

Mizzou Weekly

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Professor co-receives six-figure NEH grant to compile Swift's poems for book series



SWIFT SCHOLAR Over the next three years, Stephen Karian, associate professor of English, will work with a colleague on editing, introducing and annotating about 600 Swift poems for the Cambridge Works of Jonathan Swift. Photo by Rachel Coward

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels*, wrote some 600 poems

An MU English professor has been named co-recipient of a \$225,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Stephen Karian, associate professor of English, and James Woolley, an English professor at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., received the three-year Scholarly Editions Grant to edit the poems of the Irish writer Jonathan Swift (1667–1745).

The NEH grant, one of 26 awarded this year for the creation of scholarly editions, supports a printed edition and free online archive of Swift's poems. The printed edition will appear as four volumes of the eighteen-volume *Cambridge Works of Jonathan*

Swift, a series launched by Cambridge University Press in 2008. The online archive, which will include multimedia, will enable the user to search and compare manuscript and printed versions.

Besides the NEH, the University of Missouri's PRIME Fund (which provides cost-match support for scholarly research) and a Research Board Grant from the University of Missouri System fund the project.

A paradoxical man

Jonathan Swift isn't nearly as well known as other Irish authors such as W. B. Yeats and Oscar Wilde. He was, however, the first Irish writer to receive accolades outside his country. Moreover, his biting satire and wit were major influences on other writers.

Swift was a man of many paradoxes. He was an Anglican priest whose writings were largely secular. He was sometimes (perhaps wrongly) characterized as misanthropic and had an outsized interest in natural bodily functions. Yet he also was a social butterfly devoted to bettering the lives of the Irish.

He mocked England's monarchy and Anglican bishops, but also felt they were necessary to keep order. He could write silly verses and sentences, and ones that went to the heart of the social and economic problems of eighteenth-century Britain.

Though his writings are filled with contemporary issues and details, Swift wrote for the ages. "He was aware that fundamentally he was writing about something that transcends time and place," said Karian, author of *Jonathan Swift in Print and Manuscript* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

"He offers a refreshing, clear-eyed, non-sentimental view of both the vices and virtues of human beings," he said.

The poems

Karian's interest in Swift began in high school with *A Modest Proposal* and *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift's most popular works. His satire and sense of social justice are evident in both. In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift lampoons the Lilliputians' politics for turning minor party differences into polar extremes. One wedge issue was that a political party wore slightly higher shoe heels than the other.

Karian separates Swift's poems into three types: the silly, the scatological and the political.

An example of the scatological is "The Lady's Dressing Room." Swift spends most of its 144 lines describing the amorous deflation of Strephon after he sneaks into a beautiful woman's vacant dressing room. Her comb is speckled with dandruff and dirt, and her stockings are "stain'd with the Marks of stinking Toes." Finally, the young man lifts the commode lid. He is aghast.

Idealizing physical beauty is a fool's game, Swift seems to say.

But the poem is not so simple. "He is a very slippery writer," Karian said.

At poem's end, Strephon is unable to look upon a fair maiden with pleasure until he learns his mistake: that the poles of humanity are dynamically one — stinking and beautiful. As flower gardens blossom from wormy dirt and fertilizer, so does the Lady radiate beauty after dolling herself up. "Such Order from Confusion sprung, / Such gaudy Tulips rais'd from Dung," Swift wrote.

Historians discover a wealth of information on everyday eighteenth-century Britain in Swift's poems, and lovers of satire can pull up a chair to watch a master at work.

In "A Description of a City Shower," Swift turns on its head the commonplace contemporary pastoral poem of gentle rain falling on a countryside by describing a city downpour and its stomach-churning aftermath. At the time, British city sewer systems were rudimentary at best. Street gutters could be awash in all sorts of disgusting things after a torrential rain. "Sweepings from Butchers Stalls, Dung, Guts, and Blood, / Drown'd Puppies, stinking Sprats, all drench'd in Mud, / Dead Cats and Turnip-Tops come tumbling down the Flood," Swift wrote.

"A Description of the Morning" chronicles everyday happenings and moral failings: a man's affair with his servant ("Now Betty from her master's bed had flown"); a maid's morning duties ("Now Moll had whirl'd her mop with dext'rous airs, / Prepar'd to scrub the entry and the stairs"); and boys walking to school with "satchels in their hands."

Today's reader can find much of interest in Swift's satires of England's Parliament, Royal Family and purveyors of social injustices, Karian said. "If students have trouble grasping the satirical targets, all they have to do is read today's newspapers," he said, where stories abound on political corruption, the vanity of the rich and the plights of the poor.

Swift took society down a notch, but he didn't stop there. His works offered solutions. Regarding Ireland's struggling economy, for example, he encouraged the Irish to purchase clothes manufactured in their native country rather than import clothes from England.

"As much as he attacked people for their own stupidity and contributing to their own suffering, he also felt the need to help," Karian said.

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Coulter Foundation's history of success good news for MU

COULTER PARTNERSHIP

Five MU research projects currently receiving funding from Coulter Translational Partnership Program

At a meeting last week in Memorial Union, the MU co-program directors of the Coulter Translational Partnership extolled the promise of the five-year \$5.2 million funding agreement struck between the Wallace H. Coulter Foundation and the University of Missouri.

In its first year, the partnership is funding five MU medical research projects.

Rebecca Rone and Jake Halliday presented data at the Research & Development Advisory Board meeting Friday that showed the audited results of the foundation's first four years of work with 10 other universities.

The results were striking: \$40 million in investment that generated more than \$150 million in venture capital funding, brought in more than \$150 million in government research grants and stimulated the formation of 44 start-up companies.

The hope is that the Coulter and MU partnership will have similar success over the years. Halliday was optimistic. "In the first (round of Coulter partnerships), it was really an experimental program," Halliday said in an interview this week. MU is receiving a "well-honed process that's potentially more valuable than the initial investment."

In 2011, Mizzou and five other universities were chosen to be part of the second round of Coulter partnerships. In the partnership, Coulter agreed to provide \$200,000 in startup funds and \$666,667 each year for five years, while MU kicks in \$333,333 per year over the same period, totaling \$5.2 million.

The partnership's objective is to move medical research forward by filling a critical gap in funding that can occur between patent-ready university research and when it becomes attractive to investors.

Part of the Coulter Foundation's success, Halliday said, is that Coulter representatives keep close tabs on the funded projects. "They're committed to the success of each school," he said. "Rigorous review and feedback is part of that process."

Even as the first-year partnership between Coulter and MU gets under way, Halliday and Rone are gearing up for another year of Coulter awards to MU researchers. Applications for the those awards are due by Dec. 1.

Contact Rebecca Rone for more information by emailing roner@missouri.edu.

— Erik Potter

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Children's Hospital program brings athletes and patients together



SYRINGE ART Pediatric patient Austin Kendrick creates art in the Children's Hospital's playroom Aug. 29. MU athletes, from left, Allison Hu, Jill Rushin and Hailey Twietmeyer were among the volunteers helping out. Photo by Justin Kelley

CALEB'S PITCH

Program named after deceased 8-year-old Boston cancer patient

The paint is everywhere in the playroom at MU Children's Hospital.

It's dripping down a canvas in streaks of orange, red and yellow. It's on the garbage bag hung behind the canvas. It's under the artists' nails and in splotches on the ground.

The paint explosion was ignited by six patients ages 3 to 13. They are taking part in Caleb's Pitch, a one-hour art session in which MU athletes interact with children who are creating syringe art by squirting paint from a distance onto a canvas. The works are abstract, a tangle of colorful lines.

"We're here to supposedly brighten their day," said Mackenzie Sykes, a Mizzou junior softball player who participated in the Aug. 29 event. "But I think they do more for us."

Caleb's Pitch was founded in 2006 by Tim Jacobbe, a faculty member at the University of Florida. Jacobbe wanted to honor the memory of his nephew, Caleb, who lived in Boston with his family and died of cancer at age 8.

The program combines two of Caleb's great loves: athletes and syringe art. Weeks before his death, Caleb fulfilled a dream by visiting Boston Red Sox players at Fenway Park and throwing out the first pitch of a Red Sox game. Caleb also made a lot of syringe art at Boston Children's Hospital. Three days before he died, he created 31 syringe art paintings.

Caleb's Pitch came to Mizzou on June 19, the first time the program was held outside of Florida. Plans are to hold the event every few weeks. About a dozen young patients and MU athletes take part.

The MU Athletics Department helped bring Caleb's Pitch to MU. said Kim Lambert, associate athletic director. "Every athlete that's participated has had such fun with it."

Angie Ball, child-life coordinator at Children's Hospital, said that the mission of the program is to foster interaction between college athletes and young patients. "I loved the idea that this was a way that kids could use syringes in a fun way that's not medical," Ball said. "I also loved the idea that it really gives (the patients) a chance to feel like they're not in a hospital."

Caleb's Pitch takes place in the Children's Hospital's blue-tiled playroom. At the inaugural event, pediatric patients wandered in, usually with a parent at their side. They seemed apprehensive when four MU athletes greeted them. A plate of paint-filled syringes sat on a table.

The children loosened up quickly. You could see it on their faces, hear it in their voices and sense it in the way they patiently waited to get their hands on a syringe — a truly foreign idea to anyone who has been on the receiving end of one.

Rainbow arcs squirted through the air and onto canvases. It was high-five galore after each painting was completed. The athletes were having fun, too. They mixed all the colors into one syringe and squirted away.

After the event, the wet canvases were placed on the windowsill, a strip of protective paper catching the drips. Once the paintings dried, they were given to their respective creators as a keepsake, a memory of Caleb's Pitch.

— Ashley Carman

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Viruses able to kill certain kinds of disease-causing bacteria, study shows

BACTERIA VERSUS VIRUSES

Combination of viruses and chlorine knocked out the highest percentage of bacteria biofilm

Viruses may have some benefit after all. They may offer a one-two punch to dangerous bacteria.

University of Missouri scientists are finding that certain viruses known as bacteriophages could be used to efficiently sanitize water treatment facilities and might aid in the fight against deadly antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

In studies, MU scientists used viruses to kill colonies of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, common disease-causing bacteria. The experiment was the first to use bacteriophages in conjunction with chlorine to destroy biofilms, which are layers of bacteria growing on a solid surface, said Zhiqiang Hu, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering in the College of Engineering. A summary of the experiments was published in the latest issue of the journal *Biotechnology and Bioengineering*.

"The advantage to using viruses is that they can selectively kill harmful bacteria," Hu said. "Beneficial bacteria, such as those used to break down wastes in water treatment plants, are largely unaffected. Hence, viruses might be used to kill pathogenic bacteria in water filters that would otherwise have to be replaced. They could save taxpayers' money by reducing the cost of cleaning water," he said.

Bacteria can be difficult to kill when they form a biofilm, or outer crust. Biofilms can be killed by chlorine, but the inner bacteria are sheltered. Viruses circumvent the problem by spreading through the inner and outer of a bacteria colony.

Hu noted that the bacteriophages are easier to create than the enzymes used to attack biofilms. The viruses are also better at targeting specific bacterial species.

The greatest success in killing biofilms was by using a combination of bacteriophages and chlorine, researchers found. An initial treatment with viruses followed by chlorine knocked out 97 percent of biofilms within five days of exposure. When used alone, viruses removed 89 percent of biofilms, while chlorine removed only 40 percent.

"The methods we used to kill *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* could be used against other dangerous bacteria, even those that have developed resistance to antibiotics," Hu said. "Our work opened the door to a new strategy for combating the dangers and costs of bacterial biofilms."

Hu plans to expand his experiments into a pilot study.

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University of Missouri Extension restructuring for efficiency

A NEW MODEL

Extension regions to be reduced to seven

MU Extension is realigning its regional administrative structure to focus on high-priority local programs, adjust to uncertain public funding, generate additional revenue, and be programmatically nimble to meet increasing demands for educational programs and services, Michael Ouart, vice provost and director, said in a Sept. 11 news release.

“Changes in the economic development needs of Missouri, population demographics, societal changes and funding constraints call for new models for allocating funds and staffing,” Ouart said.

Rather than budgeting for a specific number of positions, MU Extension regions will be allocated pools of funds to carry out the highest-priority programs for the area. This will be effective Jan. 1, 2013.

“The focus will be on program impact, not the position,” Ouart said. “Decisions about where to invest in positions will be based on citizens’ greatest opportunities and needs and MU Extension’s available resources to fill those needs.”

Regional directors, in collaboration with MU Extension’s program directors and with regional and county extension councils, will determine the mix and location of priority programmatic positions.

The number of extension regions will be reduced from eight to seven.

“The regions will be reorganized, taking in consideration the number of faculty and staff to be supervised, geographic distances for travel and factors specific to each region,” Ouart said.

Correction: An earlier version of this article misspelled Michael Ouart's name.

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Fall flu shots

Flu shots are available through Healthy for Life, a University of Missouri System wellness program for faculty and staff.

Faculty, staff and their dependents (12 years and older, accompanied by an adult) enrolled in a UM Health Care plan can receive a free flu shot. Participants need to bring their insurance card and a completed Flu Consent Form.

For those not enrolled in a UM Health Care plan, cost is \$15 cash or check.

Consent forms can be downloaded at <http://wellness.umsystem.edu> (<http://wellness.umsystem.edu>).

Upcoming clinics:

Oct. 1, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Veterinary Medicine, Room W233

Oct. 2, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Hulston Hall, Fireplace Lounge

Oct. 3, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Townsend Hall, Lobby

Oct. 8, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. MU Student Center,

KC/St. Louis Room

Oct. 11, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. MU Student Center,

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Name change in student life department

Student Sustainability in the Department of Student Life has changed its name to the Environmental Leadership Office.

The change is to more accurately portray the mission of the office and provide greater clarity among environmentally-focused groups on campus.

The Environmental Leadership Office's mission is to empower students to take action in energy conservation, local food, biking, peer education and other sustainability issues.

The office currently coordinates several student programs and services, including the Bike Resource Center, the Mizzou Food Coalition and Sustainability Peer Outreach (SPROUT).

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