



The Key Reporter

Phi Beta Kappa
Founded 1776

Fall 2002 Volume 68, Number 1

Russians Introduce Liberal Arts

Editor's Note: Charles H. Adams, a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Senate, was elected to ΦBK at Tulane University. He is associate dean for academic affairs and international programs in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas.

By Charles H. Adams

In the Spring *Key Reporter*, Secretary Churchill announced that the Society will sponsor a series of discussions in the months leading up to the next Triennial Council, the purpose of which will be "to articulate the role of the liberal arts in a democratic society." This is a very exciting project, and one worthy of engaging the thoughtful attention of the Society's large and influential membership. In that spirit, I would like to share some news about a bold liberal arts initiative now unfolding in Russia. For while our national conversation will rightly focus on the role of the liberal arts in our own democratic nation, the discussion can be greatly enriched by considering the role they are playing in a rapidly democratizing society like Russia.

Long before the Soviet Union collapsed, academics throughout Russia had begun to discuss what would come next. Decades of intellectual repression had produced a system of higher education that was spectacularly unsuited to the needs of a newly democratic society in a global culture. Science and technology faculties in several areas were among the world's best, despite the top-down direction of research and curricula. But work in the humanities and social sciences had ossified under the pressure of official "methodolo-

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Folger Shakespeare Library photo

This 1579 portrait of Queen Elizabeth I hangs in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. The Folger's new director is Gail Kern Paster; see "Among Our Key People." The painting, by George Gower, was a bequest from Francis T.P. Plimpton.

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Representatives of 16 ΦBK Associations spent a Washington weekend being trained as moderators and recorders for the National Conversations project. From left: Mimi Klein, Nashville; Pat Davis, Tucson; and Clifford Brooks, Northern New Jersey. Behind them is Gerry McCulloh, Chicago.

ΦBK National Office to Move in February

The Phi Beta Kappa Society will move to its new national headquarters on Monday, Feb. 3. The address for the Society, *The Key Reporter*, and *The American Scholar* will be 1606 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington DC 20036. The telephone number at the reception desk will remain the same: (202) 265-3808. The fax number also will be unchanged: (202) 986-1601.



From the Secretary

Making Good Talk Happen

By John Churchill
Secretary, The Phi Beta Kappa Society

Humility was the answer. In this case, humility meant forgoing the advantages of expertise. It meant listening carefully. It meant asking questions more than making statements. It meant granting the most generous meaning to the remarks of others. It meant focusing on the interests of others to draw them out and to draw them together. Humility meant restraint in offering guidance and summaries.

The question was: What is the chief virtue of a discussion leader? And the discussion leader who posed and answered the question was Dr. David Newell, chair of the Department of Philosophy at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. In addition to

his day job, where he has ample practice in Socratic techniques, he is also the seminar moderator for the Aspen Institute's Wye River Programs. We could hardly have hoped for a better leader for Phi Beta Kappa's sessions preparing the moderators and recorders for their duties in our series of national conversations on the topic, "A Question of Relevance: The Social Value of the Liberal Arts."

With three other leaders—all themselves great conductors of discussion—Newell took the 35 participants through a detailed consideration of how to make good talk happen. Though one of our watchwords is "Socratic," the skills and virtues that Newell described have little to do with the practices of the bullying Professor Kingsfield of "The Paper Chase," and—interestingly—little to do with the taunting ironies of Socrates himself as he strives to trap his interlocutors in contradictions and force them to con-

less ignorance. I discovered years ago that most first-year college students heartily dislike Socrates, a fact that sharpens the lesson to be drawn from the Athenians' willingness to shut him up with hemlock.

It is likely that few great thinkers—people whose minds have led humanity to something new and important—were also convivial companions in casual conversation. It's hard to imagine having Kant over for a beer. Thomas Aquinas, with his love of food, may have been an exception. Certainly Newton was a moody sort.

But our moderators have not been trained to bulldoze a path to the truth. Rather, they have received training in the arts of exploration. The terrain to be explored is accessed only by bringing the thoughts of many people into one space. Humility opens that space. Whether we suppose that the "*sophia*" in Φιλοσοφία Βίου Κυβερνήτης is learning, or wisdom, or some other member of the family of knowledge and virtue, it remains the case that "*philo*," love, must contain an important ingredient of humility. In what other frame of mind could we approach such an important topic or entertain the thoughts of our fellows, some of whom surely must understand these matters better than we ourselves?



Trent Foley, of the ΦBK Chapter at Davidson College, displays the wooden key that has been used at initiation ceremonies for three decades.

Sibley Fellowship Deadline Announced

The Phi Beta Kappa Society is accepting applications for the 2003 Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship for Greek Studies. The deadline is Tuesday, Jan. 14.

Candidates must be unmarried women between age 25 and 35 (inclusive) with a demonstrated ability to conduct original research. They must hold a doctorate or have fulfilled all the requirements except the dissertation. And they should be able to work full time on research during the fellowship year, which will begin next September.

Eligibility for the \$20,000 fellowship is not restricted to members of Phi Beta Kappa or to U.S. citizens. The recipient will be notified in May.

Requests for additional information and applications may be sent to the Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship Committee, by mail to the Society's national headquarters in Washington; by phone to (202) 265-3808; by fax to (202) 986-1601; by e-mail to ccurtis@pbk.org; and on the Web to <http://www.pbk.org/scholarships/sibley.htm>.



Plagiarism Expert Targets the Web

Editor's Note: *Thomas Mallon, elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Brown University in 1972, literally "wrote the book" on plagiarism. "Stolen Words" was hailed as the definitive study of the subject when it appeared in 1989. He updated it last year for a new edition that includes an Afterword on the impact of technology. A contributing editor of The American Scholar, Mallon selected and edited the excerpts below for The Key Reporter. The 2001 edition is a Harvest Book from Harcourt, Inc.*

By Thomas Mallon

"Stolen Words" has had, not surprisingly, an uncomfortable relationship with the academic world. Received warmly enough in the mainstream press, it was predictably panned in *Academe*, the house journal of the American Association of University Professors—an exercise roughly comparable, I think, to reviewing "All the President's Men" in the newsletter of the Republican National Committee. In 2002, the professoriate remains more inclined to pieties than to the policing of its own ... curiously willing to vaporize the whole phenomenon of plagiarism in a cloud of French theory.

When I spoke to one audience of professors in 1990, their questions, sometimes hostile, tended to concern why I hadn't addressed concepts like Roland Barthes' "death of the author," and the possibility that there is *no such thing* as originality. I didn't address such matters because they seemed to me then, as they do now, absurd. The professors don't really believe these theories either. They're the type who can't sit on the university's parking-regulations committee without getting into a discussion of nature vs. nurture, but if they catch someone pilfering their own bibliographies, you can count on a cry of bloody murder, not an invitation to hermeneutics.

But none of this keeps them from continuing to propound imported,

abstract fantasies. Rebecca Moore Howard, a specialist in student composition, laments that "Stolen Words" has "attained canonical status in English departments"—an overstatement, to be sure—even though it is "a beacon from the past," one that "assumes a normative autonomous author." Yes, that would be me; or, when she's the one writing, it would be Professor Howard, who takes comfort in a contrary view that she works her way toward through several layers of syllogism and—attribution:

"Another critic, Françoise Meltzer, explains Descartes' and Freud's anxieties about originality: writers who want recognition must assert priority; to assert priority is to assert originality; and to assert originality engenders a fear of being robbed. Behind that fear of being robbed is 'the larger fear that there is no such thing as originality.'

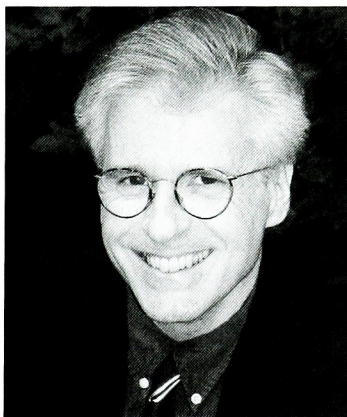
"If there is no originality, there is no basis for literary property. If there is no originality and no literary property, there is no basis for the notion of plagiarism."

In this same *College English* article, Professor Howard finds students accused of theft to be more misunderstood than culpable: "Representations of student plagiarism seldom acknowledge the heterogeneous definitions of authorship in contemporary letters." (By "contemporary letters" she means university-press books of literary theory.) "Instead, these representations sim-

plify student authorship, depicting it as a unified, stable field. The principle used for the task of unifying and stabilizing student plagiarism is the putative morality of the 'true' (autonomous) author."

Professor Howard will do almost anything with student writing but quote it, perhaps because it has such a hard time living up to the aesthetic benediction she grants it. Indeed, one reason it is so bad is that the students' professors will talk about "unifying and stabilizing" plagiarism when plain English would speak of punishing it. Howard throws her lot in with those professors who regard "patchwriting"—i.e., half-cribbed pastiche—"as

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Thomas Mallon

THE KEY REPORTER

volume 68, number 1
fall 2002

Editor: Barbara Haddad Ryan

Consulting Editor: John Churchill

The Key Reporter (ISSN: 0023-0804) is published quarterly by the Phi Beta Kappa Society, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Fourth Floor, Washington DC 20036. Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional offices. IPM #1213423

This newsletter is distributed free each quarter to every member of Phi Beta Kappa for whom we have a current address. No responsibility is assumed for views expressed in articles published. Circulation: 470,000.

For nonmembers, single copies are available for \$2; one year's subscription is \$5. Design by A&L Communications. Printed by Cadmus Specialty Publications, Richmond, Va.

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Postmaster: Send change-of-address notices to: *The Key Reporter*, Phi Beta Kappa, 1785 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Fourth Floor, Washington DC 20036. <http://www.pbk.org>

Russian Initiative

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gies.” Many of the best minds had gone into exile, forced or self-imposed, while a large number of those who stayed had created what amounted to underground universities, reading and talking furtively in anticipation of the end of the nightmare.

When the end finally came, a group in St. Petersburg was ready to move. Peter the Great’s “Window on the West” often had led the rest of the country in the past—for better or worse. And in the early 1990s, the faculty at St. Petersburg State University was the first to begin formulating plans for the reform of Russian higher education. Progressive leaders were elected or appointed to key positions—most notably a remarkable woman from the Faculty of Philology, Ludmila Verbitskaya, who currently serves as the university’s visionary rector. (It is worth mentioning that President Putin’s last position before entering the political arena was on the rector’s staff at St. Petersburg.) New programs and departments were created, among them sociology and international relations, and the university began to seek cooperative agreements with institutions outside Russia. Formal and informal groups of faculty were formed to develop ideas for the future.

One of the most dynamic of these groups was the Seminar for the Critique of Social Sciences, forged principally by the husband and wife team of Nikolay Koposov and Dina Khapaeva, joined by others including the historian Valery Monakhov. Their immediate aim was to contribute to the reform of the Russian social sciences by applying interdisciplinary models to broad social issues. This would address a fundamental impediment to progress that had been built into the structure of Soviet higher education: the deliberate fragmentation of the intellectual community by finely parsed disciplinary divisions. But the group’s key members soon realized that their efforts could not be confined to conversations among faculty members. The structure of fragmentation would perpetuate

itself unless they could revise the undergraduate curriculum along interdisciplinary lines. Their real aim had to be to train the next generation in ways of thinking that were new to Russia, and this represented a clear break with the ideas and methods of the past. Thus was born the Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at St. Petersburg State University, the first of its kind in Russia.

From the start, Smolny College was designed to provide an education suitable for a democracy. Koposov, Khapaeva, and Monakhov understood that the goals of a liberal arts education are inseparable from those of a democracy. To think critically and creatively, to express one’s ideas clearly, to learn to interpret ideas within a rich intellectual and cultural context: These are inextricable from the development of a sense of individual dignity and respect for the rights of others.

From the start, too, Smolny was conceived as a truly international educational environment. In 1997, the college was officially created as a joint undergraduate degree program of St. Petersburg State and Bard College in New York. Smolny is administered by a board chaired jointly by the rector of St. Petersburg and the president of Bard. A curriculum was developed based on the model of an American liberal arts college, but with a few topical twists, such as a minor in Democracy. The languages of instruction are Russian and English, with most courses taught in the latter. When students graduate, they receive two B.A. diplomas, one from St. Petersburg State and another from Bard.

Student and faculty exchanges between Bard and Smolny, and cooperation in curriculum development and research projects, have produced a continuing international dialogue that prepares both Russian and American students for the global challenges of the new century. This dialogue promises to expand as Smolny establishes relationships with other U.S. institutions, such as the faculty exchange agreement signed in June between Smolny College and the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas.



Photo by Rhonda Adams

During Charles Adams’s trip to St. Petersburg last June, he was able to visit Dostoevsky’s grave in a cemetery at the Alexander Nevsky Monastery. Among other notable Russians buried there are Tchaikovsky, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov.

Fulbright College has secured a U.S. Department of Education grant to sponsor a faculty seminar next summer entitled “St. Petersburg: Window on the New Russia(s).” This seminar, hosted by Smolny, will bring together faculty from Fulbright, Smolny, and Bard to lay the foundations for a course to be team-taught by faculty from all three in the summer of 2004. Applications will be accepted from students worldwide.

Shepherding the Smolny concept through the approval process required by the university and the Moscow bureaucracy was not easy. The college’s founders were accused by various parties of being CIA agents or members of a Zionist plot, or both. Clearly, the “liberal arts” were seen by many of the old guard as a Trojan horse for dangerous ideas—and so they are, to the old guard. But Verbitskaya and her colleagues persisted, and the Ministry of Education gave Smolny degree-granting privileges in 2000.

For the first few years of its existence, Smolny remained the only liberal arts college in Russia. But the experiment in St. Petersburg has been attracting a lot of attention around the country, and this fall four more such

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More information at <http://www.pbk.org/affiliate/association.htm>



Among Our Key People

Within the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington is a milieu as complex, historic and—especially—dramatic as what transpires in the U.S. Capitol a short stroll away. This is the home of the world's largest collection of Shakespeare's printed works. The Library also owns other rare Renaissance books and manuscripts in a dazzling variety of fields—history, politics, law, theology, geographic exploration, and the arts.

But the Folger is more than a conservator of tangible treasures and a museum devoted to Shakespeare's legacy. It is a dynamic center for the literary and performing arts, with programs designed to fascinate and educate every visitor, from scholars to high school teachers to antsy adolescents. And it is an active catalyst for revitalizing humanities education in the nation's schools. A sampling of its rich resources is on its website, www.folger.edu.

For 18 years the Folger's director was the legendary Werner Gundersheimer. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Amherst College, he has served on the Φ BK Senate and on the Society's Executive Committee. When he retired last summer during the Folger's 70th anniversary, he was succeeded by a distinguished fellow Φ BK member, Gail Kern Paster. She is the Folger's fifth—and first woman—director.

Paster was appointed by Amherst's trustees, who administer the Folger as an independent research library under the will of its founder, Henry Clay Folger. Described by *The Washington Post* as "one of the most influential Shakespearean scholars in the United States," she is intellectually compelling but affable and unpretentious.

A graduate of Smith College, Paster earned a doctorate at Yale. During 28 years on the faculty of George Washington University (GW), she served as an officer of its Φ BK chapter. Among her academic honors were fellowships from the Woodrow Wilson

Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. She has been the editor of *Shakespeare Quarterly* since 1998, when GW began making a contribution to the Library in support of production costs. Johns Hopkins University Press publishes *SQ* as one of its academic journals. Currently vice-president of the Shakespeare Association of America, Paster will become its president next spring.



Gail Kern Paster

She became a regular in the Folger's handsome Reading Room early in her career. All three of her books were researched there: "The Idea of the City in the Age of Shakespeare," "The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England," and the forthcoming "Humoring the Body: Affects, Materialism and the Early Modern Stage."

When Paster describes her teaching experience, she conveys a profound love of the profession. "The classroom is a wonderful, special place," she said. She began as a GW writing instructor; her first literature course was a survey "from Homer to Brecht."

After her first child was born, Paster juggled motherhood with teaching three courses, counseling students, committee meetings, and other faculty obligations. She worked hard to find "the thinking time" essential to both scholarship and teaching. She also developed what she considers the most effective way to connect with students. "You must be 'in the moment,'" she said. "You need a certain kind of intensity at a physical level. When you're in front of a class, intensity helps you reach the kids in the back row."

Today many colleges and universities—GW included—no longer require a Shakespeare course for English majors. Paster does not find this troubling. "My advice to students is to find the best teachers and take their courses," regardless of subject, she said. "But in the study of English and American literature, it's indispensable to know the early writing—the roots, the 'wonderfulness,' the 'otherness' of the past—it can be made to speak powerfully."

"Teaching Shakespeare conveys the wonder and richness of the plays. Shakespeare, taught with conviction, is a wonderful experience, but you need a wise teacher with enthusiasm. Students tend to resist required courses anyhow; I prefer self-selecting ones."

A good teacher's goal, she said, "is to create an appetite, to develop in students a life-long interest. Think of the book club phenomenon. People don't just read by themselves: They read and talk about the books—they have a hunger. They become their own teachers." She said she saw this firsthand among retirees in her GW classes.

Asked if Shakespeare really "was" Shakespeare, Paster neither sighs nor rolls her eyes; it is an issue she has written about and debated, most recently at the Smithsonian. "There's solid documentary evidence of his life at Stratford, and of his acting life," she said. "There's a clear record. The conspiracy theorists deny him his life's work—they see what they want to see. They don't use the canons of evidence that literary scholarship uses. Of course I speak only for myself as a Shakespearean scholar. The Folger has always opened its doors to people doing



research on the authorship question—and will continue to do so.”

Paster welcomes stage and film productions set in different historical eras, even if some are flawed. “It keeps them alive,” she said, “for the actors and directors as well as the audience. Actors can die if they take on the burden of saying what’s been said by so many others. You need to say it ‘for the first time,’ to approach the plays freshly.”

When she was invited to be a candidate for the Folger’s top position, Paster said she “already was quasi-staff as the *Shakespeare Quarterly* editor. But I had to think hard: Could I do the job day to day, be organized, keep a calendar and so on? I was never drawn to administration for its own sake. Academics are more freewheeling! But I decided this was a great opportunity at a good moment—I’m so deeply indebted to, and rooted in, this institution.”

And she did not have to leave the classroom behind: She will teach one class this fall in the Shakespeare seminar for high school students in the Folger’s extensive education program. Academic and performing courses are offered for grades 3 through 12; a children’s workshop led by the Folger’s acting ensemble is dubbed “Bill’s Buddies.” Folger lesson



Folger Shakespeare Library photos

Folger research assistant Harold Batie examines a book on the Old Reading Room balcony. The stone tracery was inspired by Holy Trinity Church at Stratford-upon-Avon in England.

plans served four million students and teachers last year.

Among other Library components are the Folger Theatre (Shakespeare and Maxwell Anderson are featured this season); the Folger Consort, with such musical offerings as “Rabelaisian Revels” and “The Passion of Scrooge”; a major publishing enterprise; a poetry reading program; and the Folger Institute, a center for advanced study in the humanities, sponsored by a consortium of 39 colleges and universities. The PEN/Faulkner Award, with its own board, is based at the Folger and presents readings there.

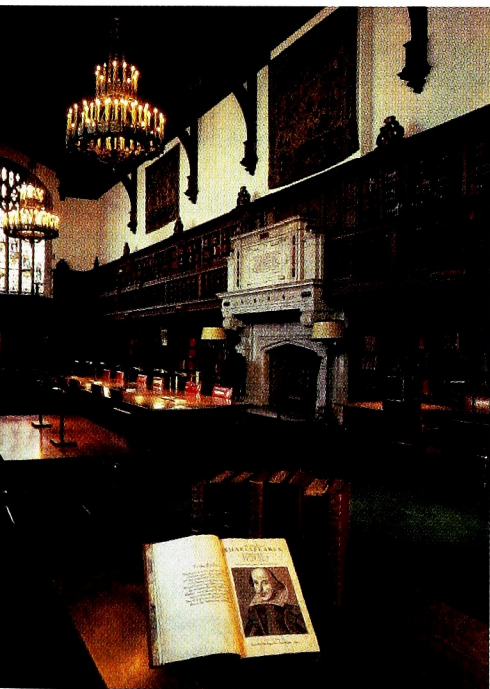
Paster looks forward to next year’s major public event, opening March 21: “Elizabeth I, Then and Now,” a multidisciplinary retrospective on the 400th anniversary of her death. The Folger has the largest collection of documents and artifacts about the Tudor monarch outside Great Britain. “This is just one example,” Paster said, “of how we plan to reach the public with exciting programs, even as we continue to offer seminars and colloquia for our community of scholars.”

As director, Paster said, she hopes to “find ways of making Mr. Folger’s ‘gift to the American people’ more widely known—first of all, here in Washington and perhaps especially among our political neighbors in Congress, but then also in the nation.” She wants this “national treasure”—both its exhibits and public programs—to be on the must-see list of visitors to the capital. And she intends to spread the word about the Folger’s website. “Even as it

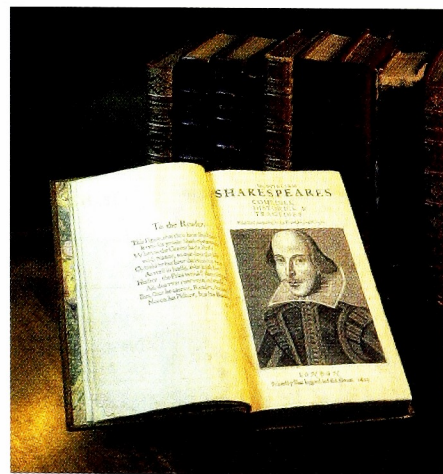
is,” she said, it “has a ‘teaching Shakespeare’ component that has millions of hits by students and teachers.”

Paster said the Folger has been “dedicated since the 1970s to public outreach, to making our institution a vital part of the cultural life of Washington and the nation. This is what we do, and this is what we will continue to do.”

A New Jersey native who grew up in the New York City area, Paster said neither of her parents attended college, and she did not set out to become a scholar. Her big ambition, she said with a smile, was “to be a foreign correspondent and live in Paris.” Her husband worked in the first year of the Clinton administration, and went on to head a public relations firm in New York City. Their daughter, 28, is a lawyer in Chicago, and their son, 25, is a bond trader at Goldman Sachs & Co. in Manhattan.



The Old Reading Room, which is 131 feet long, has carrels with computers for scholars.



This 1623 First Folio is among 79 collected by Henry Folger. It was discovered in 1891.



Phi Beta Kappa in the News

Forbes ASAP (Oct. 7) profiled Gary Loveman, "a onetime Harvard Business School professor and, improbably, the future CEO of Harrah's in Las Vegas." Initially a Harrah's consultant, he joined the firm in 1998. He attended Wesleyan University, "graduating Phi Beta Kappa with honors," and earned a doctorate at MIT.

The Associated Press (Sept. 23) reported, "For years, the people behind Miss America have been telling the world there's more to her than a rhinestone crown and a pretty smile. In Miss America 2003, Erika Harold of Urbana, Ill., they have a brainy beauty who proves it. Harold, a 22-year-old Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Illinois [Urbana-Champaign], was to

enroll this fall at Harvard Law School but put it off so she could compete in the Miss America pageant."

The Washington Post (Sept. 23) published a report on the re-election campaign of Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida: "... President Bush is average size and resembles his father; Gov. Bush is a big man and favors his mother. The president is easy-going; the governor is a bit shy. The president was a so-so student; the governor blitzed through college in less than three years and made Phi Beta Kappa."

The New York Times (Sept. 22) covered the debut of the fall fashion collections. " 'My mother is a very smart woman, Phi Beta Kappa,' said Susan O.

Posen, who left a partnership at Strook & Strook & Lavan to go into business with her son, the designer Zac. 'She said to me incredulously, What are we doing in fashion?' "

The Miami Herald (Sept. 19) marked the 30th anniversary of Florida International University, founded on a site with "an air control tower, a runway and two buildings." Enrollment has grown from 5,000 to 34,000; the once-barren field is now a 400-acre campus; and there is a second campus in North Miami.

"What began as a commuter school offering third- and fourth-year classes now comprises a four-year undergraduate program, masters and doctoral programs, an architectural school, a business school and a law school. In 2000, FIU was granted authority to open a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the prestigious national honors society."

New York's *Newsday* (Sept. 12) interviewed folksinger Jean Ritchie when she was awarded a National Heritage fellowship by the National Endowment for the Arts. The article said that she "didn't start out to be a folksinger. After graduating from the University of Kentucky in 1946 with a degree in rural social work and a Phi Beta Kappa key, she took a job at the Henry Street Settlement on the Lower East Side, where she taught her mountain ballads to city children."

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Sept. 9) reported that Kathie Olsen, "former chief NASA scientist and a Chatham College graduate, has been confirmed as associate director for science in the federal Office of Science and Technology Policy. Olsen graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a double degree in biology and psychology from Chatham in 1974 and earned a doctorate in psychobiology at the University of California, Irvine."

The Macon (Ga.) Telegraph (Sept. 2) profiled H. Wayne Cecil, who has an endowed chair in accounting at Macon State College. "A Phi Beta Kappa who

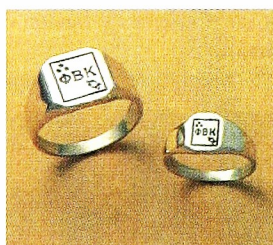
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Phi Beta Kappa Items for Members

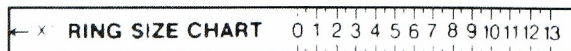


Members of Phi Beta Kappa may order insignia items including the handsome tie, signet rings and the popular wall display shown here. The Phi Beta Kappa necktie is made of 100% silk, burgundy in color, and woven with the key insignia in gold. The 10-karat gold signet rings are available in two styles. The ring gauge printed below can be cut out and wrapped around the finger you wish to measure. The wall display combines a membership certificate and a large gold-plated key in a 12 x 16 inch walnut frame.

To order, complete the form below and mail it with your payment and a copy of your mailing label from the back cover showing your ΦBK membership number to Hand & Hammer, 2610 Morse Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22192. You may place an order or request the complete product brochure by calling (703) 491-4866 or by faxing (703) 491-2031. You may also order online at www.hand-hammer.com.



- ___ Phi Beta Kappa necktie (100% silk, burgundy).....\$39
- ___ Large Signet Ring (available only in sizes 8,9,10,11)....\$195
- ___ Small Signet Ring (available only in sizes 4,5,6,7).....\$150
- ___ Custom half sizing.....\$25
- ___ Wall display (key and certificate framed 12"x16").....\$79



Ring size _____ Initials for ring _____
Name, chapter and date for personalization _____

___ Check payable to Hand & Hammer is enclosed
Charge my ___ Visa ___ MasterCard (VA residents add 4.5%)
Card No. _____ Exp. date _____
Signature _____ Phone No. _____



holds four academic degrees, including a doctorate in business administration, he's also worked for major players in the accounting world, including Arthur Andersen and KPMG Peat Marwick."

Some reviews of "Secrets of the Tomb: Skull and Bones, the Ivy League, and the Hidden Paths of Power," by Alexandra Robbins, mentioned Phi Beta Kappa. One in the *San Jose Mercury News* (Sept. 15) stated that "Yale, in Robbins' view, was founded by people who were annoyed with Harvard (just as Princeton was founded by people who were annoyed with Yale), and Skull and Bones was founded in 1832 by a man referred to as 'General' William Russell because he was annoyed with Phi Beta Kappa."

An article in the September issue of *Washingtonian* magazine said, "Skull and Bones started in 1832, back in an era when even Phi Beta Kappa was a secret society and Yale men thought aping Masonic rituals imported from Germany might help them through those long New Haven nights."

The *Baltimore Sun* (Sept. 1) stated that "student societies began in the 1750s. Literary societies arose from the 1780s onward, with the beginning of Phi Beta Kappa as a secret society." [Φ BK's national office informed the *Sun* that the Society was founded in 1776.]

From a Major League baseball round-up in *The Houston Chronicle* (August 18): "Reds manager Bob Boone made an astonishing call the other day in a loss to the Diamondbacks. It's not his first of the season, but it had scouts, broadcasters and players scratching their head [sic]."

"Adam Dunn attempted to steal second with the Reds trailing by five runs. He was caught off base. Upstairs, Hall of Fame broadcaster Marty Brennaman said: 'That's not a Phi Beta Kappa on the basepaths.' Turns out, the guy without the Phi Beta Kappa key was sitting in the dugout. Boone gave Dunn the steal sign three times before Dunn finally took off."

"Asked if he had the steal sign, Dunn said: 'Do you think I'm stupid

enough to run on my own in that situation?'"

Writing about the death of Chick Hearn, the voice of the Los Angeles Lakers, *Salon.com* (August 6) noted that he invented "a good part of the modern basketball lexicon. 'Slam dunk' was his. So were 'air ball' and 'finger roll' and 'no harm, no foul.' Somebody did something stupid? 'Not a Phi Beta Kappa play.'"

The *Lancaster* (Pa.) *New Era* (July 18) reported that Heather Graham is in the White House Fellows class of 2002–03, the only woman among 13 Fellows. She "graduated Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Wisconsin [Madison] in 1993 and received her master's in Public and International Affairs from Princeton University in 1999." Graham manages grants at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and formerly directed a program at Teach For America.

Under the headline "Southaven Woman A Phi Beta Kappa," the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* (July 11) reported: "Cindy Jones knows what it's like to be an overachiever. The 21-year-old finished atop her class at Southern Baptist Education Center in 1998 and recently earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Mississippi with a 3.92 grade point average."

"Now she's in a class of her own as the first Phi Beta Kappa Society inductee at Ole Miss from DeSoto County. 'I was honored to be invited to join because the organization has such a prestigious reputation,' Jones said."



John Lachs, left, discussed "Moral Progress Through the Ages" with members of the Φ BK Association of Nashville. Lachs is Centennial Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University.

She'll enter the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis to work on a master's degree."

The *Chicago Tribune* (July 9) reported: "Two top Chicago executives are joining forces to prod area business leaders to beef up educational opportunities for employees. The strategy is designed to make Chicago the nation's leading talent pool."

"Phil Condit, chairman and chief executive of Boeing Co., and John Rowe, chairman and CEO of Exelon Corp., parent of Commonwealth Edison Co., will launch Workforce-Chicago2.0 in an effort to enlist other chief executives to form a leadership group to promote workforce learning from the top down ... Rowe has bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin, and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. [He] has a track record as a prime mover in civic and philanthropic efforts, with the City Club of Chicago naming him Citizen of the Year."

AScribe Newswire (June 24) reported that former Phi Beta Kappa Society President John Hope Franklin won the Clark Kerr Award, "the highest honor bestowed by the Academic Senate of the University of California, Berkeley." He received it at Duke University in Durham, N.C., where he is professor emeritus, in a ceremony at the John Hope Franklin Center for International and Interdisciplinary Studies. Berkeley's Harry Scheiber, who presented the medal, called Franklin "the leading figure in the field of African-

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Recommended Reading

BOOK COMMITTEE

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

Social Sciences: Rick Eden, Josephine Pacheco

Anna J. Schwartz, Larry J. Zimmerman

Natural Sciences: Germaine Cornélissen, Jay M. Pasachoff

By Robert P. Sonkowsky

Roman Women. Edited and with a New Introduction by Augusto Frascetti. Translated by Linda Lappin. University of Chicago, 2001. \$20

This collection of essays covers, in as much detail as scant evidence permits, the lives and legends of five famous women of ancient Rome and four from Late Antiquity. They include Claudia, the vestal virgin; Cornelia, the matron; Fulvia, wife of Publius Clodius, Curio, and Mark Antony; Lycoris, the freedwoman, mime, and courtesan; Livia, first the mother of future emperor Tiberius and then wife of Octavian, alleged poisoner.

These and other women, seen in the context or brought in for comparison, more than fulfill, and modeled patriarchally defined roles in religion, society, politics, the theater. Likewise the post-Classical Perpetua, Christian martyr and unique autobiographer; Helena Augusta, mother of the emperor Constantine, Christian pilgrim, role model to saintly queens; Hypatia, philosopher, beautiful and strong, political and religious martyr; and Melania the Saint.

Although all of these women participate in patriarchal typology and much of the evidence is shaped by rules of literary genre, the scholarly analysis helps readers detect individual characteristics of living women underneath. Feminist scholars no doubt are already familiar with the 1994 Italian edition. But this translation, with its updated introduction, is to be recommended to the general reader who wishes to be informed about this otherwise elusive topic.

Diaspora: Jews Amidst Greeks and Romans. Erich S. Gruen. Harvard University Press, 2002. \$39.95

How did the Jews of Greco-Roman times interact with their surroundings in the many locations they inhabited? One of our best ancient historians, Erich Gruen, says that in general they did so quite well, thank you, and quite happily. While acknowledging that other scholars of Judaism have disagreed with him on many points, he argues in detail that their representations of a miserable longing by Jewish colonists to return to Jerusalem or a Palestinian homeland are based, anachronistically, on modern feelings or on documents of exile that allude to earlier, Biblical references not relevant to the ancient Greeks, Romans, or Egyptians of that era.

Professor Gruen sets forth his thesis cogently and in an elegant writing style. He interprets many citations from the Bible and its Hellenistic *addenda* and *intercalanda*, and from Hellenistic Jewish authors such as Philo and Josephus. Gruen shows that, by and large, although the Diaspora Jews retained their devotion to the Temple in Jerusalem, they were nevertheless integrated in their own way into their communities, whether Greek, Roman, or Egyptian. Unspeakable atrocities against Jews during this period, such as the violent pogrom that rocked them in Alexandria in 38 CE, were due to particular, sometimes complex, circumstances, rather than a generalized anti-Semitism.

Gruen's conclusion flies in the face of modern, gloomier assessments of the Diaspora. He sees it as a resplendent achievement in which the Jews went beyond mere syncretism by absorbing the best of Hellenistic culture and yet retaining their own identity and solidarity—a view something like the more familiar pro-Roman historical assessment of Roman uses of Greek culture.

His final chapter includes ancient evidence of more theoretical support, and witness by Jewish intellectuals, of his thesis that “return” to a homeland was not a Jewish longing in those days, and secondly that Diaspora Jews participated in their new communities everywhere. In earlier chapters he contrasts and compares Jewish with Greco-Roman traditions; I would have thought he might have told us here of any relationship between those two Jewish attitudes and the Odyssean “return” (*nostos*) and Stoic cosmopolitanism respectively.

By Germaine Cornélissen

Anatomy of a Rose—Exploring the Secret Life of Flowers. Sharman Apt Russell. Perseus Publishing, 2001. \$13

In less than 200 pages, Sharman Apt Russell introduces the world of flowers and the role they play in human life in a multi-faceted way. Very simply and engagingly, this acclaimed nature writer brings together the latest work of botanists, covering topics such as reproduction, communication, and evolution, while also examining the healing power of flowers and research done in this area.

Throughout Russell's eloquent writing, the importance of timing permeates, for both reproductive success and survival. To this reviewer, she revealed a new, unsuspected world, where flowers show individuality and intelligence, capable of deceit as well as charm.

Edward Abbey: A Life. James M. Cahalan. University of Arizona Press, 2001. \$27.95

This is a very thorough biography of Cactus Ed Abbey, with an incredible number of references and notes. The book also includes a set of photographs of Abbey, whom we come to know from his birthplace to his secret burial in the desert. Through his many trips in the wilderness, and the corresponding development of his career as an author and defender of the wilderness, we also learn to know him as a man, with a detailed account of events that shaped his private life. Cahalan's meticulous research of Abbey's works and papers sets the record straight, separating fact from fiction.

Making Babies: The Science of Pregnancy. David Bainbridge. Harvard University Press, 2001. \$26

David Bainbridge masterfully covers the main aspects of human pregnancy, amplifying on his introductory statement: “Pregnancy is a uniquely intimate relationship between two people.” The book takes us from conception to breast-feeding, told as a story of “hows” and “whys” in a form that anyone can understand.

The author addresses the question of why we

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This issue marks the final appearance in *The Key Reporter* of Robert P. Sonkowsky, who probably has had the longest tenure of any current Book Committee member. He began reviewing in 1979 after completing a term on the Phi Beta Kappa Senate. He has been president of the Minnesota ΦBK Association and president of the ΦBK Chapter at the University of Minnesota. The Society salutes his distinguished service.

Rebecca Resinski succeeds Sonkowsky on the Committee. A *summa cum laude* graduate of Bucknell University, she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year. She attended graduate school at Cornell University and UCLA, and earned a doctorate in classics at UCLA in 1998. Currently an assistant professor of classics at Hendrix College, she also has taught at the University of Rochester.



Recommended Reading

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

reproduce the way we do. Reasons for sexual reproduction, to allow the inheritance of genetic material and to help fight disease, are explained in a historical context that takes us to the monastery where Gregor Mendel carried out his famous experiments on peas. In reading about anisogamy, the difference in size between eggs and sperm, we learn why only mothers contribute mitochondria (the center of intracellular enzyme activity) to their offspring.

The discussion of early pregnancy cites William Harvey, whose 1651 treatise on reproduction questioned the then-prevailing idea of spontaneous generation, suggesting that mothers and embryos were equal partners. Bainbridge describes the change of an embryo into a fetus through progressive cell differentiation and the arrangement of organs.

A section on immunology considers why the mother accepts the "foreign" baby as her own, not rejecting it as a parasite or transplanted organ. The birth process is explored as a turning point in the mother's life, and important ethical questions are raised about the management of pregnancy. Clearly and engagingly, Bainbridge takes us on a 40-week journey, presenting current knowledge in a historical and evolutionary context. A delightful book.

By Rick A. Eden

Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide. Edited by Alexander Laban Hinton; Foreword by Kenneth Roth, *Human Rights Watch*. University of California, 2002. \$60

"Annihilating Difference" is a collection of 15 essays on genocide. Genocide appears so pure in its evil and so absolute in its brutality that I was surprised at the complexity and nuance of its treatment here. The volume offers rigorous yet open-ended conceptualizations of genocide. These are illustrated by case studies of modern genocides drawn from around the world—from Nazi Europe, of course, as well as Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia, and Guatemala. During the 20th century, perhaps 100 million persons died in genocides.

The contributors to the book also confront the culpability of anthropology in the Century of Genocide. The furious efficiency of 20th century slaughters was facilitated not only by modern engineering, but also by anthropological concepts—such as race and culture—that constructed and reified human differences. The monstrous Dr. Mengele, infamous as a physician, also held a degree in anthropology.

In a final turn, "Annihilating Difference" attempts to redeem anthropology by demonstrating its value to human rights activism (hence the foreword by Kenneth Roth). Anthropological studies may help to reveal which interventions can prevent genocides, and

which can best ameliorate their terrible effects, both on victim and perpetrator groups. For instance, if anthropology can describe the preconditions and correlates of genocide, then perhaps an early warning system can be devised.

Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India. Ashutosh Varshney. Yale University Press, 2002. \$45

Although Ashutosh Varshney is a political economist rather than an anthropologist, this impressive volume, the product of 10 years of research, epitomizes the kind of positive contribution by social science to activism called for in "Annihilating Difference."

Varshney sets out systematically to account for a simple observation: Many cities in India have significant Hindu and Muslim communities, yet ethnic riots are mostly confined to only a few. To explain this, he identified the cities in India that were most prone to riots between Hindus and Muslims. Then he compared three of these cities to peaceful cities that were similar in demography and other controlling characteristics of interest, such as history.

Peaceful cities were those with strong formal ties between the Hindu and Muslim communities, in the form of associations such as professional and business organizations. Other forms of intercommunal interactions—socializing, visiting, sharing public spaces such as parks—were also helpful in promoting peace between the ethnic communities of a city, but less robust in the face of events that heightened ethnic tensions. Cities without strong inter-communal structures were riot-prone because they lacked mechanisms for dampening the precursors of ethnic conflict.

Varshney's findings are intuitively satisfying and also useful. It was a pleasure to discover work so uniformly rigorous and admirable in its theory, methodology, empiricism, and ethicality.

Another Vietnam: Pictures of the War from the Other Side. Tim Page. Edited by Doug Niven and Chris Riley; Foreword by Henry Allen. *National Geographic*, 2002. \$50

Particularly for those of us who lived through the Vietnam era, turning the pages of this book is profoundly moving. We thought we knew that war so well. Yet here are wonderful, terrible images that we have never seen, taken by photographers whose names we have never heard.

Open at a random page. A photograph by Le Minh Truong. Beneath a glowering sky, a lone figure standing in a skiff carefully steers down a river. On either bank, nothing is visible but the dense detritus of a mangrove rainforest, reduced to fields of bone-like sticks and poles. It is shocking to see how effectively our defoliating agents destroyed that landscape. The scene seems fantastic, as though it belonged not to this world but to Tolkien's Mordor.

Open again, to a photograph by Duong Thanh Phong. A wide highway, empty of humanity, yet littered with what appear to be

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The AMERICAN SCHOLAR



ODDLY PLEASURABLE

"As a young child I had a stutter. I barely remember it. But it has recurred once or twice in times of adult stress, and I've enjoyed the sensual way the lips get stuck on words and the mouth chews at them, trying to form them, like mastication in reverse. After I slow down and compose myself, the word suddenly pops out, and the sentence continues its flow till the next *p* or *b* or *d* freezes on my lips. As long as it's mild and short-lived, I find this way of talking amusing, oddly pleasurable."

— From "Sensitive,"
an essay by Andrew Hudgins in the
Autumn issue of the SCHOLAR.

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Letters to the Editor

Education Debate Continues

John Leith's letter in the Summer *Key Reporter* spurred me to write this response. I'm a secondary school foreign language teacher in a small school district.

My education through the bachelor's degree was completed in New York City, where I attended private religious schools. My "tracked" high school scholarship class took New York State Regents Examinations in several subjects, and we were prepped separately for these. Our curriculum met exacting standards, Regents exams notwithstanding. My classmates came from intact families, with one-third being of white European ancestry. In light of my background one might assume I am in favor of national testing. Not so.

The "abysmal" education in "certain places" is blamed for producing people who "tend to become narrow-minded, ignorant and hateful ... National testing can help us devote extra attention to such places." Narrow-mindedness and hate are not addressed by national test questions, and it is simplistic to assume they are only the result of poor education. Often prejudices are inculcated in the home. Further, when we speak about "transmission of our heritage to the next generation," *of whose heritage are we speaking?* Public schools teach tremendously diverse populations. Standardized intelligence tests, admissions tests and the like have been shown to be biased toward the "dead white Christian male" viewpoint. How do we avoid imposing that "heritage" on our children? Yes, there are basic competencies that must be taught across the country. The issue is, how do we teach them and test for them in an unbiased way? More importantly, how do we use the results of such testing? Are these tests simply going to be one more tool for browbeating teachers on a national level and denying funding to school districts

already on the verge of bankruptcy?

Not only is there no "one size fits all" due to requirements for at-risk students, gifted and talented students or any politically correct labels in vogue for those who do not "fit the mold," but it is narrow-minded of us as educators to think in terms of only "one size." Motivation to exceed expectations is not fostered by the "one size fits all" mentality, nor can creative, higher-level thinking skills be assessed by standardized tests. It is those skills which are sorely needed for our children to "participate more fully in being citizens."

Theresa L. Margherita, Colgate, Wis.

In response to John Leith's letter regarding school testing [Summer *Key Reporter*], it is easy for those of us in Phi Beta Kappa to say that "students will rise to the fun and challenge of tests." Try explaining to teenagers with learning and behavior problems that if they fail the state test, they will not receive their high school diplomas. Even if you do inform them, as Mr. Leith suggests, that "testing is part of a national feedback procedure that leads to improvements in teaching," many will not be able to "rise to the occasion." Statistics have shown that they will just drop out.

We do need testing, and we do need standards. But first we need quality teachers, more resources, and intensive tutoring for students who are at risk for failure. Mr. Leith refers to young people "in certain areas and certain schools" who "become narrow-minded, ignorant, and hateful" due to poor education. My guess is that Mr. Leith was fortunate enough not to live in an unsafe neighborhood, with a parent who had to work constantly, wondering from where his next meal would be coming.

Many of these young people are extraordinary individuals who have amazing potential. They need people like us to become teachers, to

donate time and money, and to start new programs. I can guarantee that they do not need more tests or more stereotyping.

Leah Wasburn-Moses, Lansing, Mich.

The Summer issue of the *Key Reporter* and the August 30 issue of the *Texas Observer*, which hit my mailbox almost simultaneously, feature arguments regarding standardized testing. This spurred me to reflect on my experiences with standardized testing in Texas public schools in the 1970s and 1980s. Fortunately for me, in those days standardized assessments of basic skills were not the critical measures of success they have since become in this state, so my schools did not waste much time on training [students] to take the tests. While I agree with Mary O'Malley that "teaching to the test is not a problem if the tests are aligned to standards and are of high quality," in my school days the tests were not, and time spent teaching to them would have been even more of a waste of time than the time spent taking them was. Moreover, for the states or federal government to develop meaningful assessments would require a sustained political will, of a sort I've never seen applied to education.

Since Texas education appears to be one of the models upon which the current movement for nationalized testing is based, I would like to summarize some points the *Texas Observer* article, "Test Case: Hard Lessons from the TAAS," by Jake Bernstein, makes about how standardized testing, and specifically the "Texas Assessment of Academic Skills" (TAAS), has worked in Texas.

Many school districts have developed ways to inflate their students' average scores. For instance, if students in special education are exempt from taking the assessments, schools push more students into special education. Bernstein notes that the number of students in special education classes in Texas rose 60% from 1994 to 1998. Teachers are under pressure to focus on children on the borderline of passing the assessment; both children who will easily pass and children who are unlikely to pass are poorly served by this.

An excessive amount of class time is used to prepare for the assessments. Bernstein notes that when English professors at Texas A&M University asked freshmen to write about the TAAS in 2001, 70% were highly critical. Some complained that at their schools TAAS practice filled 20 minutes of every class period. Others got pulled out of regular classes months before the exam to attend TAAS study classes.

It appears that the quality of assessments has not improved since I was in school, but the emphasis on the tests has intensified. While I support rigor and accountability, standardized tests seem to be of limited value in achieving accountability. Unless national education assessment tests are carefully designed, they have the potential to do more harm than good.

Lisa J. Harris, Austin, Texas

ΦBK in the News

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American history, American race relations and Southern regional history in the United States." The Franklin Center at Duke "is dedicated to bringing together humanists and social scientists to study important societal issues from a variety of perspectives."

The *Athens (Ga.) Banner-Herald* (June 20) described Verner Chaffin's unusual reunion at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He had been among the volunteers sent there by the U.S. Navy in 1943 to study the

Japanese language and culture. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Navy could identify only a dozen officers who spoke Japanese.

The War Department "sent out invitations to join the program to people who had been named to the college academic society Phi Beta Kappa—people like Chaffin." He worked in Naval Intelligence at Pearl Harbor, translating documents, diaries and broadcasts, and after V-J Day he served in occupied Japan. A ΦBK at the University of Georgia, he later taught at its law school for three decades.

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Letters in the summer *Key Reporter*, asserting that our young people are being given an abysmal education, tell the same story that I have been hearing, almost without variation, for almost 80 years. In my entire lifetime I have never heard that our young people are being well educated. The U.S. education system is always presented as inadequate or worse; immediate steps must be taken to correct the situation; the sky is falling.

But the sky does not fall. Little is done to change the system, it bumbles on, but we continue to produce liberal artists of every stripe, doctors, engineers, mothers, fathers, Nobel Prize winners, college professors, businessmen, writers, and movie stars, whose accomplishments are the envy of the world, in spite of warnings that the end is near. How is such continuous success possible if we have such a permanently flawed education system?

Perhaps the education system has nothing to do with personal or national success, but I prefer to believe that this is not the case and it is the doomsayers who are wrong. May I suggest that educators, like priests, find that they can only attract attention if they tell their congregations that they are full of sin and error? A preacher must never say the congregation is doing fine, because this is such a dull and uninspiring message that it results in fewer listeners and believers. An audience is only inspired by being terrified or made to feel guilty.

Based on my observation of long-term results, our educators are doing fine. Let's have fewer and more restrained sermons.

Eric A. Weiss, Kailua, Hawaii

Liberal Arts Revisited

K. Bandell (Summer *Key Reporter*) may consider reading a newspaper with some sophistication an adequate measure of a liberal arts education, but if we content ourselves with this, who is left to measure the newspapers? I do not agree with Norman Olsen that it is illiberal to value other arts less than those considered "liberal." The medievals defined the free man as *dominus sui*, master of himself (or herself), capable of directing his own life rather than needful of another's direction. The arts that lead man to this sort of "free" life are certainly of higher value than any others.

While no art, even the manual arts, is beneath the free man, not every art enables a man to be master of himself. Those which do are the linguistic arts of the trivium—speech has been recognized as a sign that man is a social and political animal from at least the time of Aristotle—and the mathematical "arts" of the quadrivium, which allow one to perceive and internalize the order and harmony of the universe. A liberal education has traditionally been based on these liberal arts and completed by philosophy (and theology for the Christian), but never was it expected that an educated man be limited to these fields of study.

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ΦBK in Popular Culture and Literature

From Lincoln Kirstein's 1934 program notes for "Alma Mater," a ballet by George Balanchine, a performance in Hartford, Conn., that introduced his new choreography after he emigrated to the United States (sets and costumes by John Held, Jr.): "Crowds at the stadium entrance hail the half-back piled on his admirers' shoulders. Flappers dash up for autographs; posed against the fence a photographer snaps his portrait. Snake dance is a rah-rah bacchanal; not even the goal-posts are left standing. The villain in a coon-coat, his charger a bicycle-built-for-him and his cock-eyed girlfriend, encounters the hero and socks him as he plucks daisies for her. We are transported to a rag-time dreamland.... Comes dawn. A janitor with a Phi Beta Kappa key sweeps up the pieces...."

*Contributed by Barbara Palfry,
Fords, N.J.*

In the 1957 comedy, "Desk Set," Katharine Hepburn announces to Spencer Tracy that she has researched his background and discovered that he belongs to Phi Beta Kappa. "...And since I see you are not wearing your key, I presume you are either quite modest or you lost it."

Contributed by Jeff Blum, Austin, Texas

From "Ravelstein" by Saul Bellow (Viking, 2000): "As I have said, we had planned today to discuss the memoir I was going to write, but this wasn't a good day for biographical details. 'Come to think of it,' Abe said, 'I don't want to go over early times again—my effective mother educated at Johns Hopkins, top of her class. And my dumbhead father held it against me that I didn't make Phi Beta Kappa. In what mattered, I had top grades. For the required courses B's and C's were good enough. Still, no matter how well I did—invited to Yale or Harvard to lecture—my dad to the end threw it in my face that I hadn't made Phi Beta K.'"

Contributed by P.S. Taylor, McLean, Va.

From "I Know This Much Is True" by Wally Lamb: "She uncapped her pen and wrote something down. 'So what you're saying is that being Thomas's brother makes you feel bifurcated.' 'Bifurcated?' I looked up at her. 'I couldn't tell you, Doc. I don't speak Phi Beta Kappa.'"

*Contributed by Caren Milman,
Rockville, Md.*

From "She Walks These Hills" by Sharyn McCrumb (Scribner, 1994): "As a Phi Beta Kappa from Cornell and now an almost-finished Ph.D. tackling his first instructor's job at Virginia Tech, Jeremy Cobb did not consider himself one of the common people of the present century (symbolized in his mind by Wal-Mart and bowling leagues), but he was enchanted by his vision of yesterday's proletariat, with their quilts, and their spirituals, and their jack tales. The poor were the people who mattered in modern scholarship: you weren't going anywhere specializing in dead white males."

*Contributed by Erica S. Brown,
Dover, N.H.*

From "Trixie Belden and the Mystery off Glen Road" by Julie Campbell (Whitman, 1956): "Then Trixie told Honey what she had discovered the afternoon before in the woods on the other side of the road.

"A unicycle,' Honey gasped. 'I didn't know there were any except in circuses.'"

"Is that what you call a one-wheeled bike?" Trixie asked.

"Honey giggled. 'Of course, as in unicorn. The *bi* in bicycle means that it has two wheels. I think it's Greek, like Phi Beta Kappa.'"

"It's all Greek to me,' Trixie said with a grin. 'Even if I do get better marks in math so I graduate from high school and go to college, nobody's ever going to give me a Phi Beta Kappa key.'"

"Oh, I don't know,' Honey said cheerfully. 'Jim is sure to get one. He'll give you his.'"

*Contributed by David Stowe,
East Lansing, Mich.*

Stolen Words

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

an important transitional strategy in the student's progress toward membership in a discourse community."

Not long ago, the *New York Times* reported on college students' preference for doing research on the Web instead of in the library: "They are simply more comfortable sifting through hyper-links than they are flipping through a card catalog. And they admit that using the Web requires less exertion." For one thing, they don't have to trudge across the quad from their dorm rooms to the stacks. As the old Yellow Pages slogan used to put it, they can let their fingers do the walking. Inevitably, student plagiarism has changed stride, too. My former Vassar colleague, Professor Robert DeMaria, tells me that these days a clear majority of the plagiarism cases adjudicated by the college's Academic Panel involve Internet source material rather than books. Fortunately, *Originality and Attribution*, the pamphlet DeMaria helped write in the mid-1980s, has not been revised in the accommodating direction proposed by Professor Howard. It now warns students that when it comes to their scholarly responsibilities, nothing has actually changed:

"The college considers computer-generated text to be equivalent to any other form of written work; the same restrictions regarding proper attribution that apply to printed texts also cover computer programs, disks and other electronically stored materials."

The Vassar library has constructed its own Web page, "Style Sheet for Citing Electronic Information."

And yet, the pamphlet betrays an awareness that *everything* has changed: "Students have claimed before the Academic Panel that they did not consider an electronic file, because of its nature, to be property as 'personal' as a book or paper." A mental shift, not so much ethical as epistemological, is underway with students who scarcely remember a Net-less world. As Mark Fritz has put it, in a discussion of plagiarism in the *Los Angeles Times*: "Many students seem to almost reflexively embrace a philosophy rooted in the subculture of computer hackers: that all information is, or should be, free for the taking."

The Web makes it impossible for students to value originality, or writing itself, in quite the same way. If all writing is instantly available, none of it can be worth all that much. A mental law of supply and demand has to operate: when it comes to food or sex or research, humans cannot prize availability in the same way they do scarcity. Think of what the Web has meant even to the buying of actual books. I have become devoted to www.bibliofind.com, the electronic consortium of used bookstores, because when I'm looking for some out-of-print, arcane title, it *never*

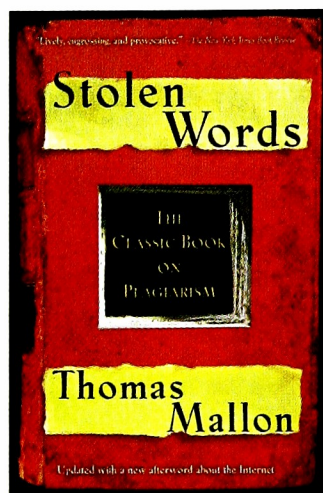
disappoints. Usually, information about a dozen copies of the desired book will come onto my screen, so that I can comparison-shop based on pricing, shipping costs, and a description of each copy's condition. I'll place my order, and two days later, by priority mail, I'll have the book.

A few years ago, in search of the same title, I would have made a trip to the mighty Strand bookstore in New

York, where I might well find what I was looking for—but then again, might not. Let's say I was successful: what would be the difference between that shopping experience and what I now have using bibliofind.com? The fruitful trip to the Strand, because it had been effortful and involved the risk of disappointment, would yield a certain eureka-like satisfaction and contentment; whereas

bibliofind.com grants a satisfaction that is certain—plain and simple. Which is to say, not as potent, instant gratification being never so gratifying as the even-slightly-deferred kind.

When it comes to research and writing, the psychological consequences of this are enormous. For students, especially, the Internet may sap the very need to create. *It's all there already*, or so it seems; all the knowledge on a given subject, and all the competing viewpoints, in a machine you can carry around like a book. What's there to add—and why dig a well instead of turning on the tap?



Russian Initiative

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

institutions are opening in cities around Russia, including Moscow. Four more are scheduled to open in the next two years. The reform of Russian higher education through the liberal arts that Smolny's founders hoped for seems well underway.

As Phi Beta Kappa members join

with other community leaders across the country in an effort to articulate the value of the liberal arts, I hope they will bear in mind the story of this genuinely courageous and visionary company of intellectuals in St. Petersburg. Our democracy is not so old, or so secure, that we can afford to ignore the wisdom of Smolny's founders. They know, as some in our nation do not, that the liberal arts must be among the cornerstones in a democracy built to last.

Some Phi Beta Kappa members have reported that the summer issue of *The Key Reporter* did not reach them. Those who did not receive it are welcome to request one by phone at (202) 265-3808, by fax at (202) 986-1601, or by e-mail at dlawrence@pbk.org.

Letters to the Editor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

The person who is not educated in the liberal arts to the degree that one traditionally was lacks a good foundation for directing his own life in today's complicated world.

J. John Baer, Santa Paula, Calif.

In her letter (Summer *Key Reporter*), Carissa Fontanella complains that "science types" berated her decision to study linguistics and foreign language in college. She asks how research can be communicated without these skills. Editors of leading scientific and medical journals worldwide have addressed that problem by adopting a common language (English) for publication. Even secondary journals in other languages usually provide English abstracts. One might then wonder how "science types" deal with the occasional Dutch patent or Japanese article that we need to read in its entirety. Trying to learn a foreign language well enough to interpret chemical patents on your own is as foolish as defending yourself in court. Instead, we recall from our "liberal arts" educations (fourth grade social studies) that division of labor is the basis of civilization, and accordingly we hire technically literate "language types" (professional translators) to help us.

Paul A. Deck, Blacksburg, Va.

New Words, Anyone?

Here's an idea for a new occasional feature in *The Key Reporter*: Custom coining of new words by readers. I propose the inaugural candidate, which was probably spawned by my running into "explornography" a couple of years ago. "Explornography" was coined to commemorate the Mount Everest disasters of 1996. It refers to a person with an obscene amount of money hiring someone to take him or her somewhere that he or she has no business going.

As a physician, I needed another new word while planning a series of health columns about habit-forming drugs, legal and otherwise, from a public health point of view. So I coined "incarceromania," which means spending an obscene amount of money jailing non-violent people for possession of a small amount of (relatively non-toxic) material for personal use. After all, most of them would make perfectly satisfactory citizens or even parents, except for being in jail. I hope other readers will contribute new words of their own. If I use any in print, I will give credit to the creator if desired.

John A. Frantz, Monroe, Wis.

Grammarians Speak Up

Readers offered complex and well-illustrated answers (some citing other languages) to a question from two readers in the summer *Key Reporter*: Should we accept the common practice of using plural pronouns with the singular nouns they refer to? The example was "Everyone has a right to their opinion."

Few gave a flat yes or no. As Secretary John Churchill warned when he read one of the responses, "This is trickier than it looks." So instead of a scorecard, we offer some excerpts:

"It fills the need for a common gender pronoun without being awkward or resorting to artificial neologisms. The rules of grammar are arbitrary, have changed in the past and will change in the future."

"What about simply 'an opinion'?" [There were several variations on this.]

"The rules of grammar were not engraved on stone tablets. [They] are an accepted codification of the way in which people are already using the language. The plural 'you' long ago replaced the singular 'thou.'"

"Shifts in written practice often lag behind shifts in spoken English. In 1998, the Oxford University Press issued a rejection of the 'rule' against splitting infinitives: [It] had been imposed in 1864 by the dean of Canterbury, who wanted English to look more like Latin. [However] communication means not just expressing yourself, but reaching an audience and assuring them of your credibility. My students therefore need to be able to use 'grammatically correct standard English.'"

"Acceptable in conversation but not in formal writing."

A reader cites quotes from "The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing" by Casey Miller and Kate Swift: "God send everyone their heart's desire." —Shakespeare. "If a person is born of a gloomy temper ... they cannot help it." —Lord Chesterfield. "Nobody prevents you, do they?" —Thackeray. "Every person ... now recovered their liberty." —Goldsmith. "Nobody does anything well that they cannot help doing." —Ruskin. "It's enough to drive anyone out of their senses." —George Bernard Shaw.

"The use of *they* with non-plural referents may be common in current usage, but it isn't new. The Oxford English Dictionary entry for *they* includes: '2. Often used in reference to a singular noun made universal by *every*, *any*, *no*, etc., or applicable to one of either sex (= he or she).' The earliest quotes the OED gives to illustrate this are from the 1500s."

"The singular/plural discordance is as off-putting as '...me leaving early' or 'I wish he was here.' Correct speech patterns are no harder to use than popular [ones]."

"I abhor the practice. I do not hear this mistake being made by students; I hear it on the radio and television."

"In formal writing, the so-called awkwardness of 'his/her' is a small price to pay for the elegance of expression which unambiguously addresses the issues both of number and of gender inclusiveness."

"There are justifiable objections to all the usual alternatives. While 'England expects everyone to do *his* duty' may suggest, inaccurately, that a woman is free from this responsibility, 'England expects everyone to do *their* duty' looks wrong to most readers, although it has become frequent in speech. The eye demands what the distractible ear no longer does."

After a devastating fire, "the Governor went on television and exulted that 'Nobody has lost their life.' Regicide sprang to mind."

"Language does not exist by grammar rules. [It] exists by a consensus of understanding and expression among its speakers. 'Their' is an easy way to avoid being sexist and is easily understood."

"Him or her' can become awkward, so should be reserved for only those sentences that require careful individual reference. When a sentence can be recast in the plural and maintain the integrity of its content, it should be."

"The solution is to refer back to the antecedent using the neutral pronoun already selected in the antecedent: 'Everyone has a right to *one's* opinion.'"

"Everyone sang beautifully, didn't they?' The singular would be ungrammatical, something a native speaker would never say: 'Everyone sang beautifully, didn't he or she?' In Steven Pinker's 'The Language Instinct' [Chapter 12], he explains that *everyone* and *they* are not 'antecedent' and 'pronoun' but rather a different logical relationship. Your readers will enjoy that chapter."

Responses came from: C.-J. Bailey, Kea'au, Hawaii; Larissa Bonfante, New York City; Michael H. Brill, Kingston, N.J.; Jonathan S. Budd, Cheshire, Conn.; Bonnie A. Catto, Worcester, Mass; Henry Chitwood, Stamford, Conn.; Sidney Corman, Kyoto, Japan; Anthony Corsentino, Cambridge, Mass.; Inis L. Claude, Jr., Charlottesville, Va.; Lawrence Crumb, Eugene, Ore.; Claire S. Drinnan, Staten Island, N.Y.; John Ferguson, North Hollywood, Calif.; Philip C. Fischer, St. Louis, Mo.; Jay M. Freyman, Baltimore, Md.; Lisa A. Goetze, Stoughton, Mass.; Joseph W. Gordon, Woodbridge, Conn.; Sharon Gray, Vermillion, S.D.; Carolyn M. Hoppe, Rydal, Pa.; Joy A. Farmer, Kennesaw, Ga.; Walter H. Jones, Santa Fe, N.M.; Lisa Kijek, Downey, Calif.; Martha Kolln, Bellefonte, Pa.; Karen Lake, Glenside, Pa.; Charles H. Lippy, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Clara H. Millett, Duncan, Okla.; Katie Mills, Los Angeles, Calif.; Joseph A. Mulligan, Hollywood, Calif.; Catherine E. Paul, Clemson, S.C.; Mary Lou M. Raffello, Tacoma, Wash.; Joanne Sandstrom, Berkeley, Calif.; Marilyn B. Scott, Naples, Fla.; Marion P. Steininger, Voorhees, N.J.; Kenneth A. Swanson, Turin, Ga.; Jean Teter, Sunnyvale, Calif.; Edward G. Voss, Ann Arbor, Mich.; Pauline Welby, Columbus, Ohio; SarahRose Werner, Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada; and Carla A. Winston, Lithia Springs, Ga.

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

Recommended Reading

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11
hundreds, even thousands of shoes. In fact, they are the combat boots of South Vietnamese soldiers who flung away all signs of their allegiance to the losing side as they fled the victorious North Vietnamese army. Again, the scene is unworldly. The aesthetic is surreal; the effect strangely comic. Yet it is horrible to imagine the fear that drove such frenzied flight.

Taken together, these photographs communicate a sense of a nation mobilized for survival. We see little hate, fear, even suffering. The dominant emotions depicted are pride, determination, resourcefulness, diligence. Surprisingly, though understandably, the resulting mood is akin to that conveyed by photographs of another mobilized nation—of America during World War II, with its familiar images of children collecting scrap metal and women working in factories.

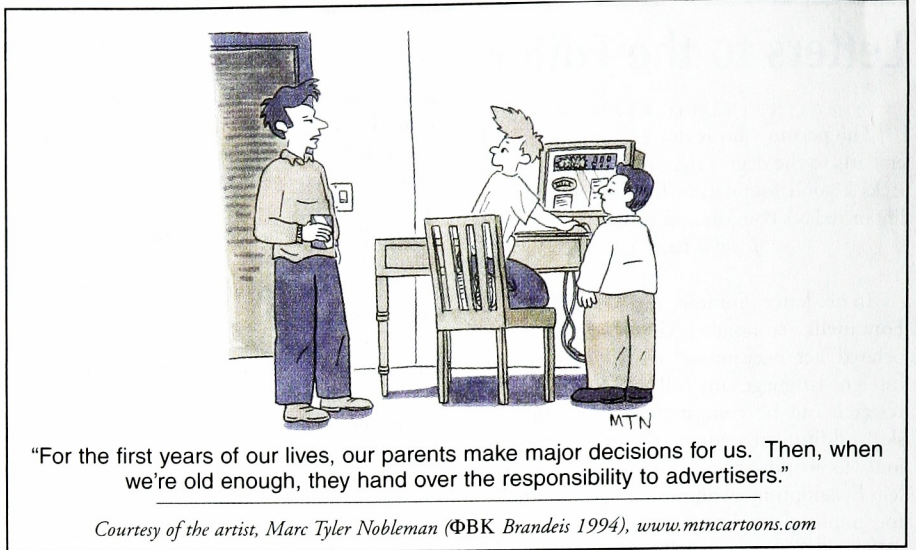
Both in text and image, this is a beautifully constructed book that succeeds on every level it attempts: as a chronicle of the Vietnam War(s) from the North's perspective, as a survey of North Vietnam's war photographers, and as a table-top gallery of startling photographs.

By Josephine Pacheco

The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. Alfred A. Knopf, 2001. \$35

A visit to a museum will never be quite the same after one looks at its treasures through the eyes of Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. In previous studies she has enlarged our understanding of women's lives in early New England, and now she expands the endeavor by inviting readers to look at spinning wheels and baskets and tablecloths and blankets in light of the history surrounding them. She helps us understand what they meant to the people making and using them, and shows a world where home production was a necessity.

She is ever mindful that women making homely objects wanted them to be beautiful, whether they were spinning, weaving, knitting, quilting, or sewing. It is possible to observe these household objects because "the Age of Homespun" was sentimentalized by New Englanders living in a world far removed from home production. As a result of "urban fantasies about rural life," some Americans undertook to



preserve artifacts from an earlier time; Ulrich uses them to great effect in this important book.

By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans. Greg Robinson. Harvard University Press, 2001. \$27.95

After the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, there were isolated incidents of violence against Arab Americans and followers of Islam. The current administration deplored the attacks and insisted that there must not be a repeat of the kind of injustice perpetrated against Japanese Americans during World War II, when they were placed in internment camps without consideration of loyalty or citizenship. Greg Robinson examines the part that President Franklin D. Roosevelt played in that terrible violation of the civil liberties of a large number of Americans.

Robinson concludes that FDR distrusted the Japanese, and in his speeches did not differentiate between Japan as an enemy, on one hand, and loyal Japanese Americans on the other. Therefore, "in the face of political pressure from West Coast governors and congressmen, the President quickly assented to taking drastic action against the Japanese-American community." Some of FDR's advisors thought that he was "casual" about his action, seemingly not realizing its seriousness. In 1983 a public hearing on the wartime internment revealed that some of the men who participated in the relocation continued to insist that it had been a military necessity. Nevertheless, Congress even-

tually passed, and President Ronald Reagan signed, a bill apologizing for the government's action and authorizing a payment to each person interned during the war.

Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic. Joanne B. Freeman. Yale University Press, 2001. \$29.95

In the early American republic, in the absence of political parties, political life operated according to the dictates of the code of honor. Joanne Freeman makes clear both the weaknesses of this system and the necessity for strong and effective parties if the government is to function well. When parties did not exist, and politics depended on loose alliances of friends, voters had few devices for discovering the trustworthiness of their leaders.

Hence the theme of this thought-provoking study: A politician had to make certain that his followers knew that he could be trusted with public office and a position of responsibility. If challenged to a duel, he had to accept the challenge or abandon his claim to leadership. So Freeman sees Alexander Hamilton's acceptance of Aaron Burr's challenge as essential to the maintenance of his authority in the early republic. Burr, fearing that his prestige was slipping away, concluded that a duel was equally necessary for his political future.

Freeman has no patience with suggestions of sexual misconduct as the reason for the duel; for her it was all politics. Indeed, she challenges the reader to regard political life in the early republic from a nontraditional point of view.

THE KEY REPORTER

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