

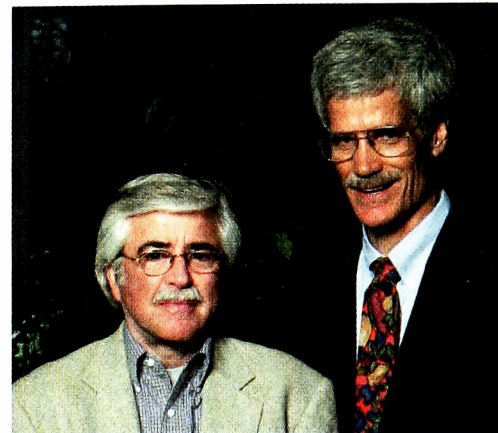


The

KeyReporter

Phi Beta Kappa
Founded 1776

Summer 2002 Volume 67, Number 4



The University of Missouri Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa celebrated its centennial with festivities that recalled other chapter milestones, including the awarding of honorary ΦBK memberships to distinguished Americans. In the 1902 photo at left is Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), in white shirt, who was elected an honorary member of the new chapter. Fellow honorees, from left, were U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ethan Allen Hitchcock; Robert S. Brookings of St. Louis, founder of the Brookings Institution; and U.S.

Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson. In the center photo, President Harry Truman, one of Missouri's favorite sons, was made an honorary ΦBK member in 1950. To his left are MU chapter members Will Nelson, Edward Weatherly and William Cassella. Honorary membership was awarded in 2002 to best-selling author William Least Heat-Moon (born William Trogdon), shown at right with Chapter President William Folk. Heat-Moon earned two degrees at MU-Columbia and has taught at its School of Journalism.

Symposium to Explore Citizenship and Partisanship

All Phi Beta Kappa members and their guests are invited to a national symposium on Saturday, Oct. 19, at Hunter College in New York City. The theme is "Citizenship and Partisanship: Educating the Enlightened American."

Hunter is sponsoring the program with the Phi Beta Kappa Society and its Middle Atlantic District, which includes the campus chapters and ΦBK associations in Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. The keynote speaker will be John Brademas, a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Indiana and president emeritus of New York University.

Other speakers and their topics will include: Joseph Gordon, president of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and dean of undergraduate education at Yale

University; "Social and Political Values in the Classroom"; Larry Kramer, the Samuel Tilden Professor of Law at New York University; "Judicial Sovereignty and American Democracy"; and Carolyn Maloney of the U.S. House of Representatives from New York's 14th District: "Participating in a Democratic Society." A question and answer session will follow the presentations.

This is the third symposium to be held at Hunter as a preamble to a Phi Beta Kappa Triennial Council; the others were in 1996 and 1999. The next Triennial Council will be in Seattle in August 2003.

There is no admission charge for the New York City event, which will include breakfast and lunch. Information on registration is available from Pro-

fessor C. Howard Krukofsky at Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, New York NY, 10021, or at c.howard.krukofsky@hunter.cuny.edu.

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From the Secretary

Inspiring Conversations

By John Churchill

Secretary, The Phi Beta Kappa Society

Words can have strange careers. “Wan” once meant dark but now means pale. “Prevent” once meant to precede, and “girl” once denoted a young child of either sex. “Conversation,” according to the Oxford English Dictionary, turns up in English in 1340 as a term for one’s general way of being and doing in the world. By 1511 it had acquired a sexual connotation, which it kept in 19th century England’s divorce court term “criminal conversation,” or “crim.con.” But it had acquired its primary contemporary sense by the time Alice mused, “[W]hat is the use of a book ... without pictures or conversations?” (*Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, edited by Roger Lancelyn Green. Oxford University Press, 1982.)

Alice’s implication—that the worthwhile parts of books (leaving pictures aside) are the conversations they may contain—is a reminder of one of the great ironies of Western philosophy. Its founding practitioner, Socrates, wrote nothing down—no philosophy, anyway; and his greatest pupil so distrusted writing that he wrote dialogues, a form that mimics the life of the spoken word. Any value shared by Alice and Plato is worth taking seriously. With that in mind, this fall the Phi Beta Kappa Society is launching a year of conversation.

We have chosen the topic, “A Question of Relevance: The Social Val-

ue of the Liberal Arts.” In this choice we do not suppose ourselves to be original. Most advocacy of liberal arts education assumes a predictable rhetorical posture. The main currents of every age seem to favor practical, immediately applicable education, and the dissenters seem always to counter with explanations that true education, even true practicality, lies with the liberal arts. For instance, the Hendrix College Catalog of 1890-91 railed against the short-sighted insistence on “Nothing but the practical!” arguing that a really practical education would prepare the mind for challenges beyond the techniques and methods of the moment.

And so, even in a world of mortal struggle, such as the early 1940s, or one of impending calamities, such as our present endangered age, Phi Beta Kappa has consistently held that broad learning in fields of disciplined inquiry—with emphasis on the cultivation of intellectual acumen and moral deliberation—is the best guide to a life worth living and a civilization worth living it in. None of us knows how the world will have been reshaped in the next month or year, let alone the next decade. But we all know that the world will need wisdom.

And one of Phi Beta Kappa’s central purposes is to articulate that need, continually reminding a world prone to the shorter vision that we also need

learning that is broad and deep, learning that is supremely practical over the long haul and for the larger issues. Therefore, starting in October, and running through the Triennial Council next August, we will sponsor a series of conversations designed to contribute to our articulation, as a national body, of the contemporary need for the liberal arts. What does this sort of education involve, and why is it important now?

Local associations of members from the nation’s northern tier to the Gulf, on both coasts, and in the great stretch between, will organize and host these conversations in concert with local campus chapters and supporters of Phi Beta Kappa, including members of the Fellows. In addition to our substantive, conceptual goals, we aim to stimulate cooperation and a sense of common purpose among the constituent groups that compose the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

But what substantive, conceptual goals should we strive for? Aristotle noted that it was a mark of understanding to know what sorts of things can be proven and made precise, and what sorts, on the other hand, require our tolerance of vagueness and probable conclusions. Our question, clearly, is not susceptible to a final, precise answer. Nor perhaps, can much be proven. But if we cannot prove, we may still improve. We may improve our grasp of the issues. We may improve our sense of the relevance of old values in new circumstances. We may improve our relations with each other by taking part in the discourse. We may improve the institution of Phi Beta Kappa by enriching our sense of its mission.

Plato used the dialogue format because the exchange of views, the posing and answering of questions, showed that understanding is a living, dynamic process. He distrusted writing because the settled character of the written word makes it look as if truth can be fixed and made to stand still. It is worth remembering that this greatest advocate of the objective reality of truth also believed that our access to that truth was sustained in reasoned discussion. Contrary to some contem-

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Paul LeClerc, right, receives a certificate of appreciation from Murray Drabkin after presenting the annual Richard W. Couper Lecture to the Fellows of the Phi Beta Kappa Society in New York City. Drabkin is president of the Fellows. LeClerc has been president and chief executive officer of the New York Public Library since 1993. A scholar and former college and university administrator, he recently became a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

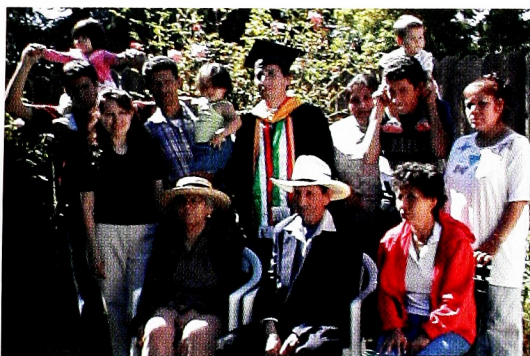


New ΦBK Members Overcome Challenges In Their Academic and Personal Lives

Initiation into Phi Beta Kappa represents a major achievement for every new member. But among those elected each year are some who confronted—and overcame—significant challenges demanding more than academic rigor. Their success serves as an inspiration to fellow students, their institutions, and anyone who feels cynical about the meaning of America's promise.

The Key Reporter sent a query last spring to all 262 ΦBK campus chapters, asking them to identify some of these remarkable new members. Here are eight who bring special qualities to the Society.

Juan Rubalcava, Santa Clara University



Juan Rubalcava and family

The son of migrant farm workers, Rubalcava was born in Yahualica, an agricultural town in Jalisco, Mexico. One of three brothers and seven sisters,

he showed an aptitude for mathematics when he won a contest in the sixth grade. After graduating from high school, he crossed the U.S. border illegally to join his parents and other siblings, working as a fruit picker in Gilroy, Calif. At age 19 he began to study English, and eventually passed the GED test. At 26 he started taking classes at San Jose City College.

Rubalcava was hired as a janitor at Santa Clara University, and after four years on the job he decided to take advantage of the reduced tuition offered to faculty and staff. His instructors became accustomed to seeing their diligent student sweeping the floors at night, and they admired his aspirations and resolve. He kept up with his studies; cleaned the classrooms, offices and restrooms; volunteered as a math tutor; took his disabled mother to frequent hospital visits; kept an eye on his elderly father—and became a U.S. citizen.

When the campus maintenance office was about to switch Rubalcava to a day shift, university officials intervened so that he could continue his classes. Last fall a sister stepped in with financial help, enabling him to quit the janitorial job. In June he graduated *magna cum laude* with a degree in computer science, two days after his 34th birthday. His achievements were reported in the *San Jose Mercury News* and on the local NBC-TV affiliate,

making him a hero to many who shared his disadvantaged background.

This summer Rubalcava has been working part time as an assistant math tutor for high school students while he looks for a position with a high-tech company. He anticipates having time, at last, to pursue hobbies like soccer and the guitar—and the luxury of summer vacations.

Kathleen Lackey, Lake Forest College

Top grades are routine for Lackey. During high school in Mundelein, Ill., she completed five levels in Spanish in three years and became the school's first non-native speaker to score 5 on the

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KENNETH KOCH, winner of the Inaugural Phi Beta Kappa Poetry Award, died July 6 at his home in New York City. He was 77. A Cincinnati native, he graduated from Harvard University and earned a doctorate at Columbia University, where he taught for 40 years.

Koch received the ΦBK award for his most recent volume, "New Addresses." The award was presented to him last November at the

Society's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The previous evening, he and the four other finalists read from their works in a public program at the Library of Congress.

The award was established by Allan and David Winston through the Winston Foundation to honor their late parents, Joseph and May Winston. Joseph, a lawyer who often hosted literary salons, was a ΦBK Fellow.

Challenged ΦBK's

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Kathleen Lackey

Advanced Placement Spanish exam. She placed fourth in a county-wide advanced accounting competition. The National Honor Society elected her secretary, and she graduated with a 4.0/4.0 GPA.

Last spring, as a junior at Lake Forest, Lackey became a member of

Phi Beta Kappa with a 3.97 GPA, and will graduate a semester early in December. She is double-majoring in Spanish and Latin American Studies, with a minor in business. Her thesis is on presentations of Evita Perón in history, literature and film. She has been an officer for a foreign language literary magazine at the college, and tutors other students in Spanish.

When Lackey was born, she was not expected to live past age 2. She has Spinal Muscular Atrophy, a genetic neuro-muscular disorder that weakens the nerves around the spine and makes the muscles atrophy, causing severe scoliosis. A spinal fusion was performed in 1995 to prevent further curvature of her spine and avoid other complications. Until then she could walk, but with great difficulty, and used a wheelchair for long distances. As expected, the surgery left her unable to walk, although she can stand with assistance. She uses a manual wheelchair at home and a power model when she goes out.

In addition to her brain, Lackey has another secret weapon: her mother. Mrs. Lackey drives her to the campus every day, helping with books, jacket,

errands and so on. But she never joins her daughter in the classroom. Instead she waits in the college library—where she has read 133 books. Lackey said the campus is improving its wheelchair accessibility, and the administrators ensure that her classes are in locations she can get to.

Her parents took her to Disney World when she was 2 years old, thinking it would be her only visit. They enjoyed it so much that they returned often, and are building a house only 10 minutes away. Lackey hopes to work for Disney World after she graduates, getting experience in customer service and using her knowledge of Portuguese with tour groups from Brazil. Eventually she plans to operate her own translation service.

Robert Wallace, Yale College

A glance at Wallace's academic record suggests a brilliant but not unique over-achiever: Graduation from Herndon (Va.) High School in three years; B.A. from Yale in economics, *summa cum laude*; 3.95 GPA, coveted prize in the humanities; courses in financial theory, investment analysis, econometrics, microeconomics; impressive computer skills, proficient in Spanish. It is not surprising that he interned in Yale's Investments Office, which manages a \$10 billion endowment, nor that he will join its staff full time this fall.

But Wallace was 36 when he received his diploma. And the first pages of his résumé hold bigger surprises: principal dancer of the Washington Ballet at age 17, only four years after he had begun to study ballet; invited by Mikhail Baryshnikov to join the American Ballet Theater (ABT); praised in the *Wall Street Journal* at age 22 when he and Baryshnikov alternated in a major new ballet; selected by Agnes de Mille to star in an ABT revival of one of her ballets, inspiring a *Washington Post* critic to call his portrayal of the Devil "a gem of drollery—an adorably disheveled, rubbery imp—deserving of a place in the history books."

As an ABT star, Wallace danced leading roles in works by other choreographers from Balanchine to Twyla Tharp.

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Sarah Hurlburt Wins ΦBK's Sibley Fellowship To Complete Her Dissertation on Montaigne



Sarah Hurlburt, a Whitman College graduate, has won Phi Beta Kappa's Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship for 2002-03. The \$20,000 award, established in 1934, is designated for young

women scholars who have earned a Ph.D. or are completing their doctoral dissertations. The fields of study alternate each year between Classics and French.

Hurlburt grew up on a farm in Tulelake, Calif. She earned a master's degree in French at the University of Chicago, where she is a doctoral candidate, and received her DEA, *mention très bien*, at the Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris-IV). The Sibley Fellowship will enable her to complete a dissertation examining the evolution of the status and classification of Montaigne, starting with the *Eloge de Montaigne* sponsored by the Académie française in 1812, and culminating with his appearance on the list of authors prescribed for study in the French school system in 1880.



Then he was invited to become a principal dancer with the Boston Ballet, which created a mentoring program specifically so that he could gain experience on the business side of ballet. Meanwhile he also performed on PBS and as a guest artist around the world, and found time to teach at the Boston Ballet School. He even managed to squeeze in a few evening college courses before finally deciding to enroll full time at Yale.

Wallace and his wife produced two sons and a daughter during his four college years. This left little time for extra-curriculars—but baby Jack, now 3, had the privilege of being rocked to sleep while his father the freshman read to him from “Don Quixote.”

Grace Kostel, University of Arkansas



Grace Kostel

Her childhood started like a classic prairie saga: Kostel was born on a farm near Wagner, S.D., and her father was killed in an accident there when she was only 2. She moved with her mother and baby sister to her great-grandfather's house, and her mother went to work on his farm. Although it was not an easy life, Kostel has happy memories of roaming on horseback, bird-watching, catching snakes and frogs, and collecting rocks and wildflowers. She thought about becoming a veterinarian.

But first she wanted travel and adventure. She knew how to drive a tractor. Could an 18-wheeler be much different? So in 1981, at age 23, she became one of the few women steering a rig—alone—across the United States. The pay was good, but more important was the opportunity to visit every state in the nation, enjoying their beauty

while deploring the amount of environmental destruction she saw.

In 1998, Kostel enrolled at the University of Arkansas. She was elected to Phi Beta Kappa last spring, but will not graduate until next May—at 45—because she spent a year at the University of Essex in England. While that experience enhanced her appreciation for her own country, the British impressed her with their knowledge of local plants and wildlife. She wonders how many Americans—surrounded by relentless suburban and rural development—are similarly informed.

Kostel was awarded a Morris K. Udall Scholarship in 2000 for her commitment to environmental studies. She has a 4.0 GPA in her major, botany, and a 3.8 GPA overall. She considers the American prairie the most endangered ecosystem, and is concerned that most restoration efforts are focused on native tallgrass prairies, while development continues to destroy the midgrass and shortgrass prairies. She hopes her career will enable her to draw attention to those fragile lands and their life forms.

This summer Kostel is working as a field botanist for the U.S. Forest Service on the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands in western South Dakota. She plans to get a master's degree at the University of Wyoming, where she will do research on the prairies of South Dakota and Nebraska—and put into practice the love of nature that marked her childhood.

Alex So, Skidmore College

So was raised in an impoverished Chinese village where his parents grew



Alex So

rice. When a flood destroyed their home and caused a food shortage, they were almost forced to give away one of their five children to ensure that the others had enough to eat. But So's mother had been given away as a child, and she refused to make any of her children suffer the cruelty she had experienced.

So said that the villagers accepted destitution, famine and “the essence of entrapment” as their fate; ambition was pointless. Yet he dreamed of becoming a research scientist. And 12 years ago, when his family immigrated to the United States, this suddenly seemed possible. But the transition was traumatic. The family moved to Hartford, Conn., where all seven lived in a run-down apartment with one bedroom. They encountered hostility and missed the warm friendships in their village. None of them spoke English, and this frustration intensified their arguments.

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The Harvard University Gazette covered historian Simon Schama's oration at Harvard's ΦBK Literary Exercises in June: Schama “evaluated the place of eloquence in American society, contrasting the present age of increasingly faster computers and shorter attention spans with the political rhetoric of 18th and 19th century America. ‘All the great orators of the Revolutionary Age,’ Schama said, ‘were famous for their controlled flamboyance. They were hams, but hams for liberty....’ Rhetoric implies ‘the freedom to be persuaded, to be reasoned with, to be moved. Eloquence is by nature tolerant...’ Schama ended by suggesting that perhaps what we need in the 21st century is ‘public discourse that lies between Demosthenes and Ozzy Osbourne, and above all, a rhetoric that knows, as Lincoln knew at Gettysburg, just when to shut up.’ ”

Challenged ΦBK's

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For the first time in his life, So saw his parents cry. He realized that he had to become independent for his own sake and theirs.

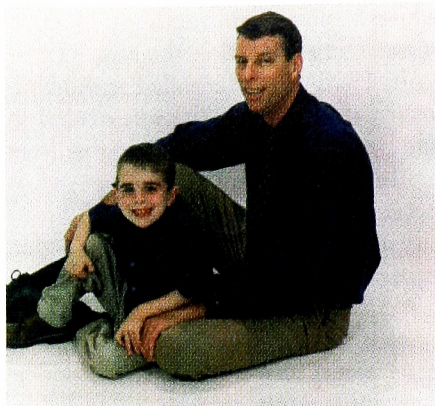
During high school, So and his siblings worked 20 hours a week to help buy a new home in the suburbs. His hectic schedule contributed to a sense of isolation and estrangement from his parents. And those feelings affected his personality in ways that alienated classmates and increased racist attitudes. He became so depressed that he considered ending his life. His mother rescued him by reminding him of the misery he had left behind in China, and encouraging him to appreciate the opportunities ahead. Both parents urged him to pursue his dream: "Hope started to reinvent itself."

In 1997 So submitted an essay on black holes to NASA's Space Science Student Involvement Program. Among 8,000 entries, his won second place. He enrolled at Skidmore, and received an award as the top freshman chemist. Throughout college he worked as a waiter, cashier, chemistry and math tutor, and biochemistry lab assistant. But he also was president of his dorm, the head of several campus organizations, director of an orientation program for new minority students, and a mentor to high school students.

This fall So will become a doctoral candidate in chemistry and chemical biology at the University of California at San Francisco. He wants his life to demonstrate to the people in his Chinese village that some dreams can come true.

Milo Jensen, San Diego State University

Jensen grew up in San Diego State's campus community; his father taught chemistry there for 34 years. But although he loved history as a boy, especially military history, Jensen took a roundabout path to a college degree. After high school he enrolled at SDSU and soon found himself on academic probation. He dropped out, got a job as a university custodian, and moved up



Milo Jensen and his son Reilly

the ladder to laborer in the Physical Plant's Steam Plant, building maintenance worker, operating engineer, power plant operator, and finally refrigeration maintenance mechanic.

Meanwhile Jensen had married and started a family, so he concentrated on his job and four lively children. He earned a degree in refrigeration technology at a community college, which inspired him to return to SDSU as a part-time history major, keeping his day job as a mechanic. He would study after the children were in bed, and rise early to write his essays; he had a special interest in issues of oppression and intolerance. He also found time to volunteer for his church and community as a Boy Scout leader.

None of these challenges could match what the Jensens faced when Reilly, their youngest, was born. His kidneys had only 10 percent of normal function, and he struggled to survive his first week of life. The family's faith, and multiple surgeries, pulled him through an agonizing first year, and at 18 months he was strong enough for a kidney transplant at Stanford University's Children's Hospital. The donor was his father.

Jensen said he found peace during that ordeal by reading the Bible—and his college textbooks. In human biology and chemistry courses, he gained knowledge that helped him understand Reilly's condition. Only a week after the transplant, he flew home to his family, his job, and final exams at SDSU. He had maintained an A average, and was named the outstanding history graduate in his class.

Today Reilly is 6 years old, and although he will always require medical attention, he is growing steadily and enjoys life every day. His father is an SDSU graduate student, working on a degree in post-secondary educational leadership. Having spent almost two decades in the mechanical trades, he looks forward to helping others discover the value of higher education.

Meliha Ceric, The College of St. Catherine

Lejla Mutapcic, University of Missouri

Both Ceric and Mutapcic are refugees from the devastation in Bosnia who earned college degrees in the Midwest. And both are preparing to make contributions to their new homeland.

Ceric grew up in Prijedor, where her father was a fashion designer and operated a tailoring business with her mother. But when Serbian troops occupied the town in 1992, non-Serbs were forbidden to work. Life became grim: Food was scarce, there was no electrical power, and non-Serbs faced the constant threat of "ethnic cleansing." The family endured these conditions for three years, hoping the war would soon end. Finally, in January 1995, they fled and became refugees.

Six months later they were able to enter the United States, living first in a Minneapolis suburb and later in St. Paul. Ceric didn't speak a word of English, but she soon learned enough to get a job in the warehouse of a clothing store. For several months she



Meliha Ceric



Lejla Mutapcic

worked full time while also studying full time at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. When the store closed, she concentrated on her studies, and earned an associate's degree.

Ceric then enrolled at the College of St. Catherine—"St. Kate's"—attracted by its strong history department, its small size and all-female student body. Mastering a new language while meeting the challenges of academic work was made even more difficult by a visual disability that imposed limits on her studying. But she still found time to volunteer at a hospital and as a tutor at a middle school. This month, at 26, she becomes a graduate student at Minnesota State University in Mankato, and will work toward a master's degree in history. She also will be a graduate assistant, gaining useful experience for her long-cherished goal of teaching history herself.

When Mutapcic came to the United States in 1996, she had to leave her parents behind in Sarajevo. She brought memories of a happy childhood cut short by a brutal war. For four years the city lacked food, water, electricity and medical supplies. Mutapcic witnessed hunger, hopelessness and murder. When humanitarian organizations arrived to help save the Bosnians from genocide, she volunteered for one called Ruhama. Her job was to aid the elderly, especially the sick or disabled, bringing them medicine and helping with household chores. This experience inspired her goal to become a physician.

Mutapcic's first American home was in rural Owensville, Mo., where she attended Gasconade County R-II High School. The teachers and staff welcomed and supported the newcomer, and she graduated with honors. U.S. government aid and scholarships enabled her to enroll at the University of Missouri. Advised to try out several extracurricular activities, she became president of the Pre-Med Club and a member of the Biology Honors and Okinawan Karate clubs.

She was thrilled to be selected for the university's Undergraduate Research Program in the Department of Molecular Microbiology, studying gene regulation in the developmental stages of *C. elegans*—simple roundworms. Her research last year won the first Undergraduate Award at the Molecular Biology Week Poster Competition, and her name appeared on a submitted research publication.

Last summer Mutapcic volunteered for Operation Crossroads Africa in Kenya. As part of a medical student

team, she was assigned to a missionary hospital in Kisumu, "shadowing" the physicians at clinics and on hospital rounds. She observed several life-threatening surgical procedures, and the primitive tools reminded her of the darkest days in Bosnia. The students also assisted nurses who staffed mobile clinics that visited villages and city slums. Her first patient was a boy of 12 who was ravaged by malaria. The trust that his mother showed in Mutapcic's ability to help him confirmed her ambition to become a doctor.

She got a "green card" in 1998 that enabled her to travel outside the United States and visit her parents in Sarajevo. Last May, two days before her graduation, she was sworn in as a U.S. citizen. Also in May, she was accepted by Mayo Medical School in Rochester, Minn., and received a Mayo Foundation Outstanding Achievement Scholarship that covers all her tuition. What pleased her most was that her parents were visiting from Bosnia at the time so could share her joy in what she had accomplished.

Inspiring Conversation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

porary opinion, the endlessness of talk is not evidence of its futility, but a condition of its usefulness. As Alice might also have said, "What is the use of a book unless it becomes part of our conversation?"

Phi Beta Kappa conversations focusing on "A Question of Relevance: The

Social Value of the Liberal Arts" are now being planned by ΦBK Associations in Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Northern California, Southern California, Chicago, Cleveland, the Delaware Valley (Philadelphia area), Denver, Hartford, Houston, Nashville, the New York City area (three Associations), Tampa, Tucson, and Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Scott Lurding at (202) 265-3808 or slurding@pbk.org.



ΦBK Secretary John Churchill, right, spoke at the initiation ceremony of the Society's chapter at Loyola College in Maryland. At left are Professor David Powers and Paul Eder, '02.



Among Our Key People

Editor's Note: *Kerry Grombacher graduated with honors in American Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1973.*

One Saturday last fall, I was speaking to an audience at a small farmhouse in eastern Iowa, introducing the title song of my new recording, "Sands Motel." Earlier that day, I had read the first few pages of an article in *The American Scholar* by Dr. Oliver Sacks, describing his fascination with the periodic table. Mentioning the article and my own fascination with cheap motels and neon signs, I said, "I like neon. In fact, I like all the inert gases: helium, neon, argon, Freon..." A voice from a back row called out, "Kerry, Freon's not an inert gas. I'm a chemistry teacher, and I know that it's not an inert gas." The audience laughed. I laughed, too, recognizing the voice of authority, and then I sang my song. After the show, as she bought a CD, my "heckler" gave me a periodic table the size of a business card. I've got it in my wallet now. "Proud to be a chemist," it says.

I'm a traveling songwriter and singer, a calling that I'm proud of, too. My shows are entertaining and—I always add, tongue in cheek—educational. I tell humorous anecdotes (including a new one about the periodic table) and talk about metaphors and palindromes, history, work, the landscape, and current events. I play guitar and mandolin and drive over 50,000 miles a year, usually by myself. It seems that most of my time is spent looking through my windshield and thinking.

Confession: I am not a member of a local ΦBK association, I don't wear a ΦBK key, and I don't list ΦBK membership in my promotional material. I do, however, talk about Phi Beta Kappa and the benefits of a strong liberal arts education when I conduct workshops on creativity, songwriting and the music business with high school students. And while I don't have contact with my professors from 30 years ago, I can imagine that William Goetzmann and Brian Dippie, scholars of the American West, ethnomusi-

cologist Norma McLeod, and the late Amerigo Paredes, a noted Southwestern folklorist, would understand what I'm doing and perhaps see their influences in my work.

From 1970 to 1976, I attended the University of Texas at Austin, where I was an adventurer in the American Studies/American Civilizations program as both an undergraduate and graduate student. I studied folklore, ethnomusicology, art history, statistics, history and literature. I am a life-long learner, a voracious reader and co-founder in 1989 of a book group that's still talking in Austin. Rarely am I without reading material and pen and paper. If I must wait, I'm going to be busy. And I've almost always been a musician. I was brought up listening to European classical music and American country and bluegrass music in a household of immigrant German Jews. My father is an accomplished pianist who has played organ in synagogues and churches. A career U.S. Army officer (we moved every three years or so), he was introduced to country music by fellow soldiers in the 1940s.

I began playing in a grade school band, on drums and other percussion instruments. As a teenager in the late 1960s, I drummed in rock and rhythm and blues bands and, in the world of coffeehouses, played guitar and Auto-harp, and sang folk and country music: songs by Hank Williams, Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs.

I had a dream job at 16, spending the summer of 1968 in southeastern New Mexico on an archaeological site survey team, and I thought a career in anthropology or archaeology lay ahead. Nearly fluent in Spanish when I graduated from high school, I enrolled in the Latin American Studies program at the University of Texas. A teaching assistant in a history course lured me to the American Studies program with tales of a small department, classes taught by full professors, and opportunities for interdisciplinary work.

Interdisciplinary work has been the watchword for me. Doesn't that describe the real world? While still a student, I served for three years as the historical researcher for the Texas Archaeological Survey, an agency that prepared environmental impact statements for large construction projects. Between 1976 and 1978, as a writer and editor on an education research project, I worked closely with psychologists, teachers, statisticians and computer programmers. And from 1978 to 1992, I worked for the Texas tax collection agency, where I managed the publishing and legal departments.

I quit working for the Texas government in 1992 and started a T-shirt design business. I had been introduced to the basics of selling a few years earlier, and in the six years I ran that business, I learned more. I also began writing and performing music in Austin again. I had quit after getting married and starting to raise a family in 1974; parenthood and my university classes and jobs didn't allow time for performing. By 1997 it was clear that playing music full time was what I really wanted to do, so I shut down the T-shirt business and took to the road.

The skills I honed selling T-shirts translated easily to the world of booking gigs and pitching songs to other

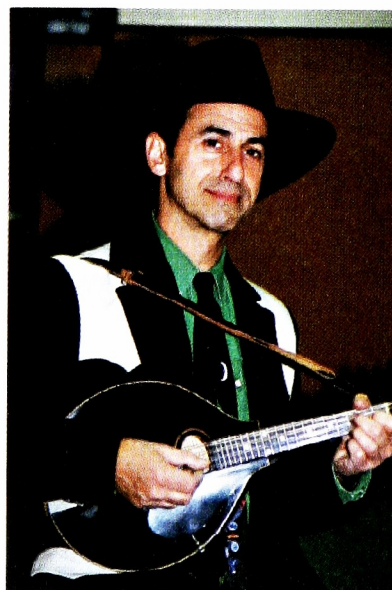


Photo by Angel Rutherford

Kerry Grombacher



artists, and I handle the booking and publishing myself.

Because I work in two rather separate genres, the singer/songwriter part of folk music and western (cowboy) music, I have more flexibility when I pursue jobs than friends who work only in a single genre.

I was “roped” into western music by a friend of my parents, a rancher and poet who invited me to my first cowboy poetry and music gathering in Sierra Vista, Ariz., in 1996. I had written a few western songs but had never been exposed to the rich culture of cowboy poetry and song. Cowboy poetry is usually rhyme and meter narrative in the style of Robert Service and Rudyard Kipling, and its subject matter is ranching and the history and landscape of the American West. I was hooked. By the summer of 1996 I had written and recorded an album of western songs, and I began to be invited to perform at gatherings. By 1998, other western artists were recording my songs, and I was often asked to play mandolin with some of the best western acts.

I write almost all the time. Without a routine or a set time and place for writing, I jot down ideas—couplets, whole verses, or story outlines—as they occur to me, and flesh them out later.

My goal is always to describe things clearly in my songs, and to use the words that best evoke the mood I want to convey. Writing western songs has brought me to an unfamiliar vocabulary of words and images, and the challenge of working in the genre is intensely provocative. The details have to be right, so that the songs withstand the scrutiny of poets and musicians who work on ranches and know that world intimately. My songs often pay homage to other works that I like. I’ve quoted from pop standards, referred to a William Carlos Williams poem, and paraphrased a passage in an E.M. Forster novel. In a new piece about roadside crosses and altars, I’ve worked in references to an Ezra Pound poem and a gospel song.

An idea might strike at any time, but my hours behind the wheel seem to be the most fertile. Here’s an example. Over Mother’s Day weekend in

2001, I performed at the Gum Tree Festival in Tupelo, Miss. As I drove from Tupelo to New Orleans that Sunday evening, I realized that I was in the confluence of several streams, or story lines, in my life. It was both Mother’s Day and the day of the second “Million Mom March” for strict gun control laws.

It had been exactly a year since I had stood by my youngest son’s hospital bed after surgery in Austin while a friend of his phoned from that demonstration in Washington D.C. It was 10 years and a week since the handgun murder of his mother, attorney Suzanne Brown—my first wife and the mother of my three children—by the husband of a divorcee client. And Suzanne had had a date with Elvis Presley in 1958, when Elvis, a native of Tupelo, was going through Army basic training at Fort Hood, in Suzanne’s hometown of Killeen, Texas. More coincidences than in a 19th century novel, perhaps, yet true: Mother’s Day, the march, a murder, Tupelo and Elvis. I wrote three verses of two stanzas each in a matter of days. It took several more weeks to complete two “floating” bridges—identical in structure but with key phrases altered. (A demo recording of the song, “Mother’s Day, Tupelo,” is on my web site.)

My family is very supportive of my itinerant profession. I’m now married to a woman who works in the music business in New Orleans, and she encouraged me as I shut down my T-shirt business and began touring more. When I’m on the road, I’m able to visit my children, who are all grown. I send

my grandchildren postcards from around the country, and I see my parents more often now than I used to.

In the few years I’ve been back in the music business, I’ve performed at a wide variety of venues and events, both as a principal act and a sideman. I’ve been at cowboy gatherings in many western states and played at the Newport Folk Festival and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

In May I sang at a cowboy poetry gathering in Rock Springs, Wyo., and then headed to Phoenixville, Pa., near Philadelphia, for the Plowshares Concerts series. After that I was in Dodge City, Kans., for the Cowboy Heritage Festival, before doing a concert in Hot Springs, Ark., in June.

In August I’m performing at the Western Theater of the Wallows in Joseph, Ore.; in Prescott Ariz., at the Arizona Cowboy Poetry Gathering; and at the Gunnison Center for Arts in Gunnison, Colo. In September, I’ll perform a concert with Willis Alan Ramsey at Swallow Hill in Denver, Colo., and I’ll host a western music show at D&D Farm and Ranch in Hockley, Texas, outside Houston.

I’m always looking for new venues, from concert halls to odd and unusual places. Last September, while touring to promote the “Sands Motel” CD, I performed under the neon signs in the parking lot of the Sands Motel in Grants, N.M.! My tour itinerary is at www.kgrombacher.com, where you can also e-mail me, and view my collection of photos of Sands Motels.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



Photo by Justin Knight

Boston College's ΦBK chapter honored Richard Tresch, seated, at its spring induction ceremony for his 25 years of leadership. Congratulating him were new officers, from left, Michael Resler, Clare O'Connor, Mary Joe Hughes and Dale Herbeck.



Phi Beta Kappa in the News

The New York Times (July 7) published "His and Hers, For History's Sake," about historian David Levering Lewis (a former Φ BK Senator) and his wife, fellow scholar Ruth Ann Stewart. They discussed their lives during the 15 years that Lewis wrote his two-volume biography of W.E.B. Du Bois. Both books won the Pulitzer Prize.

"Mr. Lewis was born in Little Rock, Ark., into an intellectual atmosphere (his father was a Yale graduate, his mother a teacher) and grew up in Wilberforce and Atlanta, where he attended high school and graduated after only one year. He enrolled at Fisk University in Nashville, Mr. Du Bois' alma mater. After graduation as a Phi Beta Kappa, he acceded to his parents' wishes and studied law at Michigan State. But he dropped out after a semester and

hopped a bus for New York City, where he sought out Jacques Barzun, the noted historian and dean of Columbia University."

The Wichita Eagle (July 7) reported that Φ BK Secretary John Churchill spoke to the Greater Wichita Area Phi Beta Kappa Association the previous week. He received a City of Wichita medallion, and the mayor proclaimed May 29 "Dr. John Churchill Day." It was announced that the association will support a scholarship for a liberal arts student at Wichita State University.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (July 2) described the rowing career of Will Ralph, "the stroke of Yale's varsity lightweight eight that won the Intercollegiate Rowing Association's national

championship. Ralph and the Bulldogs are set to row in the Henley Royal Regatta at Henley-on-Thames, England. In addition to winning the IRA national title and helping the lightweights to an undefeated season last year, Ralph graduated in May with a 3.89 GPA. He was selected Phi Beta Kappa and received Yale's John Addison Porter Prize in American history."

USA Today (June 24) interviewed the parents of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl, on the first Father's Day after he was murdered by a radical Islamic group in Pakistan. They discussed the publication of "At Home in the World," a collection of his articles. "Daniel was shy, says his mother. One reason he went into journalism after graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Stanford University was to be forced to talk to people."

The Daniel Pearl Foundation has been created "to promote cross-cultural bridge building between people through journalism, music and innovative communication. Although in its infancy, the foundation has a website (www.danielpearl.org)."

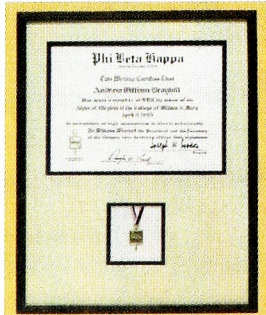
The Albany Times Union (June 20) reported that the Upper Hudson Association of Phi Beta Kappa awarded scholarships to two high school students who excelled in liberal studies.

The Houston Chronicle (June 6) wrote about three Bellaire High School graduates who scored a perfect 1600 on the college entrance exams. Each has immigrant parents or grandparents. One is class salutatorian Victor Hu, 17, who received a Phi Beta Kappa scholarship, the \$12,000 Jones Award, and National Honor Society and Chinese Professional Scholar scholarships. He will attend Harvard this fall.

The Chronicle also reported (April 29) that "the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Houston presented 63 \$3,000 scholarships to graduating seniors. The honorees were introduced by Dr. Denton Cooley and Richard J.V. Johnson." Since its founding in 1974, the association has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Phi Beta Kappa Offers Membership Items



Members may order a variety of items displaying the Phi Beta Kappa insignia. Included is a handsome brass key ring with the Society's emblem on the front and the member's name, chapter and year of election on the reverse. Each of the heavy gold-plated pens comes with a medium blue ball-point Cross-style insert and is engraved with the member's name, chapter and year of election. The pen is also available with a matching mechanical pencil, as a set. The popular membership display includes an engrossed certificate and a large gold-electroplate key, double-matted in an attractive walnut frame, 12" x 16" in size.

To order, complete the form below and mail it with your payment and a copy of your mailing label from the back cover showing your Φ BK membership number to Hand & Hammer, 2610 Morse Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22192. You may place an order or request the complete product brochure by calling (703) 491-4866 or by faxing (703) 491-2031. You may order online at www.hand-hammer.com.

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ing in 1974, the association has raised more than \$3 million for scholarships.

The Bergen County (N.J.) *Record* (June 3) reported that the first Paul Acquaviva Scholarship would be presented to a Wayne Valley High School scholar-athlete by Acquaviva's parents in memory of their son. A Phi Beta Kappa at Rutgers University, he earned a law degree at Columbia University. On Sept. 11 he died in the World Trade Center at age 29.

The Phi Beta Kappa Society recently learned that another ΦBK member was killed on Sept. 11. *The Sudbury* (Mass.) *Town Crier* wrote about the life of Geoffrey W. Cloud, 36. A partner at Cantor Fitzgerald, he worked on the 105th floor of One World Trade Center. Cloud was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and earned a law degree at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Washington Post (June 2) profiled Jonathan Pinkney, who "survived a childhood in a housing complex that was also home to one of the District's most violent open-air drug markets." At age 14 he won the city's junior high school oratory contest. An anti-drug organization awarded him a scholarship, enabling him to enroll at Morehouse College. But in his sophomore year, the organization—and the scholarship—ceased to exist. He got financial help from a D.C. Superior Court judge, the United Negro College Fund, his church, neighbors and friends, and he worked as a dormitory resident assistant. In 1996 he graduated from Morehouse.

Pinkney said that his late mother's family in rural Georgia saw Morehouse as a "mythic castle over a horizon, all but impossible to reach. 'And to think that 40 years later, her son returns to Georgia and not only becomes the first in the family to go to college, but to the college that she revered, and to graduate Phi Beta Kappa.'"

Maureen Dowd (April 27) described some readers' reactions to her *New York Times* column about a

ΦBK in Popular Culture and Literature

From "The Emperor of Ocean Park" by Stephen L. Carter (Knopf, 2002): "But moments after I walk through the door of the rambling and ugly Shepard Street house where we both spent our teen years, Mariah dumps the rest of the work on me. She does this, I think, not out of grief or malice or even exhaustion, but out of the same trait that led her to quit journalism for a career of raising her children, a peculiar willed deference to men, inherited from our mother, who required of her two daughters less that they play a role than that they display an attitude: there were tasks unfit for their gender. Kimmer hates this in my sister, and has accused her, once to her face, of wasting the brain that earned her Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year at Stanford.

"...The following Tuesday, twelve days after the death of my father, I return to my dreary classroom, populated, it often seems, by under-educated but deeply committed Phi Beta Kappa ideologues..."

From "Snobbery: The American Version" by Joseph Epstein (Houghton Mifflin, 2002): "Some young people are what are known as good students – that

is, like good dogs of a certain sort, they fetch well, bringing back in their moist mouths the sticks they were thrown. 'The significance of Anglo-Catholicism to T.S. Eliot—go get it, girl.' 'Was the Renaissance merely the Late Show of the Middle Ages or the Early Show of the Reformation—bring it back, boy, typed, double spaced, tidy footnotes at the bottom of the page.' Woof, woof. Good student. Here's your Phi Beta Kappa key, now go get a good job."

*Both of the above contributed by
P.S. Taylor, McLean, Va.*

From "Shake Down the Thunder: The Creation of Notre Dame Football" by Murray Sperber (Henry Holt, 1993): "Rockne continued to watch the Wabash situation, later grumbling that the school 'has ceased to be an athletic institution and has become quite literary and highbrow. This is too bad because Wabash, in my mind, used to be the greatest school in the State [of Indiana]. It is pretty tough on Pete Vaughan too, as Pete can do pretty well coaching football players but he is a little out of his element handling the Phi Beta Kappas.'"

*Contributed by Melinda Gates Weber,
Paducah, Ky.*

Time magazine article claiming that professional women have trouble attracting men of similar accomplishment. "Wright Salisbury writes 'in praise of brainy women: Shortly after we were married, my wife tearfully confessed that her I.Q., at 178, was 45 points higher than mine, [she] had been salutatorian of her college class, and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. It has been terrible to live with, but there have been compensations: Our children are a lot smarter. She remembers people's names, places we have visited, and learns foreign languages the way I catch colds.'"

Newsweek's Web edition (April 24) offered "Between the Lines Online: An Education in Giving": "Americans are

a generous people, but charitable giving is not keeping pace with income. Why? For many potential donors, the biggest obstacle is lack of faith. They aren't confident that the money they give will actually end up helping people. 'Donors are sick of writing that \$200 check to the Red Cross and not knowing whether it goes for the executive director's salary or the office rent,' says Charles Best, a 26-year-old Phi Beta Kappa from Yale who now teaches at a public school in the Bronx.

"Best decided to do something about it. His new Website (Donors Choose.org) is not just helping New York City kids; it may eventually change the face of philanthropy. His site—a model of user-friendliness—asks public

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Recommended Reading

BOOK COMMITTEE

Humanities: Svetlana Alpers, Michael Griffith

Robert P. Sonkowsky, Eugen Weber

Social Sciences: Rick Eden, Josephine Pacheco

Anna J. Schwartz, Larry J. Zimmerman

Natural Sciences: Germaine Cornelissen, Jay M. Pasachoff

By Svetlana Alpers

Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. Text by Jeanine Fiedler. Phaidon Press: 55 Series, 2001. \$7.95.

In what shape or form do you want your attention to pictures invited or directed? The diverse formats of some recent books focus this issue.

Phaidon's innovative series of low-priced, pocket-sized books is devoted to first-rate photographers, both known and not so well-known. The format is rigorous: 128 pages each, with an informative introduction followed by pages of photos at the right, brief commentary to the left.

We have become accustomed to looking at photographs exhibited on museum walls: art among art. But it might be argued that they are seen to better advantage on the pages of a book, accompanied by words and easily available to hand and eye. The problem is, how often does one actually take a large book of photographs down from the shelf?

The elegant design, fine printing and handy size of this series make photographs accessible and tempting to look at. I started with Moholy-Nagy (1895-1946), the Hungarian-born photographer who migrated to the Bauhaus and ended his days in Chicago. I have picked up the book and turned the pages again and again to study his dazzling experiments with light. And now I have gone on to Joseph Sudek, Atget, Nadar, Matthew Brady, and more. The series offers an exhilarating mini-education in the art of photography.

Titian to 1518: the Assumption of Genius. Paul Joannides. Yale University Press, 2001. \$65.

This is a serious and highly competent art historical study about the early works of one of the greatest painters in the European tradition.

The problems facing the author were many: we do not know the year of Titian's birth (this author says about 1488-90); we do not know what paintings he made before the first certainly dated and attributed work in 1511; many of the works considered here (well-known paintings such as "Sacred and Profane Love" and "Concert Champêtre") were not recorded until the 1600s, more than a hundred years after the artist painted them.

For those acquainted with the Titian canon, there are a number of interesting surprises: the Dresden "Venus" is neither a Venus, nor by Giorgione, but a Titian depiction of a "Sleeping Woman in a Landscape"; the "Three Ages of

Man," whose dazzlingly young couple gaze into each other's eyes on the cover, is retitled "Daphnis and Chloe"; "Concert Champêtre," the painting in the Louvre featuring two clothed men and two naked women in a landscape, which was famously taken up by Manet in his "Déjeuner sur l'Herbe," is described as homoerotic in its concerns.

The book contains scarcely any discussion of social context, but there is a lot of old-fashioned pictorial analysis. The attempt to render the nature of the paintings in words is amply supported by the fine color plates for which Yale University Press is so renowned. Pictures are more powerful than any words.

But, returning to my theme, one is left with a lingering doubt about the relationship between the brilliant reproductions of whole works (necessarily compressed), the numerous details (relation to size of original not noted), and the paintings themselves. No matter how fine, reproductions are not paintings. A mark of the success of the book is that it makes one want to go and see Titian again for oneself.

Interviews with American Artists, \$34.95, and About Modern Art (second edition), \$22.95. Both by David Sylvester. Yale University Press, 2002.

These two books offer a cross-section of the writings of David Sylvester, the influential English art critic who died last year at the age of 76. His major publications were on Francis Bacon (a book-length interview), Giacometti (a study) and Magritte (a massive catalogue). An interest in all he wrote was his presumption of closeness to the artist and his/her intentions. Modern art, and how American artists feel as part of it, are his topics in the essays collected in these volumes.

This pair of books comes without illustrations. It is less a matter of book design than a matter of a genre of publishing. Sylvester originally wrote for journals like *The New Statesman*, which did not print pictures. But he made the best of it: their absence was a spur to his genre of writing. Sylvester's words hardly need illustrations. His concern is less with describing particular works than with elucidating the artist in the making of them. As an interviewer, he has the knack of pressing artists to acknowledge how they go about things, the nature and assumptions of their practice. In the introduction, Sylvester breezily describes his writing as "not unlike St. Teresa's reports on her intercourse

with the Deity." It is this passionate nature that enables his words to stand on their own.

If you have a general familiarity with, say, the paintings of Helen Frenkenthaler, or works by Jasper Johns or sculpture by Oldenburg, or even perhaps if you don't, you can, with the help of Sylvester, practice imagining the making of them for yourself.

Celluloid Skyline: New York and the Movies. James Sanders. Alfred A. Knopf, 2001. \$45.

This is a fascinating look at the myth of New York City as it has been constructed in the movies. Sanders is an architect and designer by profession who collaborated with Ric Burns on the PBS series "New York." In this book he combines new research about movie-making with his knowledge of the actual New York in order to analyze the imaginary New York.

The story begins in the late 1920s. The advent of talking pictures had, it turns out, a lot to do with the relocation of the movie industry from the noise of New York to the quiet of Hollywood. "Oh to be back in Hollywood, wishing I was back in New York." That was Herman Mankiewicz in the 1940s recalling the nostalgia that fed a dream of the city.

The story continues with the nuts and bolts of building the cinematic image. We learn how studio art departments created realistic painted backdrops, constructed detailed sets of streets, mansions, apartments, lofts, and meticulously fabricated rooms. We revisit the memorable opening or "establishing" shots of the skyline (all the more poignant post-9/11). We are taken behind the scenes of the fantasy night clubs high above the city, on whose polished floors Rogers and Astaire danced the night away.

There is perhaps no satisfactory way to capture movies on the printed page. But New York and the movies is a scenic subject that is well served by the many stills or clips that fill this book. And be advised: some of the most interesting observations are tucked into the legends that accompany the images.

A Century of Recorded Music: Listening to Musical History. Timothy Day. Yale University Press, 2000. \$30.

Books on museums are a growth industry these days. Some bookstores have enough in stock to put them in a separate section. But this is the first book I've read that is concerned with a museum of recorded music. The author is curator of Western art music at the Sound Archive of the British Library. His informative book calls attention to the myriad ways in which the experience of music in the 20th century was shaped by the record industry.

Everything from styles of performance to the range of the musical repertory, and the diversity of the audiences who can listen to it, owes something to recordings.

Timothy Day is a most persuasive advocate for the preservation of recordings as a resource for a broader understanding of European musical culture.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



Recommended Reading

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

By Anna J. Schwartz

Dollars & Change: Economics in Context. Louis Putterman. Yale, 2001. \$40; paper, \$19.95.

This book offers a supplement to the core teachings of an introductory course in economics. It covers topics students are curious to know but which the curriculum of abstract ideas in mathematical or graphical models does not cover. The author devotes a chapter to each of six varied topics. The first sketches the millennia of human existence in small populations of hunters and foragers before the first agricultural settlements became the norm, followed by denser population growth that fostered division of labor, market activity, and technological change leading to the emergence of industrial economies only in the past century.

The second chapter traces the development of economic thought from Adam Smith, the classical school, the birth of neoclassical economics, Marxian and other critics, Keynes, to modern economics. The third chapter portrays actual economic systems as variants of market-oriented or planned economies rather than all of one or the other. In examining the prospects of the less developed world in the fourth chapter, the author expresses concern about environmental problems that would arise should the currently poor nations join those now rich, but concludes that there is no alternative but to work to create an environmentally sustainable civilization.

The penultimate chapter focuses on the economic justice of the existing distribution of income and wealth. The author argues that equity does not necessarily impose unacceptable costs to economic efficiency and that high levels of redistribution have not disfavored prosperity and economic growth. The final chapter asks whether it is enough to judge economic arrangements only measured by the material abundance they provide without consideration of the consequences for the quality of life. The author contends that the substantive knowledge and methodological strengths of economics make it relevant to a wide range of social issues.

The Market System: What It Is, How It Works, and What To Make Of It. Charles E. Lindblom. Yale, 2001. \$26.

The first part of this book is an illuminating discussion of how a market system, not as an abstraction but as it actually exists, works. The author describes it as a mammoth coordinator of an enormous range of behavior that is not merely economic. Ordinary goods, a cup of coffee, a lead pencil, are at hand because of a long chain of cooperative performances by anonymous actors worldwide that weave together human effort without a central coordinator. The market substitutes peaceful exchange for a more violent allocation of conflicting claims to desired scarce objects, making

societies peaceful. Lindblom lists 10 attributes necessary to a market system that customs and rules provide: broad rights to liberty, property, quid pro quo, money, activity for sale, intermediaries, entrepreneurs, and corporations.

In a chapter comparing market elites—entrepreneurs the largest of whose enterprises are corporations—with political elites—government executives—Lindblom describes voting with money and with ballots as forms of mass control of elites. Determining the domain for market, state, family, enterprise, and civil society, he notes, is a task for every society. Only three requirements need to be met for inclusion in the market system: an object or service must be available for sale, it must be scarce, and it must be obtainable without compulsion by voluntary reciprocating offers of benefits.

Societies, however, may choose not to use the market system as fully as they might. They use other methods of coordination or they mix the market system with others. The state is an alternative to the market system because it is the principal instrument of systematic compulsion to achieve social order, although enterprise and family are also instruments of compulsion. The household, a prodigious social coordinator, is a nonmarket alternative to the extent that it produces for itself. The corporation itself is an island of nonmarket or managerial coordination in a market milieu. Compulsion has no place in civil society, in which small group social interchanges take place, and the market rule of quid pro quo is absent.

Following his exploration of the way the market works, Lindblom offers a probing examination of selected attributes of the system. Is it efficient? Does it support personal liberty? Does the market degrade culture and personality? Can the rule of quid pro quo justify resulting income and wealth inequality? The final pages of the book consider unsettled issues about a place for the market system in the future of any society.

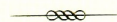
By Eugen Weber

Sinclair Lewis: Rebel from Main Street. Richard Lingeman. Random House, 2002. \$35.

No, he was not Upton Sinclair, his older contemporary and author of "The Jungle." He was Harry Sinclair Lewis of Sauk Centre, Minn. (1885–1951), master of corruscating satire and probably the best social novelist this country turned out in a 20th century that was full of them. The Nobel Prize recognized this in 1930. Lingeman also gives him his due in 559 pages of text that depict Lewis as homely, vigorous, vain, restless, brash, insecure, lonely, rebellious, unconventional, erratic, provincial, oversensitive, subversive, greedy for success and ease, and yet afraid of them, and ill at ease. He paints a raging redhead pockmarked by acne, a workaholic endlessly writing and rewriting poetry, potboilers and great works too, a romantic realist as crude as the small towns he wrote of, a wander-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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Teaching, Testing, Learning

A letter in the Spring *Key Reporter*, deploring national educational testing, appears to overlook some points. Our nation needs at least a minimal common base of understanding and communication for our people to function “as citizens and not just as subjects.” Public education is the main way to produce such citizens. An important component of successful systems is feedback-initiated control and modification of methods to improve these systems.

Testing at a national level is indicated; we are all aware of the abysmal education of too many young people, especially in certain areas and certain schools. Such people tend to become narrow-minded, ignorant and hateful, and contribute little to advancing the highest ideals of which we are capable. National testing can help us devote extra attention to such places. Such feedback and its appropriate use have been largely lacking nationally because of fears about national testing and “forced education.” We in ΦBK should be among those promoting such feedback control of national public education.

This is not to say that individual schools and teachers should not innovate. They should, and we should help our local systems excel not only on national testing but also in additional areas that may be important locally. Many anecdotes show that the average student can learn a school-year’s worth of material in perhaps four months if well motivated and taught. To claim that testing interferes with learning time is a red herring. In fact, testing involves thinking and other experiences for students

that ought to be part of our transmission of our heritage to the next generation.

Students will rise to the fun and challenge of tests from any source, if only their role models would stop griping about them, especially if they understand that such testing is part of a national feedback procedure that leads to improvements in teaching. It becomes constructive participation in a goal-directed operation.

Yes, “one size fits all” when it comes to achieving the minimal education that each of us needs to participate more fully in being citizens of our nation! And “one size fits all” should not inhibit individuals from doing even better than the minimum.

John D. Leith, Auburndale, Mass.

I read with some dismay the letter [in the Spring *Key Reporter*] from a reader who bewailed the coming “nationalized testing” that he states we’re accepting as a cure-all to our education challenges. He’s got a point—testing will not remedy the deficiencies of our public education system. But his argument displays a simplistic understanding of the current federal legislation.

Rather than argue the points of the law, I’ll describe what we should be advocating for in our public schools. First, we must believe that all students can learn. Then, each school should teach to rigorous and relevant content standards. The standards should form the foundation of learning—no student should learn less, and hopefully all will learn more.

Teachers should have the preparation, tools and professional development they need to teach

those standards. The progress of each student should be measured against them each year. Best practices in teaching and learning should be identified and promulgated across the system. When students do not succeed, they should get additional help to achieve an acceptable level of learning. When schools do not succeed, the community should decide on an appropriate way to quickly address their deficiencies.

Few public school systems are equipped to make this simple flow of events occur. The content standards in many states are neither rigorous nor relevant. The public will to give teachers what they need is almost nonexistent. Most systems do not use data well because it is deficient or teachers have not been taught how to use it. There is no consistency in how poorly performing students are given additional help, and funding for special education is laughable. Public participation in education is so low that decisions about how to rectify failing schools are generally made by a small pocket of politically influenced leaders.

As an education reformer, were I allowed three wishes, this is what I’d ask for:

- An excellent program of teacher preparation and professional development, including professional standards for teachers;
- Schools where the community is invited to participate in helping to create meaningful change, rather than schools where the public is invited only to sell band candy because “they don’t understand”;
- Systems that implement meaningful measures for continuous improvement, where disaggregated data is examined to diagnose student and school performance,

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ΦBK In the News

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school teachers to write a one-page summary of class projects and the amount of money it would cost to fund them. Potential donors decide which project to fund. No contrived grant

applications. No fancy buildings full of grant reviewers and well-paid foundation executives. No grant-making process at all.”

Mitch Albom’s *Detroit Free Press* column (April 21) said that the murder

trial of actor Robert Blake “will not become another O.J. Simpson affair.... Still, I worry. For as explosive as the O.J. trial was, the media back then were still inventing ways to cover it. Now, news programs, particularly 24-hour cable news, are Phi Beta Kappas when it comes to prolonged celebrity scandal.”

Cornell College alumnus Chris Ellerbroek, right, donated a plaque to the Iowa college that lists the 1,204 members in its ΦBK chapter. Joining him at the dedication, from left, are officers Dee Ann Rexroat and Dick Jacob, Addison Ault, Cornell President Les Garner, Jr., and Truman Jordan. Ellerbroek could not afford a ΦBK key when he was elected in 1977, so Jordan and Ault surprised him with one.



Photo by Envisage Studios, Mount Vernon, Iowa

The Green Bay (Wis.) Press-Gazette (March 4) reported that Donald J. Dessart won the Mathematics Education Trust Board of Trustees Lifetime Achievement Medal. In 1950 he graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he also earned a master’s degree in education and mathematics. Dessart is professor emeritus of mathematics and mathematics education at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

and where best practices are used to help all students achieve standards.

Teaching to the test is not a problem if the tests are aligned to standards and are of high quality. This connects teaching and learning with assessment and progress. Regrettably, as the previous writer points out, few state tests pose a valid challenge for our children.

Mary O'Malley, Chatham, N.J.

Defining "Liberal Arts"

In introducing the planned discussions of "the social value of the liberal arts" in the Spring *Key Reporter*, John Churchill quotes Melville's Ishmael: "The whale is a fish." This is an apt reminder that no matter how secure we are in defining the phrase "the liberal arts" correctly, we are not absolved from clear communication to those who might intuit other meanings. For Ishmael, calling the whale a mammal would be a sorry denigration. "King of the Cows" would be the most exalted title we could bestow upon Leviathan, invoking a petty aristocracy of birth. "The whale is a fish" celebrates his affinity with the finny deep, and emphasizes the interloper condition of those former mammals who war against his nation at their peril.

In Ishmaelite taxonomy, "liberal" would modify "arts," as "spouting" modifies "fish." This implies that those arts not anointed as "liberal" stand lower in our esteem, perhaps as "artisan" does not measure up to "artist," or as those who were "in trade" were once considered beneath those whose wealth permitted them to pursue knowledge as "amateurs." We would join Ishmael in calling such an attitude illiberal, the wrong kind of elitism, celebrating aristocracy rather than excellence.

In Linnean terms, we know that "liberal" modifies not "arts," but the "student." The liberal arts are suitable for study by freemen, leaving the other arts for... Again, we slip toward the thicket of illiberal attitude.

After we render the last whale, we deep-six the try-works. Its great mass of crumbling masonry and worn-out boilerplate up there on the deck would imperil the stability of our ship on the voyage home. Also, it stinks. Is it time to deep-six the phrase "the liberal arts"? It would

be illiberal to forbid its use, but since it con-jures unintended meanings in the minds of Ishmaelite and Linnean alike, we should suggest its de-emphasis in favor of "the arts." Or, if we expect many to construe "the arts" as excluding the sciences, "the arts and sciences."

Norman R. Olsen, Garrison, N.Y.

This letter is in response to a member's concerns [in the Spring *Key Reporter*] with the term "liberal arts" and what it means to get a liberal arts education. He stated that he went to college in the '60s, '70s, and '80s and has a negative connotation of students who are "ignorant if not downright opposed to learning the essentials." Well, what are the essentials? Could you express all the knowledge and theories you have about physics in French? In sign language?

French speakers and users of sign language would consider these "liberal arts" traits "essential."

Having gone to college in the '90s and '00s, I am equally frustrated with the so-called "science types" who like to think that their subject matter is the only thing worth learning. When discussing my courses of study, foreign languages and linguistics, many science types degrade my choice of study, asking me why anyone needs to learn foreign languages. How would any scientific research be communicated without the knowledge of foreign language?

My only contention is that the schism between science and liberal arts needs to be mended: One discipline is not better than the other, and they both (along with the people who study them) make valuable contributions to society.

Carissa Fontanella, Binghamton, N.Y.

During years matriculated at universities which celebrated the celebration of the liberal arts, there seemed a consensus that the term was both embraced and engaged rather metaphorically. What was liberal about the course of

studies was almost synonymous with liberation—that is, liberation eclectically to explore academia in environments untethered from obsessions about the demonstrable pragmatism of technically oriented pursuits. What was artistic became almost synonymous with unbridled latitude to function creatively and to think imaginatively, and to do so panoramically and across disciplinary boundaries.

Upon graduation, I felt fully equipped to do absolutely nothing. I was able, I hoped, to read a newspaper with a modest amount of sophistication. I felt blessed.

K. Bandell, Norwalk, Calif.

How about a Gordian knot solution to John Churchill's whale/fish dichotomy, David Sweetman's "negative connotation of liberals," and Hunt Harris' inspiring story of applying a liberal education to his life? Let's proclaim that Phi Beta Kappa represents excellence in the arts and sciences, with no adjective attached to either noun.

After all, today's liberal is tomorrow's moderate and the next day's conservative, and we can never stay ahead of that progression. And the political applications of the terms liberal and conservative are impossibly convoluted. So let's define ourselves to our own satisfaction instead of choosing terms that we'll have to defend against the left or right or both.

David Holton, Twain Harte, Calif.

That Gavel Query

Key Reporter readers in 16 states replied to the question from Wyoming [Spring issue] about the object on which a gavel is pounded. The vast majority said a "sound block" or "sounding block." Their primary sources were advertisements on the Web and associations of parliamentarians. Also submitted were "sounding board" and "anvil," and one reader coined a Yiddish phrase: *hemerl-geleger*.

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Key People

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An article about my lyrics and more information about cowboy poetry are at www.cowboypoetry.com. There's also a story about the Sands Motel Parking Lot Concert in the Spring issue of "Route 66 New Mexico," which may still be available at some tourist sites along Historic Route 66 in New Mexico, and on the Web at www.rt66nm.org.

Corrections

The Key Reporter regrets the following errors in the spring issue:

In "Recommended Reading," some lines were omitted from Josephine Pacheco's review of "Ben Shahn and the Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti" by Alejandro Anreus: "Shahn's work has helped to keep alive the concern that guilt must be based on deeds and not ideas. The volume edited by Alejandro Anreus is the catalogue of an exhibit of Shahn's work and not a definitive examination of guilt or innocence."

In the same section, the name of reviewer Jay M. Pasachoff was misspelled.

In "Phi Beta Kappa in the News,"

Joseph Rauh's name was misspelled in the excerpt from Robert Caro's "The Orator of the Dawn" in *The New Yorker*.

In "ΦBK in Popular Culture and Literature," Fred Yannantuono of Bronxville, N.Y., contributed the description of a scene in "Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid" starring Steve Martin.

The Phi Beta Kappa Development Office regrets that given names were used, instead of the generally accepted salutation, in a recent invitation to certain Society members to become Sustaining Members.

Recommended Reading

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er and chronic scold for whom fiction was contemporary history, and whose contemporary history seems to have left mostly scars.

Lingeman's hero is a tragic one, as vulnerable as he was talented, his fatal flaw[s] turning him into a blazing drunk, a boor when on the sauce and a bore when off it. Lingeman's biography—the blow by blow account of Lewis's life and writings—is flawed as well, because it drowns in detail. Yet it is epic for the detail that it turns into a monument to its protagonist. The writing is as clear as the air of Lewis's native Minnesota on a good day, as accessible as the subject's style. And despite 70 pages of notes and six pages of acknowledgements, this dauntingly massive book remains persistently engaging.

The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes. *Jonathan Rose. Yale University Press, 2001. \$39.95.*

This is a wonderful book that does just what the title promises. Working men and women in village, town, and countryside, shepherds and millhands, colliers, bobbies, clerks and office boys—an unassuming civilization invisible to the officially educated from the 18th to the 20th centuries—acquire personalities and faces. Those who prefer theories and generalities may abstain. But God is in the details, and Rose provides generous helpings of those: lashings of quotations from recondite autobiographies, letters and memoirs, statistical savories, clear and lively exposition.

It turns out that an impressive proportion of the poor and of their children hankered after books, poetry and music, sought enlightenment and information, grasped at classics and philosophers that their betters thought beyond them. In their random, catholic, promiscuous, indiscriminate, voracious explorations and epiphanies, they made something of it and of themselves. The surprising variety of these individual quests is by itself worth the price of admission. An electric read, and a hopeful one.

The Oxford Dictionary of Allusions. *Edited by Andrew Delahanty, Sheila Digner, and Penny Stock. Oxford, 2001. \$25. The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.* *Edited by Elizabeth Knowles. Oxford, 2001. \$50.*

If you like to play with dictionaries, Oxford has feasts for you. Its *Dictionary of Allusions*

runs from Abaddon to Zorro, and includes Dennis the Menace and Winnie the Pooh. Alice, Dormouse, Mad Hatter et al. get special attention. Sir Toby Belch and Yogi Bear rub appetites with Pantagruel under the heading of Gluttony; Hitler and Adolphe Menjou under that of Mustaches; Fermat's theorem and the Snark snuggle among the entries for Quest; but I like Mrs. Bedonebyasyouidid best. In case you do not remember, she rewards good behavior and punishes bad in Kingsley's *Water Babies*.

Twenty thousand more terms with figurative or allusive connotations appear in the *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, where one discovers forerunners of today's pit bulls in the ferocious early English *bandog*, recognizes natives of Devon in *Devonshire dumplings* and the blending of French and English in *français*, and enjoys a page and a half of closely printed famous last words. I found it hard to choose between Lytton Strachey's "If this is dying, I don't think much of it," Heine's "God will pardon me, it is his trade," and King George V of England's "Bugger Bognor." From Chaos Theory to Indiana Jones, from Lestrigonians to Lager Louts, you have no need to worry about your money's worth.

Salt: Grain of Life (Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History). *Pierre Laszlo. Translated by Mary Beth Mader. Columbia, 2001. \$22.95.*

A retired French professor of chemistry demonstrates his teaching skills and the poetics

of knowledge in dealing with a commonplace but essential substance. Long a precious commodity referred to as white gold, salt provided the cargoes of nomad caravans that traded their stock for its weight in gold or slaves. Venice, built on salt marshes, prospered on selling salt. Pot-bellied salting tubs were forebears of the larder, ancestors of the fridge. Salt curing of fish, hams, and other proteins improved diet and made possible long-distance navigation and voyages of discovery. Renowned as purifier and antiseptic, salt colonized religion, speech, history, and cooking. *Salary* originates from the *salarium* paid to Roman legionnaires. To share bread and salt symbolizes hospitality and friendship. Salt cellars, distinguished first by their precious contents, then by size and splendor, determined table protocol: distinguished guests were seated above the salt, others below it.

Laszlo serves up small vignettes about these granules that affect food taste and texture and that our bodies crave. They run from kitchens, where we salt water to boil eggs and salt cucumbers to make them sweat their water; to France where salt taxes instituted by 14th century kings were abandoned only in 1946, to the mountains of North Carolina where Welsh settlers desperate for the staple retrieved it from the floors of cabins where hams were cured, to San Francisco Bay, where production of salt by evaporation began to provision Gold Rush hordes. This slender book is a scrumptious larder packed with information, much thought, and provocative observations.

Letters to the Editor

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First to respond was Arlene Freedman of New York City. The others were C.J. Armstrong, Brea, Calif.; Paul Appelbaum, Newton, Mass.; Frank Belles, Cleveland, Ohio; Nora Blackman, Cleveland, Ohio; George H. Brown, Jr., Princeton, N.J.; Steven Burns, Chicago, Ill.; Wade Dowdell, Clements, Calif.; John Ellis, Amarillo, Texas; Jim Flynn, Bayonne, N.J.; Jeanne Gilleland, Treasure Island, Fla.; David Gold, Oakland Gardens, N.Y.; Kathryn Hansel, Snellville, Ga.; Greg Huwe, St. Paul, Minn.; Richard Hunton, Greenwood, S.C.; Elissa Jenkins, Rock Hill, S.C.; Nancy Kirk, Flagstaff, Ariz.; Andrew Kouklis, Tacoma, Wash.; Robert Lawson,

Columbus, Ohio; Anthony Litwinko, Glendale, Calif.; Dave Lovelace, Milan, Mich.; Bryant Mather, Clinton, Miss.; Jane McMurry, Wilmington, N.C.; Christine Patton, Danvers, Mass.; Robin Schleh, Northville, Mich.; David Schappert, Plains, Pa.; Russell Weintraub, Austin, Texas; Pat Weitzel, Narragansett, R.I.; Heidi Wriedt, Douglaston, N.Y.; and Sam Zelman, Topeka, Kans.

And Another Question....

Two readers have posed a new query: Do Φ BK members in education accept the current practice of using plural pronouns with the singular nouns they refer to, as in "Everyone has a right to their opinion"? This avoids the sexism of "his" and the awkwardness of "his or her." But does that trump the rules of grammar?

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