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Elliot Stein, member of the Board of Trustees, dies

BY JESSICA N. ROBERTS

Elliott H. Stein, a member of the University's Board of Trustees since 1975, died Dec. 30 at his home of complications from Parkinson's disease, He was 82. A beloved member of the University community and 1939 alumnus of the School of Business, Stein was elected to the Board in 1968 and served as a key member of the Executive Committee since 1975.

"He was always kind, he was always positive, he was always helpful," said William H. Danforth, vice chairman of the Board and chancellor emeritus. "I have never known anyone so good at looking out for other people's interest, both their individual interest and the interest of their institution."

As former chairman and member of the Nominating Committee for 25 years, Elliot was highly instrumental in attracting many other distinguished Trustees to the University's service. His tenure on the Investments Committee and on the Development Committee spanned his 32 years of exemplary trusteeship.

Stein's influence extended throughout the St. Louis community. As a successful broker and investment banker, he served on numerous boards of publicly owned corporations, becoming the indefatigable dean of St. Louis business leaders.

A resolution passed by Ralston Purina's board when Stein stepped down after 17 years of service accurately reflected the St. Louis business community's regard for Stein's service as a corporate director: "His dignified and thoughtful counsel to management, as well as his ability to address the important issues, helped to make Elliot Stein the consummate director."

A St. Louis native, Stein graduated from Clayton High School and enrolled in the School of Business. After three of his courses there and a semester in

Stein: Board of Trustees member

Weixiong Zhang, Ph.D., associate professor of computer science, applied an algorithm to an old computing and business nemesis called the Traveling Salesman Problem. One of the TSPs involved finding the best route for pay phone coin collectors.

Computer science's Zhang tackles old Traveling Salesman Problem

BY TONY FITZPATRICK

It was a combination of things, physical and metaphysical, that called Arthur Miller's traveling salesman, Willie Loman. Now a University computer scientist has developed and tested an algorithm that might at least make Loman's roads traveled a little easier. Weixiong Zhang, Ph.D., associate professor of computer science, has developed an algorithm that attacks an old problem in the computing and business worlds known as the Traveling Salesman Problem (TSP).

An algorithm is the backbone of computer operations; it is a step-wise mathematical formula, similar to a recipe, that solves a problem or reaches an otherwise desired end. TSP is actually an umbrella term for a whole host of planning and scheduling problems, often involving routes; a classic one being a postman's route, for instance.

Zhang is currently working with AT&T Bell Labs collaborator David S. Johnson, Ph.D., a leading expert in the area of computational complexity. They have applied the algorithm bearing Zhang's name to 10 theoretical TSPs and found it to be the best solution for half.

One of the problems that AT&T Bell Labs is concerned with involves the route of pay phone coin collectors. In this case, Zhang's algorithm maps a route where they walk off, or where to go or what to do after they walk off. Fentonho's court and into the visitor's locker room on the second floor of a set of 72, roughly 21 for the first time since Feb. 15, 1998. They weren't. They shook hands with the Griffins and made their way through those celebrating the near-impossible—a $500,000 for a new women's tournament.

Bears hold heads high after The Streak of 81

BY ANTHONY WILSON

They called it "The Streak." But perhaps to give the women's basketball team's consecutive-win tear of 81 games such a simple name is trivializing the grandeur of the accomplishment.

Consider this: Even the greatest teams throughout history have never won 81 straight games. In 1980, the mighty Ramsay succeeded to a rag-tag bunch of followers deemed USA Hockey. The all-powerful English soccer team of 1990 dropped a match to the Americans in perhaps the greatest upset in sports history. Even the Buffalo Bills showed that coming back from a 32-point deficit with less than 14 minutes remaining is not impossible.

And yet the Washington University Bears never experienced a loss. For all but five the infamous streak, Jan. 16 was the first day they had ever lost a collegiate basketball game. So perhaps they could be excused if they were confused about how to react, or where to go or what to do after they walked off. Fentonho's court and into the visitor's locker room on the second floor of a set of 72, roughly 21 for the first time since Feb. 15, 1998. They weren't. They shook hands with the Griffins and made their way through those celebrating the near-impossible—a $500,000 for a new women's tournament.

Stein: Board of Trustees member

International social work students aim to bring knowledge back home

BY ANN NICOLLSON

Seven social work students from emerging democracies in Asia, including parts of the former Soviet Union, will be among their homelands' first professionally trained social workers helping to lead the struggle to improve harsh living conditions. The Open Society Institute (OSI) Fellowship at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work are part of a new Network Scholarship Program to teach these international students the latest social work research and practice techniques.

Part of the Soros foundations network, OSI is a private operating and grant-making foundation that seeks to promote development and maintenance of open societies around the world through educational, social and legal reform.

The scholarship program is designed to professionally train outstanding candidates as social workers to implement reforms, foster social justice and help the development of social work in the recently independent nations of Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and

See Students, Page 6

Washington University in St. Louis

Art and Marge McWilliams (left) receive thanks from the women's basketball team and from Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton (right) at the Jan. 19 Bears game after Wrighton announced the McWilliams' gift of $500,000 for a new women's tournament.

McWilliams' gift to create new women's tournament

BY BARBARA REA

Art and Marge McWilliams, veteran boosters of University athletic programs, will sponsor an annual women's basketball tournament. The inaugural Washington University McWilliams Basketball Classic will be held this fall.

The commitment of $500,000 for the new tournament was announced by Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton at the Bears' Jan. 19 game at the Field House.

"At the very top of any list of
In a letter to parents and students, the University said:

"...Every year we search for new ways to manage our costs, and our combined tuition and fees are lower than most of the private universities with which we are compared. For example, we are converting our heating and cooling to distributed energy systems, which will help us control our growing costs for electricity and natural gas.

"Our success at raising gift support and the size of our endowment might suggest to some that more of our costs should be covered by these revenue sources. However, in combination they provide only about 18 percent of the revenue needed to support our academic programs.

"Others have suggested that we could realize additional revenue by enrolling greater numbers of students and thereby increasing our annual enrollment. Unfortunately, doing so would reduce our relationships with our current superlative and outstanding co-curricular experiences to students. We believe that quality is better, not bigger. Our academic quality helps us attract the remarkable students we are so fortunate to have, and record-setting numbers of students would seek to come here because of our personal atmosphere and accessible faculty. Our grow faster than the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The McWilliams' gift pays tribute to our outstanding women's basketball program," Ettner said. "We are grateful for Art and Margi McWilliams' interest, their support and the size of our endowment. They have been active in athletics. Schael noted that the McWilliams' gift pays tribute to our outstanding women's basketball program," Ettner said. After all the attention the women received for their 81-game win streak, one loss didn't take away everything accomplished. The Bears are still the No. 1 team in the country, they still have a game-win streak, and they are still in the hunt for a fourth consecutive national championship. It's the only two other NCAA basketball teams that haven't been upset. Even though the Bears didn't get to 81, they are a team history will always remember.
New hepatitis C replication method will enable scientists to study disease

By David Linnell

Scientists studying the virus that causes hepatitis C have found a way to grow it rapidly in cell culture, which could someday lead to new treatments for the disease, which affects more than 170 million people worldwide. In the United States, hepatitis C is the leading cause of liver transplants.

"This is a strong, workable system that we can use to learn how the hepatitis C virus causes disease and to develop drugs against it," said Kerri L. Blight, Ph.D., said.

Blight is first author of a paper that reports the results in the Dec. 8 issue of the journal Science. She is a researcher who associate in the lab of Charles Rice, Ph.D., professor of molecular microbiology at the School of Medicine. Rice's group has developed a combination therapy against hepatitis C — interferon, which inhibits viral replication, and ribavirin, which kills 90 percent of the virus in patients. Previous hepatitis C patients with chronic infection develop cirrhosis of the liver, increasing their risk for liver failure and, in some cases, liver cancer. Blight and Rice are studying how the hepatitis C virus destroys the immune system and establishes a chronic infection.

Building on previous work with RNA, the genetic material of the virus, Rice's group inserted altered viral sequences into human liver cells. The researchers identified many mutations that enabled the virus to reproduce and spread more efficiently. The mutations clustered in a gene for a nonstructural protein called NS5A.

One of the alterations were "splicing" mistakes in the gene for NS5A. The 16th was the delution of a long piece of the gene. More of the 19 mutant RNAs reproduced thousands of times more effectively in cultured cells than did the unmutated RNA of the virus. The researchers suggest that human liver cells in culture might contain a protein that interferes with part of NS5A to prevent the virus from multiplying. When the viral protein becomes altered, the interaction no longer can take place, and replication proceeds full tilt. Hepatitis C virus mutated in the NS5A region therefore will permit laboratory studies, including those that might lead to a vaccine. "In the first time, powerful genetic and biochemical proactives can be used to unravel the molecular details of hepatitis C virus replication and its interaction with host cells," Rice said. "We hope that this technology will speed up both fundamental research and drug discovery.

Pacemaker study needs volunteers

By David Linnell

School of Medicine researchers are part of a team that began a study last year to generate a complete DNA sequence of a plant. The team sequenced the genome of Arabidopsis thaliana, a flowering mustard.

Researchers know a lot about this well studied model organism, its sequence will enable scientists to study genes that control basic plant functions. This knowledge will have far-reaching impact on important crops such as wheat, corn and soybeans. It will also aid the ongoing effort to identify genes that influence human health.

The milestone is reported in the Dec. 14 issue of the journal Nature. The Arabidopsis Genome Initiative, an international consortium, performed the research. All data is available on the Internet (www.arabidopsis.org).

Here are of genetics, the medical school's Genomics Sequencing Center played a two-part role in the project. During the process, the researchers constructed a genome that is used by all the sequencing centers. In collaboration with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York and the John Innes Centre in the United Kingdom, it then sequenced chromosomes 4 and 5. Arabidopsis has five chromosomes, which was a small plant that grows readily in the laboratory. Its fully compact genome has just 125 million base pairs — the building blocks of the genome — compared with wheat's 40 billion. Both plants have approximately the same number of genes — Arabidopsis has 25,496, the researchers discovered — but wheat contains many more repeated sequences.

Information gained from the sequence could provide a basis for improving various crops. It can also help unravel things that go wrong in the disease, which affects more than 170 million people worldwide. In the United States, hepatitis C is the leading cause of liver transplants.

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Nervous system tumors investigated by Gutmann

By Gila Reicke

David H. Gutmann, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor of neurology, genetics and pediatrics, received a four-year, $1 million grant to study a gene for neurofibromatosis 2 (NF2), an inherited disorder characterised by the development of tumors in the nervous system. This gene is also implicated in the formation of meningiomas, which originate from the meninges, covering the brain and the second-most common brain tumor in adults. The research is funded by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

"Because individuals with NF2 develop several varieties of tumors, the responsible gene is thought to be involved in tumor growth. When it does not function, tumors may grow and proliferate," Gutmann said. "If you can hit a tumor when it's young and slow growing, you might be able to eradicate it completely.

Gutmann and his colleagues were among the first to demonstrate that NF2 regulates tumor growth, and they identified several proteins that may help NF2 do its job. From these discoveries, researchers have learned that the NF2 gene plays a role in the switching on and off of beginning stages of tumor development. They believe it may help scientists understand how to target the NF2 gene to suppress tumor growth. When it does not function, tumors may grow and proliferate. When it does function, tumors growth and proliferation are suppressed."

Gutmann believes finding out how the NF2 gene normally prevents cells from growing on other that might clarify the processes by which cancer cells form and grow. "In a subway car, you stop piling people in when you see that they are close together," Gutmann said. "Cancer cells lose their ability to sense their nearest neighbors and keep piling more people into the car. This is a tumor that continues growing no matter how crowded it gets."

"If the NF2 gene known to influence the beginning stages of tumor development. They believe it might help scientists target the NF2 gene to suppress tumor growth. When it does not function, tumors may grow and proliferate. Gutmann believes his research will open the door to understanding this and other aspects of tumor development. A clear picture of the initial stages of tumor development will help researchers develop targeted treatments, he said.

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Gareth Armstrong brings Shakespeare's 'Shylock to Edison

By LITA OTTEN

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

University Events

Exhibitions


"University Events" lists a portion of the activities taking place at Washington University. Since its 1998 debut, "Shylock" has received high praise from the British press. "For more information, call 935-6543 or MetroTix, 534-1111.

Lectures

"Playhouse's "The Merchant of Venice."" The Playhouse at 8 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call 935-6543 or MetroTix, 534-1111.

"Science of Vision." "New Jerusalem: Movement Exploration Workshop." The Indepen- dent Theatre, 6445 Forsyth Blvd. WHEN: 8 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call 935-6543 or MetroTix, 534-1111.


"Toward Understanding the Immune System and the Biology of Inflammatory Disease." John D. Calabresi, professor of medicine, of surgery, and of law, of medicine, and of psychiatry and co-founder, Laser Genetics. The Fever. WHEN: 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 5. For more information, call 245-4723.

"Shylock." Gareth Armstrong's "Shylock" has drawn enthusiastic praise from the British press.
The University's Gallery of Art and Department of German Languages and Literatures present a series of lectures in conjunction with the exhibition, "On Stage: The Black/White World of the 1930s and 1940s," on view at the Gallery until March 18.

The series is organized by the University's Gallery of Art and Department of German Languages and Literatures, with support from the Lamont Foundation.  "German Academic Exchange Service," the German General Consulate of Chicago, and the American Council on Germany and the St. Louis Holocaust Museum and Learning Center. Additional support comes from the following units of the University: Office of the Dean of Arts & Sciences, Department of Art History, and the Committee on Comparative Literature. Support is also provided by English, European Studies Program and Department of History.

For more information please call 815-961-8060 or visit: www.wustl.edu/GalleryofArt.

Child neglect to be examined by Jonson-Reid

BY ANN NICHOLSON

M elissa Jonson-Reid, Ph.D., assistant professor at the George Washington School of Social Work, has received a three-year $450,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute of Health, and National Institute of Justice to study child neglect and the relationships between risk factors, public service interventions, and the "Child Neglect: Cross Sector Services Paths and Outcomes" project is part of a Federal Child Neglect Research. Research questions focus on applications children. The "While numerous studies have focused on services for child abuse, very little research has been conducted on services that are even though about half of the "neglected" child abuse cases reported each year for neglect," said Jonson-Reid principal investigator on the study.

"What little research has been done suggests that children who are neglected are as likely to have poor outcomes as children who are maltreated or types of maltreatment," she added.

"This initial research combined with the magnitude of the problem neglect emphasizes the need for additional research," she said.

The project will use administrative data for the service paths of 18,000 low-income children, born to age 18 in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Researchers will examine patterns between Rear-Intake and Risk factors of child abuse, use of social services and various outcomes of what happened to the children between 1993 and 2001. Important areas of concern include the long-term benefit of social service efforts on children.

"While numerous studies have focused on services for child abuse, very little research has been conducted on services that are even though about half of the 3 million child-abuse cases reported each year are reported for neglect," said Jonson-Reid principal investigator on the study.

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In addition to concerns about a child's immediate well-being, neglect can have long-term repercussions affecting a child's intellectual, physical and emotional development. It is therefore needed to better understand these early experiences and later problems such as delinquent behavior and substance abuse, and to better understand how to prevent long-term benefit of social service efforts on children.

Jonson-Reid said. In the study, administrative data is used, which will allow analysis of services used by families and the outcomes. The study will be conducted in the 1993 and 2001.

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Zhang

For a job search, follow the easy steps below:

1. Identify the job you want.
2. Find the position number (if applicable).
3. Use the job search tool on the University of Washington's Career Center website.
4. Apply and submit your resume or CV.

Zhang

For a job interview, follow the easy steps below:

1. Schedule an interview with the hiring manager.
2. Prepare for the interview by researching the company and its culture.
3. Practice answering common interview questions.
4. Dress professionally and arrive on time for the interview.

Zhang

For a job offer, follow the easy steps below:

1. Review the offer letter and confirm all terms and conditions.
2. Negotiate compensation and benefits if necessary.
3. Accept the offer and sign the contract.
4. Prepare for your first day on the job.

Zhang

For a job promotion, follow the easy steps below:

1. Discuss your career goals with your supervisor.
2. Identify areas where you can take on additional responsibilities.
3. Ask for feedback on your performance and areas for improvement.
4. Request a promotion and negotiate the terms of the new position.

Zhang

For a job termination, follow the easy steps below:

1. Discuss your reasons for seeking a new position with your supervisor.
2. Negotiate a transition plan and exit strategy.
3. Pack up your belongings and say goodbye to your colleagues.
4. Submit your resignation letter and provide a notice period if required.

Zhang

For a job relocation, follow the easy steps below:

1. Identify new job opportunities in your desired location.
2. Research the cost of living and cultural differences.
3. Prepare for a new job interview and negotiation.
4. Move to your new location and adjust to the new environment.

Zhang

For a job retirement, follow the easy steps below:

1. Plan for your financial security in retirement.
2. Research retirement incentives and benefits.
3. Prepare for a new lifestyle and maintain social connections.
4. Support your family and friends in their retirement plans.

Zhang

For a job disability, follow the easy steps below:

1. Seek medical advice and confirm your disability status.
2. Discuss your needs and accommodations with your employer.
3. Request reasonable accommodations and adapt your workplace environment.
4. Adapt to your new abilities and maintain a positive attitude.

Zhang
Call for nominations: Gloria W. White Distinguished Service Award

Nominations are due Feb. 2 for the Gloria W. White Distinguished Service Award, recognizing a staff member for exceptional effort and contributions resulting in the betterment of the University. This annual honor was named for White, who retired in 1997 as vice chancellor for human resources after 30 years with the University. A committee will review the candidates and select an employee to receive the $1,000 award during the May 21 Staff Day celebration on the Hilltop Campus.

"Our ability to offer superior education, to achieve path-break- ing research, and to improve and direct the services we offer is due in large measure to the dedicated support of our staff," Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton said. "This award provides us an opportunity to publicly recognize our employees and acknowledge their effort and contribution."

Candidates must have at least five years of employment with the University and be non- academic staff members in good standing. Nominations will be focused on the Hilltop and West Campuses, as the Medical School has the Dean's Award to provide similar recognition to its employees.

Nominations must include the candidate's name, position (s), reason(s) for the selection, a brief description of how the University has benefited from the candidate's actions and be signed by the person submitting the nomination.

Forms may be accessed on the University human resources web site (https://hr.wustl.edu). Under Workplace Support, log in, click on Employee Recognition, and then on the White Award. Call 314-935-3090 to obtain a paper copy. Send nominations to the Gloria W. White Distinguished Service Award, Campus Box 1184.

Nominations for the faculty members on the Hilltop Campus. Others will be introduced periodically in this space.

Andrew Martin joins the Department of Political Science in Arts & Sciences as assistant professor. He graduated cum laude with high honors in 1994 from the University of William and Mary and earned a doctorate in 1998 from Washington University. His research interests include American political sociology.

Jeremy Gibson-Brown joins the Department of Biology in Arts & Sciences as assistant professor. He earned a bachelor of science in 1986 from Leicester, University of London, U.K., in biology and psychology, and a doctorate from the University of London in 1998. His laboratory focuses on how the basic protein tool has been "inked" with over time to generate the diversity of body forms that we see today. By comparing expression and function of the same developmental genes in different species, he seeks to understand the history of the evolution of development in animals. He has received a number of honors and awards for his work, including a Developmental Biology Recognition Grant from the Company of Biologists, Ltd.; in 1998, a grant-in-aid at Columbia-Presbyterian Cancer Center in 1994-95; and a Population Sciences Fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1992-94.

Sophia E. Hayes joins the Department of Chemistry in Arts & Sciences as assistant professor. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California-Berkley in 1990 and a doctorate from the University of California-Santa Barbara in 1999. Her research interests include the application of solid-state nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) to complex problems in materials science and inorganic chemistry. Hayes also works on the development of optical pumped NMR techniques, coupling laser excitation with NMR and optical detection. These techniques will be applied to low-dimensional semiconductor structures such as quantum wells, quantum wires, and quantum dots, composite materials. Her awards include Sandia National Laboratory Graduate Research Fellow, 1989-90; Postdoctoral Researcher, UC-Berkley, and Lawrence Livermore Directorate Postdoctoral Fellow, 1998-2000; Execu- tive Director, International Fellowship, Manchester, England; 1995; University of Califor- nia's Most Outstanding Graduate Year Fellowship for Physical Science, 1997-1998; James D. Komor Fellowship in International Studies, 1996; and Carnegie Teaching Award, 1995.

Compton and Cori Faculty Achievement awards nominations due

Nominations for the University's annual Arthur Holly Compton Faculty Achievement Award and the Cyril Gerty Cori Faculty Achievement Award are due Feb. 1.

The Faculty Senate Council and Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton established the awards in 1998. The Compton Award is given to a member of the Hilltop faculty, and the Cori Award goes to a faculty member also should be acquainted with the candidate's contributions as a faculty member also should be submitted. Nominations and supporting letters should be sent to: Gerald S. Williams, Administrative Offices, Campus Box 1080.

Ireland the Classical World

(University of Texas Press, December 2000)

"On the boundary of what the ancient Greeks and Romans considered the habitable world, Ireland was a land of myth and mystery in classical times. Classical authors frequently flew its people as savages - even as cannibals and devotees of incest - and evoked occasional uncertainty as to the island's shape, size, and accurate location. Unlike neighboring Britain, Ireland never known Roman occupation, yet literary and archeological evidence prove the Irish land was more than simply terra incognita in classical antiquity."

"In this book, Freeman explores the relations between ancient Ireland and the classical world through a comprehensive survey of all Greek and Latin literary sources that mention Ireland."

Susan Adora Moxon Sullivan, Ph.D., former assistant dean in the School of Law, died of ovarian cancer Jan. 10, 2001, at North Memorial Hospice in Minneapolis. She was 51.

Sullivan was the wife of E. Sullivan, J.D., formerly a professor of law and associate dean here and now dean of the University of Minnesota Law School.

Sullivan served in the School of Law from 1983-89 as assistant dean for placement, and then assistant dean for external affairs. "Sullivan was an exceptional friend and professional, a person who was respected and admired by her peers in career services throughout the country, by her colleagues at the law school, and most of all by the people she really served — the students," said David M. Becker, J.D., law school associate dean for external relations and the Joseph H. Zumbahlen Professor of Law and of Property. Sullivan was recognized nationally as a leader in legal career counseling, recruitment and job satisfaction. From 1987- 88, she served as president of the National Association for Law Placement, a nonprofit organization of the 175 accredited law schools and more than 1,000 legal employers throughout the United States.

Sullivan was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in April 1996. Since then, she devoted her energy and expertise in support of cancer patients and their families, including a recent effort with the Life Enhance- ment Support Group at Fairview University Hospital in Minneapolis.

Among her survivors are her husband of 29 years, E. Thomas Sullivan, of Minneapolis; her mother, Margaret Moxon, of Huron, S.D., brother Keith, and sister-in-law Soo, of Seattle. A Celebration of Life and Friendship service will be held Saturday at the University of Minnesota. Contributions to further ovarian cancer research may be made to the Women's Health Fund (founded in 1985) at the University of Minnesota Medical Foundation, Box 395, 420 Delaware St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455.
Embracing diversity's challenges

Jack C. Knight, Ph.D., examines how differences among us shape society's basic institutions

By Gerry Everding

In the broad marketplace of ideas, it's not unusual to find sharp differences of opinion on the merits of cultural, racial, gender and religious diversity. Even college campuses have been torn by contentious debate or arguments, with professors fighting battles over politically correct speech, race-based admissions and gender pay equity for professors. Although he has spent much of his academic career building a case for the benefits of diversity, Jack C. Knight, Ph.D., chair and professor of political science at Arts & Sciences, would be among the last to stifle those who speak out against it. Indeed, it is diversity's contribution to the marketplace of ideas that Professor Knight believes is the cornerstone, for many of Knight's theories on how and why humans interact in so many strange and fascinating ways.

Diversity, he contends, has long played a central role in shaping our most basic social institutions — the laws, norms, conventions, customs, rules and expectations that hold society together and provide its fabric. If we argue, or propose an important public policy, those institutions change and develop. An institution is more likely to evolve in a society that has faced a crisis, he maintains, than in a society that has not. He adds, "We are at the edge of discovering what we can make of its diversity.

"My work on institutions and diversity has been informed by my philosophical commitment to pragmatism," said Knight, the Sydney W. Souers Professor of Government in Arts & Sciences. "Pragmatism dictates that we be prepared to challenge our own settled beliefs and create an environment in which our beliefs are tested in the face of new evidence; institutions and organizations, of the University's Center in Economic Sciences. "Knight and I have done a number of articles on cognitive science; another recent piece on cognitive science and the theory of mind, which work together in a lot of work in political social theory," North said. "His work and mine on institutions have run on parallel tracks, but for a long time we seemed to be at odds on our view of the forces that spur the development of institutions. Eventually, after working together on a couple of editing projects, we began to realize that we were much closer in our beliefs than we might previously have admitted."

Knight's interest in institutions comes from the workings of formal, highly structured systems, such as those for deciding elections, settling labor disputes, to the highly informal, such as social relations, family and friends. His research also explores the even more complex interactions of systems that hinge on both formal and informal rules, such as those governing property rights, inheritance, dowry and marriage. Even weights and measures, he adds, can be traced to the most basic human interactions.

Knight's interest in institutions has run on from the workings of informal, highly structured systems, such as those for deciding elections, settling labor disputes, to the highly informal, such as social relations, family and friends. His research also explores the even more complex interactions of systems that hinge on both formal and informal rules, such as those governing property rights, inheritance, dowry and marriage. Even weights and measures, he adds, can be traced to the most basic human interactions.

"In Knight's view, diversity's chief attribute is the creative tension it brings to the complex equations of human interaction. A society of different cultures, histories and institutions come together, they bring with them different ideas, beliefs and values. Institutions — the rules that structure our social, political and economic life — evolve as a function of our desire to achieve the benefits of social cooperation. A diversity of interests and beliefs, he adds, can add to the strength and unity of a society by gaining a diversity of perspectives to provide a richness of ideas to solve our problems and to maintain and support the public, or stand in their way of generating policy in the first place (their colleagues)."

Although Knight's theories are having considerable impact on legal scholarship, law has never been a clearly defined career path for him. He started out torn between English literature and religious studies, earning a double-major bachelor's degree in those areas from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1974.

"I was active in politics during my college days, but I never took a course in political science," Knight said. "I always thought of politics as something you studied."

Knight stayed at Chapel Hill to finish his studies. He earned a juris doctor degree in 1977 and then earned a Ph.D. in 1989. He was an instructor for several years at the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan before joining Washington University as an assistant professor in 1988.

In addition to his teaching duties, he has served as an associate chair and director of several studies for the department of Political Science.

Knight is widely published in leading social science journals and a number of important scholarly books that include "Institutions and Social Conflict," published in 1995 by Cambridge University Press, and "Explaining Social Institutions," a 1995 volume co-edited with Itai 2005 in Political Science in Arts & Sciences. He has served as an assistant professor of anthropology in Arts & Sciences.

Jack C. Knight, Ph.D., is the University's Sydney W. Souers Professor of Government in Arts & Sciences.