



# THE KEY REPORTER

## Jensen Endows Fellowships For Study in France

Walter J. Jensen (ΦBK, UCLA, 1941) has donated a portfolio of stocks valued at nearly \$400,000 to create a scholarship fund to be administered by Phi Beta Kappa. The purpose is to enable persons "whose career is or will be connected with the active use of the French language" to study in France for at least six months in order to develop their command of standard French expression.

The fellowships, which will be grants of at least \$10,000 plus air travel to and from France, are to be awarded annually after Jensen's death. The awards will be made on a competitive basis, with preference being given to members of Phi Beta Kappa and to teachers of the French language at either the secondary or the postsecondary level.

Commenting on the establishment of the Walter Jensen Fellowship program, Phi Beta Kappa President Charles Blitzer said, "We are proud to be selected to administer this important instrument for enhancing international understanding. Through it Professor Jensen will transmit his lifelong dedication to this discipline to future generations of scholars."

Jensen is a native Californian who did graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley; Pennsylvania State University; the University of Washington; and the University of Massachusetts. He spent most of his teaching career at colleges in Massachusetts, including Holyoke Community College and Westfield State College. He now lives in Bradenton, Florida.



ΦBK President Charles Blitzer, left, accepted the funds to endow the Jensen Fellowship program from Walter Jensen in the library of the Society's national offices on March 4.

## Is the Family Obsolete?

By Leon Eisenberg

When politicians become nostalgic about the "old fashioned" American family and talk about "family values," the family they idealize has husband-father as breadwinner, wife-mother as housekeeper, and children who are seen but not heard. These sentiments memorialize a past when patriarchal values were dominant and when legal restrictions and women's economic dependence combined to make divorce a seldom-used alternative. Even then, of course, there was no *one* American family, traditional or otherwise. Wives in black families, in immigrant families, and in working-class families have always had to share the breadwinning role with their husbands.

Because families of the past were more economically interdependent they were more stable; but we don't know how many couples stayed together for lack of acceptable alternatives and how many for love. Even the image of once-upon-a-time families as centers of concerned child care is uncertain. When families were production units, children did work alongside their parents; they had to, and they worked hard. Would we wish to return to family solidarity based on the inexorable demands of the farm and the cottage industry, with no opportunity for education or social mobility?

Even if we agree that we can't go back to the days of the McGuffey

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## THE FAMILY

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readers and even if you share my doubts that McGuffey had it quite right, it does not follow that today's families are thriving. The size, the composition, the structure, and the living arrangements of families in the United States and Western Europe have undergone changes so profound as to raise the question, Is the family as we have known it becoming outmoded and obsolete? Out-of-wedlock births are an ever-higher proportion of all births. Nonmarital cohabitation, separation, and divorce have become more common, as has remarriage. Children living with only one parent (24 percent) or living with one biological and one stepparent are increasing in number. Each year an increasing proportion of mothers with young children enter the labor force.

The magnitude and significance of these changes have yet to register fully in public or professional awareness. Are these "new" family forms constructive adaptations to modernity? Or are they more like the environmental degradation that accompanies industrialization? That is,

are revolving-door family arrangements incompatible with child health? And if they are, what can be done about this problem?

### *The Need for the Family*

The universality of the family in every society testifies that it meets essential human needs: to love and be wanted, to give rise to children, to rear them until they become independent, and to preserve property rights. Are modern families adequate to these tasks?

Put simply, children need two parents, as recent U.S. studies show. Analysis of six nationally representative data sets by McLanahan and Sandefur<sup>1</sup> has demonstrated that children growing up in single-parent households, whether the parents were never married, are separated, or are divorced, have twice the risk of dropping out of high school, of being out of work, and of becoming teenage parents themselves.

Separation and divorce are obvious stressors for children. The split family loses about 40 percent of its income; children have much less time with their fathers (one-third see them once a week, another third not at all); they are twice as likely to have to change residence and school, losing friends in the process. Because remarriage is common, many children must adapt to stepparents and step-siblings; further stress may be in the offing because one-third of second marriages end in divorce. The long-term outcome depends on the circumstances of the custodial parent after the separation and on the quality of the relationship with each parent.

The 1988 U.S. National Health Interview Survey reveals similar epidemiologic findings: Children living with single mothers or with mothers and stepfathers are more likely than those living with both biological parents to have to repeat a grade at school, to be expelled from school, to be treated for emotional or behavioral problems, and to have elevated scores for behavioral problems and

health risks. Adjusting for social class and ethnic factors reduces those differences; nonetheless, even when income and ethnicity are taken into account, children from single-parent families fare worse.<sup>2</sup>

### *Sweden vs. the United States*

The evidence is clear: Children are at risk when families are incomplete. Why are such families becoming more common in Europe and the United States? In trying to answer this question, I will contrast the United States with Sweden, which exemplifies an effective welfare state.

First, families in the lowest income quintile in Sweden receive 70 percent more of national income than do those in the corresponding quintile in the United States (8 percent versus 4.7 percent). A second telling difference is relative ranking on the Human Development Index (HDI). The United Nations Development Program each year ranks nations on an HDI, the principal components of which are longevity, knowledge (that is, schooling and literacy), and per capita real income, appropriately weighted in the final index. Overall, the United States and Sweden are ranked fifth and sixth on the world HDI, but when HDI is recalculated to take into account equity in the treatment of women, Sweden rises to the top of the list and the United States falls to ninth.

In 18th-century America, women had had an average of eight children by the time they reached the end of childbearing age; about half to two-thirds of those children reached maturity. The total fertility rate per woman in the United States fell from 7 in 1800 to just under 4 in 1900, to less than 2.5 in 1970, and to 2.1 in 1990. Women in Sweden and the United States today have fewer children and cease childbearing at an earlier age. The total fertility rate in both countries is 2.1.

At the turn of the century, when a woman's life expectancy was about



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<sup>1</sup>S. S. McLanahan and G. Sandefur, *Growing Up with a Single Parent* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994).

<sup>2</sup>D. A. Dawson, "Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-being: Data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53 (1991):573-84.



48 years, she spent almost all her adult life bearing and rearing children. Today, with an expectancy of 80 years, women have a long post-reproductive life; for most women, that longer life includes years of separation, divorce, or widowhood. Acquiring marketable skills is ever more a necessity for women in the modern world.

Most women today work because they have to and because the economy needs them in the work force. Family economics is the major determinant. Paid employment for both members of a couple is a compelling need in an era when real wages are declining. Married women who have children under 18 are more likely to be employed than are childless women in the United States.

In Sweden more than 80 percent of mothers with children under age two and more than 90 percent of mothers whose children are age three or older are employed. The corresponding figure for married women in the United States is 60 percent. When women work full time and year round in the United States, they earn about 74 percent of what men earn for the same jobs. In Sweden, the ratio is 89 percent.

Swedish women have come to regard paid employment as a far more socially desirable role than that of housewife.<sup>3</sup> With paid employment, wives have become less dependent on their husbands. Divorce, once a luxury restricted to the wealthy who could afford to buy it, is now a recourse more common among the working class. Divorce rates in Sweden and the United States have increased markedly.

Today most Swedes who marry have lived in a consensual union for some years before; many have had at least one child. In 1992 the number of newly established consensual unions in Sweden was *double* the number of marriages. Unfortunately, consensual unions do not assure the stability of the subsequent marriage. Parents who have cohabited before

marriage separate more often after they marry than those who have not.<sup>4</sup>

As the result of changes in types and venues of work, in vocational characteristics, in the economics of family life, and in custom and law, the stability of the family has declined sharply in Western Europe and America. Europe and the United States differ greatly in the percentage of births that take place out of wedlock. In 1992 the percentage for Greece was 2.6, well below that for any other country in the European Union (compare: Italy 5.8, Ireland 11.7, and France 26.3 percent). The figure for the United States is now 27 percent, 2.5 times greater than it was two

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**Infants born out of wedlock in Sweden enter a family of two parents living in a consensual union; such infants in the United States most often have only a mother to care for them—a mother living in poverty, to boot.**

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decades ago. The rate for Sweden is twice again as high; *half the births* take place out of wedlock. Yet there is little public alarm in Sweden but widespread consternation in the United States about an “epidemic of teenage pregnancy.” Why the difference?

Out-of-wedlock births occur under entirely different social circumstances in the two countries. Births to unwed teenagers have been increasing in the United States at the same time that they have been decreasing in Sweden. Infants born out of wedlock in Sweden enter a family of two parents living in a consensual union; such infants in the United States most often have only a mother to care for them—a mother living in poverty, to boot.

Among industrialized nations, the United States has the highest teenage pregnancy rate *and* the highest teenage childbirth rate *despite* the highest teenage abortion rate. This is *not*

because we have the highest rates of nonmarital adolescent cohabitation; the rate for Sweden is actually higher. Public school education about human sexuality and access to contraception have been systematically provided to Swedish adolescents for many years; in contrast, both education and access have been restricted in the United States for fear of “encouraging promiscuity.” Americans seem to believe that if you don’t tell kids about sex, they won’t find out.

U.S. statistics averaged across our heterogeneous population conceal as much as they reveal. When the data are disaggregated by ethnic group, profound differences become apparent. Overall, 29.5 percent of all 1991 births were to unmarried women; the rate for blacks was 67.9 percent, for whites 21.8 percent, and for Hispanics 38 percent. The disparity in life circumstances among whites, blacks, and Hispanics becomes evident when their statuses on the HDI are calculated separately. U.S. whites rank first on the international list, blacks 31st (at the level of Trinidad and Tobago), and Hispanics 35th (just below Estonia). The reasons for this stratification have little to do with biology and everything to do with timing and mode of immigration, past and present discrimination, and extent of ghettoization.<sup>5</sup>

Lower rates of marriage and higher rates of divorce and separation leave more children under age 18 living with a single parent: 25 percent in the United States and 15 percent in Sweden. The U.S. figure has doubled since 1970; the figure for Sweden has increased one-third since 1975. Even when they work full time, most single mothers in America remain near or below the poverty line because their wages are so low. They are vulnerable to frequent layoffs; high expenses for child care deplete their meager earnings; they lose Medicaid if they work. Single parents in Sweden benefit from an extensive social support system—housing subsidies, child support, day care, and medical

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<sup>3</sup>B. Hoem and J. M. Hoem, “The Swedish Family: Aspects of Contemporary Developments,” *Journal of Family Issues* 9 (1988): 397-424.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>D. S. Massey and N. A. Denton, “Hypersegregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas: Black and Hispanic Segregation along Five Dimensions,” *Demography* 26 (1989): 373-91.



## THE FAMILY

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care—that cushions the mother and her children against adversity.

### *Why These Social Changes?*

What accounts for the increase in consensual unions, the decline in marriage, and the increase in divorce during successive decades in this century? There is no simple or completely satisfactory explanation. The striking differences among countries demonstrate the importance of local variations in custom, in history, in the influence of religion, and in economics. Increasing divorce rates regularly accompany industrialization in the West; yet Japan, at the leading edge of pace and power, continues to enjoy very low divorce and out-of-wedlock childbirth rates.

In earlier centuries, husbands and wives were tightly bound to each other. Traditional family economy enforced mutual dependence; there were simply no viable alternatives for a place to live, for subsistence, or for security. When divorce was difficult or impossible to obtain, abandonment was common; even when husbands and wives continued to live with each other, many marriages were hollow shells. As women earned wages, they gained independence; it became possible to choose to leave.

Decisions about whether to marry, to stay married, and to have children are influenced by job availability, tax structure, housing markets, the rules governing social welfare benefits, and other economic considerations. This situation is readily apparent in changing marriage patterns among young Americans. The route to economic self-sufficiency has become longer and requires more educational preparation with each succeeding decade. Class cleavage is becoming sharper. Advantaged youth adapt to the new situation by later median ages of marriage and parenthood far more often than do low-income and minority youth.

The disappearance of blue-collar jobs has shut adolescents with only a high school education or less out of the workforce. Whereas once man-

ual and semiskilled jobs in the industrial economy supported large numbers at relatively good pay, the replacement of industry by a service economy has resulted in a sharp decline in the wage scale. In 1990, 40 percent of 19- to 24-year-old Americans working full time earned less than the poverty level for a family of four (and just above it for a family of three); this is more than twice the rate for 1980!

These factors have had an especially severe effect on black Americans. In 1974, 46 percent of young black males were in relatively high-paying blue-collar positions; by 1986 that figure had been halved. During that interval, the percentage of two-parent family groups among blacks fell from 64 percent to 40 percent.

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### **The evidence is clear: Children are at risk when families are incomplete.**

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Wilson<sup>6</sup> has focused on the relationship between employment and marriage by computing a “male marriageable pool index”: the number of employed men per 100 women of the same age and race. In the mid-1960s in the United States, the black marriageable pool index was about the same as the white. In the years since, the index for blacks has plummeted so far that there are only 18 employed males for every 100 females age 16 or older on Chicago’s South Side. It can hardly be coincidental that the proportion of births to black unmarried mothers under age 20 has increased from 64 percent to 90 percent, and the proportion among those 20 to 24 years old, from 31 percent to 66 percent. For a young woman to marry a man with no prospects for employment is to take responsibility for him as well as the infant and to lose eligibility for certain benefits.

Does the expansion of welfare benefits account for single motherhood? Both welfare benefits and single parenthood *did* increase in parallel in

the 1960s and '70s. During the past 20 years, however, benefits have *declined* in real dollar value by 26 percent, whereas single parenthood has continued to increase. Rates of out-of-wedlock births are about the same for Britain, Canada, and France as the rate for the United States; the rate for Denmark—like that for Sweden—is more than 50 percent higher! The structure of the family is changing rapidly throughout the Western world.

### *Some Solutions*

What social policies can support the family and promote child health in a world in which family life has been changing so rapidly? Moral exhortation for premarital chastity and an end to divorce is unlikely to succeed in reconstituting family stability. After all, the increases in premarital sex, desertion, and divorce have all occurred despite jeremiads from the pulpit in virtually every church. Reconstruction of the family must begin with economic and legal policies to promote family formation and stability, and education in public schools for responsible parenting.

National values are decisive in the way debates on policy are framed. Discussion in the United States focuses on protecting children against harm rather than on promoting their well-being, and on protecting the right of the family to privacy; the home is a fortress that can be breached only when serious danger threatens. In Scandinavia, in contrast, state policies are formulated with the goal of strengthening parental rights, roles, and responsibility. That is the framework I urge: active intervention to promote the welfare of the family, teaching adolescents to nurture younger children.

Employment policy must factor family needs into the social cost-benefit equation. Work patterns must be designed to enhance family life; they should include flexible schedules, alternative work locations, and part-time work. It is essential to guarantee that fringe benefits are not lost in the process. Employment patterns must be redesigned to take into account the needs and preferences of

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<sup>6</sup>W. J. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).



employees. Work schedules should encourage the participation of both men and women in family-oriented programs.

The federal government must implement a full-employment policy to give young adults who enter the labor market incomes sufficient to support families. Increasing the minimum wage is merely the first step. At present, poor two-parent families receive less help than do well-off intact families or single-parent families. Nearly all middle-income households receive tax-subsidized medical insurance through work; single mothers in poverty are eligible for Medicaid. There is no safety net for poor two-parent families. A comprehensive family assistance policy should provide a decent basic living standard, cover unemployed two-parent as well as single-parent families, subsidize low-income housing, assure access to health care, and provide work training to enhance adult skills.<sup>7</sup>

Six months of paid leave after childbirth or adoption, already the case in Sweden, should be available here for either parent with guaranteed job protection. Paid parental leave permits infant care in the home and provides an opportunity for care givers to learn to become competent parents; skillful parenting is not instinctive. Payments to single mothers should guarantee a decent standard of living in conjunction with subsidized housing. Family benefits will not solve the problem of too little time, or end loneliness. They will halt the superimposition of poverty on other life stresses.

Access to good-quality infant and child day care should be assured for all families. Although there is a nominally "free market" in day care, that market is seriously flawed because parents do not know the criteria that distinguish good from poor-quality centers and therefore cannot purchase services for their children intelligently. Moreover, in many states licensing standards are weak or miss-

ing. The wages of women working in child care are low. As a result, staff satisfaction is low and turnover is high. State standards must be raised *and enforced*; there is a pressing need for consumer education to enable parents to discriminate quality.

Both parents should take responsibility for children. Nonresident fathers who are employed should be expected to share their income with their children; child support awards should be vigorously enforced. Security for mothers and children could be assured by a guaranteed minimum child support benefit paid directly by the government and recouped from the father so far as possible. Unlike welfare, a guaranteed child support benefit would not depend on the mother's income, and therefore would not be reduced if the mother worked.

Public schooling should include education for family life and child care. Children need help in understanding that happy marriages are not made in Hollywood; success in marriage requires shared values, reasonable expectations, willingness to

compromise, and moral commitment. The goals of family life education include educating preteens and teens about sexuality and reproduction in a context of responsible sexuality, and assuring that children are planned by making contraception information and services accessible. Researchers have found that young men educated about reproductive health are more effective contraceptors than those who are not, and that sex education can delay the onset as well as promote the safety of teenage sex.<sup>8</sup>

Will these policies bring about a Golden Age of the Family? Clearly not. They will cushion children against neglect and misfortune. Providing the best care we know how to give is no guarantee of a trouble-free future. Nothing is. But it will increase the likelihood that our children will be more competent than we have been at managing the affairs of the world. □

<sup>8</sup>A. Grunseit and S. Kippax, *Effects of Sex Education on Young People's Sexual Behavior* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1993).

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<sup>7</sup>J. T. Gibbs, "The Social Context of Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting in the Black Community," in M. K. Rosenheim and M. F. Testa, eds., *Early Parenthood and Coming of Age in the 1990s* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 71-88.



# ΦBK Visiting Scholars for 1995-96 Are Named

Phi Beta Kappa has named a panel of 12 Visiting Scholars—7 men and 5 women—for 1995-96. In the academic year to come, members of the panel will make two-day visits to a total of about 100 campuses nationwide. The Society established the Visiting Scholar Program in 1956 to enable undergraduates to meet and talk with distinguished scholars in many disciplines. Members of the panel are as follows:

**Dore Ashton**, professor of art history, Cooper Union. She is former art critic for the *New York Times* and former associate editor of *Arts*. Her most recent publications are *Noguchi East and West*, *Out of the Whirlwind*, *20th-Century Artists on Art*, *About Rothko*, and *American Art since 1945*.

**Walter Dean Burnham**, Frank C. Erwin Jr. Centennial Chair in Government, University of Texas at Austin. A fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he is the author or editor of *Politics in the 1990s*, *Democracy in the Making*, *The Current Crisis in American Politics*, and *The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development*.

**Eric J. Chaisson**, director, Wright Center for Innovative Science Education, and research professor of physics and astronomy, Tufts University. His books include *Cosmic Dawn* (Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science), *The Invisible Universe*, *The Life Era*, *Relatively Speaking*, *Universe: An Evolutionary Approach to Astronomy*, and *Astronomy Today*.

**Peter Gay**, Sterling Professor of History, Emeritus, Yale University. He is the author of *Weimar Culture* (Phi Beta Kappa Ralph Waldo Emerson Award), *Freud: A Life for Our Time*, and *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud* (3 volumes so far). The first volume of his two-volume study *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* won a National Book Award.

**E. Peter Geiduschek**, research professor of biology, University of California, San Diego. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, he is a fellow of the American Academy

of Arts and Sciences and the American Academy of Microbiology. He is currently an editor of *Virology* and *Seminars in Virology*.

**Paula J. Giddings**, author, New York City. She is the author of *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* and *In Search of Sisterhood: Delta Sigma Theta and the Challenge of the Black Sorority Movement*, and is currently writing a biography of Ida B. Wells. She has taught at Rutgers University, Spelman College, and Princeton University.

**Shafi Goldwasser**, professor of computer science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She received a National Science Foundation Presidential Young Investigators Award and the first Godel Prize in theoretical computer science for her work on zero-knowledge interactive proofs. She edited *Advances in Cryptology: Proceedings in Crypto88*.

**Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett**, professor of performance studies and professor of Hebrew and Judaic studies, New York University. Recent past president of the American Folklore Society, she was a Getty Scholar at the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities in 1991-92. She has written *Image before My Eyes: A Photographic History of Jewish Life in Poland, 1864-1939*.

**Edward O. Laumann**, George Herbert Mead Distinguished Service Professor, department of sociology, University of Chicago. He is director of the Ogburn Stouffer Center for Population and Social Organization and former editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*. His most recent books are *The Social Organization of Sexuality* and *Sex in America*.

**Alexander Nehamas**, Edmund N. Carpenter II Class of 1943 Professor in the Humanities, professor of philosophy, and professor of comparative literature, Princeton University. Elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he was awarded the 1990-91 Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professorship in Philosophy. He is the author of *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*.

**Annabel M. Patterson**, Karl Young Professor of English, Yale University. She has written *Censorship and Interpretation*, *Pastoral and Ideology* (Levin Prize, American Comparative Literature Association), *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, *Fables of Power*, *Reading between the Lines*, and *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*.

**Michael I. Posner**, director, Institute of Cognitive and Decision Sciences, and professor of psychology, University of Oregon. Elected to the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he received the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award of the American Psychological Association. He is the author of *Cognition: An Introduction*.

## Society Invites Nominations for 1997 Sidney Hook Award

The Phi Beta Kappa Society welcomes nominations from chapters, alumni associations, and individual members for the third Sidney Hook Memorial Award, to be presented at the triennial Council meeting in Chicago in 1997. The award was endowed in 1990 by a grant from the John Dewey Foundation in memory of Hook (ΦBK, CCNY, 1945), the internationally recognized philosopher who died in 1989.

The \$5,000 Hook award recognizes demonstrated leadership in the cause of liberal arts education, distinguished undergraduate teaching, and published research that has contributed significantly to the advancement of the recipient's academic discipline. The award was presented in 1991 to physicist Leon Lederman and in 1994 to historian John Hope Franklin.

Inquiries about the award and nominations, consisting of a letter of nomination and a résumé or biographical sketch of the person nominated, should be addressed to the Sidney Hook Memorial Award, 1811 Q Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. The deadline is July 1, 1995.



**Editor's note:** *This new, occasional department is intended to highlight stories about the Society in the news media.*

On January 23 the *Arizona Daily Star* published an article titled "Phi Beta What?: More top college students declining to join prestigious honorary," by Alisa Wabnik (ΦBK, University of Arizona, 1990). The article was prompted by the journalist's finding that 23 of the 62 University of Arizona students nominated for membership in Phi Beta Kappa in December did not respond. She interviewed a number of these students with the following results:

- One art history major said she had a hard time distinguishing the group from other honorary groups that courted her during her senior year. "In considering should I do one of them, should I do all of them, I didn't do any of them. I've since regretted it."

- Other students said that the one-time \$30 initiation fee to become a lifetime member turned them away. "It seemed like I could do something else for \$30," said one senior in anthropology.

- Another student said, "I didn't get the impression that that was a club that did a lot on campus. I've never seen any of their activities and I don't really have a lot of time, so I wasn't grabbed by the offer at all."

The journalist also quoted faculty leaders as speculating that "anything

## Phi Beta Kappa In the News

from a national increase in first-generation college students to anti-intellectualism" might also be responsible. Raymond Thompson, an anthropology professor who is head of the Arizona State Museum and president of the university's chapter, said, "This is a fairly recent thing. It's happening all over the country, and it's happening more at large institutions than at small institutions."

T. Patrick Culbert, another anthropology professor and a former treasurer of the university's chapter, said the students' responses could be symptomatic of a proliferation of honorary societies that caught Phi Beta Kappa unaware. He added, "The good students are going to be asked to join several of them. If you get asked to join three of these, maybe you're looking at \$100. I think the question is not whether you're so poor that you couldn't get together \$100, but is the money worth it for this?"

One student who accepted the invitation said, "If it hadn't been for my mom, I probably would have been more inclined to doubt the

whole thing. It costs like \$30 or something to join, and just being a wary consumer, whenever somebody asks you for money for something that's supposed to be honoring you, people tend to question that."

Phi Beta Kappa's secretary, Douglas Foard, was quoted in the article as suggesting that "given the current student reaction, all chapters have an obligation to explain ourselves better." The article also mentioned that the Society had recently produced a four-color brochure and is considering producing a video to tell students about the Society's activities, and that chapters are being encouraged to become more visible.

Students are not the only people who are apparently confused about what Phi Beta Kappa is and whether they belong to it or not. Last fall, Wes Cooley, the Republican candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives from Oregon's second district, claimed to belong to Phi Beta Kappa, but when the Democrats challenged his claim, he conceded that he actually belonged to Alpha Gamma Sigma, an honorary fraternity at El Camino Community College in southern California, which he had attended. Cooley was quoted in the *Washington Post* (October 12, 1994) as saying, "I honestly believed the honorary was Phi Beta Kappa." He was elected to Congress in November.



*An elaborate ΦBK ice sculpture looms over participants in the festivities celebrating the installation of a chapter at Loyola College in Maryland in January. The Society's president, Charles Blitzer, is flanked by U.S. Senator Paul S. Sarbanes (ΦBK, Princeton University, 1954), left, and Loyola's president, Harold E. Ridley.*



*Jeffrey Reiman, professor of philosophy and religion at American University and president of the new ΦBK chapter there, received the chapter's charter from the Society's president, Charles Blitzer, at the chapter installation ceremonies in Washington last January.*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The piece by Donald McCloskey ("Is America in Decline?" *Key Reporter*, Winter 1994-95) was remarkable in several ways. First, I was surprised, being a university professor, to see anything written in an academic-oriented publication that is favorable to the United States or that identifies Marxism as a failed philosophy. Marvelous.

However, I was also surprised at the narrow focus Dr. McCloskey adopted. Four of his six points concern whether future Americans will have good paychecks. And his fifth fact is a negative one with a little positive twist—poorly educated American high school graduates have a second chance in college. He is right; I help them exercise that chance. And, for some, I hope that they seek a third chance.

Dr. McCloskey ignored issues that I fear point to the possibility of the decline of America. He did not deal with crime rates, which make the lives of my students far more fearful than the lives my wife (then girlfriend) and I experienced in high school and college. We never had or needed escort services around campuses; we went wherever we wanted to with little—if any—fear. He did not deal with the incredible rate of single parenthood among African Americans and the rising rate among Caucasian Americans. He did not mention that race-based suspicions are not resolved and that, indeed, we can only count the failed programs, not the successful ones. (I err—the U.S. Army, the National Football League, and the National Basketball Association have been successfully integrated.) In sum, Prof. McCloskey raised and refuted ideas that I don't even consider when I worry about the decline of America. . . .

*Emil J. Posavac, Skokie, Ill.*

Donald McCloskey provides an important corrective to dire warnings of America's decline. Especially important is his point that "chatter about 'decline'" leads us, dangerously, to point fingers at "foreigners. . . ."

Yet if we stop enviously eyeing abroad and instead look to our own house, as Professor McCloskey suggests, we see that in fact all is not well. Americans are worried. Whence comes the pervasive anxiety that so concerns Robert Reich and others? The aggregate well-being that McCloskey describes masks deepening divisions that rightly tug at our national confidence (if not, alas, our conscience).

The evidence is well known. Aggregate wealth has increased, but visions of a life of leisure have evaporated as Americans work almost a month more a year than they did a generation ago. Income per household has held steady for most, but for many it now takes two earners per household to earn it. The real buying power of a median income has been essentially flat for 25 years, and those at the bottom of our economy have fallen significantly behind. That great American second chance, a college education, has become increasingly rare for certain segments of society, such as black men. Meanwhile, in "the richest nation in the world," the destitute crowd our streets, without shelter.

While the world may be converging on a happy plateau of high aggregate income, here at home the incomes of rich and poor ominously diverge. This is indeed cause for alarm.

*Andy Blauvelt, Cambridge, Mass.*

Donald McCloskey's article is perceptive, informative, and well intentioned. Dr. McCloskey is quite proper in seeking to counteract panicky rumors of U.S. "decline." I use similar examples of creativity and Nobel prize rates in my own classes. . . . His uncritical enthusiasm, however, for "the plan to let people try to get capitalistically rich" pushes him into the "Dr. Feelgood" category by which he characterizes those who rule American high schools. Two important flaws in his analysis are worth pointing out.

First, "enforcing the law and leaving people alone" by itself is hardly an adequate statement of sound economic policy. . . . Leaving people alone as far as possible is a good idea, but it remains for reasonable laws to be made with respect to vital concerns now and in the immediate future. Some of these vital concerns include assuring competition on a "level playing field." If left completely alone, the "free market" overresponds to size and power, and preoccupies itself with short-term gains, ignoring "external costs" until they become painful enough to force new laws to be passed. Ignoring the issues of what kind of laws are passed and enforced, in effect, is taking a position on them!

Second, Marxists are not the only ones who believe "the rich are made better off by keeping the poor in thrall." Many ranchers, plantation owners, bankers,

and factory and mine owners in developing nations still believe this! And our wealthy elite who hobnob with them fail to note that the centralization of power and the concentration of new wealth in their hands mask the fact that the less affluent in many countries are often worse off, despite reported rises in "average" incomes! By this "institutional exploitation" financial and commercial centers in the world economy actually create crises such as the one in Chiapas, over and over again!

Most of what Dr. McCloskey says to refute American "decline" is valid. But . . . what would he say about our earlier reluctance to impose sanctions on China to defend our workers against competition from slave labor and child labor, in contrast to our present eagerness to impose these sanctions for the protection of investments in "intellectual property"? Is this an American "decline" in sensitivity to human and social issues that he neither recognizes nor refutes?

*B. Carter Pate, Chattanooga, Tenn.*

How dismayed to find Donald McCloskey's paean to complacency in the *Key Reporter*. He apparently wasn't thinking of the ongoing palpable losses to our American standard of living in affordable health care, literacy (which he cavalierly waved away), or freedom from crime.

. . . Somehow McCloskey's article made a fitting companion piece to Richard Helms's call for keeping our country's stunningly expensive and cumbersome spy network despite the end of the Cold War. . . .

*Samuel Coleman, Eugene, Ore.*

. . . For those of us who work daily with cutbacks in the quality of educational resources, increasing rates of spousal and child abuse, lack of employment opportunity, increasing numbers of families as well as single men who are homeless, persons at risk because they have no health insurance—I could go on and on!—Dr. McCloskey's version of "Don't worry, be happy" (with apologies to Bobby McFerrin!) brings small solace indeed.

To say that we live in a society beset by wide-ranging and deepening crisis does not mean that one engages in the superficial and frantic response of running around in circles, crying, "The sky is



falling, the sky is falling!" that marks the ultimate response of despair. It does mean that, for example, one would hope that the *Key Reporter* would offer us analyses with depth and substance beyond the smug arrogance of Dr. McCloskey's article.

Lorenz M. Schultz, Grants Pass, Ore.

### Donald McCloskey replies:

Emil Posavac points out that America has problems like race and crime, too. Yes. A rising tide of income does not solve every problem, and it creates some of its own. On the other hand, as Andy Blauvelt points out, slower growth has disappointed some hopes. The statistics, though, are not open and shut. Properly measured to reflect the increasing quality of goods and services, American incomes have continued to rise.

Incomes have risen worldwide, and did so even in the 19th century. Capitalism has been good for the poor—think of our great-great-grandparents and compare their livings with ours. Mine were digging the land in their one suit of clothes. Carter Pate observes that elites in third-world countries nowadays sometimes imagine that their wealth depends on keeping their people poor. It's a case, not uncommon, of the left and right agreeing on a myth of exploitation. The worst of Leninism and the worst of country-club Republicanism have at least this much in common.

As to What Is To Be Done, Professor Pate claims that the market responds to power and ignores spillovers, and thus he implies that we need more government. But government, too, responds to power and ignores spillovers. Consider the Army Corps of Engineers or grazing on public lands or defense procurement or federal housing programs. The existence of a Problem is not by itself a sufficient argument for a governmental Solution.

Samuel Coleman says that the piece is a "paean to complacency." Pessimism is perpetually fashionable, because nobody gets called a fool for being foolishly pessimistic. But pessimism about the economy has usually been wrong. True, it sells books. The other day I bought Ravi Batra's book *Surviving the Great Depression of 1990* (Simon and Schuster, 1988), remaindered at \$5.99. I bought it to show the discount sticker to my students and to make the point that if the pessimists were as smart as they say they are, they would all be rich.

In 1830 that optimist Thomas Babington Macaulay wrote:

If we were to prophesy that in the year 1930 a population of fifty mil-



*Assembled in Williamsburg, Va., for a wedding last September, this three-generation ΦBK family posed in front of Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall at the College of William and Mary: Laurence Michelmore (UCLA, 1930), Patricia Michelmore Price (University of Michigan, 1962), and Audrey Price (Dartmouth, 1991).*

lion, better fed, clad, and lodged than the English of our time, will cover these islands, that Sussex and Huntingdonshire will be wealthier than the wealthiest parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire now are . . . that machines constructed on principles yet undiscovered will be in every house, . . . many people would think us insane. . . . We cannot absolutely prove that those are in error who tell us that society has reached a turning point, that we have seen our best days. But so said all who came before us, and with just as much apparent reason.

Contrary to the fashionable Malthusian pessimists of his day, Macaulay was spot on. (He even got the population right.) Modern economic growth is, as the kids say, something else. And it keeps happening, slowly in rich countries like America and faster in poor countries like India. Three cheers. And stop buying Bob Reich's books.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Richard Helms concludes his excellent article in the winter 1994-95 issue of the *Key Reporter* with the following statement:

. . . One must acknowledge that our government needs the best and the brightest if it is to function effectively. In the interest of America's

future, many people must forswear the accumulation of money and dedicate themselves to government service, education, science, social welfare.

As a 33-year veteran of federal government service, now retired, I suggest that the problem is more complicated than Mr. Helms has indicated. In 1942, when Mr. Helms and I entered government service, there was an unparalleled opportunity for "the best and the brightest" to make significant contributions to the country's welfare. I applied to the Treasury Department following graduation from Columbia Law School because I was convinced I would enjoy greater responsibility in dealing with interesting problems than would have been the case in a private law firm. I was not disappointed.

Unfortunately, this situation no longer prevails. With some notable exceptions, career federal government employees too rarely have an opportunity today to make a meaningful impact on the many problems confronting our nation. Unlike the United Kingdom, for instance, where a successful career official has the possibility of rising to the post of permanent under secretary, the number two slot in his Ministry, career employees in the United States tend too often now to be relegated to routine, repetitive assignments. The reason, I believe, is that plum

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## LETTERS

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assignments in an agency tend to be allocated to political appointees. . . .

I have often toyed with the idea of encouraging graduates of my alma mater, Dartmouth, to follow a career, like me, in the federal government service. However, in the absence of a political appointment, I seriously question whether they would find government service as rewarding as I did. Moreover, political appointments, by their very nature, tend to be temporary.

*Matthew J. Marks, Chevy Chase, Md.*

*[Marks (ΦBK, Dartmouth, 1936) retired from government service in 1974 as deputy assistant secretary of the Treasury.]*

Dick Helms's comments on public service resonate strongly with me, a long-term "bureaucrat" and subsequent chairman of the privately sponsored Commission on the Public Service. The Commission was dedicated to dealing with the evident problem of falling respect and morale, the thinning out of the "best and the brightest," and the disheartening lack of interest by new graduates of our best institutions.

In these circumstances it's hardly surprising that there is so much cynicism about government itself. Performance in many areas is less than that to which we are entitled. But few people make the connection between those results and our failure to nourish a committed professional and effective career service. Dick Helms is dead right in suggesting that part of the difficulty lies in our universities, including those that like to think of themselves as both dedicated and prestigious.

*Paul A. Volcker, Princeton, N.J.*

I read the article by Richard Helms with interest.

When listing the reasons qualified young people do not enter government service these days, he overlooks a key point: the appalling increase in unethical and down-right dishonest behavior of many elected, appointed, and career officials on a national, state, and local level and the extensive media coverage of this misbehavior (and correctly so)—all of which makes government a less desirable career path.

When I entered government service in the late 1950s, good government *was*, to a far greater extent, good politics. Political

and personal gain appears to have taken the upper hand in government these days.

But then we, the electorate, have permitted this change. . . .

*Robert D. Uher, East Hampton, N.Y.*

To dispel the notion that Phi Beta Kappa members wholeheartedly support federal funding of the arts, I would like to respond to the statements of Stanley N. Katz in the winter issue of the *Key Reporter*. Mr. Katz, as do most supporters of federal spending, overlooks the following issues:

**1. "Federal resources" represent private pain.** Regardless of their affiliation with the political left or right, supporters of special-interest spending programs (of which the NEH and NEA are prime examples) prefer the euphemism "federal resources" to disguise the uncomfortable facts surrounding the acquisition of funds by the government. There are two basic methods of raising funds: (1) the peaceful method by which individuals voluntarily surrender their wealth as a gift or exchange it for something else (trade) and (2) the coercive method by which funds are taken by force. The first of these methods is typical of the private sector; the second is typical of the government sector—not to mention common criminals. Regardless of the cause upon which the money will be spent, one cannot ignore the inhumanity of forcibly extracting wealth through taxation.

**2. Centralized plans are not successful.** Mr. Katz cites the Manhattan Project as a model for government sponsorship. He thus begs the question. Was it an unqualified success? . . . Government creations such as the TVA, NASA, and the Manhattan Project safely parade their "achievements" only in the absence of free-market examples that would put them to shame—much as the U.S. Postal Service and public educators would do if it weren't for the inconvenient existence of Federal Express and private schools.

**3. Federal funding of the humanities is barbaric.** Mr. Katz supports the NEH as one of the few alternative sources of support for the humanities. Translation? If people will not willingly support the arts and humanities, if they cannot be convinced by the weight of our arguments, they must be forced by the IRS to support them. Supporters of the humanities should run from this rationalization of theft. . . .

**4. Governments are not friends of liberty.** Mr. Katz claims that NEH funding is closely tied to a successful democracy. There are two problems with this statement. First, we live in a con-

stitutional republic, not a democracy. The Framers universally deplored the examples of democracy—citing its tendency to abuse the individual and elevate the mob. The death of Socrates is its finest fruit. The second problem is that a successful democracy or constitutional republic is beside the point. A form of government is not an end in itself. The end of government is the promotion of liberty, which is the only fundamental human right. Only with liberty can individuals pursue their own ends unmolested. Unfortunately, our understanding of individual rights has become clouded by hundreds of fashionable pseudo rights—from rights to food to jobs to education—at the expense of the most basic right: liberty. And the definition of liberty is simple, even if it is stated in negative terms. It is the right to be left alone to live or die free of initiatory coercion by others. Unfortunately, when one begins to emphasize the fruits of liberty over liberty itself, one becomes freedom's enemy.

**5. End the caustic influence of politics on the arts.** Too many complaints about federally funded art revolve around the content of the art. Conservatives complain that they are forced to support projects which are inimical to their values. Those on the left will be able to make the same complaint when conservatives control disbursements. The only solution is to cut this Gordian knot and free the arts from the influence of politics. Tax-subsidized, politically defined art is not the stuff of inspiration. Let each individual vote with his own dollars to buy the art he cherishes. . . .

*Lawrence M. Ludlow, San Diego, Calif.*

### Stanley Katz replies:

Judging from his letter, Mr. Ludlow believes that the United States should be a purely market society. My piece in the *Key Reporter* makes clear that I do not share that view, and it is perhaps worth remarking that history has never witnessed a purely market society. My own view, and that of the vast majority of Americans over the centuries, has been that that is just as well.



In reference to an item in the Winter 1994-95 *Key Reporter*, p. 10, regarding the appearance of the composer Kurt Weill at a meeting of the New York Association, please be advised that Kurt Weill, composer of outstanding plays and songs, died in 1950.

*Morton B. Lawrence, New York, N.Y.*



# RECOMMENDED READING

BOOK COMMITTEE

**Humanities:** Svetlana Alpers, Frederick J. Crosson, Simon McVeigh,

Robert P. Sonkowsky, Jean Sudrann, Lawrence Willson

**Social Sciences:** Earl W. Count, Louis F. Harlan,

Thomas McNaugher, Catherine E. Rudder, Anna J. Schwartz

**Natural Sciences:** Ronald Geballe, Russell B. Stevens

## Simon McVeigh

**Beethoven: Symphony No. 9.** *Nicholas Cook. Cambridge Univ., 1993. \$29.95; paper, \$10.95.*

Most of the excellent Cambridge Music Handbooks adopt a regular format of historical background and interpretive analysis. This book concentrates instead on reception, inspired by the "Choral" Symphony's status as an icon of the repertoire and a challenge to each new generation. Cook shows how its first performance has been romanticized as part of the Beethoven mythology, and he highlights changing interpretations of the disparate and still ambiguous choral finale. The Ninth has been appropriated by almost every political cause, from the revolutionary movement of the 1840s to European unity and Western democracy and even Chinese Communist orthodoxy. Cook argues that the work is in danger of being consumed under such ideological pressure, a fate from which it can be saved only by constant critical reevaluation.

**The Boulez-Cage Correspondence.** *Ed. by Jean-Jacques Nattiez. Cambridge Univ., 1993. \$42.95; paper (1995), \$14.95.*

This book brings together two of the giants of musical modernism—the Frenchman Pierre Boulez, for a time the apostle of mathematical control over every element of music, and the American John Cage, advocate of chance and indeterminacy and of the Oriental-inspired "happening." By the late 1950s it was clear that their paths were irreconcilably divergent, but between 1949 and 1954 the two were close friends with many common interests, as is reflected in this lively and often witty correspondence. They admired and promoted each other's work (Boulez, in fact, delivered a lecture on Cage's music for prepared piano, published here for the first time). They shared views on the state of current musical life, offering enjoyable acerbic comments about their contemporaries. And some very detailed technical expo-

sitions reveal surprising mutual influences, for all their ultimately opposed musical aesthetics.

**Pyramids at the Louvre: Music, Culture, and Collage from Stravinsky to the Postmodernists.** *Glenn Watkins. Harvard, 1994. \$29.95.*

This provocative study of musical collage takes its title from I.M. Pei's glass entrance to the Louvre, an exotic intrusion on a classical facade that the author likens to Stockhausen's cadenzas for a Haydn concerto. Such connections are typical of this wide-ranging cross-cultural inquiry, a virtuoso performance indeed. The sheer richness of the material is astonishing: The chapter on Milhaud's *Création du monde*, for example, roams freely from Brazilian music and Harlem jazz through Léger's interest in Ivory Coast masks to the sculptures of Brancusi. Orientalism and primitivism, masquerades and mechanical music—all can be found in the music of Stravinsky, the colossus who bestrides this book. One essay compares his layered musical techniques with cubism (and among the numerous illustrations are seven revealing contemporary portraits of Stravinsky).

The author is sensitive to the problems of cultural appropriation and to the critical questions raised by musical allusion, quotation, and pastiche ("from resonating parody to faceless citation," p. 457). His main point seems to be that collage techniques were already central to mainstream modernist music, thereby undermining many of the special claims made for postmodernism. If the conclusions remain at best tentative, this is nevertheless an unusually enjoyable book to read.

## Lawrence Willson

**How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter.** *Sherwin B. Nuland. Knopf, 1994. \$24.*

The legend on my great-grandfather's tombstone reads, "We all have a debt to Nature due; I've paid mine and so must you." In sometimes clinical language but with many literary citations, starting with Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and ending

with the noble periods of Bryant's "Thanatopsis," in words that bespeak humanity and compassion, Nuland, a physician, tells us how the payment is accomplished. He is at no point morbid or lugubrious; he simply discusses the subject realistically and directly, not avoiding the unhappy possibility (indeed, the virtual certainty) that the final chapter is not, for most of us, going to be fun, and that "the greatest dignity to be found in death is the dignity of the life that preceded it."

This book will not appeal to those who prefer a happy ending. As Nuland writes, "By and large, dying is a messy business," and trying to stay alive when one's allotted time has come is an exercise in futility and, if one is old and ailing, mere sophistry. We must, each in his time, depart the scene to make way for a succeeding generation; so—*morituri te salutamus!*

**Scott Fitzgerald: A Biography.** *Jeffrey Meyers. HarperCollins, 1994. \$27.50.*

The greater the genius, it is said, the longer it takes to define it; and the definition of Fitzgerald's genius—the attempt to find "a sense of a coherent personality" among the shards of his broken and tragic life—has been approached by such critics as Arthur Mizener, Andrew Turnbull, Matthew Bruccoli, James Mellow, and Scott Donaldson, each with his peculiar and incomplete vision, according to Meyers, who finds the secret exposed in Fitzgerald's alcoholism and his love affairs, and complicated by the madness of his wife.

It was not by chance that Fitzgerald identified with Poe, another denizen of Baltimore, whose life was at least equally tragic. Both were victimized by the times in which they lived. Both were fundamentally decent men, destroyed by the excesses of urban life, trapped, as were such friends of Fitzgerald as Ring Lardner (a noble drinking companion) and Dorothy Parker (a sometime mistress) by the supposedly sophisticated social practices of the time and place of their being.

Little by little, Fitzgerald seems to emerge from the mists as the most talented among the literary inebriates, certainly more gifted than his buddy Hemingway, for at least Fitzgerald left one work, *The Great Gatsby*, that bids fair to be remembered as an American classic, as Hemingway did not. Possibly we should accept as definitive the judgment of the generally perceptive Alice B. Toklas, that he was "the most sensitive . . . the most distinguished—the most

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## RECOMMENDED READING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

gifted and intelligent of all his contemporaries. And the most lovable—he is one of those great tragic American heroes.” That should be enough “coherence” for most men.

**James Baldwin: A Biography.** *David Leeming. Knopf, 1994. \$25.*

To be talented is generally a blessing, to be talented and black is bearable, but to be talented, black, and gay is fraught with possibilities of heartbreak and danger, or at least it was 70-odd years ago when James Baldwin was growing up in his native Harlem. Because that was his burden, he escaped to Paris, along with other outcasts and misfits in America such as Richard Wright, Josephine Baker, and Gertrude Stein. There, where he need not be Ralph Ellison’s invisible man, he could become the prophetic spokesman of his race, angrily decrying what he saw as the moral failure of the American nation and its bankrupt religion, becoming what Amiri Baraka called “God’s revolutionary mouth,” active in the battle for civil rights, a freedom rider, and a sympathizer with the Black Panthers rather than with Martin Luther King Jr., who was very different from him in background and temperament.

As a street-corner evangelist in his childhood and later as a mature artist, Baldwin preached a gospel of love, which might help to put out “the fire next time”; but that brand of general love was overshadowed by his personal, homosexual yearning. He “spent his whole life,” says Leeming, “longing to be picked up and sheltered by what he thought of as the power of love in arms stronger than his own,” and he never found it for more than a few minutes at a time.

**Second Sight.** *Robert V. Hine. Univ. of California, 1993. \$20.*

In a slim volume, Hine, an engaging writer, presents the moving chronicle of how at the age of nearly 50 he lost his eyesight, a tragic turn for a teacher of history, and then of how, 15 years later, he gained part of it back.

**The New England Milton: Literary Reception and Cultural Authority in the Early Republic.** *K.P. Van Anglen. Pennsylvania State Univ., 1993. \$40.*

Van Anglen’s book is a learned and absorbing account of how and why the New England writers of the 19th century, seeking a central authority to adjudicate for them between the Arminian demands of hierarchy and order and the Antino-

mian options for liberty, equality, and personal autonomy, found it in Milton. A second volume is scheduled.

**Benet’s Reader’s Encyclopedia of American Literature.** *Ed. by George Perkins, Barbara Perkins, and Philip Leininger. HarperCollins, 1991. \$45.*

Sometimes it takes a while—in the present instance, more than four years—to discover the real value of a work of reference, but in the interval this one has proved its worth for me, and I recommend it strongly. Seldom does it fail to turn up some information about even the obscure figures of the national literature (try Maria Gowen Brooks, for instance) and the enterprises in which they have been involved.

**The Oxford Thesaurus: American Edition.** *Laurence Urdang. Oxford, 1992. \$19.95.*

Words! Words! Words! Here is a veritable plethora of them—275,000 synonyms: “650,000 words,” says the editor, “not counting the index,” to provide cross-references—for writers who are seeking variation, whether elegant or otherwise, in their diction. A handy companion for those who wish to enlarge their vocabularies and for the more sophisticated solvers of crossword puzzles, and very probably the best of its genre.

## Svetlana Alpers

**The Rape of Europe.** *Lynn H. Nicholas. Knopf, 1994. \$27.50.*

It surprised me that this detailed, dispassionate account of the fate suffered by works of art in Europe before, during, and after World War II was so absorbing to read. It is remarkable how resilient many old works of art proved to be—Jan van Eyck’s Ghent altarpiece loaded on and off trains and in and out of mines, Botticelli’s *Primavera* discarded among debris on the floor of a villa near Florence. They were survivors. A few well-chosen photographs take up where words leave off: the protective timber over Leonardo’s *Last Supper* beside the rubble of collapsed walls; his portrait of the *Lady with the Ermine* held by two soldiers on a railway platform, somewhere; empty frames scattered the length of the Louvre’s Grand Gallery floor.

But it is human behavior, what people did in the name of art, that is the heart of the book. It is not a pretty story. The Germans conducted a relentless traffic in art—auctioning off that deemed degenerate, seizing that of peoples deemed unworthy, reclaiming that considered

Germanic—alongside their ruthless military campaign. Meanwhile, art dealers from every country took part in a market made brisker by the booty of war. There were good deeds performed by teams of men seeking to protect monuments during and after liberation, but the display of human greed in the name of saving and loving art (even the newly established National Gallery in Washington got into the act) is troubling. This book is fascinating; at the same time it leaves a bad taste in one’s mouth about what can be involved in a taste for art.

**Picasso: Sculptor/Painter.** *Elizabeth Cowling and John Golding. Univ. of Washington, 1994. \$65.*

To rekindle a pleasure in art, in particular in that inventiveness we used to call human creativity, I recommend this book/catalogue published on the occasion of an exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, last year. We think of Picasso as an unstoppable painter working alone in the studio. But his production of sculpture was intermittent, and, for technical reasons, its execution involved the collaboration of others. Living with his sculpture all around him, he did not choose to put it up for sale. From the public’s point of view, though not from that of admiring fellow artists, it was a well-kept secret.

But intelligently selected, luminously analyzed, and beautifully illustrated as here, Picasso’s anomalous sculptural production gives a fresh sense of his art and, indeed, of Art. An exhibition in book form, the book gets you to use both eyes and mind. Try to follow, for example, the 61 sequential pages of a notebook of drawings reproduced in miniature on a 4-page spread. Instead of isolating his sculpture, the organizers placed it among the paintings and drawings (often designs for sculpture never made), which it feeds and with which it interacts. Picasso is in the great tradition of European painters who wish to capture the experience of solid bodies on a two-dimensional surface. This book tracks him in his obsessive and often witty pursuit of that desire from painting into sculpture and back.

**Industrial Madness: Commercial Photography in Paris 1848–1871.** *Elizabeth Anne McCauley. Yale, 1994. \$45.*

It has been only about 150 years since photographs began to determine so much of our view of the world. Today, when the computer screen threatens to displace other images and printed texts alike, it is salutary to consider the mixture of wonder and antagonism that greeted



photography. This illustrated case study of the precarious existence of a few of the 400 commercial studios operating in Paris by 1871 is marvelously informative about the business of photography: its physical conditions (studios were perched on roof-tops for light); its subjects (portraits, the female nude, newly engineered bridges, flowers, and art works); its display (one is surprised to learn that already in 1867 the Universal Exposition devoted a section to photography); its marketing (portraits and reproductions of works of art did well, while bridges or plants as models for use by designers did not).

McCauley counters Walter Benjamin's classic analysis of the revolutionary effect of mechanical reproduction by arguing that photography was a symptom, not the cause, of the high art's adaptation to a democratizing, capitalist society. This kind of focused social history is a refreshing alternative to the ideological and critical hype that currently characterizes so much discussion of the nature and use of the photographic medium.

From the *New Yorker*  
(Feb. 20 & 27, 1995, p. 218):

INTERIOR DESIGN NOTES  
FROM ALL OVER  
[From the *Jacksonville (Fla.)*  
*Florida Times-Union*]

Books: These are great to fill empty wall units. Designers keep stacks of these on reserve for this purpose. Watch for sales sponsored by local libraries that need to clear stacks for new books. The covers of the books can relate to the color scheme of the room. Books also look nice stacked on a coffee table.

## Ronald Geballe

**e: The Story of a Number.** *Eli Maor.* Princeton, 1994. \$24.95.

There is a number other than  $\pi$  that plays a ubiquitous role in finance, mathematics, science, and engineering. It goes by the name  $e$ , and its value is the nonrepeating decimal 2.71828183. It appeared first, apparently, in the early 17th century in connection with calculations of compound interest, at about the time when logarithms were invented. Soon it was found in many places and became an essential feature in mathematics. It has a role in the equation for a hanging chain, in Bach's equal-tempered scale, in the inner structure of the chambered nautilus, in the equations that describe oscillations (whether of springs or electric

currents), and in numerous more recondite applications.

The names of many of the great figures of science and mathematics are found in this history of human thought and interactions. Probably  $e$ 's most famous appearance is in Euler's formula  $e^{2\pi i} + 1 = 0$ , an outrageous equation that connects it with four other remarkable numbers [ $i = \sqrt{-1}$ , the imaginary unit]. Maor writes clearly and entertainingly; high school mathematics will suffice to enable the general reader to follow him.

**The Essence of Chaos.** *Edward N. Lorenz.* Univ. of Washington, 1993. \$19.95.

The falling of a leaf is an example of a process that appears to be governed by chance, although its behavior is in fact determined by precise equations. It is this kind of process that Lorenz terms "chaotic." He explains how, starting a century and a half ago, awareness grew that the uncomplicated, deterministic equations of physics allow the unpredictable behavior found in many common and uncommon circumstances. A meteorologist himself, he has an understandable interest in such phenomena; he is remembered for his provocative publication, "Does the Flap of a Butterfly's Wing in Brazil Set Off a Tornado in Texas?" In this book he uses simple examples to show how chaotic behavior can be understood and quantified. The general reader can readily enjoy his presentation.

**The Physics of Sports.** *Ed. by Angelo Armenti Jr.* American Institute of Physics, 1992. \$35.

This book collects 57 articles, culled from several journals, on the physics of a large variety of sports. It answers many questions about the performance of spinning balls of many shapes and sizes, and of bats, racquets, bicycles, skis, canoes, and humans, illustrating behavior with diagrams, graphs, equations, and calculations. Will it help sports-minded readers' performance? Perhaps, but it surely will help their understanding of the complexity of activities we undertake for pleasure and (for some of us) profit.

**A Matter of Choices: Memoirs of a Female Physicist.** *Fay Ajzenberg-Selove.* Rutgers, 1994. \$40.

Among the ranks of nuclear physicists there are a few women, and their path has been thorny. Ajzenberg-Selove's path was especially difficult because, having been born in 1926 Berlin to Russian parents, she was soon transplanted to France, escaped with her family through Lisbon, and reached the United States using a visa to Santo Domingo. She had become "en-

thralled by a romantic view of physics" and through a remarkable display of determination achieved a Ph.D. in this field. Ajzenberg-Selove had a successful career in teaching and research on more than one campus and has survived serious medical problems supported by an understanding, loyal physicist husband and good friends. Her memoirs make plain that women do achieve and find satisfaction in a "hard" science.

**Out of Sight: From Quarks to Living Cells.** *Sven Kullander and Börje Larsson.* Cambridge Univ., 1994. \$29.95.

Much of contemporary science depends on our ability to "see" objects that are too small to be seen: cells, molecules, atoms, electrons, and the massless "particles" we call photons. This book provides an introduction for a general reader into the methods used to study these entities. In the course of their explanations, the authors treat historical developments and, in nonmathematical language, the theoretical backgrounds of their subject. The book is liberally and instructively illustrated.

## Frederick J. Crosson

**Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages.** *Mark R. Cohen.* Princeton, 1994. \$29.95.

This analysis of the contrast between the circumstances of Jews living under Islamic rule and those living under Christian rule—with respect to their legal and social status, their freedom of worship, and their economic role—provokes thoughts on the current relations of these three religious communities. Cohen criticizes interpretations of the medieval differences that have idealized the toleration of Jews under Islamic rule (e.g., in medieval Spain) as well as those that project the later persecution of Sephardic Jews back into an earlier epoch. Overall, the situation of Jews was better in Islamic kingdoms, and the author seeks an understanding of that by examining the history and theologies of the respective traditions. Scholarly but accessible to the general interested reader.

**The American Philosopher.** *Giovanna Borradori.* Univ. of Chicago, 1994. \$13.95.

A series of brief (ca. 15 pp.) question-and-answer interviews with nine prominent American philosophers, this book is intended for anyone interested in American philosophy and philosophers. The interviewer-author has taught philosophy in Milan and at Vassar and knows enough

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



## RECOMMENDED READING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

to be able to ask leading questions of her subjects. Some of the exchanges are philosophically interesting or at least informative; some succeed in revealing something of the persons who are often hidden behind their prose. One of the notable aspects of the vignettes is the self-distancing of some of the analytic philosophers from analytic philosophy.

**The Letters of Teilhard de Chardin and Lucile Swan.** Ed. by Thomas King and Mary Gilbert. Georgetown, 1993. \$24.95.

She was a gifted sculptor, he was a priest-paleontologist who was to become famous. They met in China in 1929; the letters run from 1932 until his death in 1955. She loved him and, in a somewhat different way, he encompassed loving her within his love of God. The relationship remained vibrant and platonic over many years. Many of his accounts of his research and of his relations with other scientists and ecclesiastical colleagues and superiors have of course taken on a new interest for us later readers, and provide glimpses of his ideas in the nascent state. The letters show that both correspondents were warm, open persons.

**The Pursuit of Love.** Irving Singer. Johns Hopkins, 1994. \$25.95.

Singer is the author of a three-volume historical study of the concept of love in Western literature and culture, but this book is a more systematic and topical reflection on love in its various forms (sexual, religious, familial) and experiential aspects (merging and duality, oneness and twoness), and of some of the theories that have attempted to analyze or understand these. Because in his view no nature or essence corresponds to the term *love*, the account tends toward the psychological and descriptively empirical. But for anyone interested in some bearing-points for thinking about the protean manifestations of love, this is a profitable volume.

**Robert P. Sonkowsky**

**Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian.** Shadi Bantsch. Cambridge Univ., 1994. \$37.50.

The title refers to the ability of audiences for dramatic or other kinds of recitations to control the interpretation of what is being said, whether intended by the author or not. The author, a

professor in two departments, Classics and rhetoric, makes skillful use of tools from both fields in analyzing the effects of Roman imperial power upon communication. Nero and his stage performances are seen as a spur to reflection upon language used in the staging of power as reported in Tacitus, Juvenal, Pliny the Younger, and other authors. This is in some ways a difficult book, but worth the effort because of its penetrating insights.

**Horace and the Dialectic of Freedom: Readings in Epistles 1.** W. R. Johnson. Cornell, 1993. \$27.50.

This bold, unconventional book is seemingly as chatty as Horace himself, and as up-to-date, subtle, and on target. Johnson's big intellect, wonderful wit, humanity, and wide-ranging allusions to diverse times and levels of culture give us new ways of interpreting Horace, as well as profound, disturbing, speculative insights into the poet's psyche. Whether that psyche is the one that Horace had in real life or whether it is a fictive ("poetic") psyche is one of the questions with which Johnson tempts us as he weaves it into his symphony. The book is a must for all pursuers of Horace, but especially for any who may have put aside the pursuit—for they will take it up again.

**The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others.** Paul Cartledge. Oxford, 1993. \$45; paper, \$11.95.

Engagingly written for the general reader, Cartledge's book is an excellent antidote to the "Greeks 'R' Us" approach of Westerners who explain ancient Greece solely in terms of our own conceptions from our own culture, as the glory we have "inherited" from the Greeks. Seeing differences, exploring "otherness," is itself an ancient Greek contribution to intellectual progress; at

the same time, the wrongful application of this method resulted in the Greek attitude toward non-Greeks, noncitizens, women, and slaves. In the prologue to this book, Cartledge points to Bosnia-Herzegovina; the ethnic strife in the former Soviet Union; the struggles of Hispanics, blacks, and women in the United States; and riots by unemployed poor youths in the author's own "decayed post-industrial Britain." These and other violent expressions parallel the current, appropriate, academic preoccupation with the study of differences against which dominant groups polarize their opposition. This book studies such polarizations in Classical Greek thought and culture and provides a great deal that is of far more than mere antiquarian interest to the modern world.

**Thomas McNaughter**

**Utopia Lost: The United Nations and World Order.** Rosemary Righter. Brookings, 1995. \$34.95.

Righter subjects the United Nations, now approaching its 50th birthday, to what in today's world can only be called "tough love." She is an internationalist and a fan of multilateral institutions, but not necessarily of the UN, or at least not all of it. As a journalist who has covered UN operations over the years, Righter is acutely aware and rightly critical of the bureaucratic sclerosis that has beset UN operating agencies, many of which lie almost entirely beyond the control of UN headquarters. But the organization's deeper problem, in her view, is creeping obsolescence: Explicitly committed to protecting state sovereignty, the UN is ill-prepared to deal with new economic and technological forces that transcend state borders or ethnic conflicts that unfold within them.

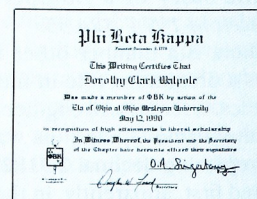


## Keys, Membership Certificates Available

Keys and key pins are available in a variety of styles. The key pictured here costs \$74 in 10-karat gold, \$24 in 24-karat electroplate. The key pin of the same size costs \$78 in 10-karat gold, \$27 in 24-karat electroplate. Other sizes as well as neck chains, tie chains, and tie tacks are available.

All are gift-boxed. Certificates with engrossed insignia are available framed (\$30) or unframed (\$7).

To order, or to request a complete price list, telephone (202) 265-3808 or write to the Treasurer, Phi Beta Kappa Society, 1811 Q Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.





The organization as a whole survives because it still commands human hopes and dreams—"brand loyalty," in Righter's words—not because it helps to improve the human condition. In her view, UN agencies should get no more loyalty than they deserve. They should be made to compete with the myriad other multi-lateral organizations that have sprung up to handle global issues. Those that fail this market test should be scrapped. Those that pass—and Righter identifies some that do—can become the core of a revitalized United Nations. Not the most flattering birthday gift the UN will receive this year, but a fair assessment nonetheless.

**Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Politics of Upheaval.** *Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott. Cambridge Univ., 1994. \$19.95.*

Observing that the upheaval of their title will play out slowly over decades to come, Dawisha and Parrott wisely make no attempt to predict the future of Russia or the other states set loose by the Soviet Union's collapse. They do the next best thing, however, by laying out a comprehensive baseline for understanding the forces likely to shape politics within and among Russia and the new Eurasian states. They untangle and examine the historical, ethnic, religious, and cultural underpinnings for each of the new states, emphasizing the perception of the past as it plays out in contemporary politics. As to the contemporary scene, they offer a fine collection of recent polling data to highlight attitudes in each state toward democracy, capitalism, and (among the non-Russian states) Russia.

Although Dawisha and Parrot remain agnostic about Russia's future course, they nonetheless allow a hint of optimism into their analysis; with glasnost and freedom has come a growing awareness of the atrocities of the Stalinist era, strengthening Russians' resistance to any return to authoritarianism in the future. Although the book is too encyclopedic to be called an easy read, it is nonetheless well and clearly written. Above all, it is essential reading for those wishing to enhance their understanding of events at Eurasia's center as the "politics of upheaval" unfold in the years ahead.

**Japan in War and Peace: Selected Essays.** *John W. Dower. New Press, 1993. \$30.*

Some of the essays in this fascinating volume appeared some years ago in "well-concealed academic places," Dower admits (p. 31), but he was right to seek a wider audience for them. Taken

together, they challenge many of the convenient shibboleths by which Americans understand the peculiarities of Japanese capitalism, bureaucracy, and politics. The drive for consensus that seemingly pervades Japanese society, Dower suggests, is not so deeply rooted in Japan's history as most Americans think. Surveying Japan's prewar political development, its wartime cinema, and its tawdry wartime atomic bomb program, Dower finds plenty of diversity and dissatisfaction in Japan. The institutional and popular roots of consensus-building in modern Japan are, in Dower's view, a "transwar" phenomenon. Institutions that were developed in the 1930s to

handle the social strains of rapid industrialization and wartime mobilization survived into the 1950s, often with care and feeding from American occupiers, who enlisted them in the fight against communism well before the Korean War formally launched the cold war in Asia. The effort obviously accomplished its goals, but Dower worries that Japan's economic style and democratic politics are both "top-down" phenomena, lacking deep popular roots. These are provocative views, beautifully and wisely set forth. The book is a must for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of Japan and its relationship with the United States.



## About Our Reviewers

*A number of respondents to our survey last year asked us to tell them about our book reviewers. Here are some biographic sketches of the reviewers whose work appears in this issue.*

**Svetlana Alpers**, professor emerita of history of art at the University of California, Berkeley, received her B.A. from Radcliffe (ФБК) and Ph.D. from Harvard. Her latest book is *The Making of Rubens* (Yale University Press, 1995). She is also the author of *The Art of Describing* (1983) and *Rembrandt's Enterprise* (1988) and coauthor of *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligibility* (Yale, 1994).

**Frederick J. Crosson**, Cavanaugh Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of Notre Dame since 1984, received his B.A. (ФБК) and Ph.D. at Catholic University. He is the author of *Human and Artificial Intelligence, Philosophy and Cybernetics, and Science and Contemporary Society*. A ФБК senator since 1982, he is currently vice president of the Society.

**Ronald Geballe**, professor emeritus of physics at the University of Washington and dean emeritus of the Graduate School, received his B.S. (ФБК) and Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley. He chaired the physics department at the University of Washington for 16 years before serving as associate dean of arts and sciences and dean of the Graduate School. In his "retirement" he has been teaching physics in the university's Early Entrance Program, giving 13- and 14-year-olds a solid year of history, English, math, and physics, after which they become freshmen, never having attended high school.

**Thomas McNaugher**, a West Point graduate with a Ph.D. in political science

from Harvard, specializes in military strategy and the politics of national security. He recently left the Brookings Institution, where he was a senior fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies Division, to become director of the Army Strategy and Doctrine Program at the Rand Corporation.

**Simon McVeigh**, the only international scholar on the committee, is a senior lecturer in music at Goldsmiths' College, University of London. He received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. at Oxford. His latest book is *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge University Press, 1993). He is currently working on a history of the violin concerto and on a study of musical life in 19th-century London.

**Robert P. Sonkowsky**, professor of Classical and Near Eastern studies at the University of Minnesota, earned his B.A. in Classics and biology from Lawrence College (ФБК) and his Ph.D. in Classics from the University of North Carolina, following a Fulbright year in Italy. Most of his publications are in Classics, but he has also published in chronobiology and he is a freelance actor.

**Lawrence Willson** received his B.A. from Wesleyan University (ФБК) and his Ph.D. from Yale. He began his teaching career at the University of Delaware and taught at several other universities before moving to the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he is now professor emeritus of English.



## Phi Beta Kappa to Participate in More Teacher Institutes

Phi Beta Kappa and the National Faculty, an Atlanta-based educational organization, have received a \$100,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation of Miami, Florida, to conduct professional development institutes for teachers in the public schools over the next two years.

The first institute, on immigration history in Minnesota, will be offered to 25 teachers in St. Paul this summer. The National Faculty will provide the leadership, while Phi Beta Kappa will tap its local resources in cooperation with the Minnesota Humanities Commission. Similar institutes are planned for two more sites in the summer of 1996. All these efforts will augment Phi Beta Kappa's own professional development project in the District of Columbia, now beginning its third year.

The Knight Foundation, which was established in 1950, makes national grants in journalism, education, and arts and culture. Its president, Creed C. Black, explained that the \$100,000 grant was intended "to coordinate and expand the involvement of college and university liberal arts faculty in the professional development of teachers."

The National Faculty has provided lead-

## Grant Underwrites Couper Lectureship

Phi Beta Kappa has received a \$5,000 grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation of New York to establish a lectureship in the humanities. The lectureship is to be named in honor of Richard W. Couper (ΦBK, Hamilton College, 1947), the immediate past president of the ΦBK Associates. The grant will underwrite a lecture by a distinguished scholar in one of the traditional humanities disciplines at the annual meeting of the Associates. The lectureship is intended to celebrate Couper's achievements as leader of the Associates as well as his lifelong devotion to humanities scholarship.

The Associates, an organization created in 1940 to sustain the Society financially, now has a national membership of 600 persons who contribute a total of about \$50,000 each year to support Phi Beta Kappa's programs. The Delmas Foundation, established in 1976, supports scholarship relating to the city of Venice, research libraries, and the performing arts in New York City as well as the humanities.

ership in teacher development projects across the nation since 1968, when Phi Beta Kappa was instrumental in its creation.

## Phi Beta Kappa Receives Unrestricted Bequests

The Society has recently received an unrestricted \$50,000 bequest from the estate of Gilberte P. Sherry of Newark, N.J., in memory of her husband, Martin A. Sherry (ΦBK, New York University, 1949).

The Society has also received another payment from the estate of Mary Tingley Center (ΦBK, Stanford, 1923); the second payment, \$36,000, was in addition to the \$60,000 contribution noted in the Summer 1994 issue of the *Key Reporter*.

### THE KEY REPORTER

volume 60 □ number three □ spring 1995

Editor: Priscilla S. Taylor

Consulting Editor: Douglas W. Foard

The *Key Reporter* (ISSN: 0023-0804) is published quarterly by the Phi Beta Kappa Society, 1811 Q Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. No responsibility is assumed for views expressed in articles published.

This newsletter is distributed free each quarter to every member of Phi Beta Kappa for whom we have a current address. For nonmembers, single copies are \$2; one year's subscription is \$5. Printed by the William Byrd Press, Inc.

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**Postmaster:** Send change-of-address notices to: *The Key Reporter*, Phi Beta Kappa Society, 1811 Q Street NW, Washington, DC 20009-1696.

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