



The

KeyReporter

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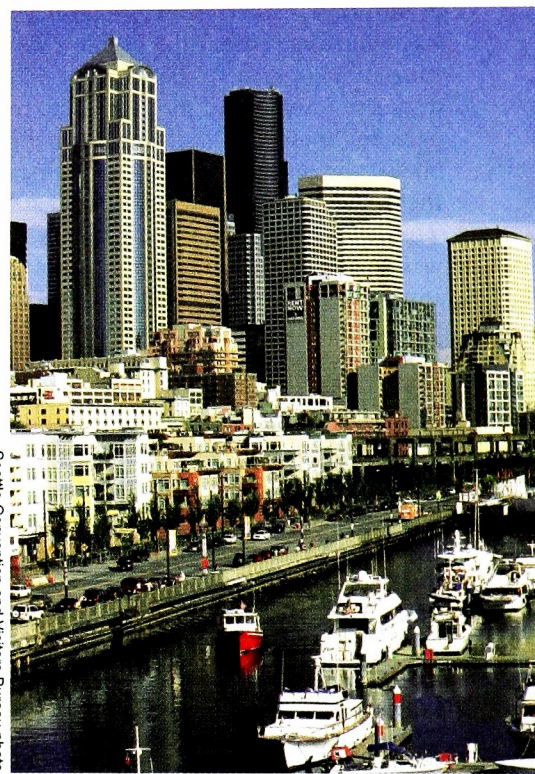
ΦBK Selects 14 Visiting Scholars To Visit Campuses in 2003–2004

Fourteen distinguished professors have been named Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholars for the 2003–04 academic year. (See pages 4–5.) They will be hosted by about 100 colleges and universities that shelter ΦBK chapters. Each Scholar will spend two days on a campus, presenting classroom lectures and seminars, meeting informally with students, and delivering an address that is open to the public. The visits are cosponsored by the institutions' ΦBK chapters and interested academic departments.

The 2003–04 Scholars are leaders in the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences, representing fields as diverse as archaeology, comparative literature, landscape architecture, and law. A list of participating institutions and the dates of the campus lectures will be posted on the ΦBK website in early fall.

The Society established the program in 1956. Its goals are to enrich the intellectual atmosphere at participating institutions, and to enable undergraduates to meet and talk with accomplished scholars in diverse disciplines. Priority is given to colleges and universities that are outside major metropolitan areas, or that do not have extensive resources for offering similar programs.

The Scholars are selected by ΦBK's Committee on the Visiting Scholar Program, whose 13 members are senior scholars in a variety of disciplines. Most of the funding comes from the Society's national office. There is also a bequest from the Updike Foundation that supports two visits, as well as a memorial gift from the family of Geri Braman Hill. Each host chapter provides a service fee to the national office and is responsible for all local expenses.



Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau photo

Seattle will be the site of the Phi Beta Kappa Society's 40th Triennial Council, Aug. 6–10. More than 400 members will participate.

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Photo by Deborah Morello

Rye Schwartz-Barcott, trying a dance step with Joy Festo in Nairobi, Kenya, founded a community organization there called Carolina For Kibera, Inc.; see "Among Our Key People."



Of Foxes and Hedgehogs

By John Churchill

Secretary, The Phi Beta Kappa Society

I was at Love Field in Dallas, anticipating the last leg of a trip that had begun days earlier in Washington. I was returning from the Pacific time zone and had read all the material that duty and interest had motivated me to pack for these travels. I had read the books, the magazines, the papers from the office, the odd not-too-old issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. I was facing hours in the air without something to read, an intolerable prospect. But at the end of the course there was a little store with some books. This was not Blackwell's or even Borders. But there were books, and a little section called "Classics."

Someone once defined a classic as a book you always claim to be rereading. I have spent much of my adult life at this putative rereading. But in any case, there at Love Field among the "classics" was Tolstoy's "War and Peace." I had not read it. I had seen the movie, the interminable Russian version, in an overnight screening—pillows and blankets welcome—in graduate school. But I had not read "War and Peace." Dostoyevsky? Yes, practically every scrap. Gogol, Turgenev, Chekhov, and other bits of Tolstoy? Yes. But not "War and Peace."

There is an inner voice that amalgamates your mother, third grade teacher, and dissertation adviser. The message of that inner voice is that your moral worth is gauged by your reading. The effectiveness of this voice is measured by the fact that—as I am told—there is a cocktail party game in which literature professors confess, serially, what they have *not* read. It's a reverse one-upmanship game in which you win by confessing, truly, never to have read some work of central importance in your field. Preeminence in this game is achieved by the Shakespeare scholar who declares himself a stranger

to "Hamlet," or by the authority on Southern literature who hasn't actually read Faulkner. This game creates its frisson by flouting the message of that inner voice.

But at Love Field I was listening to the inner voice and confessing again to myself, straightforwardly, that I hadn't read "War and Peace." I need to say that there is another dimension to this. I have spent years worrying about Ludwig Wittgenstein, the great philosopher who, at one time in his life, was heavily influenced by Tolstoy's "The Gospel in Brief." That Wittgenstein, then a soldier in the Austrian army, ran across Tolstoy's "Gospel" in a war-torn town on the Russian Front was surely a factor in my interest. If Wittgenstein could read Tolstoy in the trenches, how could I not manage this book in my airplane seat?

So I hefted the book. It was heavy. In paperback, it was a brick—slightly wider across the front than it was thick, front to back. I bought it. And the guy behind the cash register said, "Wow, you must have patience." I wondered why it would take more patience to read one 1,500-page book than to read five 300-page ones, but I was afraid there was a really good answer and didn't say anything. That was mid-November.

Toward the end of January I was no longer a Person Who Has Not Read "War and Peace." Instead, I had become a Tolstoy enthusiast, describing my conversion to anyone who would listen. I was fascinated, sometimes with approving sentiments, often disagreeing vehemently, with Tolstoy's views on society, gender, class, work, war, art, the meaning of history, and more. My perspective on Wittgenstein has been enriched, and a little research project opened. But I

also opened, for rereading, Sir Isaiah Berlin's famous essay on Tolstoy's view of history, "The Hedgehog and the Fox." There Berlin maps out a famous distinction: The idea is that the hedgehog knows one big thing, while the fox knows many little things, and thinkers—or even artists—can be characterized as either hedgehogs or foxes.

That gave my ear a special sensitivity to a remark I heard generalizing Berlin's distinction as the difference between organizing principles that tend to unify their subjects and organizing principles that tend to divide them into parts. And since—in this year of Conversations and Colloquies—I am spending time and energy, on Phi Beta Kappa's behalf, trying to clarify the meaning and value of education in the liberal arts and sciences, I asked myself: When we ask this question about liberal arts education, are we trying to establish the one big answer, or to gain a synoptic vision of many different answers, to see how they are related? Do we want one answer that would please the hedgehog, or the many that would please the fox?

Berlin's diagnosis of Tolstoy is that he was a fox who wanted to be a hedgehog. And so there was a certain frustration in his conclusions, a yearning for something unattainable or at least impossible to articulate. It remains to be seen whether this is a trap we need to guard against, in this

A correction: In the Winter Key Reporter, John Churchill said that the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College was established through a grant from the Eli Lilly Company Foundation. The Center's grant came from Lilly Endowment, Inc., founded in 1937 by members of the Lilly family as a vehicle by which to pursue their personal philanthropic interests. The Lilly Endowment is completely separate from Ely Lilly and Co. and the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, and is independently managed.



year of Conversations and Colloquies, or whether, after all, a hedgehog answer is available. And as Berlin himself acknowledges, distinctions like this grow dim after a while. It is a mark of sound deliberation to know when your distinction has lost its capacity to shed light. But this distinction still helps a bit as a reminder that we need to ask, as we go along, "What sort of answer are we looking for?"

So I am glad to have the distinction, glad to have read Berlin, and glad to have run across "War and Peace" in Dallas. And I am glad to have that inner voice. Just for the record, years ago I read "The Gospel in Brief," closely. But I am just now only halfway through "Anna Karenina." *Rereading it, you understand.*

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ΦBK Chapters Initiated 15,000 New Members

Editor's note: *Burton M. Wheeler is co-chair of the Phi Beta Kappa Senate's Committee on Chapters.*

By Burton M. Wheeler

Annual reports from Phi Beta Kappa chapters indicate that more than 15,000 new members were initiated during the 2001–2002 academic year. The report of the Committee on Chapters was presented to the Senate at its December meeting. It noted that among the 262 ΦBK chapters (and four sections), 152 chapters initiated 90 percent or more of those they elected. And in this group, 104 chapters initiated 100 percent.

Highlights of the Committee's report focused on ways that active and imaginative chapters are advancing the liberal arts. Some examples: Epsilon of Massachusetts, at Boston University, has created an award for "a graduating senior in recognition

of extracurricular contributions to the enhancement of academic life on campus." Beta of Maine, at Colby College, has established a fund to provide honoraria and travel expenses for the use of faculty members who wish to invite guest speakers to their classrooms. Several chapters, including those at New York University, the University of Redlands, Williams College, and Union College, have either sponsored research conferences or given awards for honors theses. Beta of Oklahoma, at the University of Tulsa, held a post-9/11 teach-in on terrorism.

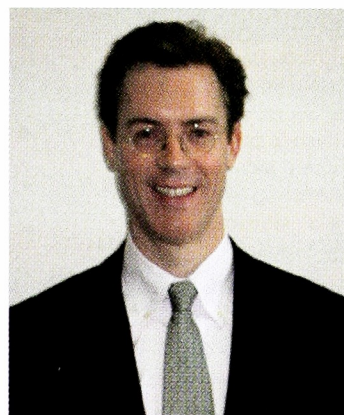
Presentation of book awards to undergraduates and local high school students continues to be one of the most popular chapter activities. Many chapters sponsor special events to bring students and faculty together for discussions and fellowship.

Lurding Named ΦBK Associate Secretary and *American Scholar's* Associate Publisher

Scott Lurding has been named associate secretary of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and associate publisher of *The American Scholar*, pending ratification of his appointment by the Senate. His position includes helping to manage financial and business affairs, and directing ΦBK's development activities.

A native of Louisville, Ky., Lurding majored in English at Indiana University and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1990. He went on to earn an M.B.A. from the Harvard Business School.

Before becoming a consultant to the Society's national staff last year, Lur-



Scott Lurding

ding spent 10 years in consulting and business development in the private sector.

In announcing Lurding's appointment, Secretary John Churchill said, "I am delighted that Scott has agreed to assume this important position. He brings to it both the intelligence and the experience that will help to advance

our mission. He will be one of the public faces of Phi Beta Kappa among our members and other constituencies, representing the Society at various forums, association gatherings, and chapter events. We look forward to working with him on a wide range of endeavors."

Memories of a Former Visiting Scholar

Editor's note: *Richard A. Lanham is professor emeritus of English at UCLA and president of Rhetorica, Inc. He participated in ΦBK's Visiting Scholar Program in 2001–2002. He can be reached at Lanham@UCLA.edu.*

Having spent most of the summer of 2001 preparing for my Visiting Scholar year, by Sept. 11, I was rehearsing the still and moving images I would project on the screen for each presentation. From the next room my wife shouted, "Turn on the TV. They've just shut down the U.S. air transportation system!" This was local news for us as well as global news, since in 10 days' time we were scheduled to fly from Los Angeles to Harrisburg, Pa., to begin a two-week, four-campus trip for ΦBK.

What to do? Certainly not fail the feast. If philosophy is guide to our life, as Phi Beta Kappa reminds us, we

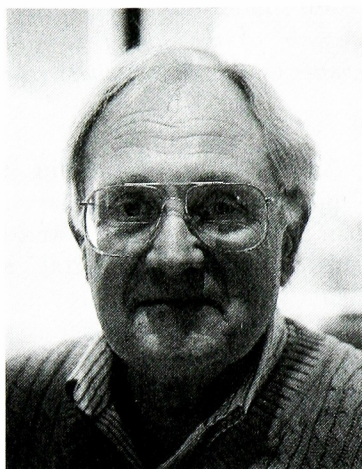


Photo by Jeffrey Singer

Richard Lanham

would go on schedule if the planes were flying. Clearly, though, those feeder flights between our four destinations—Franklin & Marshall College, Wells College, Brown University, and Skidmore College—were not likely to fly (most of them

were in fact canceled). Much better to hire a car in Harrisburg and drive to each campus. Kathy Navascués, ΦBK's mastermind and savior for all Visiting Scholars, rearranged things accordingly, and the predawn darkness of Sept. 23 found us waiting to pass a police checkpoint at LAX.

I carried my own private terror along with the larger one. I was traveling with two computers, a camcorder, three power supplies, and enough cables and adaptors to deal with any digital emergency. And I dared not check this stuff; if it got lost, no lectures. In creating my presentations, I had followed the Society's direction that they be suitable for undergraduates and the general public as well as professors, and that meant arguing directly from the images. No images, no lecture, no seminar. What would the inspectors make of me when they made me spread all this stuff out on the counter and explain it? Fortunately, my belt buckle set off the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholars for 2002–2003

Hal Abelson, *Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers; recipient of IEEE's Booth Education Award for contributions to the teaching of undergraduate computer science; cohead of MIT's Council on Educational Technology; research on creating programming technologies to harness the power of new computing substrates.

Leonard Barkan, *Arthur W. Marks '19 Professor of Comparative Literature, Princeton University*

Director of Princeton's Society of Fellows; fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; author of "The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism," "Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture," "Nature's Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World."

Margaret A. Berger, *Suzanne J. and Norman Miles Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School*

Recipient of the Rawle Award for her role in developing new approaches to judicial treatment of scientific evidence, American Law Institute/American Bar Association; co-author of "Weinstein's Evidence: Commentary on Rules of Evidence for the United States Courts and Magistrates"; former member of the National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence.

Richard J. Bernstein, *Vera List Professor of Philosophy, New School University*

Past president of the Metaphysical Society of America and the Charles S. Peirce Society; recipient of five distinguished teaching awards; author of "Freud and the Legacy of Moses," "The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity," "Radical Evil: A Philosophical Interrogation."

Leon Botstein, *President, Bard College*
Leon Levy Professor in the Arts and Humanities, Bard; music director of the American Symphony Orchestra and artistic director of the American Russian Young

Artists Orchestra; author of "Jefferson's Children: Education and the Promise of American Culture," "Music and Its Public" (forthcoming); editor of "The Compleat Brahms."

Graham R. Fleming, *Melvin Calvin Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, University of California, Berkeley*

Fellow of the Royal Society of London; recipient of the Debye Award in Physical Chemistry and the Nobel Laureate Signature Award, American Chemical Society, and the Plyler Award, American Physical Society; research involves ultrafast laser studies of elementary chemical and biological processes.

Ann Ellis Hanson, *Professor of Classics, Yale University*

MacArthur Fellow; former curator of papyri, Princeton University Library; member of the International Workshop for Papyrology and Social History, Oxford and Columbia Universities; author of more than 100 articles and reviews in the fields of papyrology and Greek and Roman medicine.

Alan Charles Kors, *Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania*

Romanell-ΦBK Professorship in Philosophy Awarded to Philip S. Kitcher of Columbia

Philip S. Kitcher of Columbia University has been awarded the Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professorship in Philosophy for 2003–2004.

The Professorship is presented annually to a philosophy scholar in recognition of both distinguished achievement and the scholar's past or potential contribution to public understanding of philosophy. Recipients receive a stipend of \$7,500 and are expected to present three special lectures, open to the public, at their institutions.

A native of London, England, Kitcher earned a B.A. degree at Christ's College, University of Cambridge, in 1969. He received a Ph.D. at Princeton University in 1974. Currently a professor of philosophy at Columbia University, he also has taught at the University of California at San Diego and at the University of Minnesota.

Among Kitcher's major awards are grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He also has been a senior fellow at the Library of Congress in the field of bioethics issues in molecular genetics. He is a past president of the American Philosophical Association's Pacific Division.

His publications include "The Nature of Mathematical Knowledge," "Vaulting Ambition: Sociobiology and the Quest for Human Nature," "The Advancement of Science," "The Lives to Come: The Genetic Revolution and Human Possibilities," and "Science, Truth, and Democracy." Forthcoming is "In Mendel's Mirror: Philosophical Reflections on Biology."

Kitcher's current scholarship involves the evolution of moral ideas, science in a democratic society, and the

nature of progress in science, mathematics, and morals.

The Professorship is made possible by an endowment from the late Patrick Romanell, H.Y. Benedict Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas at El Paso, and his wife Edna. Candidates for the award are nominated by Society chapters but do not have to be ΦBK members.

Society members in academia are invited to attend a conference this fall on "Intellectual Leadership in the Liberal Arts." The Phi Beta Kappa Society will cosponsor the event with the American Conference of Academic Deans. It will be held Oct. 23–25 at the College of Charleston in Charleston, S.C.

The discussions will focus on concepts and ideas rather than case studies and "how-to" issues. Details are available on the Society's website, <http://www.pbk.org>.

Editor-in-chief of "Oxford Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment" (four volumes); author of "D'Holbach's Coterie: An Enlightenment in Paris," "Atheism in France, 1650–1729," Vol. 1: "The Orthodox Sources of Disbelief"; codirector of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education; coauthor of "The Shadow University: The Betrayal of Liberty on America's Campuses."

Paul R. McHugh, Henry Phipps
Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry, Johns Hopkins University

Elected to the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences; member of the President's Council on Bioethics; recipient of the Menninger Award, American College of Physicians, and the Zubin Award, American Psychopathological Association; author of "The Perspectives of Psychiatry," "Genes, Brain, and Behavior," "Psychiatric Misadventures."

Virginia Sapiro, Sophonisba P.
Breckinridge Professor of Political Science and Women's Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Author of "The Political Integration of Women," "A Vindication of Political Virtue:

The Political Theory of Mary Wollstonecraft," "Women in American Society"; fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; past vice president of the American Political Science Association; former principal investigator of the American National Election Studies series.

Alan Shapiro, W.H. Collins Vickers
Professor of Archaeology and Professor of Classics, Johns Hopkins University

Author of "Personifications in Greek Art," "Myth into Art: Poet and Painter in Classical Greece," "Art and Cult under the Tyrants in Athens"; Whitehead Professor at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens; corresponding member of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

James Trefil, Clarence J. Robinson
Professor of Physics, George Mason University

Fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science; recipient of the Gemant Award for linking physics to the arts and humanities, American Institute of Physics; author of "Laws of Nature"; coauthor of "Science Matters: Achieving Scientific Lit-

eracy," "The Sciences: An Integrated Approach," "New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy" (third edition).

James L. Wescoat Jr., Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Phi Beta Kappa/Frank M. Updike Memorial Scholar

Awarded the American Society of Landscape Architects Research Merit Award for "The Mughal Gardens Project"; recipient of the Rome Prize Fellowship in Landscape Architecture, American Academy in Rome, to study uses of water in metropolitan landscape design; field research in South Asia; adviser on the conservation of gardens and waterworks of the Taj Mahal.

Geoffrey West, Senior Fellow, Los Alamos National Laboratory

Distinguished Research Professor, Santa Fe Institute; fellow of the American Physical Society; recipient of the Mercer Award, Ecological Society of America; editor of "Comments in Theoretical Biology"; research on the origin and implications of universal scaling laws in biology from molecules, genes, and cells up to organisms and ecosystems.



Among Our Key People

Editor's note: Rye Schwartz-Barcott, 23, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 2000 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he majored in Peace, War, and Defense and in International Studies. He attended UNC on a four-year U.S. Marine Corps Option NROTC Scholarship and is currently an active duty Marine lieutenant. Rye is president of Carolina For Kibera, Inc, and co-editor of "Armed Conflict in Africa" (forthcoming, Scarecrow). Information on Carolina For Kibera is at <http://cfk.unc.edu> or e-mail cfk@unc.edu.

By Rye Schwartz-Barcott

"If you PCS to Pendleton, get up with SOPs, TDGs, and FEXs quick because you never know when the MEU might punch," my friend Brig, a fellow lieutenant, reflected last winter while steaming across the Pacific with his infantry platoon.

This is just a glimpse of what some Marines call "acronymese," the *de facto* language of the U.S. Marine Corps. Of course not all acronyms are treated with affection, and I've learned as a junior officer to keep a distance from one in particular—NGOs (non-governmental organizations). This puts me in a curious position, because in addition to my military service, I lead an NGO.

NGO is a civilian acronym, but it's used frequently when Marines discuss MOOTW, or Military Operations Other Than War. I've found that much of the apprehension Marines have about NGOs is cultural. "Sir, how the hell am I going to make liaison with some holier-than-thou hippie in Birkenstocks?" a salty corporal remarked to me in a recent MOOTW exercise.

Nevertheless, U.S. Special Forces and military civil affairs units are getting increasingly involved in work traditionally reserved for NGOs like World Vision and CARE. Green Berets in Afghanistan spent much of their time building trust with local communities by constructing schools and clinics. Indeed, development debates have taken a new dimension since 9/11.

Some leaders, such as Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.), argue that U.S. aid to the developing world must be an integral part of our national security strategy. Kolbe and others contend that

poverty and disenfranchisement are root causes of terrorism and global instability. They argue that a relatively small increase in U.S. aid would protect American interests and mitigate the prevalence of anti-American sentiments overseas. As it is, when U.S. foreign aid is expressed as a percentage of federal spending—0.05 percent—it's substantially lower than that of nearly all other Western nations.

But regardless of whether U.S. aid is augmented through the military, USAID (United States Agency for International Development), or other channels, American civil servants and military officers need to understand that development efforts can exacerbate desperate situations. Many USAID efforts have evoked anti-Americanism rather than helped to prevent it. The key is the approach. And based on my experience establishing and leading an international NGO in one of the world's largest and most notorious slums—Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya—the right approach is participatory development.

Participatory development strikes a balance between top-down, Western-centric methods of modern development and grassroots, communal self-help groups. This is important because community-based organizations (CBOs) often lack the resources and networking capabilities necessary to sustain operations. Kibera, for example, has more than 600,000 people—half of them under age 15—in an area the size of Manhattan's Central Park, and more than a thousand CBOs. Very little coordination exists among these organizations, and membership is often ethnically defined and limited in size (generally 20 to 30 people). Few

CBOs have an impact on residents other than their own members.

Conversely, outsiders (i.e., elite Kenyans or foreigners) run most of the 200-plus NGOs in Kibera. These are often satellites of larger international NGOs such as Doctors Without Borders. They can be a source of conflict in the community, especially when residents feel excluded and become hostile toward them.

Participatory development recognizes that outsiders don't always have the solutions to the problems that a community's residents face, especially in poverty-stricken areas. But outsiders can help mobilize communities, advise, network, and provide resources.

Kibera is a sprawling shantytown of tin-roofed shacks, where barefoot children play beside ubiquitous trenches clogged with sewage. Hunger, disease, illiteracy, violence, and sexual abuse abound. About 20 percent of the residents are HIV positive, and more than 80 percent of those ages 15 to 30 are unemployed. Living conditions similar to Kibera's, moreover, are rapidly becoming a reality in much of the world. The United Nations estimates that the earth's population will increase by two billion over the next 30 years, and that 90 percent of that growth will occur in the developing world.

My interest in Kibera developed in college when I lived there in the summer of 2000 on a Burch Fellowship to study youth culture and ethnic violence. My focus on how youth are used to foment ethnic violence stemmed from research on the Rwandan genocide, where an estimated 80 percent of the *genocidaires* were unemployed youth, ages 18 to 26. I found that similar methods of recruitment and mobilization occurred during ethno-religious wars in Kibera, and I was shocked by the dearth of organizations that might try to positively engage rival Muslim and Christian youth from Kibera's five largest ethnic groups. I made a number of friendships while living with youth leaders in Kibera, and I decided that we should establish an interethnic soccer league.

In my senior year at UNC in 2001, I established Carolina For Kibera, Inc.





Photo by Francesco Broli

Schwartz-Barcott finds tough competition in Carolina For Kibera's first soccer tournament for players under age 12. Its youth sports association has 4,000 members.

(CFK) as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. I was able to raise \$20,000, mostly from private sources, and I prepared to return to Kibera with two colleagues who were also recent college graduates. CFK is now a program of the University Center for International Studies at UNC at Chapel Hill, and it operates a medical clinic, the Binti Pamoja (Daughters United) Center, and a youth sports association with over 4,000 members.

CFK is based on the premise that everything must be earned because nothing is free. In return for the opportunity to play sports, young people give back to their communities through garbage cleanups and AIDS awareness campaigns. CFK is succeeding in Kibera because it does what most NGOs in the slum fail to do: provide leadership, accountability, and fundraising. Each of these three principal areas is shaped by participatory development and the aim of striking a mutually supportive balance between the American side and the Kibera side of CFK.

CFK emphasizes decentralized decision-making and self-reliance. While a U.S.-based board of directors approves all major financial transactions, Salim Mohamed, 26, a former street-boy, manages day-to-day operations. A committee of a dozen youth representatives from Kibera's 11 internal villages provides grassroots leadership for all events. When American volunteers—undergraduates and fourth-year medical students from UNC at Chapel Hill and other schools—travel to

Kibera to help CFK, they work for its executive committee. It is a body of six led by Salim and the medical clinic director, Tabitha Atieno Festo, a nurse. She established the clinic after selling vegetables for six months, a project she launched with a 2,000 shilling (\$26) "grant" I had given to her out of my own pocket during my first visit.

Accountability is particularly critical in Kibera. CFK invests donor money gradually, and relies on its executive committee to manage the budget. In order to help advise the committee and to network in Kenya, CFK established a board of trustees of prominent Kenyans. Relying on a small committee of volunteers and program directors is vital, because corruption and assault can occur if money appears easily accessible. I lived near a man who got sliced by a machete one night when a gang broke into his one-room shack to steal his paycheck of 2,000 shillings.

Since CFK has roots in the United States, people automatically assume that excess money is available. Frivolous spending, even if it's only extra lunch money, evokes false expectations and a perception that people can use CFK for their own benefit. Waste and unnecessary spending diminish the communal spirit at the core of the organization.

Just as both the American and Kenyan sides must be held accountable for money donated to CFK, fundraising is a joint, transatlantic endeavor. Small grants from the Ford Foundation and Reuters Foundation will cover 65 percent of CFK's annual operating budget of \$35,000 until 2004. American vol-

unteers made the initial approach to these foundations. Then Salim and Tabitha developed personal connections with their program officers in Kenya and invited them to soccer games and tours of Kibera.

U.S. volunteers have focused on raising private support and trying to build a modest endowment. Private support gives CFK the flexibility to go beyond the scope of established activities. It makes possible the development of new initiatives, such as assisting youth members who want more education or face personal crises.

I downplay my identity as a Marine in Kibera. CFK is not intended to influence Kenyans' image of America. It exists to serve Kibera, where people are living in some of the most wretched conditions imaginable. I'm surprised at how few anti-Western sentiments I hear. After all, our country concentrates nearly half the world's wealth in the hands of less than 5 percent of the world's population, and Kibera's residents are constantly exposed to a reflection of this reality through American popular culture.

I gained more insight into the perception of America in Kibera when I returned last Christmas and reunited with a charismatic Muslim youth leader named Abdul. He combines physical size and reputation with a slick (*ganja*) ghetto gait—long, slow steps, exaggerated arm swings, confidence. Abdul knows almost every thug in Kibera. Many respect him as a former hell-raiser turned community organizer, and he sympathizes with their plight:

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American Scholar Wins National Utne Award

The American Scholar has received the 2002 Utne Independent Press Award for writing excellence. The quarterly is published by the Phi Beta Kappa Society. *Utne* magazine described the *Scholar* as a "consistently engaging journal of essays, poetry, and reviews."

Established in 1989, the Utne Awards are selected by the magazine's editors after surveying more than 1,500 publications and many websites. There are no submissions from publishers, payment of fees, or outside nominations. This is the third time in the past four years that *The American Scholar* has won the award for writing excellence.

Initiation Speaker Links Past and Present

Editor's note: *The Spring, Summer, and Fall issues of The Key Reporter will feature excerpts from some addresses presented at last year's ΦBK initiation ceremonies.*

By Thomas Willard, Associate Professor of English, University of Arizona Alpha of Arizona

Today's event is the beginning of a lifelong membership in a society—a Society of Philosophy—that can be a source of friendship, good times, and great ideas wherever your travels take you. I have always been fascinated by the concept of “initiation.” The word itself is no mystery, at least to anyone who has studied Latin, for it comes from *inire*, meaning “to lead in.” It has always seemed an interesting contrast to “education,” which comes from the Latin verb *educare*, “to lead out.” As educated people, you have been led out of darkness and all that it represents, including confusion, ignorance, and isolation.

Phi Beta Kappa was founded as a secret society. The rule of secrecy had a definite appeal to undergraduates at the

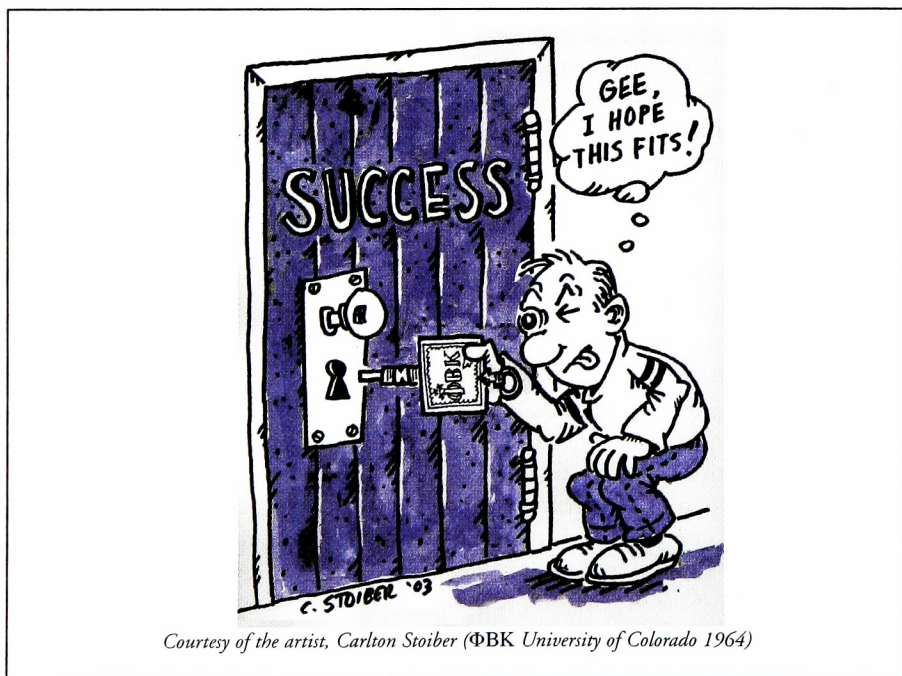
College of William and Mary in the revolutionary year of 1776: it allowed students to elect like-minded people and to debate controversial topics like slavery and monarchy without fear of close public scrutiny. That was important in the days before the official separation of church and state, but it had the disadvantage of inviting speculation and even slander about the immoral freethinkers who gathered at the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, Va.

In the history of English literature, there has been a long chain of associations between major authors and societies of initiates. Some are based on references that authors have made—for example, Shakespeare's reference in “As You Like It” to a School of Night which assembled around Sir Walter Raleigh, a school sworn to secrecy because its members discussed potentially heretical or treasonous ideas. Some associations are based on knowledge that the authors seem to have had, such as alchemical lore in Chaucer or Hermetic and Kabbalistic motifs in Milton. William Blake went to meetings of Rosicrucians. W.B. Yeats presided over a secret society.

Yeats joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn shortly after he first arrived in London. He sought images, he said, images for his poetry, images of lamps and veils, of winding stairs and midnight visitors, all of which cast an overtly “magical” light over his poetry. Any serious reader of Yeats is put into the position of the initiate who, like the speaker of “Sailing to Byzantium,” seeks “the singing masters of my soul.”

The students who gathered at the Raleigh Tavern in 1776 formulated a motto that was to be as darkly secret as anything said in Sir Walter Raleigh's School of Night. Indeed, the Society's first recording secretary took the precaution of scratching out all but the first letter of the three Greek words: a phi, a beta, and a kappa. Only the initiates would know what the letters stood for: *Philosophía biou kybernétes*. The *kybernétes* or “cybernetic” is the guide, the helmsman who steers the ship. *Biou* is from *bios* or “life,” whence our word “biology”; it is in the genitive case, so it means the guide of life. *Philosophía* is philosophy, of course, but that word has been used in so many contexts as to become a code.

For the young men in Williamsburg, it stood for free inquiry—debate free from dogmatism and censorship. For my teachers in the 1960s, it stood for “liberal education,” for great books and great ideas, and opposed to technical training on the one hand and student rebellion on the other. For us today, it may stand for critical thinking, cultural awareness, or a general education. Philosophy represents immersion in something larger than our own time and place: The SP on the back of your ΦBK key, the *Societas Philosophiae* or “Society of Philosophy,” takes you into that larger intellectual space that Sir Robert Boyle called the *Collegium Invisibilis* or “Invisible College,” that André Malraux called the *Musée sans Murs* or “Museum without Walls,” and that most of you know as “Cyberspace.” In Cyberspace, *philosophía* is your *kybernétes*; an open mind is your guide; and the ΦBK key is your visa. As they say, it's everywhere you want to be.



Courtesy of the artist, Carlton Stoiber (ΦBK University of Colorado 1964)

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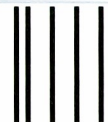
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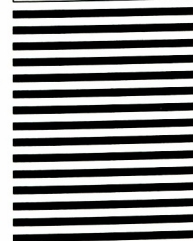
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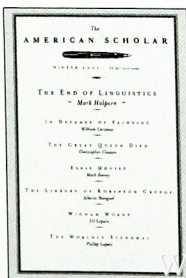


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buzzer and while I unbuckled, my machinery passed unexamined. Not very reassuring security but, I hoped, a good omen for my progress through the year's future checkpoints.

The Harrisburg airport was nearly empty and the police had banished the rental cars to a distant lot. Were long walks with rolling heaps of gear to be the pattern? But the sun came out and stayed out for a wonderful Visiting Scholar year. It began with the two-week motor trip, accompanied by my wife, through the Northeast autumn.

My two lectures were called "E-Books" and "3,000 Years of Multimedia." They represented present and past states of the digital mixture of word, image, and sound. I argued that the new digital expressive field did not repudiate traditional Western textual expression but fulfilled it. The crucial antecedent revolution, I argued, was not Gutenberg's invention but the scribes who, by about the year 1000, had started leaving space between words and using punctuation to make unrehearsed reading possible. The digital screen was offering new spaces between words and new kinds of punctuation, and my job was to illustrate what these were. I used examples that ranged from a 10th-century copy of Cassiodorus to a Crest toothpaste commercial.

It was a new argument, and I was not sure how it would be received by the mixed audiences I was to address. But after a spirited reception at Wells College by just the audience the Society had envisaged, I felt much better. My argument, it turned out, would be heard by thoughtful and interested audiences throughout the year, culminating in a wonderful session at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro that left me high as a kite. Though I was retired, I still knew how to teach.

UNC Greensboro also gave me the opportunity to present two of my discussion topics. I participated in a studio critique of digital design, where I got to see some of the graphics work being done there. In some classes, as all



Photo by Claire Duggan/GW University Relations

Historian Philip Cantelon and lawyer and journalist Traci Hughes were among the panelists in the D.C. Area ΦBK Association's liberal arts dialogue at George Washington University.

teachers know, the students spontaneously present just the points one hoped would emerge. You feel like the world is truly in tune. So it was there. Terrific fun. I also was invited to present a multimedia instructional program, my UCLA colleague and dear friend Robert Winter's CD-ROM program built around Dvorak's "New World" Symphony. The music students I talked to were planning careers as music educators, and I argued for Winter's digital course as a pattern that they might want to pursue in their own careers. I've never had a more attentive or gratifying audience.

One of the year's neat surprises was being asked to teach classes in subjects I knew about but had not listed on my ΦBK dance card. Two examples:

I was asked to talk to a class in the Business School at Florida International University. They were using my "Revising Business Prose" in class, and I was asked to do a revision session. We put some examples on the board and set to work. It was a big class, but the students were great. One young woman was really pertinacious, pushing me on the theoretical issues that emerged every time you write in a business context. She was the kind of student you pray for; I hope she ends up on the audit committee of her company.

At Hope College I was asked to talk to a class in rhetoric. The professor, Jim Herrick, had carefully prepared the class for my visit. They had read a

little of my work and were asked to write a short paper drawn from it: How did they think the study of rhetoric would prepare them for their life's work? The papers were impressive and the class discussion showed mature reflection. Future plans ranged from business to TV to advertising, but the student who really warmed my heart talked about the Christian pastoral work she hoped to do. We developed a conversational thread about the role of rhetoric in early Christian thought and mission that fit perfectly, I thought, into the Christian environment at Hope. That class made me miss teaching.

As another discussion topic, I offered "What undergraduates need to know about copyright." I've worked for 30 years, off and on, as an expert witness in copyright cases, and have long thought that questions of intellectual property would make a challenging and useful undergraduate course. And right now, with undergraduates voraciously downloading music and film, and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act ham-handedly trying to stop them, the topic was of immediate concern. A traditional one-shot afternoon library lecture on plagiarism (itself a sore subject in American higher education) is no longer an adequate response to the situation. I made my pitch in both discussion and lecture, but this time I got nowhere. I had

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From Our Book Critics

BOOK COMMITTEE

Humanities: Svetlana Alpers, Michael Griffith
Rebecca Resinski, Eugen Weber

Social Sciences: Rick Eden, Josephine Pacheco
Anna J. Schwartz, Larry J. Zimmerman

Natural Sciences: Germaine Cornélissen, Jay M. Pasachoff

By Josephine Pacheco

Benjamin Franklin. Edmund S. Morgan. Yale University Press, 2002. \$24.95

Americans have loved Thomas Jefferson for a long time, and lately they have taken to their hearts an unlikely love object, John Adams. It is past time to embrace another product of Puritan Boston, Benjamin Franklin, who may well be the most interesting of the Founding Fathers. He was devoted to civic improvement and the welfare of his country, which he saw as America and not just Pennsylvania. The caricatured image of Franklin has done him a disservice, for his scientific accomplishments earned him international renown, and he was without question America's greatest envoy to a foreign country. Without his skill and empathy, France might never have joined us in our struggle for independence. Edmund S. Morgan is one of our finest historians, and he brings his skill and knowledge to a thoughtful and well-written biography of a great man.

In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692. Mary Beth Norton. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. \$30

The people of Massachusetts Bay feared that the devil, determined to prevent the establishment of a godly colony in New England, would defeat their righteous efforts. His instruments were the French and Indians that constantly harassed them. Mary Beth Norton has concluded that the horrors of frontier warfare brought fear to a peak in 1692, precipitating the accusations, trials, and executions of witches in Essex County. Furthermore, if the devil caused the failure of Bay colonists in their encounters with the French and Indians, then the leaders of the colony were not responsible. The judges in the trials of suspected witches "quickly became invested in the reputed witches' guilt, in large part because they needed to believe that they themselves were not guilty of causing New England's current woes."

The South vs. the South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War. William W. Freehling. Oxford University Press, 2001. \$27.50, paper \$15.95

Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital. Nelson Lankford. Viking, 2002. \$27.95

Of books on the Civil War there is no end. "The South vs. the South" is about its beginning and prosecution; "Richmond Burning" is about its end, or one important aspect of its end.

Freehling is sure that Abraham Lincoln was wise to make every effort to prevent the secession of the upper South when the lower South followed the lead of South Carolina in leaving the Union. Washington was not isolated as long as Maryland remained in the Union (even if Baltimore was a problem), and Kentucky gave federal armies easier access to the lower South. Significantly, Freehling discusses the sources of manpower that the upper South provided, especially in free blacks and freed slaves. Civil War enthusiasts, as they examine every battle and skirmish, need to pay more attention to the politics of the conflict.

Lincoln failed in his efforts to keep Virginia in the Union (except for the new state of West Virginia), and when Richmond was made the capital of the Confederacy, that state became the focus of the military struggle. Capturing Richmond, essential for Northern victory, required four years of war. Lankford takes us inside a conquered city and shows how various groups and individuals dealt with defeat. As members of the Confederate government sought to escape, Richmonders who had given them support and affection wept or cursed their fate. Those who longed for freedom rejoiced at the expectation of a liberating army. And Abraham Lincoln, humbly and quietly, came to view the result of the struggle.

Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War. Finley Peter Dunne. University of Illinois Press, 2001. Paper \$12.95

Today dialect humor is neither popular nor politically correct. But it was an essential part of American life in the 19th century and the early part of the 20th. Much of that humor seems old fashioned, but the comments of Martin J. Dooley, an Irish bartender in Chicago, are as up to date as today's newspapers. Some of his sayings—politics is not beanbag, for example—are accepted political wisdom. Mr. Dooley, the creation of Chicago newspaperman and columnist Finley Peter Dunne, did not hesitate to poke fun at local politicians or national figures such as Teddy Rosenfelt [sic] and the heroes of the Spanish-American War. He was especially interested in the career of his cousin, Admiral Dooley [Dewey]; what matters a little difference in spelling? Do not be put off by the dialect; try reading it aloud.

By Anna J. Schwartz

Going Alone: The Case for Relaxed Reciprocity in Freeing Trade. Edited by Jagdish Bhagwati. MIT Press, 2002. \$60

The effort to promote free trade since World War II has usually been pursued by negotiating reciprocal agreements between two or more countries under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). A case can also be made, however, that a country will find it advantageous to adopt free trade unilaterally, even without exacting reciprocal concessions from its trading partners. Jagdish Bhagwati, of Columbia University, was inspired to investigate this case by organizing a research project with a group of leading trade economists who prepared the papers included in this volume.

Five papers on historical experiences, the most famous of which was Britain's unilateral turn to free trade symbolized by the abolition of the Corn Laws (agricultural import duties) in 1847, comprise Part I. Six papers in Part II review country experiences in Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Asia, Central Europe, and



ΦBK Secretary John Churchill, second from left, attended the first of four colloquies on liberal arts education at Wabash College. Seventeen colleges and universities were represented.

Photo by Todd Vogel

Latin America. Three papers in Part III deal with sectoral experience: U.S. financial services and telecommunications, and Japan's liberalization of the security, banking, and insurance industries.

Bhagwati's introduction summarizes the findings of the papers. In his view, under certain circumstances, unilateral free trade, while generally less beneficial than reciprocity, can obtain sequential reciprocity from trade partners and motivate lobbies there to support trade expansion. A theoretical appendix considers the choice between unilateral free trade and reciprocity.

Japan's Policy Trap: Dollars, Deflation, and the Crisis of Japanese Finance. *Akio Mikuni and R. Taggart Murphy. Brookings Institution Press, 2002. \$38.95*

Why has Japan been in the doldrums since 1990 despite interest rate cuts, easy money, and fiscal pump priming? This study is coauthored by the Japanese founder of the first independent, investor-supported ratings agency in Japan, and an American national with many years of experience in the financial community in Tokyo and an academic affiliation. Their answer to that question is that Japan has a façade of political democracy but is not a market economy.

Japanese companies do not seek profits, and profits do not determine the allocation of capital. Banks lend without credit risk. Increasing production without profitability necessitates a centrally directed financial system that serves the purpose of socializing credit and market risk.

According to the authors, Japan's ruling elite—the bureaucrats who run the ministries that the Ministry of Finance dominates—has had a single goal: accumulating production capacity far in excess of domestic needs in order to promote exports and acquire claims on foreign countries. Achieving this end requires suppressing the value of the yen. However, the prosperity of Japanese citizens is not the aim of the policy.

Instead, what motivates the policy is ensuring the survival of the elite and their continued control of key economic and political levers, and reducing to manageable levels the possibility of foreign domination. The latter goal has historic roots.

The authors believe that implementing this goal has proven to be a miscalculation. The claims Japan has accumulated from its international trade, investments, and finance—it is the leading creditor nation in the world—are held in fiat dollars on deposit in American banks. Japan is at the mercy of those who control the value of the dollars, which have lost three-quarters of their purchasing power since 1973. Its huge buildup of external assets in the form of claims on foreigners denominated in a foreign currency makes it more, not less, vulnerable to global economic forces.

Japan's policy elite did not permit the floating exchange rate system since 1973 to function as it is supposed to. Had it done so, it would have converted dollars to yen, imported

American and other countries' goods and services, and equilibrated its current account. The U.S. current account in turn would have moved from deficit to balance. That's not what happened, because it would have meant yen appreciation, contrary to the elite's wishes. As a result, the U.S. has escaped the discipline of external deficits. Japan's workers produce goods for Americans but are never paid with American goods and services.

At this juncture, for Japan to monetize its huge dollar holdings would create problems because the holdings far exceed the need for yen currency domestically. This is the policy trap in which Japan has landed. The means of escape are not obvious. Japan's build-up of dollars from its accumulated current account surpluses, which exceed official reserves and currency in circulation, has produced deflation. Economists who urge Japan to print yen until inflation emerges do not realize that the structure of the Japanese financial system, tax policies, and real estate markets are barriers to inflation.

In the late 1980s, the authorities fostered an expansion in bank credit that outstripped the expansion of the real economy in an attempt to break out of the policy trap. That credit produced the equity and real estate price bubbles. The crash in the twin markets left an avalanche of bad loans that has undermined the banking system. The government's efforts to put money in the public's hands through public works spending have been futile. The money has been placed on deposit rather than spent.

The day of reckoning for Japanese mercantilism is still not at hand. The elite will not risk loss of power by acquiescing to fundamental structural change, and the public is not eager for the upheaval such change would entail.

By Germaine Cornélissen

Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine, and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill. *Robert Whitaker. Perseus Publishing, 2002. \$28*

This book relates the social and medical history of schizophrenia in America from the 17th century to the present. Medical journalist Robert Whitaker gives a well-documented if gloomy picture of psychiatric practices throughout history. Particularly appalling is the frequent lack of humane consideration for the patient. The problems underlying the status quo are blamed on bad therapeutic practices, bad values, and bad policies.

The author touches on the ethical issue of academic alliances with pharmaceutical companies, notably in relation to the use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors. Promoted by the pharmaceutical industry as magic bullets, they have shown only marginal benefits: 65 percent response by patients with major depressive disorder, compared to 40–45 percent response to a placebo. The disappointing results of treat-

ment presented in this book stem from our limited understanding of the disease.

As in many other illnesses, the molecular targets used for drug development in psychopharmacology have not been shown convincingly to play a role in pathophysiology, which remains poorly understood for most mental disorders. Whereas currently available drugs may have had some success in controlling the psychosis, they have not addressed the cognitive problems at the core of the disease. Whitaker's book rightly emphasizes the importance of honesty and humility in our understanding of it, and consequently of our ability to find a cure.

However, I cannot help but believe the author's conclusion to be overly pessimistic. Some hope may be on the horizon. There may have been no real change in the outcome of the illness yet, but the introduction of antipsychotic drugs in the 1950s led to the massive deinstitutionalization of schizophrenic patients. There has been a promising shift in focus toward cognitive dysfunction in the search for new drugs, such as one targeted at an enzyme named COMT that breaks down dopamine in the prefrontal cortex (*Science*, 299: 333–5, 2003). Many papers and a substantial body of data have reported abnormalities in prefrontal cortical activation associated with abnormalities in executive function (*Science*, 299: 350–1, 2003).

Prospects for a better understanding of the disease have also been brightened by relatively new imaging technologies and the sequencing of the human genome. The disease's other potential causes, together with its genetic component, are also receiving considerable attention (*The Scientist*, June 10, 2002, pp. 30–31). Among putative environmental contributions to the condition, scientists and clinicians have considered a possible connection between schizophrenia and seasonality of birth (more schizophrenic patients are born in winter) and perinatal complications, perhaps involving a possible viral infection by the herpes simplex type II virus during pregnancy. Whatever the future may bring in terms of treatment, we should not forget our obligation to the victims, what the label "insanity" means, and "what we value most about the human mind," as Whitaker eloquently reminds us.

Lords of the Harvest: Biotech, Big Money, and the Future of Food. *Daniel Charles. Perseus Publishing, 2001. \$27, paper \$17.50*

A science reporter who spent his childhood on a farm tells, clearly and objectively, the epic story of the development of genetically engineered foods in all its aspects. The story revolves around research at Monsanto on genetically engineered corn and soybeans. The book reads like a novel—from the exciting scientific account, in lay terms, of the genetic manipulation of organisms to capitalizing on the idea of producing pest-protected and herbicide-resistant crops that revolutionized the food industry.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



Letters to the Editor

Mel Elfin, Pro & Con

I want to compliment *The Key Reporter* [Winter issue] on the fine essay on higher education by Mel Elfin. He articulates so well, and so comprehensively, the troubles that lie behind the increasing misgivings of the general public about our higher education establishment. His essay should be reprinted on the Op-Ed page of every newspaper in the country. If this were the best of all possible worlds, it would be. Of course, if this were the best of all possible worlds, it wouldn't need to be.

Lois Roney, Duluth, Minn.

Mel Elfin's observations hit the nail on the head. The "urgent imperatives" he enumerates should be reviewed by all university administrators and faculty. This statement is proverbial: that "academia must begin to see itself not as 'higher' education, but as part of a continuum in which educational experiences of early child-

hood may ultimately prove more beneficial to learning—and to society—than those of late adolescence."

Gerald Huestis, Waldport, Ore.

Three resounding huzzahs for Mr. Elfin. The emperor, indeed, has no clothes! Every cause cited in this writer's critique scored a direct hit. I would add two more: the near professionalism of college sports and the "publish or perish" feeding frenzy.

To teach is to "lead toward truth," not to indoctrinate. Students need to learn how to think, not what to think.

Harriet Schwarzer, Staunton, Va.

I'm incensed by several elements in Mel Elfin's article. While I agree that many problems in American higher education that he names are real—who can think that the doubling of the cost of college isn't a disaster at every level?—I'm

angered that he mixes basic quantitative data with unsupported dismissals of "the academic vogue for 'deconstructing' the truth" and "mandatory courses in multiculturalism."

There are serious reasons why the notion of monolithic truth has been interrogated in different ways in different disciplines, and why basic courses that include a variety of world cultures have been introduced. To insist that the very presence of such initiatives undermines the quality of education is to pass off a reflexive—and intellectually impoverishing—antipathy as unshakable fact.

I have reservations about movements that appear to jettison truth less than thoughtfully. I also recognize that some multicultural programs may not live up to their lofty goals. But to dismiss both, as Mr. Elfin does, is neither to transmit useful information nor to participate in serious intellectual debate. It's rather to perpetuate a tired (but unfortunately potent) species of hostility to an academy whose actual ideas and debates journalists—even those specializing in education—rarely try to understand.

Douglas Mao, Ithaca, N.Y.

I found it of interest that Mel Elfin would demonstrate a concern with multicultural courses at the university level being the progenitors of a subtle agitprop, then bemoan the fact that working middle-class Americans are increasingly being wedged out of opportunity in the educational system. It was saddening to perceive a spirit of ethnocentrism amidst an argument that on many levels I acknowledge.

Having recently graduated from a state university, I agree that multiculturalism is a fashionable discipline that often lacks the *gravitas* of rigorous intellectual pursuit. I would argue, though, that its popularity attests to apathy in academia with regard to confronting its own role in the legacy of racism.

Mr. Elfin earned his master's degree in history at Harvard. Surely he would acknowledge that history has proved that it is more convenient to spoon-feed students the niceties of diversity than to imbed in our curriculums the role that many celebrated academicians played in propagating racism overtly.

Perhaps Mr. Elfin's disdain for multiculturalism at the university level was an acknowledgment that issues pertaining to race and culture should receive contemplation at every level of the American educational system. This point must be made much more clear.

Katherine A. Cortest, Norman, Okla.

Although I agree with many of Mel Elfin's concerns, I respectfully disagree with one of his tenets. He states that a decline in learning is "one result of mandatory courses in multiculturalism."

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Equating a decline in academic standards with an increase in anti-racist courses is a shaky argument. Perhaps when multiculturalism is reduced to learning about different cultures' food and dances, it is a waste of time. But the university courses I took were far more significant. Through provocative reading, writing, and discussion—the hallmarks of any humanities or social science course—we learned to critique, to question, and to propose possible answers. Socrates himself could not have asked for more.

To this day, there is a significant achievement gap between white and non-white students, at all levels of the socioeconomic spectrum. Even wealthy students of color are outscored by their white counterparts. (How many ΦBKs are people of color?) Unless we reduce an explanation of this phenomenon to an inherent genetic defect, it needs serious analysis. What better place to do this than at the universities?

If there really is a correlation between declining academic performance and an increase in “politically correct” courses, maybe the question should be turned around. What do the surveys measure? If a child of mine graduated from college with a critical mind and a sense of social justice, I would be prouder than if I had a kid who could rattle off dates in history or other academic trivia. I doubt that the former is assessed in any standardized test. There is a need for major changes in higher education, but let's not be so quick to point fingers.

Laura Allen, Santa Cruz, Calif.

I was pleased to see in [Mel Elfin's article] that anyone had bothered to note that American universities are in a bad way. As a recent graduate of Berkeley who enjoyed coed living arrangements, however, I am sad to report that none of them magnified “opportunities for the overindulgence of youthful hormones,” which supposed magnification Mr. Elfin identifies as “a major source of post-adolescent *angst*.” It is a wonder that, having identified many causes of the poverty of student life, Mr. Elfin does not consider its grim everyday reality, which is a more effective bridle to our fearsome lusts even than the saltpeter he would no doubt have mixed into the Soviet gruel of the dining halls.

If anything drove me to the shrink, it was alienation and despair due to the conditions of extreme poverty, from which the satyric excesses of Mr. Elfin's day would have been a welcome relief.

I would also like to emphasize that while multiculturalism leaves much to be desired, Mr. Elfin and the “esteemed elder statesmen” will have to deal with the political and historical issues it has raised if they want to be taken seri-

ously. Academic reform should not be associated with reactionary impulses to ignore the bloody history of America and Europe, to deny America's great pluralism, or to keep students out of trouble.

Oliver Hall, Bryn Mawr, Pa.

A Grave Matter

The letter to the editor from Joel Marks, in the Winter *Key Reporter*, I believe incorrectly questions the location of Rimsky-Korsakov's grave. I have our 1977 snapshot of his tomb near those of Tchaikovsky and Borodin in the Tikhvinsky Cemetery at the Alexander Nevsky Monastery in St Petersburg. (Coincidentally, Rimsky-Korsakov was born in Tikhvin, not far from St. Petersburg.) As late as 1996, *The Lonely Planet's* St. Petersburg city guide (p. 184) had him still resting peacefully in the Tikhvinsky Cemetery. Although stranger things have happened to Russian notables, I doubt that Rimsky-Korsakov has ever been relocated to the cemetery at Moscow's Novodevichy Convent. So I would say that the photo caption on page 4 of the Fall *Key Reporter* was dead right.

Robert A. Naumann, Norwich, Vt.

Reading Filice—Carefully

In response to the Winter article by Frederick Filice, “The Computer Ate My Homework,” he may not be a Luddite, but by looking for a “labor-saving device,” he is missing vital positive results of technological change. The usual justification for technology is greater efficiency, an all-purpose societal catch-all. When significant technological changes occur, understanding their full impact is not understood, often for years.

Prior to the rise of the Internet and personal computers, if I did research in a library, especially a small one, my sources were limited to what was on the shelves that day. Now I can access millions of resources worldwide. Not only is my research neater and better presented, as Mr. Filice states, but also the content and results are often vastly improved.

And contrary to Mr. Filice's assertion that we produce more numbers with spreadsheets, spreadsheets permit even small companies to see “what-if scenarios” that were formerly difficult to understand, time-consuming, or too expensive to calculate. Not only has access to information improved, but also the tools to analyze it have become far more available.

Our desire to continuously “do more,” once technology enables us to do so, is related more to our psyches, competitiveness, and the underpinnings of capitalism than technology. I have an unbendable rule that I do not check e-mail in the evenings. It can wait. And I am a technologist.

Diana d'Ambra, Maplewood, N.J.

OK, so I'm slow to get punch lines sometimes. But after a shocked gasp, guffaws followed at the final paragraph [“two” for “to”] of Felice's funny, and “Oh, 'tis true, 'tis true” article.

Walter Little, Memphis, Tenn.

I enjoyed “The Computer Ate My Homework” and intend to post it on the Math Department bulletin board. I was amused at the deliberate error in the last paragraph that illustrates the limits of spell-checkers. Now I must ask if the error in the penultimate paragraph was also deliberate, or if Mr. Filice's spell-checker accepts “minuscule” as an alternate spelling.

Catherine B. Cant, Upper Marlboro, Md.

Was a typo intentionally inserted into the Filice article? I refer to “... I'm forced to read more closely now, because the mistakes that make it past the computer and require a human eye are minuscule [sic!] and easy to miss.” It reminds me of the old definition of “minuscule”: the number of people who spell the word correctly.

I just used my computer to spell-check the last paragraph: It did not flag “minuscule” as an error. Two of my dictionaries note “minuscule” as an acceptable alternate, but one of them at least says it's an error that is “becoming” acceptable.

Henry Martin, New York, N.Y.

I thought it especially cute that in the excellent article by H. Frederick Felice the penultimate paragraph, about “mistakes that make it past the computer,” misspells “minuscule.” What an appropriate place to test your readers! (Almost as much fun as the “two catch” mistake.) The unabridged Random House dictionary lists only “minuscule,” and in a “Usage” paragraph admits that the “newer spelling” occurs with such frequency “that some consider it a variant spelling rather than a misspelling.” I am not among those “some”!

Edward G. Voss, Ann Arbor, Mich.

In my reading in 2002, “minuscule” nudged out “millennium” as the most commonly misspelled word. I sent a letter to *Science* magazine with “minuscule” in 24-point type, and though my missive went unacknowledged, I haven't caught them out since.

Owen Gingerich, Cambridge, Mass.

While “CGI” has also taken on the more modern meaning of “Common Gateway Interface” (server-based scripts called by web pages), I believe the meaning Filice wanted is “Computer Generated Imagery.”

John V. Goodman, Malden, Mass.

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Letters

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Editor's note: Spelling "two" for "to" was deliberate. The Key Reporter's proofreader accepted "miniscule," citing the online American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (fourth edition). Filice says his "battered old version" of Microsoft Word did not flag it: "Bill Gates says 'miniscule' is a word." Filice also confirms that reader Goodman is correct about "CGI."

I was delighted to read in "The Computer Ate My Homework" H. Frederick Filice's report of an ancient Sumerian etymology, spelling, and meaning for our contemporary term "kwyjibo."

Today, of course, we all know that "kwyjibo" means, according to Bart Simpson, "a big, dumb, balding North American ape with no chin." How the meaning changed from the days of Gilgamesh to the era of [Matt] Groening is the real puzzle. Readers interested in this problem can refer to "The Simpsons" episode, "Bart the Genius," in which Bart, surely ignorant of the term's original meaning, employs "kwyjibo" to win a game of Scrabble.

I have already used Professor Filice's article in class to teach the perils of relying on etymology as a source of definition, and am grateful to him for providing such a splendid example.

Jeffrey Del Col, *Philippi, W.Va.*

"Disembuffling"

Connie Davis writes [*Winter Key Reporter*] that "... I believe the English language needs 'embuffle' ... when two people encounter each other in a hallway or on a sidewalk, and each shuffles from side to side to avoid the other." But what if both stand still? The best way for two people to disembuffle or avoid an embufflement is to say "Pass on the right!" in countries where driving is on the right side and "Pass on the left!" [where] it is still on the left.

David L. Gold, *Oakland Gardens, N.Y.*

A Review Reviewed

I was taken aback by Eugen Weber's review of "The Zaddik: The Battle for a Boy's Soul" [*Winter Key Reporter*] in which he insinuates that Hasidic Judaism is a "cult." Hasidism is not a cult, but a profound expression of Jewish spirituality that has inspired and comforted Jews of all persuasions for over two centuries. Those interested in learning more about contemporary Hasidic Jews may enjoy reading Jerome Mintz's scholarly "Hasidic People: A Place in the New World" (Harvard University Press, 1994) or Robert Eisenberg's not-so-scholarly (but very funny) "Boychiks in the Hood" (HarperCollins, 1995). They will learn that Hasidic Jewry is far from monolithic, com-

prising many sub-groups with divergent customs and political opinions.

Meanwhile, the next time Mr. Weber is feeling anxious about "nutty crackpots ... on our doorstep," he would do well to remember a basic fact of Humanity: Any large community will contain a number of individuals who are misguided or even crazy. While their misdeeds may make for sensational reading, it is only our own prejudice that allows us to assume that their low conduct is characteristic of the community as a whole.

Jerald Feldman, *Wilmington, Del.*

Eugen Weber uncritically accepts the central premise of E.G. Denholtz's polemical reportage, "The Zaddik: The Battle for a Boy's Soul," namely that the 13-year-old boy in question, Shai Fhima, was "kidnapped" and "brainwashed" by an ultra-Orthodox rabbi, whose religion therefore constitutes a "cult." He may not know that Mr. Fhima, now a well-adjusted adult, spoke with a *New York Times* reporter and denied having been either kidnapped or brainwashed (*Metropolitan Diary*, April 1, 2001). It seems rather that he ran away from his dysfunctional, abusive non-religious family after discovering warmth and, not incidentally, Judaism—with the rabbi and his followers.

Is it illegal to help keep a runaway adolescent out of his parents' reach? It would seem so. But might there, at times, be an ethical imperative to do so nonetheless? I would answer, yes. Was the Fhima case an exceptional situation of this type? I don't know, but anyone who wishes to find out would surely do better than to read a book with a glaring anti-religious bias.

Ethan Taub, *Zurich, Switzerland*

Editor's note: Dr. Taub provided the text of the *Times* article, which The Key Reporter will send to readers who request it. Please specify e-mail, fax, or postal delivery.

In keeping with the fundamental values of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, The Key Reporter seeks to promote the free exchange of ideas and points of view. Phi Beta Kappa is committed to providing a forum in which a range of opinions may be expressed and issues may be debated. The opinions expressed by the authors of articles, reviews, and other features are their own, and are not intended to represent the opinions of the members or employees of Phi Beta Kappa.

The Key Reporter welcomes letters to the editor. Those that are published may be condensed. Please send letters to Barbara Ryan by e-mail at bryan@pbk.org, by fax at (202) 986-1601, or by postal mail to the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

From Our Book Critics

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The successes and failures of a chemical company that tried to become a biotech firm illustrate the many facets of the agriculture business. One amazing change, at the core of the controversy and underlying the book's title, relates to the way seeds are handled. What used to be considered a gift of nature and a public good, like rain and sunshine, has been turned into a profit-driven market regulated by patents and license fees, just like computer software! Arguments presented by those opposed to agricultural biotechnology are objectively discussed, as is the need for regulation by responsible agencies.

The story about the harmful effects on larvae of the Monarch butterfly is both a reminder that genetically engineered crops can affect ecosystems and a warning about the danger of oversimplifying biological issues. But this book is not an argument. It is "the product of a personal search for understanding. The result of that search is not a set of conclusions, but a story of how genetically engineered foods came to be, and why."

The Living Clock: The Orchestrator of Biological Rhythms. John D. Palmer. Oxford University Press, 2002. \$26

This book provides a nice introduction to the relatively new field of chronobiology, the study of rhythms in living organisms. In the first chapter, we are introduced to tidal rhythms with a cycle of about 12.4 hours, to circadian rhythms with a cycle of about 24 hours, to approximately half-monthly variations, and to circannual (about yearly) changes, shown to characterize even one-celled organisms. They persist in the experimental laboratory under presumably constant conditions.

This finding constitutes the very core of the new science since it means that rhythms are built in, and not simply a response to corresponding changes in environmental variables (such as light, temperature, or the tide's rise and recession), which play only a synchronizing role. Parker rightly refers to biological rhythms as a fundamental property of all living things.

He provides supporting evidence by reviewing rhythms that affect not only single cells and marine organisms but also other animals, humans, and plants. He alludes to practical applications such as problems related to jet lag and shifting work schedules, and the optimization of treatment by timing (chronotherapy) to increase its efficacy and reduce undesired side effects.

The book ends with a discussion of the anatomical location of timekeeping properties of organisms, and of underlying molecular

From Our Book Critics

mechanisms. While recognizing the coordinating importance of the suprachiasmatic nuclei when present as a structure in its own right, the author makes the case that temporal information resides in every cell. The choice of “clock” in referring to biological rhythms, however, is unfortunate, because they are so much more than clocks or calendars. They truly are cornerstones as broad time structures or “chronomes” (not discussed as such in the book) of the essence of life.

Predictability conferred by rhythmic phenomena is an important feature of life. But it may be some degree of irregularity that provides the needed flexibility to adjust (e.g., after a transoceanic flight), to anticipate (e.g., in preparation for the day’s activities, blood pressure starts increasing before we wake up), and to intermodulate (e.g., the heart beat changes in relation to respiration) to ensure coordination among rhythms of many different frequencies in different body functions. Intended for general readers, the book does not review the methodology needed to rigorously quantify biological rhythms. References to “clocks” and the omission of chronomes notwithstanding, it is very interesting, and highly recommended.

By Jay M. Pasachoff

In the 18th and 19th centuries, observations of the rare transits of Venus provided the major data for determining the size of the solar system. These events—when Venus passes in front of the Sun as seen from Earth—occur in pairs. Though only eight years separate the members of each pair, the interval until the next pair is about 115 years. Not a person now alive has seen a transit of Venus, since the last one occurred in 1882. But a transit of Venus is coming up on June 8, 2004. Though Venus will be but a dot on the face of the Sun, and the transit will be noticeable only with optical aids or cameras, the intellectual opportunity will be of the highest order. Several new books are available about transits of Venus and related matters.

June 8, 2004: Venus in Transit. *Eli Maor.* Princeton University Press, 2000. \$29.95

First out of the box, not counting Harry Woolf’s standard “The Transits of Venus,” a study of 18th-century science from 1959, is a more popular volume by Eli Maor, a mathematician who has written for a general audience about his own field, and who is a solar eclipse buff. Maor relates in interesting fashion how Johannes Kepler’s predictions of 1627 began the story of terrestrial observations of transits of Mercury and Venus, the two planets with orbits interior to the Earth’s, and thus the only two planets that could be in transit.

We learn how the young Englishman Jeremiah Horrocks predicted a transit of Venus

in 1639 that even Kepler had missed. And he succeeded in observing it! An international symposium at the University of Central Lancashire is scheduled for transit day in 2004, including an attempt at observing the event from Horrocks’s original site at Much Hoole, 60 km from Manchester, in whose town hall there is a mural by Ford Madox Brown of the observation scheme. Had Horrocks not died at the age of 23, the history of science would no doubt know more of him.

Maor describes the science involved in predicting the transits and using the data. He also describes the personalities, including Edmond Halley, who worked out how to use the transit to measure solar-system distances. He tells of some of the dozens of expeditions that traveled all over the Earth to the transits of 1761, 1769, 1874, and 1882. He ends with maps that show where to be to see the 2004 event, and instructions on how to observe it.

The Transit of Venus: The Quest to Find the True Distance of the Sun. *David Sellers.* MagaVelda Press, 2001. £12.95; available in the U.S. at <http://bookshop.blackwell.com>, \$19.47

Sellers tells the story of the five observed transits of Venus in his own way, but the cast of characters necessarily largely coincides with those discussed by Maor. Both tell the story of the Englishmen Mason and Dixon, who whetted their abilities on the 1761 transit of Venus so successfully that they were invited to the American colonies to famously survey the dividing line between what turned out to be the North and the South. Sellers writes of the young English captain James Cook, and how he voyaged to Tahiti in 1769 to observe the transit. The dreaded black-drop effect that limited the accuracy of the determination of solar-system distances is necessarily featured in this

and all books on the subject. Sellers brings the science up to date with a discussion of how radar now gives us much more accurate distances than transits provided.

He provides maps not only of the 2004 transit but also of the 2012 event. He provides times that show how superior European and Asian sites will be in 2004. Only the very end of the event will be observable in New York in the morning sky, and none will be observable to its west, whereas the 2012 transit will be visible from the entire United States.

Transit: When Planets Cross the Sun. *Michael Maunder and Patrick Moore.* Springer, 1999. \$43.95

This is part of the “Practical Astronomy” series by Moore, a noted amateur astronomer and writer who was recently honored by being made a Fellow of the Royal Society. His book gives more attention to how to observe the transit and provides instructions to help photograph the 2004 event. It also discusses other astronomical transits, such as those that astronauts may one day see from distant planets. Of course it also tells the basic historical stories.

Setting Sail for the Universe: Astronomers and Their Discoveries. *Donald Fernie.* Rutgers University Press, 2002. \$25

Fernie provides a wonderful series of vignettes about a wide range of astronomical matters, each about a half-dozen pages. Several discuss expeditions to transits of Venus.

Though none of the books about the transit of Venus discuss literary allusions, such do exist. Shirley Hazzard’s novel, “The Transit of Venus” (1980), and Maureen Hunter’s play, “Transit of Venus” (1992), use both meanings of Venus—the astronomical object and the goddess of love. Farther back, Thomas Hardy’s

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Key People

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no job, AIDS, pride amid frustration, responsibility without resources.

Abdul visited me last New Year’s day, 2003, and he picked out one of the books I had traveled with: “The Marine Officer’s Guide.” He read the book cover to cover and then quoted it enthusiastically at random moments. One chilly night over hot *chai* and *mandazi*, I asked why he liked quoting “The Marine Officer’s Guide,” and if he made any connections to Kibera. He smiled, rocked backward gripping his knee with both hands, and said:

“‘Always faithful.’ I like that, because imagine a world where every-

body’s always faithful, everybody’s devoted. They can get time to socialize, laugh even under very tough circumstances. There are a lot of similarities, because you see that one of the strangest things here is that under these adverse circumstances, people are living. They can still say ‘How are you?’ while they are standing in sewage. Under very adverse circumstances, people can still afford one big smile. What drives CFK? I think it is to make this place more humane, and I don’t just mean Kibera. If that is the driving force, then we still have a lot of horsepower. Together we can push this thing to the end of the world.”

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novel, "Two on a Tower" (1883), includes a character patterned after Horrocks and involves observations of the transit of Venus from the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, which Hardy had visited.

Empire and the Sun: Victorian Solar Eclipse Expeditions. Alex Soojung-Kim Pang. Stanford University Press, 2002. \$21.95

Alex Pang describes 19th-century scientific expeditions, but they are for observing transits of the Moon rather than Venus across the face of the Sun. Pang describes the sociology of science rather than the science itself. He shows how nationalistic reasons led governments to support eclipse expeditions, much as the Cold War led President Kennedy to send astronauts to the Moon in the 1960s.

Pang does not describe the main scientific results of the 1800s, such as the discovery of

helium and other aspects of spectroscopy that would lead to the transformation of astronomy into astrophysics. But he describes the depictions of the corona over time and shows how the scientists interacted with printing technologies as they improved.

Though its roots in his dissertation are clear, Pang interestingly brings the flavor of developing expeditionary techniques to the fore.

The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA. Diane Vaughan. University of Chicago Press, 1996. \$24.95

Vaughan's sociological analysis of NASA's culture in regard to the space shuttle is relevant today. She asks, "Why, in the years preceding the *Challenger* launch, did NASA continue launching with a design known to be flawed? And why did NASA launch the *Challenger* against the eve-of-launch objections of engi-

neers?" Though the book contains much more information than I need to know, her conclusions are prescient.

She concludes, "After the *Challenger* disaster ... steps were taken. But at this writing, that supportive political environment has changed. NASA is again experiencing the economic strain that prevailed at the time of the *Challenger* disaster. Few of the people in top NASA administrative positions exposed to the lessons of the *Challenger* tragedy are still there. The new leaders stress safety, but they are fighting for dollars and making budget cuts. History repeats. ..."

I don't know that the general reader has to read this book, but surely NASA and those congressional and executive staffers who deal with NASA must. It took half a dozen years after this book appeared before the *Columbia* apparently fell prey to problems that had long been the subject of worry.

Lanham

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thought, when I worked up the topic during the summer, that it would find a lively response. No luck. I was discharging into a nonconductor, and I still don't understand why.

So much for the official work. Now for some unexpected treats. *Item.* The person in charge of my visit to Wells College, Assoc. Prof. Catherine Burroughs, turned out to be the wife of an old student of mine from four decades ago at Dartmouth—Rich Bogel, a professor at Cornell University. The four of us had a wonderful reunion dinner and visit. *Item.* When Prof. Barry Bandstra, in charge of my visit to Hope College, was driving me to the College from the airport, we passed a sign saying "Herman Miller." Modern furniture is one of my delights, and I knew about the crucial role that

Herman Miller had played in American furniture design. We were driving past their world-famous design studio. Could it be visited? Barry arranged it and we spent two hours being shown around by an enthusiastic guide.

At Skidmore one of the librarians, Ruth Copans, is also a professional bookbinder, and she was kind enough to show us around her bindery. I took bookbinding lessons for three years but pro is pro, and it was a thrill to admire her work. *Item.* Also at Skidmore, we were given a splendid tour of Saratoga Springs architecture by James Kettlewell, a master of its local history.

Item. Prose composition has been a main theme in my academic life, and I sat in on a meeting of the student composition tutors at Brown's Writing Center. They were so impressive, and the architect of the program, Prof. Rhoda Flaxman, so admirable in maintaining it, that again it made me miss

teaching. *Item.* Walking into a classroom at all-male Wabash College and confronting a seminar table with only young men around it. It seemed like I had stepped back 40 years in time, to Dartmouth in 1962, where I began to teach. A flood of memories peopled the room and it took me a minute to recover my wits.

Item. Talking with the librarians at Brown who generously gave me an hour of their time to discuss electronic text. *Item.* The professor who stopped me, crossing the campus at Franklin and Marshall, to thank me for my *Revising Prose* video, which he had been showing to his classes for years. Born in exasperation and haste 20 years ago, the video still does good work in the world, and it made me happy to hear it.

So—exciting schools, wonderful hospitality, warm memories. A year that began under clouds but soon escaped them.

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THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY
1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Fourth Floor
Washington DC 20036
Tel: (202) 265-3808
Fax: (202) 986-1601

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