

**A Yearlong Feast of Reading***Book Smart*, Jane Mallison

Klingensteiner alumna Jane Mallison shares her depth of literary knowledge and wit in *Book Smart*, a review of 120 "great reads" designed to entice readers. From *Beowulf* to a biography of Elvis Presley (Peter Guralnick's *Last Train to Memphis*), Mallison provides just enough pithy detail to whet the appetite. Mallison offers twelve categories of books ranging from classics to contemporary novels and biographies – all designed to encourage reading a book a month. *Book Smart* is a rich resource for self development and a guide for teachers. It is also a good book to recommend to those high school students who stand a chance of remaining or becoming independent readers.

Pearl Rock Kane, Director, Klingensteiner Center, NY

McGraw Hill, 2008

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The Klingensteiner Center for Independent School Leadership provides graduate programs and professional development for independent school educators throughout their careers.

*This is our last Klingbrief for the academic year; we look forward to resuming publication in September. We also look forward to contributions from our readers beginning September 10th.

ARTICLES, BLOGS, AND OTHER MEDIA

**The Pandora's Box of Psychopharmacology***Brain Gain: The Underground World of 'Neuroenhancing' Drugs*, Margaret Talbot

This *New Yorker* column offers a timely, sobering account of developing trends in what might also be called "cosmetic psychopharmacology." The article documents how many high-achieving college students and adults are taking prescription medications for off-label uses to increase their productivity. "College campuses have become laboratories for experimentation with neuroenhancement," Talbot points out. Can our middle and secondary school students be far behind? And where should the line be drawn between therapeutic doses vs. those that merely confer competitive advantages to those who consume them off-label? This genie already out of the bottle raises a host of ethical, educational and medical issues about which those of us in schools obviously need to be aware in this troublesome and burgeoning field.

Michael Pardee, Kinkaid School, TX

The New Yorker Magazine, April, 2009**Boxed and Bullied: a Nagging Issue Seems to Defy our Best Efforts***Dude, You've Got Problems (Domestic Disturbances opinion page)*, Judith Warner

Yet another child dies as a result of bullying--but not the physical kind--the verbal and emotional kind. Boys in our country continue to be tormented and boxed into stereotypes which leave them no room for growth: be tough or be called a "fag;" be tough or be tormented daily—and in a few cases, be driven to suicide. The scenario for girls is different but equally dangerous. For girls the image of Barbie has never held more appeal, and this image has been used to box girls into their own, second class citizen stereotypes. The problem starts as young as ages 6-9 when the push to become consumers of beauty products begins. The article, which appeared in the *New York Times* opinion column called Domestic Disturbances, deserves to be read by faculty, staff, and families, so that all stakeholders in a school can discuss and then attempt to take action so no other child has been demeaned or driven to suicide by such acts again. As is often the case, the blog responses that follow the article add rich texture to the discussion and are equally important to peruse.

Marja Brandon, Seattle Girls School, OR

New York Times, April, 2009**Project Zero Offers Some Absolute Value***Peering Backward and Looking Forward in the Digital Era*

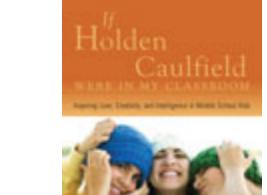
Margaret Weigel, Carrie James, Howard Gardner

A highlight in the Winter 2009 issue of this new quarterly journal is a valuable piece of research by Howard Gardner and his colleagues at Project Zero. As the digital era unfolds, learning is at once more individual (contoured to a person's own style, proclivities, and interests) yet more social (involving networking, group work, the wisdom of crowds, etc.). How these seemingly contradictory directions are addressed impacts the future complexion of learning. The article reviews for us how traditional styles of learning have given way to more complex forms of learning driven by technology's impact. (A good synopsis of this article and reader responses can be found in Weblogg-ed: Good Reads & On My Mind, Looking Forward at Learning, March 14, 2009, by Will Richardson: <http://weblogg-ed.com/2009/looking-forward-at-learning>).

Claudia M. Daggett, Executive Director
Elementary School Heads Association (ESHA)*International Journal of Learning and Media*, MIT Press, Winter 2009, Vol. I, No. 1**The Influence of Delayed Gratification in Childhood on Adults***Don't! The Secret of Self-control*, Jonah Lehrer

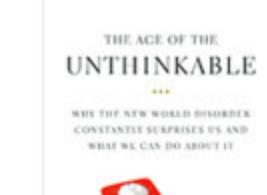
Jonah Lehrer reports on a study on self-control and delayed gratification done with preschool students in the Bing Nursery School begun on the campus of Stanford University in the 1960's. For anyone who works with children or adults, this is a fascinating article on the psychology and ramifications of delayed vs. instant gratification. Hundreds of students were studied in this "lab school" and decades later, many researchers have continued the work of the study in order to see how the lives of those who successfully delayed gratification are similar or different from those who were unable to delay gratification. The findings are fascinating. This article may have clear implications for the way we interact with our colleagues, students and parents, as well as understanding interpersonal interactions in one's private life. This is a very timely article with something for everyone, and ends with some very clear advice for parents.

Kathleen McNamara, Marin Country Day School, CA

The New Yorker, May 2009**Aeneas and Latinus are Now Friends; Troy is no Longer On-line***What would Virgil have posted on Aeneas' Wall?*, Anonymous

With summer approaching, Klingbrief departs from its weightier agenda to offer some instructive humor. Sometimes the Internet spreads information in just the "right" way. The anonymously authored "Aeneid Facebook" does an excellent job of fitting the epic into a series of pithy posts. The project is not an actual Facebook page, but rather a stand alone mock-up/parody that cleverly marries the classic story with this most modern of media. The creation spurred a number of spin offs, including "Odysseus' Twitter." The "Aeneid Facebook" is a great example of a lighthearted project that can keep our students plugged in, literally and figuratively—and one which highlights the absurdity and reach of Facebook in its humor and structure.

Rika Drea, Crossroads School, CA

The Aeneid Facebook, 2009**An Award-Winning Documentarian Explores How Gender Has Us Tied in Knots***Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up* (2009)

Debra Chasoff, GroundSpark and The Respect for All Project

From the groundbreaking and visionary makers of *It's Elementary: Talking about Gay Issues in School* comes an exciting, relevant, and honest new documentary—*Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up*—which explores how confining notions of gender and sexuality have placed our students in "prisons," as one teen in the film asserts. Unlike other films with a gender issues 101 focus, *Straightlaced* takes on the complex nuances of today's most relevant conversations about gender and sexuality unapologetically. With seriousness and even some humor, students interviewed in the film explain how gender and sexuality influence their choices from clothing to speech patterns, from friendship circles to extracurricular activities, from dating to sex, from violence and fighting to suicide. According to GroundSpark, the *Straightlaced* campaign "will open a national dialogue about the pressures teens face to act certain ways just because they are male or female." Debra Chasoff is an Academy Award®-winning documentarian (for an earlier film on nuclear waste) whose work is focused on social change

Ileana Jimenez, Little Red School House and Elisabeth Irwin High School, NY

BOOKS

**The Impact of Decline in Ability to "Pay Attention" in Modern Culture***Distracted*, Maggie Jackson

Journalist Maggie Jackson has written a lively book posing a strong argument about the erosion of attention in our diffuse, technology-saturated culture. Reminiscent of earlier writers like Jane Healey and Neil Postman, Jackson bases her research on interviews, observation, and historical analysis in an attempt to warn of a coming "dark age" while also offering ideas for the restoration of this executive function, which she argues is central to what makes us human. Amidst a wealth of optimistic books about the impact of technology, this Cassandra-like prophecy is a warning to take control over those eroding functions as we integrate technology into our lives.

Peter Herzberg, Educational Consultant, Coordinating Editor, Klingbrief, NY

Prometheus Books, 2008

**The Emotionally-Connected Middle School Classroom***If Holden Caulfield Were in My Classroom: Inspiring Love, Creativity, and Intelligence in Middle School Kids*, Bernie Schein

For Bernie Schein, a founding teacher of the Paideia School in Atlanta and a former principal of three schools, it's all about getting personal when it comes to successful teaching with middle school students. Combining his insights, ideals, and inspirations from more than 40 years as an educator, Schein aims to dismantle the archaic structures of middle school classrooms that engender boredom and obedience, in favor of building emotional connections with all of his students. The unyielding compassion which he offers to students is evident both in his descriptions of former students as well as in the excerpts from their writing which make this book a delight, whether or not we are involved in the lives of middle school students. For Schein, there is nothing more important than the lives of the children in his classroom, a lesson with relevance for all of us.

Peter Schmidt, Gill St-Bernard School, NJ

Sentient Publications, September 2008, ISBN 9781591810766

**Is Past No Longer Prologue?***The Age of the Unthinkable*, Joshua Cooper Ramo

Leaders who are learners can benefit from theories that provide an unusual view of the familiar order. In his provocative new book, *The Age of the Unthinkable*, Joshua Cooper Ramo provides an immersion in ideas that challenge the notion that the past is predictive of the future. He calls for nothing less than a new way of thinking that will challenge conventional definitions of innovation and leadership. Ramo advances the idea that foxes -- people with an intuitive ability to see larger patterns and a willingness to adapt to a cascade of circumstances -- are far more accurate in their forecasts than the hedgehog of the older Jim Collins theory. As a leading expert on China and formerly one of the youngest-ever editors at *Time Magazine*, Ramo, a 1987 graduate of Albuquerque Academy, has written an account that interprets our sometimes terrifying global challenges in a way that instructs us about what it means to think differently. By analogy, this work can inspire fresh and bold visions for schools of the future.

John Braman, Dream Year Consulting Group, NM

Little, Brown and Company, March 2009

To submit comments or suggestions, or to request that the newsletter be sent to a colleague, contact Adele Tonge, Communications Manager at klingbrief@tc.columbia.edu.

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