



# PHI BETA KAPPA

THE KEY REPORTER

WINTER 2008



**CHANGING OF THE GUARD IN WASHINGTON — WHAT TO EXPECT?  
ΦBK LECTURE SERIES IN NEW YORK CITY, JANUARY 15**



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## Curiosity Killed the Cat (Not)

We live in a sea of adages, maxims, aphorisms, and other kinds of brief, pithy sayings drawn from any number of sources — traditional cultures, parables, poems, Ben Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanack*, and so on. They are useful. The right maxim can provide a colorful way of recommending wise action: "A stitch in time saves nine." But like any tool, they can be misused. We sometimes fail to see the real point. Robert Frost has turned out to have been remarkably adept at providing adages prone to misuse. "Good fences make good neighbors." Well, maybe, but the character in "Mending Wall" who says that is pretty obviously a dolt, while the narrator of the poem makes an oppositional point: "Something there is that does not love a wall." And in "The Road Not Taken," "I took the one less traveled by" is understood by close readers to be an anticipation of a moment when the speaker will conceal the fact that his choice had been between roads traveled "about the same."

It's commonplace to note that such sayings often come in opposing pairs: "Look before you leap," and "He who hesitates is lost." My favorite such pair actually achieves a kind of self-referential elegance. Here is Friedrich Nietzsche's aphorism about aphorisms, with a reminder that getting the point takes some brains: "In the mountains the shortest route is from peak to peak, but for that you must have long legs." And here is Ludwig Wittgenstein's reminder that, wonderful as the aphorism may be, it may be best to let it remain *in situ*, undeprived of context: "Raisins may be the best part of a cake; but a bag of raisins is not better than a cake." Battling bits of wisdom!

All this swirled as back-thought when I began to reflect on something that has emerged from Phi Beta Kappa's study of deliberation. We began to understand how curiosity is a driving force in the intellectual life, and how complacent indifference to what you don't know stultifies the very capacities we like to think of as making us most fully human. So curiosity is a very good thing — even essential. Then what are we to make of "curiosity killed the cat"?

Those who study these things, such as the Web site The Phrase Finder, tell us that the maxim began life in English as "Care killed the cat." Elizabethan playwright Ben Jonson used it, and it is imbedded in a line in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. "Care," in this context, clearly means something like "sorrow" or "worry." A far cry from curiosity. But by the end of the 19th century, the priggish variation was in use: it turns up in an O. Henry story. In contemporary use, the admonition is unmistakable. Don't ask too many questions.

There's something sad about a linguistic history that runs from "don't let things get you down," to "curb your inquistiveness." But it's worse than sad; it's wrong. It's wrong in a very deep sense, in that it instructs us to repress the only energy that leads to the growth of knowledge and the improvement of understanding. It instructs us to ignore the only impetus toward constructive engagement with those with whom we disagree. The question that makes deliberation more than a sterile exchange of different opinions is this one: "How could she think that's right?" Unless we ask that, we will never awaken what American philosopher Martha Nussbaum calls "the narrative imagination," the capacity that lets us, however imperfectly, gain a sense of the way others perceive and understand the world. And if we can't do that, we're stuck. If those who say that curiosity killed the cat are happy to be stuck, then that's something I don't understand. It makes me curious.

John Churchill  
Secretary

# SPOTLIGHT



Larry Baer (ΦBK, University of California, Berkeley, 1980) with his father, Monroe Baer, Jr. (ΦBK, University of California, Berkeley, 1943)

*Phi Beta Kappa has always meant a great deal to me. My father was a proud member of Phi Beta Kappa, and when I was growing up, I remember him wearing his key on occasion. I'm proud to continue in that family tradition and hope that my children will have the opportunity to become members one day.*

*I also value Phi Beta Kappa because of its emphasis on honoring those who pursue a liberal arts education. Though I'm currently in the business of sports and the entertainment industry, I truly believe that a broad education in the liberal arts is, in many ways, the best preparation for the challenges we meet in our professional and personal lives.*

*I wouldn't trade my liberal arts education at UC-Berkeley for anything.*

— Larry Baer

Larry Baer is the president of the San Francisco Giants. He is responsible for the overall day-to-day functioning of the Giants organization, both on the business and baseball sides of the operation, and he was the driving force behind every phase of the Giant's new home at AT&T Park, now a San Francisco landmark and one of the most popular venues in the country for special events.

Under his direction, the Giants enjoyed perhaps their finest hour in San Francisco in 2000. The franchise sold 3,244,320 tickets, shattering the all-time club attendance record by more than 650,000. AT&T Park opened to widespread acclaim, and Baer joined team president Peter Magowan in throwing out the first-pitch at the park's historic opening day April 11, 2000 — an honor for which

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### ON THE COVER

Stevens Hall, University of Maine. Delta of Maine, established in 1923, was chosen to be one of ΦBK's Parmele Chapters. Photo courtesy of the University of Maine.

## New ΦBK Web Site Provides Access to Social Networking Online

You've just attended your Phi Beta Kappa initiation ceremony, and you're wondering how you might keep in touch with your fellow ΦBKs after graduation. Or perhaps you've recently moved to a new town and want to know if there are any other members in the area who you might add to your professional network while building your career.

ΦBK members can now keep in touch by joining the Society's online member network. Login on the new ΦBK Web site and reconnect with old friends or make new contacts in your community or across the country.

### About the ΦBK Member Network

To join the member network, login on the ΦBK Web site. Click on the link to the network, choose your display name, and add any information that you would like to share with other members to your online profile.

Members who join have access to many different social networking tools

and features, including a blog, photo album, calendar and messaging service.



Members can use the network to contact other ΦBKs and invite them to become "Friends" on the site. Accepting an invitation to become "Friends" allows members to have access to each other's profiles. Members can also create "Friend Circles" for communication and discussion among a selected group of the

member's "Friends."

### How do I login?

Go to the login box on the ΦBK Web site located at [www.pbk.org](http://www.pbk.org).

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

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

For example, if your name is Mary Jones and you were elected in 2001, your password is maryjones01. If your last name is hyphenated, include the hyphen.

Need your Member ID or have a problem logging in? Call (202) 745-3242 or write to [membership@pbk.org](mailto:membership@pbk.org). We will be happy to assist you. ■

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## ΦBK Honors U.S. Professors of the Year with Capitol Hill Reception

Every fall, Phi Beta Kappa partners with the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Carnegie Foundation in honoring the outstanding scholars and teachers selected as U.S. Professors of the Year.

This year's Capitol Hill reception, co-sponsored by ΦBK and CASE, was held November 20 at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. The honorees were greeted at the reception by ΦBK Associate Secretary Scott Lurding, where they mingled with members of the U.S. Congress and other guests.

Among the State and National U.S. Professors of the Year for 2008, the following are also ΦBK members:

### Martin C. Carlisle

ΦBK, University of Delaware, 1991  
Professor of Computer Science, United States Air Force Academy

### Scott E. Casper

ΦBK, Princeton University, 1986

Professor of History, University of Nevada, Reno

### Jerusha B. Detweiler-Bedell

ΦBK, Stanford University, 1995  
Associate Professor of Psychology, Lewis & Clark College

### Jeffrey Gray

ΦBK, West Virginia University, 1992  
Associate Professor of Computer Science, University of Alabama at Birmingham

### Robert Hackey

ΦBK, University of Rhode Island, 1987  
Professor of Health Policy and Management, Providence College

### Mary Spratt

ΦBK, St. Olaf College, 1957  
Cox Endowed Professor of Biology, William Woods University

### Ralph G. Williams

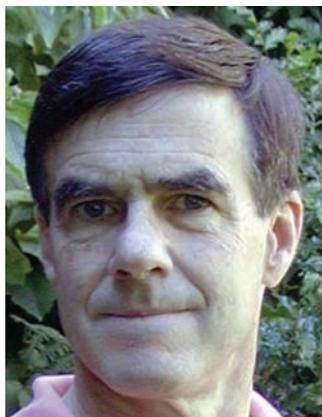
ΦBK, University of Michigan, 1965

Thurnau Professor of English, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

CASE and the Carnegie Foundation have been selecting the U.S. Professors of the Year since 1981. CASE assembles two preliminary panels of judges to select finalists. The Carnegie Foundation then convenes the third and final panel, which selects four national winners. CASE and Carnegie select state winners from top entries resulting from the judging process. The honorees are selected from faculty members nominated by colleges throughout the country.

TIAA-CREF, one of America's leading financial services organizations and higher education's premier retirement system, became the primary sponsor for the awards ceremony in 2000. Additional support for the program is received from a number of higher education associations, including Phi Beta Kappa. ■

## Davison Soper Receives Sakurai Prize



University of Oregon professor and past president of the Alpha of Oregon chapter, Davison “Dave” Soper (ΦBK, Amherst College, 1965) is one of three U.S. physicists who will share the 2009 J.J. Sakurai Prize for Theoretical Physics.

The prize will be presented formally in May during the American Physical Society’s annual meeting in Denver. Soper was cited for his “work

in perturbative quantum chromodynamics, including applications to problems pivotal to the interpretation of high-energy particle collisions.” Quantum chromodynamics is a theory of strong nuclear interactions among quarks — fundamental constituents of matter.

Soper is a member of CTEQ, a collaboration of 30 scientists from 17 universities and federal labs, all of whom pursue high-energy physics centered on quantum chromodynamics.

The prize honors J.J. Sakurai, a Japanese-American particle physicist who authored leading textbooks on quantum mechanics and the principles of elementary particles during a career at the University of Chicago and UCLA.

This year’s winners bring the total number of honorees to 36, including three who later won the Nobel Prize. The other selected scientists chosen by the American Physical Society for the prestigious honor are John Collins of

*Continued on page 10*

### ΦBK in the News

- CBS News President Sean McManus has announced that **Chip Reid** (ΦBK, Vassar College, 1977) will be CBS News’ Chief White House Correspondent. The appointment is effective January 5, 2009. (“CBS Names Reid to White House, Axelrod Back to NY” TVNEWSER 10 Nov. 2008. [http://www.mediabistro.com/tvnewser/cbs/cbs\\_names\\_reid\\_to\\_white\\_house\\_axelrod\\_back\\_to\\_ny\\_100119.asp](http://www.mediabistro.com/tvnewser/cbs/cbs_names_reid_to_white_house_axelrod_back_to_ny_100119.asp))
- Former U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce **Kenneth I. Juster** (ΦBK, Harvard, 1976) has agreed to serve as a senior advisor on the advisory board of Sunovia Energy Technologies, Inc. (“Former U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce Kenneth I. Juster to Advise Sunovia Energy Technologies” PRNewswire 23 Oct. 2008.)
- According to “The New York Times Politics Blog,” Michigan Governor **Jennifer Granholm** (ΦBK, University of California-Berkeley, 1984) played the part of Sarah Palin in practice debates with Vice President-elect Joe

Biden. (“Granholm to Play Palin in Biden Debate Prep” *The New York Times* 10 Sept. 2008. <http://theaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/09/10/biden-chooses-debate-prep-partner/>)

• Neil Munro writes in *National Journal*: “The story of **Phyllis Schlafly**’s life can be read in the gold charms that dangle from the necklace draped around her neck.” One of these charms, Munro says, is her 1944 ΦBK key from Washington University. (Monroe, Neil. “A Feminine Force, But Don’t Call Her A Feminist” *National Journal* 1 Sept. 2008. [http://www.nationaljournal.com/conventions/co\\_20080901\\_1957.php](http://www.nationaljournal.com/conventions/co_20080901_1957.php))

• **Barack Hussein Obama, Sr.**, father of President-elect Barack Obama, was the first African student at the University of Hawai’i. He became a member of ΦBK there in 1962. (Maraniss, David. “Obama in Hawaii” *Honolulu Advertiser* 29 Aug. 2008. <http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080829/NWS05/808290416/1009/LOCALNEWS-FRONT>) ■

### New Membership Benefits

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



*Colonial Williamsburg*

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



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

#### How to Get the Discounts

To take advantage of these exciting new benefits and review the full details, members will need to login at [www.pbk.org](http://www.pbk.org).

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# Frankenstein and Feminism at the University of Mary Washington

## A Report from ΦBK's Visiting Scholar Program

by Charlotte Johnson Jones

The co-convenor of the Visiting Scholar Committee at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va., was hesitant to ask. Would ΦBK Visiting Scholar Anne Mellor think it inappropriate to deliver her lecture “Mothering Monsters: Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*” the week before Halloween? Would the distinguished professor of English and women’s studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, balk at popularizing a topic central to her reputation as a scholar of women writers, women’s studies and the literature commonly known as British Romanticism?

When the gracious answer came back via e-mail, “I’d love to do the FRANKENSTEIN lecture. . . . I’m very much looking forward to my visit with you — and am happy to do whatever you like,” the tone for another successful ΦBK Visiting Scholar stay at UMW was set. Mellor proved to be a knowledgeable, flexible and energetic visiting scholar, one of many that Kappa of Virginia has hosted since the chapter was chartered at UMW in 1971.

In keeping with Society’s guidelines, Mellor’s schedule included classroom visits, the public lecture and informal opportunities to meet and talk with students, with an emphasis on undergraduate participation. Since UMW’s traditional College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and graduate campuses are geographically separated by almost seven miles, activities were set on the CAS campus and naturally attracted the undergraduate audience. Almost 40 students helped kick off the visit with Lunch and Conversation at Simpson Library. Lunch and Conversation — or depending on the timing, Tea and Conversation — at the library is an event that has become a standby on the UMW Visiting Scholar schedule. Drawing on the privately endowed DeAngelo Lecture Fund, University Librarian LeRoy Strohl

springs for free tea, sandwiches, sweets and food. Nobody gets chased out of the building for eating. Nobody gets shushed. In fact, everyone is encouraged to join in the discussion.

This year’s topic was feminism in the academy, and the conversation began with a brief interview between Mellor and moderator Kristin Marsh, assistant professor of sociology.



Anne Mellor, ΦBK Visiting Scholar, 2008-2009

Marsh’s history of social theory class was among the audience, as was English, Linguistics and Communications Senior Instructor and former ΦBK chapter President Constance Smith’s first year seminar on international short fiction by women, whose members had voted unanimously to attend the session in lieu of their scheduled class session. As a founder of both Stanford University’s and UCLA’s Women’s Studies programs, Mellor was able to bring 25 years of experience to an idea currently under active consideration on the UMW campus, establishment of an interdisciplinary gender and women’s studies major. Asked if UMW was too late in the game to establish a meaningful program, Mellor suggested that an interdisciplinary major offers the

advantage of integrating women’s studies and a feminist perspective into all departments, a benefit that a separate department cannot necessarily provide, and she encouraged listeners to move forward in their planning.

Just how intriguing the feminist perspective can be in a given discipline became clear in the lectures Mellor delivered at UMW. As co-editor of the groundbreaking anthology *British Literature, 1780-1830*, and the author of many articles and books on writers from this period, including the well-known Mary Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft as well as many previously unexamined voices, Mellor has been an active agent in the transformation of the literary canon to include women writing in all genres. Her work considers the biological, social, political and cultural influences on women and their work, and the result is a new look at old images we thought we clearly understood.

Accordingly, by the end of Mellor’s *Frankenstein* lecture, the audience of students, faculty and community members had ditched their stock picture of Boris Karloff’s bullet head and embedded electrodes for a fresh take on Shelley’s creature and the extraordinary forces in the author’s life that caused her to give birth to him when she was only 18. At the reception following, the common comment in the buzz was, “I really need to read it” . . . either again or for the first time.

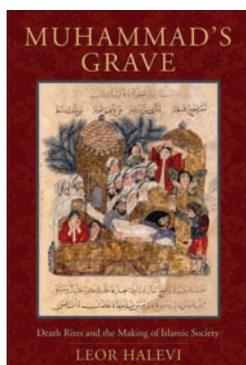
Mellor’s visit was coordinated by the UMW’s Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar Committee and co-sponsored by the UMW Campus Academic Resources Committee; the Department of English, Linguistics and Communication; the Department of Sociology; the UMW James Farmer Program in Human Rights; and the University Libraries. ■

*Charlotte Johnson Jones is the Reference & Social Sciences Librarian at UMW (ΦBK, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1974).*

## ΦBK's Book Award Winners for 2008

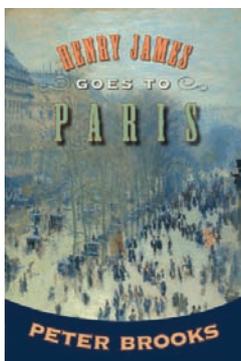
ΦBK's Book Awards are given each year in December for outstanding scholarly works published in the United States. The winners are drawn from the fields of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, must be of broad interest and accessible to the general reader. Each winner receives a \$10,000 prize.

### RALPH WALDO EMERSON AWARD



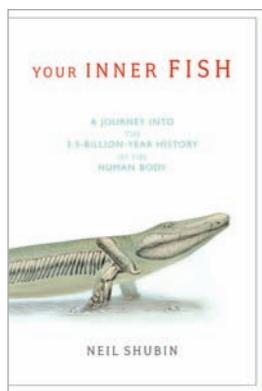
Leor Halevi will receive the Ralph Waldo Emerson Award for *Muhammad's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society* (Columbia University Press, 2007). This award was established in 1960 for significant contributions to interpretations of the intellectual and cultural condition of humanity. Halevi is an associate professor at Vanderbilt University. His work has won numerous distinctions, including fellowships from the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies.

### CHRISTIAN GAUSS AWARD



Peter Brooks will receive the Christian Gauss Award for *Henry James Goes to Paris* (Princeton University Press, 2007). This award, given for books in the field of literary scholarship and criticism, was created in 1950 to honor a former Phi Beta Kappa president and distinguished scholar at Princeton University. Brooks is Sterling Professor of Comparative Literature at Yale University and from 2008-2014 Mellon Visiting Professor in the department of Comparative Literature and the Center for Human Values at Princeton University.

### BOOK AWARD IN SCIENCE



Neil Shubin will receive the Phi Beta Kappa Book Award in Science for *Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body* (Pantheon Books, 2008). This award is offered for outstanding contributions by scientists to the literature of science. Its purpose is to encourage literate and scholarly interpretations of the physical and biological sciences and mathematics. Shubin is provost of The Field Museum as well as a professor of organismal biology and anatomy at the University of Chicago, where he also serves as an associate dean.

These awards support the general mission of the Society to advocate for excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and to promote dialogue about important issues and ideas of our time in an environment of intellectual fellowship. ■



“In 1946, I learned as I was tapped for ΦBK that, in Greek, it stood for the idea: ‘The love of wisdom is the guide of life.’ As a professor of philosophy, I have spent a lifetime attempting to teach and inculcate the very same, identical truth. Oddly enough, the academic voice of philosophy and the high aim of ‘love of wisdom’ have often been unheard, ignored and neglected in both our society and in the university in the U.S. Yet, over the years, I have noticed that, often, ΦBK has been the main or the only support of the liberal arts in higher education. Often, it does so even better and more adequately than the teachers of philosophy themselves. How, then, can I help but sing the praises of ΦBK, and join in the chorus when I can, and accept with joy the invitation to the Secretary’s Circle?”

— Joseph N. Uemura

Joseph N. Uemura is the Paul Robert and Jean Shuman Hanna Professor of Philosophy, emeritus, at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is the author of four books in philosophy and the founder and editor of *Morningside Review* and *Hamline Review*.

**Join the Secretary's Circle.**

**Join the conversation.**

[secretarycircle@pbk.org](mailto:secretarycircle@pbk.org)

# Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Mississippi

## Chancellor Robert Khayat Recalls the Process and the Benefits of Acquiring a Chapter

Among the five top priorities our management team established when I became chancellor in 1995 was the privilege of sheltering a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

The University of Mississippi was established in 1844 as a liberal arts university. We began our first academic year in October 1848. Through the years we had on several occasions applied for recognition by Phi Beta Kappa but had not been successful.

There were several reasons we made our application a high priority and devoted so much energy, time, financial resources and effort to our pursuit of a chapter. We were committed to providing our students extraordinary educational opportunities and recognition of their accomplishments. We believed that our faculty members of Phi Beta Kappa would embrace the initiative and would realize a great sense of achievement if we were successful. Also, our alumni knew that they are graduates of a great public university, and they enthusiastically and generously supported our efforts.

Conversations I had with Doug Foard, then executive secretary of Phi Beta Kappa, helped us develop a plan. We began by asking our Phi Beta Kappa faculty if they would support and lead the effort. Then, following the suggestions received from Foard, we asked our university attorney, Mary Ann Connell, to assume the responsibility of writing the four-volume application — no small task. And finally, we focused on the following: enhancing the College of Liberal Arts faculty salaries, increasing our library holdings beyond the million-volume level

with a long-term commitment to continue to add to our collection, establishing our Honors College to attract the very best students, embarking on a commitment to an ambitious private gifts campaign that included the objectives associated with our Phi Beta

the high expectations of Phi Beta Kappa, we were thrilled, and we believed we were ready. Our visitors were kind and fair, but it was clear that a rigorous review was underway. All of us were pleased when we learned that the visiting committee would recommend us for recognition.

But the triennial meeting of the Council of Phi Beta Kappa was yet to be held, and it was there that we would learn our fate.

So many times in the past we had fallen short for one reason or another. Library resources, faculty salaries, credentials of students, insufficient numbers of high-quality academic programs and extraordinary intellectually challenging opportunities for students, as well as inadequate governance of athletics, had each been a factor in prior denials. Having addressed each of these issues and more, in addition to submitting a compelling written application, resulted in a momentous day for us on October 22, 2000, when the public announcement

was made. We received an overwhelming affirmative vote from the Council of Phi Beta Kappa, and a statewide celebration ensued.

Of course an impressive and dignified ceremony was held on campus to receive our charter. Since that historic day, 506 students have been inducted into our university's chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

Perhaps the most gratifying outcome of sheltering a chapter is that our top students now have opportunities for membership in America's most prestigious academic honorary society. Our fundamental reason for existing and functioning is to provide extraordinary opportunities for our students. Being

*Continued on page 10*



University of Mississippi Chancellor Robert Khayat in front of the Lyceum, the first building constructed on the school's Oxford, Miss., campus

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“I think the Phi Beta Kappa installation and initiation ceremony was the most important day in the modern history of our university.”

— Robert Khayat

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Kappa proposal, and finally uniting as a community in our relentless pursuit of the privilege of sheltering a chapter.

Faculty leadership was critical to the process. Ronald Schroeder, associate professor of English, was chosen by our Phi Beta Kappa faculty to lead the process. Several of our alumni contributed extraordinary funds to create an endowment for liberal arts faculty salaries, increase the funding of our library acquisitions, endow scholarships for gifted students, expand our visiting speakers' agenda and construct our world-class performing arts center.

When we were told that a visiting team would come to our campus for on-site evaluation of our response to

# Changing of the Guard in Washington — What to Expect?

## Inauguration of the Phi Beta Kappa Lecture Series in New York City, January 15

Five days before President-elect Barack Obama will take the oath of office, ΦBK members in New York City will participate in the inaugural Phi Beta Kappa Lecture Series, “The Changing of the Guard in Washington — What to Expect?” The speaker, broadcast journalist Judy Woodruff from “The News Hour with Jim Lehrer,” will discuss the outlook for the new president, problems facing the United States and the domestic and international issues his administration will face.

Immediately following Woodruff’s lecture, Bill Baker will serve as the moderator in a roundtable discussion with other journalists. Baker is the Claudia Aquaviva Distinguished Professor of Education Journalist-in-Residence at Fordham University, president emeritus of Educational Broadcasting Corporation and executive-in-residence at the Columbia University Business School.

The lecture will be held on the evening of January 15, 2009, at Fordham University’s Lincoln Center

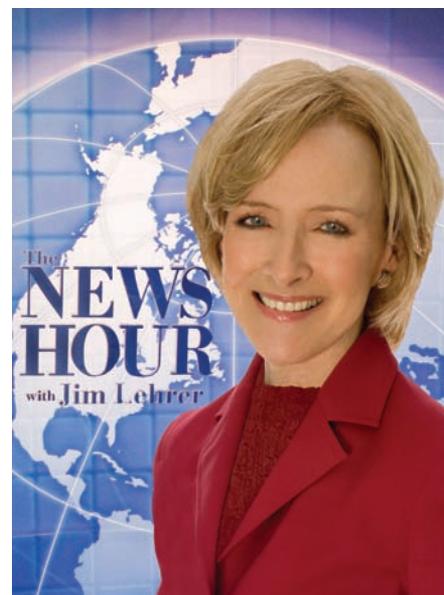
Campus. A wine and cheese reception will follow the lecture.

Online registration on the ΦBK Web site opens December 1. The cost is \$25 per person.

This program was developed by the ΦBK national office in Washington, D.C., in cooperation with the ΦBK Association of New York.

The Society plans to expand its Phi Beta Kappa Lecture Series to other parts of the country in order to provide its members with greater opportunities for intellectual fellowship and allow the Society to return to its historic role of participation in a larger, national dialogue about the important issues of our time.

Since its founding in 1776, Phi Beta Kappa has stood for freedom of inquiry and expression, disciplinary rigor, breadth of intellectual perspective, the cultivation of skills of deliberation and ethical reflection, the pursuit of wisdom, and the application of the fruits of scholarship and research in practical life. The Society champions these values in the confidence that a



Judy Woodruff, inaugural lecturer for the ΦBK Lecture Series in New York City, January 15

world influenced by them will be a more just and peaceful world.

Register for this event and purchase tickets at [www.pbk.org](http://www.pbk.org). ■

## Parmele Chapters Develop Outreach Programs and Best Practices

Over the last half-century, American higher education has changed dramatically. Colleges and universities now exhibit greater diversity in size and purpose. Undergraduate populations are also more diverse than ever before. Honor societies have proliferated. And new disciplines have emerged to claim the allegiance of students and faculty.

The continued preeminence of the Phi Beta Kappa Society is critically dependent on chapters successfully adapting the organization’s historic strengths to this new environment.

The Society initiated the Parmele Project in 2007 to provide selected chapters with grants to support activities that increase awareness of ΦBK and its mission on their campuses, and improve acceptance rates among students elected to join the Society.

The designated Parmele Chapters develop programs that help to strengthen their chapter and provide models for Best Practices to the Society’s other chapters.

Since the project began two years ago, chapters at the following schools have participated in the program: University of Colorado, Duke University, Florida State University, University of Maine, North Carolina State University, University of South Carolina, Stetson University, University of Texas, University of Washington and

*Continued on page 10*



Michael Morgan (left), professor of atmospheric and oceanic science, Charles Franklin (center), professor of political science, and University of Wisconsin-Madison ΦBK Chapter President Jonathan Martin, professor of atmospheric and oceanic science. This photo was taken following Franklin’s lecture “The Structure and Dynamics of the 2008 Election” held October 6.

DAVISON SOPER

*Continued from 5*

Penn State University and Keith Ellis of Fermilab near Chicago. ■

*Previously reported by Inside Oregon, published by the Office of Communications at the University of Oregon and reprinted with permission.*

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UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

*Continued from 8*

accepted for membership in Phi Beta Kappa is an extraordinary achievement.

Through the years, Mississippi has been challenged by economic, cultural, educational, health care and political issues. Often we have been excluded from the national discourse or have been burdened by negative images and perceptions.

Acceptance into the exclusive circle of top colleges and universities who shelter chapters of Phi Beta Kappa had a dramatic impact on our self-perception as well as how we are perceived by others. We believe this milestone benefitted the state at large as well as our university.

Creation of our Honors College, Institute for International Studies, Racial Reconciliation program, Leadership Center and other high-quality academic enrichment programs attracted more Phi Beta Kappa-quality students. We have been told by numerous students that the opportunity to earn the Phi Beta Kappa key was a major factor in their selection of Ole Miss.

As the flagship university of our state, as well as our state's oldest university, it is our responsibility to lead. Successfully pursuing a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa reinforced and strengthened our leadership role.

From its inception our chapter has brought great value to our campus. Induction ceremonies attract the families of our students as well as members of our community. Each year, a highly respected speaker addresses the class of inductees, and the day is one of the highlights of our academic year.

Our university is grateful for the privilege of being among the select group of colleges and universities recognized by Phi Beta Kappa. ■

*Robert Khayat is the 15th Chancellor of the University of Mississippi.*

*Under his leadership, UM became the first public institution of higher learning in the state to have a ΦBK chapter.*

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PARMELE CHAPTERS

*Continued from 9*

University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Recently, the University of Wisconsin-Madison held its first event of the year on October 6, with special guest Charles Franklin from the university's political science department.

"This event exemplifies how an active ΦBK chapter can take advantage of the expertise on a diverse campus and sponsor illuminating presentations about events of the day," said Jon Martin, president of Alpha of Wisconsin.

Franklin spoke on "The Structure and Dynamics of the 2008 Election." He is a world expert in congressional and presidential elections, campaigns, campaign ads, tracking polls, public opinion polls, exit polls, survey and polling methodology, statistical methods, Supreme Court and public opinion. Franklin also co-developed Pollster.com, which provides polling data to the national media. ■

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LARRY BAER

*Continued from 3*

many Phi Beta Kappans might gladly trade their keys. Since then, the club has enjoyed continued success at AT&T Park, ranking third in the National League and fourth overall in cumulative attendance.

Baer was a key leader in assembling the current ownership group and negotiating the 1992 ownership sale that kept the Giants in San Francisco, and he has been a vital strategist and negotiator of the club's major transactions since that time, including the Giants partnership with Comcast and FOX, which makes it possible for Giants fans to see virtually every game on television.

Working for the Giants is like going home for Baer, in more ways than one. Not only is Baer a fourth generation San Franciscan, he began his

career with the Giants. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1980, where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, Baer joined the Giants as the club's marketing director. In 1983, he left the Giants to attend Harvard Business School, followed by a four-year tenure at Westinghouse Broadcasting in San Francisco and New York. He finally returned to the Giants in December 1992 from CBS, Inc., in New York, where he had served as special assistant to the network's chairman, Lawrence Tisch.

In 1996, Baer was accorded the San Francisco Distinguished Leadership Award, a highly coveted honor given to individuals who have contributed to their community and provided leadership for a better quality of life. In addition, the Giant's executive received the prestigious Sports Torch of Learning Award from the

Scopus Society of the American Friends of the Hebrew University in 1995 and the Anti-Defamation League's Torch of Liberty Award in 2001.

Baer serves on the Board of Major League Baseball Enterprises, which oversees national television and radio contract negotiations, national sponsorship and licensing programs as well as the overall marketing of the industry.

Baer is a member of the boards of the California Academy of Sciences, the San Francisco Committee on Jobs, the Boys and Girls Club of San Francisco and the United Way of the Bay Area.

Baer and his wife, Pam, reside in San Francisco with their four children. ■

# MARY ISABEL SIBLEY FELLOWSHIP FOR GREEK STUDIES 2009

**P**hi Beta Kappa is now accepting applications for the 2009 Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship for Greek Studies.

Candidates must be unmarried women between the ages of 25 and 35. They must hold a doctorate or have fulfilled all the requirements for a doctorate except the dissertation, and they must be planning to devote full-time work to research during the fellowship year that begins September 1, 2009. Eligibility is not restricted to members of Phi Beta Kappa or to U.S. citizens.

Applications for the \$20,000 award are due **January 15, 2009**. The recipient of the award will be notified no later than May 15, 2009. Application materials can be found at [www.pbk.org/sibley](http://www.pbk.org/sibley).

Direct questions to Lucinda Morales, coordinator of society events, at [awards@pbk.org](mailto:awards@pbk.org).



## Phi Beta Kappa Membership Items

Phi Beta Kappa's distinctive key is the official symbol of membership in the Society. A complete line of solid gold and gold-plated key jewelry, as well as other items bearing the Society's insignia is available. Keys are made in three sizes in either 10-karat solid gold or 24-karat gold electroplate. The medium-size key is shown here actual size with matching 18-inch neck chain.

The Phi Beta Kappa paperweight is solid crystal with the key insignia etched inside. 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.

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 can also place an order or request the complete product brochure by calling (703) 491-4866 or by faxing (703) 491-2031. You can also order on line at [www.hand-hammer.com](http://www.hand-hammer.com). A three dollar shipping and handling fee is added to each order.

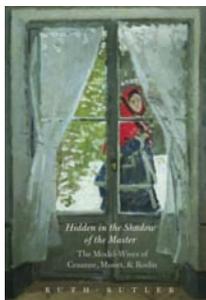
___ Phi Beta Kappa paperweight (crystal 4" high).....	\$24
___ Medium-size key, 10-karat gold (1-3/8" high).....	\$100
___ Medium-size key, 24-karat gold-plated (1-3/8" high).....	\$29
___ 10-karat gold neck chain, 18 inches (for gold key).....	\$69
___ 24-karat gold-plated chain, 18 inches (for plated key).....	\$8
___ Phi Beta Kappa chair (black maple and cherry).....	\$345
___ Shipping for chair (east of the Mississippi).....	\$29
___ Shipping for chair (west of the Mississippi).....	\$39
___ Shipping Fee (per order).....	\$3

Name, college, and date for personalization \_\_\_\_\_

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## From Our Book Critics

By Svetlana Alpers



**Hidden in the Shadow of the Master: The Model-Wives of Cézanne, Monet, & Rodin.** Ruth Butler. Yale University Press, 2008. 376 pages. \$35.00

Explanations of how we see often concentrate on what we fixate. But there is more to seeing than that. When we attend to the world what we attend to is not only the center — or a series of central fixations — but also the periphery. It is essential to comprehension. And peripheral vision, or the non-fixated, seems an appropriate rubric for the elusive nature of what is attended to in the three books here under review.

I was surprised by what a good book Ruth Butler has written. The title led me to fear a vengeful account of long-suffering wives mistreated by their artist husbands who, therefore, turn out to be not so great after all. Instead, the model-wives (I like to think a pun is intended!) are treated with respect as collaborators in their husbands' lives and art. Suffering there was, that is the human condition. But as Butler wisely suggests, surely it was worth it to these women for the creative lives in which they had a significant part.

The book is interesting as social history: the fact that these marrying men are distinguished from the determinedly non-marrying artists of a previous generation (Eugene Delacroix and Gustave Courbet, for example); the means of transportation by which women and their families from the country travelled to Paris; how women managed to live there on their own.

But the book also looks attentively at art. There are nuanced accounts of Paul Cézanne's remarkable portrait encounters with Marie-Hortense Fiquet, of Camille Monet's love of stylish dresses in which she posed, juxtaposed here with a poignant series

of paintings by Claude Monet, Édouard Manet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir of her with her child in the garden at Argenteuil, and we learn of Rose Beuret first modeling for a splendid plaster head then to become the (almost) life-long primary assistant in the production of Rodin's sculpture.

The modesty of the illustrations is appropriate. But one regrets that the publisher neglected to note the dimensions of all the works.



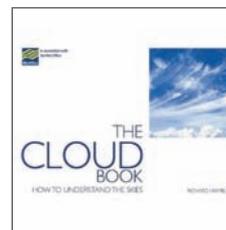
**William Henry Fox Talbot.** Geoffrey Batchen. Phaidon Books, 2008. 128 pages. \$39.95

“Fairy pictures” and “creations of a moment” are the words William Henry Fox Talbot used to describe the fleeting natural images cast onto paper by sunlight coming through a camera obscura. The year was 1833, and he was, as he wrote in a well-known account, at Lake Como on his honeymoon and dissatisfied with the drawings he made of the scenery with his own hand. His invention of what he called photogenic drawing — the fixing of camera obscura images on paper soaked with a solution of silver nitrate — was the solution to his immediate quandary. It was also a beginning of photography.

An English gentleman of means with an education that was both literary and scientific, Talbot (1800-1877) devoted but ten years (his last camera image was made in 1846) to experimenting in the making of remarkable still-lives (of plants, pieces of lace, crockery and glass) portraits, sculpture and architecture, pages of print, views of city and country. So many of the interests and possibilities of what we know as photography were in play here at the start, and some, such as the haunting *Crossed Muslin* (Screen) (plate 50), a by-product of experiments with photomechanical engraving, still remain to be taken up. Talbot may also be said to exemplify the complex roots of the practice: its basis in science, its

appeal as art, its commercial possibilities in reproductive printing when he went on to invent and patent what is now known as photogravure.

After Geoffrey Batchen's succinct introduction, the heart of this elegantly produced book is its 55 splendid prints. The world, which our eyes normally catch in passing and which no draftsman can capture in such detail, is presented to attentive view as had not been possible before.



**The Cloud Book: How to Understand the Skies.** Richard Hamblyn. David & Charles Ltd., 2008. 144 pages. \$16.99

We owe this book to the Met Office, which is the central governmental weather forecasting bureau in the UK, to the English science researcher and writer Richard Hamblyn, and also to Luke Howard (1772-1864), an amateur meteorologist from East London who in 1802 came up with the classification and designation of clouds by the Latin names such as cirrus, stratus and cumulus, by which they are still known and observed around the world.

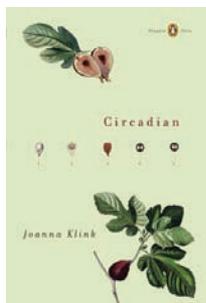
The book itself, a handy paperback printed in a landscape (or horizontal) format, offers a sequence of splendid color photographs of clouds taken at diverse (often identified) sites, arranged and classified according to their types (low, middle, high), and subgroups as introduced by the World Meteorological Organization in their 1939 atlas. Supplementary phenomena such as haloes, lightning and rainbows are included at the end to complete the picture of the skies.

We do not normally fixate on cloud formations as these photographs do. Further, in their presentation of multiple subdivisions of types, they emphasize a continuing process of growth and decay. Clouds, in nature but also in art, literally pass us by. Painters — think of Giovanni Bellini or Giovanni Battista Tiepolo — depict

clouds with care and purpose. But they are often considered less important than the figures or landscapes they are above.

This book will enable you to turn your attention to clouds — peripheral though they may appear in nature and in art.

By Germaine Cornelissen



**Circadian.** Joanna Klink. Penguin Poets, 2007. 80 pages. \$16.00

You may ask why I chose to review the poems of Joanna Klink. Not that I qualify to comment on poetry

or the English language! I have no such claim. Others have praised her art as “a meeting of minds and a reverence for the natural world that is tried by an awareness of mortality and ecological peril, these poems remain alert to the reparations of beauty and song, formally elegant, urgent and moving.” My interest in the book, in turn, came from its title and the fact that the author chose circadian rhythms as her inspiration to write about sleeping and waking, the opening and closing of flowers, bird migration or the heart’s rhythms.

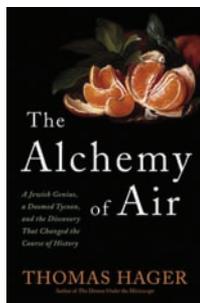
Circadian rhythms are what first brought me to this country to join the group of Franz Halberg, the father of chronobiology, the study of time in the life sciences. Science has come a long way from the early discussions of whether daily changes in temperature, blood pressure, heart rate and most other physiological functions are a mere response to environmental cycles or whether they are built in. Since the discovery of clock genes, not only is the genetic basis of circadian rhythms no longer disputed, their role is found to extend well beyond the coordination of a broad time structure and to be involved in a host of conditions ranging from addiction to cancer.

Klink’s poems encompass so much more than circadian rhythms. Some of her poems also evoke the seasons, the

influence of our environment being ever present, with titles such as “Winter Field,” “Sea Levels,” and as a matter of introduction “Auroras.” How fitting when we are learning about the many other cycles, such as the week, month and year, that circadian rhythms shape our temporal organization. Whereas the about daily variation is generally tightly synchronized with the 24-hour alternation between light and darkness, some other cycles are more loosely related to their environmental counterpart. This is particularly true in the case of cycles related to the geomagnetic changes caused by variations in solar activity, which remain mostly unseen, except for the mesmerizing auroras or northern lights.

I was delighted to see that the field of chronobiology has truly become transdisciplinary, the beauty of circadian rhythms — and of a much broader time structure so essential to life itself — even inspiring poetry.

By William F. Gilly



**The Alchemy of Air.** Thomas Hager. Harmony Books, 2008. 336 pages. \$24.95

This is a tale of a pair of young chemists, Fritz Haber and Carl Bosch, who

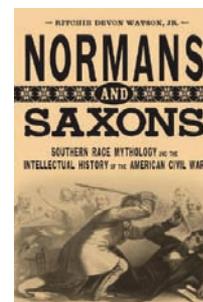
changed the world in an unprecedented way by inventing a process that allowed the world’s population to roughly double while providing the foundation for the modern chemical industry upon which we have all come to depend. The story starts at the turn of the 20th century with the prospect of impending global starvation due to a rapidly growing population and shrinking food supply — something English political economist and demographer Thomas Malthus had predicted a century earlier. The 20th century challenge was to solve the problem by providing vast quantities of affordable, nitrogen-based fertilizers to boost worldwide agricultural output by using the cheapest raw ingredient imaginable — the

largely inert nitrogen that comprises almost 80 percent of the air that we breathe.

Thomas Hager’s tale of how Haber and Bosch accomplished this feat is an intriguing web of science, business, politics, psychology and personalities. This story of the struggle, triumph and ultimate despair of Haber and Bosch, both of whom won Nobel prizes, is a truly great story that has received surprisingly little attention in the popular press. This book really should be read.

Our planet has again become dangerously overpopulated, largely due to the increased availability of affordable agricultural products grown with Haber-Bosch fertilizers. But with a world shortage of fresh water looming, more cheap fertilizer will not do the trick this time. Moreover, much of the nitrogen applied to the world’s fields ends up in our ground water, rivers, atmosphere and oceans. We have been unintentionally fertilizing all regions of the planet for a long time and changing global ecosystems in unknown ways. But Hager barely touches on these immensely important problems, and it is here that the reader will be hungry for more. Nonetheless, this book brings up the problems, and that is a huge first step. We are undoubtedly drawing near to the time when the next hand will be dealt in our perpetual poker game with Malthus. The world needs to know this story.

By M. Thomas Inge



**Normans and Saxons: Southern Race Mythology and the Intellectual History of the Civil War.** Ritchie Devon Watson, Jr. Louisiana State University Press, 2008. 286 pages.

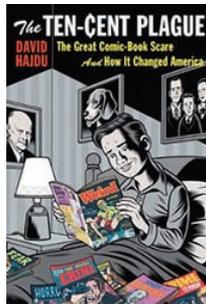
\$40.00

Unlike most scholarly inquiries into intellectual history, this study opens with a dramatic and violent event: the caning of Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts by

Representative Preston Brooks of South Carolina on the floor of the United States Senate in May of 1856. Sumner's offense was having made a speech two days earlier, "The Crime Against Kansas," in which, among other insults, "he held up to ridicule the Southern code of chivalry, the foundation of the South's exalted view of itself as an enlightened, cultivated and aristocratic slave society." Exactly how the South came to view itself as such a version of Camelot is the business of this authoritative, intelligent and elegantly written analysis of attitudes towards race in the South before the Civil War by Ritchie Devon Watson, Jr.

Southern racial mythmaking, it turns out, was based on an amazing amalgam of self-serving mythology, pseudo-science, warped theology, earnest Romanticism and a powerful misreading of any number of texts both political and fictional, including such novels as *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott and popular sociological books of the time. What resulted was a view of national conflict that cast those who lived below the Mason-Dixon line as members of a distinct, superior white race, descended from the European Cavaliers and thus "Normans," against the Northeastern descended Puritans and less civilized members of the "Saxon" race. That such nonsense was taken seriously was reflected in the debates over slavery and secession, as well as the Civil War itself, and explains the vehemence of Brooks' attack on Sumner.

Watson moves with ease from political speeches and essays to contemporary newspapers and on to poetry and fiction by popular literary figures in a display of thoughtful cultural history at its best. In his conclusion, Watson regrettably finds traces of such racist attitudes present even in today's political climate. The breadth of his research and the logic of his conclusions make this a cornerstone study that will stand for a long time to come. It is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand the South.



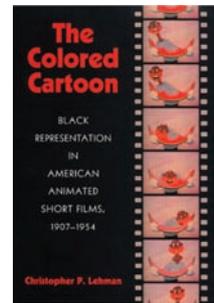
**The Ten-Cent Plague: The Great Comic-Book Scare and How It Changed America.** David Hajdu. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008. 445 pages. \$26.00

In more than a dozen cities throughout the country, "[s]chools held public burnings of comics, and students threw thousands of the books into the bonfires; at more than one conflagration, children marched around the flames reciting incantations denouncing comics." Was this Nazi Germany or some totalitarian nation where free speech was not allowed and children were indoctrinated in the prescribed system of thought? No, it was the United States of America during the scare of the 1950s that comic books and motion pictures caused juvenile delinquency.

The U. S. Congress, the FBI, police agencies, teachers, ministers, parents and moral guardians all joined forces, and led by such so-called authorities as Dr. Fredric Wertham, they set out to investigate and close down the creation and production of some of the most innovative and original art and story-telling to be found in 20th-century American culture. The writers and artists of comic books were exploring the boundaries and testing the limits of a new literary/art form, and the young readers absolutely adored the cheaply printed magazines in which they appeared. The result of the investigation and the adverse publicity was the creation of the self-policing Comics Code Authority with the most oppressive and stringent set of guidelines ever applied to any mass medium or form of culture in U. S. history. Comic books nearly expired, only to be rescued and resurrected in the 1960s during the new found freedoms of the student revolution and the underground press, which would eventually lead to the graphic novel and its dynamic presence on the current literary scene.

David Hajdu has amply outlined these historic events in *The Ten-Cent*

*Plague: The Great Comic-Book Scare and How It Changed America*, settling not simply for the public record but doing extensive interviews with the numerous artists and writers involved. There are valuable lessons to be learned from this compelling account, especially at a time when threats to civil liberties and the surveillance of citizens have become commonplace. It is a sorry chapter in our history and an exemplum of what can happen when reactionary forces strike out at the powerful appeal of the new in culture and art.



**The Colored Cartoon: Black Representation in American Animated Short Films, 1907-1954.** Christopher P. Lehman. University of Massachusetts Press, 2008. 137

pages. \$29.95

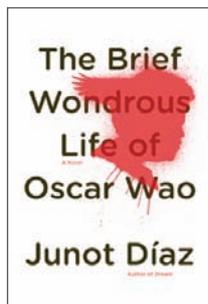
This brief and seemingly inconspicuous volume makes the rather large and bold claim that "American animation owes its existence to African-Americans." But the author backs up this claim with some of the most thoughtful and extensive research ever applied to the presence of African-American influence in our visual popular culture. Christopher Lehman does not mean that blacks created the technology or production methods of animation, but rather that their pervasive presence, either through depiction or influence, has largely shaped the content and humor of this often neglected area of film history.

The fact that the cartoonists often used black-face and minstrel-show stereotypes in portraying African-Americans is well known. Less recognized are the more subtle influences, such as the reflection of black-face imagery in the visual depiction of Mickey Mouse or the adaptation of the African trickster figure into Bugs Bunny. Occasionally, Lehman may push such associations a little too far, since other equally important influences played a part in the creation of

the iconic Mickey Mouse, for example, and other ethnic groups can lay claim to the trickster-figure tradition to which Bugs belongs.

Searching through contemporary reviews, the actual scripts for the films, as well as the films themselves, and interviewing living animators, Lehman's book is one more study in the disenfranchisement of blacks in America, but it also highlights their less obvious contributions to mainstream culture. Music, art and literature in the United States would not be the same after blacks became a part of the social fabric, first as slaves and later as citizens. The writing of animation history should not be the same after the publication of this insightful volume.

By Jan Lewis



*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao.* Junot Díaz. Riverhead Books, 2007. 352 pages. \$24.95

This is the most exhilarating novel I have read since Michael Chabon's

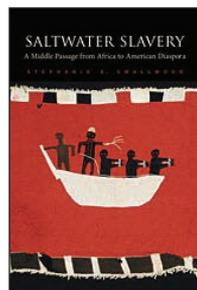
*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Klay*. The two novels bear only a surface resemblance, each with adolescent protagonists, a deep immersion in the popular culture of super heroes and a near-perfect recreation — or re-imagining — of an immigrant community. In Chabon's case, it is the community of mid-20th-century Jews exiled from central Europe to New York City, and in Junot Díaz's, Dominicans who shuttle back and forth between dictator Rafael Trujillo's Dominican Republic and northern New Jersey. But more important, both authors have written novels that are at once wildly and joyously imaginative and deeply historical.

In chapters that cut back and forth in time and place — the Dominican Republic and New Jersey, the 1950s, the near-present and in-between — Díaz traces the intersections of a doomed family and a doomed people. They suffer from what Díaz, on the

first page of his novel, calls the *fukú americanus*, “specifically the Curse and Doom of the New World,” which began with “the Admiral’s” arrival at Santo Domingo, “Ground Zero of the New World.” Why “the Admiral” instead of “Columbus”? “To say his name aloud or even to hear it is to invite calamity on the heads of you and yours.”

To begin a novel in this way — profane, portentous and wrapping itself in the mantle of 500 years of history — is quite a risk. But the writing, a mixture of English, Spanish, Spanglish and Díaz's own inventions is so dazzling that it carries the reader along to its inevitable end. (It is, after all, a *fukú*, “a ghost story from the past with no power to scare.”)

Díaz's integration of history and invention, which is itself a commentary on the impossibility of separating the one from the other, is dazzling. He punctuates his saga of the Cabral-De León family with footnotes that are historical and discursive, and often just as profane as the text itself. They create the impression that Díaz is narrating a history, yet as he himself notes (in the text), “who can keep track of what's true and what's false in a country as *baká* as ours.” It is this capacity to make Oscar, Lola and Yunior as real as my own Rutgers students, and the burden of history as light as a feather — a ghost story robbed of the power to scare — that marks Díaz as an artist of the highest order and his novel as truly great art, an act of redemption.



*Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora.* Stephanie E. Smallwood. Harvard University Press, 2007. 288 pages. \$29.95

Stephanie Smallwood's account of the 18th-century slave trade is an unassuming little book, less imposing in both heft and force of argument than Marcus Rediker's *The Slave Ship*, published at the same time. Yet Smallwood's book makes a greater

impression. Smallwood covers only a relatively brief period in the history of the slave trade, the half-century between 1675 and 1725, and only a portion of the African coast from which enslaved people were gathered for transport across the Atlantic. Her focus is upon England's Royal African Company, only one of the firms that was active in the slave trade. Smallwood's book is by no means a comprehensive history.

But what it lacks in thoroughness it more than makes up in elegance and attention to detail. It may seem odd to use the term “elegance” to describe a book about so horrific a topic. But there is something to be said for letting the horror speak for itself rather than pummeling the reader with the kinds of words that Rediker uses: terror, “oppositional sensibility” and the “deep dialectic of discipline and resistance.”

Smallwood focuses upon the way that English merchants turned enslaved Africans into commodities. The slave trade, of course, was a business, and its purveyors acquired expertise about how best to assemble a human cargo and transport it, as safely and efficiently as possible, across the ocean. Smallwood is especially good at showing how the process of turning other human beings into commodities became second nature to slave merchants, a business for which they came to believe they bore no moral or political responsibility. One ship's captain explained to his rebellious cargo that he was not responsible for their enslavement and hence they should bear him no ill will, for they “had forfeited their Freedom before [he] bought them,” and they were now his “property.” Smallwood shows us how slavery and slaves were made, without ever losing sight of the humanity of the enslaved Africans or those they left behind. Her book is an ideal introduction to the topic for those who know little about it or want to see it through fresh eyes.

Our critics select the books they would like to review for *The Key Reporter* and do not limit their selections to books by ΦBK authors. Unsolicited submissions are forwarded to the reviewers for their consideration.

New Year's Resolution: Think Smart  
**The AMERICAN SCHOLAR**

*If you aren't reading it, here's what you've been missing*

William Deresiewicz  
on the disadvantages of  
an elite education

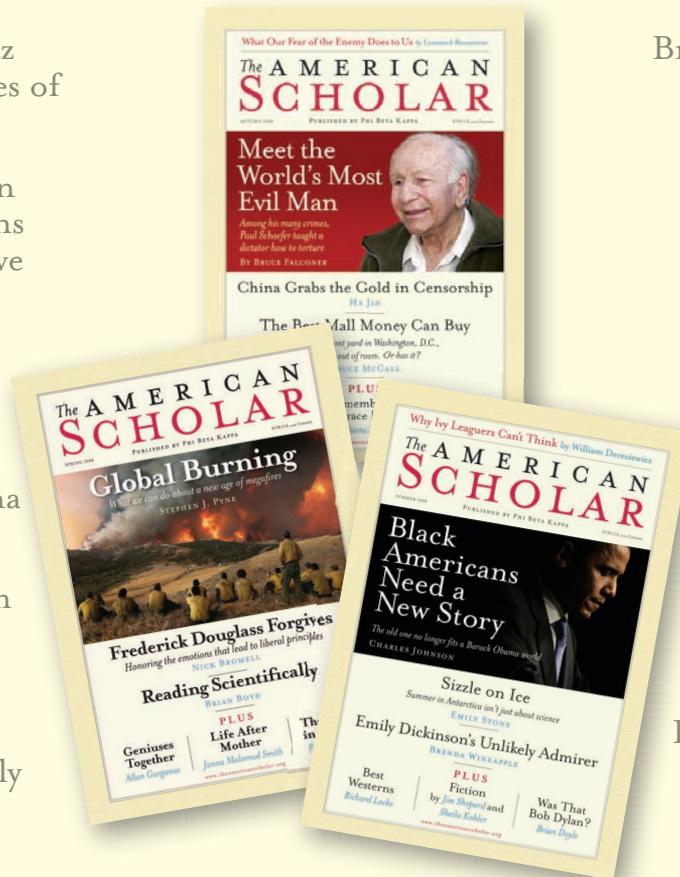
Charles Johnson on  
why black Americans  
need a new narrative

Six poems by the  
new poet laureate,  
Kay Ryan

Ha Jin on  
censorship in China

A previously  
unpublished speech  
on terrorism by  
Leonard Bernstein

Brian Boyd on  
reading scientifically



Brenda Wineapple on  
Thomas Wentworth  
Higginson and  
Emily Dickinson

William Zinsser  
remembers the  
*Herald Tribune*

Essays by  
André Aciman  
James McConkey  
and Kyoko Mori

Fiction by  
Charles Baxter  
Lore Segal and  
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