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Mapping brain circuits

By Barbra Rodriguez

Researchers have developed a way to visualize nerve fiber bundles that transmit information between different areas of the living human brain. Their study provides new information on the orderly pattern of these fiber connections and could one day lead to improvements in brain surgery, diagnosis of brain ailments and understanding of neurological diseases.

"This technique will enable scientists to make more detailed maps of connections between different parts of the brain," said Thomas C. Conturo, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of radiology. "In particular, this technique can provide diagrams of how the brain is wired and which parts of the brain talk to other parts. By knowing that, scientists may be able to identify abnormal connections between brain areas that might be important to diseases such as schizophrenia." The study, published in the Aug. 31 issue of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, also might provide a way to tell if behavioral differences among people result partly from differences in the way their brains are wired. Conturo, the lead author, also noted that wiring diagrams could be used to study how the recently recognized process of "re-wiring" occurs in brain ailments such as stroke. Scientists' understanding of the wiring of the human brain has come primarily from studies of animals which lack many of the higher brain functions of humans. A nine-member team of physicists, computer scientists, neuroscientists, radiologists and anatomists spent three years developing a variation of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and analyzing data to provide these detailed maps of brain wiring in living humans. The MRI fiber tracking method monitors the random movements of water inside...
New law society supports students in public service

BY ANN NICHOLSON

The School of Law has created an outstanding scholars program in honor of one of its most celebrated alumni, former FBI field director William H. Webster.

The Webster Society is designed to recognize students with exemplary academic credentials and demonstrated commitment to public service.

The school has inducted eight inaugural members into the new society; each scholar in the program will receive a full-tuition scholarship and stipend.

"The thought of Bill Webster working to lessen the shaking."

Dyke, a professor, said that scientists had already conducted a computer model that calculated the best way to turn the power on and put the dampers to work to lessen the shaking.

"The device holds great promise in offering the best possibility of implementation and acceptance by the engineering profession, both for new construction and retrofit applications," Dyke said.

The dampers in the building are about to be about the size of a cardboard packing box and would be inserted inside the wall of a structure.

Shirley Dyke

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News Briefs

Befriending music

The Department of Music in Arts & Sciences invites you to join the Friends of Music. Now in its ninth year, the Friends of Music provides scholarship support for music students and for undergraduate students throughout the University who are seeking musical enrichment through private lessons.

The organization also sponsors student performances for its members through the Membership's Open to all members of the University.

Campus quiz: This clock

"Does this clock resemble the lardly at which Hilltop Campus location?"

Answer: The Hilltop Campus location is on the corner of the new Brookings Residential College on the South 40.

Teenage volunteer

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Scientists at School of Medicine help test smart mouse

By Jim Dryden

Coogie is smart, and its brain seems to demonstrate that a mother's brain worked differently than those of other mice.

Joe Tien at Princeton is the one who generated the idea of altering the gene, and he tested the hypothesis that it was possible to produce these mice and make them smarter," said Zhou Ph.D., assistant professor of anesthesiology and neuroscience at the School of Medicine. "But in order to demonstrate that convincingly, the rest of us had to get involved."

These modified mice so that certain parts of the brain would make more of a protein called NR2B. The protein is one of the building blocks of a cellular structure called the NMDA receptor. In earlier experiments, Tien and colleagues had already known the gene for NR2B had problems with function and memory and was known that when mice —

The first grant awarded by NIDA to address this concept is: "We've had some success in the past with our NIDA-funded, peer-led interventions among drug users, but those programs proved to be less successful in women than men," Cotter said, noting that her team won the Missouri Public Health Association's publication award for their work on peer-led delivered interventions. "In 'Sister to Sister,' we are specifically tailoring the intervention to urban women, and we're looking primarily at alcohol use because it's the most frequent substance abuse in this population. We're also looking at obesity, physical activity, and psychosocial properties may affect HIV transmission rates."

In a second study, funded by a one-year $85,000 grant from the National Center for Responsible Gambling, involves the development of a diagnostic gambling assessment tool. The tool is actually an interview to help researchers gather more information about behavioral symptoms that lead people to uncontrollable gambling and its emotional and financial devastation. The need to study and understand pathological gambling has come to the forefront of national concerns as opportunities to gamble expand across the United States. "We will ask about the onset, frequency and duration of gambling symptoms and about the consequences between gambling and substance abuse," said Renee M. Cunningham-Williams, Ph.D., principal investigator and research assistant professor of social work in psychiatry. "We're also interested in finding available help for those with gambling problems."

To A. Fiedorow, Ph.D., research instructor in psychiatry, will lead the fourth project, funded by a one-year $75,000 Behavioral Sciences Track Award for Rapid Transition. The award will support research on ways to reduce crack cocaine use.

In the project, Riderou will use a computerized artificial neural network to investigate outcomes among drug users in two types of interventions. The study will attempt to determine whether neural networks can be more useful than traditional techniques in predicting treatment outcomes and will benefit most from various treatment options.

These models provide a form of artificial intelligence. By mimicking the way the brain processes information, they may one day be able to improve treatment research in many areas."

Michael Kass becomes head of department of ophthalmology and visual sciences department

Michael A. Kass, M.D., has been named head of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. With the new appointment, he also becomes an ophthalmologist-in-chief at Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

The appointment was announced by William A. Peck, M.D., chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. Kass has been an associate professor of ophthalmology at Washington University since 1992.

"Mike Kass excels as a clinician, researcher and leader," Peck said. "During his months as acting head of the department, he has proven to be an exceptional administrator as well," Peck said. "Our Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences has long been world renowned, and I believe that Mike's leadership will continue to enhance its position."
Delbarco: ‘Do Americans Still Have a Dream?’

A

Author and essayist Andrew Delbanco will deliver an Assembly Series lecture titled “Do Americans Still Have a Dream?” at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6, in Graham Chapel. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Delbanco is the author of “The Puritan Ideal” and the editor of “The Portable Abraham Lincoln,” which he recently helped the University of Chicago Press prepare for publication. In his most recent book, “The Death of Satan: How Americans Have Lost the Sense of Evil,” Delbanco examined the ways in which the very notion of evil has been diminishing in recent decades.

In his talk, Delbanco will consider the continuing presence of a modern American life and how the ideas of transgression and the unknowable self are fast becoming obsolete. Delbanco said the driving motive behind this book was the conviction that if evil, with all its insidious complexity, escapes the reach of our imagination, it will have established dominance. He also looks at the past strategies in which American leaders such as Curtis Matley, Jonathan Edwards, Jefferson and Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and Whitman and modern writers such as Rachel Carson and Susan Sontag have recognized and fought evil with moral, cultural and social responses.

Delbanco received a bachelor’s degree from Harvard University in 1978 and a doctorate in 1980. He began teaching at Columbia University shortly thereafter and was promoted to full professor in 1987.

For more information, visit the Assembly Series website at assembly.wustl.edu or call 935-5285.
Sports
Saturday, Oct. 2
7 p.m. Football vs. College of the Holy Cross
Field House, 943-5220.

Friday, Oct. 8
6:15 p.m. Volleyball vs. Siena College
Grand Center, 935-5220.
7:30 p.m. Volleyball vs. Elmhorst College.
Grand Center, 993-5220.

Saturday, Oct. 9
10 a.m. Cross Country - All-Missouri/Northern State Championship
Steinberg Hall Auditorium, 933-5220.
10 a.m. Volleyball vs. DePaul University
Field House, 943-5220.
3 p.m. Volleyball vs. Simpson College.
Field House, 943-5220.

And more...
Tuesday, Oct. 5
10 a.m. Music Department - Chamber Music Recital
Steinberg Hall Auditorium.

Football Bears win
The football team won its University Athletic Association (UAA) opener for the sixth consecutive season Saturday, Sept. 26, winning 22-7 over Case Western Reserve University 42-7 at Finnigan Field. Junior quarterback Greg Lake threw for 226 yards and three touchdowns in just over two quarters of work. Washington U. awed its defense put points on the board for the third time in four games as junior defensive lineman Luke Schumacher intercepted a deflected pass and returned it 14 yards for a touch- down. Junior running back Sean King ran for added 48 yards. Sophomore Justin Huynh and Mark Gistker each tallied for the Bears. In a non-conference game last weekend in California, 5-2-1 with a pair of touchdown receptions. Junior Cory Lockwood earned a win at No. 2 over Montclair State University.

Women's soccer bests Case Western Reserve
The University's No. 16 women's soccer team improved to 7-1-0 on the year with a 2-0 conference-opening win over Case Western Reserve University Saturday, Sept. 25, at Francis Field. Junior Sarah Wood tallied the game-winning goal, her 10th goal this season and fourth game-winner, and added an assist. Rachel Sweeney added an insurance goal as the Bears posted their first shutout of the season 2-0 over Montclair State University (N.J.).

Women's tennis bests Case Western Reserve
The University's No. 16 women's tennis team clinched a sweep at Case Western Reserve University Saturday, Sept. 25, at Francis Field. Junior Katie Godaw also had a strong tournament, hitting .412 with 72 kills, 48 digs and 27 blocks. Junior Katie Godaw also had a strong tournament, hitting .412 with 72 kills, 48 digs and 27 blocks. Junior Katie Godaw also had a strong tournament, hitting .412 with 72 kills, 48 digs and 27 blocks. Junior Katie Godaw also had a strong tournament, hitting .412 with 72 kills, 48 digs and 27 blocks. Junior Katie Godaw also had a strong tournament, hitting .412 with 72 kills, 48 digs and 27 blocks.

Bears win two matches
The men's soccer team improved to 2-0 with a pair of weekend victories at Francis Field. The Bears topped Case Western Reserve University 3-0 on the weekend with 72 kills, 47 assists and 37 blocks. Junior Katie Godaw also had a strong tournament, hitting .412 with 72 kills, 48 digs and 27 blocks.

Runners place third, fifth at invitational
Men's cross country runner Tim Julien continued his impressive senior season by leading WU to a third-place finish at the University College Invitational Friday, Sept. 24. Julien ran a season-best 24 minutes, 49 seconds to finish in second place, just nine seconds off the pace. Sophomore Pat MacDonald finished 12th as the Bears finished behind only national powers North Central College and the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. The women also had a strong day, finishing in fifth place among the 30 teams. Sophomore Beth Peterson finished in 10th place to lead the Bears.

Women's tennis team falls to Cornell College
The women's tennis team dropped a match to Cornell College 5-4, Friday, Sept. 24, at the Tao Tennis Center. Junior Nandini Chatravatua was a double winner, picking up victories at No. 1 doubles and No. 3 singles. Sophomore Kar Copicoan picked up a win at No. 5 singles, and sophomore Shilpi Reddy and freshman Abbie Lockwood earned a win at No. 2 doubles.

Catherine Opie is renowned for her landscapes, including "Untitled #27" (1994, above). Opie is the New Friends Fellow at the School of Art and the Saint Louis Art Museum.

Catherine Opie, photographer and Freund Fellow, to speak
Washington University will host a pair of events featuring Catherine Opie, renowned for her landscapes, including "Untitled #27" (1994, above). Opie is the New Friends Fellow at the School of Art and the Saint Louis Art Museum.

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Eating disorders, anxiety among clinic group topics

The Psychological Service Center (PSC) at Washington University is offering two five-psy—educational groups in the fall of 1999. The PSC, an outpatient mental health clinic operating under the aegis of the Washington University in St. Louis, is an N. Jackson Ave., Clayton, on the West Campus.

The five group therapy sessions will cover the topics of female childhood sexual abuse; eating disorders in women, depression, stress management and related topics; and emotional health. Four groups will be led by advanced graduate students in the clinical psychology doctoral program, under the supervision of licensed clinical psychologists. The fifth group will be led by an experienced licensed clinical psychologist.

Childhood sexual abuse can affect the ability to develop close personal relationships and can cause unexplained feelings of sadness, fear, anger, low self-esteem and hopelessness. The groups will be led by advanced graduate students and experienced licensed clinical psychologists. The fifth group will be led by an experienced licensed clinical psychologist.

Wellness Program expands, launches new initiatives

offered are wellness assessments, stress management, instruction for relaxation techniques, alcohol and drug education and referral, smoking cessation, behavior—-changing information, nutritional analysis and confidence—building activities. In addition, a number of other concrete initiatives are unfolding:

— A campuswide Wellness Committee is forming, in order to develop a working structure and to create a plan outlining the direction for future wellness initiatives.

— A massive poster promotion—

— "Wellness/What?"— is under way. Designed to empower students, the poster is a collection of helpful reminders on everything from safe campus cold and flu prevention to means for safer sex. Also included are an array of "social norming" messages (e.g., "Most U Wash students drink three drinks a week, and 35 percent choose not to drink alcohol"); designed to enlighten students who incorrectly perceive them—• As part of the poster promotion, a variety of "social norming" messages are being displayed (for a $5 certificate) or answer a series of "open book" questions promoting messages on facts to the poster (for $25).

A new wellness peer education group, which deals mainly with stress management, nutrition and exercise, has been formed. "I'd like to put together a coalition of people interested in working in different areas that have a piece of wellness," said Pope. "The University is one of 21 colleges taking part in the pilot American College Health Assessment Survey this fall. The 91—question survey, which has been distributed to 2,000 students here, with each school a variety of behavioral topics.

— Plans for a wellness education program, which was the centerpiece of a recent conference at the University Center, continue to take shape. In addition to the comprehensive wellness equipment, the center will include a series of health and wellness programs, computer programs, workshops and other educational materials.

"This past spring, we did a lot of marketing. The programming really isn't what it takes to change behavior, "said Pope. "In order to make a cultural change and impact behavior, it takes more than a one-shot deal. I'm excited about the components that are coming into play."
Elizabeth George, William Darby named to student services leaders in posts

Elisabeth M. George and William P. Darby, Ph.D., of whom have served the University in diverse capacities, have been named to lead, co-lead posts within the student services at Washington University, beginning Aug. 1.

George has been appointed director of career planning and placement services. Darby has been named vice dean for academic affairs. George will play a key role in focusing much of his time on the undergraduate admissions — an institutionwide program — as she leads the recruitment and securing loans to editing the admissions office.

She received a baccalaureate in 2007 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she graduated with honors in business administration. During her time at UNC-Charlotte, she served as a resident assistant and a member of the student government. George received a master of business administration from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2011, where she graduated with honors. She joined the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 2011, where she served as the director of corporate and community relations. George previously served as the director of project management and assistant director of the School of Business Administration at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She is a member of the American Association of Higher Education and the National Association of Student Affairs Administrators.

Darby has been an associate professor of neurobiology, recently received a four-year grant from the National Science Foundation for her research on "Collage and Assemblage as New Art Forms." The exhibition is now at the Columbia College Center for Book and Paper Arts in Chicago and will travel to five additional locations during the next year.

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For Balota, it's the mind that matters

David Balota, Ph.D., works to unlock the secrets of the subconscious

David A. Balota, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Washington University in St. Louis, is doing research on the mind's ability to process information at an unprecedented speed. He has spent much of his career exploring the subtle cognitive mechanisms of the human mind. It is the mind's ability to control and focus its attention that lies at the heart of Balota's research and teaching interests, and it is the millennium — one-thousandth of a second — that figures prominently in his efforts to unlock the secrets of our feverishly churning, rapid-fire subconscious minds.

Balota knows, for instance, that readers of this sentence do not scan groups of words in a series of continuous streams, but instead scan short glimpses of words that are processed separately. He also knows that readers are functionally blind for about 20 milliseconds as they shift their gaze from one phrase to the next.

Balota and colleagues at the University of Massachusetts capitalized on this quirk of human perception with experiments that use sophisticated eye movements to determine if gaze shifts as readers scan computer displays. They then make instantaneous changes in the next word to be read, all during the reader's fleeting milliseconds of blindness. Results occasionally notice the word change, but most glean some sense of meaning from the initially displayed word as they subconsciously read ahead using peripheral vision.

"Reading is just one example of the many human abilities our brain has to process information at an unconscious level," Balota said. "At any point in time, you have lots of things that are impinging on you and vying for your attention. How the middle toe on your left foot feels in your shoe. The sensation of your back against a chair. The brain is constantly dealing with all these stimuli, but you're never conscious of all of them unless you direct your attention." Subliminal messages

In his studies of the power of subliminal processing, Balota presents subjects with a 15-million-glimpse of a visually camouflaged word, such as "spade." Participants quickly realize their awareness that a word or anything else has been presented, but follow-up responses reveal that the subliminal message actually began processing these "invisible" words, leaving the unwitting participants highly primed to subsequently perceive and recall words that they had not even seen.

While Balota's research confirms these subliminal effects, it also shows the effects are short-lived and have little influence on future behavior.

"This is actually bad news for learning Spanish while advertising to advertisers who think they can change subliminal ideas," Balota said. "It appears that we don't pay just attention, we need to lay down memory traces.

In more recent studies, Balota has begun to shed light on one of the most elusive problems in Alzheimer's research — how the disease influences a person's ability to acquire and retrieve memories.

The mind, Balota explained, stores memories of events and other knowledge in intricate webs linked by logical, semantic associations; a thought or other stimulus can spark a reaction along these networks and cause a flood of information to be activated. The ability to maintain attention to critical to the memory process because the mind must continuously weigh and choose among these streams of information on what's relevant and discarding the rest.

Our findings suggest that memory-related functions, with aging are not the result of a broad decrease in attention, but instead are due to sharp declines in cognitive areas, specifically portions of the brain that control attention and the strategic processing of information once it is recalled from memory," he said.

A native St. Louisan, Balota conducted his first research on human learning as an undergraduate at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). The first from his immediate family to attend college, he is the son of a construction worker, a pipe fitter who was eight years up from asbestos-related cancer.

"My father consistently reminded me that I did not want to let him down for the St. Louis Blues and the best way to ensure that would be a college education," Balota said.

Balota took the advice to heart. Intrigued by a course on philosophy of the mind and his readings of Descartes, he majored in psychology and minored in philosophy, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1976. In an UMSL research lab he met Janet Duchek, another psychology major from St. Louis, and his future wife. Shared interests led them to the University of South Carolina, Balota was coaching these kids in soccer that he's cramming with grad students in his labs. Neither started out knowing much, but he gave us all the same good-natured encouragement, said Day, as if he were a proud, easygoing father, but he never seems like he's working you hard. The further I go in this field, the more I realize what an amazing mentor he was," Dan Spieler said.

Balota has been associate professor of psychology since 1996, a period in which the department moved into a new $28 million building and added 10 faculty. He also has served on the steering committee for the Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology (PNP) Program as chair of the Linguistics Program and as coordinator of the Cognitive Science Interdisciplinary Research Group.

He is currently active in the Hewlett Mind-Brain Program, a new undergraduate curriculum that exposes freshmen to two years of intensive cross-disciplinary study in matters of the mind.

Teaching abroad

Balota was born and raised in St. Louis in 1963 and became a full professor of psychology in 1995. He added a second appointment as a professor of neurology in the medical school. "He's a fantastic researcher who has included students as a scholar at the University of Canterbury in The Netherlands and as the Erskine Distinguished Professor at the University of New Zealand. Balota has collaborated often with world-class researchers, Balota also enjoys working, with newcomers. His work with a former undergraduate student, Joel Zem, will soon be published as a co-authored article in a leading journal. For five years, he has worked with students from local high schools to complete research as part of the National Science Foundation's Young Scholars Program.

"I want to turn my students on to the science of understanding the mind, and I want them to embrace that understanding and pursue anything the exciting research that's coming on this area science of psychology," Balota said. "We're in the middle of a new era of time for the science of the mind. I'd like to make it a little less mysterious for everyone."