Author, Journalist Nicholas Lemann Agrees to Become Journalism Dean

By Joseph Kennedy
and Caroline Ladhani

oticed author and journalist Nicholas Lemann has agreed to become dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, subject to approval by the University Trustees, announced President Lee C. Bollinger on April 15. “Nicholas Lemann has had a distinguished career as a journalist and writer for more than 25 years,” Bollinger said. “I have had the opportunity and privilege of working with Nick this past year on the Journalism Task Force that was set up in the fall to look at the future of journalism education. In all my years in university life, I have rarely met anyone with more promise and ability in assuming a leadership role of a school.”

Lemann has been the Washington correspondent for The New Yorker since 2000. Readers know him for his “Letter from Washington” column and articles on national and world events. Before joining The New Yorker, Lemann spent 15 years as the national correspondent for The Atlantic Monthly, where he reported on a wide range of domestic issues. Prior to that, he held senior editorial posts at both The Washington Monthly and The Texas Monthly and was a member of the national staff of The Washington Post.

A New Orleans native, Lemann began his journalism career as a 17-year-old high school student writing for a local newspaper. He went on to Harvard and in 1976, graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College, where he earned a degree in American history and literature and was president of the Harvard Crimson.

Lemann is widely respected as a perceptive analyst of the issues of race and inequality. His books include the award-winning The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America (1991), which was adapted by the BBC and the Discovery Channel into a five-part TV series. His book The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy (1999) and its hour-long adaptation for the PBS series Frontline helped spark a reform effort that has led to a major overhaul of the SAT.

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Spring Fulfills its Promise!

Although it took longer than usual, spring finally made an appearance on Columbia’s Morningside campus. Students responded by taking to the Low Library steps, a traditional gathering place to relax and converse for more than a century.

Books on Native American Slavery Awarded Bancroft

Two books dealing with the history and socioeconomic impact of slave trade among Native Americans in the South and Southwest have been selected as winners of the 2003 Bancroft Prizes in American History and Diplomacy.

This year’s recipients are: Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands, by James F. Brooks (University of North Carolina Press), and The Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670-1717, by Allan Gallay (Yale University Press).

Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands examines the origins and legacies of a flourishing captive exchange economy within and among Native American and Euro-American communities throughout the Southwest Borderlands from the Spanish colonial era to the end of the nineteenth century.

Indigenous and colonial traditions of capture, servitude, and kinship met and meshed in the borderlands, forming a “slave system” in which victims symbolized social wealth, performed services for their masters, and produced material goods under the threat of violence. Slave and livestock raiding and trading among Apaches, Comanches, Kiowas, Navajos, Utes, and Spaniards provided labor resources, redistributed wealth, and fostered kin connections that integrated disparate and antagonistic groups even as...

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