

MOSAICS

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI | COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE | SPRING 2008



*Sweet sounds
of success*



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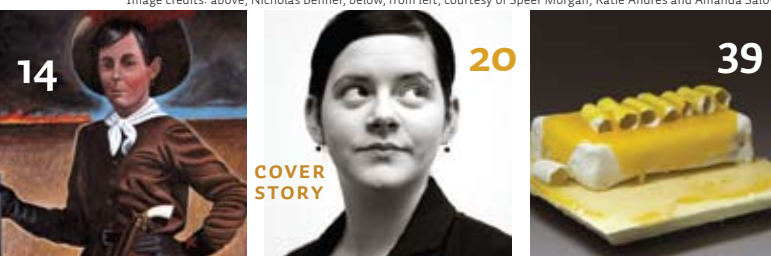


Image credits: above, Nicholas Benner, below, from left, courtesy of Speer Morgan, Katie Andres and Amanda Salov

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ON THE COVER: A student majoring in horn performance gives the School of Music twin reasons to celebrate.



Savor Great Ideas with Fun, Food, Faculty Talks

By Dean Michael J. O'Brien

Welcome to another issue of *Mosaics*, the magazine of the College of Arts and Science at the University of Missouri. In case you didn't know, the College celebrated its centennial this year — a milestone that we recognized in numerous ways. We kicked off the celebration with a memorable banquet in February that fea-

tured the five living former deans of A&S: Armon Yanders, Richard Wallace, Milton Glick, Larry Clark and Richard Schwartz. I had the pleasure of serving as associate dean under the last three — a tenure that gave me the opportunity to see firsthand not only how to run a large and complicated academic unit but how to manage the myriad personalities that are always center stage.

We plan on ending the celebration in March with an event that, although not new to the College, hasn't happened in a long, long time. That event is the anticipated A&S Alumni Seminar Weekend, when friends and alumni of A&S come back to campus for a series of faculty-led seminars on a variety of topics. The unifying theme of the seminars will be what has happened over the past hundred years with respect to those topics. For example, what do we know in 2008 about the ancient Greek world that we couldn't have imagined 100 years ago? What do we know about human aging that we didn't know then? Or about medicine?

I have asked some of our most engaging professors to spend an hour in a lively presentation on their specialties. In fact, the professors will deliver the same presentation twice during the day so we can keep the attendance small. Remember those large lecture-hall classes, where it was almost impossible to ask more than the most cursory questions? Well, I do, too; that's why we want to gear things toward true seminars, where you'll have the opportunity to engage the professor in a meaningful way.

If you're interested in the opportunity to get away for a weekend to be intellectually stimulated, entertained and well fed (trust me: very well fed), please plan on spending March 13 and 14 with us. By the time you read this, invitations will have gone out, but there is a good chance we might have missed you, and that would be a shame. If that's the case, here's what you should do: e-mail us at advanceas@missouri.edu. It just won't be the same if you don't join us. This is a great way to reconnect with your friends and fellow alumni, and it will give me an opportunity to meet you. I'd like that. Meanwhile, enjoy perusing this year's *Mosaics*.

Michael J. O'Brien

The College gratefully thanks the A&S Alumni Organization for financial assistance with the production of *Mosaics* magazine.



A neck-handled Amphora from the collection of the Museum of Art and Archaeology (58.3) dates from the Greek late Geometric Period. See Page 39.

A monumental experience in Rome

THE COMPETITION IS INTENSE. Only one Eta Sigma Phi scholarship is awarded annually for the Classical Summer School of the American Academy in Rome.

Yet, for two consecutive years, MU graduate students of classical studies have won the prestigious award given by the national honorary collegiate society for students of Latin or Greek. David Collier is the 2007 recipient, and Keturah Kiehl won in 2006.

The mix of scholars, professionals and graduate students at the academy produces what Collier calls a dynamic environment filled with interesting people. Spending the time in a postcard-pretty environment isn't bad either.

Collier immersed himself in the city of Rome for his summer course that afforded class time at monuments and buildings as well as field trips to nearby sites in Italy. Such an experience allowed the master's

candidate to develop his thesis, a combination of literature and social history that examines Roman or Latin authors of late antiquity. Collier will outline classical Roman beliefs on what it means to be Roman and to see how that "Roman-ness" applies to some later authors.

"This question could be applied to any society — What does it mean to be an American? — and be equally difficult to answer," Collier says.



Photo by S. Greg Panosian © iStock

Cooking with hot peppers

RED OR GREEN, chili peppers were the right ingredients for two unrelated news stories that involved a Mizzou art alumnus and an anthropology professor.

In Los Angeles, designer Matt Taylor, BFA '99, won a 2007 Grammy Award for his work for the Red Hot Chili Peppers. About the same time, Professor Deborah Pearsall released new information on the history of domesticated chili peppers. Both stories had some sizzle.

Taylor, who was art director of a Red Hot Chili Peppers' CD package, *Stadium Arcadium*, won the Grammy for "Best Art Direction for Boxed or Special Limited Edition Package."

A freelance designer since August 2006, Taylor specializes in music packaging. He began his career in Los Angeles as junior designer for MCA records before taking a position as in-house art director for Warner Brothers, which linked him to the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Taylor has designed albums for clients such as Paris Hilton, My Chemical Romance, Out of Eden, Michael Bublé and others.

Pearsall's surprising entry into the hot media scene occurred with some collaborative research she and several colleagues published. They found that people in the Americas were eating domesticated chili peppers as long as 6,000 years ago. The story spread like a house afire. It went national, then picked up steam to go international.

Was it a bland news day? "The interest was amazing," says Pearsall, who also researches maize.

Putting the peppers in perspective,

Pearsall's study indicates that chili peppers, along with maize, are one of the oldest domesticated food sources in the Americas, and it provides clues about connections among disparate cultures. No historical recipes emerged, however.

Of the two stories, Pearsall's piece had the longer shelf life. Her story generated headlines in news outlets as far removed from Mizzou as Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Peru, China, India and other countries where spicy foods are on the menu.

Although Taylor picked up his award at a non-televised event before the Grammys broadcast, both he and Pearsall were delighted with their 15 minutes of fame brought on by a hot topic.



Photo by Elena Moiseeva © iStock

A student thinks big

Graduate student Eric Roark created a bit of a stir in the world of philosophy by winning an award previously won only by faculty members.

Roark earned the 2006 Jean Hampton Memorial Prize for the best paper by a philosopher in an early career. The Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association conducts the competition in social and political philosophy, ethical theory, legal theory and many other areas of philosophy.

Previous winners of the writing award include some of the nation's most well-known faculty in philosophy. Professor Peter Vallentyne, Roark's mentor, calls the paper insightful and tightly argued. "I expect that it will be published in a leading journal," he says.

Roark's paper is titled "Is Michael Otsuka's Conception of Robust Self-Ownership Too Robust for a Left-Libertarian?"

The paper argues that a left-libertarian must either be content with endorsing the formal libertarian right of self-ownership or give up on the left-libertarian reconciliation of self-ownership and equality altogether.

A fourth-year doctoral student, Roark is writing his dissertation on the use and appropriation of natural resources. The work explores such issues as global poverty, material equality, liberty and autonomy.

"The academic culture and climate at MU has played a significant role in helping me foster and build my ideas," says Roark, who aspires to become a professor.



What we learn from Katrina

THE LINGERING DEVASTATION of New Orleans still touches the heart of Professor Jacquelyn Litt as she follows the difficult lives of evacuees after Hurricane Katrina.

Litt, who is chair of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies, co-directs a group of national experts charged with researching the status of evacuees displaced by the 2005 hurricane.

The sub-committee is part of a broader project, "Lessons Learned from Katrina," led by disaster specialist Kai Erikson of Yale University. Erikson asked Litt to participate because of her research, which includes the topic of motherhood as a primary vehicle for and reflection of inequalities.

"Katrina evacuees have become relatively invisible and almost impossible to locate," Litt says. "We are attempting to locate them and analyze their living conditions and barriers to returning to New Orleans. Once FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) stopped distributing money, it lost track of them."

Litt's recent study follows a group of women and children from a kin network of

about 70 people who moved to Columbia after the disaster. She is writing a book on the Missouri evacuees and, with other researchers in the Lessons Learned project, will contribute to another book on topics that explore the locations of the evacuees, their living conditions, race, gender, class and mental health.

Litt says the majority of the sub-committee's research focuses on poor African-American evacuees, mostly single mothers, who don't have the power or resources to return to their former homes in New Orleans.

"We will contribute to discussions on how gender matters," she says. "In disaster recovery, women evacuees are experiencing ongoing dislocation, limited job options, child-care responsibilities and little access to government resources. In addition, evacuees face racial discrimination, yet they show courage, resourcefulness and caregiving as they cope with constant disruptions."

The Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation and Social Science Research Council are funding the project.



Photo courtesy of Lori Peek

Jackie Litt's glimpses of abandoned property in New Orleans add poignancy to the national study she co-directs on the status of Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

English spoken here, luv

Students who take a fancy to English literature and creative writing have a new study-abroad opportunity to savour the literary culture of the United Kingdom. Whilst reading and discussing the works of British authors, the undergraduates will experience student life at the University of Manchester.

English Associate Professor Nancy West will direct the summer programme and teach Locating Literary England, the literature part of the four-week course. Offered for the first time in June 2008, the curriculum will include a creative writing workshop taught by a faculty member from the University of Manchester.

The students will read selected works of writers such as William Wordsworth, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and Emily Brontë, then sojourn to the UK locales — both posh and not-so-posh — those authors wrote about.

Taking inspiration from the guided visits to Dublin, London, Stratford-upon-Avon, the Lake District and the Yorkshire Moors, the students will labour on a project that combines literary and creative writing components. They might produce, for example, a travel journal, photographic essay or literary map.

Amongst the literary colour the participants will experience is Hawthth Museum with its memorabilia of the Brontë sisters — Anne, Emily and Charlotte.

West says the across-the-pond adventure offers endless project possibilities for the students and is one she wishes she had experienced. "One of my regrets is that I didn't study abroad," West says. "I didn't even go to England until I was in my 30s."

A faculty grant that West received from the Arts and Science Alumni Organization — one of 16 grants awarded by ASAO — will help defray some costs.

Actors to watch

Television viewers and entertainment writers nationwide want to know more about Jon Hamm. Who is the handsome actor nominated for Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild (SAG) awards?

Well, tell them and anyone else who asks, that the newest leading man is a Mizzou graduate — in English. TV reviewers are praising the acting talents of Hamm, BA '93, in *Mad Men*, a surprise summer hit on cable TV.

Hamm stars as a droll ad executive in the period drama, which received a 2008 Golden Globe Award nomination for best drama series. The AMC show also collected the top spot on *Time* magazine's list of the best new TV shows of 2007. Hamm's Golden Globe and SAG nods came for best actor in a TV drama.

Mad Men, set in a Madison Avenue ad agency in 1960, pays loving attention to detail in period sets, props and costumes that authentically show the year.

Hamm's character, Dan Draper, balances a high-pressure career with suburban life and some extramarital

hanky-panky. Surrounded by beautiful women and an ever-present cloud of cigarette smoke, Draper faces the social, racial, political and sexual changes of the 1960s.

While an MU student, Hamm played the role of Cliff in the 1992 Summer Repertory production of *Cabaret* and in 1993 appeared in *Assassins*, also a musical.

In film, another MU actor, Chris Cooper, drew critical acclaim for his role as spy Robert Hanssen in the 2007 thriller *Breach*, a true story based on one of the biggest security breaches in U.S. history. *Time* magazine movie critic Richard Schickel wrote that Cooper, BGS '76, portrayed Hanssen "brilliantly."

Cooper also starred in *The Kingdom*, a 2007 action thriller about an FBI anti-terrorism team. His upcoming movie appearances include roles in *Married Life*, projected for release in February, and *The Road Back*, a drama featuring Cooper as a man whose family falls apart after his daughter's suicide. Cooper is a 2003 Oscar and Golden Globe Award winner for supporting actor in the movie *Adaptation*.



Photo courtesy of AMC TV

Jon Hamm, in character on the set of *Mad Men*, plays the lead role of Dan Draper in AMC TV's new hit series.

Can you identify actor Chris Cooper in this 1976 photo of a ballet from the Summer Repertory production of *Pal Joey*? Now an Academy Award and Golden Globe winner, Cooper acted, sang and danced in MU theater productions. The theatre department's 1976 Summer Repertory production of *Pal Joey* featured Jim Wardlow in the lead role, with Cooper as Sweeper. Men students, from left, are Greg Johnson, Cooper, Wardlow and Scott W. Lincoln. Women students are Diane Williams, Christina Sobin, Sharon Houck and Betsy Ross.



Photo courtesy of MU theatre department

Former deans; then and now

IN A MOVING TRIBUTE, the College of Arts and Science honored its living former deans with Distinguished Service Awards during 2007 Arts and Science Week in February. The conferring of awards and dinner were part of a centennial commemoration to mark the official naming of the College in 1907.

The five honorees are Armon Yanders of Columbia, who led the College from 1969 to 1982; Richard L. Wallace of Columbia, 1982 to 1983; Milton Glick of Reno, Nev., 1983 to 1988; Larry Clark of Columbia, 1988 to 1998; and Richard B. Schwartz of Columbia, 1998 to 2006.

Current dean, Michael J. O'Brien, credited the former deans with protecting the integrity of the College as the intellectual leader of the campus.

Yanders strengthened the focus on affirmative action in A&S and appointed the first MU committee on the status of women. He directed the first intensive review of all A&S courses, increased involvement in international programs for students and faculty and improved College advising at all levels. Yanders now directs MU's Alzheimer's Disease Research Program and the Spinal Cord Injuries Research Program.

In public talks, Wallace often reminisces with audiences about his tenure as interim dean of A&S, which he calls the most enjoyable job

he ever held. His legacy includes the development of a computer-based information system and the first draft of an A&S academic plan. Wallace served as interim chancellor before becoming MU's chancellor in 1997. He retired from that position in 2004 and now works as a special assistant to Chancellor Brady Deaton.

Glick left his mark on A&S with many advances, including establishment of the Campus Writing Program, which became a national model. He attracted considerable attention by placing a networked computer in the office of every faculty member of the College — a revolutionary idea at the time. Glick is now president of the University of Nevada, Reno.

Milestones of Clark's tenure are enhancement of the departments of chemistry, history, mathematics and English; moving the dean's office from Jesse Hall to Lowry Hall; and growth of a fledgling development program. Clark's academic discipline is theater, and he chaired MU's theatre department, founded the

Summer Repertory Theatre, taught classes in acting, directing and theater history, led the discipline's national associations and wrote an acting

textbook that is in its ninth edition.

During Schwartz's deanship, A&S acquired funds to enhance various department initiatives, expanded the faculty, experienced growth in sponsored research at or above the University's record-setting level and established the Center for the Literary Arts. Schwartz stepped down as dean to teach writing in MU's Creative Writing Program and to pursue his own passion for writing. He is the author of three recently released crime novels and has five novels in progress.

In an A&S centennial tribute, the College honors its former deans, from left, Larry Clark, Richard Schwartz, Milton Glick and Richard Wallace. Not pictured is Armon Yanders.

Building honors

The General Classroom Building, known by students for decades as GCB, is an evolving footprint in the history of Mizzou. The University officially changed the name of the building in April 2007 to honor one of its own, Professor Emeritus Arvarh Strickland.

Strickland Hall honors MU's first African-American faculty member, who joined the history department in 1969 and served for 26 years as a teacher, mentor, researcher and administrator. Strickland taught the University's first course in black history and nationally became a respected historian of African-American culture.

MU wasn't the only academic institution to honor the distinguished professor in 2007. Strickland's alma mater, Tougaloo (Miss.) College, awarded him an honorary doctoral degree in May. Strickland completed a bachelor's degree at the historically black college in 1951.



A distinguished teaching award in classics recognizes Associate Professor David Schenker's creative strategies.

Photo by Colin Suchland

Entertain this thought

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR David Schenker's ability to educate, excite and entertain students has won him the highest teaching award in classics from the American Philological Association.

His secret? He lavishes attention on undergraduates.

Schenker received the award for Excellence in Teaching at the College Level at the 2007 annual meeting of the association in January. One to three such awards are announced annually.

Members of the awards committee praise what they call Schenker's rare ability to "dazzle" students and meet them on their own levels. Schenker has acquired a reputation as a professor who engages students, whether they enroll in small discussion groups or large lecture classes. By keeping students off balance with a variety of teaching strategies, Schenker makes even a lecture class of 160 students seem intimate.

"Formal lectures have a place,"

Schenker says. Just don't look for many formal lectures in his classes, where students learn to expect the unexpected. Imagine their reaction when he walks into class wearing his academic robe.

"Taking a class with him requires more than just sitting and listening," says graduate student David Collier. "He does his most to ensure that you are learning the material and that you are thinking about it in new and creative ways."

Schenker doesn't lecture to students; he has in-class conversations with them. He works the room. He walks. He asks questions. He may select participants to give impromptu performances of a Greek tragedy — in costume. Or he might ask groups of students to learn different parts of a lesson and share the information with their classmates.

While encouraging his best students to work toward top achievements in classes on ancient culture and Greek, Schenker guides those who struggle and provides a

comfortable classroom atmosphere.

One student's written evaluation of Schenker's classes described the atmosphere as a class where every student willingly and enthusiastically participated each day.

Schenker joined MU's classical studies department in 1991 and accepted the chore of redesigning the curriculum. Since then, the number of students majoring in classical studies has risen from fewer than 15 to 50. Former department Chair Dan Hooley attributes much of that success to Schenker.

"Everyone contributes," Schenker says. "I'm only one contributor to a culture within the department that values our undergraduates highly and lavishes attention on them."

Schenker is the second faculty member of MU's classical studies department to receive the distinguished teaching award. Associate A&S Dean Ted Tarkow won the honor in 1980.

He's "re-education" began in China

STATISTICS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Zhuoqiong "Chong" He didn't choose to study math — it chose her.

One fateful day in 1977, He took the newly reinstated college entrance exam in her native China, knowing that her score would dictate her future area of study. The test result dictated that she would study math, not physics — her preferred subject.

"After 10 years without education, you grab any chance you get," she says. He lived in China during the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1977) when Chairman Mao's government was closing schools and "re-educating" intellectuals.

Although not her choice, math soon became He's passion. She studied applied mathematics at Hunan University before relocating to the United States for a second master's degree and a doctorate



Chong He solves statistical problems that are as complex as her career path.

Photo by Melody Galen

in theoretical statistics.

At MU, He works on statistical problems arising from large, complex scientific studies. About the time China's education system was overhauled, statistical methods were still small scale, such as data gathered by biologists working mainly at the species level.

As study at the ecosystem level became prominent and biologists examined multiple species interacting with their environments, they needed more sophisticated statistics to deal with new problems brought about by complex, larger-scale studies.

Statistics department Chair Nancy Floumoy says He developed a way to analyze data that couldn't be done five years ago, and she did it basically by operating outside the bounds of textbooks.

"What you learn from text and what is reality are very different," He says. When applying text to reality, researchers can make "messy" assumptions that may lead to inconsistent results among similar experiments.

He's new method helps eliminate inconsistencies in large data sets by creating models to fit the data, rather than vice versa. Her current research involves collaborative projects with the Missouri Department of Conservation.

One of He's studies centers on measuring the survival of eggs in a nest. The model she developed, which assumes nothing is known, successfully produced the survival curve that biologists know to be true from observation.

Now He is seeking funding to allow any biologist access to the computer program she created and to make it more user friendly. Most of her work is related to conservation, a concept she says was non-existent in China.

— Rachel Mahan

The Marshall plan

Characteristic of highly successful people, John Marshall plans ahead. The Texas oilman from Missouri's Bootheel has a passion for life that he displays through his work, his church, his family and his alma mater.

No conversation with Marshall gets very far without one of those subjects entering the dialogue. In addition to having a long and successful career in petroleum geology, Marshall, BA '50 geological sciences, has made philanthropy a big part of his life.

And when talking about church and education, Marshall may turn the conversation to participation as well: "I've given, and you can, too!"

With his love of family, Marshall focused on taking good care of his children as he planned his estate. He wanted to be sure that giving to his other passions would not take away from his children. "That's when I decided there might be a way to give to both," he says.

After consulting his financial advisers, Marshall discovered that he could plan a gift to benefit MU that would provide an income for him and his wife during their lifetimes, with the remainder directed to the Department of Geological Sciences. From the tax savings he received through establishment of a charitable remainder trust, he paid the premium for a life insurance policy to create wealth that will take care of his family.

"The advantages of making the gift of insurance to my children is that the money will not count in my estate and my children will owe no taxes on the money," he says.

In essence, Marshall created a plan that lets him give his money twice. He receives annual payments from the charitable remainder trust that he uses to make other gifts. At the end of his life, his children will receive a significant insurance benefit while his trust will benefit MU.

Now that's a plan.



Photo courtesy of the Kauffman Foundation

Macro experience

EVEN AT the unpopular hour of 8 a.m., Professor Michael Podgursky's honors section of micro- and macroeconomics was a popular place to be for senior Samantha Dalton.

"I can honestly say that it was the only 8 a.m. (class) that I have ever been really excited to attend," says Dalton, who is majoring in economics. "Every day we learned something new and exciting that explained a little bit more about the world, consumers and our economy."

Recognizing a talented student, Podgursky recommended Dalton for a summer internship with the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City, where he had served as a scholar in residence. Acceptance into the internship is an entry to careers in entrepreneurship.

Dalton was one of 17 interns chosen from 500 applicants nationally.

"The economics major attracts some of the very best students at MU, and Samantha shines among that select group," Podgursky says. "Her motivation and enthusiasm for learning are exceptional. Samantha's experience at Kauffman shows that our top students stack up to the best undergraduates — anywhere."

Each week a different department held

Economics student Samantha Dalton, left, meets with her supervisor at the Kauffman Foundation, Marisa Porzig, on a summer research project.

a seminar for the interns to discuss current projects, and the students met daily for analysis. Dalton loved everything about the summer from the jam-packed workloads to the mentors, whose credentials included the successful development of nanotechnology companies.

But most impressive to Dalton were the motivating personal interactions with Carl Schramm, president and CEO of the Kauffman Foundation. Having lunch with a head administrator is awe inspiring, she says.

Dalton worked with the foundation's Research and Policy Division on studying how universities help to commercialize the technologies developed at their institutions. Her research included visits to spin-out companies at such places as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of California, San Diego.

In another project, Dalton explored why college is so expensive, and she sought potential methods to cut the costs.

"I think there is a real understanding that what is going on at the Kauffman Foundation is important for the sake of the nation's and the world's economy," she says.

Unearthing solutions to water runoff

Torrents of rainwater wash over a city's paved surfaces during heavy storms. As it finds land, the swiftly roiling water erodes soil, transports sediment and degrades water quality.

Urbanization has become a worldwide environmental concern, and geography Assistant Professor Yingkui Li is searching for strategies to minimize the impact of surface runoff.

Urbanization is increasing at what Li calls an alarming rate. A report from the Environmental Protection Agency indicates that urbanization changed America's landscape at the rate of 56 acres an hour from 1982 to 1997. That's a lot of pavement and multiple challenges for urban planners.

"It is necessary to assess the impacts of urbanization on surface runoff and water quality," Li says. To do that, he is studying St. Charles County, a rapidly urbanizing region of St. Louis located in the Dardenne Creek watershed.

Through satellite images provided by MU's Geographic Resources Center, Li can interpret patterns and rates of land-use changes in the area during the past 15 years and assess the impact on the watershed. Undergraduate students are assisting Li with field investigations.

When the assessments are concluded, Li hopes to offer urban-development strategies for the future. His study is funded by a faculty grant from the Arts and Science Alumni Organization.



Yingkui Li uses U.S. Geological Survey images to study urban sprawl, such as this 1992 view of Las Vegas.

Good to go

FIRST THERE WAS CORN in ethanol. Now the versatile vegetable is popping up with a potential new method to power our vehicles.

Physics Professor Peter Pfeifer has discovered a way to use corncobs to make natural gas a more feasible automotive fuel. With the help of researchers at Midwest Research Institute, the invention is being tested on a vehicle belonging to the city of Kansas City, Mo.

The innovation is a fuel tank composed of aluminum tubes filled with 16 carbon briquettes made from corncobs. Microscopic cavities, “nanopores,” in the carbon hold the natural gas and provide greater storage capacity than an empty tank.

Pfeifer and colleagues make the briquettes by heating crushed corncobs at high temperatures and pressing the material into round one-inch thick shapes that resemble hockey pucks.

“It’s almost like charcoal that you put on your Fourth of July barbeque,” Pfeifer says.

There are many reasons to use natural gas rather than gasoline in cars. Natural gas is cheaper, burns cleaner, is easier to procure and would reduce the nation’s reliance on foreign oil. It produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions than gasoline, emits virtually no exhaust and the equivalent of one gallon of unleaded gasoline costs just \$1.25 to \$1.40.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, 85 percent of the natural gas consumed nationally is produced domestically, with Canada supplying most of the remainder.

Automotive engines can burn natural gas without the need for modification. Although some natural gas-powered vehicles are already in use — mostly for government vehicles and public transportation — the trend hasn’t caught on because of



Photo illustration by Blake Dinsdale

the need for heavy steel high-pressure cylinders to store the fuel.

That’s what Pfeifer’s innovation can change. With the carbon, the fuel can be stored in lighter tubes at a lower pressure, 500 pounds per square inch rather than 3,600. Furthermore, the

tank can be attached to a car like a gasoline tank.

Pfeifer, who says he’s fielding requests for information from the automotive industry, believes the natural gas system could be in use in American cars within five years if it became a national goal.

MADAME PRESIDENT

Mary Jo Neitz, professor of sociology and women’s and gender studies, began her term in August 2007 as president of the Association for the Sociology of Religion.



SINGER IS A GRAMMY NOMINEE

Caroline Worra, MM ’93, received a 2007 Grammy nomination for best opera recording for her soprano role as Jenny on the CD “The Mines of Sulphur,” a new opera by Richard Rodney Bennett. Worra is a regular with New York City Opera.



Photo by Marty Umans

ENDING THE EARLY WEEKEND

Students at several universities may be taking more classes that meet on Fridays, thanks to research by psychology Professor Phillip K. Wood, which found that students who don’t take Friday classes consume twice as much alcohol on Thursday as those with early Friday classes. Citing the research, educational institutions report they are considering changes to their class scheduling to combat the problem.

CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF A&S

The yearlong celebration of the past century of arts and science will start winding down Sunday, Feb. 10, with a concert featuring Jazz at Lincoln Center with Wynton Marsalis. Tickets for the 7 p.m. performance in Jesse Auditorium are available by phone through the “We Always Swing” Jazz Series at (573) 449-3001 or online at wealwayswing.org. A&S faculty, staff, students and alumni receive a \$5 discount on tickets.

ADVENTURE REWARDED

The Society of American Travel Writers has honored Kira Salak, PhD ’04 English, for stories published in *National Geographic Adventure* magazine. Judges of the 23rd annual Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Competition bestowed two gold medals on Salak, who started gathering writing acclaim while still an MU student.

SUPER LAWYER

Super Lawyers magazine named Thomas P. Battistoni, BA ’75 history, a 2007 New York Super Lawyer in business litigation. Awardees represent the top five percent of lawyers nationally. Battistoni is a partner with Schiff Hardin LLP.



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

The American Psychological Association honored Professor Ken Sher with the Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award for lifetime achievement. Sher’s research focuses on alcohol addiction.



CANCER DETECTION

For breakthrough methods in phage display, Curators Professor of Biological Sciences George Smith won the 2007 Promega Biotechnology Research Award from the American Society for Microbiology. Smith’s new approach helps detect even small tumors.

RANKED SEVENTH

Conservation Biology, a highly respected journal in biology, ranks MU biological sciences seventh nationally among all public institutions. That ranking is based on publications by biological sciences faculty from 1988 to 2005.



STUDENT’S WORK STILL STANDS

A paper by a graduate student in biological sciences is the 15th most-cited article ever in the journal *Conservation Biology*. Therese Donovan, PhD ’94, wrote “Reproductive success of migratory birds in habitat sources and sinks” in 1995.

STUDENT IN CHARGE

National health associations usually direct research grants to faculty, not students. But physics graduate student Mingzai Sun is an exception. As the primary investigator on a study related to high cholesterol, Sun received a \$25,000 grant from the American Heart Association.

STAR QUALITY

Known for involving her students in research, astronomy Associate Professor Angela Speck has received a 2007 distinguished CAREER Award, which emphasizes the integration of research and teaching. The National Science Foundation award provides \$500,000 for Speck’s research in circumstellar dust.



Photos by © iStock

Morgan hopes for a rising Starr

IS THE FOURTH TIME A CHARM FOR MORGAN'S BOOK?

THE PROCEDURE for having a book optioned for movie rights is as familiar as an old hat to English Professor Speer Morgan.

Make that a cowboy hat, because for the fourth time, Morgan has signed a movie option on his novel *Belle Starr*, a Western published in 1979. The most recent option is the second for writer-director Ron Maxwell, who took an option in 1994. Other studios also have signed options on the book — United Artists in 1981 and Rix, Ubel and Malice in 1992.

Morgan believes Maxwell's accuracy in using historical facts uniquely qualifies him for the cinematic venture. "Ron did *Gettysburg* and is a history buff almost to the degree of undermining himself," he says. Actor Tom Berenger, BA '71 theatre, played Lt. Gen. James Longstreet in the 1993 film.

Morgan wrote *Belle Starr* — his first of five novels — during his early teaching years at MU and attributes the book's newly rising popularity to the movie industry's rejuvenated interest in producing sagas of the West.

"I never liked Westerns as a genre, but I'm a fan of history," he says. "Belle Starr was a powerful figure of the world I grew up in."

Morgan admired Starr's force of character as a strong woman operating in a man's world. He uses a lot of history in his tale of the female Missouri outlaw who was born Myra Maybelle Shirley on a farm near Carthage. The book draws what Morgan calls her "imagined life story" from legends he heard during his childhood in Fort Smith, Ark.

Starr's life does seem destined for the

big screen. The book jacket describes her as an uncommon woman whose stories live on: When ambushed by a hostile band of Indians, Belle ripped off her shirt, howled the Cherokee death-gobble and marched on them alone.

Starr was seduced and became pregnant by the outlaw Cole Younger, who then abandoned her. Although she appeared to enjoy playing the role of a fallen woman, she was married twice — to a criminal named Jim Reed and later to a Cherokee Indian, Sam Starr, with whom she lived in Indian Territory.

Starr coped with such distractions as toothaches and migraines yet laughed at the world and herself. Among the many noteworthy activities in her life, she robbed a bank, spent nine years in a house of corrections and burned down a brothel run by her daughter. Despite being reared in a family with a less-than-stellar reputation and connections with Quantrill's Raiders, she was educated in music, some foreign languages, reading, writing and literature.

"Even though she rode outside the law, Starr was a free woman who made her own life, as flawed as it was," Morgan says.

Morgan's interest in Starr began with his kindergarten-class visit to a hometown museum and kindled with the tales he heard of Starr when he accompanied his father on business trips in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kansas. Starr's reputation as a Missouri outlaw who grew up with such infamous people as Jesse James, coupled with Morgan's move to MU, cemented his curiosity and resulted in the book.

In the novel, Belle is a formerly attractive middle-aged woman. Morgan discov-


ered recently that a writer hired by United Artists had written a movie script adapted from his book with Elizabeth Taylor in mind for the title role.

For the current movie possibility, Morgan would prefer a middle-aged actress who's not spectacularly beautiful; however, he knows the producers have plenty of options in actors as well as scripts.

Professor Speer Morgan grew up in Fort Smith, Ark., hearing legends of female outlaw Belle Starr.

Belle Starr has inspired generations of storytellers, but there was no biographer of her life.

BELLE STARR

A NOVEL
BY 
SPEER
MORGAN

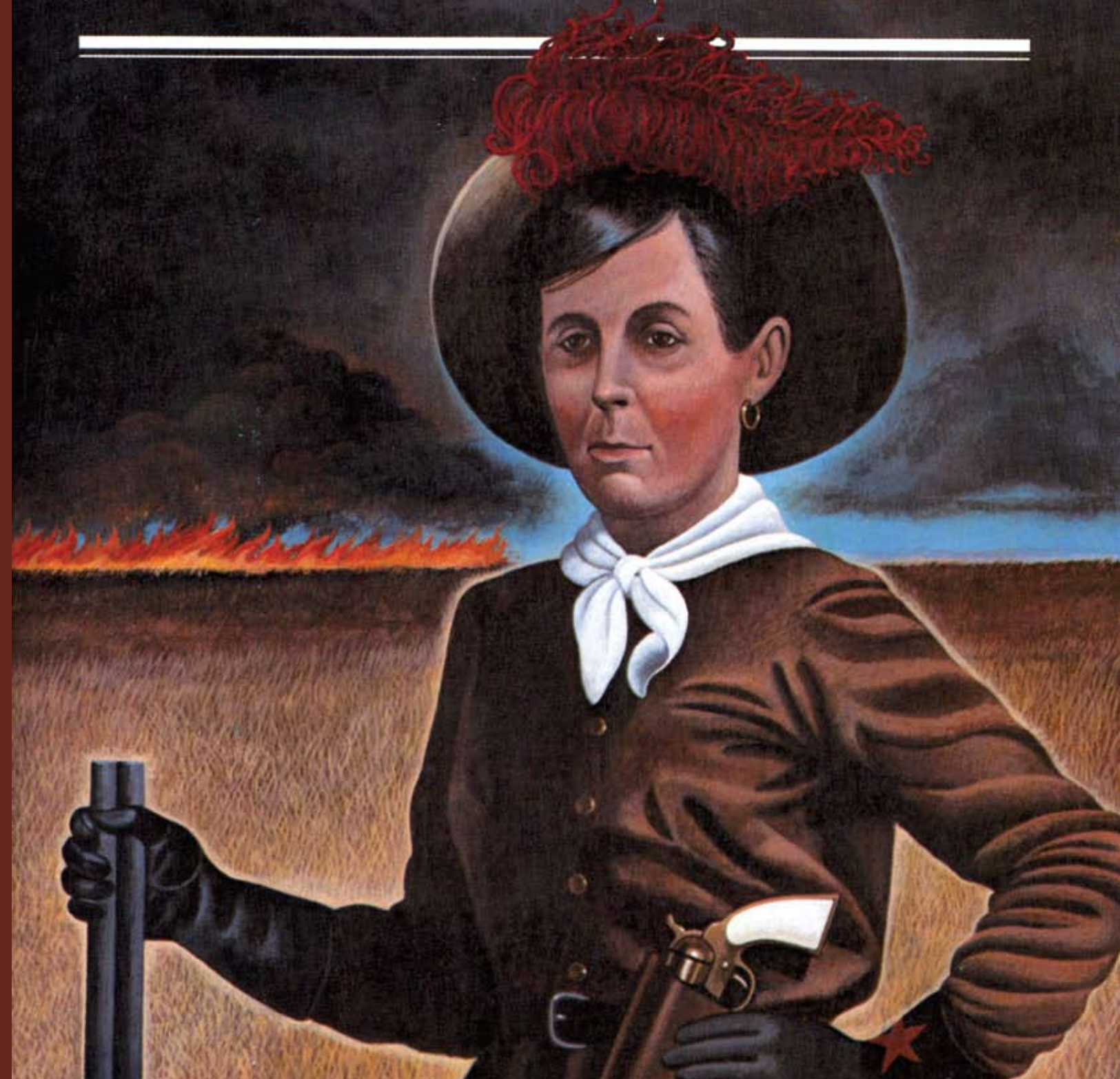




Photo by Colin Suchland

ancient art sheds light on society

GREEK ART FROM THE GEOMETRIC PERIOD IS GORGEOUS AND INFORMATIVE.

IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE the tall and elegant figure of Susan Langdon, associate professor of art and archaeology, digging for relics in far-flung locales. Yet since she was a 12-year-old drawing pictures of Greek myths with her older brother, she has been driven to pursue archaeology.

Langdon's first experience with excavation, in the appropriately named English site of Mucking, rescued artifacts from an Anglo Saxon graveyard before they could be destroyed by the construction of a limestone quarry.

Since then, she has garnered much acclaim for scholarship that has taken her to a variety of countries, including Cyprus, Turkey and Greece. She is the recipient of two lectureships from the Archaeological Institute of America, the pre-eminent professional organization for classical archaeologists in the nation, and travels extensively as a speaker.

Langdon recently completed a monograph that is the result of several years of research on Greek art from the Geometric Period, 900 B.C. to 700 B.C. Abstract and reminiscent of textile patterns, the art employs sparsely drawn figures to depict aspects of society, such as funerals, community mourning, warriors and chariots. City-states were first beginning to rise in Greece during that period, and Langdon's research examines art's function at a time when social constructs were going through drastic transformations.

"I was interested in looking at how

Susan Langdon travels internationally to share her knowledge of Greek art dating from 900 B.C. to 700 B.C.

art plays a role in creating a society that's going to be living in cities and has its own hierarchy and commitments to the institutions of the city," Langdon says. "It's a view that hasn't been taken with this art in the past."

Langdon began the project in 1999 at the National Humanities Center near Chapel Hill, N.C. She initially had planned to study the portrayal of women in Greek geometric art, but some stimulating conversations with other scholars at the center inspired her to broaden the research.

"It really became a book not just about women, but about society," Langdon says.

Langdon found that geometric art depicted and may have been used in rituals that surrounded conceptions of gender and adolescence. For boys, this often involved portrayals of heroism, such as fighting centaurs.

Langdon says the heroic model was rare for girls, who were often shown dancing — an important way for them to be displayed when they came of marriageable age. She argues the art helped establish and reinforce gender roles and a gender hierarchy that primed society for male-centered households.

"It was a very handy way for a rising state, which needed to procure the allegiance of its households, to be sure that each man would control his own household and that inheritances and land ownership would be transferred properly," Langdon says. "This was really the foundation of the classical city."

Langdon first began studying Greek geometric art while pursuing a doctor-

Langdon's work is considered ingenious because it examines the remains of ancient societies through creative, new perspectives.

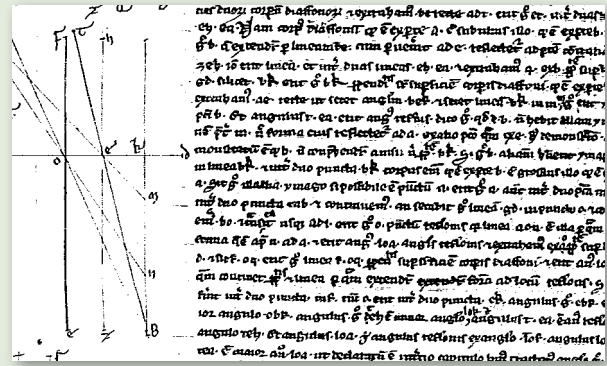
ate at Indiana University. She wrote her dissertation on how bronze human figurines were used in religious rituals. Those figures are some of the earliest examples of the ancient Greeks using sculpture to represent not just gods but also themselves.

Her newest study is about a sanctuary of the Greek goddesses Demeter and Kore in the city of Corinth. The sanctuary was home to a religious cult run by women, and Langdon is trying to establish a profile of the cult by examining terracotta figurines excavated from the site in the 1960s.

Langdon knows there's still much to be learned about those ancient societies, which makes the quest as fresh now as it was on the plains of Mucking.

patience required; silence not necessary!

MARK SMITH HAS BEEN WORKING ON THIS TRANSLATION FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS.



THE SCENE: The rare-books room in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, England.

MU history Professor A. Mark Smith sits at a table reading a 14th-century Latin manuscript slightly smaller than a Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. A magnifying glass helps him read the somewhat cramped, ornate script. He puts on a pair of gloves and gently turns one of the heavy parchment pages.

Smith is critically editing and translating a work on visual perception and the physics of light originally written in Arabic by Alhacen, an 11th-century scholar. Alhacen ranks among the top tier of contributors to the history of science for his work on mathematical subjects, including optics.

To understand the difficulty of such research, consider that Smith — an expert on medieval history and internationally known for his research on the history of pre-Newtonian optics — has been working on the project for two decades. The Latin text he's reading was written in medieval script akin to that used in the Gutenberg Bible, not Roman letters as we use today. And half of the text is unbelievably complex geometric proofs.

"The translation requires an immense amount of patience," Smith says. "When you're facing a single math theorem that's 16 pages long, it's daunting. That's longer than some mathematics dissertations."

Kitab al-Manazir (Book of Optics) — the Arabic version of the work Smith is editing — was translated into Latin under the title *De aspectibus* (On Visual Appearances) around A.D. 1200.

Dealing with Latin is not a worry

for Smith, who's as comfortable reading scholastic Latin as he is English. He even speaks the language. On one occasion when he was lecturing in French to Parisian students, his brain misfired and he switched to Latin in mid-lecture.

Step by step

For the first 10 years, Smith undertook what he describes as the most difficult and time-consuming part of the project — analyzing the 17 existing manuscript versions of the work to determine their interrelation. To accomplish that, he transcribed roughly 40 percent of the entire text, about 200,000 words.

"I was able to isolate seven manuscripts as 'family' representatives upon which to base the critical Latin text, which is supposed to represent the progenitor from which all copies stem," he says.

For the translation, Smith works with those Latin copies written by different scribes in different time periods and geographic areas. Smith uses one of the seven as a control copy, which he transcribed into Roman characters for ease of reading.

Line by line, he compares the six others to the control copy to seek places where they diverge. He checks for omissions or errors, identifies occasional linguistic anomalies and deciphers the scribes' various abbreviations or shorthand forms for terms and concepts.

By collating the resulting transcriptions, he produces a critical Latin text that is the basis for his subsequent English translation and commentary and that reflects as closely as possible the source translation, which has not survived.

Smith chose the research because he saw a clear need for a modern edition of Alhacen's treatise, which was the authoritative source on optics until about A.D. 1600. The treatise is subdivided into seven books that deal with subjects ranging from ocular anatomy and physiology to refraction and image formation in mirrors.

Smith has published editions and translations of the first five books of *De aspectibus*; his edition of the sixth is in press. Such profoundly scholarly work earned him a 2007 Guggenheim Fellowship that will support a research leave to work on the seventh and final book. Guggenheim awards are generally recognized as the most prestigious grants in the humanities.

When he began the project 20 years ago, Smith could read the text without optical assistance. Now as he works on the end stages, he wears bifocals and more frequently picks up that magnifying glass mentioned earlier.

Through the years of work, he developed an appreciation for Alhacen's brilliance as a mathematician and for the work of the scribes, for whom the project must have seemed endless.

"Thank God. It's finished," one scribe added in relief at the end of his text. It will be at least another three years before Smith can make a similar statement.

One of the most prestigious grants in the humanities honors Professor A. Mark Smith's research on the history of science. The Latin text he translates is written in medieval script.



Photo by Colin Suchland

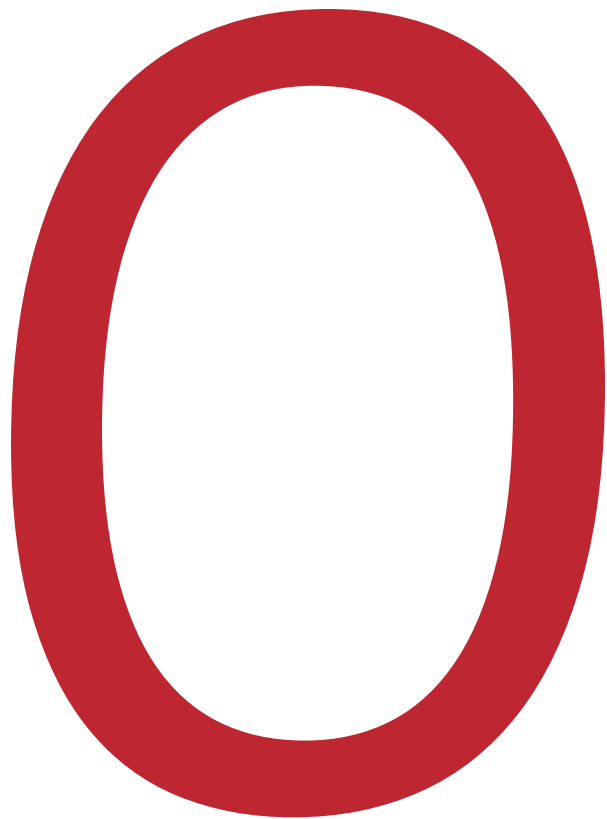


Photo by Nicholas Berner



Goth Girl

The student made her mother cry and tested her own mentor professor. We loved her for it.
By Nancy Moen.



ONE OF THE MOST brilliant students Professor Marcia Spence has ever encountered showed up at Mizzou with pink hair, body piercings, high platform shoes and all-black clothes.

If her first horn audition for an ensemble spot was a sign of things to come, Katie Andres encountered a reality check on the level of competition. She finished dead last.

“Students who decide to major in music in college were usually the best musicians in their high schools, so it’s a shock to run into better players at college,” Spence says.

The experience just made Andres work harder. “There are determined people on Earth, and then there’s Katie,” Spence says of the French horn player from Bonne Terre, Mo., population 3,000.

Andres pulled herself together and moved up eight chairs after the next audition. By her sophomore year, she had made the top band, then the orchestra. For the past two years, she’s been the top horn in Spence’s studio.

Andres didn’t win any performance

competitions her first year, but since then she won every state and division contest she entered and, as a senior, captured some national honors as well.

Runner-up wasn’t the title Andres was hoping for when she earned entry into the finals of two national music competitions. But by winning second place in both events, she achieved an unusual distinction.

Andres placed second nationally in the 2007 Young Artist music composition competition and again in the brass performance division of the Music Teachers National Association. MTNA contest officials say students frequently win awards in related categories, such as instrument solo and ensemble competitions, but winning honors in unrelated categories is rare.

The irony of Andres’ prize in composition is that her winning piece, “Moodswings for Woodwind Quintet,” was her first composition. On a challenge from Spence, she wrote it in two weeks.

“Moodswings” won state and division awards, then advanced to nationals, where it lost the first-place slot to the work of a

graduate student from the New England Conservatory. Andres was only moderately disappointed. The competition, after all, was fierce for a beginner.

Spence wasn’t surprised by the success of her standout student, who blossomed with coaching. As a performer, Andres plays some of the most difficult horn literature in existence. For the national competition, she played “Concertino Opus 45” for horn and piano by Carl Maria von Weber. A tough multiphonics section of the piece required Andres to play notes while singing several different pitches at the same time to form chords.

Perfect pitch

Ask Andres to sing an “A,” and she can pull it out of the air. Spence discovered at one of Andres’ first lessons that she has perfect pitch, which allows her to accurately hear music in her head.

Although the music she writes has a contemporary sound, it displays her knowledge of the master composers as well as a desire to please listeners. “Music can be kooky without alienating the audience,” she says. “I’m not super serious. My music is kind of sarcastic, tongue in cheek, which is how I view myself.”

Andres named the five movements of “Moodswings” after moods that describe the works: Obsessed, Jovial, Optimistic, Despondent and Sardonic.

In addition to MTNA recognition, “Moodswings” won Andres the 2007 MU Siquefield Prize and a commission to write another work. Her resulting “Concerto for Horn and Orchestra” is an eight-minute test of even an experienced performer.

In a gracious thank-you gesture to her mentor, Andres asked Spence to play the concerto for its world premiere at the Chancellor’s Concert. Spence started practicing: “I know how difficult her music is. I can’t think of a greater tribute. She could have chosen to play it herself.”

On the evening of the concert, Chancellor Brady and Anne Deaton and the entire audience stood to acknowledge Andres’ work with lengthy applause while tears trickled down the cheeks of Andres’ mother.

Smooth passages

“Katie wasn’t afraid of taking hard classes and working with difficult professors. She relished it,” Spence says. “She’s had the highest grade point average in the school. Every class she’s been in, she’s been one of the best.”

And not just in music. Andres learned to speak German after taking the beginning German sequence. She skipped the next four courses and took graduate-level German.

High school was a similar experience. Andres completed college math requirements by taking advanced calculus. She developed proficiency with computer technology that allowed her to design and manage 10 Web sites. She was a good soft-

Katie Andres aspires to play horn in a professional symphony after she completes a master’s degree.



Photo courtesy of Katie Andres

ball pitcher, too, but gave up the sport for fear that a stray ball in the mouth could end her horn-playing future.

That’s not to say Andres doesn’t have shortcomings. Spence points out Andres’ occasional overuse of the word “like” and says punctuality isn’t a virtue either. Andres’ first class could be at noon, and she’d still be late.

About all that remains of Andres’

Goth-girl image now are the multiple earrings she wears. Long gone are the black clothes, clunky shoes and pink hair.

Andres graduated in May 2007 with a music degree in horn performance and a minor in German. She’s off to graduate school at the University of North Texas to work with her mentor’s mentor, William Schamberg. She will use her \$4,500 in competition earnings to buy a new horn.



Photo © iStock

Help for the Dangerously Thin

For the approximately 10 million people in the U.S. suffering from anorexia and bulimia, Bardone-Cone's studies on eating disorders could contribute to the difference between life and death. By Priya Ratneshwar

M“MY ABUELITA, MY grandma, they called *la gorda*, ‘the fat one,’ ” says psychology assistant professor Anna Bardone-Cone, with a laugh.

Surrounded by stacks of papers and books in her high-ceilinged office in McAlester Hall, the diminutive Bardone-Cone continues the anecdote about her Ecuadorian grandmother in a rich, storyteller's voice that fills the room.

“She was this plump little lady, and it was totally a term of affection. But can you imagine members of a white, non-Latino community calling their grandma ‘little fat one?’ ”

Bardone-Cone frequently finds her scholarly work reflected both in her own and in others' personal experiences. She studies the psychology of eating disorders. In the past two years, she wrote papers

that charted new territory in research on diseases such as anorexia and bulimia.

One of the studies, conducted with Kamila Cass, an MU clinical psychology doctoral student, explores the disturbing phenomenon of pro-anorexia (commonly referred to as “pro-ana”) Web sites. Pro-ana Web sites encourage anorexic behavior by telling women with the disease how to further lose weight. The sites provide “thin-spiration” as support for eating-disordered activities through chat rooms, blogs and images of extremely thin and extremely obese women.

People with eating disorders primarily create and maintain the sites, and some of the content they post reveals a painfully conflicted awareness of their condition. Those individuals know they're hurting themselves emotionally and physically yet are not interested in recovery.

For example, advice on Angelica's Ana Web site suggests, “Take a picture of yourself, or of the body part that you hate the

most, carry it with you, and look at it every time you feel like eating!” And the creator of the Web site I Need You Now Somehow states in her biographical entry, “I'm tired of looking in the mirror and hating myself. ... I will embrace Ana because she will bring me to my ideal weight. I am tired of fighting with her.”

Guestbook messages reveal that visitors find comfort in these sites' acceptance of deeply negative self-images. A visitor to Ana's Tiny Secrets site writes, “Where I live no one understands any of what I'm going through and why I do it; to them anorexics ... are pathetic. This site gives me the strength to continue my quest for perfection and to not give up.”

Research on eating disorders has been slim

Bardone-Cone first heard about pro-ana sites from an eating-disordered client who went to them for support.

“I remember her telling me she finds it



Photo by Valentin Casarica © iStock

comforting to have others to chat with who won't judge her," Bardone-Cone says. "I thought, 'Oh, honey, this is just entrenching you further in the eating disorder!'"

In a subsequent conversation about the phenomenon, Bardone-Cone and Cass realized that although those sites had garnered popular attention from the media and from clinicians, no one had done empirical research on their impact.

Bardone-Cone and Cass embarked on a pilot study, which was published in the July 2006 *European Eating Disorders Review*. It provided the first scientific data on the dangers of pro-ana Web sites and led to a larger study published in September 2007 in the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*. Both studies showed that women who viewed the sites felt worse afterwards and were more likely to perceive themselves as overweight.

In the larger study, 235 undergraduate women between the ages of 18 and 23 were randomly assigned to view one of three sample Web sites that Bardone-Cone and Cass created: a prototypical pro-ana site, a site about female fashion using average-sized women and an appearance-neutral site about home décor.

Before and after viewing the sites, subjects completed sets of questionnaires that assessed their mood, self-esteem and feelings about their weight and appearance. In the final and crucial step, research assistants debriefed the subjects, focusing particularly on the women who viewed the pro-ana site to minimize or eliminate negative consequences of the experience.

Results showed that women who viewed the fashion and home décor sites experienced no change in the factors measured; however, the women who viewed the pro-ana site showed a comparatively worse mood, decreased self-esteem and decreased

"appearance self-efficacy" (how confident they were that they could attain their desired weight).

Associate Professor Debora Bell says Bardone-Cone and Cass' study supports concerns of health professionals and the general public about those easily accessible sites.

"Anna's work gives parents information that these Web sites could be detrimental to their daughters," Bell says. "It supports parental decisions to block these Web sites and to keep home computers in a public area so that they can monitor sites visited by their children."

In January 2006 Bardone-Cone also published research in *Behaviour Research and Therapy* that explored the relationship between perfectionism and bulimia. Produced in collaboration with researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Minnesota, Dartmouth College and Florida State University, the study tested a model designed to predict the bulimic symptoms of binge eating and "inappropriate compensatory behaviors," such as purging. The model comprises three factors — perfectionism, perceived weight status and self-efficacy (how confident one is in one's abilities to accomplish goals) — and gauges the interaction between them.

The participants, 406 women between 17 and 25 years old, completed a survey that measured their levels of perfectionism, perceived weight status and self-efficacy. They completed weekly questionnaires in which they reported any behaviors related to bulimia, including binge eating, vomiting, fasting and use of diet pills. Results showed that women who think they're overweight and have high levels of perfectionism combined with a low sense of self-efficacy are most likely to binge eat. The study was inconclusive about the model's ability to predict compensatory behaviors.

Bardone-Cone says individuals exhib-

iting the combination of high perfectionism, low self-efficacy and a sense of being

overweight may develop "aversive self-awareness," i.e., feeling bad about oneself. Binge eating can provide an immediate escape from this negative state. One implication of those results is that reducing perfection, increasing body satisfaction or increasing self-efficacy could all potentially reduce binge eating.

"Anna's work looks at the interaction between these variables and helps clinicians to understand the profile of a person suffering from bulimia," says communication Assistant Professor Jennifer Aubrey, who served with Bardone-Cone on Cass' dissertation committee. "I find this approach much more helpful than studies that isolate one particular social or personality dimension to explore the underlying roots of eating disorders."

Bardone-Cone conducted a similar study with black women. The majority of eating disorder research works with white women because traditional wisdom says that black women are more immune to these diseases. But studies have found that although black women rarely suffer from anorexia, they're on par with white women for binge eating and bulimia. In the future, Bardone-Cone would like to expand the study to other demographic groups, particularly Latinas because of her own Ecuadorian roots.

When body image becomes an obsession

Bardone-Cone first worked on eating



Anna Bardone-Cone



Photo by Nicholas Benner

disorders while pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her personal encounters with family and close friends also piqued her interest in the subject.

"I've seen extremely bright, capable young women have their minds taken over with thoughts about food and weight, and that has been part of the motivation to pursue research in this field," she explains.

Bardone-Cone is working on several projects that further explore eating disorders and their relationship to perfectionism. In January 2007 she began a study funded by the National Institutes of Health that examines current and former eating-disordered patients at MU's Pediatric and Adolescent Specialty Clinic. Working with doctors D. Paul Robinson and Melissa Lawson, Bardone-Cone is comparing different kinds of perfectionism among current eating-disordered patients, recovered patients and control subjects without eating disorders. Within the study, she's also exploring the meaning of recovery in regard to eating disorders. Traditional markers of recovery depend on physical signs such as patients returning to within 10 percent of their ideal weight, but Bardone-Cone believes

such definitions aren't always sufficient.

"I can say from clinical experience that I've worked with clients who are recovered by that definition, but they think about food all the time and they show unhealthy eating behaviors," she says. "The hope is this study will lead to a more accurate depiction of the range of possible recoveries and should give patients, their families and health care professionals a better sense of what's possible."

Bardone-Cone has other studies and papers in progress, including one on body dissatisfaction in men and another on the impact of viewing pro-ana sites on men's body image and their perceptions of the ideal female shape.

Bell says Bardone-Cone's work on perfectionism reveals the complexity and potentially negative consequences of a value often thought of as purely positive. And, as with much of her work, Bardone-Cone recognizes the relevance of this research to her own life.

"I used to be very hard on myself, and I was a perfectionist," she says. "Back in the days before there were computers, I'd be typing up some school project and make an error on the last word, and White Out would not do. I would have to retype the

whole thing."

But as she looks around at the clutter around her, she chuckles and admits that she has learned to exercise control over those impulses. Bardone-Cone is also careful to ensure that her children don't learn to take perfectionism to unhealthy levels.


"If my 3-year-old son, Addis, says, 'Mom, I spilled on the table,' I may respond, 'That's okay, we can clean it up,'" Bardone-Cone says. "My husband and I really try to be very accepting of imperfection."

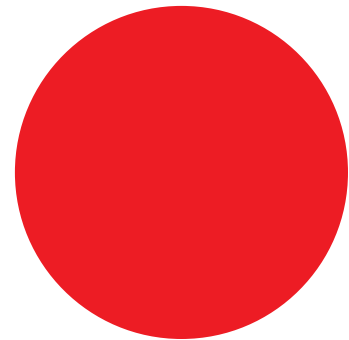
Her drive to make her scholarly work resonate with people's lived experiences is one of many reasons that Bardone-Cone finds fulfillment in teaching. In addition to supervising and mentoring graduate students, she also teaches the undergraduate courses Abnormal Psychology and the Psychology of Women.

"I love teaching Abnormal Psychology," Bardone-Cone says. "Something in there is going to apply to someone on a personal level."

To show the real-life relevance of research, one of Bardone-Cone's assignments in the Psychology of Women course requires students to go to stores and observe the degree to which products are marketed by gender.

For her teaching skills, Bardone-Cone won a departmental teaching award for junior faculty in 2006 and a 2007 MU Provost's Outstanding Junior Faculty Teaching Award. Because so much of her research is driven by the human need she's observed around her, she takes those skills outside the classroom by giving talks during MU's Eating Disorder Awareness Week and lecturing on eating disorders at Rock Bridge High School.

As for her own weight, Bardone-Cone has stayed in the slim-to-average range for most of her life. She tends to follow the philosophy of her paternal grandmother, Kate, who used moderation as a guide for eating and wasn't as enthusiastic about cooking as *abuelita*. 



SILENT SHOWMEN IN THE SHADOWS

THESE STUDENTS TRY TO BLEND INTO THE BACKGROUND ON STAGE BY WEARING HOODS, BUT THE WORD IS OUT: THEY ARE RESPECTED PERFORMERS OF AN ANCIENT ART. BY NANCY MOEN



MARTIN HOLMAN:

"MU's Bunraku Bay Puppet Troupe is the only active traditional group outside of Japan in the world."



MANY OF THE STUDENTS who manipulate traditional Japanese puppets for MU's unusual troupe grew up watching *Sesame Street* on TV. Now the advanced puppetry they perform could reduce Cookie Monster to crumbs.

When Japanese studies instructor Martin Holman formed the Bunraku Bay Puppet troupe, he envisioned the art form as a method for students to develop and apply their foreign language and cultural skills.

Holman couldn't have foreseen that his student puppeteers would become such skillful performers of the ancient art.

Bunraku Bay was invited to open the 2006 Iida Puppetry Festival in Iida, Japan, a weeklong event that featured more than 250 puppet troupes. It marked the first time a non-Japanese troupe received such an honor. Despite being performed by a group of foreigners who were neophytes in the art form, Bunraku Bay's performance was named best show of the week.

The puppet theater of Japan, known today as *bunraku*, developed before the year 1600. Puppeteers may work years to perfect each portion of a performance — polishing can go on forever — and attain proficiency with levers that control such lifelike movements as opening and closing hands, blinking the eyes and moving a mouth.

Three operators share the manipulation of each puppet. The head operator, or *omozukai*, reaches into the back to move the head and right hand; a second operates the puppet's left arm with a rod and uses his or her free arm to move stage props; a third moves the puppet's feet.

Senior Ed Selvey IV of St. Louis, a head operator, describes the choreography of a performance: "Being in such close proximity, it always seems like you'll run into the other two people; however, much the contrary was true. The three of us very quickly learned to move in tandem and got to a

point that we were anticipating one another's next steps."

The head operators may have the most strenuous task. They must hold a four-foot puppet over their head to position its feet at the level of an elevated stage. Even at 6 feet tall, Selvey tires after supporting the 20-pound weight for scenes that may run eight to 30 minutes. "Fabric never seemed so heavy," he says.

Hooded and dressed in black, the three operators become silent shadows in the background, yet they can watch audience reactions.

A narrator sings the story and speaks lines for the puppets in different voices. In U.S. performances, however, Bunraku Bay uses audio recordings, presents a synopsis in advance and focuses on the puppets' movements to tell the dramatic or comedic stories.

The troupe performs in academic and entertainment venues. Schools often partner with museums for public shows that include a full performance, lecture and demonstration of how the puppets work.

In spring 2007, Holman accompanied nine students to Washington, D.C., for three performances at the Smithsonian Institution. The troupe had appeared previously at the Kennedy Center for the city's Cherry Blossom Festival.

PERFORMING IN JAPAN

Holman has been fascinated with traditional Japanese puppetry since the 1980s when he did research on the troupes and hitchhiked across Japan to watch performances by some of the hundreds of troupes.

For three years, he trained as a puppeteer and made his debut with the Tonda Troupe as the first non-Japanese to perform *bunraku* puppetry. The performance was televised on Japan's largest network.

Holman formed MU's Bunraku Bay

MU's Bunraku Bay troupe opened a puppetry festival in Japan and won acclaim as best show of the week.

Troupe in 2005 when he joined the faculty to teach Japanese in the Department of German and Russian Studies. Although he trains some of the troupe's puppeteers, most of them study in Japan with one of three troupes. Gaining skills in puppetry is engaging and complements language learning.

"We try to get students to talk to Japanese people. One of the hardest things is to give them a reason to do it," Holman says. "If they have a task that has to be accomplished, they don't have to be buddies to approach the task together. The necessity of accomplishing a task draws both people into it."

Growing up on a southern Indiana farm, Holman never met an international visitor or heard a language spoken other than English. The concept of international study was foreign to him, but he eventually spent 10 years in Japan and a year in Korea and now pushes it hard for his students.

Head operator Andrew St. John, a senior majoring in international studies, says the experience of training with the Kuroda Puppet Troupe "drastically" improved his language skills.

"The puppeteers welcomed us with



Photos by Nicholas Benner

happiness and patience and even pride," he says. "They loved that we had traveled halfway across the planet to visit them and learn from them. I ended up being able to communicate well with our great teachers."

In summer 2007, eight students went to Iida and four to Tonda for training. Holman says the members of the Japanese troupes are delighted to work with American students.

Senior Ed Selvey, a head operator, works the head and right hand of a puppet. Each puppet needs three operators.

Selvey, who is studying computer science and theater, loved training in Iida. "I've always wanted to learn Japanese. Professor Holman talked about an opportunity to study abroad in Japan and learn to perform *bunraku*, and I was sold," he says. "The majority of what I'm doing in school is working toward my career goals (computer animation). Japanese was something I could do just for me."

St. John relished learning *bunraku* from the experts: "It was my first time in Japan, and I experienced one of Japan's richest cultural and historical treasures."

Another favorite performance for the students was the Orlando, Fla., Puppetry Festival. Their invitation came from Heather Henson, daughter of Muppet creator Jim Henson. 🎭



Odd "Oops" Moments

The inevitable glitches of puppeteering can be entertaining. Martin Holman once fell off the back of the stage during a performance in Canada but says he managed to not make much noise.

At the Smithsonian Institution performance, the student puppeteers — Ryan Baxter, BA '07 anthropology, Brett Windhausen, a senior majoring in linguistics and Justin Burghoff, a senior majoring in business — continued the show when their puppet's hand fell off. Burghoff cleverly substituted his own hand for the missing appendage.

"They were sure every eye in the audience was on it," Holman says. "I don't think anyone noticed."

For more information on MU's Bunraku Bay Puppet Troupe, go to bunraku.org.

How an Uppity Woman Became a Legend

Statistician Nancy Flournoy is considered the world's leading expert in adaptive design.

THE MOST VIVID MEMORY Professor Nancy Flournoy has of her early career was being the only female statistician at UCLA's Regional Medical Program, where she was fired for being an "uppity" woman.

"I never could keep my mouth shut. I remember agonizing over whether to speak up," she says.

Flournoy told that story to 1,000 statisticians at the annual Joint Statistical Meetings after receiving the F.N. David Award, one of the nation's most distinguished awards in statistics. The award is named after Florence Nightingale David, a trailblazer for women in statistics.

A committee of presidents of all the statistical societies of North America selected Flournoy based on her multiple professional achievements, including research, leadership in multidisciplinary collaboration, education and service, particularly as a role model to women.

Flournoy is known internationally for advancements in designing statistical models for clinical studies with information that develops and changes over time. Her algorithms can be used to find more effective treatments with fewer patients and give more study participants the better treatment.

Her biostatistics work — data management, experimental design, clinical trial coordination and statistical analysis — with the bone marrow transplantation team of E. Donnall Thomas played a significant role in research that later earned Thomas a Nobel Prize. She co-wrote approximately 60 papers on the subject.



Photos by Colin Suchland

Changing statistics

After working on a study for five years and discovering the results weren't showing much, Flournoy became interested in adaptive experimental design and sequential analysis to make the best use of changing information. She believed that using the new information could produce better results.

"Without doing the learning first, drug companies settle for mediocre therapies rather than finding what's best. And when

the data are sequential, not to use this feature is wasteful, most significantly of human and animal life."

Flournoy herself helped spread those ideas through lectures, symposia and workshops internationally. Now many statisticians work on adaptive design projects, and she is arguably considered the world's leading expert, according to William F. Rosenberger, statistics chair at George Mason University.

Flournoy's work in bone marrow

transplantation and in experimental design has earned many national and international honors. She is one of a few statistical scientists elected a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and she is a fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, a select group of scientists and artists with paramount contributions, such as Jonas Salk.

"Members are added only when a vacancy created by a death arises," Rosenberger says of the coveted honor.

Mentors light fires

It took years of work and the example of a female role model for Flournoy to feel at ease in a field dominated by men. She once had the privilege of attending a talk by F.N. David, and she remembers the sense of strength David exhibited.

"She stood confidently at the front of a large auditorium, smoking her cigar," Flournoy says. "I immediately took up cigar smoking as a way to exhibit my seriousness."

It wasn't the first time Flournoy had modified her behavior to appear less like the young blonde she was in those days. Although the cigar smoking didn't endure, the comfort level did.

Until recently, national meetings of the premier academic statistics society were populated mostly with men, but that, too, is changing, largely as a result of mentors such as Flournoy.

As the first female program director of statistics at the National Science Foundation from 1986 to 1988, Flournoy operated in a new circle of people and found ways to encourage previously unfunded researchers, who tended to be women, minorities and beginners. "I learned the power of a compliment," she says.

Some of her focus was on women who weren't submitting proposals for funding

because they had received no feedback on their work, and it hadn't occurred to them to try submitting. When she left the agency, women were submitting proposals in proportion to their numbers in the field.

For two decades Flournoy co-directed an annual conference, Pathways to the Future, for young women faculty members.

"She is the leading advocate in the profession for new investigators, women and minorities and researchers in smaller universities," Rosenberger says. "These people often do not have a way to be heard; they don't have a seat at the table of the statistics elite. She has been their voice."

At MU under Flournoy's leadership as department chair, statistics counts one of the strongest female representations worldwide — six of 18 faculty members are women. "Last I knew, it was the maximum," she says.

Another of Flournoy's interests is bringing together people who would normally not work together. The department has cultivated multiple projects that link statisticians with researchers from other departments.

Croatia connection

"Nancy is highly deserving of this award, and we are very fortunate that she is in our department," says Professor Paul Speckman, who has stepped in as interim department chair for the 2007-08 academic year. Flournoy is on sabbatical.

Among her future interests are projects with the University of Zagreb — to establish a doctoral program — and with the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

Such international connections have led to an exciting personal project as well. Flournoy and her husband, statistics Assistant Teaching Professor Leonard Hearne, are remodeling a 350-year-old farmhouse in Croatia as a second home.

One can imagine the challenges.

"We don't want a place where you sit and twiddle your thumbs," Flournoy says. As with her research, she will enjoy the path toward her goal while she deals with the inevitable changes.

Epilogue: UCLA tried to rehire Flournoy one year after firing her. She declined the offer.

Uphill climb

A diving-board accident when she was 10 left Nancy Flournoy temporarily paralyzed from the waist down and clinging to the side of the pool. Ten years later she knew she was severely damaged from hitting her forehead on the board.

She endured 15 years of disability, chronic neck and back pain, culminating in a throbbing facial nerve, spotty vision and an inability to think clearly. It seemed like the end of a career for the emerging statistician when for nine months she couldn't even read.

Years of treatment with a cranial-sacral therapist and an exercise program have healed body and mind. Now an internationally known statistician, Flournoy follows a strict exercise regimen that includes hiking and Pilates.



accidental discovery

KEN MACLEOD WAS ON SITE WHEN DRILLERS PULLED A ROCK CORE THAT MAY HELP DETERMINE WHAT KILLED THE DINOSAURS.

A **PIECE OF PLYWOOD** draped with a child's blanket protects the glass-covered, coffee-table display of fossils in Ken MacLeod's home. MacLeod, an associate professor of geological sciences, figures that with two young children in the family, the decorative piece is an accident waiting to happen.

Accidents have been kind to MacLeod lately. By accident, he was in the right place twice — aboard ship near Guyana and earlier off the coast of Florida — when drilling teams produced the two best sediment samples that may help scientists solve the mystery of what killed the dinosaurs.

As do the majority of scientists, MacLeod believes the impact of a single asteroid caused the extinction of the dinosaurs and most of their contemporaries some 65 million years ago. Scientists call that time period — marking a distinct change from an abundance of plant and animal life to a near absence of life — the Cretaceous(K)/Tertiary (T), or K/T boundary.

The six-mile wide, massive rock that slammed into the Yucatán Peninsula that fateful day millions of years ago left a 110-mile-wide crater and so much devastation that the site and 1,000 surrounding miles have yielded a geological record that is jumbled and difficult to interpret.

Consider the scene after the asteroid hit: an impact equal to the force of 300 million nuclear weapons, with sonic boom, blinding light, blast wave, earthquakes, landslides, flash fires and wind, followed by enormous clouds of dust blacking out the sun. Later, erosion stripped away the material from below the impact, acid rain destroyed the compacted fossils, chemicals leached from the sediment and massive storms produced

floods that removed the sediment.

Supporting the theory of such a cataclysmic impact is the rock core that drilling teams recently extracted from an under-sea plateau off the coast of Suriname and French Guiana.

A 22-centimeter-long segment of one of the critical cores produced from the Guyana site shows a distinctly different strip of rock sandwiched between an older layer of chalk on the bottom and a layer of mostly clay stone above it. The center section, MacLeod explains, appears to be debris from the asteroid mixed with material from the crater.

“In this core, we see exactly the record we would expect from a single impact. We even argue that this basal layer formed more than 10 minutes but less than two hours after the impact,” he says. “To resolve minutes of time in events from millions of years ago is mind boggling. Answering boundary questions has forced geologists to push the edge of science.”

Researchers on board the cruise ship that day were searching for fossil-rich black shale. They were not expecting to find boundary sediment in the drilling area, about 2,800 miles from the Yucatán Peninsula.

Because there were no K/T boundary specialists aboard the ship, MacLeod was the lucky scientist selected to analyze the remarkably clear samples. The fossil evidence showed what MacLeod calls “wholesale extinction” at the boundary.

With co-investigators from the University of Minnesota, the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History and the University of Vienna, MacLeod published findings of the analysis in the January 2007

Geological Society of America Bulletin, which media reported worldwide.

MacLeod's more usual research focuses on global climate changes. By analyzing the shells of ancient sea life, he can estimate water temperatures in deep time. Among the fossils he studies are giant clams found in rocks older than about 67 million years. That's just two million years before the K/T boundary, so scientifically he keeps running into it.

The excitement of being on hand for the K/T boundary discovery hasn't slowed MacLeod's work on climate models. He spent part of summer 2007 in Tanzania studying new cores to determine temperatures there about 100 million years ago. “It's basic science, but it's science that should inform policy makers. It's nice to feel that what you're doing is relevant,” he says.

MacLeod confirms that the scientific community is getting close to understanding K climate, and hot, unpleasant summers are helping secure funding for the research.

“In the last 150 years, we've changed the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere more than they changed naturally over tens of millions of years, and it's affecting climate,” MacLeod says. “It's solvable, but not without cost.”

As he secures the safety of his children by covering the glass-topped coffee table, MacLeod is working to provide them, and other children of the world, with a secure future.

Did you know?

The windowsills in Memorial Union are crafted of a creamy-white limestone that's millions of years old and loaded with fossils.



who is that lovely lady?

A STUNNING PAINTING BY BINGHAM THAT THE ARTIST NAMED “THE DULL STORY” IS ANYTHING BUT DULL.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY with Snow White coloring captivated viewers who were drawn to her pink complexion, glossy black hair and shimmering satin gown.

The 19th-century oil-on-canvas portrait emerged as the focal point of a stunning exhibit of seldom-seen paintings of American master artist George Caleb Bingham. The Museum of Art and Archaeology marked the centennial year of the College of Arts and Science with the unusual summer 2007 exhibit.

Bingham, who was MU’s first professor of art, is known widely for paintings of fur traders, boatmen and settlers, as well as images of the political process in rural areas. But there were no jolly boatmen or town meetings in this exhibit of works gathered from seven collections.

From scenes to portraits, allegorical subjects and even his only known miniature, the selected pieces examined the variety of Bingham’s works. Still, it was difficult to avert your eyes from the beautiful woman who dominated the west wall of the gallery.

Visitors learned the background of the painting by reading an explanation of “The Dull Story,” written by Meghan McClellan, a graduate student in art history and criticism. McClellan and fellow students wrote signed panels for each work on display.

McClellan fell in love with the painting, which, she discovered, diverges from Bingham’s style in two ways: it is done in a color palette typically not seen in his work, and it shows his sense of humor.

“Bingham was never considered a colorist, but this work breaks the

historical boundary between color and drawing,” she says. “It is a mesmerizing work of art.”

The sleeping beauty that Bingham painted with a touch of humor in 1843-44 is his first wife, Sarah Elizabeth Hutchison.

While researching the painting, McClellan found the humor. She learned that Sarah Elizabeth had told Bingham about a captivating book she was reading. “Then, to Bingham’s amazement, he stumbled upon his beautiful wife, fast asleep while reading her ‘engrossing’ book. He was so amused that he chose to paint her in this situation,” McClellan wrote for the signed panel.

Indeed, viewers of the exhibit routinely smiled at the lovely lady who fell asleep and provided inspiration for such a charming domestic scene.

Although you might have missed the exhibit in person, you may access it online through the museum’s Web site at maa.missouri.edu. Be sure to look as well for Bingham’s two portraits of another gorgeous young woman who fascinated him, Miss Vinnie Ream.

But that’s another story, although not a dull one either, to be sure.

Missouri artist

The University acquired many Bingham paintings that were later lost in an 1892 fire that destroyed the main academic building. In 1910, MU mounted one of the largest recorded exhibitions of Bingham’s works.

A Museum of Art and Archaeology exhibit displayed seldom-seen paintings by Missouri artist George Caleb Bingham.

Photo by Colin Suchland

Graduate student Meghan McClellan explored the humor behind Bingham’s painting of his wife.

Sculpting Success

MU IS ONE OF ONLY TWO UNIVERSITIES WITH TWO WINNERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE CENTER'S 2007 COMPETITION.

“**THE GIFT FROM** graduate school is that you have the opportunity to take risks,” says former art student Amanda Salov.

Salov and fellow graduate student Eric Carlson are enjoying the rewards of their risk-taking in the field of sculpture. Judges of the International Sculpture Center's 2007 competition selected the two ceramics students for Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Awards.

Salov and Carlson are among 21 winners from 339 student nominees whose artwork will be on exhibit through April 27, 2008, at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, N.J., and will be included in *Sculpture* magazine.

“It's a real testament to the quality of the schools' sculpture programs,” says Lauren Hallden-Abberton of the International Sculpture Center. More than 140 universities and art institutes nationally nominate their students for the annual awards.

Department mentors of the MU winners were Professor Bede Clarke, Assistant Professor David East and Professor Jo Stealey.

Salov's three pieces chosen for display are non-archival works, meaning they won't last. She created them of translucent porcelain, boiled sugar and wax, with a touch of food coloring for the pastel hues. The abstract sculptures — “Dripping Sweetness,” “Gentle Anxiety” and “Tip-toe” — demonstrate how the human condition is fragile and in transition.

Salov boils the sugar to hard-crack stage for a liquid that resembles slow-moving molten glass. “I don't think of candy as food,” she says of the thin, fragile coating. “It's so alluring, shiny and pretty, like a façade of energy.”

Salov understands that these creations are rather strange, but she says they also show a sensitivity she has had since childhood. “I'm not at a place now where I have to sell my work (although “Tip-toe” has sold),” she says.

After graduating with a master of fine arts degree in May 2007, Salov began a residency as an assistant teacher of sculpture at Anderson Ranch Art Center, an artists' conclave in Snowmass, Colo.

Carlson, who has the physique of a body builder and a secure psyche to match, seldom gets teased about working in fiber art. Yes, he sews with baby-soft fleece. So what?

Carlson stitched his way to the national award with a fiber collection of stuffed toy weapons: a gun rack with machine guns in various colors, land mines, green grenades, football-shaped mortar rockets, a dynamite pack complete with cord and plunger and a quarter-scale model of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

His ISC exhibition piece, “Plays Well with Others,” is a 3-foot by 4-foot bear trap that functionally closes. The trap invites people to play with it while provoking them to think about the violence behind the art. Through the unusual sculpture series, Carlson makes fun of himself and

his childhood fascination with violent action figures and movie stars.

“It's meant to get people to see how we are seduced by violence and how it affects our culture,” he says.

Carlson grew up in a family of blue-collar workers. As he watched his mother sew and knit, he developed a fascination for crafts and fibers, which offended his father's view of manliness — boys don't need to sew.

“Every field I'm attracted to is a craft: metals, jewelry, ceramics and fibers,” Carlson says. “My grandfather showed me how to work with my hands and not be afraid of it.”

Carlson graduated with a master of fine arts degree in May 2007. He is teaching color theory and 3-D design at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg. He continues to create as well as teach.

Graduate students Amanda Salov, pictured in her studio, and Eric Carlson won 2007 national awards for their contemporary sculptures. Salov's winning pieces, at top left to right, are “Gentle Anxiety,” “Dripping Sweetness” and “Tip-toe.” Carlson's winning work, “Plays Well with Others,” bottom, far right, is part of his fabric weapons series that includes “Gun Rack,” left, and “Pick and Throw,” center.



Photos courtesy of Amanda Salov and Eric Carlson

Why students love alumni

BY WORKING TOGETHER, the members of the Arts and Science Alumni Organization experience firsthand the strength of alumni.

ASAO leaders are directing a campaign for contributions to the organization's Heart of Mizzou Endowment, which supports scholarships and faculty development throughout the College. They pledge to use such gifts to help attract and retain multitalented A&S students and faculty.

Members of the executive committee, led by ASAO President Chris Stevens, BA '91 communication, understand how extra resources can supply a generous dose of encouragement. "Our alumni have generous hearts," Stevens says, "and gifts of all sizes are appreciated."

Just a few years ago, the ASAO members were students of the arts and sciences. Today, they rejoice with current students who continue a legacy of achievement and success that has spanned more than a century.

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Good news on hold

“OVERWHELMING” IS NICOLE BEER’S description of winning four major writing awards in the past year.

The most dramatic announcement came with news that Beer, a doctoral student in English, was the recipient of a \$20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

When the NEA chairman couldn’t reach Beer by phone, he used the literary technique of foreshadowing in his recorded message. He identified himself and said he would call again the next morning.

Beer heard the message just before bedtime the night before she was scheduled to take her comprehensive exams. With her interest and anticipation piqued, she barely slept at a time when she needed rest.

The next day, just an hour before the exams, Beer talked with Dana Gioia and learned that she had, indeed, won an NEA grant for poetry. The \$20,000 cash prize affords her the opportunity to devote time to her craft.

“I had to go on campus and work for three hours without talking to anybody to share my news,” she says.

Beer will use the NEA grant to visit places that inspire her poetry, such as zoos, aquariums and museums.

Among Beer’s other national awards, her poem “Still Life with Half-Turned Woman and Questions” was selected to appear in *2007 Best American Poetry*. A group of her poems was chosen for a reading at the Unterberg Poetry Center in New York and publication in *The Nation* in the 2006 Discovery/*The Nation* contest.


Beer also won second place in the national Astrobiology and the Sacred Poetry Contest, administered through the University of Arizona, with her poem “The Collector’s Song.”

In addition to Beer’s win as a student, three English department alumni received 2007 NEA grants for poetry: Averill Curdy, PhD ’04, Rebecca Dunham, PhD ’06, and Steve Gehrke, PhD ’06.



Photo by Melody Gallen

A \$20,000 cash prize is one of four awards that graduate student Nicole Beer won in the past year.

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