The Key Reporter

VOLUME 56 NUMBER THREE SPRING 1991

Society Names 1991–92 Visiting Scholars

Phi Beta Kappa has named a dozen men and women to be Visiting Scholars in 1991–92. Each Scholar will make several two-day visits to colleges and universities across the United States to meet with students and faculty members in informal and formal sessions, including classroom and seminar discussions and public lectures. Phi Beta Kappa has been sponsoring this program since 1956 to enable undergraduates to meet and talk with distinguished scholars in diverse disciplines. The 1991–92 Visiting Scholars are as follows:

Margaret Alexiou, Seferis Chair of Modern Greek Studies, Harvard University. Author of *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* as well as editor of *C. P. Cavafy* and *The Text and Its Margins: Post-Structuralist Approaches to Twentieth-Century Greek Literature,* she currently serves on the executive committee of the Modern Greek Studies Association of America.

Hyman Bass, professor of mathematics, Columbia University. A member of the National Academy of Sciences and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he is recipient of the American Mathematical Society's Cole Prize in Algebra and author of *Algebraic K-theory* (awarded the Van Amringe Prize).

Stan Brakhage, professor of film studies, University of Colorado at Boulder. He has made more than 200 independent films, most recently *Dante Quartet, Kindering, Faust 4, Visions in Meditation, Babylon Series,* and *City Streaming.* In 1986 he received the American Film Institute's Maya Deren Award for outstanding independent film and video artists.

John P. Demos, Knight Professor of American History, Yale University. He is the author of *Past, Present, and Personal: The Family and the Life Course in American History; Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England* (awarded the Bancroft Prize); *Turning Points: Historical and Sociological Essays on the Family;* and *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony.*

Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, Graduate Center, City University of New York. Past president of the Eastern Sociological Society, she is the author of *Women in Law; Access to Power: Cross-National Studies of Women and Elites; The Other Half: Roads to Women's Equality; Woman's Place;* and *Deceptive Distinctions: Sex, Gender, and the Social Order.*

John Garcia, professor emeritus of psychology, psychiatry, and biobehavioral sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, he was elected to the Society of Experimental Psycholo-

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Ethics: An American Growth Industry

By James M. Gustafson

THE 19TH AND EARLY 20th centuries spawned numerous movements: some against slavery, contraception, and alcoholic beverages and others for women's rights, to name only a few. Group action was organized to rectify child labor, poor working conditions, exploitative wages, and—closer to our own time—racial discrimination. Roman Catholic manuals of moral theology and some rabbinic writings discussed medical ethics. Concern for the moral dimensions of political, economic, and social issues during the early decades of our century is evident in the secular writings of the Progressive Era, in the influential writings of Protestants Walter Rauschenbusch and Reinhold Niebuhr, and in Monsignor John A. Ryan's application of papal social encyclicals to the American scene.

James Gustafson

The past three decades have seen a dramatic increase of publications in the field of ethics, and of public interest in certain moral issues. The growing interest is clearly related to the negative and positive effects of various technologies on living and dying, the environment, and the conduct of warfare; the increased cultural and moral pluralism; and the erosion of presumed moral consensus about sexual activity, the ordering of family life, and other human affairs. This article attempts to point out some of the signs of the recent growth in the ethics industry and to comment on them.

Some Signs of Growth

One sign is the increased attention moral philosophers are giving to practical moral and social issues. Thirty years ago the books and articles on ethics written by such philosophers concerned primarily theories of ethics. Much debated were questions such as the following:

- Is it ever morally justifiable to break a promise? If so, what potential benefits would override the commitment?
- Can statements of fact ("is" statements) and statements of value ("ought" statements) inform each other, or are the two planes of discourse mutually exclusive?
- Can utilitarian ethics, with their necessary calculation of potential benefits and harms caused by action, ever provide firm bases for judging the morality of an act?
- Can human desires and habits be trusted to direct a course of action? (I.e., to what extent are the virtues of persons reliable guides to action?)
- Should ethics be based on the rights of persons and communities? Are rights based on human nature, on social custom, or only on law? What rights are inalienable? How can conflicts of claimed rights be settled?
- Should ethics be based on ideal ends, on the approximation of fulfillment of morally desirable states of affairs? If so, are there moral limitations on the means that can be used to achieve these ends?
- In Protestant circles a major question was the relationship between love and

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justice. Does love require "going the second mile" or "turning the other cheek"—a kind of self-denial? Is justice a disinterested, cold calculation of what is due to others? Does an ethics of love imply that a "blank check" be issued to the other person, and thus love goes "beyond justice?"

- In Roman Catholic ethics, "natural law" ethics continued to be discussed. Is there a moral ordering in nature that can be known by human beings? How specific is that knowledge? How does one apply general principles of "natural law" to specific cases?

All the issues raised by these questions were treated in learned, relatively abstract literature that often took little account of the actual moral dilemmas of persons or institutions.

Different theories of ethics—such as utilitarian, natural law, and deontological (ethics of duty)—have different practical implications, but much of the technical literature reflected an assumption that agreement on the correct theory of morality would inevitably lead to proper moral practice. It was as if controversies over the correct use of terms and concepts, and over competing theories, had to be settled in the abstract by philosophers before a practical problem could be addressed.

On one occasion in Canada a distinguished philosophical colleague applied his particular theory to an analysis of urban planning programs. The audience included not only academics but also members of the Canadian Parliament, civil servants from various levels of government, and others responsible for making political and economic choices. When a Montreal city official complained that the lecture did not help him deal with ethnic, political, economic, and religious interest groups in his work, the speaker responded, "Those are political problems and not moral problems." The speaker apparently believed that problems were defined as moral on the basis of his theory and the proper use of concepts; what was not dealt with by the use of his theory was some other kind of problem, in this case a political one. The city official could not separate the two.

This situation has changed significantly for the better; without abandoning their concern for theory, moral philosophers now write books and articles about actual medical, environmental, political, arms-control, and other problems. Some institutions employ moral philosophers as consultants or staff members. Resident philosophers not only teach medical students but counsel staffs about hospital policy decisions, experimental procedures, and the morality of various therapies. Corporations are counseled about ethical codes, investment policies (e.g., whether to remain in South Africa), and personnel policies. Philosophers testify before congressional hearings on arms control and allocation of funds for specific medical technologies. Government commissions engaged ethicists when the development of artificial hearts and research on human fetuses were discussed. Less of the literature by moral philosophers can be typified by an article on X's use of the word *ought* on page 96 of his or her latest book. Indeed, the philosopher Stephen Toulmin has noted this transition in an article, "How Medicine Saved Ethics," published in *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*.

A second sign of growth in the ethics industry is the attention that moral issues, most often in medicine, get from the mass media. My hunch is that public interest in medical ethics was initially stimulated by Dr. Christiaan Barnard's first heart transplant in 1967; the condition of his patient, Louis Washkansky, was closely monitored by the press and other media. To be sure, the Nazi *Doctors of Infamy* had evoked worldwide concern for ethical issues, particularly of human experimentation; Dr. Henry K. Beecher rightly brought these matters to both professional and public attention in our country. But we still seem most interested in cases dramatically linked to denying death or prolonging life. Since those early heart transplants, comparable attention has been focused on a Down syndrome case from the Johns Hopkins pediatric intensive care unit, Indiana's Baby Doe, Karen Ann Quinlan, and others. Ethics talk-shows and other media presentations seldom do more than point out excruciating dilemmas, and leave the hearer or viewer acknowledging, "Gee-whiz, those are tough choices." But the growth of interest is undeniable.

A third sign of growth is *institutional:* the activity of foundations; the establishment of ethics centers, institutes, and committees; and the enactment of regulations requiring "public interest members" on advisory boards and review committees. Medical ethics institutes have multiplied since the founding of the Hastings Center more than 20 years ago and, a little later, the Georgetown Center, initially funded by the Kennedy Foundation. Federal regulations now require committees to address issues in therapy and in experimentation, such as whether the patient has given fully informed consent to a procedure and whether the risks involved in a double-blind experiment outweigh the potential benefits to patients.

In the business world, corporations have developed ethical policy statements, the most effective being Johnson & John-

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Society Selects 1991–92 Visiting Scholars Panel

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gists and awarded its Warren Medal for outstanding research in psychology. He is recipient of the American Psychological Association's Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award.

Frederick Grassle, director, Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences, Rutgers University. A fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, he is a former senior scientist with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. He has served as chief scientist on cruises of 11 research vessels, and he led the first biological expedition to deep-sea hydrothermal vents in the eastern Pacific.

Clifford Grobstein, professor emeritus of biological science and public policy, University of California, San Diego. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, he is past president of the American Society of Zoologists and the Society for Developmental Biology. He is the author of *The Strategy of Life, The Double Image of the Double Helix, From Chance to Purpose,* and *Science and the Unborn.*

Rozanne L. Ridgway, president, Atlantic Council of the United States, Washington, D.C. A retired career diplomat with the Department of State (1957–89), she served as assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs, as well as ambassador to Finland and East Germany and ambassador for Oceans and Fisheries Affairs. She was twice awarded the Presidential Distinguished Performance Award.

Anya Peterson Royce, professor of anthropology, Indiana University. She is the author of *Prestigio y Afiliacion en una Comunidad Urbana: Juchitan, Oaxaca; The Anthropology of Dance; Ethnic Identity; Movement and Meaning; Silver Age of the Commedia dell'Arte;* and *Splendid Muse.* A fellow of the American Anthropological Association, she is former copresident of the Society for Latin American Anthropology.

Mark Siegler, professor of medicine and director, Center for Clinical Medical Ethics, University of Chicago–Pritzker School of Medicine. A fellow of the Hastings Center, he is the author of *Clinical Ethics; Changing Values in Medicine; Medical Innovation and Bad Outcomes: Legal, Social, and Ethical Responses; Institutional Protocols for Decisions and Life-Sustaining Treatments; Medical Ethics;* and *Clinical Medical Ethics.*

Joseph H. Taylor, Jr., McDonnell Distinguished University Professor of Physics, Princeton University. Coauthor of *Pulsars* and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, he has received the Academy's Henry Draper Medal and John J. Carty Award for the Advancement of Science. He is a fellow of the American Physical Society and recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship.

son's, which guided that company's action following the criminal tampering with Tylenol capsules that resulted in poisoning of consumers. The company's credo makes clear that its first responsibility is to doctors, patients, parents, and other consumers who use its products: "In meeting their needs, everything we do must be of high quality." The company withdrew all Tylenol capsules from the market until it was satisfied that a safe and effective sealing technology had been developed. It is at least arguable that this response in the name of moral responsibility was economically more costly than some other possible responses. Whether corporate ethical credos are merely platitudinous or effectively inform policy depends on whether managers conscientiously bring them to bear in their decisions about product safety, plant relocation, and other choices affecting employees, consumers, communities, and the environment.

Voluntary associations, such as environmental interest groups, both educate and lobby on moral issues. And scores of colleges and universities have established or are establishing "ethics centers," which seek to introduce instruction in ethics in various professional programs, offer lectures and seminars on ethics and policy issues, sponsor conferences on ethical issues in the Human Genome Project, conduct research on ethics and arms control, and seek to make students and faculty more aware of the importance of ethics.

A fourth sign is the growth in publications on business ethics, environmental ethics, and particularly medical ethics. Thirty years ago there was not a single secular journal devoted to medical ethics, and there were few articles on ethics in medical journals. Now many journals discuss medical ethics, including the *Hastings Center Report, Man and Medicine, Medical Ethics, Journal of Medicine and Philosophy, Second Opinion,* and *Journal of Clinical Ethics.* And articles on ethics are regularly found in the *Journal of the American Medical Association, New England Journal of Medicine, Perspectives in Biology and Medicine,* and the *Annals of Internal Medicine.* Whereas the most readily available literature on medical ethics 30 years ago was written by Roman Catholic moral theologians, there are now scores of books by religious, philosophical, sociological, and other authors.

When I first lectured on medical ethics at Yale Medical School in the early 1960s, my lectures were sponsored by the Office of the University Chaplain, and equal time (two lectures) was given to a Roman Catholic priest, a rabbi, and a Protestant clergyman. At that time there was only one important book in the field by a Protestant: Joseph Fletcher's *Morals and Medicine.* I could keep up with medical ethics and pursue my main academic interests handily. Now keeping abreast of medical ethics would be almost a full-time job.

A fifth sign of growth is the number of conferences on ethics and various issues of public policy and professional activity. Announcements of these conferences almost equal the number of catalogues from publishers in my professional mail. Some conferences address general topics, others quite specific topics. The rosters of participants often overlap; the same speakers may be in Cincinnati in October, in Atlanta in March, and in Jerusalem or Stockholm another month. Medicine, business and economic policy, nuclear deterrence and war, environmental issues, and civil rights and minority issues evoke sufficient interest to find funding for what an affluent jet-age has made possible, namely, the brief conference. No doubt these conferences have had significant educational benefits.

A final sign of growth is the emergence of a new specialist called the "ethicist," a word that was not in our ordinary vocabulary 25 years ago. In the mid-1950s, Chief Justice Earl Warren, in an address at Jewish Theological Seminary, suggested the need for such a specialist; he would surely be pleased to see how many persons have taken that role. People are making their living, or moonlighting, as entrepreneurial consultants on ethics in hospitals, corporations, and other institutions.

Ethicists do different things: They may serve as teachers, offering courses and seminars to groups from various professions; as consultants to executives and others about how to analyze various policy and professional choices in ethical terms; as arbiters when conflicts of moral judgments arise in medical care or the conduct of business; as prescribers of what conduct is morally correct; and as sources of moral commentary to the news media as they report on such matters as controversial medical therapies or environmental policies. Or they write books and articles they hope will affect decisions and policies.

What certifies their competence? Their technical knowledge of moral concepts such as justice, rights, ways to evaluate benefits and harms, and the criteria for sound moral arguments; their ability to point out the strength or weakness of various ethical theories with regard to a practical choice; their knowledge of historic ethical traditions stemming from religions or philosophy; their ability to analyze the assumptions and the steps in moral arguments; their knowledge of the area of practice they have chosen (e.g., the biology of human reproduction or renal disease, ecological sciences, taxation policies, or use of weapons); their ability to communicate intelligibly with professionals who formulate issues in the terms of medicine, economics, politics, and the like. There have even been proposals to develop accreditation procedures for "medical ethicists."

Effects of the Growing Ethical Interest

Although ethics is a growth industry in America (as well as other parts of the world), it is not clear that conduct in all the spheres of the growing ethical interest is more moral, or less immoral, as a result of this growth. Some restraints on unethical activity are evident in the attention given to environmental protection; to civil rights for women, minorities, and others; to automotive safety; and to the use of humans in experimentation, to mention only a few examples. But these beneficent effects have occurred largely as a result of enforceable laws and regulations. If a distinction is made between the legal and regulatory, on the one hand, and the voluntary (thus more specifically ethical), on the other, do we really behave better because of the growth of the ethics industry?

The evidence is mixed. First, despite the presence of ethics committees in the U.S. Congress, the media often report violations of the established standards. Racism, sexism, and other forms of unjust discrimination continue. One would be hard-pressed to provide solid evidence that an undergraduate course in ethics makes students' behavior more moral. On the affirmative side are recycling, less smoking in public places, and other activities resulting from raised consciousness about environmental and public health problems. Many physicians, particularly younger ones, demonstrate greater awareness of how to think about moral issues in medical research and practices. And government officials are asking the questions raised by the just-war tradition, and giving assurances that "noncombatant immunity" in the conduct of war is honored as much as possible.

Second, there is deep ambivalence in our culture about what constitutes an ethical issue. Some activities for which people were judged immoral in the past, such as premarital sex, homosexuality, or excessive use of alcohol, are no longer universally condemned. Suicide, historically considered both a crime and a sin, is now viewed with compassion. Alcoholism and other addictions are now classed as illnesses, and therapy has replaced moral judgment as the appropriate response. At the same time we are made to feel responsible for the state of our cholesterol and the condition of our heart and lungs, so our duties to ourselves have been enlarged. Antismoking campaigns have a moral fervor; smokers have no right to endanger innocent bystanders. But we do not have the same fervor for reducing speed on roads, restricting the

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sale of dangerous weapons, and engaging in other activities that may harm the innocent. The contradictory movements and impulses reflect inconsistency and border on becoming paradoxical. What formerly was morally prohibited has sometimes become permissible, and what was permissible has become prohibited, as I noticed in my building at Emory University. The janitor told me one day that there was a sign on a door on an upper level, "Please do not disturb. Having sex." This was beyond doors on which there was a sign, "*Absolutely* no smoking in this area." Having a cigarette was prohibited, so perhaps the couple was "having sex" instead.

Third, we tend to focus on dramatic and critical choices—often called to our attention by various communications media—and do not question many more general and underlying trends in the development of technology and changes in the valuations of life that may have longer-range ramifications. In his discussion of *in vitro* fertilization in *Toward More Natural Science* (pp. 101–02), Leon Kass has demonstrated this problem. The literature asks, "Is it ethically justifiable?" Kass responds by asking readers to consider some implications of this technology for their understanding of what it means to be human. Does removing conception from the normal way in which new persons come to be diminish the significance of sexuality as part of our whole sense of the human? Are rich historic traditions of the significance of family—both ancestors and descendants—harmed? In effect, does this and other technology remove us from our naturalness in ways that might lead to inhumane outcomes in the long run? Kass seeks to jolt his readers into reflecting on the shifting understanding of humans in relation to nature that such a technology expresses, and asks us to enlarge what we take into account in the light of potential long-range outcomes antithetical to traditional human values.

In *The Imperative of Responsibility* Hans Jonas uses the heuristics of fear to call attention to incremental effects of the development and uses of technology (e.g., the greenhouse effect) that might well cause devastating and irreversible damage to life on this planet. Kass, Jonas, and others worry, too, about gradual shifts in human values and in historic trends that could undermine the well-being both of individuals and of the species. Except for environmental problems and population growth, however, the public generally concentrates on immediate and dramatic choices.

Fourth, for all the publicity given to ethics in the media and the increase of literature on the subject, much "Gee-whizzing" remains undisciplined either by sufficient knowledge of the circumstances addressed or by proper use of concepts, terms, and distinctions. The more technical ethical literature and teaching have had limited effect on public discourse; opinions come from "feelings" rather than from due rational consideration. To be morally conscientious is to learn to use certain concepts, to draw relevant distinctions, and to recognize certain problems—for example, how outcomes are to be judged as good or bad and for whom. To become ethical in a critical way requires us to learn to use the language of ethics. The popular dramatic presentation of quandaries, such as withdrawal of life-supporting or death-denying technologies, is seldom followed by sophisticated analysis that helps the viewer, hearer, or reader clarify in moral terms—terms like justice, rights, duty, obligation, responsibility, virtue, and ends—how the problem might be resolved. The growth in the ethics industry has not closed the gap between ethics as a discipline of thinking and the discussions of morality in the public at large.

Fifth, a heightened sense of the ethical, when accompanied by dogmatic certainties about right and wrong, can lead to moral polarization in our society. Polarization obviously is sometimes beneficial; advances in civil rights for minorities and women have certainly been speeded in part as a result of polarized interests. In my childhood the polarization concerned the sale and use of alcoholic beverages—an issue of moral significance quite different from civil rights. Now there are intractable debates about the morality of abortion, with dogmatism on both extremes of the issue. Judith Shklar, in *Ordinary Vices,* argues that a liberal society has to tolerate some behavior that often disturbs moralistic people, such as snobbery and hypocrisy. Tolerance of these vices, as Shklar calls them, and trade-offs on some other controverted issues, such as abortion, are arguably necessary for the health of the body politic. Tolerance and trade-offs are harder to achieve when polarized moral absolutisms are regnant. A civil society requires tolerance and adjudication of moral claims; some compromises are necessary.

Thomas Aquinas taught that not every "sin" should be made a crime, and not every crime is necessarily morally wrong—for example, stealing food for the sake of the survival of one's family. Absolutists are quick to make their moral causes matters of law and judicial decision. The unresolved question is which moral faults and immoral acts should be made crimes, and on which issues is plurality of judgment tolerable and necessary. Invoking the language of "rights" generally strengthens the claims of parties in controversy and escalates tensions in society, sometimes for good and other times for ill. We cannot agree on the relative gravity of contended moral issues. Certain actions for which strong moral justifications can be made have been judged criminal: Two cases in point are those of Karen Quinlan and Nancy Cruzan, in which the final stages of dying were delayed by legal procedures. Moral choices in pediatric intensive care units were inhibited under the Reagan administration, when *anyone* who thought that some technical procedure was not being used to save an infant was encouraged to call the posted toll-free number to report to federal authorities. Fortunately, the posted numbers have been removed.

Sixth, as with any academic specialization, the ethics literature has become highly technical—indeed, recondite—and distant from the world of those with

the American Scholar

Wherever you plan to go this summer, take along *The American Scholar.* This quarterly journal was recently described as "the only (magazine) that regularly delivers what it promises" (Jonathan Yardley, *The Washington Post*). Our forthcoming Summer 1991 issue is no exception, offering the serious reader a fine selection of feature articles, essays, poetry, and book reviews. Among the articles scheduled to appear are *A Life of Learning*, by Paul Oskar Kristeller; *Michael Joseph Oakeshott: 1901–1990*, by Josiah Lee Auspitz; *Schumpeter Ascending*, by Thomas K. McCraw; and *What Was Hidden*, by Frances Mayes.

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responsibility for moral choices in the context of what is possible. Clearly, this literature is important in forcing rigor of thought and refinement of distinctions. But it is often obscure to persons in politics, the private sector, and various professions. One example is the journal *Philosophy and Public Affairs,* to which I eagerly subscribed when it was announced and from which I have gained intellectual benefit. But I doubt whether persons responsible for public affairs and professional choices read it, because the articles are written by philosophers for their academic peers, and reviewed according to the canons of the discipline. In some fields, like medical ethics, much of the literature is tediously redundant. I did not think that anyone could publish yet another article on informed consent—until another appeared recently in the *Hastings Center Report.*

Seventh, the new specialist, the ethicist, is now testifying in the courts, and attorneys for each side can recruit "expert" ethical testimony. In 1985, during the trial of the Brophy case in Worcester, Massachusetts, which involved removal of death-denying technology, I was invited to testify. Two Jesuits had been recruited, one to testify on the conservative side and the other on the liberal side. The conservative side had also found a Protestant to testify, and the liberal side wanted me to provide a different Protestant opinion. Philosophers and theologians who aspire to find a theory of ethics on which all rational persons can agree are embarrassed by incidents like this, but of course the debates continue among these rational persons about matters of theory and application. Maybe the claims of expertise for ethicists will be diminished when people realize they are for hire.

And finally, public interest continues in the dramatic moral choices, such as the use of nuclear weapons, the effects of pollution, and critical medical choices—and for good reasons, because such decisions have life-and-death consequences for both individuals and communities. In the meantime the ordinary vices discussed by Judith Shklar—snobbery, deception, hypocrisy—continue, together with our insensitivity to the needs of persons with whom we have daily and intimate contact and our callousness toward signs of poverty and unjust discrimination. It might be interesting to shift some of the enthusiasm for ethics toward the customs and conduct of undramatic, daily behavior, where it can affect all of us ordinary people. A Jewish prophet named Jesus remarked wisely, "Why are you so busy trying to get the speck out of another person's eye when you have not yet removed the log from your own?"

The growth industry of ethics over the past 30 years has produced important achievements, but it still has a way to go before what I take to be its aims—increased moral responsibility by persons and institutions and a more just social order in which the common good is realized—are fulfilled. Its limited success to date, or in the future, may be rooted in the deeper tendency of individuals, communities, and institutions to pursue their own desires and immediate self-interest—a tendency not readily reformed by ethical teaching alone.

James M. Gustafson, Luce Professor of Humanities and Comparative Studies at Emory University, is a past president of the American Society of Christian Ethics and the author of Christ and the Moral Life, Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective, *and other works. As a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar in 1990–91, he visited seven campuses.*

Recommended Reading

Book Committee

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

Madeline Robinton

From Beirut to Jerusalem. Thomas L. Friedman. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1989. $22.95.

The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs. David Pryce-Jones. Harper & Row, 1989. $25.

Both these books were written by journalists before the Persian Gulf War, and both aim to help the West understand the very different culture and ways of thinking of the Middle East. Their conclusions reinforce each other, but the books are very different.

From Beirut to Jerusalem is a very personal, autobiographical account of a young American Jew who in 1968 at age 15 was taken to Israel on a visit. Overwhelmed by the experience he spent the next three summers there. On graduation from college he went to Oxford as a Marshall Fellow and took a master's degree in Arabic studies. He subsequently became the *New York Times* correspondent in Beirut (1974) and Jerusalem (1984). Chronological and anecdotal, this book reflects the maturing and thinking of the author as he seeks to understand the complexities of the conflicts he is reporting.

The Closed Circle is written by an Englishman who was taken to Morocco in 1941 at the age of six by an uncle in the consular service. As a war correspondent in Egypt during the Six-Day War in 1967, Pryce-Jones became aware of the need to understand a society so alien to his Western thinking. This book deals with the Arab world in Africa as well as in the Middle East, is less personal and treats its subject topically and analytically, and is based on extensive reading of writings on the Middle East.

The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880. Harold Perkin. Routledge, 1989. $49.95.

This study in social history is a sequel to *The Origins of Modern English Society* (1969) by Professor Perkin, then at Lancaster and now at Northwestern. The book is thought-provoking because it offers a new model for the way British society functions. It describes the transformation of 19th-century Britain from a class society—a landed aristocracy, a capitalist and entrepreneurial middle class, and a large working class—to a society of professionals, who run both the economic (the corporation replacing the entrepreneur) and the political (bureaucracy) structures. Perkin sees the conflicts in modern society not along class lines but rather within the professional hierarchies drawn from all classes on the basis of merit—the main conflict being between the professionals in the public sector and those in the private sector for society's resources.

My France: Politics, Culture, Myth. Eugen Weber. Harvard, 1991. $24.95.

For anyone who is eager to understand more about the *mentalité* of modern France, this is a fascinating book. Weber begins with an introduction that is in reality an intellectual autobiography. It describes how on his journey as a child from Romania to France, then to school and university in England, and to his job at UCLA, curiosity drove him to answer certain bothersome questions about contemporary France—and to write many books and articles. This book is a collection of essays published from 1958 to 1988, but it is more than that. The introduction helps the reader understand the intellectual context of the essays, the kind of sources used, and the breadth of Weber's critical and historical approach.

History and Hope: Essays on History and the English Civil War. C. V. Wedgwood. Dutton, 1989. $25.

This collection of short essays and lectures written over the past 50 years by the distinguished historian of the English Civil Wars reflects Dame Veronica's broad interest in history, biography, and literature, not only in the 17th century. Rewarding reading.

A Cultural History of the French Revolution. Emmet Kennedy. Yale, 1989. $35.

This is a study of the effects of the Revolution on French cultural institutions: the Church, academies, schools, libraries and archives, universities. It treats also the effects on the work of France's artists, sculptors, writers, dramatists, and musicians—even the popular culture, both Parisian and peasant. Short-term and long-term consequences are explored. Profusely illustrated with engravings of the period.

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Recommended Reading

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The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1815. Johannes Menne Postma. Cambridge Univ., 1990. $54.50.

A veritable compendium of the subject. Postma discusses the origins of the trade, the organization of the Dutch West Indian Company and its relationship to the free traders, the establishment of the ports on the west coast of Africa to which the slaves were brought for sale by the African traders (Europeans did not penetrate the interior of Africa until the 19th century), the ships, the markets in the Western Hemisphere, and the conditions of slavery. Some 100 pages of appendixes and maps based on archival material in the Netherlands are included.

Earl W. Count

A happy coincidence has brought the following four titles to my desk at the same time. As ordered, they amount to a beyond-an-introductory course in anthropology:

The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins. Richard G. Klein. Univ. of Chicago, 1989. $39.95.

"Career"—the fossil record of man's ascent from the ape. This, I believe, is the latest of a lengthening succession of inventories concerning Mankind So Far (thank you, Professor Howells). Each member is richer in fact than all its predecessors—and more enlightening, complex, problematic. This one is superb. The author, in essence, conducts you on a tour, takes the evidence (largely skull parts) from the shelves, and tells you about them. *Reculer pour mieux sauter:* The primates themselves materialize late in the Cretaceous period, 80 million years ago; the ancient Hominids in the recent 2 million, the Pliocene epoch; at long last the Neanderthals and our kind not more than in yesterday's hundred thousand years. The author summons the valley full of dry bones to rise and live; neither bodies nor implements are quite understandable without the other. So the concomitant artifacts testify to an increasingly skillful cultural achievement.

A closing "Partly Conjectural Outline of Human Evolution" forms a noble synopsis of Mankind So Far.

Paleoanthropology traces the humanization of the body, including the brain; archaeology adds thereto the birth of technology. But there are no fossil minds. Let us transcend the materialism of it all. Humanization crossed the Rubicon of animality to humanness when our ancestry grew capable of wondering whether the universe is friendly (homage to Thomas Huxley). Wherefore:

The Dawn of Belief: Religion in the Upper Paleolithic of Southwestern Europe. D. Bruce Dickson. Univ. of Arizona, 1990. $29.95.

From the French Massif Central to Spanish Cantabria, for two decimillennia Old Stone Age man drew, painted, and sculpted within caves; carved and incised portable bric-a-brac that bespeaks a life of symbol—art, undoubtedly for more than art's sake. Piecemeal, the specimens encourage speculation; aggregated, they hint a world view that changes moderately in changing circumstances yet retains its identity. Can it be decrypted? The students' answers range from yes to no. The author considers them and renders his own measured yes. To be sure, the naivest of extant human societies have traveled far since the Old Stone Age; nevertheless, they all suggest a common human pattern of thinking that apparently does no violence to that vanished way of life.

Old Stone Age people sustained themselves in an exigent action-world. There were crises, some recurrent (death, birth, maturation), others chancy (casualties of the hunt, winning bulls). To seek a measure of control of the chancy, people moved to the cave-world, the world of belief. And why, late in time, the abundant figurines of grotesquely fat females and of vulvas? And why some increase in burials of women? What new beliefs do these things hint?

The author's valedictory is this: "To the Classical Greeks, fear and hope were the twin tyrants of humankind. No less than ourselves, the peoples of Ice Age Europe were tormented by these twin tyrants. Their reply to this torment is frozen in the mighty art of the Upper Paleolithic and has resonated down three hundred centuries into our own time."

"Belief" and "religion," however, are not synonymous. Briefly, believing declares an evolutionary level of brain-mind achieved by only one primate (to the best of our knowledge); religion is one result of that capacity. We may limit the meaning here to world view, which includes belief in god(s) plus a consequent practical adjustment. "Myth," however, is broad enough to sweep in religion. It is the profound effort after meaning, with or without an accompanying theology. Recently we have listened to Joseph Campbell (now deceased), cosmopolitan mythologist par excellence, on television. Herewith a skeleton key[1] to a great and sensitive perceiver of myth:

Joseph Campbell: An Introduction. Robert A. Segal. Rev. ed., New American Library. Penguin, 1990. $4.95.

Campbell reads myth not as the primitive grasp of the universe but as a perduring self-statement of the human mind—which helps to explain why this humanistic genius dipped from the Pierian springs of Freud and Jung, especially the latter. Yet he found his guru (his own word) in Heinrich Zimmer, noted scholar of Indian thought—although India itself he found revulsive.

The worldwide likenesses of myths were to Campbell more sooth than the features of difference. Myths are what people perpetually live by. Campbell was not religious. Myths nevertheless transcend religion. They join human beings to the cosmos, to their fellows, to themselves. The great 19th-century mythologists were rationalistic; Campbell was a romantic, a complex person—all mythologists have to be. So, too, their biographers. And our author is a deft keymaker.

"What is humankind?" Anthropology is a never-ceasing quest for some part of an answer. Unknowingly, every person steps it down to "Who am I?" This too is anthropology; for only humans (we believe) can pose the question. The last book is an epilogue in our series; it paraphrases the stepdown matchlessly:

The Human Career: The Self in the Symbolic World. Walter Goldschmidt. Basil Blackwell, 1990. $36.95.

This is a rare and seminal book, by a Nestor among us. He writes, nevertheless, that anyone who runs may read.

I was born biologically programmed. My society, pervaded with its symbolic world, took me in hand. It redesigned my biological programming where suitable. I was *motivated* to shape me a *status,* even to seek a degree of *prestige.* Naturally, my every tactic followed the idiom of my culture. Such have been all our careers: Yes, *what* humans do is endless, varied; but they all do the same *kinds* of things: rich man, poor man, beggarman, thief . . . saint and sinner.

A fleshless skeleton, admittedly; but a symbolic world is vastly complex and eternally interesting. And Nestor dispenses insight and an arresting originality beyond what this brief review can capture.

Frederick J. Crosson

Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius. Ray Monk. Free Press, 1990. $29.95.

Rare is the person in whom life itself seems driven by passion (or a daimon) centered on seeking the resolution of philosophical restlessness. Wittgenstein was such a one, as virtually everyone who knew him has borne witness. The intensity of the way he lived, the brilliance of his mind, the originality of his thought overwhelmed not only his students but his seniors, like Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore. This biography conveys some sense of that intensity and of the "revolution" in philosophy traceable to Wittgenstein more than to anyone else. If some aspects of his life and ideas are disproportionately discussed, that is a matter of emphasis rather than censure. A very readable biography of an influential and engrossing man for whom philosophy was, indeed, a way of life.

Nine Talmudic Readings. Emmanuel Levinas. Trans. by Annette Aronowicz. Indiana Univ., 1990. $29.95.

For most readers who look into it, the (Babylonian) Talmud is a difficult if not esoteric text, consisting of fragments by various authorities in the rabbinic tradition commenting on points of the Law dealing with first-fruits, sacrifices, etc. Imagine now a philosopher—one who seeks to address all thoughtful persons—reflecting on some of these apparently kaleidescopic stories about what Rabbi X did and said, and showing us the coherence that underlies the stories. The nine readings were originally given as talks at annual meetings of French Jewish intellectuals. Unfortunately, none of the discussions that followed the talks have been translated, but I know of no work that more readily opens this classic of Judaic learning to the general reader. Admirable and different.

African Philosophy. Ed. by Tsenay Serequeberhan. Paragon, 1991. $13.95.

A collection of 11 essays dating from 1967 to 1987, all dealing with the question of what constitutes or would constitute African philosophy (compare: what is American philosophy or French philosophy?). Four answers emerge from the dialogue of the essays: ethnophilosophy, the second-level articulation of cultural beliefs; sagacity, the tradition of tribal sages, already reflective; nationalist-ideological thought, exemplified in writers like Nkrumah and Nyerere; and "professional philosophy," which takes its place in the world dialogue of philosophers but speaks from an African perspective. The lively, forceful, differing contributions provoke the reader to think about the nature of philosophy itself.

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[1] He was coauthor of *A Skeleton Key to Finnigans Wake.*

Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry. Alasdair MacIntyre. Notre Dame, 1990. $24.95.

These Gifford Lectures compare and contrast the traditions of moral inquiry represented by the 19th-century ninth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica,* that is, the late enlightenment of Lord Gifford's time; the genealogical mode of inquiry represented by Nietzsche and some contemporary French philosophers; and the Augustinian-Thomistic tradition, which was considered to have been superseded by the enlightenment. MacIntyre aligns himself with the last of these, but his interest, and the interest of the book, is in addressing the question of how discussion can be meaningfully carried on among these traditions that continue to divide us and yet share no common universe of discourse. The issues are not merely academic: The life we seek to live in common, in community, is on the table. Recommended.

Kierkegaard in Golden Age Denmark. Bruce Kirmmse. Indiana Univ., 1990. $35.

Kierkegaard, Godly Deceiver. M. Holmes Hartshorne. Columbia, 1990. $35.

Two quite different works, both illuminating. Kirmmse's large (500 pp.) study first details the radical changes in the political, economic, and social history of Denmark in the century preceding Kierkegaard's writings, and then shows how these writings reflect and take positions on the changes that occurred and continue to occur. Most readers will find the familiar texts elucidated in a dimension previously obscure.

The second book focuses on the pseudonymous character of many of Kierkegaard's works. Everyone knows that Kierkegaard declared that what is said in those works should not be attributed to him; some commentators have tried to take that injunction seriously, while others have virtually ignored it. Hartshorne makes the most coherent and persuasive argument known to me for the ineluctable role of the pseudonymic authorship in the interpretation of those compositions.

The Darkness and the Light. Charles Hartshorne. SUNY, 1990. $39.50.

Charles Hartshorne's life spans the 20th century and pervades American philosophy. He has known the thinkers and the philosophies whose emergence and diminution have marked the tides of the coming of age of philosophy in the United States. This autobiography, however, is mainly a reflection about the persons and ideas that have shaped Hartshorne's own thought. He voices some strong convictions and does not hesitate to label nonsense where he sees it. Perhaps the reader needs to bring some interest in the subjects to find the chiaroscuro narrative captivating, but given that, it is a broad canvas with much to survey.

CORRECTION

Marjorie Hope Nicolson, the first woman president of the ΦBK Society (1940–46), was elected as a member in course by the University of Michigan in 1914, not as an honorary member.

Anna J. Schwartz

Child Labor and the Industrial Revolution. Clark Nardinelli. Indiana Univ., 1990. $25.

This economic interpretation of child labor in textile and other factories in Britain during the Industrial Revolution completely overthrows both traditional criticisms of industrialization for its exploitation of children and the view of the importance of the Factory Acts in preventing the increasing use of children in the labor force.

Historically, child labor has occurred predominantly in nonindustrial situations, in agriculture and services. Experience of employment of children in factories in Britain and elsewhere was exceptional. Family income determined whether child labor would be supplied to industrial and other occupations. Children who worked in factories were not necessarily worse off than children who worked in the home and in other market occupations. In contrast to the view that employment of children is evidence that employers oppressed workers and their families, Nardinelli suggests that families must have regarded the decision to send children to work in factories as preferable to other options for increasing the family's welfare.

The author finds common characteristics in the child labor legislation passed in the 19th and early 20th centuries in Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and the United States. In all these countries effective legislation was enacted only after industry was well established. Humanitarianism, combined with fear of a rising working class, was part of the support for child labor legislation. Efficient firms also favored regulation of workshops as a means of harming backward competitors, and in some places for adult male workers regulation served to limit competition from other workers. Where the family labor system was used, adult males opposed factory legislation. Throughout the industrial world, factory legislation in the short run reduced the employment of children. It was not legislation, however, that accounted for the long-term decline in child labor. Technological change reduced the demand for child labor, and increasing family income coupled with growing demand for education reduced the supply.

Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., with the assistance of Takashi Hikino. Harvard/Belknap, 1990. $35.

To be successful, modern industrial companies had to become large firms, according to the author of this massive study. Size enabled them to take advantage of economies of scale (cost reductions resulting from an expanded level of a single line of output) and economies of scope (cost reductions resulting from applying processes used in making one product to related products). The second step in the creation of the modern industrial enterprise was investment in marketing, distributing, and purchasing networks, within and across national borders. The final step was recruiting and organizing managers to coordinate these activities. The entrepreneurs who first undertook these steps acquired first-mover advantages that made it easy for them to nip challenges in the bud. Challengers did appear, but in industries with scale or scope cost advantages, oligopoly was common.

This pattern of growth of industrial companies from the 1880s to World War II is depicted in a series of chapters for each of three countries: the United States, an example of competitive managerial capitalism; Britain, an example of personal capitalism; and Germany, an example of cooperative managerial capitalism. The author's explanation for the poor performance of American and British large firms in the past two decades is that they attempted to grow in the face of postwar competition by diversifying without making first-mover investments like those they had made in their original businesses. They should instead have reinvested in their enterprises to maintain and improve products and facilities as part of a continuing long-term process.

Appendix tables for each of the three countries rank the 200 largest industrial enterprises by assets or market values of shares and identify their product lines at three dates before the 1940s. A fourth table for each country summarizes turnover during this period in the food, chemical, and machinery industries and ranks each company.

Market Volatility. Robert J. Shiller. M.I.T., 1990. $35.

This book investigates the source of volatility in prices of corporate stocks, bonds, and real estate. Economists usually support the efficient-markets hypothesis—that prices represent the best information about true economic values and that price changes are due to shocks to fundamentals such as technology, consumer preferences, demographics, natural resources, and monetary and other policies. Shiller for many years has pursued an alternative hypothesis, namely, that capricious changes in investor attitudes or psychology, including fashions and fads, cause asset price changes. The objective of this collection of research papers, about two-thirds of which were published previously in professional journals, by Shiller and occasional coauthors, is to provide evidence on the relative importance of changes in economic fundamentals and changes in opinion as explanations of speculative price movements. Shiller has contributed new material in an introduction and overviews of each of the financial markets in which the papers are grouped.

Russell B. Stevens

The Medical Triangle: Physicians, Politicians, and the Public. Eli Ginzberg. Harvard, 1990. $27.50.

History of Syphilis. Claude Quétel. Trans. by Judith Braddock and Brian Pike. Johns Hopkins, 1990. $35.95.

Considered separately these two books are strikingly unlike. Ginzberg offers a detailed and convincing analysis of what he refers to on the very first line and page as the "highly volatile health care scene" in the United States—its conspicuous features, the interactions among the various groups involved, the facilities, the costs, the tensions, and so on. Quétel, to the contrary, provides a stark account of the agonies suffered by individuals and society as a result of the scourge of syphilis. Only perhaps by reading both can one fully realize how very far the science and practice of medicine have progressed in the twentieth century. Few, if any, would choose to exchange the troubles of today for those of yesterday.

(continued on back cover)

Recommended Reading

(continued from page 7)

The Wisdom of the Genes: New Pathways in Evolution. Christopher Wills. Basic Books, 1989. $19.95.

There can be no concept in modern biology more pervasive than that of organic evolution. More the pity, then, that debate concerning the mechanisms of evolution is too frequently thought to be about the validity of its central message. Probably as a consequence, Wills has taken the trouble to explicate the general themes of evolution in chapters well within the understanding of the nonspecialist before turning to his own conviction that among the attributes of living systems that have evolved is, as he might put it, the capacity to evolve more effectively. Specialists will almost surely debate this hypothesis and they should, but debate about "how" cannot fairly be construed as debate about "whether."

Seed to Civilization: The Story of Food. Charles B. Heiser, Jr. Harvard, 1990. $12.95.

As the proportion of the population directly concerned with production agriculture in the industrialized societies continues to shrink, it is well for us to be reminded from time to time that we, as biological beings, have an undiminished dependence on food. Heiser's small volume is a convenient, easily read, well-illustrated way of accomplishing that objective.

The Universe and Its Origins: From Ancient Myth to Present Reality and Fantasy. Ed. by S. Fred Singer. Paragon House, 1990. $34.95.

This is an almost miscellaneous collection of short papers or essays on such varied topics as cosmology, astrology, astronomy, human travel in space, extraterrestrial life, UFOs, and the like. Interspersed with each of the basic presentations are one or more commentaries, agreeing or disagreeing with the initially stated point of view. Part science, part history, part mythology, part speculation, the material reads easily and interestingly.

Food Hoarding in Animals. Stephen B. Vander Wall. Univ. of Chicago, 1990. $29.95.

Although many of the details of this monograph will probably interest only the specialist, the diversity and pervasiveness of the phenomenon of hoarding throughout the animal kingdom are almost overwhelming. The reward for the general reader comes from dipping pretty much at random into the text, where, aided by numerous photographs and diagrams, one is awestruck again by the complexity of the living world. As to whether squirrels do or do not successfully retrieve the acorns they so diligently bury, Vander Wall's answer would be, I think, "Part of the time."

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Possible Roles for Phi Beta Kappa in Virginia's Public Schools Discussed at Williamsburg Conference

Representatives of the 11 Phi Beta Kappa chapters and three associations in Virginia met in Phi Beta Kappa Hall at the College of William and Mary in January to discuss "Phi Beta Kappa and Virginia's Public Schools: The Present and Future." James W. Dyke, Jr., Virginia's secretary of education, called for community partnerships between Phi Beta Kappa affiliates and the local schools. Robert Spivey, president of the Richmond Association, endorsed this appeal. Harold Hodgkinson of the Institute for Educational Leadership talked to the group about the changing demographics among Virginia's school-age population.

At an afternoon session devoted to developing ideas for collaboration and chaired by the Society's vice president, Joan Ferrante, the participants seemed especially interested in projects that would encourage the professional development of the state's public school teachers. Joining in the deliberations were representatives of the Association of American Colleges, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the National Honor Society, and others.

Virginia's secretary of education, James W. Dyke, Jr., (left) talks with William and Mary's president, Paul Verkuil, at the opening of the Williamsburg conference.

Society President Otis Singletary greets Society member Helen Kelley of Richmond, who suggested the Williamsburg conference.

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