



# The Key Reporter

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## *Boorstin to Receive Award*

### **35th Triennial Council Will Meet in San Antonio October 27–30; Singletary and Ferrante Are Nominated for President, Vice President**

San Antonio is the site for the 35th triennial Council of the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, which will meet October 27–30. A highlight of the weekend will be the presentation of the Phi Beta Kappa Award for Distinguished Service to the Humanities to Daniel J. Boorstin, Librarian of Congress Emeritus, at the banquet October 29. This award, which includes a medal and \$2,500, is given only once in a triennial period.

The host chapter is Epsilon of Texas at Trinity University. Headquarters for the meetings is the Hotel Hilton Palacio del Rio.

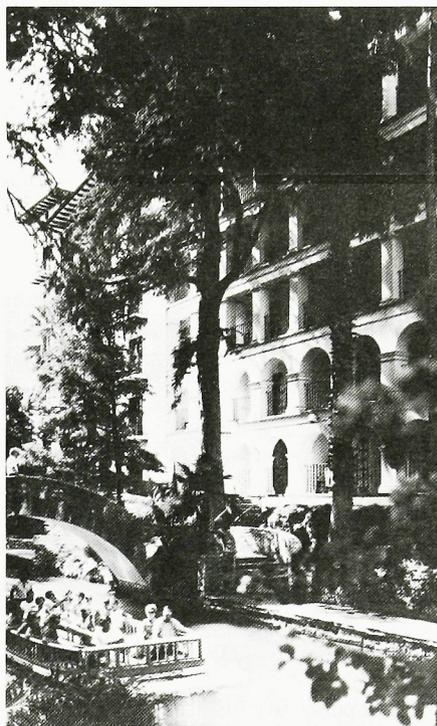
All Council participants have been invited to a reception and buffet supper on October 27 at the Institute of Texan Cultures, cohosted by the Phi Beta Kappa Associations of San Antonio and Greater Houston, the Trinity University chapter, and the United Chapters.

As the legislative body of the United Chapters, the Council will consider and vote on the Senate's recommendations for the establishment of three new chapters, at the University of Dallas, Millsaps College, and the University of Tulsa. The Council will also vote on an amendment to the constitution to change the name of the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa to reflect the fact that the constitution identifies both the chapters and the associations as the constituent members of the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa.

Among the other subjects to be discussed are the continuing efforts to achieve greater uniformity in standards of election to the society among the 237 chapters.

The Council will also elect officers and senators for the coming triennium. Nominated for president of the United Chapters is Otis A. Singletary, president emeritus of the University of Kentucky and currently vice president of the United Chapters. The nominee for vice president is Joan M. Ferrante, professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University and currently a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Senate.

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



*The River Walk in San Antonio*

Dore Ashton, professor, Cooper Union; \*Charles Blitzer, director, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; \*Frederick J. Crosson, Cavanaugh Distinguished Professor of Humanities, University of Notre Dame; Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, Alice Freeman Palmer Professor of History Emeritus, University of Michigan; \*LeRoy P. Graf, Distinguished Service Professor of History Emeritus, University of Tennessee; Doris Grumbach, novelist and critic; William C. Havard, Jr., professor of political science, Vanderbilt University; Vera Kistiakowsky, professor of physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Donald S. Lamm, chairman, W. W. Norton and Co. publishers; Linda Koch Lorimer, president, Randolph-Macon Woman's College; \*David E. Pingree, professor of the history of mathematics, Brown University; \*Otis A. Singletary; Joseph F. Wall, professor of history, Grinnell College; and Eugen Weber, Joan Palevsky Professor of

*(continued on back cover)*

### **Johns Hopkins Teaching Assistant Wins 1988–89 Sibley Fellowship**

Anne Catherine Vila, who is completing work on her Ph.D. in French at the Johns Hopkins University, has been awarded Phi Beta Kappa's Sibley Fellowship for the academic year 1988–89. She will use the grant to study the influence of medicine and natural philosophy on the fiction of the French Enlightenment.

A 1983 graduate of Brown University, she has studied in Paris and Avignon. For some time she has been exploring interdisciplinary approaches to literature and science, and has written articles on John Locke's "naturalist" rhetoric in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and on Balzac's fictional borrowings from the physiologist Xavier Bichat in *Louis Lambert*.



*Anne C. Vila*

She is the 40th winner of the award, which was established with funds bequeathed to Phi Beta Kappa in the will of Isabelle Stone.

In 1989, the Sibley Fellowship, which carries a \$7,000 stipend, will be offered for studies in Greek language, literature, history, or archaeology. Candidates must be unmarried women between 25 and 35 years of age who hold the doctorate or who have fulfilled all the requirements for the doctorate except the dissertation. They must be planning to devote full-time work to research during the fellowship year that begins September 1, 1989.

Further information and application forms may be obtained by writing to the Sibley Fellowship Committee, Phi Beta Kappa, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

### **Two Phi Beta Kappa Members Vie for U.S. Presidency**

For the first time since 1912, both the Republican and the Democratic presidential nominees are members of Phi Beta Kappa: George Bush, Yale, 1947, and Michael Dukakis, Swarthmore, 1955. In 1912, Republican William Howard Taft (Yale) and Progressive Theodore Roosevelt (Harvard) lost to Democrat Woodrow Wilson (honorary member, Wesleyan).

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## Boorstin to Be Honored by Triennial Council For Lifetime Contributions to Humanities

By Priscilla S. Taylor

WHEN DANIEL J. BOORSTIN announced his intention to retire as Librarian of Congress last year, the *Washington Post* recalled the controversy almost a dozen years before when he had been nominated. Professional librarians complained that he was not one of them; minority employees questioned his commitment to affirmative action programs; and some of his academic colleagues, perhaps jealous of the widespread popularity of his books, expressed objections to "a number of his well-expressed opinions." The *Post* recalled that it had supported Boorstin's confirmation by citing the advice Felix Frankfurter had given Franklin D. Roosevelt decades before: "What is wanted in the directing head of a great library are imaginative energy and vision. He should be a man who knows books, loves books, and makes books. . . ."

There's no question that Boorstin filled that bill, and his stewardship of the Library now is widely acclaimed. Early on, he appointed an internal task force and eight outside advisory groups to help plan a reorganization of the Library, which took place two years later. He opened the bronze doors in the great hall, made the stacks more accessible to scholars, put out picnic tables, and sponsored an assortment of festivities celebrating the whole range of American civilization. He is credited with increasing the public visibility of the Library; establishing more systematic interaction with the world of scholarship and learning; and, perhaps most important, persuading Congress to support his vision. The Library has now occupied the James Madison Building—which at one time was threatened with a takeover by Congress for office space—and the Library's two older buildings are being extensively renovated.

In the belief that enthusiasm for the latest technology should not replace books, Boorstin was also the inspiration for the Center for the Book project at the Library, established by act of Congress but supported by private resources, to encourage reading. The center has sponsored studies, symposia, and publications and, working with CBS, has sponsored a project to encourage television viewers to "Read More About It." As tangible evidence of his continuing devotion to the Library and as a tribute to the institution they came to love, Boorstin and his wife Ruth donated \$100,000 on his retirement to establish a Boorstin fund to support the Library's publication of elegant facsimiles.

Boorstin, a trim septuagenarian who obviously has more mental and physical energy than most people a decade younger, expresses great respect for Phi Beta Kappa, which he calls a "symbol of quality." He is enthusiastic about the prospect of receiving Phi Beta Kappa's triennial award for lifetime contributions to the humanities, which is to be presented in San Antonio in October.



Daniel J. Boorstin  
—From the Library of Congress Collections

In response to a question about the role of the humanities today, he notes that all Americans should be exposed to the classics in their own language: "It's a crime against society to produce illiterates by design." He adds, "There is only one kind of history—human history—not men's or women's history, not black, not white. The approach to teaching history must be ecumenical to be humanistic. History is by nature comprehensive. Segregation has no place in history any more than anywhere else in a civilized society. To fragment history into races and sexes and classes is to condemn part of mankind to the back of the bus."

Boorstin's own approach to history, and to life, has always been comprehensive and whole-hearted. His irrepressible enthusiasm for learning and ideas is concretely evident in the two bookshelves that span the length of one wall in his spacious, modern townhouse in Washington's Cleveland Park and encompass the books he has written and their translations—from his Harvard undergraduate thesis to the much-applauded *Discoverers*. This latest book has won him several

new groups of admirers, and the awards of the American Geographical Society and the Association of American Geographers, whose medal is displayed nearby. Among the 14 translations of this book, so far, his library includes those in German, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, and Japanese.

The works of art that surround him reflect his attachment to civilizations as disparate as the Orient (the Japanese government awarded him its highest "Order of the Sacred Treasure"); Europe (a wall-size 15th-century planisphere shows the Earth encircled by water, with Jerusalem at its center); and modern America (a large work of kinetic art by Frank Malina over his bookshelves quietly transmutes from pink to yellow and white.)

Although Boorstin has won prizes everywhere he has gone (including the Bowdoin at Harvard, the Jenkins and Younger at Balliol), he wears his honors modestly. His life has been dominated not only by reading and writing books but also by rising to new challenges along the way. Almost every job he was offered seems to have been something he had not, on paper, been "prepared for." And some of his success as an American historian may stem from the fact that he has spent so much time observing his own country from abroad.

### His Early Days

Boorstin is a product of the public schools of Tulsa, Oklahoma, in the days when high school was serious business (he remembers a solid grounding in academic subjects and a bicameral school legislature). He came to love Gibbon at Harvard (a small engraving of Gibbon adorns his study wall), but when a beloved grandfather died, he dropped his study of history and literature for biochemistry, to find a way to deal with disease. Although he later switched back, after finding he had "no aptitude" for science, he apparently had adequate aptitude to maintain an average that won him a *summa* and his Phi Beta Kappa key. Moreover, he says, his "indoctrination into science" stood him in good stead later.

When he won a Rhodes Scholarship to Balliol College at Oxford, he studied law and took a double first in the bachelor of arts and bachelor of civil law degrees. He attributes his interest in the law to his father, whom he describes as a "general practitioner" of the law in Tulsa—a man who spent his life helping and counseling others in the days before litigation became the answer to every problem.

Boorstin points out that he enjoyed the humanistic approach to the law at Oxford, which emphasized Roman law, legal history, and comparative law. He also relished using his Latin, but found the law

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too constricting overall. ("Legal education sharpens the mind by narrowing it.") The Master of Balliol, a philosopher, he notes, sensed his frustration with the law and generously tutored him on the side in philosophy, particularly Kant and William James. Boorstin credits his Oxford tutor with honing his writing skill by mercilessly attacking all papers submitted to him.

Boorstin was admitted as a barrister at the Inner Temple in London and flirted briefly with the idea of remaining permanently in England, but the spell wore off and he returned to the United States to take his J.S.D. as a Sterling Fellow at Yale, where he also wrote *The Mysterious Science of the Law*.

Harvard invited him back to teach American history and literature, a subject he claims never to have studied formally. Meanwhile, the dean of Harvard Law School asked him to edit the three-volume *Delaware Cases, 1792–1830*, which he did with the help of an assistant, Bennett Frankel. Frankel eventually took Boorstin home, where he met Frankel's sister Ruth, a fellow member of Phi Beta Kappa, who became his wife four months later. (Their three sons, Paul, Jonathan, and David, also are members of the society.) Anyone who knows Boorstin cannot help being impressed by his devotion to his wife of 47 years, whose inspiration and editorial help he acknowledges in all his major works.

### The Middle Years

During World War II, Boorstin worked as an attorney in the Lend-Lease Administration before returning to academe—this time, Swarthmore—to teach yet another subject he claims never to have studied: European history. Among his pleasures during his brief stay there was his friendship with W. H. Auden and the Gestalt psychologist Wolfgang Kohler.

In 1944 he moved to the University of Chicago, where he was to spend a quarter-century. The interdisciplinary emphasis made Chicago the ideal university for Boorstin, who taught legal history and American intellectual history, edited the 29-volume *Chicago History of American Civilization*, edited the American history section of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and worked as an adviser to the University of Chicago Press and to McGraw-Hill.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Boorstin was also on the road, as he lectured from Iceland to Fiji and at most of the places between. He also was visiting professor of American history at the University of Rome and Kyoto University; was the first incumbent of the chair of American history at the Sorbonne; and was Pitt Professor of American History and Institutions at Trinity College, Cambridge.

And books flowed from his typewriter:

*The Genius of American Politics* (1953); *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (1958); *America and the Image of Europe* (1960); *The Image, or What Happened to the American Dream* (1962), in which he invented the term *pseudo-event* [see box on page 4]; *The Americans: The National Experience* (1965); *The Landmark History of the American People* (2 vols., 1968, 1970); *The Decline of Radicalism* (1969); and *The Sociology of the Absurd* (1970).

In 1969 Boorstin returned to Washington to head the Smithsonian's Museum of History and Technology, and it was from there that he was selected to head the Library of Congress six years later. In 1973 he produced *The Democratic Experience*, the final volume in *The Americans* trilogy that garnered the Bancroft, Dexter, Francis Parkman, and Pulitzer prizes. Later books include *De-*

*mocracy and Its Discontents* (1974) [see box on page 3]; *The Exploring Spirit* (1976); and *The Republic of Technology* (1978).

### The "Retiree"

Today, Boorstin spends most of his time tackling the writing he left the Library to complete. Like Gibbon, he believes history to be a "literary art," and he obviously writes it gracefully so that people will be persuaded to read it.

Boorstin long ago developed the habit of rising early and getting some writing done in his ground-floor study, which overlooks a Japanese garden, before going to the office. He still does his writing at home; he's completing *The Creators*, a companion volume to *The Discoverers*, to deal with the "artistic" (continued on page 4)

### The Quotable Boorstin

*From Democracy and Its Discontents: Reflections on Everyday America (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), pp. 45–47 (copyright, 1971, by Daniel J. Boorstin). Reprinted by permission.*

. . . A new price of our American standard of living is our imprisonment in the present.

That imprisonment tempts us to a morbid preoccupation with ourselves, and so induces hypochondria. . . . We think we are the beginning and the end of the world. And as a result we get our nation and our lives, our strengths and our ailments, quite out of focus.

Overwhelmed by the instant moment—headlined in this morning's newspaper and flashed on this hour's newscast—we don't see the whole real world around us. We don't see the actual condition of our long-lived body national.

In a word, we have lost our sense of history. In our schools the story of our nation has been displaced by "social studies"—which is often the story only of what ails us. In our churches the effort to see man *sub specie aeternitatis* has been displaced by a "social gospel"—which is a polemic against the supposed special evils of our time. Our book publishers and literary reviewers no longer seek the timeless and the durable, but spend much of their efforts in fruitless search for à la mode "social commentary"—which they pray won't be out of date when the issue goes to press in two weeks or when the manuscript becomes a book in six months. . . .

Without the materials of historical comparison, having lost our traditional respect for the wisdom of ancestors and the culture of kindred nations, we are left with little but abstractions, baseless utopia, to compare ourselves with. No wonder, then, that some of our distraught citizens libel us as the worst nation in the world, or the bane of human history. For we have wandered out of history.

We have nearly lost interest in those real examples from the human past which alone can help us shape standards of the humanly possible. So we compare ours with a mythical Trouble-Free World, where all mankind was at peace. We talk about the war in Vietnam as if it were the first war in American history to which many Americans were opposed. We condemn our nation for not yet having attained perfect justice, and we forget that ours is the most motley and miscellaneous great nation in history—the first to use the full force of law and constitutions and to enlist the vast majority of its citizens in a strenuous quest for justice for all races and ages and religions.

We flagellate ourselves as "poverty-ridden"—by comparison with some mythical time when there was no bottom 20 percent in the economic scale. We sputter against the Polluted Environment—as if it had come with the age of the automobile. We compare our smoggy air not with the odor of horse dung and the plague of flies and the smells of garbage and human excrement which filled cities in the past, but with the honeysuckle perfumes of some nonexistent City Beautiful. We forget that even if the water in many cities today is not as spring-pure nor as palatable as we would like, still for most of history the water of the cities (and of the countryside) was undrinkable.

## Boorstin to Be Honored

(continued from page 3)

achievements of mankind." And despite his endorsement of the latest technology for the Library, he still pounds out his books on a manual Olympia typewriter, surrounded by his own books and some on loan from the Library.

Boorstin is also an active member of the editorial advisory board for *U.S. News and World Report*, and his responsibilities for Doubleday as "editor at large," a title created for him, take him to New York each month. He is particularly enthusiastic about reissuing some of the books on Doubleday's backlist, which includes volumes by Teddy Roosevelt and other U.S. presidents.

He is "exhilarated" to see his own books appearing in translation, which he refers to as both a largely "unrecognized, uncompensated art" and an affirmation of the humanities, because the ideas are "no longer imprisoned in one language." He is also particularly proud of the first two publications paid for by the Boorstin donation to the Center for the Book: reproductions of a Japanese fairy tale and a set of antique maps.

Not surprisingly, Boorstin's model as Librarian of Congress was Archibald McLeish, with whom he consulted before accepting the job and who, Boorstin notes, was still writing in his 90s. It's safe to assume that Daniel Boorstin intends to be, too.

### The Quotable Boorstin (continued)

From *Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1987), pp. 11–12 and p. 57 (copyright, 1961, by Daniel J. Boorstin). Reprinted by permission.

A pseudo-event, then, is a happening that possesses the following characteristics:

(1) It is not spontaneous, but comes about because someone has planned, planted, or incited it. Typically, it is not a train wreck or an earthquake, but an interview.

(2) It is planted primarily (not always exclusively) for the immediate purpose of being reported or reproduced. Therefore, its occurrence is arranged for the convenience of the reporting or reproducing media. Its success is measured by how widely it is reported. . . .

(3) Its relation to the underlying reality of the situation is ambiguous. . . . While the news interest in a train wreck is in *what* happened and in the real consequences, the interest in an interview is always, in a sense, in *whether* it really happened and in what might have been the motives.

(4) Usually it is intended to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. The hotel's thirtieth-anniversary celebration, by saying that the hotel is a distinguished institution, actually makes it one. . . .

\* \* \*

Our age has produced a new kind of eminence. . . . This new kind of eminence is "celebrity."

The word "celebrity" . . . originally meant not a person but a condition—as the Oxford English Dictionary says, "the condition of being much talked about; famousness, notoriety." . . . Now American dictionaries define a celebrity as "a famous or well-publicized person." . . . *The celebrity is a person who is known for his well-knownness.*

His qualities—or rather his lack of qualities—illustrate our peculiar problems. He is neither good nor bad, great nor petty. He is the human pseudo-event.

# Recommended Reading

## Book Committee

**Humanities** Frederick J. Crosson, Robert B. Heilman, Robert P. Sonkowsky, Lawrence Willson **Social sciences** Earl W. Count, Richard N. Current, Leonard W. Doob, Madeline R. Robinton, Victoria Schuck, Anna J. Schwartz **Natural sciences** Ronald Geballe, Russell B. Stevens

### Ronald Geballe

**James Lick's Monument: The Saga of Captain Richard Floyd and the Building of the Lick Observatory.** Helen Wright. Cambridge Univ., 1987. \$32.50.

When completed a century ago, the 36-inch refractor atop Mount Hamilton was a superlative achievement, the subject of admiration the world over. Success took the conjunction of private fortune, vision, innovation, and ability that characterized the American venture of those days. Richard Floyd and Thomas Fraser deserve recognition as the dedicated heroes of the enterprise. Eccentric, shrewd, many-sided James Lick played a large role in San Francisco's development and left many monuments. None is of greater significance than the observatory he commissioned for the budding University of California. It has accumulated a glorious record of discovery and influence. Grown elderly, Lick, concerned about the disposition of his body, declared himself thus against cremation, "No, sir! I intend to rot like a gentleman!" and willed that his body be interred in the pier of the great telescope. The knowledge that it lies there caused this reviewer, when, as a susceptible boy of 10, he was first taken up to view Saturn, to turn his head away from the pier with its awesome contents.

**The Twin Dimensions: Inventing Time and Space.** Geza Szamosi. McGraw-Hill, 1986. \$15.95.

Time and space are the concepts on which all science is based; we can measure them, but defining them in more primitive terms is beyond us. All life responds unknowingly to them, but humans, out of our special needs, must have conceived them. Szamosi appeals to the demands of early music and pictorial art for first giving structure to the concepts. Their growing elaboration brought quantification and measurement. Galileo, Newton, and their contemporaries could not free science from pure speculation until time and space could be seen as passive arenas in which actions take place. Today we don't see them quite that way but we aren't through wrestling with the concepts. This eloquent, provocative essay, totally non-mathematical, brings the reader up to the many-dimensional universe of contemporary theory and the possibility that "there exists nothing in the world but structured space-time."

**The Ice: A Journey to Antarctica.** Stephen J. Pyne. Univ. of Iowa, 1986. \$37.50.

"The Ice is profoundly passive; it does not give, it takes. The Ice is a study in reductionism." Superficially, like all other places on Earth, Antarctica has its geology, geography, weather, tales of exploration, literature and art, and geopolitics. But it also has unrelenting ice and other special qualities and quantities that are extremes. Pyne, a historian by profession, has been there, and his graceful writing evokes an understanding of all these to an extent unlikely to be achieved without daring to venture there.

**The Advancement of Science and Its Burdens.** Gerald Holton. Cambridge Univ., 1986. \$12.95.

Holton, a Jefferson lecturer, is a leading analyst of the presuppositions and styles of science in our day, especially those of Einstein. The high school textbook and course developed through his insight, leadership, and perseverance stand as a model for the integration of the history of physics with the subject matter itself, as well as for clear exposition. This collection of essays contains contributions on Einstein, on the history of 20th-century science, and on the role of science in education and in the public interest. All are interesting, carefully worked out, and informative.

**To Infinity and Beyond: A Cultural History of the Infinite.** Eli Maor. Birkhauser, 1987. \$49.50.

The author, a mathematician, takes the reader on an enjoyable excursion to the infinite, exploring the concept along its various dimensions: mathematical, geometrical, aesthetic, and cosmological. The many illustrations (which include apt quotations running from the Bible and Greek antiquity to the present day) will connect his work with almost any reader.



**Rabi: Scientist and Citizen.** John Rigden. Basic Books, 1987. \$21.95.

The late I. I. Rabi, for his bar mitzvah talk, lectured his family and friends in Yiddish on the principle of the electric light bulb. This display of originality and courage was a precursor of a conviction expressed years later that religion and science “spring from the same thing, from human aspiration, from the depths of the soul, from deep thinking and feeling.” He is acknowledged as one of those who led American physics from mediocrity to preeminence. A consummate experimentalist, he also had the capacity to develop the theory of his experiments. His molecular beam and magnetic resonance studies brought him a Nobel prize and like prizes to a remarkable number of his students. Twenty Nobel laureates are found among the branches of the “Rabi Tree,” which best illustrates the pervasive influence of this man. After distinguished service during World War II, he was recognized the world over as a statesman of science who would give considered, humane opinions succinctly and forthrightly. His last years were devoted to setting forth his vision that science, respected by people who differ extremely in other matters, can help to bring harmony to the world.

**The Making of the Atomic Bomb.** Richard Rhodes. Simon & Schuster, 1986. \$22.95.

Here is a readable account, solid in its treatment of the technical principles, and full and fair in its treatment of the many people who participated in the development, use, and attempts to control this creation. From the beginning of the century, when the existence of atoms of matter and quanta of radiation became undeniable, the course of physics was set; the discovery of fission was inevitable. Once it was discovered, the intrinsically interesting properties of the reaction demanded full exploration. Ingenious Szilard had, years before, anticipated the likelihood of a self-sustaining nuclear reaction. The stage was set and the war provided the powerful motivation. This is the best treatment so far, and it is an admirable one.

**Madeline R. Robinton**

**Condemned to Repetition: The United States and Nicaragua.** Robert A. Pastor. Princeton, 1987. \$24.95.

Condemned to repeat the mistakes are those who do not know history, said Santayana. This analysis of the historical background of the revolution in Nicaragua and of the process of the formulation of U.S. policy by Pastor, professor of political science at Emory and director of the Latin American and Caribbean Program at the Carter Center, is intended to prevent this. He served on the National Security Council as director of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs from 1977 to 1979 with access to classified papers in that period and conducted extensive interviews with many (100 plus) participants, both American and Nicaraguan. To avoid the “repetition of the Cuban parallel,” Pastor offers thoughtful and well-reasoned suggestions for future U.S. policy in this area.

**The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia.** Vol. 1: **The Formative Years, 1902–1918.** Jacob Goldberg. Harvard, 1986. \$22.50.

Professor Goldberg of Tel Aviv University disputes the “conventional” view that Saudi Arabia’s foreign policy is governed by Wahhabi doctrine, a militant fundamentalist Islamic

reform movement of the 18th century, both proselytizing and expansionist. Rather, he contends that Ibn Saud, who became the ruler in 1902 after his exile in Kuwait, learned there the technique of a pragmatic diplomacy. He traces this development from 1902 to 1918, when Ibn Saud skillfully played the British off against the Turks. The British dominated the Persian Gulf area to protect their road to India and their commercial interests in Persia. Ibn Saud learned to use “the Russian card” to secure the support of the British in his negotiations with the Ottoman Empire, whose sovereignty he acknowledged. World War I led to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the independence of Saudi Arabia. A final chapter shows how Saudi Arabia adapted its foreign policy to the changes in the power structure in the Middle East.

**Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East.** R.K. Ramazani. Johns Hopkins, 1987. \$27.50.

This is not a history of the revolution in Iran, but a guide to the complexities of the politics of the Middle East. Professor Ramazani deals with the geopolitics, the socioeconomic changes, and the impact of Khomeini and Shia ideology on the states of the Persian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean, and offers his guidelines for U.S. policy in that area.

**The Middle East Reader.** Ed. by Michael Curtis. Transaction Books, 1986. \$14.95.

This is a collection of articles, mainly by American academics, for the *Middle East Review*. Professor Curtis of Rutgers provides a most informative introduction, which helps put into context the detailed studies on the political, economic, and religious factors affecting the Arab states, Israel, and the role of the Superpowers.

**The Crusades: A Short History.** Jonathan Riley-Smith. Yale, 1987. \$25.

This is truly a short history of a most complicated period in the area now known as the Middle East. Chronologically it covers the time from 1095, when Pope Urban II preached the first crusade, the “holy war” for the recovery of Jerusalem and against the Moslems in the East and in Spain, to 1798, when the “crusading movement ended with the fall of Malta on 13 June.” Professor Riley-Smith of the University of London has written an excellent reference book incorporating and assessing recent scholarship as well as long-established theories and accounts of the myriad interrelationships that help to explain this complicated story.

**A History of Private Life.** Vol. 2: **Revelations of the Medieval World.** Ed. by Georges Duby. Tr. by Arthur Goldhammer. Harvard, 1988. \$39.50.

This is the second volume in the social history of a period, the daily life of the people and what has been called *mentalité*—their attitudes and thoughts. The first volume dealt with Pagan Rome and Byzantium. Volume 2, by distinguished French medievalists, covers the period from A.D. 1000 to the eve of the Renaissance, the 14th and 15th centuries, the period of the “emergence of the individual.” Based almost exclusively on primary source material, the life depicted in the early period is that of the castle and the monastery, the life of the feudal aristocracy, mainly in northern France. A new dimension is added for the later period with the study of life in the emerging cities of Tuscany, the life of the bourgeoisie,

merchants, and craftsmen and of their servants and slaves (mostly from the Near East). Rich in illustrations, this book uses paintings and drawings almost as footnotes to the text. A most scholarly work.

**Feminine and Opposition Journalism in Old Regime France: Le Journal des Dames.** Nina Rattner Gelbart. Univ. of California, 1987. \$38.

This is not merely a history of a woman’s magazine. Professor Gelbart of Occidental College does a fascinating job in using the story of the struggles of the journal to survive censorship, financial problems, and editorial turnover to provide insight into the role of the press in the ancien régime. The *Journal* was part of what she calls the *frondeur* press, neither licensed nor pamphleteering, which raised questions, intellectual and artistic, economic and political, that disturbed that society and took positions that were, in many instances, antithetical to and more populist than those of the philosophes. Its editors offered a vehicle of expression to women, and what developed—especially under its three women editors—was support for the complete intellectual equality of men and women. The story of the lives of its editors, both men and women, reads like a novel.

**A History of Europe.** Vol. 1: **Medieval Europe, 400–1500.** Vol. 2: **Early Modern Europe, 1500–1789.** H.G. Koenigsberger. Longman, 1987. \$19.95 each.

To all concerned with understanding the significance of European history, and particularly to those engaged in teaching it, these books are of special value. Repeated in each of the volumes is an introduction—brilliant in its analysis, synthesis, and succinctness—to the meaning of European history. Never dogmatic, Professor Koenigsberger of the University of London raises questions of interpretation and refers frequently to conflicting theories. Political, economic, religious, and intellectual development are lucidly integrated and continually related to significant events outside Europe’s borders.

**Robert P. Sonkowsky**

**Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion.** William A. Graham. Cambridge Univ., 1987. \$32.50.

Scripture is historically and fundamentally oral, but both scholarship in general and some popular practice in America have neglected this sensual aspect of religion in favor of the purely mental aspects, thereby missing an understanding of an approach to scripture immensely important not merely to preliterate cultures but to the major continuing scriptural traditions today. Graham studies in some detail the Vedic, Christian, and Muslim traditions with reference to others. He does not deprecate print textuality—neither the veneration of holy books themselves in procession, nor their calligraphic presences as objects of adoration, nor the pleasures of scholarship on the silent text—but he stresses orality as the enlivening factor in religious sensibilities.

**Listening to the Cicadas: A Study of Plato’s Phaedrus.** G.R.F. Ferrari. Cambridge Univ., 1987. \$39.50.

The title refers to the background noise in the dialogue’s rural dramatic setting. Ferrari  
(continued on page 6)

## Recommended Reading

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shows how Phaedrus accommodates himself with routine, "professional" appropriateness to this setting, as well as to the topics of the discussion, whereas Socrates is stimulated by the setting to guide their conversation with the lively responses of a philosopher. Ferrari's intriguing analysis continues through the major, complexly related issues of the dialogue—rhetoric, love, the spoken versus the written word—and touches illuminatingly upon others, such as mythology and philosophic study. All Greek is translated.

**Ancient Mystery Cults.** Walter Burkert. Harvard, 1987. \$20.

**Greek Religion.** Walter Burkert. Tr. by John Raffan. Harvard, 1985. \$30.

The author is widely recognized as our best scholar of ancient Greek religion, a vast and enigmatic field. Neither of these volumes is a pat survey. In each, Burkert deals with the evidence directly, clearing away misconceptions and discussing problems of interpretation. The first book, which has four chapters, based on as many Harvard lectures, and 12 plates exemplifying visual evidence, attempts to reconstruct the personal aspects of the cults. The last chapter, on "the extraordinary experience" of participating in them, as well as the first chapter, on religious needs, might be read *before* the second and third, on organizational, literary, and theoretical matters.

The other book is a more carefully arranged and voluminous study that first appeared in German in 1977, here not only translated but updated by Burkert. It surveys the prehistoric and Minoan-Mycenaean background and concentrates on Late Geometric, Archaic, and Classical Greek religion in complex analysis of ritual and myth, concluding with a chapter on the approaches of the philosophers, especially Plato. Both books are extremely valuable to students of religion.

**The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.** Donald Kagan. Cornell, 1969. \$42.50.

**The Archidamian War.** 1974/1987. \$39.50.

**The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition.** 1981. \$38.50.

**The Fall of the Athenian Empire.** 1987. \$39.50. 4-vol. set, \$135.

These four volumes by the distinguished ancient historian from Yale are the first large-scale attempt to write a history of the Peloponnesian War since the turn of the century. Kagan's account is responsible to the advances of scholarship since then, and although absorbingly and penetratingly written, it deliberately avoids social science terminology and clearly delineates evidence and interpretation. Kagan's special excellence is the contrary-to-fact conditional sentence, which ultimately examines the *reasons* for historical outcomes, along with his willingness to interpret and make judgments, features that promise to restore to history the hope of wisdom through experience.

**The Later Roman Empire: 284–602.** A.H.M. Jones. Johns Hopkins, 1986. 2 vols. \$75; paper, \$37.50.

This reprint of the 1964 original stands as the monumental survey of the social, economic, and administrative history of the later Roman Empire. A.H.M. Jones (1904–1970) narrates that history and then describes in detail the government, finance, law, civil service,

the army, the cities, the church, and so on. The source notes are voluminous.

**The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome.** Martin Goodman. Cambridge Univ., 1987. \$39.50.

This is an important analysis of the rebellion of the Judaeans against the Roman government from A.D. 66 to the destruction of the Temple in 70, with a summary of the aftermath. Goodman's well-argued thesis is that the Romans, failing to understand Jewish values, established a ruling class whose nature was contrary to them. The resulting conflicts led to factions and strife within the ruling class and the outbreak of war. Implications for study of the entire period are far-reaching.

**The Moral World of the First Christians.** Library of Early Christianity, vol. 6. Wayne A. Meeks. Westminster, 1986. \$18.95.

This is a good introduction to Christianity in the first and second centuries. Meeks analyzes selected texts to depict the Classical and Judaic backgrounds and the practical and theoretical constructs built upon or diverging from them in particular communities. He sketches patterns of early Christian moral thinking and the development of a world view that has persisted. He suggests readings in the sources.

**Christianity and Paganism, 350–750: The Conversion of Western Europe.** Ed. by J.N. Hillgarth. Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1986. \$10.95.

This book's subtitle was the title of a less extensive version in 1969. The present paperback contains carefully arranged and annotated English translations of selections from treatises, inscriptions, hagiographies, sermons, law codes, letters, commentaries, poems, histories, ordinals, and other documents of the period. They provide valuable information about the spread of Christianity into the Roman and non-Roman world throughout the West European continent, North Africa, Ireland, and England. Hillgarth's prefaces to the groups of selections outline the appeal of Christianity to its converts; relations of the church to the Roman state, to the "barbarians," and to various monarchies; legislation by the church and by the monarchies; northern Christianity; and liturgy. The documents are well translated and highly readable.

### Earl W. Count

**Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins.** Colin Renfrew. Cambridge Univ., 1987. \$29.95.

The puzzle is a hardy perennial—we still are nescent as to how or whether a problematic Indoeuropean people ever embodied an Indoeuropean speech. The author, an archaeological authority and a disarming and linguistically knowledgeable writer, urges that today the two disciplines can join to resolve the puzzle as they have never yet done. He is an astute critic of tenured hypotheses; he proposes that the proto-Indoeuropeans were neolithic farming people in eastern Anatolia who encroached westward to Greece, northeastward to inner Asia. The westerners spread their farming to the Iberian peninsula, and northward via the Balkans into Central Europe; the easterners spread into Iran and India. Speakers of the Tocharian languages were nomads. The stem-subfamilies of Indoeuropean speech diversified *pari passu*. The Indo-

europeans brought farming to Europe about 6000 B.C.

**Dolmens for the Dead: Megalithic Building throughout the World.** Roger Joussaume. Tr. by Ann and Christopher Chippindale. Cornell, 1988. \$29.95.

The Big Stones abound in Western Europe, but they dot Italy, parts of Africa, Palestine, India, Korea, Japan, even Colombia. (Why not elsewhere?) They seem always to be sites for disposal of the dead; nevertheless, they resist speculation that they represent diffusion. This is an enormous and detailed catalogue, but the author restrains his own conclusions. The skeletal contents, wherever found, remain unstudied. Arresting, isn't it, that such enormous efforts were devoted to providing such lasting domiciles for the community's dead?

**The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations.** Ed. by Norman Yoffee and George L. Cowgill. Arizona Univ., 1988. \$35.

It has been more fashionable and comfortable to search into the rise and status of cultures than to sleuth their "collapse," and "collapse" may be too facile a word anyway. At all events, the tales of Mesopotamia, Maya, Teotihuacan, the Han Dynasty, even Rome, read differently today from what they have done. Yet—laws of *Untergang*? Not that either. Nor have these historians and social scientists attempted a consensus. Still, the spirit of our age is congenial climate for "collapse" as an anxious theme; let the symposiasts forgather. Their thought here penetrates; their speech is not arcane.

**Ritual, Politics, and Power.** David I. Kerzner. Yale, 1988. \$22.50.

Ritual moves and shakes public life—as varied, shrewd, ubiquitous, indispensable today as ever in the tragedy of man. Apparently, it is too obvious to be seen—until a piercing eye and a robust global experience gather to us a theme. The author's final chapter is worth the book.

**Past, Present, and Personal: The Family and the Life Course in America.** John Demos. Oxford, 1986. \$17.95.

The whole is largely confined to the New England Then (17th to 19th century) and a generalized America Now; still, a rangy historian can make the first informative of the second. Not surprisingly, conventional impressions frequently invite a second look. As public agencies have taken from the family responsibilities for child-rearing, the residuals have increased some difficulties. Today the role of the father has taken on a peculiar importance; the author devotes a welcome bulk of space to this oft-neglected topic. Of course, the status and role of women have drastically changed, but the historic woman was not the downtrodden figure often supposed. The "teen-ager" is something of a latter-day conceptualization. Midlife crises then and now, old age then and now—a brilliant social historian looks at the intimate side of the American life-course.

**Shaker Communities, Shaker Lives.** Priscilla J. Brewer. Univ. Press of New England, 1986. \$24.95.

Come ye out and be ye separate, saith the Lord. The Shakers slightly antedated the Declaration of Independence. They fashioned a Little Utopia that foretold the second advent of Christ, and they turned American in pace with other colonials. But after a heyday in the early 19th century, their promise faded; it was hard enough to peg their material and



social economy amidst a changing outside world; it was harder still, and more important to them, to peg their ideals and world views. The author, dispassionate and compassionate, looks at the Brothers and Sisters as they struggle against the ultimately impossible. Yet perhaps the lesson of the Christian dedication and cooperation still awaits the learning.

**Native Religions of North America.** Åke Hulkrantz. Harper & Row, 1987. \$7.95.

Except for this little volume, the publisher's series sketches the world's great faiths. Add to them this unassuming explication, by a celebrated authority. As might be expected, the hunting-gathering Shoshone value personal quest for a tutelary spirit, whereas the communal Zuni gather to invoke the gathering deities; the person is communally prescribed. Still, the Zuni embody traces of their long-lost hunter-gatherer ancestry. The author contrasts his examples in specific detail, yet together they bespeak the continent. If the Indians spiritualize their world more powerfully than we do ours, it is because their world is more immediate and intimate.

### Russell B. Stevens

**Invisible Frontiers: The Race to Synthesize a Human Gene.** Stephen S. Hall. Atlantic Monthly Press, 1987. \$19.95.

**Bones of Contention: Controversies in the Search for Human Origins.** Roger Lewin. Simon & Schuster, 1987. \$19.95.

**Theories of Human Evolution: A Century of Debate, 1844–1944.** Peter J. Bowler. Johns Hopkins, 1986. \$32.50.

Race, controversies, debate—three words, each plucked from one of the subtitles above, underscore the extent to which even the very best science is done by persons whose dedication and intellectual brilliance are affected by attributes common to the human race in general. They hotly argue differing views, they exult in being the first to make a new discovery, they agonize when new data damage a treasured hypothesis, they savor the recognition of peers. And, to their credit, for the most part their interactions are restrained and cordial.

Hall tells, in eminently readable style, about the almost frantic effort, at the forefront of molecular biology, to synthesize the human gene for insulin. At the other end, in a sense, of the biological spectrum, Lewin chronicles recent efforts to push ever further in the search for fossil evidence of humans and their immediate ancestral relatives. Bowler details how views have changed over the years, as new evidence—and new investigators—have come onto the scene.

These accounts drive home once again the crucial importance of new, often highly sophisticated, investigative techniques in making possible the advancement of knowledge and

### Correction

In the announcement of the presentation of the Christian Gauss Award for 1987 to Leonard Barkan (*Key Reporter*, Winter 1987–88, page 1), the second sentence of the second paragraph should have said that Barkan has a grant from the George A. and Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation to do research for another book in Rome.

the resolution of issues. Not only is research in the natural sciences increasingly and perforce a team effort, but often the members of an effective team must bring with them highly disparate backgrounds and skills.

### Lawrence Willson

**Studies in the American Renaissance, 1986.** Ed. by Joel Myerson. Univ. of Virginia, 1986. \$35.

The 10th volume of *Studies* merits a place of respect in the library of the student of American literature a century ago by an essay on Mary Moody Emerson, Ralph Waldo's formidable aunt, as a "Calvinist Link to Transcendentalism"; the third (and final) installment of the selected letters of Elizabeth Hoar, "Aunt Lizzie" to his children; and "Censorship, American Style: The Case of Lydia Maria Child," author of the scandalous novel *Hobomok* (one of the few novels Henry Thoreau ever read) and the even more scandalous *Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans*, in which she described the slave laws and practices of the United States as "more harsh than those of any other nation," denounced the laws against miscegenation, and called for immediate emancipation (in 1833).

**A Word or Two before You Go . . .** Jacques Barzun. Wesleyan Univ., 1986. \$14.95.

**Good Words to You: An All-New Dictionary and Native's Guide to the Unknown American Language.** John Ciardi. Harper & Row, 1987. \$19.95.

**Van Winkle's Return: Change in American English, 1966–1986.** Kenneth G. Wilson. Univ. Press of New England, 1987. \$18; paper, \$10.95.

For "amateurs of language who love the stuff" and for the professionals, too, whether conservatives who lament the steady deterioration of the language or the permissively liberal who accept change, however painful, because to oppose it is to invite apoplexy, the books listed here will bring hours of mingled horror and delight.

Ciardi, on the prowl for the origins of words and phrases, alert to shifting usage and popular etymology, considers such words as *serendipity*, *dog-tired*, *booze*, *coon* (Negro), *digs* (lodgings—surprisingly, an American coin-

age); the history of *ain't*; and the origins of "Alphonse and Gaston" and "Kilroy was here." His book is just what the jacket says it is: a browser's dictionary.

Barzun's book is made up of short pieces, the product of 40 years of scornful commentary on pedantry and pretentiousness in the use of language—the invention of such barbarisms as *language arts*, *learning experience*, *meaningful relationship*, and *parenting*. Barzun is not above quibbling, but as he says, "All precision is quibbling." He will not countenance the use of *cohort* to refer to fewer than 300 people; he would never use *contact* as a verb, and he is a last-ditch defender of the clarifying hyphen.

As Barzun is the sophisticated conservative, Wilson is the sophisticated—really laid-back—champion of nonjudgmental lexicography. What is, *is* (sometimes alas!). In his engrossing study of the liberation of college dictionaries from the taboos of a blasted gentility, he makes illuminating observations about "the gender issue," the ubiquitous *hopefully*, and kindred aspects of usage, but his principal accomplishment lies in his chapters on the "bad" words derived from sex, excrement, racial bias, and ethnicity. If you have not lately looked up words in the first two categories in a dictionary of contemporary vintage (and the chances are that you haven't if your own vintage is pre-1965), perhaps, in the interest of learning, you should do so, but be prepared to be, if not shocked, at least astonished. The old taboos have almost completely disappeared, but beware of the racial or ethnic slur. It could get you into real trouble.

**The Poe Log: A Documentary Life of Edgar Allan Poe, 1809–1849.** Dwight Thomas and David K. Jackson. G. K. Hall, 1987. \$75.

Although when Poe died it was recorded that "his lack of stability, of fixed principles of character, frustrated all his plans and extinguished them in a dishonored grave," history has given the lie to the somber conclusion of that judgment. He may well be the most constantly read of our classic writers, and his life continues to fascinate, perhaps because it has been clouded by mystery and mendacity. *The Poe Log*, in 919 pages, presents the facts of that life, collected from "all known documents and events relating to Poe" and arranged in a

(continued on back cover)

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## Phi Beta Kappa's Treasurer, Mark C. Feer, Dies

Mark C. Feer, treasurer of the Phi Beta Kappa Foundation and of the United Chapters, died on April 28 in New York City. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Dartmouth College in 1949 and earned a Ph.D. from Tufts University. In the 1970s he was a general partner at Kuhn Loeb & Company and subsequently a managing director at Lehman Brothers. Since 1980 he had taught international economics at Tufts and at the Graduate School of International Affairs at Columbia University.

He was deeply devoted to Phi Beta Kappa and gave generously of his time and experience to directing the society's investment policy. He presided over a period of unprecedented growth in Phi Beta Kappa's endowment, which tripled in value during his tenure, and thereby established a sound financial foundation for the society's programs.

## Recommended Reading

(continued from page 7)

"year-by-year, month-by-month, day-to-day" format.

**Early Novels and Stories: The Troll Garden. O Pioneers! The Song of the Lark. My Antonia. One of Ours.** Willa Cather. Selected and with notes by Sharon O'Brien. Library of America, 1987. \$27.50.

**Willa Cather in Person: Interviews, Speeches, and Letters.** Ed. by L. Brent Bohlke. Univ. of Nebraska, 1987. \$17.95.

**Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice.** Sharon O'Brien. Oxford, 1987. \$24.95.

**Willa Cather's Short Fiction.** Marilyn Arnold. Swallow (Ohio Univ.), 1986. \$10.95.

The establishment of Willa Cather as one of America's classic writers is attested to by the publication in a single volume of the Library of America of her first collection of short stories (including such memorable tales as "The Sculptor's Funeral," "The Wagner Matinee," and "Paul's Case") in 1905 and four of her novels, all from the texts as originally printed, and by the collection of published interviews

## ΦBK Associates Hear Graff, Announce Plans to Meet October 21-23 in Wilmington

A group of Phi Beta Kappa Associates and guests met for lunch on May 6 to hear Henry F. Graff, professor of history at Columbia University, discuss the U.S. presidency and the changing views of the office and the election process over time. The meeting took place at the Harvard Club in New York City. Graff, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the City College of New York, was named an honorary member of the Associates.

The Associates will hold their 1988 annual meeting October 21-23 in Wilmington, Delaware. Members are invited to attend the annual dinner and a private viewing of the "American Vision" exhibition of the works of three generations of Wyeths at the Brandywine River Museum on Saturday evening. Also planned are a reception at the Hotel du Pont for the Associates and area Phi Beta Kappa members and special tours of Winterthur and Longwood Gardens.

with her, dating from her arrival in Pittsburgh as editor of the *Home Monthly* in 1897, to 1940; her speeches, beginning with the oration she delivered at her graduation from Red Cloud High School in 1890; and a smattering of her letters that for one reason or another escaped her testamentary interdiction against the printing of her correspondence. Because Cather's telling of her own story is distinguished by falsifications and reticences that, however understandable, distort the truth, Sharon O'Brien's account of Cather's early years (up to the writing of *O Pioneers!* in 1913) is all the more valuable, even though one pauses nervously over its description as "a close study of gender and creativity." In trying to cover the tracks to her past, Cather naturally invited the biographer (whose intrusion she feared and deplored) to write such chapters as "Divine Femininity and Unnatural Love."

Arnold's discussion of Cather's short fiction is straightforward and unpretentious.

## Triennial Council Meeting

(continued from page 1)

Modern European History, University of California at Los Angeles.

One senator is to be elected from each of the following districts:

**New England:** \*Ruth M. Adams, professor of English emeritus, Dartmouth College; and Z. Philip Ambrose, professor of classics, University of Vermont.

**South Atlantic:** \*Carl L. Anderson, professor of English, Duke University; and Nelson G. Markley, professor of mathematics, University of Maryland.

**South Central:** Thomas A. Bartlett, chancellor, University of Alabama; and \*David W. Hart, professor of English and associate dean of the Graduate School, University of Arkansas.

Although the voting members of the Council are the chapter and association delegates, any member of Phi Beta Kappa is welcome to attend the Council meeting. Members wishing to attend as nondelegates may receive information from the United Chapters, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

## Essay Prize Established by University of Oregon Chapter

The Alpha of Oregon chapter of Phi Beta Kappa is establishing the Stanley B. Greenfield Phi Beta Kappa Prize with an annual award of \$100 for the winner of an undergraduate essay contest. Greenfield, who died last year after nearly 30 years on the faculty, was considered one of the university's most dedicated and distinguished professors. The prize will be funded by a permanent endowment; an anonymous donor has agreed to match the first \$1,000 contributed. Contributions should be addressed to the Greenfield Phi Beta Kappa Essay Prize, University of Oregon Foundation, P.O. Box 3346, Eugene, OR 97403.

## The Key Reporter

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