Lee Bollinger, George Mitchell And Joan Didion Among 2002 Honorary Degrees Recipients

BY VIRGIL RENZULLI

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ormal Senator George Mitchell, author Joan Didion, and Columbia President-Elect Lee C. Bollinger are among those scheduled to receive honorary degrees at commencement exercises marking Columbia University's 248th academic year on Wednesday, May 22. Also scheduled to receive honorary degrees are Brown University President Ruth Simmons, Latin American literary scholar Robert González Echeverría, neuropsychologist Brenda Milner, and Jack Beezon, Columbia's MacDowell Professor Emeritus of Music. Neuroscientist George Yancopoulos will receive the University Medal for Excellence, which is given each year to a Columbia alumnus who has made significant contributions to society.

In addition to the awarding of honorary degrees, more than 9,000 Columbia students will graduate before tens of thousands of their family and friends during a ceremony that will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Low Library Plaza at the center of the Morningside Heights campus, Broadway and 116th Street.

Lee C. Bollinger, the former University of Michigan president who will become Columbia's 14th president this summer, will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree. At Michigan Bollinger's achievements included: advancing undergraduate education, launching a $700-million Life Sciences Initiative, attaining record levels of research funding and private giving and developing a major campus revitalization plan.

A former provost of Dartmouth College and dean of the Michigan Law School, Bollinger is a legal scholar whose primary interests are free speech and the First Amendment. He led the legal battles to uphold the University of Michigan's affirmative action policies in student admissions.


As special advisor to President Bollinger's plan.

Calvin University College have received several outstanding books for the Trilling Award, which is presented to Columbia faculty members for work that "imparts rigorous academic standards with an understanding that students exist as people outside of the classroom," said Immerwahr. "The students with whom the committee spoke about Professor Bynum told us that she not only made them better thinkers, but changed their lives in a very positive way."

The committee noted that it received several outstanding books for the Trilling Award, but that "Castes of Mind" stood out for its breadth of scholarship, its originality and its accessibility.

"It was astounding to the committee that Professor Dirks was able to make some very complex arguments about the relationship between colonialism and caste in India so clear and enjoyable to read," said Immerwahr. "One of the sections that we found particularly compelling, which tells how a particular archive was directed at the project.

Lee Bollinger

George Mitchell

Joan Didion, circa 1970

Trilling and van Doren Awards Presented to Professors Bynum And Dirks by College Students

BY JAMES DEVITT

The students of Columbia College have awarded the 2002 Mark van Doren Teaching Award to University Professor Caroline Bynum, a professor of history, and the 2002 Lionel Trilling Book Award to Profes sor Nicholas Dirks, chair of the anthropology department, for his book "Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India" (Princeton 2001).

The van Doren Award, now in its 41st year, is given to one teacher in the College each year for outstanding leadership and teaching. The Trilling Award, now in its 27th year, goes to one book published in the last calendar year by a faculty member teaching in Columbia College. Winners are selected by the Columbia College Academic Awards Committee, chaired by Yaacov Dweck, CC '02, Michael Fishman, CC '02, and Daniel Immerwahr, CC '02.

"Professor Bynum has a very unusual ability to combine rigorous academic standards with an understanding that students exist as people outside of the classroom," said Immerwahr. "The students with whom the committee spoke about Professor Bynum told us that she not only made them better thinkers, but changed their lives in a very positive way."

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"It was astounding to the committee that Professor Dirks was able to make some very complex arguments about the relationship between colonialism and caste in India so clear and enjoyable to read," said Immerwahr. "One of the sections that we found particularly compelling, which tells how a particular archive was turned into a film.

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