

Society's Books of Note

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Diana Rhoten and Craig Calhoun, eds., *Knowledge Matters: The Public Mission of the Research University*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011. \$75.00. 539pp.

Rhoten and Calhoun of the Social Science Research Council have assembled an impressive array of authors who chart the changing and volatile landscape of the research university in terms of funding and mission across Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and North America.

Judith Stacey, *Unhitched: Love, Marriage, and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China*. New York: New York University Press, 2011. \$27.95. 275pp.

Judith Stacey, professor of social and cultural analysis and sociology at New York University, proposes to challenge feminists and conservatives and their conceptions of family and family life, in particular the nuclear family. Based on a variety previously published articles, the book brings together in one place a perspective intended to provoke debate.

George Kateb, *Human Dignity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011. \$22.95. 256pp.

Kateb, professor of politics, emeritus, at Princeton University, asks what human dignity is and why it matters for any claim to human rights. He examines

the nature of humiliation and insult as affronts to human dignity and argues that the status of dignity is essential for defining the unique place of humanity in the natural order.

Shamus Rahman Khan, *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul's School*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011. \$29.95. 232pp.

Khan, assistant professor of sociology at Columbia University, taught at St. Paul's and offers an account of what he terms the "trick of privilege." Revisiting classic questions about the responsibilities of elites, Khan questions how "diversity" and meritocracy work together to maintain elites about which his own ambivalence leaves open the question of what the alternative to elites might be.

Robert J. Lifton, *Witness to an Extreme Century*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011. \$34.99. 448pp.

Renowned psychiatrist, Robert J. Lifton, recounts in this memoir his long career as a public intellectual, addressing the various projects he has undertaken, from Hiroshima to communist brainwashing to Nazi doctors to My Lai in order to consider the nature of political violence across time and space.