

# PHI BETA KAPPA

THE KEY REPORTER

SUMMER 2006

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# In Wolfe's Clothing

One of the biggest events for aficionados of the humanities in Washington, D.C., is the annual Jefferson Lecture. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Jefferson Lecture is, at the 35-year mark, only five years younger than the NEH itself. And, over the years, the NEH has induced leading figures in the nation's cultural life to offer the address. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., David McCullough, Helen Vendler and Donald Kagan preceded this year's Jefferson Lecture, and earlier lectures were delivered by the likes of Robert Penn Warren, Cleanth Brooks, C. Vann Woodward, Jaroslav Pelikan and others of equal stature.

This year's Jefferson Lecture was delivered on May 10 by new journalism practitioner and novelist Tom Wolfe. Readers of a certain ... ahem ... age will remember *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* and *The*



*"If we weigh the evidence and draw conclusions about our times and the future and the figures who shape both, we must say what we mean as clearly as we can."*

*Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby.* (Hint: Your copies are on that bottom shelf next to Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, tattered from being carried in the hip pockets of those jeans.) Wolfe produced a steady stream of books, modulating from the fiction-like techniques of the new journalism to novels like *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, *A Man in Full* and, most recently, *I am Charlotte Simmons* — all works that strive to capture, in fiction, the core truths of their age.

And so, in his Jefferson Lecture, Wolfe sought to capture the current *Zeitgeist* (yes, he quoted Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and just about everyone else), in a talk titled, "The Human Beast." *The Washington Post's* next-morning review was unfavorable, calling the lecture "odd," "anecdotal," "confused" and "filled with large claims that were left unproven or unconnected." But the reviewer's biggest worry was that Wolfe, who rambled either charmingly or troublingly through one hour and three quarters of the next, was exposing himself as a misanthrope, a dark figure belying the trademark white suit. If there is a boundary somewhere between the witty deflation of pretension and the sour conclusion that humanity is, at last, ignoble, Wolfe seemed to have crossed it. Even John Calvin made a cameo appearance on behalf of humanity's depravity.

One of the facts about a reflective and deliberative culture is that reflection and deliberation themselves become part of the cultural environment. Aeschylus is about 5th-century Athens, and also *of* it. And so those who practice the arts of wit and commentary — from H. L.

Mencken to John Belushi — must attempt to gain some perspective on their age, while inevitably they are shaped by the very cultural forces they seek to bring under critical judgment. Ironically but necessarily, the line between diagnosis and embodiment blurs.

So what can we in Phi Beta Kappa learn from this irony, committed as we are to enlarging reflection and deliberation and to making sure that the two are informed by knowledge? Three things, I think. The first is self-critical humility. If we are never quite sure whether or not we embody what we decry, it's best to be a bit gentle, a bit tentative. Second, there is an obligation of clarity. If we weigh the evidence and draw conclusions about our times and the future and the figures who shape both, we must say what we mean as clearly as we can. And last, there is the recognition that, after we have spoken, something else will need to be said next. In a recursive process, each new comment becomes the subject matter of its successor. On it goes.

The trouble with these sober principles is that they are not funny. Worse, they inhibit humor. And humor is, at least sometimes, good. We need to play a little sometimes. Even the darker sort of play has its place, but it is not (see above) the last word.

John Churchill  
Secretary



*“Supporting education in the sciences is essential to the mission of the National Science Foundation. The research we fund at America’s colleges and universities is thoroughly integrated with the quality of education those institutions provide. Students get excited by real research, by working side-by-side with teachers and mentors on real-world problems. And I can attest to that from my own experiences. This is the sort of learning environment that transforms a “science student” into a “young scientist” and inspired me as a student at Chatham College. My election to Phi Beta Kappa there in 1974 is a cherished honor, and I am proud to share the love of learning the Society represents in my work for the National Science Foundation.”*

— KATHIE L. OLSEN

Kathie L. Olsen became Deputy Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) in August 2005. She joined NSF from the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President, where she was the Associate Director and Deputy Director for Science, responsible for overseeing science and education policy including physical sciences, life sciences, environmental science, and behavioral and social sciences. Prior to her work with NSF, Olsen served as Chief Scientist at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

After receiving a bachelor’s degree from Chatham College in Pittsburgh, Pa., double-majoring in biology and psychology, Olsen earned her Ph.D. in Neuroscience at the University of California, Irvine and was a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Neuroscience at Children’s Hospital of Harvard Medical School. Subsequently, at SUNY-Stony Brook, she was both a research scientist at Long Island Research Institute and an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at SUNY’s medical school. ■

## THE KEY REPORTER

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

## On the Cover

Galbraith Marine Science Laboratory  
Eckerd College  
Zeta of Florida, 2004

**General Washington was where?**

Although I greatly enjoyed Joyce Appleby's article in the spring 2006 issue of *The Key Reporter*, there is a serious error.

Appleby writes: "The sight of free African Americans serving in Minute Men units at Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill in 1775 shocked Washington. Their bravery invalidated one of the slave master's most self-serving assumptions: that blacks were incapable of valor on the field of battle."

It is well known that General Washington was not present at any of those three engagements. He arrived in the Boston area in early July 1775. Thus, the sight of those specific battles could not have "shocked" nor had any other impact on him. The mostly New England "army" over which he took command certainly did include a number of African Americans, some of whom may have remained as veterans of the April engagements at Lexington and Concord (as Minute Men) or of the June Battle of Bunker Hill (in the somewhat more organized militia units) or as new recruits. It was this force and later units comprising the nascent Continental/American/United States Army that would present a more diverse face than Washington may have expected — or for that matter, most anyone else seems to have, until the last couple of decades of scholarship in this area.

As an American Revolutionary War historian and author of a biography of the "other Washington" (*William Washington — Cavalryman of the Revolution*), I dealt with a young African American who may well have saved the patriot cavalry commander's life at the Battle of Cowpens. This incident mentioned in John Marshall's

*The Life of George Washington*, is memorialized in William Ranney's 1845 painting now hanging in the South Carolina Statehouse. However, I have encountered a few skeptics since later paintings show the young man as white!

Stephen Haller  
Miami University, Fla.

**Appleby Responds**

Stephen Haller is correct. Washington was stunned by the bravery of the African American soldiers in the militia, but he didn't see them until after Lexington and Concord. I should have been more careful in my wording not to put Washington where he was not in April of 1775.

Joyce Appleby  
University of California, Los Angeles

**Sergei Khrushchev**

The piece on Russian cultural politics in the spring 2005 *Key Reporter* featured an unsupported claim from Nikita Khrushchev's son, Sergei Khrushchev, regarding two important achievements of his father. The first was "... to steer the world in a peaceful direction." Would that be actions such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, which nearly plunged the world into nuclear war? Khrushchev's second comment, even more disingenuous, was that his father "improved the life of Russian people." Aware readers may have observed that Khrushchev undermines his own claim by leaving "improved" Russia for a home and career in the U.S.

Donna Rook  
Chicago, Ill.

**Counting Votes**

Since our democracy uses elections as the mechanism by which citizens are

to select our government, vote counting and all other election procedures must be done in a way that facilitates participation and observation by ordinary citizens. This is the only way to ensure the legitimacy of both our elections and our government.

No one needs to choose between intellectual deliberation and attention to practical realities. It is uninformed and wrong for intellectuals to disdain practical considerations, call them "obsessions," as John Churchill does in his essay "1776" in the last issue of *The Key Reporter*, or to imply that concern with counting votes prevents us from having a better democracy.

Teresa Hommel  
New York, N.Y.

**EDITOR'S NOTE** The reader interprets Secretary Churchill's remarks to be critical of citizens concerned with counting votes. Churchill replies:

My point was not to belittle concern over the accurate counting of votes. Clearly that is necessary in a democracy. Necessary, but not sufficient. A democratic society should also sustain reasoned inquiry concerning public policies. Phi Beta Kappa's commitments to the liberal arts and sciences bear on the conditions of democracy at that point: we should hope that the love of learning is the guide of political life, as well.

John Churchill  
Secretary

*The Phi Beta Kappa Society*

*The Key Reporter* welcomes the submission of letters. Those that are published may be condensed. Please send letters to Kelly Gerald by e-mail to [kgerald@pbk.org](mailto:kgerald@pbk.org), by fax to (202) 986-1601, or by postal mail to the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

**Key Personnel**

The Phi Beta Kappa Society is delighted to introduce three additions to the national office staff:

**Erik H. Meier** joined ΦBK as director of information technology in December 2004. Born and raised in New Orleans, Meier earned a bache-

lor's degree in economics at Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, Calif., and a master's degree in information systems at DePaul University in Chicago. Meier also pursues a passion for teaching and higher education by instructing students in GRE and SAT preparation

for *The Princeton Review*. He can be reached at (202) 745-3273 or by e-mail at [emeier@pbk.org](mailto:emeier@pbk.org).

**Lorena Perez** works in membership and chapter services. Before joining ΦBK in June 2005, Perez worked for Infologics Corporation in

*Continued on 5*

## Priscilla Long's "Genome Tome" Wins "Ellie" in Feature Writing for *The American Scholar*

Readers of *The American Scholar* had their instinct for excellence affirmed on Monday, May 8, when Phi Beta Kappa's flagship publication won the 2006 National Magazine Award in the category of Feature Writing for Priscilla Long's essay "Genome Tome." In their citation, the judges for the award praised Long for "her inventive, deeply informed and memorable meditation" on recent breakthroughs in genetics.

This is the fourth time *The American Scholar* has been recognized by a National Magazine Award and the

12th time it has been nominated for the industry's most prestigious editorial honor.

The National Magazine Awards honor magazines that consistently demonstrate superior execution in carrying out stated editorial objectives, innovative editorial techniques, noteworthy journalistic enterprise, and imagination and vigor in layout and design.

The "Ellies" (named after the Alexander Calder stabile "Elephant," which is the American Society of Magazine Editor's symbol of the award)



Photo credit: Steve Friedman

Robert Wilson pauses for a photo with the "Ellie" at the 2006 National Magazine Awards in New York City on May 8.

were presented to 14 print and on line magazines across 22 categories. ■

## Atlanta Will Host Phi Beta Kappa's 41st Triennial Council in October

Delegates from 270 Phi Beta Kappa chapters and more than 60 associations are expected to attend the 41st Council of Phi Beta Kappa on Oct. 25-29 in Atlanta, Ga. The headquarters for the Council will be at the Westin Peachtree Plaza.

This year's meeting will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Society's Visiting Scholar Program and will feature speakers Elaine Fantham, Giger Professor of Latin, Emerita, Princeton University; Linda Greenhouse, Supreme Court Correspondent, *The New York Times*; N. Katherine Hayles, Hillis Professor of Literature,

University of California, Los Angeles; G. Dennis O'Brien, President Emeritus, University of Rochester; Yi-Fu Tuan, J.K. Wright and Vilas Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin-Madison; and Michael Turner, Rauner Distinguished Service Professor, University of Chicago. All have served as scholars for Phi Beta Kappa's Visiting Scholar Program.

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

Charles Tilly, Joseph L. Bottenwieser Professor of Social

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

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

### Key Personnel *Continued from 4*

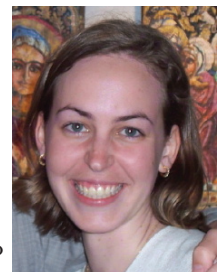
the Systems Operations Division and for the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety in the area of data management. In her spare time, she does freelance work for Jeffrey Arnett, editor of the *Journal of Adolescent Research*. Bilingual in English and Spanish, Perez grew up in Guatemala and Washington, D.C. She can be reached at (202) 745-3242 or by e-mail at [lperez@pbk.org](mailto:lperez@pbk.org).

**Sam Worland-Esquith** joined ΦBK as awards coordinator in February 2006. Raised in East Lansing, Mich., he earned a bachelor's degree in literature at Harvard University and a master's degree in fiction writing from the University of Florida. He also served in the Peace Corps in Mali for two years, where he trained local residents in well construction and repair. In addition to working for ΦBK, Worland-Esquith teaches English at Westwood College in Arlington, Va. He can be reached at (202) 745-3235 or by e-mail at [sworlandesquith@pbk.org](mailto:sworlandesquith@pbk.org). ■

### Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship for French Studies 2006

Alicia Levin of Oshkosh, Wis., is a doctoral candidate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Levin graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University in 2002 with a major in piano performance and a minor in French. She completed her Master of Arts at UNC in 2004. Her dissertation, "Seducing Paris: Piano Virtuosos and Artistic Identity, 1820-1848," investigates the music culture of Restoration and July Monarchy Paris by examining how prominent piano virtuosos of the time constructed their identities and launched their careers in France.

Established in 1934, the \$20,000 award 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 Greek and French. ■



Alicia Levin

## Fifty Years of Visiting Scholars

In the Middle Ages, centers of learning such as Paris, Orleans and Chartres were familiar with what were known as *Vagantes*, or "Wandering Scholars," who had a unique place in the transmission of knowledge and the development of European culture from the 10th century to the end of the 13th. So, too, American centers of learning over the last 50 years have become familiar with the Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholars. They were, in fact, provisionally named "itinerant scholars," surely a reminiscence of their Medieval forebears. But their present title was approved when the program was established by the Triennial Council of 1955, and it is as Visiting Scholars that we salute them in this year and celebrate their half-century of service to liberal education.

The Society inaugurated the Visiting Scholar Program a few months later in 1956. The central concept behind this initiative was that, in support of its chapters, Phi Beta Kappa would make it possible for distinguished scholars in the liberal arts and sciences to visit sheltering institutions and spend two days on campus, speaking to students and faculty alike about major new developments in the visitor's specialization. The program was an immediate success and has become one of the most important Phi Beta Kappa undertakings.

In the past 50 years, 4,450 visits have been made by 529 Visiting Scholars who have taken part in the program. A special anniversary celebration will take place in Atlanta, Ga., at the 41st Council meeting.

### PHI BETA KAPPA VISITING SCHOLARS 2006-2007

**MARCIA L. COLISH**, Frederic B. Artz Professor of History Emerita, Oberlin College; **RAYMOND J. DEMALLIE**, Chancellor's Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University; **ERIC J. HELLER**, Professor of Physics and Chemistry, Harvard University; **CHRIS IMPEY**, University Distinguished Professor of Astronomy, University of Arizona; **MARGARET LEVI**, Jere L. Bacharach Professor of International Studies, University of Washington; **WALTER BENN MICHAELS**, Professor of English, University of Illinois at Chicago; **SARAH MORRIS**, Steinmetz Professor of Classical Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles; **GARY B. NASH**, Professor Emeritus of History, University of California, Los Angeles; **THOMAS G. RAWSKI**, Professor of Economics and History, University of Pittsburgh; **BARRY SCHWARTZ**, Dorwin Cartwright Professor of Social Theory and Social Action, Swarthmore College; **GUS SOLOMONS jr.**, Artistic Director, Solomons Company/Dance, New York City; **JEAN E. TAYLOR**, Professor Emerita of Mathematics, Rutgers University; **ROSANNA WARREN**, Metcalf Professor of the Humanities, Boston University.

Scholar profiles are available at [www.pbk.org/advocacy/visitscholar.htm](http://www.pbk.org/advocacy/visitscholar.htm). Questions about the program should be directed to Kathy Navascues at (202) 745-3231 or [knavascues@pbk.org](mailto:knavascues@pbk.org).

## Kathy Navascues Honored for 37 Years of Service to Visiting Scholar Program

On April 26, in Conway, Ark., the stage of Reves Recital Hall was set for the customary initiation of the new members of Hendrix College's chapter of ΦBK. Family and friends of the 28 student initiates had assembled, the roll book for Beta of Arkansas lay open, elegantly inscribed with the date, and the officers had assumed the positions practiced in their recitation of the familiar words of induction.

On this occasion, the stage held two additional chairs, one for Secretary John Churchill and the other for Kathy Navascues, head of the Visiting Scholar Program. The faculty members of Beta of Arkansas had voted to allow Navascues entry into their chapter as an honorary member in recognition of her faithful and excellent service to the Visiting Scholar Program since she began working for ΦBK in 1969. Navascues became director of the program in 1977 upon the retirement of Frances Robb, who had been with program from its inception in 1956.

During the ceremony, Churchill presented a citation of Navascues. Among other plaudits, he described the reach of her service: "She has managed 448 scholars, who, all told, from 1969 through 2006, made 3,535 campus visits. If my arithmetic is good, this works out to about three visits a week during every academic year from 1969 to the present. If 100 student contacts per visit is a fair guess, then the number of students directly benefited by Kathy's work is roughly 350,000. That's enough students to fill RFK Stadium, the home of the Washington Nationals, eight times over."

President of ΦBK, Niall Slater of Emory University, said: "Over the past 30 years, few have done more to advance the ideals and the mission of ΦBK than Kathy Navascues. Her brilliant stewardship of our Visiting Scholar Program has brought the best of what ΦBK has to offer, from novelists to Nobel Prize winners, to campus after campus, all with superbly efficient grace and dedication. We are deeply in her debt."

The 50th anniversary of the Visiting Scholar Program will be commemorated at this year's 41st Triennial Council. ■

## Joy of Reading: The D.C. Area Association Reaches Out to Local School Children

by Margarette Shovlin

In 2001, Eddie Eitches, past president of the D.C. Area Phi Beta Kappa Association, recommended to the association's executive board that a reading program for elementary school children be started to complement the High School Award Program, which recognizes scholastic achievement in Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland. Joanne Hsu volunteered to chair the program and solicited volunteers among our members. In 2003, second graders at Washington's Brightwood Elementary School became the first students to participate in the program. The excitement and joy the children expressed when given a book of their own to keep gave the program its name, Joy of Reading.

Joy of Reading serves children at schools in economically disadvantaged districts. The objective is to promote a love of reading at a young age by inspiring children with classic children's literature and great storytelling in a supportive environment. To encourage them to continue reading and enjoy books in their time away from school, each child also receives a free copy of one of the books read to them during the program.

Books included in Joy of Reading are time-honored favorites and award

winners, such as the Caldecott Honor Book *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel and the Outstanding Science Trade Book for

Children *From Caterpillar to Butterfly* by Deborah Heiligman and Bari Weissman. Before the program begins, a reading list is proposed by the Joy of Reading coordinator, and the teacher selects books from this list that are compatible with state standards for learning and the school's curriculum. Program volunteers visit the school twice a year and read to second graders in small groups. At the end of the second session, each student, the teacher and the school's library are given a copy of one of the books. So far, more than 300 books have been distributed.

With generous financial support from our members and cooperation from local schools, Joy of Reading is thriving. At our association's biannual board meeting, President Christel



Margarette Shovlin reads *From Caterpillar to Butterfly* to second grade students at Glen Forest Elementary School in Fairfax, Va.

McDonald and the executive board agreed to expand Joy of Reading throughout the Washington metropolitan area. After discussions between Nicole Newburg-Rinn of the D.C. association and Dr. Murray Steinberg and John Stack of the Baltimore association, Joy of Reading is also being expanded to include schools in Baltimore.

If you live in Washington, D.C., Virginia or Maryland and would like to get involved, please contact me, Margarette Shovlin, at [mshovlin@msn.com](mailto:mshovlin@msn.com). ■

*Margarette Shovlin, coordinator of the Joy of Reading program, earned her bachelor's degree in human relations from Trinity University where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.*

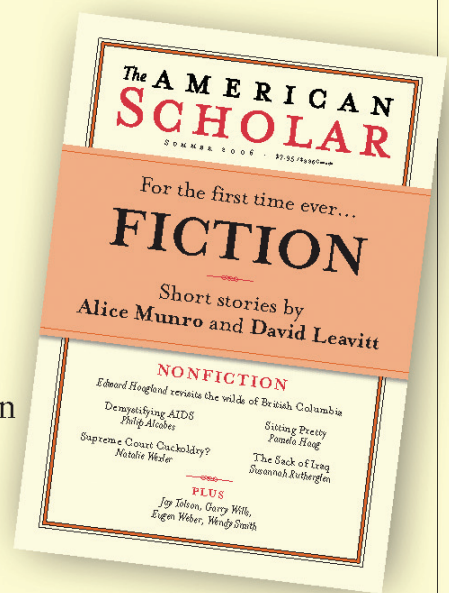
# True Lies

After nearly 75 years of publishing the best essays, criticism, narrative nonfiction, and poetry in the land, **THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR** begins to publish fiction with its Summer 2006 issue.

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AKRSU6



# Politics and the American Sense of Humor

by M. THOMAS INGE



Long Abraham Lincoln  
a Little Longer

*Harper's Weekly*

Nov. 26, 1864

Artist: Frank Bellew

When Lincoln won reelection in 1864, he carried all but three states, but the popular vote was close. A series of recent Union victories inspired Northerners to hope that, with Lincoln a little longer, the war would soon end.

If incongruity is at the heart of humor and what makes people laugh, as some theorists have maintained, then nowhere is there a greater disparity between the ideal and the real, between the dream and our failure to achieve it, than in American politics.

The democratic system posits higher values than we can live up to — not only life and liberty, but the pursuit of happiness for heaven's sake! Not to mention equality, justice and freedom of speech. And then there are the politicians entrusted with achieving them. We still laugh, unfortunately, at Mark Twain's quip, "There is no distinctly American criminal class except Congress."

A gauge of the success of our system is our willingness to make fun of ourselves and to celebrate our failures with a horse laugh. We hold nothing above ridicule — the law, government, religion or the President — and we seek redress through satire.

Rather than be discouraged, the use of humor encourages us to try again and see if we can't get it right the next time. Laughter is a healthy corrective, and it serves to adjust our hopes and expectations to the reality of what's actually possible in this increasingly precarious world.

Little wonder, then, that the editorial or political cartoon has been a mainstay in the media of this country from its very founding. One of the earliest political cartoons to appear in a newspaper was attributed to Benjamin Franklin in the May 9, 1754, issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. The crude drawing portrayed a snake cut into separate portions like the states, with the injunction "Unite, or Die," a warning that political survival in the colonies depended on union and mutual respect. Not much humor there really, except in the odd choice of the snake, given all its symbolic weight, as the image of the emerging nation.

We would not have truly belletristic writing in America until Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper several decades after the founding of the nation. One reason for this may have been the fact that the minds of the leading intellectuals were mainly involved in working out the details of the social and political structure of the commonwealth. Most of the writing, therefore, addressed practical

economic and political problems, as well as theological questions.

There did seem to be room for humor, however. As early as 1637, Thomas Morton, of Maypole fame, made fun of Puritan bigotry in *New England Canaan*, and a decade later, Nathaniel Ward turned the spyglass around and ridiculed what he saw as too much religious tolerance and freedom for women in the colonies in *The Simple Cobbler of Agawam*. Ebenezer Cooke in Maryland laid a comic Hudibrastic curse on the entire new world in *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1708).

As periodicals and newspapers developed, the columns were promptly filled with humorous essays and satires on the absurdities and pomposities of the emerging social and political classes. Franklin, the Connecticut Wits, Hugh Henry Breckenridge, Seba Smith, Frances Whitcher and Marietta Holley were among them, the last two women also having their say.

Soon major schools of humor would emerge in New England and the Old South, which would, in turn, produce Mark Twain, after whom neither American literature nor humor would ever be the same. As for political humor, do we have a more profound and funnier statement on the conflict between the individual conscience and the laws of the state than *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885)?

The example of Twain's comic accomplishments would inspire many other writers to follow, such as James Thurber, Dorothy Parker, Langston Hughes, William Faulkner, Woody Allen and Garrison Keillor, to name only a few. A strong strain of humor has persisted in American literature.

But, just as surely as these writers were observing and commenting on the national scene and the human condition, so too were the editorial cartoonists in the pages of the newspapers. Although Franklin and Paul Revere are credited with early political cartoons, it wasn't until Thomas Nast and Joseph Keppler in the 19th century that they became a major force.

Nast's satiric vision was so penetrating and influential that his cartoons seemed to have an effect on national affairs. One of his Civil War drawings is credited with assuring Abraham Lincoln's reelection in 1864, and



his unrelenting attacks on Boss Tweed and his Tammany Hall cronies contributed to Tweed's downfall and imprisonment.

Although few others would have such direct influence, many notable comic artists would follow Nast's path into political cartooning as a profession, such as Rollin Kirby, Jay Norwood "Ding" Darling, Herbert L. Block (Herblock), Bill Mauldin, Patrick Oliphant, Paul Conrad and Jeff MacNelly.

Do readers pay attention? Sometimes with startling results. While mostly readers respond with letters of complaint, in 1987 a reader was so incensed with a cartoon by Tony Auth in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* that he broke into his office, trashed it and warned that, if it wasn't for his religion and humanity, he would have killed the cartoonist.

More recently, in the Jan. 29 issue of *The Washington Post*, a cartoon by Tom Toles criticized statements about the war in Iraq by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld through use of a symbolic figure of an American soldier who has lost both arms and legs. A few days later, on Feb. 7, the *Post* published a letter attacking the cartoon as "callous" and "reprehensible" signed by the chairman and the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the only time in memory that a single letter had been signed by all five members for any purpose, much less a cartoon. The letter did not address the political point of the drawing but only the use of the amputee figure as "beyond tasteless."

On the same day that the cartoon by Toles appeared in the *Post*, the pages of the newspaper carried the first story about what would prove to be the most profound and powerful response to a cartoon in history, what has become known as the Danish cartoon incident.

On Sept. 30, 2005, *Jyllands-Posten*, a daily newspaper in Viby, Denmark, published 12 cartoons criticizing Islam and the prophet Muhammad as a test of freedom of speech, the editor understanding that Islamic tradition forbids pictorial portrayals of the prophet as a hedge against idolatry. The editor may also have understood that any ridiculing of the

prophet, as had been demonstrated by Salman Rushdie's lampoon of him in *The Satanic Verses* (1988), would constitute blasphemy deserving of the death sentence.

Protests, demands for an apology from the editor and the Danish government and legal complaints were lodged for months by Muslim groups before it erupted into an international furor. Danish embassies were closed in Islamic countries. Boycotts against Danish trade and products were instituted. And riots broke out in several countries, leaving many injured and a considerable number dead.

Editors in the United States and abroad who chose to reprint the cartoons were accused of inciting further violence, while those who did not were condemned for giving in to repressive pressure to gag freedom of speech. A few resigned or lost their jobs.

However, such radical responses as these are rare in the history of the political cartoon. Mainly, the drawings serve the same function as does all successful humor in providing a useful reality check. Walt Kelly, former editorial cartoonist and creator of the popular political comic strip *Pogo*, once put it best: "Humor should not be regarded as the sweetening around a sour pill. It is something that clears the air, makes life more real and, therefore, less frightening." ■

*Richard's Poor Almanac* ~ ~ ~ by Richard Thompson

## Benjamin Franklin, Cartoonist

Benjamin Franklin, who turns 300 on Tuesday, was more than just a wit, inventor & Founding Father. He was also the creator of the first cartoon published in America (below) which urged the colonies to unite.

**JOIN, or DIE.**

The cartoon was a big hit, & soon appeared on greeting cards, T-shirts & page-a-day calendars. Eager to repeat his success, Franklin took the snake, named it 'Slinky McBits' and put it in a daily syndicated comic strip.

**SLINKY McBITS** BY BENNY FRANKLIN

OWCH!	I'VE GOT THE GOUT!	THAT'S A TAIL OF WOE!
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But Slinky McBits was a failure. And all the other Founding Fathers just made fun of it.

A. dismembered snake who talks? I don't get it.

Why don't you go invent something useful, Ben? Like the Comb-over!

Discouraged, Franklin folded "Slinky." But his next venture was more successful. He started the Franklin Mint and, 90 years before the Civil War, invented the Civil War Chess Set (\$1,200<sup>00</sup>). Its immediate popularity ensured that, for the rest of his life, Franklin was rolling in the Benjamins.

Richard Thompson for *The Washington Post*  
Jan. 14, 2006

M. Thomas Inge, Blackwell Professor of Humanities at Randolph-Macon College and a Phi Kappa Phi member, is a pioneer in the field of popular culture and comics studies. He has authored or edited over 50 books, including the influential *Comics as Culture and Handbook of American Popular Culture*.

# John Steinbeck, Ed Ricketts & Holistic Biology:

## *A New Voyage to the Sea of Cortez*

In 2004, I served as director and chief scientist of the Sea of Cortez Expedition and Education Project, an eight-week journey throughout Mexico's Sea of Cortez that retraced the legendary 1940 trip made by writer John Steinbeck and marine biologist Ed Ricketts. By visiting the same sites at the same time of year, our goal was to see today's Sea of Cortez through our own eyes, compare our experience to that of Steinbeck and Ricketts and document changes in this mythical place.

*"One of the reasons we gave ourselves for this trip — and when we used this reason, we called the trip an expedition — was to observe the distribution of invertebrates, to see and to record their kinds and numbers, how they lived together, what they ate, and how they reproduced. That plan was simple, straight-forward, and only a part of the truth. But we did tell the truth to ourselves. We were curious. ... We wanted to see everything our eyes would accommodate ..."*

—John Steinbeck

*The Log from the Sea of Cortez*

### A Changing Sea of Cortez

Our 2004 expedition employed a wooden fishing boat, Capt. Frank Donahue's *Gus D*, that was the same size as and remarkably similar to the *Western Flyer*, Capt. Tony Berry's vessel that made the 1940 trip. Along with writer Jon Christensen and myself came the core crew of Nancy Burnett, a photographer; Chuck Baxter, another scientist; Sue Malinowski, a practitioner of holistic Chinese medicine and cook; and Mariah Areas, who was in charge of our education-outreach efforts. Along the way, we were joined by a number of other scientific colleagues, including Exequiel Ezcurra from the National Ecological Institute of Mexico, Rafe Sagarin from UCLA's Institute of the Environment; Cesar Salinas from *El Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste* in La Paz, Mexico; and two

by WILLIAM F. GILLY

literary experts on Steinbeck and Ricketts, Susan Shillinglaw of San José State University and Kathryn Rodger of the University of California, Davis.

Anyone who knows the Sea of Cortez, understands Steinbeck's statement, "Trying to remember the Gulf is like trying to re-create a dream." To give you a sense of the activities and observations that took place during the expedition, I'd like to share two summaries written during the trip, one halfway through the journey and one nearly at the end.

### May 1, 2004. Puerto Penasco

We just spent a month crawling on hands and knees over miles of intertidal rocks along the Baja California peninsula, all of which are barnacle-covered and most of which are sharp, jagged volcanics. This mystical torture was a daily fact of life. The goal was to revisit the same 15 field sites in the Sea of Cortez between Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Refugio that were visited in 1940 and to see how things have changed biologically. Being ambitious, we added 15 additional sites, some on the Pacific coast and others in remote, roadless sections that were neglected in 1940. After studying these 30 sites by laying out transects and counting every visible organism in regularly spaced half-meter square quadrats, I am mostly tired but still curious to decipher the changes. So much depends on your point of view and a commitment to keep looking.

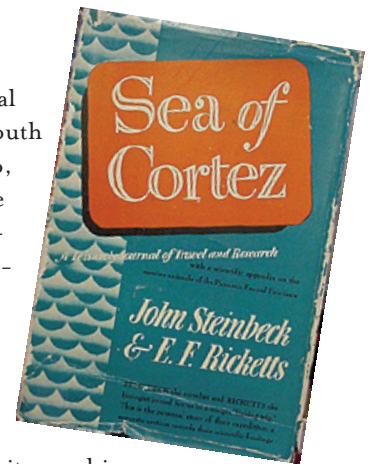
Some changes are dramatic. The tuna cannery, which marked the original Ricketts site in Cabo San Lucas, still exists, but that was about the only thing there in 1940. Today, this formerly sleepy town is the adult Disneyland of Baja, and the dredging of the marina appears to have led to a sanding-in of the former rocky intertidal habitat. No habitat means no animals to count. The same phenomenon appears to have occurred at Puerto Escondido, a beauti-

ful natural harbor south of Loreto, where the tidal currents generated a fantastically rich fauna, one of the best witnessed in 1940. Today the channel is half concrete, and the diversity of intertidal organisms was apparently greatly reduced.

In other cases, change is harder to assess or even define. Several areas labeled as "burned" in 1940, such as Isla Cayo north of La Paz and Isla Coronado north of Loreto, were described as having few species because they appeared to be hostile to life. Today these fairly remote areas support some of the most diverse fauna that we found. Is this richness only apparent because we are comparing these sites to our own burned areas, like Cabo San Lucas, that have been scorched by recent anthropogenic impact? Have these sites actually remained quite unchanged in absolute terms? That is much harder to judge.

Truth loves to hide, and knowing the meaning of what you see only comes slowly. The holistic philosophy of Ed Ricketts would argue that this is so because everything you see is connected to so many things you do not.

**Notes (2006):** 1.) Counts of species identified in both 1940 and 2004 now confirm that some sites, particularly Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Escondido, have indeed greatly deteriorated. On the other hand, some sites like Isla Cayo, have apparently improved, sometimes dramatically. At present, we cannot explain this. Other sites have remained more or less the same. Our sites in roadless areas tended to be uniformly rich. Continued monitoring efforts will be necessary to track changes as they are occurring. 2.) We are still analyzing our



data concerning abundance of certain species, and an overall, wide-spread decrease in abundance in large predatory snails and starfish has emerged. Small predatory snails, on the other hand, appear to have increased. Perhaps the larger snails, which are collected commercially, have been overharvested with the smaller species taking their place. We do not yet understand the causes for the starfish decline.

**May 21, 2004. Off Magdalena Bay, Pacific Coast**

During the last eight weeks, we have crawled over the intertidal rocks along both coasts of Baja California at 36 field sites spaced every 50 miles or so, in an attempt to compare our vision to that of 1940 and to set a baseline for future studies. This effort involved counting virtually every visually identifiable organism in half-meter square quadrats, spaced every meter, marked by a tape laid on the rocks and grounded in position by Global Positioning System. Although straightforward, the task is significant, and the total number of quadrats exceeded 600. My eyes had been sharpened during all this to spot cryptic organisms on the rocks, particularly miniscule ones.

After all of this, we were tired and strained when we started the trip home from Guaymas along the Sonoran coast before cutting back across the gulf to La Paz. We had two more original collecting sites to revisit. Though neither involved rocky transects because they are sandy mangrove habitats, we wanted to see them. At the first, Estera de la Luna, we were blown out by wind and couldn't get our small boats in, so we ran all night to the next, Estero Agiabampo.

At first, it looked bleak, shallow and sandy with no rocks. Then, looking more closely, the unfamiliarity began to dissolve, and we discovered the magic of an unexpected place throbbing with life. The mangrove roots, every broken-off branch in the water, old glass bottles – all were covered by invertebrates, several of them new to us. In every dead cockle shell (the largest cockle species in the world) on the sand flats we found octopus, either a mother brooding eggs or  
[www.pbk.org](http://www.pbk.org)

what appeared to be a mating pair. Perhaps the only thing limiting here was solid habitat for the creatures that our eyes had been trained to see ... and our willingness to open our eyes to the unfamiliar.

Then, quite suddenly, we realized that we were no longer doing science but having fun, maybe for the first time on the trip. Wandering ankle deep on the expansive sand flats, we dredged for clams with our fingers, tactilely distinguishing prized silky, smooth *chocolattes* (for eating!) from the more numerous



Photo credit: Nancy Burnett

View of Cabo San Lucas from the intertidal site visited by Ricketts and Steinbeck. In 1940, Steinbeck noted that the white tuna cannery building (now abandoned) and a few small houses were the only visible structures.

ribbed clams. We were joined by two passing local fishermen. They asked no questions and just got out of their boat in six inches of water and started collecting for us.

Sometimes it takes getting lost to get the right perspective on a place that touches the heart rather than the brain. Perhaps it always does.

**Notes (2006):** 1.) The presence of octopuses of different sexes cohabiting the same shell appears to never have been reported in the scientific literature, although use of old shells as homes is well known. We must go back. 2.) Upon rereading Steinbeck's *Log* recently, I was surprised by his description of Agiabampo: "It was not a difficult collecting station; the pattern, except for the eel-grass, was by now familiar to us although undoubtedly there were many things we did not see. Perhaps our eyes were tired with too much looking." Maybe we really had developed a similar vision of the dream.

**Where next?**

Probably the most compelling finding of our 2004 expedition was the real-

ization of how difficult it is to determine how something has changed in 64 years with only two snapshots taken at the beginning and end of this period.

As George Bernard Shaw said, "Science is always wrong. It never solves a problem without creating 10 more." Indeed, our Sea of Cortez expedition raised questions that should and can be addressed, and maybe that was its value. What is real long-term change, and what is the result of a series of hurricanes that swept through the gulf five years ago? Which changes are seen throughout the gulf, and which reflect some local phenomenon? What factors make some places appear to be richer now than in 1940?

Such questions can be addressed only by continued study of the same sites into the future. We are so far from understanding the *what* and *how* of such ecological puzzles that the notion of *why* doesn't even register. Ricketts would probably be pleased with this non-teleological notion. He would want us to look much deeper and to go to the tide pool more often. ■

*William F. Gilly, Ph.D., spoke at the 2006 Asilomar Conference of the ΦBK Northern California Association, Inc. He has been at Stanford University's Hopkins Marine Station since 1980. Gilly's current research focuses on the jumbo squid, Dosidicus gigas, in the Sea of Cortez and integrates oceanographic parameters, behavioral aspects of the squid and sociological features that are relevant to the commercial fishery for this species.*

*The 2004 Sea of Cortez expedition has stimulated the development of an interdisciplinary field course at Stanford stressing the complexity of natural systems and connections between all elements of nature, including man. Students work in the same tide pools in Monterey Bay that Ricketts did, peer into Steinbeck's human tide pools of Cannery Row through his literature and travel to the Sea of Cortez, study a number of the 1940 collecting sites and monitor changes in the Sea of Cortez. To learn more, visit [holisticbiology.stanford.edu/](http://holisticbiology.stanford.edu/)*

# Love and Seduction: Our Anxiety about Rhetoric

ΦBK-ΣΞ Lecture by Wayne Fields at Washington University in Saint Louis

The Phi Beta Kappa chapter at Washington University in Saint Louis (Beta of Missouri) focuses its attention largely on the core mission of national Phi Beta Kappa: the recognition of excellence in the liberal arts. We do so by means of three activities per year: the presentation of a book award, the selection and initiation of new members, and cosponsorship of a speech in the university's weekly speaker series.

We cosponsor an Assembly Series talk every spring, usually the same day as the initiation ceremony. Our cosponsor is Sigma Xi, our counterpart in the science and engineering disciplines. Lists of new members of both honoraries are included in the program for the speech, and the chapters take turns choosing the speaker, who sometimes speaks also at the Phi Beta Kappa initiation. The Assembly Series is one of the ways in which Washington University extends liberal arts education to the entire university community, and the Beta of Missouri chapter is pleased to contribute to one of its programs. In addition, our cosponsorship of a well-attended lecture is an effective means of publicizing Phi Beta Kappa in general and our new members in particular.

In 2006, our interests coincided with those of the Independent Project in the Humanities (IHP), an interdisciplinary program whose first group of majors is graduating this year. IHP sponsored a three-lecture mini-series by Wayne Fields, collectively titled "Love and Seduction: Our Anxiety about Rhetoric." The first of these lectures doubled as the annual Phi Beta Kappa-Sigma Xi talk, and it is summarized in the following article.

Nancy P. Pope  
Chapter Secretary

"Rhetoric is what makes our life together possible. It lies at the very heart of what we think of as civilization, as much in our relationship to our family and friends as in our civic life," Wayne Fields said. But why is "love" in his title? Because rhetoric is about persuasion. Why "seduction"? Because there is risk. Persuasive talk makes us anxious. Things are not always as we are told. And so the field is bounded: the claims, the facts, the speaker and ourselves, busy responding and evolving in relationship to the arguments being laid out before us.

Citing Aristotle, Fields defined rhetoric as the art of persuasion, rather than eloquence, and pointed out that we create ourselves, both as public citizens and as private persons, by the way we talk to each other when we try to exert influence. We rarely open our mouths without some intention of influencing another person, so his use of Aristotle's definition of rhetoric left almost all occasions of discourse available to him. Indeed, Fields' second claim was that we are wary not only of rhetoric in particular but of discourse, democracy and even human nature in general — and that our wariness comes from "our gift for language and the inevitable incompleteness of that gift."

Consider Cicero's description of the beginning of civil society, starting with "a time when men wandered at large in the fields like animals" and "did nothing by the guidance of reason." Then a great and wise man established civil society by gathering everyone together and delivering "a speech at the same time powerful and entrancing" to introduce civil institutions, including religion, marriage and a legal code that put those with greater physical strength on a par with those who were weaker. So persuasive was this first orator that everyone accepted these new ideas and began to live by them.

Fields commented that the story is itself persuasive in its central assertion that "human relationships, whether familial or political, are either managed by physical force or by rhetoric." The fact that Cicero links public and private institutions is also compelling, for the way in which a society imagines authority in one sphere of human activity carries over into others, according to Fields: "If God and our earthly parents are known to us chiefly by the rod with

which they threaten us, then it is unlikely we will expect anything different from our government, but if we can imagine those relationships as reasoning, dedicated to our growing into the fullness of our own humanity, then it is possible to imagine citizenship in a society with similar values."

However, Cicero's myth continues past the golden age in which humanity was governed "by civic orators devoted to the common good" to a fall in which wicked seekers after power used eloquent speech for their own unworthy purposes and thereby drove better men away from public life and the practice of rhetoric for fear of guilt by association.

In the American version of this story, we associate gifted and benevolent oratory with the Founding Fathers and its perversion with later periods in our history. But we continue to need freedom of speech in order to have a free society, and we need political freedom in order to have freedom of speech. This mutual dependence was well-known to our founders: John Quincy Adams described a republic as a government "where every citizen has a deep interest in the affairs of the nation and, in some form of public assembly or other, has the means and opportunity of delivering his opinions and of communicating his sentiments by speech;" Thomas Jefferson wrote that "in a republican nation, whose citizens are to be led by reason and persuasion and not by force, the art of reasoning becomes of first importance." Today, these attitudes continue to inform democracy movements all over the world, as can be seen most recently in the Republic of Georgia.

So not only are we dependent on rhetoric, but we are made anxious by that dependence. Why do we feel such anxiety? Because rhetoric is "the activity in which we risk being humiliated, deceived and betrayed," Fields said. It is capable, for example, of making an offer of seduction sound like a gift of love. There are two general reasons why rhetoric seems untrustworthy to us. One is that it enables us to arrive not at certainty but rather at a well-informed and well-reasoned opinion — an approach to the truth, but not *the* Truth. The other is that language is inherently ambiguous, whether that ambiguity is deliberate or accidental. And among deliberately ambiguous uses of language, deceit

is not as humiliating as seduction. The former just cheats us, if we are taken in, as a buyer is cheated by a used car with an odometer that has been turned back. The latter is based on a presumed knowledge of what the buyer desires, as when a salesman markets a used car as able to make the buyer look or feel younger. The salesman's presumption is a violation in that it presumes and then exploits an intimacy with the buyer. Yet speakers and their audiences inevitably make analogous assumptions, as Fields said, paraphrasing Kenneth Burke: "Every speaker assumes a familiarity with the feelings and motives of the audience; every audience is engaged in an evaluation not only of the speaker's argument but of his or her character as well. Each, in one way or another, is presuming to know the other." Therefore, we can become anxious about all uses of discourse.

In order to explore the sources of our anxiety further, Fields turned to Plato's dialogues between Socrates and Sophists about teaching. After comparing Protagoras to a college recruiter who would rather discuss the consequences of being his student than the content of his curriculum, Fields spent the rest of his time on the *Gorgias*. Unable to move Protagoras past promising his students the ability "to speak and act most powerfully in the ways of state," meaning eloquence in the political arena, Socrates maneuvers Gorgias into stating that he teaches "the source, not only of personal freedom for individuals but also of mastery over others in one's own country." Whereas Cicero's fable imagined rhetoric as a way to make those of differing physical strength equal to each other, Plato sees the danger that rhetoric may simply replace violence as a means of domination. Therefore, teachers of rhetoric in America today as well as in classical Athens say that speakers and writers should be virtuous and that their audiences must judge their character — or, as Fields commented, the purity of their beliefs, these days — as well as judging their argument.

Far from being concerned with virtue, however, Gorgias is unashamedly interested in making his students win arguments even when they're in the wrong. Fields noted that "Gorgias is proud that those whom he trains will be

able to prevail over experts on the issue under consideration — the man who can speak well triumphing over civil engineers when fortifications are the matter at stake, for instance (think Louisiana)." Not at all surprisingly, Gorgias proceeds to distance himself from the uses to which his students might put their ability, claiming that he is just the coach and they are the athletes; what they accomplish, for good or for ill, is their own responsibility.

Fields pointed out the parallels between Plato's Athens and our own time and place more explicitly as he neared the end of his talk. He compared Gorgias to teachers in general, "a bit puffed up — but almost comically so — and a man hungry to be both respected and liked," and his students to those media pundits for whom verbal combat is a way to prove personal toughness. The most assertive of Gorgias's students in Plato's dialogue is a man named Callicles, who aggressively threatens Socrates with execution by the polis if he does not stop spouting philosophy. The philosopher forces Callicles to acknowledge that he views his

freedom from being harmed as dependent on his willingness to harm others, and Fields interjected, "We hear it expressed all the time from presidents and football coaches, the best defense is a good offense, and so it may be in international affairs and in athletics, but it is problematic in personal and social relationships of the sort that Socrates and Callicles are discussing."

Plato concludes the *Gorgias* with Socrates' story of how our lives are judged after death. In the light of such a judgment, Socrates warns Callicles, it is well to be good, not just to seem good, and the philosophers are likelier to be good than those who seek power. Fields concluded the ΦBK-ΣΞ lecture with the suggestion that the way to be good, to engage in teaching and learning that lead to growth and to use rhetoric without mutually assured seduction, is to love. ■

*Wayne Fields is director of American Culture Studies at Washington University in Saint Louis and a nationally recognized authority on rhetoric and American political argument.*

## Brighten Up!



The Phi Beta Kappa Society is offering a new desk lamp to its members. The Phi Beta Kappa lamp features a deeply carved key insignia and is made from solid maple hardwood. The black lacquer finish is accented with gold banding and a cherry base. Each lamp is personalized on the back with the member's name, chapter and year of election. Delivery of the lamp by UPS takes four to six weeks. Also available is an extensive line of other membership items including the popular membership display, which includes a membership certificate and a large key, double-matted and framed in a 12-x 16-inch walnut frame. A three dollar shipping charge is added to each display order.

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# From Our Book Critics

By Svetlana Alpers



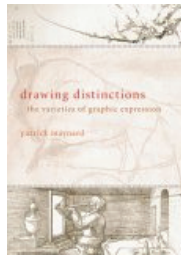
**Vincent Van Gogh: The Drawings.** Colta Ives, Susan Alyson Stein, Sjraar van Heugten and Marije Vellekoop. Yale University Press, 2005. \$65.00

There is much interest in drawing today on the part of both artists and viewers. The exhibition of Van Gogh drawings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York last fall drew crowds. But it was impressive that, despite the crush, people paused to look. It helped that the works (100 out of the 1,200 drawings Van Gogh made in the 10 years of his working life) were superbly selected and purposefully hung. It was making, rather than questions of meaning, that one worked one's way through.

A surprising amount of the visual interest, and even the sense of arrangement, is preserved in the printed catalogue that accompanied the exhibit. It often seems these days that exhibitions are made for the sake of the publication and convenient sale of a book, but the success of such books rests on the integrity of the exhibition itself. On this occasion, exhibit and book share the glory.

There are many revelations to be had. First, that the brilliant hues and fiery brush stokes of Van Gogh's paintings had their origin in drawn lines, in particular in the bold marks formed by the pens the artist fashioned from the reeds he found in Provence. Van Gogh's paintings, one discovers, can be described as drawings executed in paint. Further, a number of drawings were made not before but after completed paintings. Put differently, a painting was continued and perfected in a series of replicative drawings. As the artist admitted in one of the many letters to his brother quoted here, the painting lacks clearness of touch. While the paintings can appear passionately expressive, the drawings suggest that Van Gogh also had an almost Cézannian sense of structure in him.

Essays on the making of the marks, the critical reception and the unfortunate metamorphosis over time of the materials used for the drawings make this volume as good to read as it is to look at.



**Drawing Distinctions: The Varieties of Graphic Expression.** Patrick Maynard. Cornell University Press, 2005. \$29.95 paperback

What is it that is so basic about drawings and about drawing as an activity? Patrick Maynard is a philosopher who addresses images. Having earlier written a subtle study of photography, he starts off this time by writing against it. This book begins with a vigorous defense of the purpose and use of drawing in human cultures against the current obsession with photography.

Maynard thinks of drawing as a tool kit, an expansive group of different techniques for deploying the marks human beings have made on a diverse variety of surfaces. Everything from children's first efforts to technical schemes to cartoons and more are included. But the heart of the matter for him is the activity we know as art.

He considers relevant writings of art historians such as Erwin Panofsky (on perspective and the depiction of space) and Ernst H. Gombrich (on the larger issue of convincing representation). This is the best account I have ever read of Gombrich's complex *Art and Illusion*. At a time when art historians and perceptual psychologists are rather faddishly hobnobbing together, it is salutary to be brought back to a foundational text that used perceptual psychology to analyze convincing representation and why it has a history.

The heart of the book looks closely, under a series of categories and with reference to basic handbooks on the art of drawing, at a few drawn images. Among them are Albrecht Dürer's 1514 engraving of *St. Jerome in his Study*, a figural drawing by Francisco Goya and a landscape by Paul Cézanne. You will see how Dürer micromanages illumination

and space, how Goya brushes in shadow and how Cézanne suggests objects without marking edges and contours.

This is a dense book to read right through, but it is a marvelous resource about the nature of drawing to have and refer to.



**Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo.** Christopher Green. Yale University Press, 2006. \$50.00

It is interesting to come to this book with drawings on the mind. Drawing, it might be argued, was Picasso's greatest natural gift. The theme of the book is the tension between the architecture of pictorial structure and the vertigo of whatever transgresses it. It considers the tension between the two in Picasso's art by starting off with the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907) and some of his many preparatory drawings. In that famously aggressive painting, it is the order behind or prior to it — the great mythological paintings of nudes in the tradition by Titian and Rubens — that Christopher Green stresses here.

The setting of the book is Paris in the first decades of the 20th century, with its new building and new anthropological forays. Green posits the architect Le Corbusier as the representative of order and the writer Georges Bataille as the representative of transgressive violence. With this tension in mind, he proceeds to work thru the "primitive" paintings of Theodore Rousseau, the cubist landscapes of Braque and Picasso, the sculpture of Jacques Lipchitz and paintings by Joan Miró.

Though it makes one look and think, the book is not entirely satisfactory. The author's sense of the relationship between context and art, between art high and low, is not made clear. Further, one misses some acknowledgment that there was a nasty political side to Bataille's courting of violence. After all, these are the years of fascism. A result of the book is that Picasso's vertigo/violence became, at least for this reader, more than a little suspect.



**Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South.** Adam Rothman. Harvard University Press, 2005. \$35.00

Adam Rothman has chosen an important topic for his first book: the near-explosive expansion of slavery into the deep South in the first decades after the American Revolution. It was this expansion that made the South, and, by logical extension, the entire nation, a slave country.

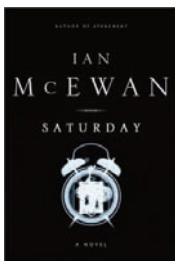
Yet, amazingly, slavery grew and spread even in the face of a general belief that slavery was, if not morally wrong, at least out of step with the improving spirit of the age. Americans such as Thomas Jefferson comforted themselves with the fantasy that slavery was on the road to extinction. In an argument that today seems laughably counterintuitive, they argued that, by letting slavery spread to new territories to the southwest, the institution would be "diffused," making its eventual abolition all the easier. Rothman calls diffusionism "an antislavery rationale for the expansion of slavery" and points out that it only made the institution stronger. At the end of the Revolution, there were half a million slaves in the United States, and, by 1820, there were three times that number, spread over a much wider territory.

One of Rothman's most arresting findings is that the rapid spread of slavery into the deep South was accompanied by persistent, if half-hearted, attempts to prevent the spread of slavery. As late as 1819, Mississippi's legislature was attempting to restrict the importation of slaves into the state. At the same time, planters from the upper South were selling thousands of slaves to the deep South, perhaps half of them children and teenagers. It is not news that slavery tore children from their families or that the institution fed off the labor of teenagers, but Rothman illustrates the deep logic of a system that was, in fact, an integral part of a global

market in commodities such as cotton and sugar.

Rothman also notes that, before the land in this region could be planted with such crops, it had to be taken from the Indians who inhabited it. Here, the key figure is Andrew Jackson, who made his fame as an Indian fighter and his fortune as a planter. Rothman's Jackson serves as a corrective to Sean Wilentz's much more sympathetic portrait in his recent *The Rise of American Democracy*, where Jackson is an advocate for the common man. In Rothman's book, Jackson pops up everywhere that land must be secured for the spread of slavery. He is there, of course, leading Americans to victory at the Battle of New Orleans, and he is there on his famous unauthorized foray into Florida to fight the British, who, he thought, were riling up the Indians and slaves. Jackson also led the American forces who defeated the Creek Indians. A faction known as the Red Sticks had risen in rebellion against the Americans, but, when the war was over, the Americans took all the Creeks' land, friend and foe alike. Jackson's vision was almost pastoral — "elegant mansions, and extensive rich & productive farms" — but it was built on Indian lands by slave labor.

Rothman sketches in a critical chapter in American history, and he aims for a large audience. He has tried to write what his publisher calls "an elegant narrative," but phrases such as "the crepuscular predawn light" suggest that he has tried too hard. At the same time, as both a writer and an analyst, Rothman tends to talk around his subject. Unfortunately, the book lacks both the narrative drive that would make the book attractive to general readers and the analytical bite that would make it compelling to scholars in the field.

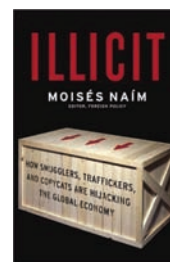


**Saturday.** Ian McEwan. Doubleday, 2005. \$26.00

It is 3:40 in the morning on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2003, and Henry Perowne, a successful neurosurgeon, has awakened suddenly

and inexplicably. As his wife, an accomplished lawyer whom he loves dearly, continues to sleep, Perowne looks out the window of their London townhouse. "An habitual observer of his own moods," he is struck by his own euphoria. And then, he hears it first, a loud rumble, before seeing it: an airplane, on fire, headed toward Heathrow. In these ominous, post 9-11 days, with the Iraq war imminent, Perowne expects the worst. His expectations, it will turn out, are wrong, but not entirely.

Ian McEwan's beautifully crafted novel is all about these sorts of contrasts and expectations, the ominous rumblings and quotidian pleasures that constitute life in the 21st century. The events of the novel all take place on a single day, a Saturday marked by both the routine and the wholly unexpected. Perowne is a good man, perhaps as good a person as one can be, and the challenges he will face on this remarkable day have essentially nothing to do, McEwan seems to suggest, with any limitations of Perowne's. Instead, they are historical, existential and accidental. This is not, however, a philosophical novel, or at least obviously so. "It's not a visionary age," Perowne thinks to himself. Instead of a vision, McEwan offers his readers an accumulation of precisely observed details: a saxophone's "wild and ragged high note, like a voice cracking with joy" or the tentorium of the brain, "a delicate structure of beauty, like the little whirl of a veiled dancer."



**Illicit: How Smugglers, Traffickers and Copycats Are Hijacking the Global Economy.** Moisés Naím. Doubleday, 2005. \$26.00

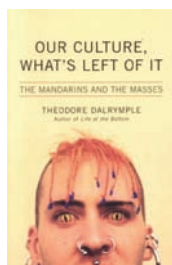
Missiles and marijuana, machines and methamphetamines, cocaine and children, software and sex slaves, kidneys and counterfeit goods, small arms and bootleg videos: a cat's cradle of criminal commerce insinuates itself into the world economy. Editor of the

influential *Foreign Policy*, Moisés Naím has written an explosive book to warn us that a firestorm of illicit trade is radically altering world politics and economics ... for the worse. Knockoff Kalashnikovs can now be bought almost as easily as knockoff Prada or Gucci bags, pirated cassettes, fake pharmaceuticals, veterinary drugs repackaged for human use, bogus brake pads made of compressed sawdust or women put up on the Web "for sale."

Illicit trade in all this and more is global, piggybacking on expanding global commerce, accelerating with it and often overlapping. The world market is awash with dirty money, pre- and post-laundering. Demand — for stolen art, cars, hijacked cigarettes, human organs, bits of (other) endangered species, discrete dumps for hazardous waste, corruptible officials, bureaucrats, cops and bankers — grows apace, but hardly outstrips supply. Great migrant tides sweep past borders. Governments and bungling bureaucracies are hamstrung by legal constraints that the criminal competition ignores. Officers of the law flag, disarmed by inadequate budgets and well-meaning watchdogs. State capacity to enforce sovereignty, guard borders and jugulate crime dwindles. Greed and need combine with new technologies to help the avid and the desperate get around habitual standards, disorder the forces of order, rent the services of politicians and governments or buy them outright.

Yet all is not dark. To the endless struggle between flexible lawbreakers and

muscle-bound enforcers, there is no foregone conclusion *provided* we understand that moral homilies are no help when the issue is not morals but incentives and profits. Illicit activities, Naím insists, are not a moral phenomenon but an economic one that turns about markets, demand, supply and price differentials. A stalwart chapter near the end lays out the author's menu of anti-trafficking possibilities, not blazingly novel but largely convincing and heartening, if only our masters and those of other lands take heed.



**Our Culture, What's Left of It: The Mandarins and the Masses.** *Theodore Dalrymple.* Ivan Dee, 2005. \$27.50

Dalrymple's subtitle tells us his purpose: dressing down the cultivated, compassionate, sensitive mandarins, denouncing their efforts to goad gauche, inarticulate, unimaginative masses out of complacent darkness.

He rails at the ever greater use of euphemisms, as when prostitutes, for example, are meliorated as sex workers. He exposes the propensity of some alleged artists and critics to promote the transgressive artistry of dirty pictures. He debunks ambient semantic and statistical legerdemain (or, rather, *legerde-langue*). He chaffs buffoons who invite us to jettison the fossilized, antediluvian past in favor of a brave and vacuous present. He observes the effects upon

susceptible populations of intellectualized coarseness and "the erosion of civilized standards of conduct" brought about by assaults from all sides. He praises critical minds that brush off political correctness because it forces many "to say or to imply what they do not believe but must not question." He censures ideological uniformity imposed by "monomaniacs who believe themselves in possession of a theory that explains everything, including the future." Living in the English provinces, he knows that all opinion is free, but some opinions are freer than others. So he applauds a brave schoolmaster who tried to reason with advocates of diversity and multiculturalism, convinced that all cultures are equal but not presumptions other than their own.

Sparkling, lucid and maliciously witty, Dalrymple's essays are crowded with anecdotes culled from a lifetime of wide-ranging travel and inner-city medical practice. If you share one or more of his admirable prejudices, you will enjoy this book.

#### HOW BOOKS ARE CHOSEN FOR REVIEW

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