie Heller, 301 El Vi-ento, Los Alamos, NM 87544. \$0
- New York**
* Long Island—Prof. Sharon D. Abramson, Nassau Community College, Garden City, NY 11530. \$25
* New York—Mr. Michael D. Caratzas, 3117 Broadway, Apt. 62, New York, NY 10027. \$20
* Scarsdale/Westchester—Dr. Lloyd Raines, 29 Argyle Rd., Rye Brook, NY 10573. \$30
* Upper Hudson—Dr. Frances C. Allee, 24 Providence St., Albany, NY 12203. \$25
Western New York—Mr. Edward A. Heintz, 67 Red Oak Dr., Williamsville, NY 14221. \$20
- North Carolina**
* Pitt County—Dr. Tinsley E. Yarbrough, East Carolina University, Department of Political Science, Greenville, NC 27858-4353. \$20
* Wake County—Ms. Sarah D. Williamson, 1801 Craig St., Raleigh, NC 27608. \$10
- Ohio**
* Cleveland—Mrs. Margaret Robinson, 2602 E. Overlook Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44106. \$20
* Toledo—Mr. Lyman F. Spitzer, Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP, 1000 Jackson, Toledo, OH 43624. \$5
- Oklahoma**
* Oklahoma City—Ms. Elaine T. DeGuisti, 1413 Sherwood Ln., Oklahoma City, OK 73116. \$15
- Pennsylvania**
* Delaware Valley—Mrs. Evelyn S. Udell, 124 Annasmead Rd., Ambler, PA 19002. \$25
- South Carolina**
* Low Country—Ms. Cornelia Gibbs, 201 Broad St., Apt. 2, Charleston, SC 29401. \$25
* Piedmont Area—Dr. B. G. Stephens, 429 N. Church St., Spartanburg, SC 29303-3663. \$5
- Tennessee**
* Chattanooga—Prof. John D. Tinkler, 1012 Hanover St., Chattanooga, TN 37405. \$0
Nashville—Ms. Vicki Agee, 766 Rodney Dr., Nashville, TN 37205. \$35
- Texas**
Greater Austin—Mrs. Joyce Pulich, P.O. Box 5366, Austin, TX 78763-5366. \$25
* Greater Houston—Mr. William E. Ryan, 5311 Kirby, Ste. 210, Houston, TX 77055. \$25
* North Texas—Mrs. Patricia Irvin, #12 Bermuda Dunes Ct., Frisco, TX 75034-6827. \$25
* San Antonio—Mr. Kurt G. May, 1703 N.W. Military Hwy., San Antonio, TX 78213. \$10
* West Texas/Eastern New Mexico—Mrs. Patsy C. Harston Nunley, 6203 Louisville Dr., Lubbock, TX 79413. \$10
- Virginia**
Northern Virginia (see D.C. Area)
* Richmond—Mrs. Ellen H. Massie, 12283 Fieldcrest Ln., Ashland, VA 23005. \$10
* Shenandoah Valley—Prof. Linda Cabe Halpern, General Education Program MSC 1201, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA 22807. \$25
- Washington**
* Inland Empire—Ms. Amy Kelly-Pittman, 5713 Ella St., Spokane, WA 99212-1628. \$15
* Puget Sound—Mrs. Myra Lupton, 3443 72nd Pl. SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040. \$25
- West Virginia**
* Charleston—Mr. William Jernigan, 326 S. Pointe Dr., Charleston, WV 25314. \$15
- Wisconsin**
* Greater Milwaukee—Dr. Chan D. Tran, 1631 W. Edgerton Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53221. \$20

*Chartered associations. Charters are granted by the PBK Senate.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

key. With supreme confidence he said, "I won't wait long. When you are elected in your junior year at Cornell, just order a larger key for me."

Now, side by side are a tiny "lady's" key with his name on the back and a larger one with my name on it.

Phi Beta Kappa keys are a girl's best friend.

Natalie Gavrín Nixon, Greenbrae, Calif.

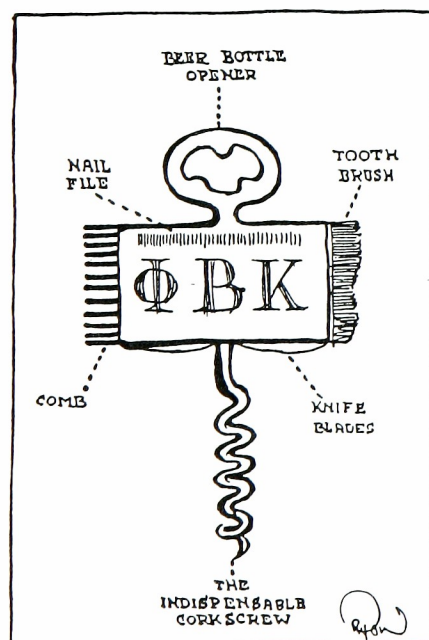
As a staff member here at Berkeley I frequently wear my key. It's a very status-conscious campus, and I like to remind faculty that staff are not necessarily ignorant or uneducated.

Joanne Sandstrom (ΦBK, University of California at Berkeley, 1959), via the Internet

I enjoyed the illustrated article on variations in Phi Beta Kappa's key [Autumn 1999]. Yesterday while leafing through the 1927 *Jayhawk* annual of the University of Kansas, I noticed that among the nearly 100 pages of paid advertisements were numerous gibes and jabs, thanks to the efforts of the junior class, which was responsible for production of the annual.

I enclose a copy of the page containing their recommendations for revision of our key. Looks sorta like something we might find in a Sharper Image catalog.

James G. Price, Leawood, Kans.



The only way a Phi Beta Key can be made useful.



In an article titled "Volunteering: Running Out of Time" (Wall Street Journal Nov. 5, 1999), writer Eileen Daspin noted, "Volunteerism is experiencing a severe case of commitment phobia," causing "serious problems for groups such as suicide hot lines and programs for battered women that require training and long-term commitments." Thus, although more people than ever before are volunteering, "they are doing it in ever-smaller portions." A consultant for volunteer groups was quoted as saying, "People . . . are stressed and don't want to do something that sucks time out of their lives." According to the article, however, "it isn't only the most emotionally wrenching tasks that are going undone." Literacy Volunteers of America, for example, is finding that although the number of people seeking help has skyrocketed, the number of volunteers has remained steady at about 50,000. "One reason: The group requires at least 20 hours of training and a once-a-week commitment from volunteers for a year."

This issue of the Key Reporter, which reports on the activities of Phi Beta Kappa's associations—our own "volunteer" organizations for members in the community at large—seems an appropriate one in which to publish an interview with a woman who has spent much of her life as a volunteer for a variety of causes. Shipley Newlin Walters, now the author or coauthor of numerous publications on local history in California, majored in French at Stanford University (ΦBK, 1951). At age 44 she went to the University of California, Berkeley, to get her master's in library science with plans to become a librarian. Instead, she developed an interest in historical research and embarked on a new career in local history. She and her husband, Richard Walters (ΦBK, Williams College, 1951), live in Davis, California.

Q. How did you get your start in volunteer work?

A. My first major volunteer work was with the League of Women Voters, which I joined when our first child was a year old and I was pregnant with the second. A college friend took me along to a meeting on water resources in California; I joined the League that night.

My involvement with the League led me to study water resources and quality, regional transit, county government, regional and city planning, constitutional reform, and the juvenile justice system. Two decades in the League taught me how to speak effectively in public, interview public officials, write clear explanations of complicated ballot measures, moderate candidates' forums, follow *Robert's Rules of Order*, lead productive discussions, and work with other volunteers. For somebody who was changing residence every few years—in those days my husband was an exploration geologist for an oil company—the League provided adult companionship and the opportunity to study important political issues.

Q. When you did settle down in Davis, what did you find to do?

A. First, I heard about a new suicide prevention organization that was looking

for volunteers. I went to a meeting, enrolled in a training program, and began a 20-year commitment as a crisis line counselor. Our training included developing listening skills and learning about local health, mental health, and social resources available to help people in need.

Volunteers at home answered calls relayed by an answering service. For the first 10 years volunteers remained on call at home for a 24-hour period, though in later years, with more calls and more volunteers, the shifts were shortened to six hours.

Serving on a crisis line is often a heart-breaking experience. You try to offer hope and alternatives to a person who is alone, depressed, and in despair. You hope that you can convince the caller that you care, that life is worth living, and that there is help available. At the end of a call, you feel sometimes that you made a difference, sometimes not, and you try harder on the next call. My rewards for this service included more knowledge of the social, cultural, and physical causes of human misery; an increased awareness of the dedication and skill of people who minister to the sick in mind and body; and an appreciation for the value of listening carefully and learning to care for all sorts of people.

Q. Did your League experience continue to prove useful in Davis?

A. Yes, it proved invaluable when I was appointed foreman of our county's grand jury for a year. I took time off from the crisis line to do this job, which involved presiding over meetings of 19 people once a week, supervising the jury's activities, and signing legal documents on behalf of the jury.

While I was foreman of the grand jury, I was also employed full-time as public information officer for the county superintendent of schools. As things worked out, this job led indirectly to even more satisfying volunteer work.

In 1976 the United States was planning a big festival to celebrate our Bicentennial. The superintendent was on the local planning committee, and he asked me to attend the meetings in his place and to prepare a slide-tape presentation on the history of Yolo County schools to be shown at the Bicentennial celebration in our county seat.

The festival was to be held in a historic farmhouse that was being developed into a museum. Representatives from the old families and people interested in history came to the planning meetings, and they soon introduced me to the joys of Yolo County history. They located historical photographs of one-room schools, suggested old-timers for me to interview, and lent me out-of-print histories of the county. After some months I produced a slide-tape presentation that was played throughout the day of the celebration.

The show was so well received that the superintendent suggested that I update a county history that had been prepared by his office long before. It was not until I had left the office several years later that I found time to give it a try. A friend who had researched and written a history of another town and I developed a plan to produce the history as a resource for local teachers. A committee of teachers and people interested in local history was set up to advise us, and the superintendent and the Yolo County Historical Society agreed to publish the book.

We planned to publish first a brief, chronological account of the county's history and then minihistories of nine communities. For about six years my friend and I read published histories, articles, and books on many subjects; interviewed dozens of people; visited every inch of the county; and generally enjoyed ourselves. But without any real supervision or direction, we produced only growing files of facts, photographs, and theories.

Then one day a commercial publisher appeared and offered not only to publish

a book but to pay our expenses and minimal compensation. Within a year our book, *Yolo County: Land of Changing Patterns*, was published, and the Historical Society purchased copies for every school in the county.

Q. How about the second part of the original project—the minihistories?

A. It took me eight years, but I eventually completed histories of the four communities that were my responsibility, and the Historical Society published them too. During that period I also continued my research and gave many talks to schools, service clubs, and historical societies on various topics related to my research.

At the same time I served on a committee that advised the county board of supervisors on historical matters. Working with other volunteers and county staff, we were able to get the Yolo County



Shipley Walters

Archives established. When the county was unable to fund the archives, I set up a nonprofit corporation to provide for its financial and volunteer support.

As a local historian, I had a selfish interest in wanting an official repository of county records. For years I had been forced to look in attics, warehouses, basements, and garages for documentation of historical events because county, city, and special district records were hard to find, disorganized, or missing. I made many a presentation before city councils and the board of supervisors, trying to persuade busy politicians and overworked staff members that it was important to preserve the records of the past.

Q. How did you come to corporate history?

A. While I was working in the county archives, we were offered the records of a large farming corporation that dated back to the 1910s. The company had

been bought out, and the new manager had no use for the old records. Several of us spent weeks in an old warehouse, painstakingly unwrapping brown-paper bundles containing correspondence, bills, receipts, board minutes, and all the paper that keeps a company going.

I had just finished writing the history of a town next to the farmland owned by the company, so I proposed to the new directors that I write a history of their company. When they agreed, I spent a year working on the history.

This was one project I didn't finish, for I found that a self-taught historian has her limits. It is not enough to read corporate records. One must understand them in the context of the time in which they were generated. I lacked the thorough knowledge of agricultural economics and Depression-era government programs that would enable me to write accurately about a company that went bankrupt during the Depression and was finally revived when World War II generated a great enough need for agricultural products to resuscitate it.

I admitted my failure to the directors, turned over my five completed chapters, and tried to forget about it. Much to my surprise, two years later the company published the history, *River Garden Farms*, with my chapters and my name on the cover as coauthor along with that of the retired company lawyer who had finished the book.

Q. Tell us about your work as an oral historian.

A. I started doing oral history as part of the research for my local histories, taping interviews with people who could provide information on subjects related to my historical research. I soon found that in a county that is primarily rural, one needs a personal introduction to get in the door for an interview. Many of these people live on isolated farms and are understandably wary of recorder-toting strangers. Luckily, I was able to find people willing to introduce me, and once introduced, I was invariably treated with courtesy and generosity.

One invitation led to a fascinating interview in a bowling alley. (I learned a valuable lesson that day: *Never* conduct an interview on tape in a bowling alley.) Another invitation took me to a pump-house next to the Sacramento River, where I was instructed in the finer points of irrigating fields with river water. I have spent time in disreputable bars, gone in the back door of a farmworker's shack where our interview was conducted in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

halting Spanish and broken English, bumped over a cow trail in a pickup truck to see exactly where the levee broke in the last flood, ridden in a van converted into a Toymobile with a woman who distributed toys to poor migrant children, and chatted with a 100-year-old woman in an exquisitely furnished Victorian home.

Taped stories are valuable to the historian because they convey information on subjects that are hard to document in archives or libraries, such as the contributions of ethnic minorities or the thinking that lay behind political decisions. Oral history also adds color to a written account. There are problems, of course, with relying too much on oral sources for historical information, so I try to use them judiciously and always document my findings.

In an effort to supplement the documents in the county archives, I started and directed an all-volunteer oral history project to interview county residents who have personal knowledge of a particular subject (agriculture, schools, county government, development of local communities). Over a period of several years, the project generated more than 20 tapes containing invaluable historical information.

One part of this project was interviewing Japanese and Japanese Americans who had been interned in detention camps in the United States during World War II. When we decided to undertake the project, we became aware of how sensitive the subject was, for many of those interned had never mentioned the subject even to their children after they were released from the camps. Because there are many important cultural differences between Japanese and Americans, we decided that all the interviewees would be Japanese or Japanese Americans. I trained several willing volunteers, who then conducted the interviews. As a result, the archives gained 18 valuable tapes and transcripts that document this controversial chapter in the history of our county.

Q. What's your next project?

A. At my 50th high school reunion, we heard a talk by a favorite English teacher, now in her 90s and still mentally acute. She urged each of us to adopt a 20-year plan for what we wanted to do after retirement. I plan to keep on volunteering, but in a new area. I have just become a literacy tutor and am teaching an adult to read and write. This may be the most rewarding experience of my life as a volunteer. ■

Musings of a Presidential Evaluator

BY ALONZO L. HAMBY

Last October, Alonzo L. Hamby, Distinguished Professor of History at Ohio University, served as "academic anchor" for the program on Harry S. Truman in C-Span's "American Presidents" series. Recently, C-Span asked him to participate in a survey of approximately 90 historians and presidential experts who appeared on the series or have been interviewed for the cable network's "Booknotes" program. This article is adapted from comments the author returned with the completed survey form to C-Span chairman Brian Lamb. Survey results are to be released on Presidents' Day, 2000.

Dear Mr. Lamb:

No conscientious scholar of American history or politics should ever engage in an exercise of this sort. None of us have the encyclopedic knowledge required for authoritative evaluations of 41 chief executives whose terms spanned more than two hundred years. But if not us, who? We all have a good textbook knowledge of American history and some vision of its main themes. We all know more about presidents and the presidency than most people. And, to tell the truth, the opportunity is about as irresistible as a bottle of 100-proof Old Grand-Dad placed with ice and branch water in front of a U.S. Senator. Conscientiousness has its place—at a safe distance—when one gets a chance like this.

The survey form is elaborate, asking us to rate each president on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest) in each of the following 10 categories: public persuasion, crisis leadership, economic management, moral authority, international relations, administrative skills, relations with Congress, vision/setting an agenda, pursuance of equal justice for all, and performance within the context of the times. I suspect we will take the last as the bottom-line evaluation. (Please tell me that no one will add all the category numbers for each president into a summary total and rank him accordingly. Presidential achievement is more, sometimes less, than the sum of these parts.)

The categories themselves present problems. "Public persuasion" seems self-explanatory until one realizes that its means and character were much different for George Washington, a paragon of elite politics in an age that predated the transportation and communication revolutions, than for Franklin Roosevelt or Ronald Reagan, both of whom transmitted

their voice and image across a continental democracy by film or electronic means and traveled vast distances with ease. "Moral authority," I guess, is clear enough, but we need to understand that it once was a quality that presidents were widely assumed to have. Since the 1960s, we have to allow for the cynical and corrosive skepticism that has become a part of our mainstream political culture. "Crisis leadership" and "international relations" are not the same thing—there are, of course, domestic crises—but the terms do tend to overlap.

"Administrative skills" are nebulous. Historians will forever argue whether the chaos of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency was the calculated design of a skilled

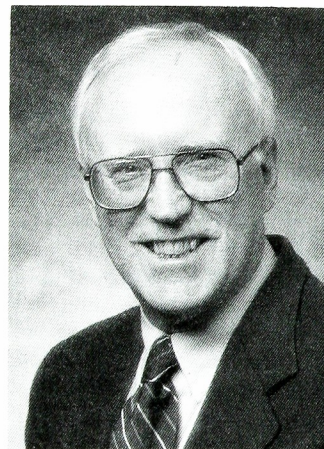


Photo by Patrick Fatuca

Alonzo L. Hamby

manipulator or simple ineptitude. Still, most will agree that running an orderly shop does not necessarily signify greatness. "Relations with Congress" seems easy—the better they were, the higher the score. But Harry Truman's relations with his congresses were usually poor; yet he was stunningly successful in winning over the Republican 80th Congress for the Marshall Plan and the rest of his program for the containment of the Soviet Union in Europe and the Middle East. At the same time he used his fights with Capitol Hill on domestic issues to reinforce the liberal reformist identity of his party. Few presidents had better relations with Congress than Lyndon Johnson. LBJ's "achievement" facilitated the excesses of the Great Society and the Vietnam War.

"Vision/setting an agenda" strikes me as referring to two rather different things. "Vision" surely connotes some grand design—the establishment of a republic of free men in an age of despotism, Manifest

Destiny, the preservation of the Union, Fourteen Points, Four Freedoms, civil rights for all. An agenda is a series of steps for getting there. Perhaps the two greatest “vision presidents”—Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt—were fortunate to die at a moment of maximum success before experiencing the ordeal of agenda fulfillment. Woodrow Wilson was not so lucky, suffering multiple defeats in negotiating the Treaty of Versailles, staking everything on American membership in a League of Nations, exiting the presidency defeated and physically ravaged.

“Economic management” presents some special problems. The Founding Fathers were expected to establish a sound financial system for the new republic; they did so with great effectiveness. Ultimately, Andrew Jackson destroyed that system and thereby did considerable damage to the country. But most 19th-century presidents were not expected to be economic managers. It was only with the debate between Bryan and McKinley in 1896 over the gold standard that economic management expectations began to creep back toward center stage, and possibly not until Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal that the duty became central to the presidency.

“Equal justice for all” confronts us with even greater definitional quandaries. No leader of the first decade of the 19th century in any country was more identified with the ideal than Thomas Jefferson; but as we are still constantly reminded, Jefferson was a slave owner and may have had an illicit sexual relationship with one of his slaves. Lincoln, the Great Emancipator, surely rates a perfect 10, but he was not attuned to the enormous income disparities of his age. Lincoln affirmed freedom and opportunity but never aligned himself with the goal of equality of wealth. “Equal justice” is a noble concept, but the operational meaning has been a constantly developing story.

The categories raise problems, but more fundamental issues get in the way of balanced evaluations. Presidents are prisoners of historical circumstance. Those who aspire to historical greatness need to live in interesting times. Placid prosperity may be a blessing to a nation, but it is a curse to a chief executive who hopes for the reverential opinion of future generations. Periods of crisis—economic, constitutional, diplomatic—are charisma-producing times of opportunity for those who can meet challenges.

How would we remember a Lincoln presidency if secession had been averted in 1861? Suppose Democrat James Cox somehow had been elected president

ΦBK Presidents

Seventeen U.S. Presidents are members of Phi Beta Kappa. Six were elected as undergraduates: John Quincy Adams, Chester A. Arthur, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, George Bush, and Bill Clinton. Eleven were elected as alumni or honorary members: Martin Van Buren, Franklin Pierce, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Grover Cleveland, Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Jimmy Carter.

The only ΦBK first lady is Eleanor Roosevelt, who became an honorary member in 1941.

Since Elizabeth Dole (ΦBK, Duke University, 1958) pulled out of the race for the Republican presidential nomination last fall, there are no ΦBK members among the candidates for the presidency in 2000. However, the wife of Democratic contender Bill Bradley, Ernestine S. Bradley, is a member (Emory University, 1960).

instead of Warren Harding in 1920, had succumbed to a heart attack during his first year in office, and had been succeeded by his charming lightweight of a vice president, Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is hard to imagine that we would look back on an FDR who oversaw the Great Bull Market with quite the same awe we feel for an FDR who presided over the New Deal and led the nation through World War II. (Of course, not all leaders can seize opportunities to demonstrate their greatness. The Great Engineer, Herbert Hoover, took the oath of office in 1929 as the most admired politician in America and left four years later at the depth of the Great Depression as its most reviled.)

Another problem is often forgotten. Great men are not always great presidents. For talent, character, and larger historical importance, the fourth and sixth presidents, James Madison (Father of the Constitution) and John Quincy Adams (America’s greatest diplomat and secretary of state), are far more impressive than the fifth, James Monroe. Yet Monroe’s presidency, popularly dubbed the Era of Good Feelings, was surely the most successful of the three. Few presidents have had more claims to greatness than Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson’s first term was an overwhelming success, highlighted by the Louisiana Purchase, economic prosperity, and the near-collapse of the Federalist opposition; his second term was an abject failure, marked by military embarrassment on the high seas, economic depression, and a reemergent

bitter partisanship. How does a historian strike a balance between these opposites? Jefferson generally gets extra points for his nonpresidential greatness and invariably shows up in the top six. (The political equivalent of baseball’s sophomore jinx, by the way, is a common presidential story from Thomas Jefferson to William Jefferson Clinton.)

I have argued that many considerations militate against the presidential evaluation game, but let me stop before there is any danger of persuading you that I might be right. Here for the record are my top 10, with the members of each group listed chronologically:

Perfect 10s. *George Washington:* father of his country and father of the presidency. *Abraham Lincoln:* America’s greatest moral statesman. *Franklin Roosevelt:* the world’s outstanding tribune of democracy during the age of the Great Depression and World War II.

Close-behind 9s. *Theodore Roosevelt:* established the United States as a world power and the government as an agent of progressive reform. *Harry Truman:* contained Stalinist communism and preserved the liberal identity of the post-Roosevelt Democratic party. *Ronald Reagan:* engineered (however messily) a major economic recovery, toppled the Soviet empire, and restored the country’s self-confidence.

Great or near-great 8s. *Thomas Jefferson:* the classic victim of the second-term curse. *James K. Polk:* a tireless, skillful chief executive who by means both fair and foul made the United States a continental nation. *Woodrow Wilson:* outstanding progressive, impressive war leader, failed peacemaker. *John F. Kennedy:* not, as the popular mind believes, the best ever, but still a charismatic figure who brought the United States into the contemporary civil rights era and successfully managed the worst crisis of the nuclear age.

This list may demonstrate that greatness has not been exclusively associated with any party or ideology. I do not know if a single one of the other respondents would agree with these 10 names and the rough order in which I have presented them. Differences of opinion, William Allen White once remarked, make marriages risky and horse races interesting. He might have added that they are essential to scholarship. ■

Alonzo L. Hamby (ΦBK, honorary member, Ohio University, 1977) is a ΦBK senator. His latest book is Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman (Oxford University Press, 1995). He is now at work on a history of the United States in the 1930s that will contrast the American experience with that of Britain and Germany.

RECOMMENDED READING

BOOK COMMITTEE

Humanities: Svetlana Alpers, Michael Griffith,

Robert P. Sonkowsky, Eugen Weber

Social Sciences: Thomas McNaugher, Josephine Pacheco,

Anna J. Schwartz, Larry J. Zimmerman

Natural Sciences: Jay M. Pasacoff, Russell B. Stevens

Josephine Pacheco

E. W. Scripps and the Business of Newspapers. Gerald J. Baldasty. *Univ. of Illinois*, 1999. \$42.50.

Scripps was the first American to create a nationwide chain of newspapers and to emphasize a telegraphic news service and a feature syndicate to disseminate news very cheaply. He insisted on a market analysis of any city before deciding to establish a paper there. Scripps cared little about the appearance of his papers, buying second-hand presses and cheap paper and insisting on frugality: Reporters had to pay their own streetcar fares and buy their own pencils.

Scripps wanted to attract a working-class readership and took pride in supporting working men and women. He used his papers to report on strikes, conflicts over wages and hours, and collective bargaining. The Scripps papers supported many of the issues associated with Progressivism, such as government ownership of utilities and the use of ballot initiatives and referenda to increase officials' accountability to the electorate. By the time he died in 1926, Scripps owned newspapers from one coast to the other, and his name lives on in the Scripps-Howard chain.

Legacy: A Biography of Moses and Walter Annenberg. Cbris Ogden. *Little, Brown*, 1999. \$29.95.

The name Annenberg is now associated with philanthropy on a grand scale, but in the 1930s it meant corruption on a grand scale and a term in prison. Ogden sets out to explain this contradiction, in the process telling a classic rags-to-riches story of a poor immigrant making good or at least getting very rich, but with a less-than-happy ending. Ogden provides proof of the centrality of a big-city newspaper to national politics in the 1930s.

Moses Annenberg, who got his start in the rough and tumble of Chicago newspaper wars, became rich through his control of the *Daily Racing Form* and the wire that sent out racing information. This put him in contact with gamblers and made him liable to charges of cor-

Josephine Pacheco (ΦBK, University of Richmond) has joined the Book Committee to review books in American history. She holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago and taught at George Mason University for some 30 years.

ruption. In his search for respectability, Annenberg bought the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, through which he hoped to influence national politics. When his criticism of the New Deal drew the attention of FDR and his friends, the connections with racing and gamblers provided ammunition for an attack on Annenberg. Ogden makes it clear that members of the Roosevelt administration were determined to send Annenberg to prison and to keep him there even when he was ill and close to death.

Moses Annenberg's son Walter devoted his life to clearing the family name, and in so doing he proved to be a genius at sensing the direction that journalism would take. *Seventeen*, the bible of teenagers for many years, was his brainchild, and he foresaw that *TV Guide* would become essential for millions. Walter Annenberg has given away more than \$2 billion, far outstripping the philanthropy of other great givers, and in the process ensuring that the Annenberg name stands for accomplishment rather than for corruption.

The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times. Susan E. Tift and Alex S. Jones. *Little, Brown*, 1999. \$29.95.

This is an unusually thoughtful history of the *Times*, the man who created it, and the family who sustained it. If Scripps cut corners and produced a poor product, Adolph Ochs was, from the beginning, determined to have the best newspaper in the country. And if Moses Annenberg used the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, at least in part, to gain respectability, the Ochs-Sulzberger dynasty tried not to depart from the path of integrity that the founder had established.

Tift and Jones are convinced that the

Times has maintained its leadership in the world of newspapers because family members agreed that no matter what differences might arise, the paper always came first. Because Tift and Jones have also written about the Bingham family that owned the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, they are well qualified to perceive the disaster that follows family disintegration. I lost track of all the members of the Ochs-Sulzberger clan (there is a family tree at the front of the book), but that did not detract from my enjoyment of what is a really good read.

Another Life: A Memoir of Other People. Michael Korda. *Random House*, 1999. \$26.95.

This is a lively, gossipy account of book publishing since the 1950s. It is more fun to read this book if you can readily identify such former celebrities as Joan Crawford or Merle Oberon, but even if you cannot, you will relish Korda's account of struggling with authors, some reluctant and others eager; with agents, all eager; and with executives and businessmen. Much of the gossip is fascinating, but some of it is cruel and should have been omitted.

The gossip makes *Another Life* sound frivolous, but it is in fact a serious book that reveals the decline of publishing from an intensely personal enterprise run by people who loved books to an impersonal adjunct of a huge conglomerate. Although the executives with whom Korda first worked were, to say the least, eccentric, he knew that their loyalty was to the books they published. He contrasts this loyalty with the situation today, when conglomerates sell off book companies to raise money to pay for acquisition fights. I found it heartening that through it all, Korda never loses his belief in the primacy of the book.

Michael Griffith

Birds of America. Lorrie Moore. *Picador*, 1999. \$14.

In this justly acclaimed collection, her third, Moore cements her status as perhaps the best American short-story writer at work today. She masterfully mixes comedy with pathos, and fierce wit with compassion for her characters. These tend to be women adrift in midlife—the heartsick, the grief-stricken, the awkward and anxious and unstrung: a lonely librarian (“Agnes of Iowa”); a second-tier starlet (“Willing”); a woman who composes analogy questions for a testing service and who, newly separated from her husband, makes a pilgrimage to the Blarney

Stone with her mother ("Which Is More Than I Can Say about Some People"); and, in the collection's most celebrated story, a woman writer whose infant son has been diagnosed with cancer ("People Like That Are the Only People Here: Canonical Babbling in Peed Onk"). Moore's characters tend to share her mordant wit, and they use this rueful or joyful irony in every context: as weapon, as amusement, as protective coloration, as consolation. It is what they have when they can't have one another. This is Moore's best book yet, and we eagerly await the next.

Enchanted Night. *Steven Millhauser. Crown, 1999. \$17.*

This brief novella finds Millhauser, America's premier fabulist, in top form. It tells the story of a moonlit summer night in a suburban village, a night whose enchanting promise lures townspeople from their beds. Millhauser traces the action—such as it is—with a tender lyricism; he follows the wanderers (a band of teenage girl vandals; a 40-ish writer *manqué* who lives in his mother's attic and ventures out at midnight to visit his confidante, Mrs. Kasco, a chain-smoking widow 20 years his senior; a trysting young couple; various attic dolls and insects and night voices, loners and "flops and fizzlers"; a mannequin summoned to life by the moonlight and, it may be, by the longing of her human beau) through the charms and illuminations of night and steals away, like a lover, at dawn. The book is an odd kind of aubade, with the promiscuous moon showering its affection on the town and then taking its leave.

Some readers will doubtless find *Enchanted Night* cloying or fey, and it's true that there's precious little trouble here; even the mischief is sweet and gentle. But *Enchanted Night* is that oft-remarked oxymoron, a "minor miracle." It is a small, perfect thing.

The Dangerous Husband. *Jane Shapiro. Little, Brown, 1999. \$22.95.*

Shapiro's second novel is a marvelous black comedy about the tangles and snares of matrimony. The narrator is a 40-year-old photographer who meets and marries Dennis, a charming, sweet-tempered, but accident-prone man. His clumsiness soon proves to be almost without limit; it seems he will literally love her to death. His ever-escalating bumps, swoons, messes, falls, and misadventures—one of which, during sex play, nearly results in castration by glass tabletop, others of which leave the narrator bruised, bleeding, or with a broken bone—push his wife to desperate mea-

asures. Finally, in a marvelously rendered scene, she hires a hit man/philosopher king, but then she can't go through with it, and she kidnaps her husband's albino frog (another victim of his love) and flees. The novel begins slowly, but Shapiro soon finds her stride, and her style is reliably delightful: trenchantly funny, observant, fluid, with an undercurrent of real affection for the hapless Dennis. Kurt Andersen has called this a "postfeminist slapstick tragicomedy"; the label fits.

Russell B. Stevens

Gobi: Tracking the Desert. *John Man. Yale, 1999. \$24.95.*

Life in the Treetops: Adventures of a Woman in Field Biology. *Margaret D. Louman. Yale, 1999. \$27.50.*

These authors could hardly have chosen topics more disparate than the parched lands of the Gobi Desert and the tropical rainforests of the two hemispheres. That said, the books have much in common. Both are informal, highly personal accounts of experiences in their chosen fields. Both are nontechnical, yet solid, descriptions of the flora and fauna with which they deal. Both are couched in readable language. Above all, both provide a dramatic sampling of the real-

ities of what must be two of the least-known ecosystems on our planet.

The Rose's Kiss: A Natural History of Flowers. *Peter Bernhardt. Island Press, 1999. \$24.95.*

To a degree, this is a textbook of botany in disguise, and purposely so. The author provides, with a commendable minimum of jargon, a wide-ranging look at the biology of flowers, their growth and development, their role in reproduction of plants, the formation of seeds and fruits, interaction with pollinating insects, and so on. No special background is needed to handle the information presented here, yet in no sense is the material "dumbed down" and thereby spoiled.

Killer Algae: The True Tale of a Biological Invasion. *Alexandre Meinesz. Trans. by Daniel Simberloff. Univ. of Chicago, 1999. \$25.*

For this once the book's dust jacket rings true—it is indeed a "biological and political horror story" concerning the invasion of the Mediterranean seacoast by a species of tropical alga carelessly introduced therein several years ago. Much of the story is cast in the first person and reflects the author's justifiable frustration

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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RECOMMENDED READING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

in his futile efforts to convince authorities that the threat is serious. Above all, perhaps, this account of dismal failure underscores the fact that although prompt efforts toward eradication of an invasive species will not always succeed, an attempt that is delayed will almost certainly fail.

The Missing Moment: How the Unconscious Shapes Modern Science. Robert Pollack. Houghton-Mifflin, 1999. \$25.

This book offers much to enhance and update one's knowledge of recent findings in biology and medical sciences, granted that to appreciate fully much of the material requires some prior familiarity with these fields. To this general account Pollack adds an urgent plea for substantial changes in society's approach to medicine. For example, he argues strongly for emphasizing the development of vaccines instead of drug therapies, and for improving the quality of the pre-death experience rather than making heroic efforts to postpone death itself. By no means an "easy read," the book is well worth the effort.

Jay M. Pasachoff

Journey Beyond Selēnē: Remarkable Explorations Past Our Moon and to the Ends of the Solar System. Jeffrey Kluger. Simon & Schuster, 1999. \$26.

Two failed Mars missions in late 1999 have left the general impression that NASA is at a low point. But history shows that space exploration is difficult, and that NASA has picked itself up from difficult times in the past. Kluger, a senior writer at *Time* and coauthor, with astronaut Jim Lovell, of the *Apollo 13* story, has described the uncrewed (as we now call it) space missions to the planets through descriptions of the work at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).

The book's historical part begins in 1964, with William Pickering of JPL dealing with President Johnson. A series of five uncrewed *Ranger* spacecraft to the Moon had failed, and NASA (or higher ranks in the government) was about to pull the plug. The story of how JPL survived and flourished, and how the people involved brought triumph to the exploration of the planets, is a fascinating one.

The pair of *Voyager* spacecraft to Jupiter and Saturn, with one vehicle proceeding to Uranus and Neptune, was perhaps the biggest JPL success. Kluger describes the 63 solar-system moons that are now known, many with their surfaces

investigated in detail and personalities of their own. Toward the end, he shows how JPL engineers saved the *Galileo* mission when its main antenna didn't open; after years of sending back high-resolution images and other data about Jupiter and its moons, this mission is just ending.

The *Cassini* mission is en route to Saturn, with arrival in 2004 to bring not only an orbiter but also a probe plunging into Saturn's huge moon *Titan*. And we read about the prospective *Pluto-Kuiper Express* and the hoped-for lander meant to drill into the ice on Jupiter's moon *Europa*, a satellite as interesting in reality as it was in Arthur Clarke's novels.

We can hope that NASA's best days still lie ahead, as they did even during the troubles described in this book.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. All by J. K. Rowling. Arthur A. Levine Books, Scholastic Press, 1999. \$17.95 each.

Students at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry are required to take astronomy at midnight on Wednesdays, which is excuse enough to review these books in a science column. Harry Potter is the British boy whose exploits now take up the top three spots on the adult bestseller list of the *New York Times*, despite challenges from some that "children's books" don't belong there. By the time the seven books in the series (one for each year at Hogwarts School) are completed and we advance well into the new millennium, young Mr. Potter is a character likely to survive and to provide nostalgia for the '90s and '00s.

A strong "downpour of shooting stars," perhaps not unlike the Leonid meteor storm of November 17, 1999, marked strange doings across England. Indeed, Harry Potter's parents are killed on the night of the shooting stars by an evil wizard; Harry survives the onslaught and is left with a lightning-shaped scar on his forehead. He is sent off to stay with a wicked aunt and uncle. He is liberated from this Cinderella-like existence, and given the knowledge that he is not a mere Muggle (a nonwizard like you and me, and I'm not so sure about you), only when he receives a letter inviting him to the wizards'/witches' school. (Having recently taken the train from London to Cambridge from Track 9 at Kings Cross, I was interested to watch him pass through an apparently solid wall to meet his school train at Track 9 3/4.)

At school, he is a celebrity. His search for the Sorcerer's Stone (the publishers apparently thought that American audi-

Liberal Arts Graduates Invited to Apply for Accounting Scholarships

Five \$5,000 scholarships are being offered to liberal arts degree holders who wish to pursue graduate accounting study through the John L. Carey Scholarship Program of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). The scholarships can be renewed for a second year. The deadline for applications is April 1.

For further information, write to AICPA, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036-8775; or telephone Leticia Romeo at (212) 596-6221; or fax (212) 596-6292; or send your complete mailing address via e-mail to educat@aicpa.org. The AICPA's home page address is <http://www.aicpa.org>. Keyword: Carey.

ences wouldn't recognize a reference to the Philosopher's Stone and changed the name) brings him again face to face with villainy by the end of the second book in the series. The third book has so many reversals of friendship and fortune that the ending is surely a surprise.

The series, which has many of the elements of *Star Wars*, complete with a villain on the dark side and revelations about the hero's father, is enthralling readers of all ages. I can see why. The supernatural parts are so thoroughly fictional that even my scientifically inclined mind doesn't object. The intrusive exposition reminding readers of situations from the earlier books in the series could be dispensed with, but the rest of the material is enthralling. Read the books yourself, whether or not you have a young person to discuss Harry Potter with.

Thomas McNaugher

Fire in the East: The Rise of Asian Military Power and the Second Nuclear Age. Paul Bracken. HarperCollins, 1999. \$25.

The title may suggest another screed about a rising, belligerent China, and the theme is not incompatible with that future. But Bracken's Asia stretches from Israel to Japan, and his theme has as much to do with America's military power as with Asia's. Asians find themselves surrounded by technologically sophisticated U.S. military power, based, prepositioned, or afloat around the Asian rim. Although some in this region are comfortable with this presence, many aren't, and these governments must decide what to do about it.

There is little hope of actually matching the United States, weapon for weapon, and some danger in funneling money into large, inefficient, and occasionally power-hungry military bureaucracies. Instead, Bracken suggests, they seem to be turning to so-called disruptive technologies—nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and the missiles that carry them. Many of these technologies are all too readily available from the global marketplace, and most can be funded outside traditional military channels. However they are obtained, these weapons allow Asian governments to threaten both their neighbors and, more important, nearby U.S. bases or attacking U.S. forces. The U.S. Defense Department is not blind to these trends, which produce what the Pentagon calls “asymmetric threats.” But Bracken argues that U.S. forces remain ill-prepared to deal with them. And traditional arms control measures may actually encourage the trends by appearing to Asians as bald attempts to preserve U.S. military dominance.

This is a disturbing message, bound to be controversial. But it is surely as plausible as the schemes of arms control advocates. Taken seriously, it has profound implica-

tions for U.S. strategy, military operations, and future arms control efforts.

Environment, Scarcity, and Violence. *Thomas F. Homer-Dixon. Princeton, 1999. \$27.95.*

This is as thorough an examination as you'll find of the links between scarcity and environmental degradation, on the one hand, and human conflict, on the other. Homer-Dixon recognizes that human ingenuity has allowed some societies to escape the bleak future predicted two centuries ago by British economist Thomas Malthus, who expected population growth inevitably to outstrip food production, breeding famine, disease, and “premature death.” Obviously, however, many societies lack such ingenuity, and Homer-Dixon worries that those stuck without it may never get it because the conditions that prevent its emergence—instability, lack of a social surplus to invest in innovation, and so forth—tend to reproduce themselves, yielding a widening “ingenuity gap.” He also identifies worrisome thresholds and discontinuities in the environment’s adaptation to human abuse; after years of seemingly steady and benign change, an environ-

mental factor may suddenly go haywire, possibly with disastrous consequences.

Interestingly, Homer-Dixon finds few cases of major interstate war fought mainly to relieve scarcity. The main link, he concludes, is between scarcity and conflict within states. Still, those links are complex, as is the model he elaborates as the book progresses. This book is the “state of the art” when it comes to thinking about scarcity and conflict, while its footnotes and bibliography offer readers a vast array of suggestions for further inquiry.

Non-Governments: NGOs and the Political Development of the Third World. *Julie Fisher. Kumerian, 1998. \$24.95.*

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are relatively new denizens of the global political landscape, having appeared in significant number only since the late 1960s. Since then, however, they have exploded in number, thanks to the expansion of both international aid programs in need of implementation and the number of educated, idealistic locals looking for meaningful work. The communications revolution, running contemporaneously with the growth of NGOs, has bolstered their power and expertise by allowing these organizations to talk to each other and to the media, which can bring global attention to bear on previously local issues.

Fisher argues that NGOs have become the principal mediators between governments and peoples, a key source of “civil society”—voluntary associations outside state control that in many ways help glue societies together while also providing an impetus toward decentralization and, ultimately, democracy. Especially since the Rio conference in 1992, many NGOs have committed themselves to sustainable development; at their best they supply the ingenuity and organizational skills needed to make it happen at the grassroots level. These arguments leave Fisher more optimistic than Homer-Dixon. But she is aware that much depends on the highly variable interaction of NGOs and local governments, many of which do not take kindly to the “help” NGOs offer. ■

Corrections

In the review of the book *Sight Unseen* [*Key Reporter*, Autumn 1999] the name of the author was misspelled. The correct spelling is Georgina Kleege. Also in the same issue, the lectures on which Thomas Crow’s *The Intelligence of Art* is based were delivered not at Duke University but at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Phi Beta Kappa Offers Signet Rings

As part of its expanded line of membership items, the Society now offers 10-karat gold signet rings in two styles. Each is engraved with the Phi Beta Kappa insignia on the top. The member’s initials and year of election are engraved on the inside. The ring gauge shown at the bottom of the box can be cut out and wrapped around the finger you wish to measure. Ring sizers are also available from Hand & Hammer.

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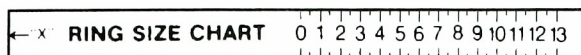
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Garry Wills Discusses Leadership, Newton Minow Receives ΦBK Fellows Award at Annual Banquet in Washington

On November 13, 1999, historian Garry Wills was the featured speaker on "Leadership" at the Phi Beta Kappa Fellows' banquet held at the Doyle Washington Hotel in Washington, D.C., while Newton Minow, who, as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission in the 1960s, coined the expression "a vast wasteland" with respect to television, received the annual Fellows Award.

The Fellows began their weekend on November 12 with a reception at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, where Phi Beta Kappa's offices are located. On the morning of November 13 they were guests at a forum on "Leadership and Character" at George Washington University, sponsored by Phi Beta Kappa for the annual conference of National Honor Society students and advisers.



At the Fellows' banquet last November (from the left): principal speaker Garry Wills, Fellows President Alvin Edelman, and Fellows Award recipient Newton Minow.

During a business meeting, four new members joined the Fellows' board: Peter Eder (Stamford), William Kelly (Atlanta), Judi Lipkin-Strauss (Chicago), and Jack Williams (Boston). Murray Drabkin is chairman of a Planning Committee that is assessing the future role of the Fellows organization in the Society.

The Fellows organization changed its name from the Phi Beta Kappa Associates last summer, to avoid confusion with the Phi Beta Kappa associations, which are described on page 2. The Associates were organized in 1940 to provide a financially secure future for Phi Beta Kappa, and they have contributed a total of \$2 million since that date. The current annual pledge is \$500, or \$5,000 over a 10-year period. The combined membership of regular and life members of the Fellows numbers around 650.

The next meeting of the Fellows will take place in April at the Harvard Club in New York City, where the organization was founded. For further information about the Fellows, write to Anthony McIvor at the Society's national office, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Is Your Chapter or Association Looking for a Speaker?

For the past 57 years the Fellows organization has supported the Fellows Lectureship (formerly the Associates Lectureship), which provides speakers for up to 30 engagements each year. The Lectureship is divided into four regional panels, which are made available to all Phi Beta Kappa groups within each geographical area for occasions such as chapter initiation ceremonies, honors convocations, public lectures, and annual dinner meetings.

For a list of the speakers in your region, write to Kathy Navascues at the national office of Phi Beta Kappa.

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