



PHI BETA KAPPA

THE KEY REPORTER

SUMMER 2008

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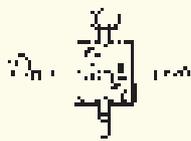
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**JOHN CHURCHILL TESTIFIES
FOR NEH BUDGET INCREASE**

**NEWSWEEK EDITOR EVAN THOMAS
ADDRESSES SECRETARY'S CIRCLE**





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Summer 2008

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Like Messing About in Boats

It might well seem obvious that education in the professions — law, health care, engineering, teaching and so on — is a public good. After all, anyone can see that the specialized knowledge and abilities cultivated there benefit society as a whole. Such education for some of us, therefore, tends to make everyone better off. That means, among other things, that it is an appropriate object of public, as well as private, support.

What about education in the liberal arts and sciences? What public good, if any, is advanced through having people study philosophy, history and literature? Where is the benefit to society as a whole in having people who will never pursue these fields professionally study psychology, economics, physics and chemistry?

I have friends who teach mathematics (and other things, too, for that matter) who claim, at least when they are feeling daring about their discipline, to have no interest in such questions. Studying mathematics (or whatever) is to be thought of as Rat in *Wind in the Willows* thought of his favorite pastime: “There is nothing — absolutely nothing — half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.” People who enter the professoriate tend to think of their chosen fields in this way — as intrinsically valuable — and they even get nervous over arguments that portray them as useful. Biology (or whatever) is an end in itself, not to be demeaned by being thought needful of justification by appeal to its usefulness.

It is a good thing that the professoriate is populated by people of this persuasion. The best work is driven by love. It would be too bad if the passion required for good teaching and research were sustained only by the hope that the results would be useful.

However valid these attitudes about intrinsic worth, it is still important to advance the further arguments. A lot of people are mystified by the claim that doing mathematics is an engagement with beauty, and historians' romance with the past leaves many people cold. If the value of the arts and sciences is to be demonstrated to these audiences, we need a utilitarian argument.

What most people remember best about Jeremy Bentham, founder of utilitarianism, is that his pickled body is kept in a case at University College, London. Some people will remember, though, that one of his main criteria for the value of a good is its extent; that is, its distribution over a broad population. So a strong utilitarian argument for the liberal arts and sciences will show that they distribute some good broadly — publicly.

Then what public good is advanced by the study of the liberal arts and sciences? You could argue that such studies make people fulfilled — even happier, in some deep sense — and that a society composed of happy and fulfilled people is a better one than one otherwise composed. In fact, if “happy” and “fulfilled” are taken deeply enough into strong meanings, that is probably the whole argument.

But there is more to say. It seems plausible that one of the essential elements in being happy and fulfilled is the capacity to make important decisions well. Some such decisions would be personal, some political, some professional, and there may well be other categories. But indisputably, some of life's decisions are important. So it is important to make them well.

Is there anything to be said, in general, about how people can gain that capacity? A few years ago, when Phi Beta Kappa asked thousands of its members to reflect on the value of their liberal arts education, it was precisely to the acquisition of deliberative skills that they pointed. Engagement with the liberal arts and sciences fostered their abilities to use knowledge to make important decisions well. This is an affirmation, in fact, of the meaning of the Society's name: Love of learning is the guide of life. And when we remember that “guide” in the Greek refers to a ship's helmsman, we return to Rat's observation about boats, with a confirmation that what is intrinsically fun can also be supremely useful.

John Churchill
Secretary

SPOTLIGHT



Higher education for the next generation of Americans is an investment in the future of our nation and a fundamental form of economic development. I'm grateful for Phi Beta Kappa's commitment, over more than two centuries, to recognizing and encouraging the pursuit of excellence in the liberal arts and sciences.

— Stephanie Herseth Sandlin

The Honorable Stephanie Herseth Sandlin is South Dakota's at-large Member of Congress. She is a leader of the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of moderate Democrats committed to fiscal discipline and strong national security, and is co-chair of the Rural Working Group, which is dedicated to raising the profile of issues important to rural America. She also serves on three committees vital to South Dakota's interests: Agriculture, Veterans' Affairs and Natural Resources. She is the Chairwoman of the Veterans' Affairs subcommittee on Economic Opportunity. At the beginning of the 110th Congress, Herseth Sandlin was chosen to serve on the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming in recognition of her advocacy for and leadership on the issue of renewable biofuels.

Herseth Sandlin grew up on her family's farm and ranch near Houghton (HOW-ton) in the northeast part of South Dakota. She graduated from Groton High School and attended Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where she graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in government. Herseth Sandlin received her law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center, where she was a senior editor of the law review and later served on the faculty.

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ON THE COVER

Stetson University, spring on the quad.

ΦBK Secretary John Churchill Testifies for NEH Budget Increase



Jessica Jones Irons, executive director of NHA (left), reviews notes for Congressional testimony with ΦBK Secretary John Churchill.

On April 3, John Churchill, secretary of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and president of the National Humanities Alliance, testified on the proposed fiscal year (FY) 2009 budget for the National Endowment for the

Humanities (NEH) before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies.

In his prepared testimony, Churchill indicated that President Bush's FY 2009 request of \$144.4 million for NEH was essentially flat funding. Within the proposed budget, however, increases for overhead and administration were offset by nearly \$7 million in cuts to two core programs: NEH preservation and access grants and challenge grants.

"Over the years, inflation and budget cuts have eroded NEH's ability to carry out its congressional mandate," Churchill said. "The humanities

community appreciates last year's increase of \$3.6 million and urges a restoration to the peak nominal funding level of \$177.5 million reached in 1994."

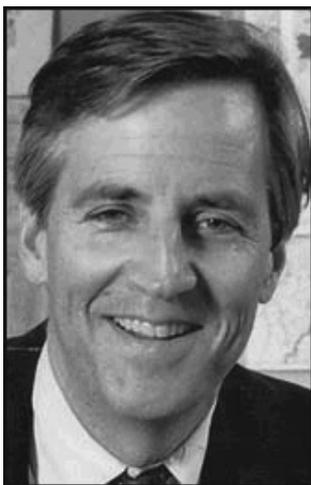
The FY 2009 budget cuts preservation and access grants by almost 25 percent (\$4.5 million) from the 2008 level. Challenge grants would decrease by almost 24 percent (\$2.2 million). These grants are awarded to support humanities research infrastructure and to aid other institutions.

Churchill's testimony before the subcommittee in 2007 noted that NEH support for projects focusing on other cultures decreased 54 percent between 1995 and 2000. The subcommittee has since requested an evaluation by NEH of its international perspective.

NEH Chairman Bruce Cole testified before the subcommittee on February 4 in support of the president's FY 2009 request for the agency.

To learn more about the National Humanities Alliance, visit them on the Web at www.nhalliance.org. ■

Newsweek Editor Evan Thomas Addresses Secretary's Circle



Evan Thomas, editor at large of *Newsweek*

Each spring, the Secretary's Circle meets in Washington, D.C., for a weekend of cultural events with an intellectual spark. This year's gathering, held May 16-18, included a guided tour of one of the city's newest and most popular museums, the Newseum — a venue that offers visitors an interactive experience of five centuries of

news history supported by up-to-the-second technology. Afterwards, members attended a black-tie dinner at the Metropolitan Club with keynote speaker Evan Thomas, one of journalism's hottest movers and shakers. He spoke on the subject of presidential leadership and the 2008 campaign.

Thomas was made editor at large of *Newsweek* in September 2006. He was the publication's Washington bureau chief from 1986 to 1996 and an assistant managing editor from 1991 to 2006. He is the magazine's lead writer on major news stories and the author of many longer features, including *Newsweek's* behind-the-scenes issues on presidential elections. He has written more than 100 cover stories for *Newsweek* and was pivotal in spearheading *Newsweek's* coverage of the war on terror from the Washington, D.C., bureau. Thomas has been a regular weekly panelist on the syndicated public affairs talk show, *Inside Washington*, since 1992. He is a frequent guest on the nationally syndicated morning radio show, *Imus in the*

Morning, and has appeared on numerous television shows as a commentator, including: NBC's *Meet the Press*, ABC's *Nightline*, CNN's *Larry King Live* and PBS's *Charlie Rose*.

The weekend's events also included a cocktail reception and tour of ΦBK's national office located in the historic Jerome H. Kidder residence in Dupont Circle, a special invitation to the Couper Luncheon with ΦBK Fellows speaker Roger Mudd and an afternoon of cultural events with Passport D.C.'s Around the World Open House, a day when embassies all over the city open their doors to the public and present programming that showcases each country's unique culture. The weekend concluded with Sunday brunch at the national office and a private briefing with ΦBK Secretary John Churchill where members provided input and ideas on future ΦBK direction and initiatives.

For more information about the Secretary's Circle call (202) 265-3287 or write to secretarycircle@pbk.org. ■

Carolyn Yerkes Receives Sibley Fellowship



Carolyn Yerkes

Established in 1934, the Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship is a \$20,000 award designated for young women scholars who have earned a Ph.D. or are completing their doctoral dissertations. The fields of study alternate each year between Greek and French.

The recipient of the 2008 Sibley Fellowship is Carolyn Yerkes, a doctoral candidate in the art history and archaeology department of Columbia University. She received her B.A.,

magna cum laude, in 2002 from Columbia University and her master's degree from the Princeton School of Architecture in 2005. At Princeton, Yerkes won the Suzanne Kolarik Underwood prize for her thesis as well as the Archaeological Institute of America medal.

Yerkes has worked for architectural design firms in New York and Washington, D.C., and was awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies to pursue a Ph.D. in architectural history. She will use the Sibley Fellowship to continue work on her dissertation, "The Paradox of Precision: Architectural Drawing between Ancients and Moderns." Her project explores intersections between architecture and science in 17th-century France through a close examination of architectural drawing technique.

For more information about the Sibley Fellowship, contact Sam Esquith, coordinator of Society activities, at (202) 745-3235. ■

ΦBK in the News

• PIMCO, a world leader in fixed-income management, announced the promotion of **Saumil H. Parikh** (ΦBK, Grinnell College, 1999) to the position of executive vice president in March. Parikh is one of 11 new executive vice presidents. ("PIMCO Announces Promotions" www.tradingmarkets.com 27 Mar. 2008.)

• **Xiao Wang** (ΦBK, University of Virginia, 2008) is a 2008 Truman Scholarship winner. Wang is a junior majoring in economics at the University of Virginia. ("U.Va. Student Xiao Wang Selected as Truman Scholar" www.virginia.edu/uvatoday 26 Mar. 2008.)

• **Michelle Pierce** (ΦBK, Wellesley College, 1991) is going to Chile as a 2008 recipient of a Fulbright scholarship grant for international educational exchange. Pierce is an associate professor in the education department at Salem State College. While in Chile she will work on an ESL initiative called English Opens Doors. ("Fulbright in Hand, She's Off to Mentor Teachers in Chile" *The Boston*

Globe Online 20 Mar. 2008.)

• **Pauline Yu** (ΦBK, Radcliffe College, 1970), president of the American Council of Learned Societies and a ΦBK Senator, is the winner of the Modern Language Association of America's 44th annual William Riley Parker Prize for an outstanding article published in its journal *PMLA*. Yu's article, "Your Alabaster in This Porcelain": Judith Gautier's *Le livre de jade*," appeared in the March 2007 issue. ("MLA Awards William Riley Parker Prize for an Article in *PMLA* to Pauline Yu" www.acls.org/news 15 Feb. 2008.)

• Allen-Vanguard Corporation of Ottawa, Canada, announced the appointment of **Lawrence J. Cavaiola** (ΦBK, Johns Hopkins University, 1976) to its board of directors. Cavaiola is president of Cavaiola & Associates, LLC, a consulting and advisory services company focusing on the defense, aerospace and security sectors. ("Allen-Vanguard Announces Appointment of Dr. Lawrence Cavaiola to Board of Directors" www.newswire.ca 18 Mar. 2008.) ■

New Membership Benefits

Through our partnerships with Colonial Williamsburg and Encyclopaedia Britannica, ΦBK is now offering a series of new benefits to our members.



Colonial Williamsburg

ΦBK members and their immediate family can receive a 20 percent discount at Colonial Williamsburg Hotels, a 20 percent discount on passes to the Historic Area and a 15 percent discount on Williamsburg merchandise. Some restrictions apply. For more details, click on the Colonial Williamsburg promotion after logging in on the ΦBK Web site.



New members can also receive a free one-year subscription to Encyclopaedia Britannica online and a 25 percent discount on Britannica merchandise from store.britannica.com. In addition, all Phi Beta Kappans are eligible for a 50 percent discount on the annual subscription rate and continued discounts in Britannica's online store.

How to Get the Discounts

To take advantage of these exciting new benefits and review the full details, members will need to login at www.pbk.org.

You will be asked for your login, which is your Member ID, the six- or seven-digit number that appears next to your name on your *Key Reporter* address label.

Your password consists of your first and last names and the last two digits of the year you were elected to ΦBK, with no spaces in between.

Have a problem logging in? Call (202) 745-3242, or write to membership@pbk.org.

Derek Bok Receives 2008 Fellows' Award

Annual Awards Dinner Held in New York City April 11



Murray Drabkin (left) with Derek Bok and his wife Sisella Bok

The Fellows of the Phi Beta Kappa Society recognized Derek Bok, professor emeritus of Harvard University, for lifetime achievement as a scholar who has exemplified the goals and ideals of the Society, in part, for his current work on the new research on happiness and its implications for public policy.

The 2008 Fellows' Award was presented to Bok on April 11 at the Harvard Club in New York City where Bok addressed the Fellows during a formal dinner held in his honor.

"This year's Fellows' Award celebrates the contributions and achievements of a very special person," said Murray Drabkin, president of the Fellows, "someone who has reached the pinnacle of higher education, but whose keen mind and intellectual curiosity have taken him, and us, into other vital areas of human relationships as well."

Bok is the 300th Anniversary University Professor and faculty chair of the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations. He has been a lawyer and professor of law, dean of the law

school and president of Harvard University from 1971 to 1991. The author of six books on higher education, he serves as the chair of the board of the Spencer Foundation and was formerly the chair of Common Cause.

Previous recipients of the Fellows' Award have included Pulitzer Prize-winning author Eudora Welty, physician and researcher Jonas Salk, historian John Hope Franklin, author and activist Elie Wiesel, coloratura soprano and New York City Opera director Beverly Sills, composer Stephen Sondheim, Librarian of Congress James Billington and Senator George Mitchell.

The ΦBK Fellows were organized in 1940 by 40 eminent members of the Society in New York City. Donations from the Fellows support the ΦBK Foundation, which helps to underwrite the Society's programs and activities. ■

Portrait of ΦBK's First Woman President Donated to the Society



Marjorie Hope Nicolson (1894-1981) became the first woman president of Phi Beta Kappa in 1940. This portrait, drawn by Samuel Johnson Woolf and autographed by

Nicolson, appeared in *The New York Times Magazine* on March 17 of that year as an illustration for an article written by the artist: "Woman Leader of 'Key' Men — Dean Nicolson of Smith, chosen by Phi Beta Kappa, views the academic world."

Nicolson was president of Phi Beta Kappa from 1940-1946. She later became president of the Modern Language Association in 1963 and served as chair of Columbia's graduate Department of English and Comparative Literature from 1954-1962.

Stuart P. Feld, president and director of Hirschl & Adler Galleries in New York City, acquired the original charcoal portrait of Nicolson, together with a group of drawings and other works by Woolf, directly from the artist's estate in 1989. He recently donated the portrait to ΦBK.

Feld explained that there are considerable collections of historical portrait drawings by Woolf at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., The New York Historical Society and

the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park. Individual drawings, or smaller groups of drawings, are in many museums and historic places throughout the United States. He noted that most of Woolf's portraits, like the one he donated to ΦBK, were autographed by the subject, in addition to being signed by the artist, in order to prove that they were actually drawn from life.

According to Feld, Woolf's career began while he was a soldier during WWI. He became known for his realistic combat sketches and for his portraits of ordinary soldiers as well as statesman. After the war, Woolf distinguished himself as one of the finest and most successful portrait artists in the United States from the 1920s to his death in 1948. During the course of his long career, he drew nearly every major American figure in politics, business, the arts and letters, medicine, science and religion and also portrayed many of the leading British and European personalities of his time. ■

Nova Producer Michael Ambrosino at MIT

ΦBK Association of Boston and Xi of Massachusetts Partner for Success

Michael Ambrosino, creator of *Nova*, the most-watched documentary series on public television, spoke at MIT on April 17, courtesy of a remarkable partnership between Xi of Massachusetts and the ΦBK Association of Boston.

“Working with the Boston association on this event was a wonderful way to promote ΦBK on our campus,” said Kimberly Benard, ΦBK chapter secretary. “They brought a high-profile speaker to MIT, took care of all the planning and logistics, while our chapter provided the location and arranged for additional publicity.”

Molly Eckman, president of the Boston association added, “Our partnership with MIT benefits ΦBK Boston by not only providing a wonderful space for events, but also by diversifying the crowd of attendees, mixing people from a variety of ages and backgrounds.”

Ambrosino joined WGBH-TV in 1956 to create school broadcasting for the state of Massachusetts. In 1960 he left to be founding executive director of the Eastern Educational Network, the nation’s first regional public television network.

He returned to WGBH to create and be executive producer of *Nova*, which won the 1974 Peabody Award. With his own production company, Ambrosino went on to develop *Odyssey*, a series of stories about human beings past and present, as a companion to *Nova*, which had dealt most often with the physical worlds of science, technology and medicine.

“I was fortunate to find a profession that allowed continuous challenge and interest,” said Ambrosino. “It was part preparation and hard work, and part accident and being in the right place at the right time. As I reflect back, I realize the importance of risk in finding fulfillment and happiness.”

Ambrosino’s interactive presentation at MIT combined lecture with video clips and a discussion with the audience that explored how documentary films are made and addressed the cooperation and struggle between the world views of the academic and the journalist.



Representatives from the Boston association with speaker Michael Ambrosino. (L-R) Margarita Fenn, treasurer; Friederika Aceto, secretary; Marcia Scott, member-at-large; Nancy Upper, vice president of events; Michael Ambrosino; Charles Hersch, member-at-large; Molly Eckman, president

This event was the first co-sponsored by the MIT chapter and the Boston association. The decision to have the event on the MIT campus exemplified the partnerships among scientists, artists, creative thinkers, educators and public television that enabled Ambrosino and the many others in public broadcasting to create and produce some of greatest stories ever told.

According to Rakel Meir, vice president of membership for the Boston association, “affiliating with a ΦBK chapter at an academic institu-

tion helps to nurture the bonds between students and ΦBK alumni ... much can be gained by collaborating to host events such as lectures, films and networking events.”

“Unless ΦBK members join an association after they leave college, many have little to no contact with other members,” said Margarita Fenn, treasurer of the Boston association. “A working relationship between ΦBK associations and ΦBK chapters bridges this gap by bringing together college students, new ΦBK initiates and ΦBK alumni.” ■

FOSTER THE LIBERAL ARTS IN NEW ENGLAND

The New England District Executive Committee is eager to assist members interested in starting new Phi Beta Kappa associations. Associations have been formed in Maine, the Boston area and the Burlington, Vermont, area. The district is able to provide support for creation of new associations in other parts of New England, such as:

Rhode Island • Connecticut • Western Massachusetts
Southern Vermont • New Hampshire

Through associations ΦBK members come together for friendship, lectures and stimulating discussions. Associations also sponsor academic awards, scholarships and other programs that foster the liberal arts in their local communities. For more information and a copy of the Associations Handbook contact associations@pbk.org or Kate Soule, president of the New England District Kate.R.Soule@Dartmouth.edu.

The Raleigh Tavern

WHERE PHI BETA KAPPA WAS BORN

Established about 1717, the Raleigh Tavern's namesake was Sir Walter Raleigh, who had attempted the first colonization of Virginia in 1585. His lead bust stood above the door and, during Publick Times in April and October, planters and merchants from all over the colony passed beneath it on the way to the court. Some adjourned to play dice in the gaming room or to feast in the dining room.

Often there were balls; colonial Virginians loved to dance. Thomas Jefferson, a love-struck student at the College of William & Mary, attended one with Rebecca Burwell (he called her "Belinda") on October 6, 1763. As he described it in a letter to his friend John Page, young Tom made something of a fool of himself:

"In the most melancholy fit that ever any poor soul was, I sit down to write to you. Last night as merry as agreeable company and dancing with Belinda in the Apollo could make me, I never could have thought the succeeding Sun would have seen me so wretched as I now am. I was prepared to say a great deal. I had dressed up in my own mind such thoughts as occurred to me, in as moving language as I know how, and expected to have performed in a tolerably creditable manner. But, good God! when I had an opportunity of venting them, a few broken sentences, uttered in great disorder, and interrupted with pauses of uncommon length, were the too visible marks of my strange confusion."

There were more serious occasions for resort to the Raleigh. When the House of Burgesses protested the Townshend Acts in 1769 and Governor Botetourt dissolved the chamber for its disrespect, bolder members reconvened at the tavern. There they formed a nonimportation association, agreeing to suspend the purchase of various

goods from British merchants. It might have been called a boycott, but the word would not be invented for another 111 years.

Meeting at the suggestion of burgess Richard Henry Lee in a private room at the Raleigh in 1773, a group that included lawmakers Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Francis Lightfoot Lee, and Dabney Carr

"On Thursday, the 5th of December in the year of our Lord God one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six and the first of the Commonwealth, a happy spirit and resolution of attaining the important ends of Society entering the minds of John Heath, Thomas Smith, Richard Booker, Armistead Smith, and John Jones, and afterwards seconded by others, prevailed, and was accordingly ratified. ..."

— From the minutes of the first ΦBK meeting held in the Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern

planned the introduction of a resolution to create a standing Committee of Correspondence. The committee participated in the circulation of letters and other communications among the legislatures of the restive colonies — an important step toward continental unity.

The very next year, on May 27, Governor Dunmore dissolved the House of Burgesses again for objecting to the closing of the Port of Boston after its Tea Party, and 89 burgesses reassembled at the Raleigh to form another nonimportation association. George Mason drafted the association agreement, and George Washington introduced it.

Benson J. Lossing, a 19th-century journalist who visited Williamsburg to gather material for a book, wrote, "the Raleigh Tavern and the Apollo Room are to Virginia, relatively, what Faneuil Hall is to Massachusetts."

The tavern served many interests. Theater tickets were sold at the

Raleigh, and merchandise and slaves were auctioned from its steps. Though he usually stayed elsewhere (perhaps sometimes across the street and to the west, where Christiana Campbell kept an inn at the site of today's James Anderson House), Washington often dined at the Raleigh. So did many leading Virginians.

The colony's council entertained Governor Botetourt with a Raleigh Tavern meal his first night in the city in 1768. Just seven years later, Peyton Randolph's return from Philadelphia and the Continental Congress (of which he had been president) was celebrated at the Raleigh.

On December 5, 1776, a group of College of William & Mary students gathered in the Apollo Room and founded Phi Beta Kappa. In 1779 another

band of gentlemen met at the Raleigh and formed the Pulaski Club, a group that still meets and may be the oldest men's social organization in the nation.

The city's celebration of the Treaty of Paris in 1783 began at the courthouse and ended at the Raleigh. When the Marquis de Lafayette returned to Williamsburg in 1824 in the course of an American tour, a feast was given in his honor at the Raleigh. Among the guests were Chief Justice John Marshall and John C. Calhoun.

The last notable Raleigh Tavern banquet was in 1858, when former President John Tyler and other College of William & Mary alumni gathered. Someone memorialized the Raleigh in verse the following February:

"Around the simple hearth which
blazes yet
The simple planters of Virginia met,
Discussed the news, and cursed in
equal terms

Continued on 10

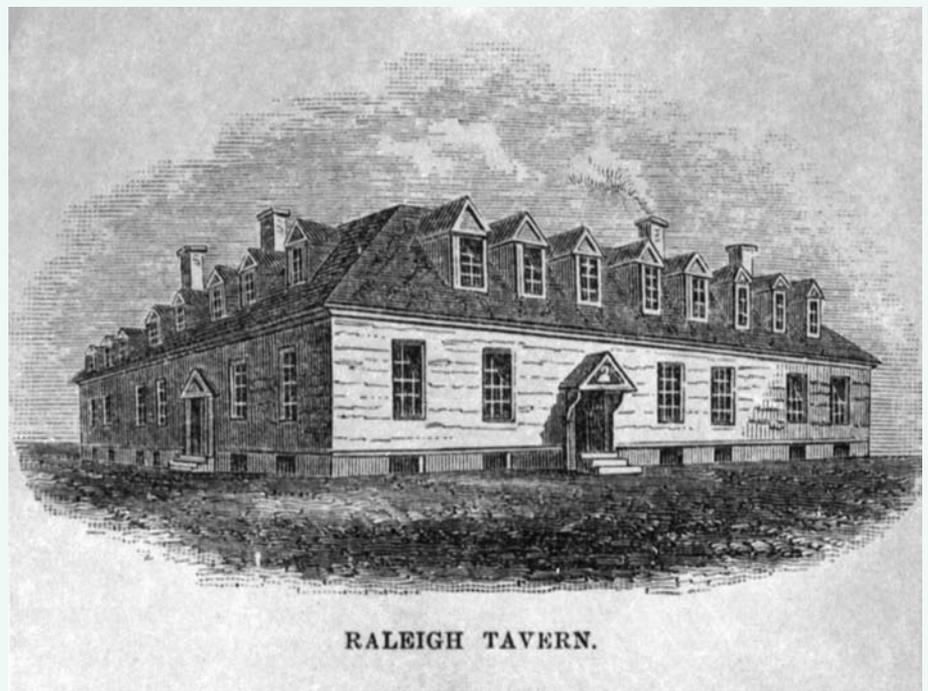
ΦBK Returns to Historic Williamsburg in December

Painted in gilt above the mantel in the Old Raleigh Tavern's Apollo Room was the motto *Hilaritas Sapientiae et Bonae Vitae Proles*, which may be translated "Jollity, the offspring of wisdom and good living." In the Apollo Room, within sight of this elegant reminder of the benefits that wisdom and good living might bring, the founding fathers of the Phi Beta Kappa Society considered the development of their own motto, "Love of wisdom, the guide of life."

John Heath, the first president of ΦBK, was determined to develop a student society that would be much more serious-minded than its predecessors at the College of William & Mary. That is not to say, however, that the motto he and the other founders created was intended to exclude jollity and good living from the fellowship they enjoyed, as many ΦBK meetings since that time have happily demonstrated.

In recognition of the historic link the Society has with the town, and its historic tavern, the ΦBK Executive Committee and Senate decided to have meetings and events at Colonial Williamsburg from time to time. In December of this year, the Senate will return to Williamsburg and the Society's annual book awards dinner will be held there on December 3, the closest Saturday to ΦBK's anniversary date of December 5. This will be the first time the Society has held an event in Williamsburg since its 225th anniversary celebration in 2001.

This year's book awards dinner will be unique in another way as well. For the first time, the event will be open to a larger group of members — the Fellows of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and the Secretary's Circle. Both are special groups of ΦBK members whose financial contributions help to support ΦBK's general programs, like the award-winning quarterly *The American Scholar*, the Visiting Scholar Program, *The Key Reporter* and the various fellowships, professorships, and awards sponsored by the Society. ■



Top: An etching of the Raleigh Tavern taken from *A Pictorial Field-Book of the American Revolution* by Benson John Lossing, 1855, Volume 2, page 280. This is one of the historic images included in the new ΦBK Traveling Exhibit available for loan to all ΦBK chapters and associations.

Bottom: The Raleigh Tavern as it appears today. The tavern, a reconstruction of the original, is one of the buildings maintained by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. (Photos courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.)

The first meeting of the Phi Beta Kappa Society was held in the Apollo Room of the original Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, Virginia. The earliest record of the Society, the minutes from this meeting, enumerates the "Founding Fathers," describes the creation of the ΦBK key, and gives the text of the "oath of fidelity" taken. It also describes the first election of officers and the plans for the drawing up of a constitution. The organization was created as a secret society so that its founders would have the freedom to discuss any topic they chose. Freedom of inquiry has been a hallmark of ΦBK ever since.

Deliberative Skills for Citizenship

By Chris Geyer

John Dewey said, “Democracy begins in conversation.” And, as Secretary John Churchill reminded us last year and that the ΦBK program “Deliberation about Things That Matter” carried forward into 2008, there is an important connection between the ideals of ΦBK and democracy; ideals that include “public advocacy of the skills of deliberation that are important to citizenship.” These skills — critical thinking, gathering facts that can serve as reasons in deliberation, and discerning what is worth thinking and deliberating about — are the foundation of the discipline of rhetoric, and the very skills for which I chose to teach college composition. In a time where information overload is common and individuals are bombarded with images, sound bytes, opinions passed off as truth and inflammatory commentators, I wanted to give students tools to sort through the noise, to analyze information and prepare to make informed arguments, particularly in areas of contested values.

Rhetoric began in ancient Greece with the Sophists, who taught the art of speaking and making persuasive arguments to men who needed to represent themselves in a more direct model of democracy than we have in the United States. Our Founding Fathers, many of whom had formal training in rhetoric, debated at length and heatedly over the

documents that became the (written) backbone of our country, and left us a system of government that is continually deliberating the right thing to do. But too often, meaningful deliberation is lost to quick slogans, shallow insults, and vague generalities. As citizens in this country, in this time, we need to analyze what is and is not being said, to think about the downstream consequences of proposed actions, to ask hard questions and listen carefully to long answers, pressing for understanding and clarity. We need to separate “empty rhetoric” from the ancient art and skill of analyzing and constructing persuasive arguments for the common good. These are the skills I strive to bring to my students.

The will of the majority is heavily influenced by a small minority, from political parties to religion to advertising. The receptiveness to those influences begins in the homes and classrooms across the country. The conversation over dinner shapes what the child believes is true. Even when the child first starts school, some beliefs are already firmly ingrained. By the time a young person is old enough to vote, they bring a value system to that opportunity. Thus the conversations in private or informal spaces shape what comes to be accepted, to be the “will of the majority” in the public and political realm. The informal spaces are just as

important as the formal ones, and the persuasion that takes places in those spaces is often unnoticed. Critical thinking and rhetorical analysis ask that we notice.

I believe the principles of ΦBK are important, and I firmly believe that rhetoric is the key discipline in furthering those principles. Rhetoric provides the tools for analyzing and crafting communication in an increasingly atomized yet “globalized,” individually separate yet increasingly multi-cultural, multi-value-holding, yet still participatory democracy. The United States does not sit in isolation. Reasoning out the right thing to do involves many knowledges, and the ability to hear and discuss beliefs that are new and sometimes contradictory to our own.

Our democracy is only as good as the conversation in it, only as good as the deliberative skills of the men and women whose speaking and writing shapes its policies, beliefs, legislation and relations. That’s the importance of ΦBK and its ideals. ■

Chris Geyer (ΦBK, University of Washington, 2002) is currently enjoying a dissertation fellowship year as a doctoral candidate in the composition and cultural rhetoric program at Syracuse University.

RALEIGH TAVERN
Continued from 8

The odious Stamp Act and tobacco worms.”

On December 16, 1859, a Richmond newspaper reported that the Raleigh was “willfully burnt down” five days earlier. Flames damaged two nearby stores, the account said. In the same paragraph, it noted that damage totaled \$15,000 and that “[a]ll parties are partly insured.”

Doubtless, sleepy 19th-century Williamsburg did not afford an innkeeper the opportunities for profit enjoyed by the Raleigh’s 18th-century

owners, including Henry Wetherburn, Alexander Finnie, apothecary surgeon Dr. George Gilmer, former cabinet-maker Anthony Hay, and James Barret Southall. The Wren Building also burned in 1859 and was rebuilt; the Raleigh was not.

When the restoration of Williamsburg began in 1926, two modern brick stores stood on the site. Archaeological excavations begun in 1928 by the Williamsburg Holding Company (a forerunner of Colonial Williamsburg) unearthed the foundations and artifacts. Drawings from Lossing’s book, *A Pictorial Field-Book of the American Revolution*, and insurance policy sketches permitted precise

reconstruction, and 18th-century inventories informed the the tavern’s refurbishing.

Colonial Williamsburg’s first exhibition building, the reconstructed Raleigh was dedicated September 16, 1932, a year to the day after the restored Wren Building opened. A local minister delivered the benediction: “God bless the father, the son, and the Williamsburg Holding Corporation.” ■

This article about the historic Raleigh Tavern is reprinted with permission from www.history.org/almanack/places/hb/hbral.cfm © The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2008.

Key Legacies



Eric and Jessica Rubin with their family's ΦBK keys

Dear Phi Beta Kappa,

On Tuesday evening, April 22, my wife Michelle Rubin and I drove out to Lehigh University to be with our daughter Jessica as she was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. What made this so special to us was that she is now the third generation ΦBK in our family. My dad, Hanan Rubin, and I also achieved this in our undergraduate days — New York University, 1948, and Binghamton University, 1979. After my dad died about a year and a half ago my mom, Mona Rubin, began wearing his key around her neck. She wears it every day. I got the idea of bringing it and mine to the ceremony so that the three of us could be together in spirit with our keys at this event. So my mom gave it to me for the day, and it was a beautiful thing. I wore mine and his around my neck, and when Jessica received hers we took a nice picture. We went up front and showed it to the chapter head. He was quite impressed and said that this is indeed rare. It was a very poignant and satisfying evening. We are so proud of Jessica and her many accomplishments, with her induction into the prestigious Phi Beta Kappa Society certainly a career highlight.

Sincerely,

Eric S. Rubin — Proud father, proud son, and ΦBK member

HERSETH SANDLIN

Continued from 3

Herseth Sandlin is a member of the South Dakota Bar and has taught classes on government and politics at Augustana College in Sioux Falls and South Dakota State University in Brookings. In 2003, she served as the executive director of the South Dakota Farmers Union Foundation, working to further economic prosperity and cultural vitality in rural South Dakota. Herseth Sandlin currently lives in Brookings and is married to former U.S. Representative Max Sandlin who served the First District of Texas from 1997-2005.

Former Governor Ralph Herseth was Herseth Sandlin's grandfather, and Lorna B. Herseth, South Dakota's secretary of state, was her grandmother. Her father, Lars, served in the state legislature for 20 years and was the Democratic nominee for governor in 1986.

In 2006, Herseth Sandlin was re-elected to her second full term in the U.S. House of Representatives. She received more than 230,000 votes — the second highest vote total in the nation among House members. ■

Phi Beta Kappa Membership Items



Phi Beta Kappa's distinctive gold key design is the symbol of membership in the Society. A full range of solid gold and gold-plated key jewelry, as well as other items bearing the Society's insignia are available. Keys are made in three sizes in either 10-karat solid gold or 24-karat gold electroplate. The medium-size key is shown here actual size with matching 18-inch neck chain. The box is cherry wood, 6 x 7 inches in size with a certificate plate on the lid.

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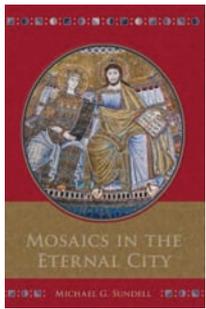
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From Our Book Critics

By Svetlana Alpers



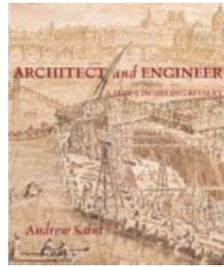
Mosaics in the Eternal City. Michael G. Sundell. Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Occasional Publications, 2007. 211 pages. \$39.00. Paperback

It is said that we live in a visual age. The notion is that we are everywhere entertained, instructed and bombarded by images — on streets, in galleries, but mostly on screens of all kinds. All the more reason then to slow down and let some of the things we see give us reason to pause.

This dense, compact book, with 65 illustrations in color, pauses to look at splendid mosaics in a few Roman churches made in the years between 400-1300 — roughly between the conversion of Constantine and the removal of the papacy to Avignon. As the title suggests, the book is mosaic specific but also Rome specific. It is part of an established textual tradition of travelers to Rome. In the process of walking, looking and writing Michael G. Sundell, like those before him, became acutely aware of the tangled history of the city and of his chosen works. His account moves between the drama of Rome's evolution from empire to Christian capital and the experience of light playing off bits of stone or glass fitted to the surface of deep apse and monumental arch. He ponders the subjects depicted. We learn about such diverse things as: Paschal I, bishop of Rome and a great patron of the arts depicted in the mosaics he ordered for Santa Pressede, and Santa Cecilia and Santa Maria Domnica; layers of time past as captured in layers of structures under San Clemente; the acanthus branches that wind, sheep that graze and holy figures who wait on gleaming walls.

Easing into the first person, Sundell advises at what time, in what light and what sequence he has found best for each visit. With this experi-

enced guide in hand, you might want to travel to Rome to see for yourself. If you have been, you will want to return.



Architect and Engineer: A Study in Sibling Rivalry. Andrew Saint. Yale University Press, 2008. 530 pages. \$65.00

Andrew Saint, an architectural historian who taught in the School of Architecture at Cambridge University, is a critic of the rivalry that exists between architects and engineers. Fair and full in his account of each practice, the moral of his huge book (530 pages including index and notes) is that they are distinctive but in need of each other and so, inevitably, intertwined.

The focus is on the Western tradition of building in France, Great Britain and the United States, but its reach is broad and includes a variety of structures — fortifications, bridges, department stores, churches, an opera house and museum all make their appearance. It is a fascinating chronicle of building practices over time.

While the text sets forth in detail how a myriad of things were actually conceived and built, the marvelous photographs (420 in color and black and white) offer novel views of things under construction, or “erecting” as the author puts it, often with the relevant builders on site. These photographs, with their articulate legends, invite us to look and see for ourselves. Familiar structures like the Flatiron Building come to new and vivid life, and there are many discoveries such as the elegant small bridges of Robert Maillart in the Swiss Engadine.

Historically, Saint argues, design and building are different tasks though they have not necessarily been different professions. The centralized structure of governance in France institutionalized a separation that developed elsewhere when new complex materials and structures and the need for specialized calculations widened the gulf between thinker and maker.

The six chapters work forward in

time from 17th century military architecture, to the use of iron and of concrete, to bridges that seem to privilege engineering and on to modernism that offers a tentative (while still disputatious) reconciliation. Professional training over the entire period is taken up as a kind of coda.

What the text opens up in exceedingly profuse detail, the photographs put forth succinctly. They demonstrate that very coming together of engineering and art that Saint advocates.



The Repeating Image: Multiples in French Painting from David to Matisse. Edited by Eik Kahng with contributions by Stephen Bann,

Simon Kelly, Richard Schiff, Charles F. Stuckey, Jeffrey Weiss. Yale University Press, 2007. 200 pages. \$50.00

Repetition is fashionable in the art world today. The taste is fed by a post-modernist suspicion about the originality assumed to be basic to great painting. Of course, pausing to look at Roman mosaics or “erecting” structures is itself an experience of kinds of repetition. But the compelling essays in this book, published for an exhibition originated at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, consider leading French painters who practiced repetition while making works that appear singular.

Eik Kahng's thoughtful introduction that proposes repetition as symbolic form does not really attempt to prepare us for the disparate cases presented by the essays that follow.

One is astonished to see four *Duels after the Masquerade* by Gérôme, three Ingres paintings of *Oedipus and the Sphinx*, any number of all but identical paintings of *The Evening Star* by Corot. But most astonishing of all is the wall at the Galerie Maeght in 1945 on which Matisse hung his magnificent depiction of a woman in a Romanian blouse he called *The Dream* among 12 or more large black and white photographs he himself had taken of previ-

ous states of his painting. One essay gives a hugely well-researched year-by-year account of serial works from Boudin and Courbet in 1859 to Monet's beloved haystacks and cathedral facades in the 1890s. The motives for repeating are many: marketing or rehearsing or studying or recording or some mixture of them all.

It is enlightening at the same time that it is disturbing to find so many examples of multiples, to use a term associated with Andy Warhol, among hallowed paintings of the past.

By William F. Gilly



oPtion\$: The Secret Life of Steve Jobs, A Parody by Fake Steve Jobs. Da Capo Press, 2007. 248 pages. \$22.95

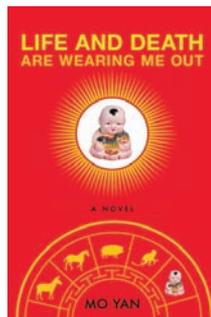
Sometimes the magic of a book comes simply from the fact that

everything in the work could have happened because so many of its characters and events are real. It is wonderfully embellished images and contortion of temporal purity, rather than complex plot or clever contrivance, that make such a book work. A classic example is John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*, a novel with so many real events and characters that it is actually hard to know what is fictional.

oPtion\$ is the *Cannery Row* of Silicon Valley. This satire depicts the tortured life of Steve Jobs during 2006, when the Apple CEO was undergoing scrutiny by the SEC for backdating of stock options. The tone is set on page one when the author patiently explains what a personal insult this travesty of justice was, because "...the devices I create are works of art, machines so elegantly crafted and industrially designed that they ... restore a child-like wonder to people's lives, and bestow upon their owners a sense that they are more intelligent and even, well, better than other people. I also invented the friggin iPod. Have you heard of it?" If you can imagine Hunter S. Thompson hanging out with Jobs and revealing the inner world of this

contumacious guru as he serially engages his Zen with the Apple Board, federal prosecutors and even Hillary Clinton, you've got a good picture of *oPtion\$*. But buried in this gonzo tone, there is pith with some real messages — if you can keep from laughing too loud to hear them. Where is Steve Jobs and his valley today? That is where this poisoned creampuff of a book leads us. It is a hilarious, irreverent stab at Silicon Valley's iMovers and eShakers — one that anybody, anywhere can enjoy ... assuming you've heard of an iPod. (The author of *oPtion\$* is Daniel Lyons, senior editor at *Forbes* magazine.)

By M. Thomas Inge



Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out: A Novel. Mo Yan. Translated by Howard Goldblatt. Arcade Publishing, 2008. 540 pages. \$29.95

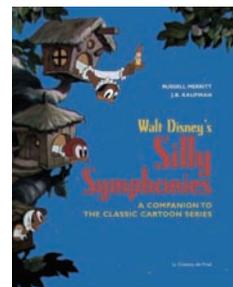
Emerging at a time in the mid-1980s when

young Chinese writers, painters and filmmakers were moving beyond political ideology to postmodern themes and subject matter, Mo Yan has created a singular and compelling fictional voice that has brought him attention as a world-class writer. Under the influence of William Faulkner and Gabriel García Márquez, both of whom he acknowledges as his literary masters, he has produced novels and stories which appeal to readers far beyond the shores of mainland China. Under the hand of the talented translator Howard Goldblatt, several of his novels have been rendered in English to considerable critical acclaim: *Red Sorghum* (1993), *The Garlic Ballads* (1995), *The Republic of Wine* (2000), *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* (2004) and now *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*.

The novel opens with one of the most astounding scenes in recent literature. Ximen Nao, the narrator and the first of several, finds himself in hell, tortured and fried alive by Lord Yama. He has been an honest and decent landlord whose main crime was to resist

collectivism, and he is unwilling to confess to sins he did not commit. Admitting defeat, Yama sends him back to earth reincarnated first as a donkey, then an ox, a pig, a dog, a monkey and as a boy with a large head and a special gift for languages.

Such a summary hardly does justice to the range of humor, irony and pathos Mo Yan demonstrates in this novel as Ximen Nao travels on his strange odyssey towards becoming human again. He witnesses a half century of Chinese history from singular perspectives and ultimately asserts both the incorrigibility and the redeemability of mankind in telling his story. The work is a tour de force of the imagination and serves as a showcase for the incredible style and inexhaustible talent of Mo Yan. The Nobel Prize Committee should pay attention.



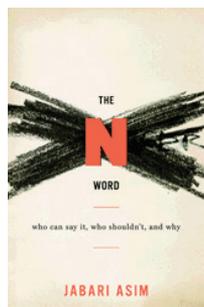
Walt Disney's Silly Symphonies: A Companion to the Classic Cartoon Series. Russell Merritt and J. B. Kaufman. La Cineteca del Fruili/Indiana

University Press, 2006. 272 pages. \$44.95

When *Steamboat Willie*, featuring Mickey Mouse, chugged onto the screens of American theaters on November 18, 1928, it was an immediate success and created for Walt Disney's films a welcome place on any short film program. Happy with the popularity of his diminutive character and flush with the financial success of the merchandising of Mickey that followed, Disney decided to try something a little more upscale. He wanted to continue to amuse the children, but he wanted to engage his adult audiences as well. Moving beyond the popular and folk music that he had embraced in the sound tracks for the Mickey Mouse cartoons, he wanted to integrate classical and traditional music with the visual imaginings of his brilliant staff of animators. Thus the first of his features called *Silly Symphonies*, released nationally as *The Skeleton Dance* on August 22, 1929,

brought to life the bony denizens of a graveyard dancing to excerpts from Edward Grieg's "March of the Dwarfs."

The cartoon amused the adults, frightened the children and got itself banned in Denmark for being "too macabre." It also launched another successful Disney experiment by becoming the first of 76 innovative animated shorts that, according to the authors of this companion, "created a fairy tale universe more daring, quirkier and more diverse than anything even in the Mouse series." Before the series concluded with *Ferdinand the Bull* in 1938, such classic titles as the all-color *Flowers and the Trees* in 1932 (the first cartoon to win an Academy Award) and *Three Little Pigs* in 1933 had appeared. The affirmative message of the last at the height of the Great Depression, with its memorable theme song "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" made the nation happy and Disney wealthy by grossing \$125,000 in its first year. The stories of every one of the *Silly Symphonies* are carefully and meticulously chronicled in this remarkable companion to one of the many bright spots in Disney history. Everything anyone could possibly want to know, and more, can be found in this impressive product of scholarly dedication and devotion.



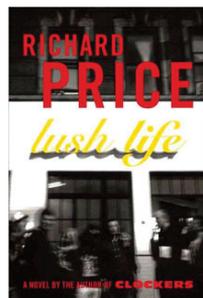
The N Word: Who Can Say It, Who Shouldn't, and Why. Jabari Asim. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. 288 pages. \$26.00

Children used to chant in response to verbal taunts, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." By the time we become adults, we learn that it isn't true. Words can indeed hurt, wound our sensibilities, instill self-doubt and cause violence, and no word has been more notoriously hurtful than the subject of this book. Jabari Asim, deputy editor of *The Washington Post Book World*, tracks down the obscure origins of the word and finds contrary to popular belief that it once was a loving word or an affectionate substitute for "slave," from the start the racial epithet was intended

to denigrate, objectify and dehumanize.

He then traces the uses of the word through 19th- and 20th-century literature, legal documents, popular culture and public discourse, sometimes a little too superficially. It is evident by his comments that he has not actually read many of the books and novels he discusses but summarizes them from secondary sources. However, he clearly documents how the word has changed up to the present when it can be used by blacks in a familiar way but not by whites under any circumstance. He recommends a willing suspension of its use by everyone: "As long as we embrace the derogatory language that has long accompanied and abetted our systematic dehumanization, we shackle ourselves to those corrupt white delusions — and their attendant false story of our struggle in the United States." This is a story well told and worth heeding.

By Jan Lewis



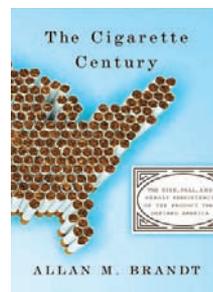
Lush Life: A Novel. Richard Price. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008. 464 pages. \$26.00

Near the end of Richard Price's terrific new novel, Eric Cash, a failed writer working as the manager of an upscale bar, tells a police officer, "I'm so much better than anything I've ever done." By this point in the novel, readers will understand that the comment could apply to almost any of Price's characters. Many of them have done terrible things, while the rest have failed in lesser ways. Again and again, people fail to connect — with their lovers, their children, their friends, the strangers they meet on the streets of New York's gentrifying Lower East Side. They bump into each other instead.

Lush Life is about just such collisions. The transformation of the neighborhood has filled it with high-priced lofts and chic bars, where aspiring young actors and writers stay up late, encouraging each other's dreams,

fueled by a lot of liquor and maybe a little blow. Their dealers live in housing projects in the same neighborhood. They have their dreams too. The police try to keep the peace. A Quality of Life Taskforce goes on patrol every night, stopping suspicious-looking cars, hoping to convert evidence of a minor infraction into information about something more nefarious — "someone who knows someone" who has a gun.

When one of those someones who actually has a gun shoots one of the aspiring writers, the police, as flawed as everyone else, must investigate, and they, too, come into collision with the residents of the neighborhood and with each other. After the murder, suspicion initially falls on Cash. Not only is his story contradicted by an eyewitness, but he never asks how the victim, a friend, is doing, not even whether he is dead or alive. But eyewitnesses are untrustworthy, and appearances are often deceptive, particularly in a world in which everyone is at least a little bit guilty, and even the worst of the criminals are better than what they have done.



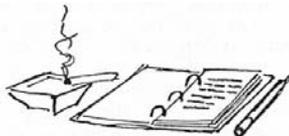
The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America. Allan M. Brandt. Basic Books, 2007. 640 pages. \$36.00

It is no accident that the title of Allan M. Brandt's book calls to mind Henry Luce's characterization of the last 100 years as "the American century." In many ways the history of the cigarette traces the rise and triumph of American industry, advertising and culture, those engines of American dominance in the 20th century. Have I left out the military? Wars were not won — as one of Brandt's chapter titles hints — with "tobacco as much as bullets," but the soldiers in 20th-century war were smokers. During World War I, supplying the boys on the front with cigarettes became a patriotic duty. "When our boys light up, the Huns will light out," Bull Durham predicted.

At first, the opposition to cigarettes was moral, much like the opposition to alcohol. Indeed, by 1922, laws restricting cigarettes were on the books in 16 states. Yet unlike liquor, tobacco was never prohibited nationally. Tobacco's proponents argued successfully that smoking, unlike drinking, just made a man "calmer and more peacefully inclined."

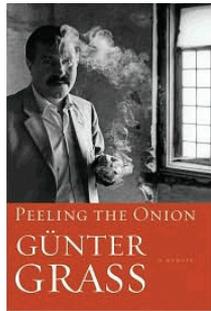
Brandt's book is at once a comprehensive history of the cigarette and a compelling case study of how American ingenuity in manufacturing, business and advertising brought about the cigarette's triumph — and how science led to its eclipse, at least in the United States. Although cigarettes had almost always been considered unhealthy, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that epidemiologists and other medical researchers had the methods — or the population of long-time smokers — that would prove that smoking was literally poisonous. Brandt explains these advances in medical knowledge with admirable clarity. And he recounts with cold contempt the tobacco industry's resistance to this evidence. (Brandt served as an expert witness for the government in *United States v. Philip Morris*.) Americans began to cut back on their smoking even as the tobacco companies increased their efforts to press cigarettes on them and their children, and so tobacco has now sought — and found — a huge market abroad, thus "exporting an epidemic." By 2030, when the hundred thousand or so people who take up smoking every day, mostly in the developing world, will have been puffing away for several decades, 70 percent of the deaths from tobacco will be in developing nations. At the end of the cigarette century, the problems caused by smoking had only been globalized.

This is a powerful book, written by a master of his craft.



Do you remember? This image from the spring 1960 issue of *The Key Reporter* served as a casual illustration for the essay "In Much Wisdom is Much Grief" by Francis Lee Utley.

By William Riggan



Peeling the Onion.
Günter Grass.
Translated by
Michael Henry
Heim. Harcourt,
2007. 425 pages.
\$26.00

Günter Grass's memoir *Peeling the Onion* ignited a huge furor with its revelation that Grass — the acclaimed novelist and artist, winner of the 1999 Nobel Prize in literature, longtime political activist and merciless satirist of his nation's Nazi past in such acclaimed works as *The Tin Drum* — had himself for decades been less than honest about his own participation in the National Socialists' wartime machinery. Grass had long since acknowledged his teenage membership in the Hitler Youth and the Labor Front and his service in ragtag anti-aircraft units of the German Army. What he had left unadmitted was the fact that his basic training and initial posting as a Panzer gunner took place under the auspices of the Waffen-SS, the military arm of Himmler's ruthless, elite corps.

As he peels away the "layers" of some 70 years of memories, Grass does not recall any shock or horror at his assignment to the notorious Waffen-SS, only youthful enthusiasm at finally being able to leave his cramped family home in Danzig and enter real military service in a renowned professional unit. From his present vantage point, however, he now acknowledges, for the first time ever, that for decades "he refused to admit all this."

"What I had accepted with the stupid pride of youth," he continues, "I wanted to conceal after the war out of a recurrent sense of shame. But the burden remained, and no one could alleviate it." Still, he never fired a single shot, never engaged in combat and never harmed or even threatened another human being while in service. Thus, though innocent of "active complicity" in the SS's war crimes, he retains "to this day a residue that is all too commonly called 'joint responsibility.' I will have to live with it for the

rest of my life." Grass the novelist and raconteur may often be unreliable. His confessions regarding his burden of shame, however, come across as utterly sincere.

The memoir's second half is not nearly as revelatory or entertaining as the first. We follow the teen-aged Grass through his postwar wanderings, until he decides to become a sculptor and enters a stonecutting apprenticeship as he awaits admittance to art school. His itinerary during the late 1940s and 1950s will be familiar to most, as will the fortuitous sequence of events which led to his entry into postwar Germany's literary world, first as a poet in the early 1950s, then with the enormous international success of *The Tin Drum* in 1959. What will fascinate readers through the book's last 200 pages or so are the many small details that later found their way into the novels and novellas we now know so well: the grotesques who modeled for his art classes, the jazz trio he formed with fellow students, a girlfriend's three-year-old nephew who interrupted a family dinner by beating on a little tin drum. Also of note are several encounters with famous personages while Grass was still a young nobody: the sculptors Brancusi and Morandi, the inimitable Louis Armstrong, and a devout Bavarian youth named Joseph whom Grass believes to have been Joseph Ratzinger, now known as Pope Benedict XVI.

Who really can say whether such accounts are true or not, even in part? Storytelling, in every sense of the term, is such a fundamental aspect of the Grass we have come to know, that we no longer concern ourselves so much with the factuality of what he narrates as with the greater import, the transformative revelation, the sheer entertainment of the "stories" we are reading and hearing. As with much of Grass's fiction, it ultimately matters not if the tale is true, only that it could be.

Our critics select books for review and are not limited to ΦBK authors. Members are welcome to send review copies of their books to the editor of *The Key Reporter*. They will be forwarded to reviewers for consideration.

The LATEST THINKING

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- ▶ How it feels to live on the bottom of the world

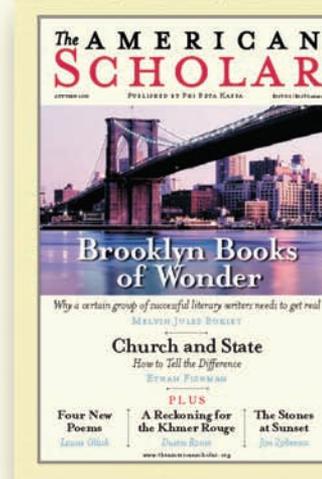
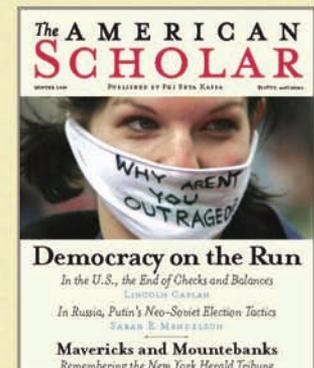
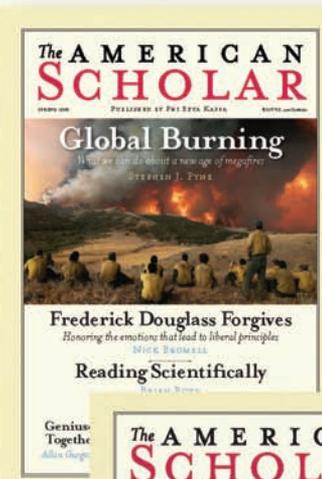
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