



Phi Beta Kappa Selects 2005-06 Visiting Scholars

The Phi Beta Kappa Society's popular Visiting Scholar Program will feature visits to some 100 campuses by 13 distinguished men and women during the 2005-06 academic year. [See Page 6].

This innovative program annually sends professors and other persons of achievement to more than a third of the colleges and universities with ΦBK chapters. A Scholar spends two days at an institution, presenting classroom lectures and seminars, meeting informally with students, and delivering a public address.

The visits are co-sponsored by the colleges' and universities' ΦBK chapters and academic departments that are relevant to the Scholars' expertise.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Photo by Tim Barcus

Visiting Scholar Andrea Liu, professor of physics at the University of Pennsylvania, met informally with science majors at Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo. From left: Monica Stutz, Jacqueline Weiss, Liu and Lisa Field. In addition to academic presentations, Liu spoke at a program on "Women in Academia," sponsored by "Women in Chemistry" members.

In This Issue

From the Secretary	2
Fellows Award Winner	2
Romanell Professorship	3
H. Bentley Glass Dies	3
Linda Wolin on Education and Nanotechnology	4
Recalling "Miss Gould"	4
2005-06 Visiting Scholars	6
Nicholas C. Brown on U.S. Higher Education	7
National Symposium in October	7
From Our Book Critics	10
Letter to the Editor	12

Barbara Abad Wins Jensen Fellowship

The Phi Beta Kappa Society has selected the 2005 winner of the Walter J. Jensen Fellowship for French Language, Literature and Culture. She is Barbara Abad of Brooklyn, N.Y., a doctoral candidate at New York University. Abad is the first recipient of the award.

The \$10,000 fellowship is intended to support a young American educator and scholar in French language and literature for six months in France. It was established by a bequest from Walter J. Jensen, who was elected to ΦBK at UCLA in 1941. He spent his career teaching French, primarily at state institutions in New England.

Abad, 30, grew up bilingual in Spanish and English. She graduated magna cum laude in 1997 from the State University of New York at Buffalo, where she earned a bachelor's degree in French and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She later earned master's degrees in French literature and philosophy at NYU. Her doctoral thesis is on "The Representation of the Father in the Works of Rétif de la Bretonne," a prolific 18th century writer.

ΦBK Secretary John Churchill said, "Phi Beta Kappa is very pleased to have been chosen as the custodian of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



From the Secretary

New Chapters

By John Churchill
Secretary, The Phi Beta Kappa Society

As winter moved toward spring, representatives of Phi Beta Kappa's Committee on Qualifications (CQ) visited several colleges and universities, and the faculty members in the Society on those campuses moved a step closer to authorization to form new chapters. The Committee's teams were on each campus for several days, talking to students, faculty and administrators, and amplifying information that had been submitted in voluminous written reports.

These processes actually began almost 18 months ago, when Phi Beta Kappa faculty at those institutions, along with dozens more, submitted preliminary applications. They will culminate in another 18 months, when the next Triennial Council will vote on the applications that have been recommended to it by the Senate. Then comes the installation of the newly authorized chapters, and after that—months or minutes as the case may be—the new chapter will induct its first class of Phi Beta Kappa members.

The three-year span is fixed by the structure of the Society's governance through Triennial Councils. But the pattern of preliminary contacts between the Society and faculty groups wishing to form chapters often extends over a period of years, even decades. One recently formed chapter was the product of a conversation that began during the administration of Calvin Coolidge.

So at any given time, the Society is in contact with faculty and administrators at many institutions in various stages of preparation. In these relationships, the Society seeks to advance its purpose of promoting excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. The formation of a new chapter is a clear signal of congruence between the Society's vision and the institution's success in that aim. It is a happy moment for all concerned.

Because we believe that a critical element of the Society's mission is carried out through this process, Phi Beta Kappa is eager to ensure that the process is well understood. We are

pleased to explain it and do so continually to inquirers who seek to pursue chapters at their college or university.

Here is the basic pattern: After several discussions with officers of the Society in the national office, a faculty group will apply for authorization to form a new chapter. The format is spelled out in documents provided by the national office, and the application is actually made to the Committee on Qualifications. This body, responsible to the Phi Beta Kappa Senate, comprises members who are Senators and members who are not. It includes a mix of longtime participants in the process and newly-appointed people with fresh perspectives, often informed by their having recently shepherded a successful application.

CQ reviews the several dozen preliminary applications. It is guided by Phi Beta Kappa's historic standards of excellence, recently reaffirmed in our strategic planning. A small number of applications is selected for further study. The submitting faculty groups are invited to work with their institutions to develop a more comprehensive application, and a campus visit may be arranged.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



Photo by Mary Drabkin

Brian Greene, center, received the Fellows of Phi Beta Kappa Award in April from Murray Drabkin, left, the Fellows president. At right is Tracy Day, who accompanied Greene to the presentation. A leader in string theory, Greene is professor of physics and mathematics at Columbia University. His books include "The Elegant Universe" and "The Fabric of the Cosmos."

Corrections

There is an incorrect attribution in "Recent Research Rewrites Society's History with Identity of First Black Woman Member" by Stephanie Y. Evans (Winter 2005 *Key Reporter*). "The Earliest Black Graduates of the Nation's Highest-Ranked Liberal Arts Colleges," an article by Theodore Cross, appeared in *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, and the issue was dated Jan. 31, 2003.

The story on "U. S. Professors of the Year" in the Winter 2005 *Key Reporter* did not note that Robert H. Bell of Williams College is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. He was elected at Dartmouth College in 1967.

Zagzebski Named Romanell Professor

Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski of the University of Oklahoma has been awarded the Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professorship in Philosophy for 2005-06. She holds the university's Kingfisher College Chair of the Philosophy of Religion and Ethics.

The professorship is presented annually to a philosophy scholar in recognition of distinguished achievement and the scholar's past or potential contribution to public understanding of philosophy. Recipients receive a stipend of \$7,500 and are expected to present three lectures, open to the public, at their institutions.

In its nomination statement, the Φ BK chapter at Oklahoma called Zagzebski "one of the foremost figures in the philosophy of religion, ethics and epistemology." The nominators wrote that her work has special relevance outside professional philosophy,

and has a "unique ability to increase the public's understanding of philosophy. Her current research is concerned with moral and religious diversity—but not in a way that is either relativistic or dogmatic. Rather, it is aimed at uncovering interpersonal, cross-cultural methods of evaluating and accepting responsibility for one's religious and moral beliefs.

"While such beliefs have traditionally been treated as one's private business, especially in this country, recent events have made abundantly clear the serious and dramatic consequences that are associated with those beliefs. Consequently, an open, sensitive, yet rigorous examination of the ways of evaluating, justifying and accepting responsibility for such beliefs, and the actions associated with them, could hardly be more timely. Her numerous

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



Linda Zagzebski

THE KEY REPORTER

Volume 70, Number 2
Spring 2005

Editor: Barbara Haddad Ryan

Consulting Editor: John Churchill

The Key Reporter (ISSN: 0023-0804) is published quarterly by the Phi Beta Kappa Society, 1606 New Hampshire Ave. NW Washington DC 20009. Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional addresses. IPM #1213423

This newsletter is distributed free each quarter to every contributing member of Phi Beta Kappa. The summer and winter editions also are sent free to every Φ BK member for whom we have a current address. All four issues are posted on the Society's website.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors or the officers of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. Circulation for this issue: 82,731.

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.

Copyright © 2005 by the Phi Beta Kappa Society. All rights are reserved. The Phi Beta Kappa name, key, and *The Key Reporter* name are registered trademarks of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

Postmaster: Send change-of-address notices to: *The Key Reporter*, Phi Beta Kappa, 1606 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington DC 20009.

<http://www.pbk.org>

Geneticist and Φ BK Leader Dies at 98

H. Bentley Glass, president of the Phi Beta Kappa Society from 1967 to 1970, died Jan. 16 in Boulder, Colo., at age 98. A *New York Times* obituary called him "one of the nation's top geneticists." It described him as "a biologist who in the 1950s and '60s led a ubiquitous career as writer, scientific policy maker and theorizer, with provocative and often prescient predictions about still-burning issues like genetics and nuclear war."

In addition to Φ BK, Glass had been president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Society of Human Genetics, the American Institute of Biological Sciences, the American Society of Naturalists, and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). He chaired an AAUP committee that censured several universities in the 1950s for firing professors with alleged Communist associations that the committee contended were unproven.

During that decade, he also became a leading scientific spokesman on the effects of radiation, and he led colleagues in predicting that fallout from nuclear bomb tests would cause enormous harm to future generations.

Glass served as editor of *Science*, *Quarterly Review of Biology* and *Scientific Monthly* and as president of the journal *Biological Abstracts*. In addition to scientific articles, he wrote a column for the *Baltimore Evening Sun*.

Born in China to Baptist missionaries, Glass came to the United States for college. He spent two years at Decatur Baptist College in Texas before transferring to Baylor University, where he later earned a master's degree. He received a doctorate at the University of Texas. He became an influential geneticist at Johns Hopkins University, where he taught and conducted research from 1947 to 1965. Then he moved to SUNY at Stony Brook (now Stony Brook University), where he remained until his retirement in 1976.

Nanotechnology Era Calls for Teamwork

Editor's note: *Linda Wolin is a medical and technical writer and editor. She has done global sourcing and supply-chain management for multi-national corporations and has taught science and business at the high school and graduate levels. Elected to ΦBK at New York University in 1963, she earned an M.B.A. at Lake Forest Graduate School of Management. She is president of WriteSAIF Inc., a consulting firm in Wilmette, Ill.; writesaif@sbcglobal.net*

By Linda Wolin

Nanotechnology—the word frequently appears in the news these days because nano-technological products are beginning to enter the marketplace. Why all the attention? The term *nanotechnology* represents multiple technologies that are predicted to dramatically impact diverse products, processes and industries, and even the way we live. The essence of all of these technologies is “the structuring and controlling of matter”¹ on the atomic and molecular scale. Designing and manufacturing at this level give new and improved characteristics to products, characteristics previously only dreamed about. We humans are becoming true alchemists!

A biomedical tool, nano-size polystyrene particles and a sports product provide three examples of the potential impact of the nanotechnology age. Microarrays are tools that enable the collection and analysis of vast amounts of biomedical information. They have many uses, including the identification of an individual's propensity to develop a disease and the stage of a disease within an individual, to facilitate more effective drug treatments. Nanoarrays, which are just being developed, will enable the analysis of DNA characteristics that are more than 1,000 times² smaller than what is possible in microarrays, providing faster and more enhanced bio-recognition capabilities. Also, it is predicted that the overall size of arrays will shrink and become so small that physicians will use arrays in their offices, dramatically reducing test expenses and a patient's waiting time for results.

Researchers at the University of Ulm in Germany have discovered nano-size polystyrene particles that may be able

to remove the harmful chemicals from the atmosphere that are destroying the ozone layer.³ These particles may also be able to repair the ozone layer.

Golf balls manufactured by Nano-Dynamics Inc., which are expected to be available this year, reduce hooks and slices⁴ even for non-professionals.

Some scientists and futurists predict that the age of nanotechnology will dwarf both the industrial and information ages in its scope and impact and, like them, will change the way we work. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that if we want our children prepared for this new world, their educational programs will have to change as well.

One aspect of the predicted work change is already being felt. In nanotechnology research centers both in the

United States and abroad, researchers and other scientists no longer work alone on projects but in multi-disciplined teams. Although such teams have been used for years in many arenas, in nanotechnology centers the use of multi-disciplined teams is the norm.

Here are some examples. At the Center for Nanotechnology, which is part of NASA's Ames Research Center, Dr. Meyya Meyyappan, the director, confirms that research at Ames is conducted by multi-disciplined teams.⁵ The work is collaborative to support innovations and to help train future staff. At the University of Michigan's Center for Biologic Nanotechnology, biologic science is being combined with material and analytical sciences to develop new approaches for clinical problems.⁶ And at Columbia University's Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC), multi-disciplined teams are composed of members from teaching, industry and national laboratories.⁷

It is significant that many aspects of our lives (apart from anything involving nanotechnology) require team-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

New Yorker Recalls ΦBK's “Miss Gould”

The New Yorker magazine published in its Feb. 28 issue “Miss Gould,” a tribute to Eleanor Gould Packard, who died that month at age 87. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Oberlin College, she worked at the magazine for 54 years, most of them as grammarian, before a stroke forced her to retire in 1999.

The *New Yorker* “Postscript,” by editor David Remnick, quoted from an engaging feature in the Summer 1999 edition of *The Key Reporter*. Priscilla S. Taylor, its editor at the time, assembled the piece from Miss Gould's hand-written letters. These were faxed to her for that purpose in an exchange that lasted a year and a half.

Several readers could not find the feature on the ΦBK website and informed the Society that it was missing,

This issue has been posted and can be found at www.pbk.org under “Publications.” The interview excerpt quoted by Remnick:

“My list of pet language peeves would certainly include writers' use of indirection (i.e., slipping new information into a narrative as if the reader already knew it); confusion between restrictive and nonrestrictive phrases and clauses (*that* goes with restrictive clauses, and, ordinarily, *which* with nonrestrictive); careless repetition; and singular subjects with plural verbs and vice versa.”

In the newsletter, this paragraph continued: “Also, always change *ten times more than to ten times as many as; he is one of the best writers who is to who are; and they only did five things to they did only five.*”

Teaching Teamwork

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

work: families, volunteerism, sports, other community activities, business projects, scientific research and global politics. It is also significant that the use of teamwork is increasing—and that the nature of teamwork is evolving. Global discussions now are needed to review problems previously handled individually by countries; environmental issues provide one example.

Some of my own teamwork experiences are relevant. My first exposure to teamwork on a daily basis was in the 1980s when I worked at a corporation. My department referred to itself as a team, and I was a team player. However, like a lot of other teams at that time, my team was “one-function”—composed of individuals from one discipline. In addition, most of us were from one of two ethnic groups, and all of us were from the same company and country. By the 1990s, I was serving on a team that was multi-disciplined (or cross-functional), cross-cultural (six different cultures) and global, with members from different companies and countries. The teamwork I did in the 1990s was much more interesting and exciting, and it required a far more complex skill set.

Relating seems to be built into the fabric of the universe. “In the Quantum world” [the world in which nanotechnology design occurs], “relationship is the key determiner of everything.”⁸ At one time, the quantum world was considered a realm in which humans did not function. Today, however, brain research is indicating otherwise: “... consciousness and the quantum field of information and energy ... may be identical things.”⁹

Perhaps when we are relating in teams, we mirror the universe, and by so doing, we maximize our creative potentials. It may be synergistic cause, not just coincidence, that as we move toward the age of nanotechnology—in which products are structured at the relating quantum-level—teamwork, and in particular multi-disciplined teamwork, is increasingly needed. In the future, children who master the

science and art of successful teamwork will grow up to be more employable and more successful at keeping their jobs. But are we preparing our children for teamwork? Do our elementary and secondary schools include teamwork projects and teamwork skills development in their curricula? After speaking with several teachers and other professionals in different regions of the United States, I have learned that teamwork skills may or may not be present in curricula.

Further, it is evident that many students enter college without sufficient teamwork skills because colleges and universities often have to teach these skills. According to Manuel Ares Jr., a Howard Hughes Medical Institute professor, “If today’s undergraduates are going to become researchers who solve the important biomedical problems of tomorrow, interdisciplinary thinking must be cultivated at the undergraduate level.”¹⁰ However, “several traditional practices within undergraduate education work against interdisciplinary thinking.”¹⁰ Ares is trying to overcome these obstacles by using multi-disciplinary teams.

The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) states that lack of sufficient “teacher-time for planning and collaboration with colleagues is a major detractor of professional development.”¹¹ Also, student and teacher standards need to be linked.¹² If students do not see teachers collaborating in teams, they are not getting the right modeling behavior.

So what examples do we have of schools doing a good job? Ashley Ball, in “Great Team, Great School,” which appears in *Eutopia*, an online magazine on the George Lucas Educational Foundation (GLEF) Web site, <http://www.edutopia.org>, profiles Eual J. Landry Middle School, a public school in Hahnville, La.¹³ Teamwork has been part of Landry’s school structure and curricula for more than 15 years.¹³ Every day, students engage in “Tiger Talk,”¹³ which includes greeting each other with eye-to-eye contact, handshakes and encouraging interactions.



Linda Wolin

Also, like the new nanotechnology research centers, the structure of programs at Landry is designed to support team involvement, and teachers collaborate first to provide excellent modeling for students.¹³ According to Carmen Johnson, a content leader at Landry, “The expectation that we will be working together with everyone in the classroom starts with the teachers.”¹⁴

At the Mission Hill School in Roxbury, Mass., Alphonse Litz, lead teacher, confirms that academic subjects such as science, literature and mathematics are structured and taught in an integrated and collaborative format. Teamwork is embedded in project-based curricula, and students are accountable both individually and collaboratively for their work. Teachers also collaborate and share curricula, providing excellent models for students.¹⁵

Our children’s education must prepare them for the world in which they will live and work. Initial indications demonstrate that the coming age of nanotechnology will increasingly require the use of teamwork skills, so our children need to master such skills. We do not confine instruction in English, other languages, history, mathematics and the sciences to colleges and universities. We know that familiarity with different types of learning at early ages (pre-kindergarten and above) is essential for our children’s optimal grasp of subjects.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

ΦBK Visiting Scholars for 2005-06

John Eaton, *Composer and Performer, New York City*

Professor emeritus, University of Chicago; composes and performs electronic and micro-tonal music around the world; operas include "The Cry of Clytaemnestra," "Myshkin," "Danton and Robespierre" and "The Tempest"; co-founded Pocket Opera Players with the New York New Music Ensemble; former composer-in-residence at the American Academy in Rome; awarded three Prix de Rome grants, two Guggenheim grants, a MacArthur fellowship and commissions from the Koussevitzky and Fromm foundations, the Santa Fe Opera, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Joseph A. Farrell, Jr., *Professor of Classical Studies, University of Pennsylvania*

Scholar of Latin literature and Roman culture and society; currently exploring the mutually defining relationship between antiquity and modernity and researching Latin poets, notably Vergil and Ovid; author of "Latin Language and Latin Culture from Ancient to Modern Times" and "Vergil's *Georgics* and the Traditions of Ancient Epic"; at work on "Juno's *Aeneid*: Metapoetics, Narrativity, Dissent"; founded The Vergil Project to study ways to create interactive tools for learning, teaching and researching the classics on the Internet; former editor of *Vergilius*.

Ronald L. Graham, *Irwin and Joan Jacobs Chair of Computer and Information Science, University of California, San Diego*

Worked 37 years at Bell Labs, leaving in 1999 as chief scientist; during that time held positions at Princeton, Rutgers and Stanford universities, California Institute of Technology and UCLA; conducts research within the field of discrete mathematics that includes Ramsey theory, development of the theory of quasirandomness and contributions to the number theory, approximation algorithms and computational geometry; awarded Pólya Prize in Combinatorics by the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics and the Steele Prize for Lifetime Achievement from the American Mathematical Society.

Laura H. Greene, *Swanlund Professor of Physics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Researches strongly correlated electron materials, focusing on novel superconductors; studies electronic structure by measuring how electrons cross superconducting interfaces using tunneling and point contact spectroscopy; served on the advisory board of the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics; former Bell Labs scientist; received Maria Goeppert-Mayer Award of the American Physical Society

and the E.O. Lawrence Award for materials research from the U.S. Department of Energy.

Linda Greenhouse, *Correspondent, Washington Bureau, The New York Times*

U.S. Supreme Court correspondent for *The Times* since 1978; author of "Becoming Justice Blackmun: Harry Blackmun's Supreme Court Journey" (2005); winner of a Pulitzer Prize, the Henry J. Friendly Medal from the American Law Institute, the Carey McWilliams Award from the American Political Science Association, the Goldsmith Career Award from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and the John Chancellor Award from the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania.

N. Katherine Hayles, *Hillis Professor of Literature, University of California, Los Angeles*

Holds joint appointment in UCLA's design/media arts department; teaches and writes on the relationship among literature, science and technology in the 20th and 21st centuries; currently studies narrative and database, and ways that the tension between them is manifest in narrative theory and such data-intensive fields as nanotechnology; author of "How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics" (winner of the René Wellek Prize), "Writing Machines" and "My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts" (2005).

William A. Klemperer, *Erving Research Professor of Chemistry, Harvard University*

On Harvard's faculty since 1954; conducts research in areas of molecular structure, energy transfer and intermolecular forces, most of it involving experimental spectroscopic methods; helped to establish the field of interstellar chemistry; winner of the American Chemical Society's Langmuir Award in Chemical Physics, the Debye Award in Physical Chemistry and the Wilson Award in Spectroscopy; received the Plyer Award from the American Physical Society, the Bomen-Michelson Award from the Coblenz Society and the Faraday Medal from the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Bernard McGinn, *Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor Emeritus, University of Chicago Divinity School*

Theologian and medieval history scholar; author of works on Christian spirituality and mysticism and on the history of Western apocalypticism, including "Visions of the End" and "Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil"; completed the fourth volume in his ongoing history of Western Christian mysticism, "The Harvest of Mysticism in Late Medieval Germany 1300-

1500" (2005); former president of the American Society of Church History and the American Catholic Historical Association.

Elliot M. Meyerowitz, *George W. Beadle Professor of Biology, California Institute of Technology*

Identified and cloned homeotic flower development genes leading to "ABC Model" of floral organ specification, and was the first to clone plant hormone receptors; current work combines studies of gene expression and cell division patterns with computation to understand plant growth; honors include Pelton Award of the Botanical Society of America and the Conservation and Research Foundation, Gibbs Medal of the American Society of Plant Physiologists, the Genetics Society Medal, and the International Prize for Biology of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

Kenneth L. Pomeranz, *Chancellor's Professor of History and Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures, University of California, Irvine; 2005-2006 Phi Beta Kappa/Frank M. Updike Memorial Scholar*

Studies Chinese economic development and comparative economic development, rural social change, environmental change, state formation, the history of popular religion, and family organization and gender roles; awarded Fairbank Prize of the American Historical Association and the World History Association Book Prize (co-winner) for "The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy"; Fairbank Prize for "The Making of a Hinterland: State, Society, and Economy in Inland North China, 1853-1937"; co-author, "The World That Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400 to the Present."

Judith V. Reppy, *Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Cornell University*

Current research areas include responses to the risk of bioterrorism and issues related to the public understanding of science; associate director of Cornell's Peace Studies Program; co-editor and contributing author of "The Genesis of New Weapons: Decision Making for Military R&D," "The Relations Between Defence and Civil Technologies," "Beyond Zero Tolerance: Discrimination in Military Culture" and "Secrecy and Knowledge Production"; served on the National Academy of Sciences committee on preventing the destructive application of biotechnology.

Steven Shapin, *Professor of the History of Science, Harvard University*

His scholarly work is at the intersection of cultural history, the history of science and the sociology of knowledge; co-author of "Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life"; author of "A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

U.S. Higher Education Remains Unique

Editor's note: *Nicholas C. Brown of Lancaster, Pa., was elected to ΦBK at Ohio Wesleyan University in 1942. Following service in World War II, he earned a doctorate at Yale University. After teaching for several years, he became a staff associate and executive officer at the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C., where he also served, on loan for six months, as a consultant to President Eisenhower's Committee on Education Beyond the High School. Later he was a professor, dean, vice president for academic affairs and acting president at several institutions. This article is based on a chapter in his recent book, "The Renewal of Society through Education: A Series of Personal Essays."*

By Nicholas C. Brown

The most striking thing about American higher education is its enormous diversity. Our colleges and universities are public and private, large and small, independent and religious, as well as single- and multi-purpose. Some are highly selective while others have open admissions; some are richly endowed while others struggle to make ends meet; some attract students from all over the world while others have national, regional or local constituencies; some enroll only men or women while others are coeducational. Some are four-year and others are two-year institutions.

In contrast to the far more uniform structure and standards of most European institutions, U.S. colleges and universities defy easy generalizations. Putting it the other way around, almost any generalization about higher education in America would be true somewhere at some time.

In my father's day, most college students studied the classics, including Greek, Latin, philosophy and rhetoric, so they shared a common culture. Having read many of the same books, they understood each other's allusions to the Bible, early philosophers, Shakespeare and other great writers, as old Congressional Records and other public documents attest.

Today, however, it would not seem remarkable to find two college graduates, even from the same school, whose readings never intersected. In a democracy based on a core of common beliefs derived from a great philosophical and literary heritage, that is a bit scary. Every free society needs its unique

intellectual and inspirational glue to hold itself together.

It is also true, but seldom acknowledged, that the graduates of many American colleges today would not meet the entrance requirements of certain other colleges. Because of this disparity of standards, all college degrees do not mean the same thing. A discriminating employer (in the best sense of that phrase) wants to know where a degree was earned. Yet the employer also must take into account another disparity: the wide range of ability and achievement *within* each institution.

The top student in a non-selective institution may excel his or her counterpart at a very selective institution. Averages sometimes conceal wild variations and are misleading. It is revealing, for example, to note that many eminent scholars at our most prestigious institutions earned their undergraduate degrees at less well-known colleges and universities, probably near their homes.

Even though this huge diversity of U.S. higher education poses problems of evaluation, it also offers an overriding advantage: a "second chance" for late bloomers, for the able but once-impoverished inner-city child, for the young mother whose children are now in school and—yes—for the lazy bum who has matured. It is also a second chance for countless others who want to refresh their minds, need to update their knowledge and skills, or are forced to change careers.

The very variety of institutional offerings beyond high school bears witness to the characteristically American belief that everyone is enti-

tled not only to equality of educational opportunity, but also to the possibility of social mobility as one earns it.

The end of World War II brought unprecedented changes in higher education. First, the so-called GI Bill of Rights brought college within the reach of millions of veterans who previously could not afford it, and so had never seriously considered it. The bill also made it possible for many college graduates to undertake graduate and professional studies. In short, this landmark legislation opened the doors to colleges and universities much wider, making them far more accessible, especially to qualified students in families that never before had college experience.

Then this generation—with a higher percentage of college graduates than any previous one—became parents of the "baby boomers." And they raised the expectations of their own children, cultivating an ever-expanding population with aspirations to attend college.

Thus, in the next half-century, the total number of institutions more than doubled, largely because of the creation of community colleges. The total fall enrollment of all institutions skyrocketed more than 5.5 times. Not

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Phi Beta Kappa's Middle Atlantic District will sponsor its Fourth Triennial National Symposium on Saturday, Oct. 15, in Philadelphia. It will be presented in cooperation with the ΦBK chapter at the University of Pennsylvania and the Society's national office.

The theme will be "The Forgotten Star? Morality and the Phi Beta Kappa Mission," derived from the star representing morality on the ΦBK key. The symposium will consider the traditional and contemporary meanings of morality, with emphasis on its philosophical, scientific, educational and political aspects. Details of the event will be announced in the next *Key Reporter*.

A Unique System

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

only did the college-age population burgeon: The numbers of high school graduates going on to college also increased steadily, at the rate of one percent a year, for several decades.

To accommodate this flood of students, colleges and universities made a historic effort to expand their faculties, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, dormitories and other facilities in record time. The most difficult task of all, which most people don't realize, was to find enough qualified teachers. In order to teach this great wave of students from the high-birthrate generation, institutions had to recruit new faculty largely from the low-birthrate Depression years.

So it was that the 1960s became the best of times and the worst of times, as colleges and universities experienced the hazards of their own success. They made a monumental effort to keep faith with the younger generation by providing opportunities for the millions of youth born after World War II. But as a result, they suffered the massive discontent of students who—because of the impact of large numbers—felt they were treated impersonally, as though they were mere punch cards.

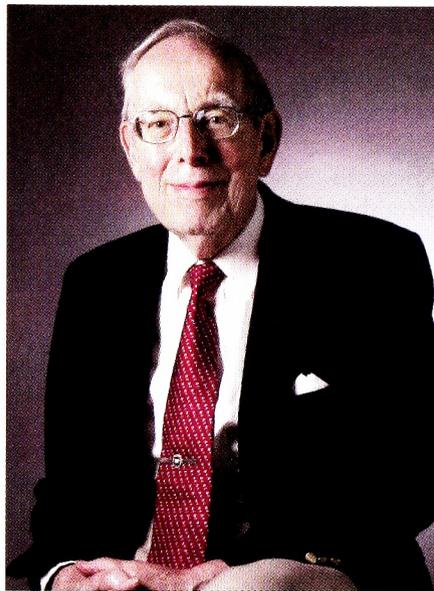
Moreover, because of their deliberate effort to encourage independent thinking and social responsibility following a decade of student apathy in the 1950s, institutions suddenly found themselves confronted by highly articulate and idealistic young critics. Sometimes, in their youthful overzealousness, these students seriously disrupted both teaching and learning and—in some cases with faculty consent—undermined traditional standards of scholarship.

For example, short-sighted charges of “irrelevance” diminished enrollments in many courses of enduring value and created others of only ephemeral worth, once more substituting training for education. Also, academic standards were eroded on some campuses by the adoption, with faculty approval, of “pass-fail” grading. This became a disservice to students who later wanted to

attend graduate and professional schools that looked askance at them.

Gradually, however, even those institutions regained control over their own destinies. They learned how to cope with quantity without sacrificing quality, and to encourage legitimate student responsibility without surrendering to the hard-core destroyers.

At least two other significant transformations in higher education took



Nicholas C. Brown

Photo by The Patriot-News of Harrisburg, Pa.

place in the last 50 years. As accessibility to education beyond high school rapidly increased, the ratio of enrollments in private and public institutions dramatically inverted. Likewise, the ratio of men to women, more than three to one in 1949-50, changed to the point where women outnumbered men. Today about 56 percent of college graduates are female.

Despite the publicity about the escalating cost of higher education, more students than ever are attending college. The reasons for this apparent paradox are that the *average* cost is considerably less than the examples cited by the media, and financial aid has vastly increased in the last half-century. It would be interesting to compare the percentage of family income now devoted to college expenses to that of five decades ago. I would wager that, in terms of family sacrifice, it is not much different.

One needs only to observe the cars in student parking lots, the expensive athletic equipment, the stereos and spring-break activities to judge the validity of the press reports. Furthermore, the institutions most often cited as charging the highest tuitions often have the most generous financial-aid packages for students who qualify academically. And a few of the most highly selective colleges and universities have retained “need-blind” admissions policies so that, if a student is admitted, he or she is guaranteed whatever financial aid is needed.

All of these factors and trends have a direct bearing on the renewal of our society through higher education.

Visiting Scholars

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The program's goals are to enrich the intellectual atmosphere at participating institutions, and to enable undergraduates to meet and talk with notable scholars in diverse disciplines. Priority is given to colleges and universities that are outside major metropolitan areas, or that do not have extensive resources for offering similar programs.

Participating Scholars are selected by Φ BK's Committee on the Visiting Scholar Program, which comprises senior scholars in several fields. Most of the funding comes from the Society's national office; a bequest from the Updike Foundation supports two campus visits. Each host chapter handles local expenses and provides a service fee to the national office.

A sampling of the subject areas represented among the 2005-06 Scholars indicates the program's breadth: electronic and microtonal music, interstellar chemistry, ancient Roman culture, applied mathematics, national health policy, the genetics of flowering plants, bioterrorism and Christian mysticism in the West.

Early this fall, the Society will post on its Web site the names of institutions that Scholars will visit, and the dates for their public lectures.

Jensen Fellowship

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

this important award. Professor Jensen's aim—promotion of the knowledge of French language and culture in the United States—is entirely consonant with the Society's advocacy of liberal learning. We congratulate Ms. Abad on receiving this well-deserved honor."

The award committee praised Abad's commitment to an academic career that emphasizes teaching as much as scholarship. In her application, she described what she has discovered as a consultant and research assistant at NYU's Center for Teaching Excellence. Her work there includes staying informed on current pedagogical research. This has helped her understand, she wrote, "that the common thread between research and teaching is learning. As a scholar of French literature, I must ask the right questions, and in searching for answers, I construct new forms of knowledge."

"By teaching, I mean not simply disseminating a pre-conceived knowl-

edge—according to the teacher-centered/content-oriented model I once held—but helping students formulate their own questions and construct their own forms of knowledge. I try to get my students to understand that their quest for knowledge does not mean a search for the truth, but rather that it entails the consideration of other points of view as well as the formulation of their own. This student-centered/ learning-oriented conception has helped me see that my students and I are both transformed as a result of this process, precisely because we are both learners. For me, this is where the joy of teaching lies."

In 2001-03, Abad was a French instructor in NYU's College of Arts and Sciences, where she supervised graduate assistants and served as a resource for undergraduate teachers. She received the college's Outstanding Teacher Award in 2003. Last March she received NYU's President's Service



Barbara Abad is the Jensen award's first recipient.

Award in the programming category for "enhancing the intellectual, cultural and social life of the University."

A member of the Société Rétif de la Bretonne, Abad also belongs to the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, the Modern Language Association and the Society for Eighteenth Century French Studies.

Romanell Award

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

public lectures indicate both a passionate approach to philosophical conversation and debate, and a compassion and sensitivity to divergent views that ensure a lively presentation of difficult yet timely issues."

The nomination statement said that Zagzebski's three major publications "represent her remarkable breadth in philosophy as well as her innovation and leadership in these three fields." They include "The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge," "Virtues of the Mind: An Inquiry into the Nature of Virtue and the Ethical Foundations of Knowledge" and "Divine Motivation Theory." She also has published 47 journal articles or book chapters, edited collections of essays, and lectured widely in this country and abroad.

The statement noted that Zagzebski has accomplished all of this since

1990, "and there could be no better time to honor her with the opportunity to present cutting-edge work at the intersection of philosophy of religion, ethics and epistemology as a Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professor in Philosophy."

Zagzebski holds three degrees in philosophy. She graduated from Stanford University in 1968 and the next year earned a master's degree at Berkeley. She was awarded a doctorate at UCLA in 1979. Before joining the University of Oklahoma faculty in 1999, she taught at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

Her honors and awards include two National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) summer stipends and an NEH fellowship for college teachers; a Distinguished Visiting Scholar position at the University of Uppsala, Sweden; and a Distinguished Scholar Fellowship at the Center for Philosophy of Religion at the University of Notre Dame.

Zagzebski is president of the Society of Christian Philosophers and past president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association. She is also a member of the American Philosophical Association and the Society for Catholicism and Analytical Philosophy.

The professorship is made possible by an endowment from the late Patrick Romanell, H.Y. Benedict Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas at El Paso, and his wife Edna. Candidates are nominated by Society chapters but do not have to be ΦBK members.

As a student at the College of William & Mary, Thomas Jefferson belonged to a secret society that helped to inspire the founding of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. But the primary activity of Jefferson's group was carousing at local taverns.



From Our Book Critics

Humanities: Svetlana Alpers, Rebecca Resinski, Eugen Weber

Social Sciences: Rick Eden, Jan Ellen Lewis

Anna J. Schwartz, Larry J. Zimmerman

Natural Sciences: Germaine Cornélissen, Jay M. Pasachoff

By Svetlana Alpers

The Whole Equation: A History of Hollywood. David Thomson. Alfred A. Knopf, 2005. \$27.95

Many different approaches can be used to give an account of an art. David Thomson's study of American movies takes the form of a sweeping survey of the art—and of the business to which it is, in his view, fatally bound. He takes salaries, costs and profit margins of films to be essential, even dominant factors. I was surprised to learn that *The New York Times* earns over \$85 million a year from movie advertising. In the face of that, what is the role of its movie reviewers?

Thomson, an English film writer long resident in the States, takes his title from F. Scott Fitzgerald's unfinished novel, "The Last Tycoon." The words refer to the challenge of holding in the mind everything that goes into the making of movies. Like Fitzgerald, he is aware of the dark side as well as the light. Though written by an enthusiast, this is a bleak book.

The bleakness even colors recognition of the aesthetic side. Movies are a narrative medium. Frame follows frame, and things are acted out. But the urge to tell stories in Hollywood, Thomson argues, is inseparable from the urge to make money. Moving the emotions of the audience is part of this process. Thomson distinguishes cinematic narration from the art of the novel: Presence and sexual allure, rather than depth of character, are its mode.

But his admiration of, say, Nicole Kidman in "The Hours," as Virginia Woolf when she was writing "Mrs. Dalloway," is tempered by the thought that watching a movie doesn't equal reading the book. Unlike reading, inherently a solitary activity, watching a movie in the dark is an experience shared with others. This may be inherently democratic, but the appeal to the crowd turned dangerous when employed in a fascist scenario of inciting mobs.

The book opens with "Chinatown" and the myriad corruptions lying at the heart of the development of Los Angeles. It has a wonderful chapter on Eric von Stroheim's "Greed," and a devastating chapter on Chaplin that shows it took a dictator to perform "The Great Dictator." It closes with "The Godfather," pointing to the heart of darkness in a family: Corleone's, but also America's.

Considering the whole equation makes for not just a quirky history of the movies but, more ambitiously, a history of America in the time of movies. Perceptively, Thomson mourns

the loss of light—Hollywood's actual light and also the light that, in new digital processes, is no longer cast on film. But his greater concern is for the staggering impact of the movies on America, and the thundering artillery (as he puts it) that, through them, this nation has unleashed on the world. Editing could have made it more concise, but this is an illuminating and disturbing book.

Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism and Postmodernism. Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh. Thames & Hudson, 2005. \$85

We are used to finding a timeline as the appendix of a book. What happens if, instead, the timeline provides its structure?

This massive history of art in the 20th century (and after) is imaginative in illustrations and design. It is organized year by year with an essay, or sometimes two, devoted to the significant events in (or for) art each year. The authors are friends, each with his/her own distinctive interests: psychoanalytical, social-historical, formalist/structuralist and poststructuralist. The implications of a particular critical approach and, helpfully, a sense of its limits are presented in concise introductory essays. In addition, the entire project is reviewed in dialogues presented halfway through (a break is made at World War II) and at the end.

The timeline format makes a complex century easier to grasp. But the insistence on the role of critical methods justifiably complicates things: Ideas and events beyond art objects are introduced, and nothing is transparent to view, since everything is a matter of interpretation.

For readers, the pleasure (and the fun) is various. Dip in and find out what happened in 1909 (Marinetti gets the first Futurist Manifesto onto the front page of *Le Figaro* and it is reproduced here) and 1910 (Matisse paints his great decorative canvases, "an expansive field of color that is difficult to behold") or 1976 (in New York, "King Tut" is a blockbuster at the Metropolitan, while the alternative space of the former Public School No. 1 is founded in an old school building in Queens.) Or look for the small initials in the decade indexes, and read the essays of a writer whose voice you fancy.

This is a creative way to take in a crowded and difficult century that, as it seems to these authors, has left both the nature and the role of art in doubt.

De Kooning: An American Master. Mark Stevens and Annalyn Swan. Alfred A. Knopf, 2004. \$35

Willem de Kooning (1904-97) fled his Dutch homeland (and family) for America in 1926. A master he certainly was, and a great one, though perhaps more a master *in* American than, as the title of this biography has it, *as* an American. His work eventually flourished in New York and was taken as a model by painters in this country, but his artistic roots were European.

These roots were an original combination of (among other things) cubist pictorial structure, a working of the paint and color that is out of Titian and Arshile Gorky, monumental figures whose heritage is the small carnival figures of Netherlandish low-life painting, and the light in de Kooning's late Long Island landscapes, which is pure Dutch.

Biography is popular these days. As a way to write about art, it dates back at least to Giorgio Vasari, the first art historian, writing in the second half of the 16th century. Vasari used biography as a critical tool. Fine historian though he was, he often used invented anecdotes to get at the truth of an artist's style.

But the character of biography these days is to research with the aim of telling the whole truth about a person. De Kooning spent the best part of his life painting. Something regressive, infantile even, is revealed in his obsessive art. He drank too much, was endlessly and famously unfaithful to his wife Elaine, and often turned his back on Joan Ward, the mother of his daughter. But just how necessary is this to know when looking at his art?

That question aside, this book is good to read. It immerses one in the life and times of a group of painters in New York in the 1920s, '30s, '40s and '50s. Despite the economic hardship involved, de Kooning's late coming into his own style (he was in his 40s) is a bracing alternative to the youth culture favored by the art world today. And the uncertainty about the value of his later years of painting, done in the trap of Alzheimer's disease, is a problem for our time.

De Kooning famously remarked that "Content, if you want to say, is a glimpse of something . . . It's very tiny, very tiny, content." His work—neither representational nor abstract—confirms painting as an art.

Raphael in Early Modern Sources 1483-1602. John Shearman. Yale University Press in cooperation with the Bibliotheca Hertziana-Max Planck Institute for Art History, Rome, 2003. \$125

Art can be approached not only through the evidence of artists' works, but also through the documents concerning their works and lives. For artists from the past, the documents that remain (most are lost over time) are essential to knowledge.

This extraordinary book is a critical, annotated edition of every known document concerning Raphael from his birth in 1483 until 1602 (the end date of the previous collection, published 75 years ago). "Document" means any

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



From Our Book Critics

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10
written item. This means everything touching on the artist, including inscriptions in paintings and frescos and on drawings and frames. It is the final work by Shearman, the great English art historian of the Italian Renaissance, who spent his final years at Harvard University and died just before publication.

Shearman realized that the sheer quantity of material concerning this famous artist makes it an exemplary case of the aims and limits of documentary research. Documents take special skills to deal with: They must be deciphered; they must be read intently (the author's word) and in context. And prior to all of that, they must be verifiable as true in what they say but also in what they are, neither facsimile nor forgery.

Despite—or rather, maybe because of—his confidence in the task, Shearman elegantly acknowledges in the introduction the difficulties in looking for facts in the archive. Forgeries (there are many relating to Raphael), for example, do not differ absolutely from genuine material except in terms of intention. Both have many shadings of truth. In the face of a possible forgery, the psychological difficulty for the historian, he adds, is to have to renounce information and, more than that, renounce “glimpses of the human being.”

A stunning case of a problematic document is Raphael's famous letter addressed to *Il Conte*,

or Baldassarre Castiglione, in which he set down his aesthetic views concerning, among other things, the *idea* in art. In this instance, there is life after discovery. Shearman has demonstrated that the letter was fabricated by Castiglione himself—and, further, that the “forgery” belongs to the established genre of letter-as-portrait.

It is unlikely that many readers of this review will buy a pricey book written by a scholar for scholars and their libraries. But these 1,744 pages, in two volumes, are well worth reading into and owning if you have a taste for art, for life, and for the way the history of these is constructed.

By Jan Lewis

The Plot Against America. Philip Roth. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$26

“It can't happen here,” we say, a half question mark at the end of the sentence, asking for reassurance that no, it could not. But, then, strange things have happened since Sept. 11: not just the blind rush into the Patriot Act and the detention of harmless citizens, but the proliferation of American flag decals and other cheap symbols of patriotism, along with suspicion of those, especially those of a certain religion, who do not display them.

This is the climate in which Philip Roth wrote “The Plot Against America,” and it hovers over his novel like a layer of smog. The time is 1940, and Charles A. Lindbergh has challenged Franklin Roosevelt for the presidency. He speaks in platitudes, but who cares? He promises to keep the country out of war. He flies himself to his campaign stops and looks every bit the hero. It does not hurt his image that everyone knows that his infant son was kidnapped and killed.

We see these events through the eyes of 7-year-old Philip Roth, who lives in an apartment in the Weequahic section of Newark, N.J., with his parents, older brother and orphaned cousin Alvin. Roth recreates the time and place perfectly. By giving his characters the same names as the members of his own family—Herman, Bess, Sandy and Philip—even providing a set of documents at the end of the novel, Roth only increases our sense that we are reading, if not history itself, at least a highly plausible counterfactual kind of history.

And so it is with a profound sense of uneasiness that one finds oneself slipping into the strange world that Roth has created, because it seems as though it really might be true in the way that history books are supposed to be true. Lindbergh indeed defeats Roosevelt, and as Europe falls to the Nazis, Britain must fight them without American assistance. At home, signs of anti-Semitism begin to appear, and Herman Roth thinks he can see what's coming. Some of his friends have already emigrated to Canada, and Alvin has joined the Canadian armed forces.

In June of 1941, Herman takes his family on a trip to Washington, D.C. They are evicted from their hotel. The manager apologizes for his mistake, but the room has been promised to another family, or so he says. Herman appeals to a policeman, who tells him that the Declaration of Independence does not mean “all hotel reservations are created equal.” Herman can't help voicing his opinions a little bit too loudly, and twice in their short trip he and his family must hear the epithet “loud-mouth Jew.”

The little signs begin to coalesce into a pattern. Sandy is sent to Kentucky for the summer by the federal Office of American Absorption, “a volunteer work program introducing city youth to the traditional ways of heartland life.” And he returns enamored of those traditional ways, which include eating pork in all its forms. Alvin comes home without a leg; the FBI starts asking questions about him.

Herman learns that he is to be transferred to the Danville, Ky., office of the insurance company for which he works. He is one of the first to be chosen as a participant in a new federal program, Homestead 42, “which is designed to give emerging American families a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to move their households at government expense, in order to strike roots in an inspiring region of America previously inaccessible to them.” And Philip begins to fantasize about escape.

For most of the book, Roth weaves seamlessly the national and family stories. But his decision to begin his novel with the counterfactual what-if creates a problem. How far will he let his historical imagination take the novel? A world in which Britain has been defeated by the Nazis? In which American Jews are sent to death camps? Where would such a story end? But we already know that “Philip Roth” has survived, to become a character in other Philip Roth fiction, so he must find a way to bring the historical portion of his story back on track.

The novel has several false finishes, however, as if Roth does not quite know how to conclude it. Young Philip Roth keeps plotting his escape, almost like Huck lighting out for the territories, the classic American hero who imagines he can escape from history.

“All plots lead toward death,” Don DeLillo has written, and so it must be with “The Plot Against America.” There is no escaping history, and no one is innocent, not even a little boy. Although the conclusion (or conclusions) seem a bit forced, the novel is deeply moving. Roth maintains the atmosphere of foreboding, in part because we see this slice of imagined history from the necessarily distorted perspective of a little boy who wonders if his parents can protect him. The book is filled with orphans and parents who have lost their children, and they make us feel that we are living in a world of loss, where everything we most value is at risk.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

2005-06 Scholars

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6
“Seventeenth-Century England” and “The Scientific Revolution”; awarded fellowships by the Guggenheim Foundation and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences; received the J.D. Bernal Prize of the Society for Social Studies of Science for distinguished career contributions to the field.

Deborah Stone, *Research Professor of Government and Public Policy, Dartmouth College*

Health policy specialist currently studying the place of altruism in public life and public policy toward care giving; author of “The Disabled State,” “The Limits of Professional Power: National Health Care in the Federal Republic of Germany” and “Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making”; winner of the American Political Science Association's Aaron Wildavsky Enduring Contribution Award; has advised the Social Security Administration, the Human Genome Commission and the Institute of Medicine; received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, Harvard Law School, Harvard's Program on Ethics and the Professions, the Open Society Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



The 1809 Miami

Thank you for the correct and almost extinct recognition of “Miami University” in your introduction to author Rob Slee [Fall *Key Reporter*]. Not “Miami of Ohio”; not “Miami (Ohio)”; not even “Miami University in Oxford, Ohio”; no, the oldest university west of the Alleghenies stands on its own venerable feet. Established in 1809, our alma mater has been subjected to recent decades of sobriquets and appellations as the football preeminence of the usurper to the south has landed that pretender school in the forefront of national consciousness. No doubt Mr. Slee, like many other alumni, sports a t-shirt or bumper sticker proclaim-

ing, “Miami was a university when Florida still belonged to Spain.” Even so, we accept our lot, finding solace in our motto “*Prodesse Quam Conspici.*”

W. Brent Eckhart, Indianapolis, Ind.

Editor’s note: *Eckhart reports that the official translation of Miami’s motto is “To accomplish rather than to be conspicuous.”*

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.

From Our Book Critics

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma. *Camilla Townsend. Hill and Wang, 2004. \$25; paper \$14*

Pocahontas is an American icon, a legend even during her own brief lifetime. She is the ideal stuff of mythmaking. She left us nothing that she wrote herself, and even the few words that she is reported to have spoken come from the writings of men who cannot entirely be trusted.

It is to John Smith that we are indebted for the charming story that the Indian princess begged her father, the chieftain Powhatan, for the English captain’s life. The only problem is that Smith did not publish this story until several years after Pocahontas was dead; none of his earlier accounts of the events in question include this dramatic episode. Moreover, to the trained observer of Algonkian custom, Smith’s account makes no sense; none of the rituals that Smith describes fit the circumstances he claims.

In this elegant little book, Camilla Townsend has unraveled this and many other myths about the captivating young Indian princess. Like an expert archeologist reconstructing an ancient artifact, Townsend has pieced together the shards of Pocahontas’s life. The focus always is on her and the Indian peoples, and the limited array of choices available to them when they encountered the technologically superior English.

Here Townsend relies upon Jared Diamond’s “Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies” to argue that whites were not “one whit more intelligent or more perceptive” than the Indians—“just better informed and better armed.” Indian society had been farming for perhaps 300 years and European society for about 11,000, which led to the latter’s huge technological advantage.

Examining the Indian-English encounter through this lens, Townsend sees that Powhatan wanted information and he wanted it badly. What other historians have interpreted as

Pocahontas’s honeymoon to England after her marriage to John Rolfe, Townsend sees as a kind of reconnaissance mission: Powhatan’s daughter was supposed to bring back valuable information about English capabilities. Townsend speculates that what Pocahontas saw surely must have alarmed her—the inevitable defeat of her people by a technologically (but certainly not morally) superior people.

Of course this conclusion is speculation, as is most everything that has been written about Pocahontas. But it is certainly plausible, as are Townsend’s other conjectures. And there are other bits and pieces that have been left out of the standard narratives, many of which concern the place of women in the Anglo-Virginian world.

For example, Townsend has figured out the critical role that marriage played in Powhatan’s consolidation of power over a number of neighboring tribes: He took as his (plural) wives noblewomen from those tribes. Once they bore him sons, they were sent back home, where they were free to choose new mates. But Powhatan required the sons to be brought up with him. Then, when they were grown, he sent them back to their mother’s tribes, where they could rule as legitimate heirs in a matrilineal society, but rulers with a loyalty to their father and the empire he had put together

Yet not all of Powhatan’s wives were chosen so strategically. Pocahontas’s mother was almost certainly a commoner, and although Pocahontas was the daughter of the chieftain, her position was not as high as that of the children of Powhatan’s noble wives. Hence, Townsend surmises, when John Rolfe proposed marriage, she might have seen it as an opportunity to increase her status. She had already been married once, to a warrior, but not to a chief. She may well have regarded Rolfe as an English chief. The English had kidnapped her and confined her to an all-white community, assuming that, as the daughter of the chieftain, she would be ran-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Also, real innovation results partly when knowledge becomes second nature, enabling innovators to achieve leaps in understanding, which may give rise to paradigm shifts. What an extraordinary world we would live in if teamwork skills were second nature to our children, so that they could make paradigm shifts in relating and the sharing of information! It is the responsibility of all of us to find out what our local schools are doing about teamwork and project-based learning.

References

1. Mize, S.: “Nanotechnology—Addressing the Millennium Changes.” Foresight Institute. Conference on Advanced Nanotechnology, October 2004.
2. Eureka Alert. “Scientists develop protein nanoarrays for biological detection.” 2002. Available at: http://www.eurkalert.org/pub_releases/2002-02/nu-sdp020702.php.
3. Brightsurf.com. “Nanotechnology could save the ozone layer.” Jan. 31, 2003. Available at: http://www.brightsurf.com/news/jan_03/IP_news_013103.html.
4. Nanotechnology Now. “NanoDynamics.” Dec. 14, 2004. Available at: http://www.nanotech-now.com/news.cgi?story_id=07112.
5. Interview, Feb. 5, 2005.
6. Baker, J. Jr.; Quintana, A.; Piehler, L.; Banazak-Holl, M.; Tomalia, D.; Raczka, E.: “The synthesis and testing of anti-cancer nanodevices.” *Biomedical Microdevices*. 2001; 3:1, 61-69.
7. Columbia University, MRSEC. “About the Material Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC) at Columbia University.” Available at: http://www.cise.columbia.edu/mrsec/about_mrsec.htm.
8. Wheatley, M.J.: “Leadership and the New Science,” Second Edition. Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 1999:11.
9. Shanor, K.N.: “The Emerging Mind.” Renaissance Books; 1999: 120.
10. HHMI News: “Preparing biology undergrads to be problem solvers.” Dec. 2, 2004. Available at: <http://www.hhmi.org/news/120204.html>.
11. Illinois Office of Educational Services: “Curriculum-related needs of teachers in Illinois.” May 22, 2003. p.1.
12. Ibid., p.2.
13. Ball, A.: “Great Team, Great School.” *Edutopia*. George Lucas Educational Foundation. Available at: http://www.edutopia.org/php/article.php?id=Art_1142.
14. Interview, Feb. 13, 2005.
15. Interview, Feb. 13, 2005.



From the Secretary

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

After visits by some CQ members, the Committee reconvenes to study reports of the visits and to make recommendations to the Senate concerning new chapters. The Senate reviews these reports and, based on them, after its own deliberation, makes recommendations to the Triennial Council. According to the Phi Beta Kappa constitution, only the Council can authorize the creation of a new chapter. A typical outcome is the formation of seven or eight new chapters out of a pool that began with several dozen.

Disappointed faculty groups are advised in considerable detail about CQ's evaluations and conclusions. Unless it is determined to be inappropriate, they are encouraged to stay in contact with the Society, to visit the headquarters for discussions with staff, and to host staff visits that might help them understand better how institutional change can lead to success in a future application.

These discussions pertain, of course, to the centrality of the liberal arts and sciences in the institution's mission, and to maintaining excellence in their pursuit. So there are inquiries about mission, resources, the health of the general education program in the arts and sciences, and the well-being of their disciplinary fields. The academic strength of students and faculty, the quality of the facilities, and the support of constituencies such as administrators and trustees are examined. So are the stability of the institution, its finances, and its future. Governance policies and practices are important. Does the faculty control the curriculum? Do all relevant parties respect the normal protections of the integrity of the institution's academic life?

In the course of this process, answers to these and related questions—quantitative when possible and appropriate, qualitative when judgment is required—are assessed by the representatives of Phi Beta Kappa, who come to know an institution quite well. And it is more usual than not for CQ's review of a particular application

to take place in the context of the Society's memory about previous accounts of the institution's strengths and problems.

Phi Beta Kappa regards as confidential the information entrusted to its representatives in this process. When a college or university's Phi Beta Kappa faculty move toward authorization for a chapter, an extended conversation typically develops, with many exchanges ranging over a number of campus issues. As an application moves from stage to stage in the process, CQ is often in the position of seeking assurance that previous problems have been corrected. Frequently they have; sometimes they have not. If an issue of long-standing concern to Phi Beta Kappa has not been resolved positively, the application will not move forward.

And so, generally, when an application does not move forward—as most do not—the officers of the Society can and do explain why. Since even first applications are preceded by a period of advice and consultation, these explanations enlarge upon topics familiar to the applicants. They are conveyed in a letter that also offers an invitation to further discussion with the applicant faculty and the institution. But we do not make these particulars available to the media or the public.

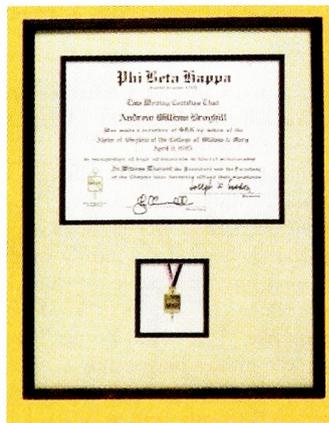
This process reflects the best ideals of Phi Beta Kappa and the deepest values of academic life in America. It is carried out by dedicated volunteers whose experience, expertise and professionalism lead to constructive outcomes that serve those ideals.

Have a Seat!



The Phi Beta Kappa Society is pleased to offer a special chair to its members. Phi Beta Kappa's chair features a hand-stenciled gold key insignia and is made from solid maple hardwood. The black lacquer finish is accented with gold beading and cherry arms. Each chair is personalized on the back with the member's name, chapter, and year of election. Delivery of each chair by UPS takes four to six weeks. Also available is an extensive line of other membership items, including the popular wall display of a membership certificate and a large key, double-matted 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 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) 492-2031. You may also order on line at www.hand-hammer.com.



- __Phi Beta Kappa chair (black maple and cherry)... \$325
- __Shipping for chair (east of the Mississippi).....\$25
- __Shipping for chair (west of the Mississippi).....\$35
- __Membership display (key and certificate framed)...\$85

Name, chapter, and date for personalization _____

__Check made payable to Hand & Hammer is enclosed.
Charge my __Visa __MasterCard (VA residents add 5%)

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____ Phone _____

somed. But she was one of many daughters, and not the most noble among them, and her father left her with her captors.

One gets the sense that, in Indian and much of English society, women and poor people in general were fungible or close to it. Personal qualities counted far less than status and gender. A few more cases support this point: When Pocahontas and her husband traveled to England, they were accompanied by several Indian attendants. Two of the women—called Mary and Elizabeth by the English—were too sick to return to Virginia. When they recovered, the Virginia Company had to figure out what to do with them. How about sending them to Bermuda as brides for English colonists? If returned to Virginia, they would no doubt resume their heathenish ways. The women consented and were shipped off, with two impoverished boys to serve as the women's dowries and hence "enabling them to marry someone a cut above the ordinary." Mary died aboard ship, but Elizabeth was married off to "as fit and agreeable a husband as the place would afford."

Another story Townsend relates: In the 1622 Indian assault that left a quarter of Virginia's English population dead, about 20 young English women were taken prisoner, "mirror images of Pocahontas." One of them, Anne Jackson, became so attached to her captors that when she was finally ransomed four years later, she could not break her ties to the Indians. So "the colonial authorities shipped her back forcibly to England."

Townsend's pages are filled with young men and young women, many still in their mid-teens; Pocahontas herself was probably only 19 when she died, already having been married twice, become the mother of a toddler, and seen more history than many people would in their entire lifetimes. We say "young men" and "young women," but in many cases we are talking about those barely out of childhood.

Thomas Rolfe, Pocahontas's son, was only 19 when he returned to Virginia to claim his legacy, but he was unusual in having a choice to make and a legacy to claim. Most of the young people we meet in Townsend's wonderful book—for example nameless servant boys, Powhatan's numerous "wives" and even Pocahontas herself—live in a world that is enormously and often brutally constrained. One must wonder what it means to make a "choice" in such a world, in which choice itself is a luxury afforded only a few.

By Eugen Weber

Napoleon: A Political Life. Steven Englund. Scribner, 2004. \$35

Napoleon has starred in countless publications, films, commemorations and evocations. But if you read just one book about him,

Englund's biography should be the one. The fruit of years of research, it is crammed with luscious detail, vastly informed and immensely readable. More than the political life it justly claims to provide, it is above all the vividly told tale of a man self-made and self-unmade, a man in times that he touched and transformed while he himself changed under the impact of experience, successes and failures.

Son of the French Revolution, he learned that destiny in the modern world takes the shape of politics, then shaped both politics and destinies. In 1799, he wrote from Cairo to his brother Joseph: "... greatness bores me ... glory is insipid; at 29, I have exhausted everything." He did not know that he stood on the threshold of immortality; that his monuments and public works would outlast his victories; nor, best of all, that when he overreached and crashed, the women he had loved and left continued to stand by him. Englund's memorial, as fascinating as its subject, is a triumphant treat.

Marianne in Chains: Daily Life in the Heart of France During the German Occupation. Robert Gildea. Picador, 2004. \$17

Many good books have been written about France under the Occupation. This is one of the best. It avoids theory, intellectual circuits and high politics. It zeroes in on ordinary people, ordinary communities, in one area only: the valley of the Loire.

A professor of French history at Oxford, Gildea has plumbed French national, departmental, municipal and diocesan archives; German military archives; private memoirs and diaries; and many interviews. The result is engaging, scholarly and, above all, novel in its break with the politically correct stereotypes of those years—of Franco-German relations and Franco-French relations (more complex than generally assumed), and of the Resistance (devastating).

Typical of the latter is the gendarme officer who refused to write the history of the Resistance in Saumur, in which he took part, because "in 1941-43 the number of resisters could be counted on the fingers of two hands, while in 1945 the crowd of heroes was innumerable in Saumur, as elsewhere." Nuanced, subtle and stunningly detailed, this is a book not to be missed.

Vermeer in Bosnia: Cultural Comedies and Political Tragedies. Lawrence Weschler. Pantheon, 2004. \$25.95

A collection of essays is like a gift box of chocolates: dark, milk, soft centers, hard, chewy or simili-lickerish. Weschler offers something for all tastes, cooked up mostly in the style of *The New Yorker* magazine to which he has long contributed. If you like *New Yorker* essays, you will like "Vermeer in Bosnia," even though the Delft master makes only a cameo appearance that helps to remind us that the 17th-century Netherlands was as scarred by conflict as our own times.

I liked the caramels best: strong-flavored as in the Balkan pieces that depict Milosevic's crusade for a Greater Serbia, leaving behind a Lesser Serbia and great heaps of corpses; sticky as in the essays on Roman Polanski and Art Spiegelman; pungent as in the bulletins from Los Angeles; and lots more. Whatever you pick, you'll recognize a winning writer and savor his absorbing reportage.

Americans in Paris: A Literary Anthology. Edited by Adam Gopnik. *The Library of America*, 2004. \$40

Gopnik's inspired editing serves up a trove of enchanting passages penned by petulant ghosts who run from Benjamin Franklin to fashion editor Diana Vreeland, and on. Henry Adams waxes encomiastic about French newspapers; Edith Wharton expounds on Paris salons; Henry Miller is incoherent and pretentious; Gertrude Stein is incoherent and perceptive; Art Buchwald writes like a student (badly); James Baldwin writes like James Baldwin (deftly).

And there are revelations, like M.F.K. Fisher's attribution of the revival of the Gare de Lyon's grand restaurant to two American women writers. Many visitors, as Gopnik observes, are obsessed with French food and the pleasurable places dedicated to potatoes and provender. Look them all up. You won't regret it.

The Thurber Letters: The Wit, Wisdom, and Surprising Life of James Thurber. Edited by Harrison Kinney with Rosemary A. Thurber. Simon & Schuster, 2004. \$40

In March 1919, James Thurber, writing to a college chum from Paris, reports that he's been living in a *penion* for four months, and it's a mess: "Of course, there is a certain charm in the dark, old stairways—the high French windows. But gradually inconvenience and discomfort overcast fascination and charm. And there is no charm ... in carrots 3 times *le semaine* [sic]. Nor in the utter absence of running water."

Eleven years later, this time from New York, he tells a girlfriend that at night he dreams about cats or catastrophes, rarely about women. "However, about 3:30 in the afternoon, Sex begins to creep in. It knocks at my door, it rears its ugly head from behind the radiator, it calls on the phone, it whistles in the wind."

Thirty years on, in 1960, Thurber quotes an old mentor from his student days at Ohio State averring that "intellect is the conventional part of imagination." He takes issue with the assumption that the humorous, the moralistic and the sad are separate values. Humor covers morals, "it is part and parcel of pathos." And he quotes a quote: "Youth will be served, frequently stuffed with chestnuts."

By now he's 66, famous, nearly blind; and we are on Page 274 of this wonderful 762-page collection of letters, admirably and unobtrusively edited by the author of "James Thurber: His Life and Times," with the help of Thurber's granddaughter. Personal or public, angry, charming, lovelorn, frustrated, wicked, wild,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

From Our Book Critics

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

romantic, misogynist, always intelligent and witty, this is a splendid compilation.

The Spectacle of Flight: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1920-1950. Robert Wohl. Yale University Press, 2005. \$39.95

A decade ago, Robert Wohl, historian and pilot, penned the glorious "A Passion for Wings," which traced the impact of aviation on the Western imagination between 1908 and 1918. "The Spectacle of Flight" carries that exploration to 1950, beginning with Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight and ending with the bombings of World War II and their cinematic reflections.

When Wohl's chronicle opens in the 1920s, flying is still an exceptional, frequently hazardous experience. Unemployed wartime fliers pioneered air mail, but passenger traffic became routine only in the late 1930s and after World War II. Domestication of flight technologies took longer than that of aviation's close contemporary, cinema.

Both arts offered an unwonted magic experience, and both participated in making the first half of the 20th century an age of spectacle par excellence in aspirations, entertainment, commerce and politics. Wohl traces the connections between flying and film, flying and fascism, air mail services and passenger traffic. Above all, he writes an adventure story in several episodes, each hooked to a few remarkable figures. It makes for a thrilling tale—impressively researched, sensitively told, lavishly illustrated—that reads like a novel.

By Anna J. Schwartz

Global Capital Markets: Integration, Crisis, and Growth. Maurice Obstfeld and Alan M. Taylor. Cambridge University Press, 2004. \$65

Brookings Trade Forum 2004: Globalization, Poverty, and Inequality. Edited by Susan M. Collins and Carol Graham. Brookings Institution Press, 2004. \$30 paper

Two scholarly works emphasize different aspects of globalization, the term that has come into general use to describe movements of goods and services and factors of production (land, capital, labor) across international borders, and international capital flows. Despite the differentiation, far from being independent categories, they are highly interdependent.

When foreigners purchase more U.S. assets—Treasury securities, corporate stocks and bonds, real estate, factories—than American purchases of foreign assets, there must be an opposite and equal change in the trade balance. In this case, purchases of foreign goods and services by U.S. residents must exceed U.S. sales of goods and services to foreigners. Obstfeld and Taylor's work focuses on capital flows across borders. The Brookings book focuses on trade flows across borders.

The study of global capital markets traces their evolution from medieval beginnings but concentrates on developments in capital mobility and global market integration during four episodes: between 1870 and 1914—the first globalization experience; the interwar period, when capital mobility broke down; the Bretton Woods period, when capital controls interdicted mobility, and the period since its demise, marked by the current resumption of the first globalization experience.

Obstfeld and Taylor examine the benefits of open capital markets as well as the costs. They conclude that an open capital market is not invariably a winning proposition. For industrialized countries, the benefits of global market integration have been huge. For some low-income countries, capital account opening has been a disaster because their economic and institutional conditions were inappropriate. For others, the risk of opening capital markets was worth taking.

The tradeoff between costs and benefits is most problematic for developing countries beset with rudimentary financial institutions, corruption, uncertain property rights, and unrepresentative political parties. According to Obstfeld and Taylor, the costs since the early 1990s principally are financial crises in Western Europe, Latin America, East Asia and Russia, which imposed substantial losses on developing and emerging market countries. They advocate liberalizing a capital market by low-income countries only after the right preconditions have been achieved.

Nine commissioned papers, accompanied by the Trade Forum discussants' comments and the editors' summary, are included in the Brookings study. The main theme is the relationship among globalization, poverty and inequality. The issues covered by the papers, however, are wide-ranging, including the effects of globalization on health and on happiness. To give a sense of the findings, I have chosen to report the content of two papers on the effects of globalization of trade, one on poverty and the other on inequality.

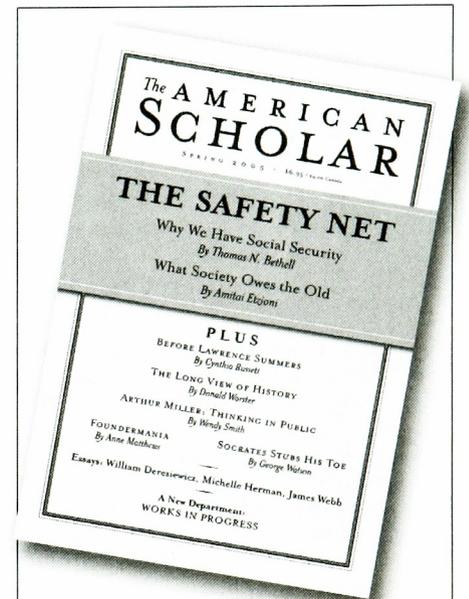
A paper by Goldberg and Pavenik deals with the relationships between trade liberalization and poverty. They find that, in many developing countries, sectors that are heavily protected by tariffs and nontariff barriers employ predominantly unskilled workers earning low wages. In the short and medium term, trade liberalization tended to harm these workers. Moreover, in the 1980s and '90s, major labor reallocation across sectors following trade reform was not observed.

There is little evidence that trade reform leads to an increase in black-market employment and worsened working conditions. Trade reform probably changes relative prices of goods output and thus could affect consumption, but little is known empirically about trade policy changes and changes in relative prices.

A paper by Easterly examines different effects on the inequality of two alternative models. In one model, the channel through which globalization affects inequality between and within

countries is relative differences in the countries' factor endowments but no differences in their level of productivity growth. In this case, inequality is reduced. The other model, in which differences in productivity drive the results, inequality may rise both between and within countries.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



Looking for a Smart Graduation Present?

Give your favorite graduates a subscription to *The American Scholar*

For a gift subscription, please call

1-800-821-4567

KRSP05

From Our Book Critics

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

To explain why the two models give different answers for the effects of trade flows on inequality, Easterly studies 17 types of evidence to check which model fits each real-world episode. In some cases, productivity channels are better able to account for the inequality result, but knowledge of the channels by which productivity differences operate is limited. In other cases, differences in factor endowments have good explanatory power.

The two works reviewed here show that both the capital markets and trade aspects of globalization may not benefit all developing economies but, contrary to critics of globalization, the fault may not inhere in transactions across international borders.

By Germaine Cornélissen

Unfiltered: Conflicts over Tobacco Policy and Public Health. Edited by Eric A Feldman and Ronald Bayer. Harvard University Press, 2004. \$55

The authors offer a broad international comparison of the historical, cultural and institutional frameworks underlying changes in tobacco policy during the past half century. Eight national case studies of major industrialized democracies—the United States, Japan, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Denmark—explore the political, economic and legal forces that have shaped tobacco policy.

The chapters in this book are contributed by an international group of political scientists, sociologists, historians, legal scholars, public health experts and ethicists. They review how these nations share a broad commitment to liberal political values but approach questions of tobacco regulation from interestingly different perspectives. Three cross-national essays attempt to answer questions raised by some striking similarities and important differences in tobacco policy among the various countries. Common policy questions relate to restrictions

in tobacco advertising, limits on where smoking is permitted, and taxation of tobacco products.

In the 1950s, scientific evidence started accumulating that showed that smoking increases the risk of developing cancer, heart disease and other health problems, making it responsible for millions of premature deaths. An impressive consensus developed about the fact that smoking constitutes a health risk with enormous consequences. Yet considerable disagreement remained, both within and across nations, about the most appropriate public policy response to the health burden from smoking. The powerful economic interests of both corporations and nations have clearly had a limiting effect on public health policy.

Interestingly, perhaps more effective than the scientific evidence itself has been the erosion of the social image of cigarette smoking as a rational consumer choice by informed adults. This has played a critical role in the enactment of aggressive tobacco regulations. In the last 50 years, smoking went from being widely perceived as socially attractive to becoming a dirty and smelly social offense.

Anti-smoking forces have become most successful by questioning the voluntary nature of smoking. Focusing on “children and bystanders first” undercuts the traditional notion of smoking as a voluntary behavior. Emphasis on the impact of passive smoking and the addictive properties of nicotine challenges the image of smoking as a rational choice made by individuals. The importance of public support is also illustrated by the French experience of non-compliance with regulations. This indicates the significance of the precise timing of public health campaigns, and how they fit within prevailing cultural expectations.

Ethical problems for anti-tobacco efforts now stem from the fact that it is the poorest who continue to smoke. Tragically, smoking rates have been relatively untouched by public health measures in the world’s poorest nations. While smoking rates have been declining in high-income countries, they have risen sharply in many low- and middle-income nations, raising concerns about expected tobacco-related morbidity and mortality.

¡Tequila! A Natural and Cultural History. Ana G. Valenzuela-Zapata and Gary Paul Nabhan. University of Arizona Press, 2003. \$29.95; paper \$14.95

The authors succeed in providing a succinct and enjoyable account of the development of an industry—the production of tequila—from ancient farming traditions to the modern mass-production of one of the world’s favorite spirits. The reader is first introduced to the beauty of the rich varieties of the agave plant and the task of describing and categorizing each specimen. This is done in order to understand the evolution of agaves as they have been influenced by humans and by their pollinators. The fascination of the authors with the agave fields is felt throughout the book.

The making of tequila was much like that of other mescals until 1875, when its Mexican entrepreneurs achieved name recognition. It took another century to modernize the distillation process. With demand for the drink spreading well beyond its local consumers, the distilleries sought huge quantities of firewood, thereby impoverishing the forest cover surrounding the agave fields.

A focus on the blue agave, in preference to other mescals, coincided with the dropping of other cultures. Because tequila was more profitable than other crops, those crops were gradually abandoned. This diminished the diversity of cultivars, which elevated the risk of infestation and disease of the blue agaves. Those developments eventually led to an epidemic devastation of the agave fields caused by a larva that burrowed into the heart of the plant, destroying its host.

The authors are a leading agronomist in Mexico’s tequila industry and a respected ethnobotanist. They are uniquely qualified to discuss not only the natural history but also the economics and cultural significance of the agave plants and the production of tequila. Their book offers another lesson about the dangers of monoculture farms, and about the merits of little-known varieties and nearly forgotten production methods that may ultimately save an overgrown industry.

THE KEY REPORTER

THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY
1606 New Hampshire Ave. NW
Washington DC 20009
Tel: (202) 265-3808
Fax: (202) 986-1601

Periodicals Postage
PAID
at Washington DC
and at additional mailing addresses