



# THE D.C. AREA PHI BETA KAPPA ASSOCIATION

Founded on December 6, 1913

[www.dcpbk.org](http://www.dcpbk.org)

## NEWSLETTER

[suggestions@dcpbk.org](mailto:suggestions@dcpbk.org)

December 2020-January 2021

### Connect with DC PBK Online!

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## News for the New Year

**The DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association (DCPBK)** looks forward to a lively and diverse program for 2021, including some brand-new events, as seen below. Hope you can join us for many of them.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT:**

#### **New Year, New You Series**

The **New Year, New You Series** focuses on helping our members achieve their New Year's Resolutions. Our event leaders will be teaching new skills to tackle some of the common ones. Some New Year, New You events of 2021:

- learn about nutrition (resolution: eat healthy) JANUARY
- learn how to paint (resolution: new skill) FEBRUARY
- learn how to do a home workout (resolution: get in shape)
- learn about wine through a guided tasting (resolution: try new things)
- learn how to write a resume (resolution: career change)
- learn how to cook (resolution: have cooking skills).

What is your New Year's Resolution? What new skill would you like to learn? Please contact Lynley at [dcpbkevents@gmail.com](mailto:dcpbkevents@gmail.com) with your ideas.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT:**

#### **Language Forums**

Based on interest, DCPBK will explore various language clubs for those who would like to learn or converse in different languages and discuss foreign cultures. Our first forum is a German Language group led by Christel McDonald. We are looking at establishing additional fora for other languages, to possibly include Spanish, French, Mandarin, Japanese, and others! If you are interested in leading or moderating for one of these languages, please contact Lynley Peoples at [dcpbkevents@gmail.com](mailto:dcpbkevents@gmail.com).

## Upcoming Events

### Coffee & Conversation with Infectious Disease Expert Dr. Daniel Lucey

**Saturday, January 23, 12:00-1:00 PM, via Zoom**

Grab a cup of coffee and join us for the third installation of our **Coffee & Conversation** guest lecture series, featuring **Dr. Daniel Lucey**.



Dr. Daniel Lucey, M.D. MPH, FIDSA, is an expert in infectious diseases whose work is recognized worldwide. He has been involved on the ground with several outbreaks and pandemics, including SARS, MERS, anthrax, Ebola, Zika, Nipah, yellow fever, and pandemic flu. He also proposed and co-organized an exhibit on eight pandemics entitled "Outbreak: Epidemics in a Connected World" for

the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History (2018-2021).

Dr. Lucey researches and writes extensively on COVID-19 and will be speaking to us about the pandemic, including its origins, the development and distribution of the vaccine, his recent advocacy on behalf of the frontline healthcare workers, other strains of the virus, and how this virus compares and contrasts to other pandemics in which he has been involved.

To learn more and to sign-up, please click [here](#)!

### Valentine's Day Painting Class

**Join us for a virtual painting class on Thursday, February 11 from 6:30pm - 8:30 pm**

More Information can be found [here](#).

## Recent Events

### NEW!

#### German Language Forum

The DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association is excited to announce the establishment of the first **German Language Forum**. The inaugural meeting took place on **Thursday, January 14, 6:15 PM, via Zoom**. Any member is welcome, but a comfortable level of German conversation skills is highly recommended because the forum will be conducted in German, and topics of discussion will include German culture, current affairs, sports, and food!

DCPBK's very own **Christel McDonald** will serve again as our moderator for the next meeting, and lead us through a guided conversation to engage participants.

To register for the next meeting of the German Language Forum, please email Dan Rosenberg at [dberg8@gmail.com](mailto:dberg8@gmail.com). You will receive confirmation and a message from our moderator prior to the event with some initial topics.

Thank you all and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

*Mit freundlichen Grüßen,*

The DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association

## **Annual Holiday Party/Book Exchange**

**Saturday, December 5, 6:00-8:00 PM, via Zoom**

This year's **Holiday Book Exchange** was a great way to end 2020. Thank you to our members for rising to the challenge of having a holiday party via Zoom. Our members sent in books on a wide variety of topics from biographies to poetry to soccer to alien invasions. We all had a lot of fun and everyone ended up with a great new book to read during their holidays.

The night ended in a scavenger hunt, which was hilarious and allowed us to get to know our members better. One member showed an enviable circular staircase. Many showed off their pets when asked to "show something they love". The vast majority showed stress balls when asked to "show something squishy," which just proves how ready we all are for the new year. One member showed off her s'more slippers which heated up. This particular item was immediately included in my letter to Santa. Thank you to everyone for making this holiday party such a success!

## **Coffee & Conversation with Rebecca Cataldi**

**Wednesday, December 9, 7:00 PM**

For the second installation of the monthly **Coffee & Conversation** guest lecture series, DCPBK hosted conflict resolution expert **Rebecca Cataldi**, who is a volunteer facilitator for the organization Braver Angels, which seeks to reduce political polarization in the United States by facilitating grassroots dialogue among everyday citizens. She also serves as a Senior Program Officer for the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD), which aims to turn religion from a source of divisiveness and conflict abroad to a force for peace building, community strengthening, and mitigating violent extremism

More than twelve members were in attendance, and it was a very informative and rich conversation. Rebecca discussed Braver Angels' approach to facilitating dialogue among and relationships between people with very different political opinions. There was ample time for Q&A from the audience, and members asked Rebecca about her extensive experience preventing/combatting violent extremism (P/CVE) all throughout the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

## **Young Professional (YP) Network Hosts Holiday Family Feud**

**On Wednesday, December 16**, fifteen DC Phi Betes gathered together via Zoom for a fun night of **Holiday Family Feud!** Throughout the evening, contestants were asked a variety of holiday-themed questions such as "What are the most notable holiday meals?", "What is the worst holiday gift to receive?", and "What are the best Christmas carols of all time?" Some of the answers were quite surprising, and it turned out to be a fun event for everyone.



If you have any questions about the event or ideas for future YP Events, please contact Hunter Hamrick ([hunterhamrick@gmail.com](mailto:hunterhamrick@gmail.com))

## **Book Club News and Reviews**

### **Past Discussions:**

On Monday, November 23, the Book Club met to discuss ***Ficciones (Fictions)* by Jorge Luis Borges**, one of our Classic selections for the Fall Series. The group has been especially conscious in recent years to include literature considered classic internationally, not only in English-speaking countries, and we were happy to include this as the second collection of short stories to appear in our 2020 selections, after Ursula K LeGuin's *Fisherman of the Inland Sea*. While many of the stories are eclectic and quite esoteric, certain themes emerge, such as the concept of the labyrinth, and the power to decide the circumstances of one's own death. It is possible to hear Borges himself through the text, playfully self-aware and impossibly well-read. He name-drops literary and philosophical figures both real and imagined, and wrestles with the utility of authorship, suggesting "the certainty that everything has been already written nullifies or makes phantoms of us all."



On Tuesday, December 29, eleven members met to discuss ***To Marry an English Lord* by Gail MacColl and Carol McD. Wallace**. This nonfiction selection was published several decades ago, and details a very particular period of time, the 1870s-1910s, during which the heiresses of America's Gilded Age, newly rich businessmen sought marriage matches with men of the British aristocracy. We remarked that while the book is quite dense and could benefit from more structured storytelling, it does depict a clear geopolitical arc; English economics were shifting from agriculture to industry, leaving British lords with less income but large estates to fund, while select American families were newly rich but, in their minds, without respect and renown. In this way the marriages were seen as a way to elevate both parties. It was easy for us, living in the vast socioeconomic divides of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to be put off by the gaudy opulence and rampant consumerism depicted in the many photos of residences and clothing from the time included in the text. Any reader who has visited the Gilded Age summer mansions in Newport, RI, will recognize the feeling. Yet it remains a fascinating look at a rarified period of history, and offers Americans opportunity to reflect on the growth and development of our country.



### **Two January 2021 Book Club Meetings Upcoming: Tuesday, January 19, 6:30-8:00 PM, via Zoom**

Please join us for a special, timely mid-January Bonus meeting on January 19 to discuss ***Common Sense* by Thomas Paine (Classic, 104 pages)**. The 2020 election was one for the history books—let's revisit one of the core documents from the American Revolution on the eve of President-Elect Biden's Inauguration.

[Register Here.](#)

At the end of the month, on January 28, the group will meet to discuss ***Other Minds: The Octopus, the Sea, and the Deep Origins of Consciousness* by Peter Godfrey-Smith (Nonfiction, 257 pages)**.

Here is the list of remaining selections for our Spring 2021 Series:

**\*Please note there has been a switch in our March programming. *Klara and the Sun* will not be released until early March, so we will read that selection at the end of the month, instead of as our Mid-Month Bonus.**

- **February:** *Kindred* by Octavia Butler (Fiction, 287 pages)
- **March:** *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro (Fiction, 304 pages)
  - **Mid-Month Bonus:** *Convenience Store Woman* by Sayaka Murata (International, Japan, 163 pages)
- **April:** *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain (Classic, 480 pages)
- **May:** *The Library at Night* by Alberto Manguel (International, Argentina, 373 pages)
- **June:** *The Splendid and the Vile* by Erik Larson (Nonfiction, 464 pages)

**A quick note on meetings for the foreseeable future:** In light of global efforts to slow the spread of Covid-19, the DC PBK book club will proceed meeting via Zoom, until we can meet again in our favorite spots. **Members who RSVP Yes on the website will receive the meeting link and login information in their registration confirmation email.** We will start all together, and break into smaller group chats, as needed, after introductions. Feel free to grab food and drink for the meeting, as we normally would!

## Announcements

### High School Awards Committee

The High School Awards Program seeks 1-2 Committee Members to assist with outreach and selection of awardees for the 2020-2021 academic year. The committee selects high school seniors in the DMV based on their academic achievements and community service. In recent years DCPBK has offered up to four awards to college-bound seniors of \$1,000 each.

Volunteers must be members of DC PBK in good standing.

### Position Description

Conduct outreach to DMV-area high schools to inform school counselors about scholarship opportunity

- Evaluate applications and participate in selection process of 2021 awardees
- Assist in planning the annual Awards ceremony

### To Apply

- Please email High School Awards Committee Chair Mackenzie Fusco at [awards@dcpbk.org](mailto:awards@dcpbk.org) with a resume and a brief statement of your interest in joining the Committee.

### Mentorship Network News

The participants of the fall cycle of the Mentorship Program are finishing up their time in the cohort, which will be completed at the end of January. After an analysis of the program, we are looking to make some exciting changes to increase the value of the program and include more members in the benefits of the program! Check out the next newsletter for the launch of the reimagined Mentorship Network!



As a reminder, the DCPBK Mentorship Network offers a six-month structured mentoring program with opportunities for peer mentoring and young professional-to-experienced professional relationships. Participants receive resources such as a handbook, mentorship agreement template, regular newsletters, and the opportunity to meet others in the program at a special MentorMix event. You can learn more at <https://dcpbk.org/programs/mentorship/>.

Questions may be sent to Program Manager Rebecca DeSantis at [mentorship@dcpbk.org](mailto:mentorship@dcpbk.org).

### **DCPBK Board Meeting**

Our quarterly board meetings are open to any DCPBK member in good standing. To register to attend via Zoom, click [here](#). The Spring meeting will be held on Saturday, TBA, 2021 from 10:00 AM-12:00 noon

Venue: Zoom (link to be provided upon registration)

## **DC Area Phi Beta Kappa Association Board**

### **2020-2021 Officers**

**PRESIDENT: Breann Watt** (University of California Riverside, 2011)  
**1<sup>ST</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT: Rebecca DeSantis** (Washington College, 2015)  
**2<sup>ND</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT: Lynley Peoples** (George Mason University, 2013)  
**SECRETARY: Dan Rosenberg,** (George Washington University, 2014)  
**TREASURER: Pat Cascio** (Denison University, 1969)

### **At-Large Executive Committee Members**

**Nina Kuo** (Duke University, 2012)—Past President  
**Paul Lubliner** (University of Oregon, 2006)—Past President  
**Carol Bontempo** (University of Connecticut, 1962)—Newsletter Editor  
**Liz Marshall** (Lawrence University, 2009)—Past President  
**Kate H. Smith** (Boston University, 2010)—Book Club Coordinator

### **Advisory Council**

**Deirdre LaPin** (Agnes Scott College, 1967)—Past Vice-President  
**Christel G. McDonald** (George Washington University, 1986)—Past President

### **Additional Volunteers**

**MEMBER ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR: Bailey DeSimone** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2017)  
**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS COORDINATOR: Hunter Hamrick** (Florida State University, 2015)