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Students Teach Students About AIDS

The best way to prevent the spread of AIDS among teenagers — the group experts expect will be hit hardest by the disease in the next few years — is to educate young people before they begin behaviors that put them at risk.

That’s the thinking behind a novel program that Washington’s medical students have developed to teach children about AIDS. Called Students Teaching AIDS to Students (STATS), the three-hour program, designed to supplement a teacher’s lesson plans on immunology and sexually transmitted diseases, is one of several volunteer projects created by the American Medical Students Association (AMSA). Adviser to the program is Sessions Cole, professor of pediatrics and director of the division of newborn medicine.

Last fall, 65 of the University’s AMSA members from the first- and second-year classes presented their pilot program to some 350 seventh-graders in St. Louis’ Ferguson Middle School. Inspired by the project’s success, they returned in November to teach the school’s 350 eighth-graders. Plans now are to offer the program to the middle school’s seventh-graders in fall 1990 and to develop the program in two other St. Louis schools.

University STATS co-coordinators Janet McGhee and Jenifer Jaeger, third-year medical students who recently were appointed by AMSA as national coordinators of STATS, attribute the program’s success to two components: a mini-version of the AIDS education classes presented to parents of the youngsters and the enlistment of AIDS patients who visit the school to answer questions about the illness. “As far as we know,” says Jaeger, “no other program like ours exists, although many medical schools are developing similar programs.”

Preliminary testing has shown that the Ferguson students retained the information presented in the STATS sessions. The next step, says Jaeger, is to develop procedures for evaluating behavior.

University Acquires Famous-Barr Property

Washington University will acquire from May Department Stores Company the Famous-Barr Clayton property located .7 miles from the Hilltop Campus. The 11.4-acre tract includes the Famous-Barr store, parking deck with ground-floor retail space, and three other commercial buildings on the site. The property will continue to be occupied by Famous-Barr until fall 1991, when the department store will move to the St. Louis Galleria.

Under the terms of agreement, May Company will combine a sale and a charitable donation of the property to the University. The property is valued in excess of $30 million, for which May will receive $17.5 million.

The acquisition will meet both long- and short-term needs of the University. The long-term need is for more land that will provide additional space for the decades ahead. In the short term, the land and buildings will be used for the following:

- The ground floor of the Famous-Barr store will be used for the storage and on-line retrieval of library holdings, thereby freeing up much-needed space in Olin Library, which, in turn, will be renovated into study and work space. An extension of regular shuttle service will provide for transportation of people and book deliveries. Study space will be created in the new location.
- The central computer operations could be shifted to the new site, freeing essential space for the School of Engineering.
- Parking facilities on the Famous-Barr property could be used for shuttle parking. A shuttle bus would run to other parts of the Hilltop Campus.
• The University will encourage commercial retailers on the property to continue operations so that rental income can help offset the purchase price. After it takes possession of the site, the University intends initially to utilize only the parking deck and the Famous-Barr store.

Medical School Makes Nation's Top 10; Business School, Best “up-and-comer”

U.S. News & World Report's annual report on “America's Best Graduate and Professional Schools” ranked the School of Medicine sixth in the country and named the John M. Olin School of Business the most promising business school.

According to survey results, the top 10 of America's 127 medical schools, in order, are: Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, Duke University, University of California-San Francisco, Yale University, Washington University, Cornell University, Columbia University, University of Washington, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Stanford University claimed the magazine's top ranking for business schools, followed in order by Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Four other business schools awarded “up-and-comer” status, in rank order behind Olin, are Emory University, University of Minnesota, Georgetown University, and Southern Methodist University.

The magazine's ranking system combines a subjective survey of academic reputation with objective data that relate to an institution's student selectivity, its instructional and other resources, and its graduation patterns.

OVATIONS! at Edison

The world-famous Abbey Theatre of Ireland, the Moscow Studio-Theatre, and the Pickle Family Circus will present premiere performances in St. Louis as part of the 1990-91 OVATIONS! series at Edison Theatre.

The 17th season of Edison fare continues a tradition of eclectic performers distinguished for their innovation, technical mastery, and captivating delivery. “Stage Left,” billed a “provocative new series,” debuts with three events in the Mallinckrodt Center Drama Studio. “Meet the Artists” programs and an expanded miniseries for youngsters once again will bring the community closer to the world of professional theatre, music, and dance.

OVATIONS! 1990-91

LadyGourd Sangoma
Fri. and Sat., Sept. 21-22
Claire Bloom in Then Let Men Know: A Portrait of Shakespeare’s Women
Fri., Oct. 5
Excerpts from Henry James’ The Turn of the Screw
Sat., Oct. 6
Paul Winter Consort
Sat., Oct. 20

The Abbey: The National Theatre of Ireland
Playboy of the Western World
Fri. and Sat., Oct. 26-27
Laura Dean Dancers
& Musicians
Fri. and Sat., Jan. 18-19
Keith Terry, body musician
Sound Proof
Fri. and Sat., Feb. 1-2
Moscow Studio-Theatre
Fri. and Sat., Feb. 22-23
The Bach Ensemble
Joshua Rifkin, director
Fri., March 1
Joshua Rifkin Plays Scott Joplin
Sun., March 3
The Acting Company
Two Gentlemen of Verona
Fri., March 22
Romeo and Juliet
Sat., March 23
Lar Lubovitch Dance Company
Fri. and Sat., April 26-27
Pickle Family Circus
Luna Sea
Fri., Sat., and Sun., May 3-5

For program and ticket information, call the Edison box office at (314) 889-6543, or write Campus Box 1119, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130-4899.
Search for Pottery Leads to Brewery

Anthropology doctoral candidate Jeremy R. Geller recently traveled to Hierakonpolis, a major administrative center in Predynastic Egypt located about 450 miles south of Cairo, to study the town's pottery kilns. His search for signs of pottery manufacturing led him to discovery of the world's oldest known brewery that some 5,400 years ago flourished on the banks of the Nile. The brewery is at least 500 years older than any other brewery that has been found to date.

Geller was attracted to the site by a circle of fragmented, blackened pottery. The fragments turned out to be pieces from the first of four vessels Geller eventually uncovered. The vessels were shaped like vats and set in a platform of mud.

"I realized that the structure couldn't be a pottery kiln by the form of the vats coming out of the ground and the black residue inside them," says the anthropologist. Upon closer inspection, he found that the glossy black residue contained grains of cereal. A chemical analysis suggested the residue was derived from sugars produced in the cooking or fermenting of fruit or cereal.

"From the structural evidence and the residue, brewing came out as the leading contender," says Geller, who received a master's degree from Washington in 1984 and a bachelor's from Vassar in 1979, both in anthropology. "The ancient Egyptians used fruit in their beer to sweeten it and to augment fermentation. Mashing, a cooking process in brewing, can produce a residue similar to what I found."

Geller estimates that the brewery might have produced up to 300 gallons of beer a day. "Beer was not merely a beverage that people drank for fun," he claims. "It was a staple foodstuff; all strata of ancient Egyptian society consumed it. Bread and beer were symbols of nourishment and well-being. A house without beer was a sad place."

Washing Away Allergies

Legions of cat owners suffering allergic reactions to their pets may find relief in a simple, inexpensive procedure: giving their felines a lukewarm bath.

Allergist H. James Wedner, associate professor of medicine, directed a team of researchers who presented the method for reducing cat allergenicity at the American Academy of Allergy and Immunology's annual spring meeting in Baltimore. A monthly 10-minute washing in lukewarm, distilled water markedly reduced the production of Fel D1, the major allergen in cats, the researchers reported.

A protein produced by the salivary and sebaceous glands, Fel D1 is deposited on the skin and hair either as the hair passes through the sebaceous gland or as the cat preens. It is a major component of the cat dander that is ubiquitous in cat owners' homes.
**Washington People in the News**

Two new members have been elected to the Board of Trustees: **Thomas H. Jacobsen**, chairman, president, and chief executive officer of Mercantile Bancorporation Inc. and Mercantile Bank of St. Louis, N.A., and **Edward E. Whitacre, Jr.**, chairman and chief executive officer of Southwestern Bell Corp. Both were elected to four-year terms.

The Board announced the re-election of the following trustees to four-year terms: **B. A. Bridgewater, Jr.**, chairman of the board, president, and chief executive officer of Brown Group Inc.; **Paul L. Miller, Jr.**, president of P.L. Miller & Associates; and **Harvey Saligman**, chairman of the board of INTERCO INCORPORATED.

The Board of Trustees also has re-elected to four-year terms the following former trustees, who, after a mandatory one-year hiatus, are eligible for additional terms: **David C. Farrell**, chairman and chief executive officer of The May Department Stores Co.; **Richard F. Ford**, managing general partner of Gateway Associates L.P.; and **Louis S. Sachs**, chairman and chief executive officer of Sachs Electric Co.


**Thomas A. Harig**, director of purchasing and general services at Washington University, was named acting associate vice chancellor for business affairs in July. He succeeds **Joe F. Evans**, who retired in June after more than 36 years at the University.

**Harig**, who began work at the University in the procurement department in 1961, will continue his duties as director of purchasing and general services.

Formerly vice president for administration at Lindenwood College in St. Louis, Harig received his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University in 1959 and a master's degree in commerce and finance from St. Louis University in 1965.

Several individuals in the university relations area recently have been promoted to key positions. In the public affairs office, **Donald Clayton** was named executive director of medical public affairs and **Judy Jasper** was appointed executive director of university communications.

In the area of alumni and development programs, **Lee Hanson** was appointed assistant vice chancellor and director of development services. **David F. Jones** has assumed the post of assistant vice chancellor and director of schools alumni and development programs.

**Glenda Wiman** was named assistant dean for special programs at the School of Medicine in July. Formerly the executive director of the Office of Medical Public Affairs, Wiman had worked with the public affairs staff for 15 years, serving as a writer, coordinator of news and information, and director of medical public relations.

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**Noting Martinu**

An international conference and festival celebrating the 100th birthday of Czechoslovakian composer Bohuslav Martinu will be held at the University Oct. 22-29. Organized by **Michael Beckerman**, associate professor of music, the conference will feature 30 scholars and musicians from Czechoslovakia, England, Germany, Russia, and Switzerland.

**Boris Krajny**, considered one of the world's finest Czech pianists, will make his St. Louis debut.

Martinu was one of the most prolific composers of the 20th century. He wrote six symphonies, 12 ballets, 13 operas, 25 concertos, and more than 75 chamber works. The symposium will explore Martinu's relationships with his contemporaries Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and Sibelius.

Beckerman, a renowned Czech music scholar, has traveled frequently to Czechoslovakia in recent months. In February he led a Smithsonian Institution fact-finding mission to assess the current political and cultural climate there. Recently he returned from Prague, where he led five University music students on a newly established exchange program with Charles University.

For information on the conference, call the music department at (314) 889-5566.
Insects May “Shell Out” to Chemical Research

Studies conducted by chemistry professor Jacob Schaefer may lead to an insecticide that would kill pests by keeping them from developing a hard shell that holds them together.

Using solid-state nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), Schaefer discovered a site in the cuticle, or outer shell, of insects where the chemical bonding of key proteins and compounds involved in the stiffening of a bug’s shell takes place. Breaking or preventing the formation of this “cross-linked” site blocks the insect from advancing past the infant stage, eliminating or lessening its chance to reproduce, damage plants, and carry disease.

Schaefer and an interdisciplinary research team of scientists from Kansas State University in Manhattan and the United States Department of Agriculture Grain Marketing Research Laboratory first published results of their find in a spring 1987 issue of Science magazine. Their work since has progressed rapidly to define other cross-linked sites in various insect species.

“My collaborators are now isolating the essential enzymes and metabolites that help make the shell structure,” says Schaefer. “Hopefully, they may be able to develop an inhibitor molecule, one that thwarts the enzyme’s mode of action.”

Schaefer’s NMR technique will generate new ideas about how scientists can manipulate skeletal chemistry for insect control.

Medical School Awarded $18.6 Million for Heart Research

The School of Medicine was designated a Specialized Center of Research (SCOR) in Coronary and Vascular Diseases in January and was awarded a SCOR grant of $18.6 million from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The five-year grant will support research designed to improve prevention, detection, diagnosis, and treatment of heart and vascular diseases.

The SCOR grant enables 49 investigators from the medical and Hilltop campuses to conduct 14 multidisciplinary projects encompassing both laboratory and clinical research. Several of the projects will explore the potential of molecular variants of clot-dissolving agents such as t-PA (tissue plasminogen activator) and modulate their metabolism to salvage heart tissue and improve the effectiveness of coronary thrombolysis, the breaking up of blood clots that cause many heart attacks. Two will focus on the causes, treatment, and prevention of heart arrhythmias, irregularities in the heartbeat that can cause death. Investigators will conduct several cardiac imaging projects that use noninvasive techniques such as ultrasound and positron emission tomography to characterize the heart’s response to drugs.

The SCOR is directed by Burton E. Sobel, Tobias and Hortense Lewin Professor of Cardiovascular Diseases and director of the cardiovascular division at the medical school.

Bronzing the bard: Professor Howard Nemerov, U.S. poet laureate for two terms (1988-1990), was honored in May with induction to the St. Louis Walk of Fame. A brass star and bronze plaque, bearing a brief biography of the poet, were set in the sidewalk showcase located in the 6300 to 6500 blocks of Delmar Boulevard. Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor Emeritus and Distinguished Poet in Residence, Nemerov joins other honorees such as singer Josephine Baker, poet T.S. Eliot, actress Betty Grable, former U.S. president Ulysses S. Grant, and baseball hero Stan Musial. Walk-of-Fame stars were either born in the St. Louis area or spent their formative or creative years here and have made a major contribution to the city’s cultural heritage.
Ivan Van Sertima
Redefines African History

In a lecture titled “Blacks in Science: Ancient and Modern,” Ivan Van Sertima, a professor of Africana studies at Rutgers University, challenged traditional methods and theories of African history. His speech, part of the Assembly Series and the keynote address for Washington’s 20th annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Symposium, was based on a book of the same title edited by Van Sertima in 1983.

Van Sertima also serves as a visiting professor at Princeton University and editor of the Journal of African Civilizations. While not without his critics, the native British Guyanan has dedicated his life’s studies to redefining the history of Africa and its people.

Van Sertima premised his lecture on the idea that, although complex technologies existed in Africa before the slave trade, anthropologists have consistently focused on the continent’s most primitive and remote cultures. He provided numerous examples of advanced technologies in ancient Africa, such as the sophisticated steel-smelting practiced by people living on the shores of Lake Victoria in Tanzania some 2,000 years ago — techniques not achieved in Europe until the mid-19th century.

Africans are often labeled “pre-literate,” yet they have as many scripts as Europeans, Van Sertima argued. Africans practiced advanced medicine, he claimed, including successful Caesarian deliveries performed in Uganda at least as early as 1879 — years before Western cultures could safely do the same. “No race has a monopoly on genius, intelligence, and invention,” concluded Van Sertima.

School of Social Work Establishes American Indian Studies Center

With a gift from an anonymous St. Louis donor, the Center for American Indian Studies in Social Services was established in spring at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work. The gift provides funding for a three-year program that will offer three scholarships and stipends annually to Native American graduate students, plus operational costs for the center.

Dana Wilson Klar, M.S.W./J.D.’89, a former legal assistant with the U.S. Indian Health Service, has been appointed the center’s director. Of American Indian descent — she is a member of the Houma tribe of southern Louisiana — Klar hopes to help students understand and preserve their Indian heritage.

The curriculum will address health-care policy, economic development, cultural assimilation, and program development. Practicums will include social work on Native American reservations with an emphasis on improving the lives of children.

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Minority Youth Program Wins National Award

The Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge awarded its prestigious Leavey Award for "Excellence in Private Enterprise Education" to Washington's Minority Youth Entrepreneurship Program in March. The Leavey Awards honor teachers whose outstanding, innovative classroom projects impart to students a deeper understanding of the advantages private enterprise offers individual Americans.

Through an eight-week study regimen, the entrepreneurship program encourages minority teens to consider operating their own businesses. It is offered each summer to about 40 high school juniors in the St. Louis region, who receive specialized instruction from the University's top business school professors, and is sponsored by the John M. Olin School of Business and the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

Employees in a smithy: At upper left, Pythagoras, legendary discoverer of musical theory, experiments with the sound of the hammer. From Hugo Spechtshart's Flores musicae, 1488.

Ode to the Grecian Lab

"While it is generally believed that the ancient Greeks were only theoreticians and not experimentalists," says Professor Andrew Dimarogonas, "a small but adequate body of literature illustrates that the sciences of mechanics and physics were experimentally founded and rigorously defined in the middle of the first millennium B.C. by Pythagoras and others."

Dimarogonas, William Palm Professor of Mechanical Design, has traced the world's earliest known man-made research laboratory to the Greek mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras of Samos. Drawing upon the writings and illustration of the Roman author Boetius (480-524 A.D.), Dimarogonas shows that Pythagoras, whose geometric theorem has been taught to geometry students for centuries, developed a vibration research laboratory during the 5th century B.C.

The expert in vibrations and mechanical design cites, among other sources, a passage in Boetius' writing that describes a legendary incident in which Pythagoras, upon passing a metal shop, was struck by the different tones made by the ringing vibrations of hammer on metal. Moved to conduct his own experiments, Pythagoras found that the different vibrations were not the result of the men swinging the hammers (excitation), but rather of the different sizes, or mass, of the hammers.

Additional experiments led to a theory called isochronism, in which the philosopher-mathematician proved that the natural frequency of a system is a property of that system and not something dependent on external excitation. The theory was previously attributed to Galileo Galilei.

Literature, or the lack of it in some cases, is what makes the scientific contributions of the ancients, especially the Greeks, ambiguous, if not enigmatic. Much of the knowledge between 600-300 B.C. either was not recorded or, as in the case of the Pythagoreans, a mysterious cult group, was kept secret.

Dimarogonas also claims that ancient Greeks and Chinese, not Galileo, may have invented the pendulum. His research probing the origins of several scientific tools and principles was published in the July 1990 issue of the Journal of Sound and Vibration, published by Academic Press.

Contributors: Debby Aronson, Kate Berger, Debra Bernardo, Gerry Everding, Tony Fitzpatrick, Carol J. Manthey, and Carolyn Sanford

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Contributors: Debby Aronson, Kate Berger, Debra Bernardo, Gerry Everding, Tony Fitzpatrick, Carol J. Manthey, and Carolyn Sanford
A former senator and a past presidential adviser transform the classroom into a microcosm of the nation's capital.

Early on a Tuesday morning, some 70 students shuffle to their seats in the amphitheatre-style classroom in Simon Hall as two of Washington University's most distinguished professors prepare to do battle. Republican Murray Weidenbaum, the emissary of cool economic reason, takes the podium and motions for quiet. A chief architect of Reaganomics, he calmly states his case for the use of cost-benefit analysis in assessing government spending programs.

Former Democratic U.S. Senator Thomas F. Eagleton sits nearby, taking in Weidenbaum's comments with obvious disdain. He drops his head, cradles his chin in a loosely curled palm, and digs at his temple with an outstretched finger. Suddenly, he springs from his chair.
"I want students to gain a greater comprehension of how and why policies are formed."

Thomas F. Eagleton

With that, chaos breaks out in the classroom and Weidenbaum, more of a politician than he'll admit, joins in the fun. "I can see the newspaper now," he says, framing the banner headline with palms open just a bit wider than his grin: "DANFORTH SAYS DAM THE UNIVERSITY."

And so it goes in one of Washington University's most popular elective courses. A hybrid mix of business management and political science, the course introduces students to the complex nature of the business-government relationship, how it evolved, and how it functions in the real world. It focuses on the roles played by business organizations, interest groups, government agencies, and other institutions in the formulation of public policy.

The course, known officially as "The Common Law Marriage of Business and Government" (graduate students take it as "Business, Government and the Public"), is referred to more affectionately by students as "The Tom and Murray Show" or "Eaglebaum" — names that even the professors now seem to prefer. The students' names are perhaps the more accurate because it is the curious interaction between Eagleton, University Professor of Public Affairs, and Weidenbaum, Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor, that makes the course.

"We agree much more of the time than we disagree," says Eagleton of his colleague Weidenbaum. "Of course we have our little exchanges, but of all our words uttered, we are probably 90-plus percent in agreement. Yet it's that 10-percent difference that often is most important in terms of setting public policy, making political decisions."

Both are no strangers to public policy debate. Eagleton has served in public office for more than 30 years, beginning his political career as circuit attorney of St. Louis, then attorney general of Missouri, and next as lieutenant governor of Missouri. In 1968, he was elected to the first of three terms in the U.S. Senate.

Gerry Everding is assistant director of communications for business issues at Washington University.

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Weidenbaum waits for an opening and tries to fend off the attack with a plug for one of the administration's favorite agencies: "That's why we need the Office of Management and Budget to justify the project."

Eagleton isn't buying. "The OMB," he barks back. "What the OMB decides will depend on the political bent of the administration and whether the administration wants a dam." The class goes hush. No note-taking now, just wide eyes, gaping jaws. Weidenbaum drops into a seat near the podium, conceding the floor to the honorable senator from Missouri. He seems to enjoy Eagleton's performance as much as the class, but the OMB jab hits home. With the look of a Red Cross donor about to get the needle, he braces, waiting for Eagleton to find the vein.

"If Senator Jack Danforth wants to build a dam on the campus of Washington University," says Eagleton, "you can bet OMB will find some crazy way to justify it for him."

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Gerry Everding is assistant director of communications for business issues at Washington University.
Weidenbaum’s career is in itself a mix of business and government. He has served as the fiscal economist in the U.S. Bureau of Budget, as the corporate economist at the Boeing Co., as the first Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy, and as President Reagan’s first chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. He is director of the University’s Center for the Study of American Business.

“We’ve both been there,” says Weidenbaum of their decades in the public service arena. “We come into these issues from different doors, but often we wind up in the same location. Our view of reality is a bit different, but the best thing about this course is that Tom doesn’t hesitate to criticize Democrats, liberals, or politicians, and I don’t hesitate to criticize Republicans, conservatives, or business.”

**Economic troika:** In 1969 Murray Weidenbaum, left, then the Treasury Department’s key adviser on economic policy, met regularly with Maurice Mann, center, assistant director of the Bureau of the Budget, and Herbert Stein, standing at right, a member of the Council of Economic Advisers. Two colleagues look on.

**Party leaders:** Left, Senator Thomas F. Eagleton and presidential candidate Jimmy Carter greet one another in 1976.

In much the same way that a political satirist uses irony to make a point, Eagleton and Weidenbaum employ humor with a purpose, suggesting, perhaps, that without a sense of humor, survival in politics is impossible. From their playful exchanges emerge lessons not easily forgotten. With Washington, D.C., as the setting for most of their scenes, the cohosts of “Eaglebaum” have an almost endless supply of material for their twice-weekly sitcom. Students get front-row seats as two world-class players act out real-life debates on issues regarding political action committees, lobbyists, job safety, tax policy, corporate bailouts, military spending, and foreign trade.

“There are two sides to nearly all important public issues,” says Eagleton. “It’s useful to focus two different perspectives on the same set of facts. It shows there are no categorical, hard-and-fast rules on many issues. As far as business-government relations, there are no eternal truths.”

Eagleton’s point is well illustrated by the following excerpt from a recent class; even on what most people would consider a cut-and-dried issue — whether defense spending is on the increase or decrease — there is room for debate:

**Weidenbaum:** “I know of nobody who forecast the downturn in the military market in terms of the speed and the extent that is now occurring. If you plot it …”

**Eagleton:** “Up two percent. The military budget is up two percent.”

**Weidenbaum:** “Down two percent….”

**Eagleton:** “No, up two percent in last year’s budget.”

**Weidenbaum:** “Down two percent...”

**Eagleton:** “Up two percent. You call that a precipitous downturn?”

**Weidenbaum:** “Down two percent. In real terms it is down.”

**Eagleton:** “Down in real, but up two in budgetary terms.”

**Weidenbaum:** “Oh well, that is beside the….”

**Eagleton:** “They’re asking for up zero percent in education, up zero percent in health care, up zero percent in homeless. What is that down in real terms?”

**Weidenbaum:** “No…No…Homeless is going
up...homeless is going up. We're generating more homeless."

Eagleton: "Why is that?"

Weidenbaum: "We're doing a better job of counting them."

Both Eagleton and Weidenbaum have taught similar business-government courses at Washington University, but spring 1990 marks the first time they have co-taught a course. Students from the John M. Olin School of Business — both M.B.A.s and undergraduates — hold a majority of the class, but there's a sizable contingent from other areas of the University.

"I don't think there's much doubt that the business school students are for Murray and the political science students are for me," Eagleton says. "The business students are much more conservative. Most of the 'polisci' students are still what I like to call 'my save-the-worlders.'"

One of the prime benefits of the course, some students say, lies in learning to re-examine their own political views in light of the arguments and criticisms they hear voiced so eloquently by their professors.

"Even if you don't agree with them, it certainly gets you to think about these issues in a new way," says Laura Meckler, A.B. '90, former editor of the campus newspaper, Student Life.

A Cleveland native now graduated and pursuing a career in journalism, Meckler admits that the course made her more aware of the price tags of some social welfare programs. "Weidenbaum made me stop and think about some of the hidden costs of these programs," she says. "I've never been a supporter of cost-benefit analysis, but he made me see some sense in it."

On the opposite end of the political spectrum is L. Cartan Sumner, Jr., a self-professed conservative from St. Louis pursuing a joint law and M.B.A. degree. Sumner, 25, has worked with Republican Jack Kemp and as an intern at the White House. He admits siding with Weidenbaum on most classroom debates, but at times, he says, his hero betrayed him.

"He's not just a card-carrying conservative
who doesn't think about what he's saying," Sumner says of Weidenbaum. "A couple of times when I fully expected him to blast Eagleton on some issue, he ended up agreeing with him. Hearing these comments made me think twice about the issue."

In many ways, what goes on in the classroom each day is a microcosm of how things get done (or don't get done) in Washington, D.C. Students begin to understand how the realities of power and politics can make it difficult for governments to follow the seemingly most logical course of action.

"I think the debate in the classroom is a pretty good mirror image of what happens in Washington," Sumner says. "You get a feeling of how these points are argued to gain political advantage."

Often, when an example or anecdote is called for, the class gets what amounts to oral history, a first-person account of what went on behind the scenes in the formation of national policy. Often these accounts provide insights that aren't likely to make it into the history books. Consider Weidenbaum's reply to a student outraged at Reagan's decision to increase defense spending while slashing the education budget.

Student: "We might have won — quote, because we have more bombs — but our educational system is in such a mess...."

Weidenbaum: "I disagree with the disproportional cuts in the Department of Education budget. OK. That's not where my priorities were. Do you know which agencies' budgets got cut? They cut programs that were most politically vulnerable, and education happened to be one of them. It's not surprising that at the same time a politically powerful program, like farm subsidies, is growing rapidly. Farm subsidies during that same period doubled and re-doubled because of political power. And education just didn't have it."

Student: "You mean they didn't have political power, therefore, they didn't get more money?"


Student: "But do you think that's right?"

Weidenbaum: "Let me say this. I was on the budget committee when Reagan, Meese, Baker, Don Regan, Dave Stockman, a few other people, and I put together the final budget. We had an array of budget cuts proposed, and I'll tell you which ones were approved and disapproved. The biggest cuts were the Department of Education, HUD — which they didn't cut enough, HHS, except for the entitlements, and Labor."

Student: "Do you agree with that?"

Weidenbaum: "No, I don't agree. If I had agreed, I still would have been there. I disagreed strongly, but I wasn't the president."

Weidenbaum doesn't discuss his decision to leave the president's inner circle of advisers. He speaks of tax cuts, deregulation, and other reforms he helped institute, and there's an unmistakable tone of pride in his voice, a sense that he is genuinely satisfied that his work has helped brighten our economic future.

But let him talk about the budget deficit, about his inability to force politicians to make tough decisions on spending cuts, and his voice tends to quaver a bit, to become almost apologetic. Therein lies at least part of the reason he takes time from his writing and research to teach.

"If ever I get discouraged looking at the current scene in Washington, it helps to know that our hope for the future is the next generation and that by teaching, I am helping prepare that generation to make the right choices," Weidenbaum says.

Eagleton says he's always wanted to teach and he pointed out at retirement from the Senate, 30 years in politics is long enough for anyone. His move to the University was a logical step, and he seems to relish the opportunity to take his liberal message to conservative business students.

"I'm not here as a missionary hustling votes for the Democratic ticket; that's not my purpose," he says. "I do think it's important to expose young minds to an alternative way of thinking about issues. I want them to gain a greater comprehension of how and why these policies are formed."

For some students, the real value of the course lies in the opportunity to interact with two high-level players in the political process,
to observe the human side of public policy debate, to see how political nuances and emotional appeals can exert tremendous influence on the policy process.

“The course gave me a chance to get very close to two people who, each in his own way, has been an influential force in our country,” says Joseph Bianco, 33, a New Yorker who left a career as a teacher of literature to pursue his M.B.A. “I gained a lot of insight into politics just by observing how they approached issues, how they reacted to questions when put on the spot.”

For Bianco and many others, the class was a highlight of their stay at the University. Several students expressed an appreciation for the down-to-earth, accessible way in which Eagleton and Weidenbaum conducted the course.

On a typical day just before spring break, both professors shed coats and loosen ties. Weidenbaum takes the podium. “I’ve been given an assignment by Professor Eagleton,” he says, a bit of mock deference in his voice, a flash of mischief in his smile. “Some questions to answer on the economics of sports.”

Eagleton sits in a padded, swivel office chair, sipping coffee from a Styrofoam cup. He leans back, crosses his legs, folds his arms square against his chest, and listens as Weidenbaum plays the crowd.

“I will take on Senator Eagleton’s question,” says Weidenbaum, patting Eagleton on the shoulder. “What if cable E.S.P.N. outbid the free networks for the rights to broadcast the World Series? Should the government intervene?”

Weidenbaum launches into a lecture on the virtues of free markets. “If someone wants to buy on the open market the right to broadcast the World Series, I wouldn’t inhibit that, I wouldn’t unduly restrict it,” he says. “What’s the federal issue? There is no constitutional or God-given right to watch a baseball game.”

A student questions whether the free market should have so much control over something as central to the American culture as baseball. Eagleton’s eyes brighten; the senator applauds the remark with an approving glance, a wry smile of satisfaction.

Weidenbaum returns the volley: “As an economist, I see no need for intervention, but as a senator — especially if I’m up for re-election against someone tough like Tom Eagleton — do I have to react to every little concern of my constituents? I guess that depends on whether I’m a Republican or a Democrat, but that’s a cheap shot.”

Eagleton turns to the class and rolls his eyes. He swivels in his chair, scribbles a few notes, and listens once more. He takes it all in, minding his manners, waiting for his turn at the podium. He has the look of someone trying hard not to scratch an annoying itch, to swat a bothersome fly.

“Why do congressmen want to mess with this topic?” asks Weidenbaum. “I put this in the same context as the colorization of old movies. It’s a great issue if you don’t want to deal with tough issues. I would submit that …” his point interrupted by Eagleton booming out of his chair.

“Let me tell you what the issues are here,” Eagleton shouts, pounding out each word with a chop of his hand. “In truth and in substance, I couldn’t disagree with you more. The federal issue here is the airwaves. They belong to us. We the people … we own them. We allocate them. I’m not talking about tractor-pulls. I’m talking about the World Series, the Super Bowl, and the Final Four. I’m talking about the American Way.”

Eagleton has walked two circles around Weidenbaum and the podium, and he is now leaning across the front row of students, cajoling, imploring, pleading for them to do the right thing: “I think, I hope, I expect that if any of you have a shred of social conscience, you’ll agree that there are certain social obligations to the less affluent and to minorities that override the abstract need for a so-called competitive marketplace.”

Weidenbaum looks on, amused, struggling to get a word in: “Where do you draw the line,” he says. “Where do you draw the line …”

“I’ll tell you where you draw the line,” intrudes Eagleton. “This draw-the-line thing is the most inane argument I’ve ever heard. We draw lines every day of our lives.”

And so it goes in one of the most popular electives at Washington University.
The 1979 Nicaraguan revolution marked the first rebellion in modern Latin America to be initiated with the support and active participation of the country's churches. When Anastasio Somoza Debayle was overthrown in 1979, ending more than four decades of his family's tyrannical dictatorship in Nicaragua, the revolutionary Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN), communist in design and headed by Daniel Ortega Saavedra, took over the country. Instructed by Latin American bishops to "defend the rights of the oppressed," the country's religious communities joined forces with the new regime. (Later, the Catholic hierarchy, fearing a loss of power to the Sandinista Front, withdrew its support.) Together, they worked to reverse the crimes and hypocrisy of the Somozas in fashioning a socialist government, built on Marxist and Christian principles, that could care fairly for all its citizens.

Recognizing the country's leading revolutionary poet, President Ortega named Marxist priest Ernesto Cardenal minister of culture in 1979. (Ernesto's brother, Fernando, served as minister of education.) Cardenal's poetry and politics, inextricably intertwined, became a catalyst for political action and social change.

John Garganigo, professor of Romance languages and chair of Latin American studies.

A scholar of contemporary Latin American poetry, John Garganigo is professor of Romance languages and chair of Latin American studies. Lorin Cuoco, a St. Louis-based writer and editor whose interviews have appeared in the literary magazine River Styx, contributed to this story.
Visiting professor: John Garganigo, left, and Ernesto Cardenal outside the poet’s home in Managua.

In memoriam: Right, demonstrators in downtown Managua raise their torches to “Mothers of Martyrs,” in remembrance of the sons, daughters, and husbands killed in the revolution. Scenes of the Sandinista-Contra war are depicted on the wall in the background.

studies, and Randolph Pope, professor of Spanish and chair of comparative literature, invited Cardenal to speak at the Midwest Conference on Hispanic Literature, held on campus in October 1988. Cardenal accepted, but the U.S. government refused to issue him a visa. At the urging of Mexican novelist and diplomat Carlos Fuentes, Garganigo traveled to Managua to interview the poet. They spoke at his home on October 4 — shortly before Cardenal would retire from his position with the Sandinista government — 18 months before a democratic government, voted upon by the people and headed by Violetta Barrios de Chamorro, was installed on April 25, 1990.

According to a news report issued in August, Cardenal, along with at least 60 of Nicaragua’s 300 priests, remains committed to the Sandinista cause, determined to “rule from below” until the party’s planned return to power in the next (1996) election.

They told me that you had fallen in love with someone else; that’s when I went to my room and wrote this article against the government for which I am now in jail.

Or the biting verses he wrote on the dedication of a statue of Somoza, by the same Somoza:

It is not that I believe that my people erected this statue in my honor because I know better than you do that I commissioned it myself; nor that I pretend to pass on into posterity with it because I know that the people will knock it down one day; nor that I had wanted to erect this statue of myself in my own lifetime, the monument that you would have never erected. Rather, I erected this statue because I know you hate it.

These proved to be prophetic verses in light of what happened years later when this very same statue, a symbol of Somoza’s tyrannical rule, was knocked down by the liberating forces of the Sandinista revolution and when Cardenal himself, forced into exile by the Somoza regime, became a roving ambassador for the FSLN.

Cardenal’s voice emerges as the most politically and socially committed of the literary tradition that begins with Nicaragua’s national poet, Rubén Darío, founder of the literary movement known as modernismo. The tradition includes Azarias Pallais, one of the country’s first poet-priests; Alfonso Cortes and Salomon de la Selva, members of vanguard movements; the central figure of Pablo Antonio Cuadra; and José Coronel Urtecho, Cardenal’s mentor, friend, and literary companion.

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The Voice of Cardenal

Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal’s first book of verses, Epigramas, written during the ’50s and published in 1961, combines two distinct themes: the political and the amorous, both tempered by a keen sense of humor. Who can forget those verses dedicated to Claudia, one of the poet’s many girlfriends:

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conversion that led to his renunciation of the worldly life. He joined the Benedictine order of Trappist monks at Gethsemani, Kentucky, where he came under the influence of Thomas Merton, his spiritual and political leader. It was Merton who convinced Cardenal to renounce violence and accept the preaching of Gandhi.

Cardenal continued his studies at the Benedictine Monastery of Cuernavaca, Mexico, at that time a center of progressive Catholic thinking, and at the Colombian Monastery of La Ceja. He continued to create narrative poems, publishing in 1960 the epic poem *La hora O* (Zero Hour), a Latin American revolutionary classic written during his first militant phase. Writing under the direct influence of North American poets Walt Whitman, e.e. cummings, and Ezra Pound, Cardenal indicts those forces of imperialism that undermine the fiber of his country. In these verses the majestic figure of Augusto César Sandino emerges with mythical qualities. Inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and killed on orders of the first Somoza, Sandino became a counterforce to the evils of the Somoza regime. To the people, he represented the only hope for the future.

In 1965, Cardenal returned to his home to be ordained a Roman Catholic priest. A year later, he founded the religious commune, *Nuestra Señora de Solentiname*, on the island of Mancarron in the Great Lake of Nicaragua. There, he created a community along classless lines where campesinos, after their work, expressed themselves in workshops dedicated to the study and creation of poetry and the arts. In this peaceful oasis, surrounded by the violence of Nicaraguan politics, Cardenal began a dialogue with Tomás Borge and Carlos Fonseca, both revolutionary leaders. The year was 1972, when the poet-priest began to reject Merton’s and Gandhi’s pacifist ideas to align himself with the Sandinista forces.
Conversations with the Poet

Garganigo: Your entire work reveals a profound commitment to social problems. You have spoken about the desire “to tear down the barbed wire fences.” In these difficult times for Nicaragua, how do you feel now?

Cardenal: I did use the term desalarbar, or “tearing the fences down.” I was referring to the fences that surround the fields, but it could also be applied to the fences that constrict life itself. At this time I feel that in Nicaragua certain prophecies have been fulfilled: the land has been turned over to the people who work it, and at the same time we have removed other boundaries by liberating the country.

Garganigo: How do you see the role of the poet? How do you maintain strong Christian beliefs, an accusatory attitude, a clearly enunciated political tone, and continue to write poetry?

Cardenal: It seems to me that a Christian attitude is accusatory. Jesus Christ was the great accuser: He denounced the Pharisees, the forces of Herod, and an entire social system. For this he was put to death. As far as politics is concerned, I am engaged exactly in the same way Jesus Christ was. I would add that I am not really a political person but a revolutionary one.

Garganigo: You have said that your life has been a path toward God and toward revolution.

Cardenal: I could say that my life has been directed toward God and revolution but from two distinct paths: First, my life was consecrated towards God; this led me to the revolution. My commitment to God led me to giving myself to others. This led me to a social, political, and revolutionary commitment. You could say that God showed me the way to the revolution. My life, after my religious conversion, has been totally dedicated to the desire of doing God’s work wherever He intends to lead me.

Garganigo: Tell me about your conversion in 1956 and about your relationship with Thomas Merton.

Cardenal: I had a conversion, which was like becoming enamored of God. It was a falling in love that led me to search for
Him in silence and solitude. That is why I chose a place like the Trappist monastery in Gethsemani. It just so happened — perhaps it was divine providence — that Thomas Merton was the novice master. He is the one who has had the most impact on my life. He influenced my spiritual growth as well as the temporal, social, political, and economic aspects. It was Merton who made me think about the destiny of people because he made me aware that one involved in the contemplative life cannot be alien to the problems of man.

Garganigo: You have been the driving force behind the poetry workshops in Nicaragua. How do they function?

Cardenal: They are like the ones in many universities in the United States. They are designed to teach the techniques of modern poetry. They are directed toward those who have no knowledge of poetry or who have not had the instruments to write poetry. The difference between our workshops and those in the United States is that ours are for workers, farmers, soldiers, policemen, campesinos, and entire indigenous communities. About 2,000 or 3,000 have participated so far. And for the first time, the people have learned to write with the influence of the great North American poetry of Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, T.S. Eliot, and especially Ezra Pound. I say Ezra Pound specifically because not only have many emulated him, but also because the principles and rules of poetry that are taught in the workshops stem directly from him. We have produced a lot of poetry in these workshops, but above all, we gave the people the opportunity to express themselves, to express their personal experiences.

Garganigo: One of your best poems, in my opinion, is Oración por Marilyn Monroe (Prayer for Marilyn Monroe), in which you demystify an entire ideology by using the language of advertisement and consumerism.

Cardenal: I was studying for the priesthood in a Colombian seminary when I heard the news of the actress' death. On this particular day we were studying the Gospel, and we read the part where Jesus is casting the money lenders out of the temple. The idea came that the temple of marble and gold is not only Twentieth Century Fox, but also the temple of the body of the actress, where the Son of God is throwing the merchants out. I use the terminology of our age: the language of psychoanalysis, the jargon of astronauts, autographs, newspaper clippings, and the language of romance novels, when I say that her life ended without that final kiss. I end with her cry, when we do not know who she was trying to call, probably not someone in the Los Angeles telephone directory. I finish by saying, "YOU, ANSWER THE PHONE."

Garganigo: What directions has your poetry taken in recent years?

Cardenal: I think that my poetry has been more or less the same since I found my style in my youth. The themes have changed a bit. During my youthful period, I wrote poetry dedicated to love, inspired by various women. Later, the poetry assumed mystical characteristics with an emphasis on God. I have political poems with a revolutionary orientation. I also have had a series of poems dedicated to the indigenous populations of North, Central, and South America, as well as historical poems and ones on the theme of contemporary life. In Vuelos de victoria (Flights of victory) I dedicate myself to writing about the Nicaraguan revolution. These last poems are a bit simpler, easier to understand. The theme had an effect on the language. These poems are for the people, the campesinos.

Garganigo: You have been minister of culture since the first days of the Sandinista triumph. How have you been able to adjust?

Cardenal: It has been quite difficult. I have had to sacrifice time normally dedicated to poetry. But there has been a great compensation because this has been so others could write poetry, compose music, stage plays, and perform dances.

Garganigo: You have always said that God put you on this earth in order to spread culture.

Cardenal: That is true. I have always considered that I was carrying out God's will while I was minister of culture, and now His will has destined something else for me.
Annelise Mertz, professor emerita of dance, belongs to that remarkable group of women who spread the indigenous American art form of modern dance throughout the university system nationwide. She is joined by such educators as Martha Hill (New York University and later, Juilliard), Alma Hawkins (University of California-Los Angeles), and Bessie Schoenberg (Sarah Lawrence College) who, in establishing a scientific foundation to the art, created a program that gave modern dance a solid basis. They trained their students to become dancers, choreographers, historians, therapists, teachers, archivists, and technicians. In addition, they contributed greatly to the campus theatre renaissance that provided the United States with an enviable string of excellent theatres across the country.

The Midwest of the late '50s was still the Midwest of the '40s — quiet, shady, and undisturbed — when Annelise arrived in St. Louis. In 1957, energized and volatile, she entered the calm, unruffled scene of a sleepy, midwestern university. In leaving Germany, her birthplace, and assuming her post at Washington University, she had stepped into another world.

Germany of the '20s and '30s had experienced a manic burst of creativity. The influence of Max Reinhardt, the famous Austrian theatre director, had changed the look of the European stage. The Bauhaus streamlined the art of design and introduced the concept of functionalism. The dancing of Mary Wigman and Harold Kreutzberg had reached international stature.

In her childhood, Annelise studied the expressionist Wigman modern dance technique as well as traditional ballet and ethnic dance. Her first engagement was with the Berlin State Opera, which was then under the baton of such conductors as Sir Thomas Beacham, Wilhelm Furtwängler, and Herbert von Karajan.

Whether through elusive youth or the confusion of the times, her earliest days are a jumbled memory of her parents' divorce, the war, the rancorous Nazi party, and the catastrophic historical events that made survival her primary focus.

When the postwar peace brought with it a semblance of order and sanity, the opera houses were once more brought into operation. But by this time, Annelise had focused solely on modern dance, which had more relative bearing to life and the depth of expression and belief she had experienced and acquired during the war years.

She was invited to join the Kurt Jooss Dance Theater, which had re-formed in Essen at the renowned Folkwangschule and was touring internationally with the classic antiwar ballet, "The Green Table." She continued her classes in technique, improvisation, and choreography, strengthening her philosophy in the value of modern dance as an essential development of human well-being. She also decided to leave the country and the chaos that followed the war.

When she arrived at Washington University, she honored her contract with the physical education department. At that time, dance was an alternate sport offered to young women. She was relegated to a partitioned-off section of the pool area in the Francis Field House and had to hawk her own classes at early registration.

Nevertheless, her vitality and enthusiasm were infectious, and her enrollment climbed steadily. She mounted her own campaign to give dance the stature she felt it merited.
Annelise requested an assistant and additional courses in theory and composition so the students could learn anything, she felt they had to learn about themselves. They had to think, they had to move, they had to experience, they had to challenge their creative potential. Since Plato, this has been the classical training — the process of metakinesis, mind and body.

Methodically she built the dance major, and later, the minor. As a result of her determination, a performing arts area was created. At the same time, Annelise established Dance Concert Society, now called Dance St. Louis, a project designed to bring professional dance to St. Louis. She was a founding board president and guiding force in the organization's first decade.

Eleven years ago Annelise formed a professional dance company drawn from the University’s dance faculty and graduate dance majors. For this group she choreographed many works and guided its performances from Washington University to theatres throughout Europe. In early May, the company danced its final concert.

Over the years, Annelise has created more than 40 works. Her vivacity and unhesitating dedication have motivated thousands of students profoundly affected by her unflagging integrity.

Perhaps her former student Michael Hoeye, a writer and painter in upstate New York, put it best: “Annelise revealed for us a hidden syntax of events. She unveiled an architecture of motion in everything around us. She tutored us in discipline and spontaneity. She opened eyes and unleashed bodies. She railed at our provincialism. She hounded us into growth. She changed us, and she taught us to dance!”

Dancer, choreographer, and teacher Murray Louis is co-director of Nikolais and Louis Dance in New York. He is the author of Inside Dance, a collection of essays published by St. Martin’s Press (1980), and writes a monthly column for Dance Magazine. Louis culled material for this article from his forthcoming book on pioneering dance educators, one of whom is Annelise Mertz.
By Tony Fitzpatrick & William Booth

Scientists survey field and stream for clues here hundreds of yellow-legged frogs once crowded the shorelines of mountain lakes in the Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks in California, researchers find few frogs today. Only one of the 38 lakes that scientists from the University of California at Los Angeles recently surveyed contained the yellow-legged leapers. A frog watch organized by park rangers in summer 1989 revealed the amphibians were still present, but their distribution was patchy at best.

For several years, rumors and scattered reports have circulated that frogs and toads seem far less common than they once were. According to recent studies conducted by field biologists, amphibian populations appear to be declining mysteriously around the world. Many scientists fear their dramatic disappearance may be a sign of widespread environmental degradation of some unknown kind.

Biologists have begun documenting precipitous declines, sometimes measuring from 50 to 90 percent, and local extinctions in a variety of settings, from tropical forests to temperate mountain lakes. Scientists have seen marked declines of salamanders in Mexico, toads in Peru and Costa Rica, and several species of frogs in Brazil. European amphibians, too, are under threat.

The mystery of the disappearing amphibians is further clouded by the fact that in some areas, says biology professor Owen

The Case of the
Sexton, researchers have found no decline. Scientists working in Borneo and East Africa, for example, report no detectable downward spiral. Also, in the southeastern United States several scientists claim that some populations seem to be holding steady while others have fallen.

To unlock the mystery and to better document how extensive the decline is, a group of the nation’s researchers met in Irvine, California, in February to deliberate “Declining Amphibian Populations — A Global Phenomenon?”

A specialist in amphibian populations, Sexton attributes the decline to any number of factors — acid rain, pesticide spillover, fish predation, even scientists who collect the animals as specimens. He points to his own research and to several reports recently published to indicate the significant impact fish predation has had on amphibian survivability in various water systems.

Sexton has studied many ecosystems worldwide. In the late ’60s, the scientist built three ponds specifically to study amphibians — Railroad Pond, New Pond, and Salamander Pond — at Washington’s Tyson Research Center, a 2,000-acre wildlife refuge center located approximately 30 miles west of downtown St. Louis. In various stages of their development, 14 species of frogs, salamanders, and newts lived in and near the ponds.

Then, natural disaster struck. Nearly five inches of rain fell in the area in spring 1979, spilling the Meramec River, which meanders less than one-third of a mile from the ponds, over its banks. The flood introduced several of the 89 species of fish found in the river — the highest number of fish fauna of any stream in the state — into Railroad Pond and New Pond. Another flood of the Meramec in December 1982 immersed an outlet of Railroad Pond but left the other two bodies of water unaffected.

The result? Silent Spring for Railroad Pond, which over the next four years lost 12 of its original 14 amphibian species to the six species of fish that colonized it. The biggest villain was the green sunfish, a voracious predator, says Sexton, although bluegill, bass, bullheads, minnows, and golden shiners also played a role in the destruction. Two large species of amphibians, the bullfrog and the leopard frog, survived. New Pond, invaded by minnows and golden shiners, suffered little loss of amphibian life, and the uninvaded Salamander Pond, none. Sexton published his findings in a paper, “A Qualitative Study of Fish-Amphibian Interactions in 3 Missouri Ponds,” in Transactions, Missouri Academy of Science.

Recent history has presented some ominous examples of how an ecosystem can metamorphose through the introduction of a species. One of the most striking is found in the world’s third largest lake, Africa’s Lake Victoria. This body of water has for millennia provided fish — the major protein source — to the population that lives nearby. In the ’60s, though, British colonists
Biologists have begun documenting precipitous declines of amphibians, sometimes measuring from 50 to 90 percent, and local extinctions in a variety of settings, from tropical forests to temperate mountain lakes.

introduced a tasty species of perch, the Nile perch, to boost the fishing industry and tourism and instead, spawned an ecological chain reaction that today is threatening the very existence of the lake.

The Nile perch feeds on all fish species; it can grow to six feet long and weigh hundreds of pounds. Within years, the Nile perch seriously threatened the existence of the tilapia, a small, flavorful fish that fishermen are able to preserve simply by letting it dry in the sun. The perch ate other fish that were algae-feeders; algae grew uncontrollably in the upper waters, dying, then sinking all the way to the bottom of the 270-foot-deep lake. This deprived the bottom 110 feet of the lake of oxygen, which drove out all the fish in that zone. Now that people are dependent on the Nile perch as their protein source, they are deforesting the shoreline to smoke the fish, which are too big and oily to dry in the sun. As a result, deforestation and soil erosion pose serious problems for the lake area, which encompasses parts of Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya.

Despite emerging studies that portend a grim future for amphibians, Sexton says hope lies in efforts to reintroduce certain species into the environment. With the help of Missouri State Conservation Department's herpetologist, Tom R. Johnson, Sexton reintroduced to Tyson a species of wood frog, *Rana sylvatica*, commonly found in the northern United States.

Eleven egg masses of *Rana sylvatica* were introduced into the wooded Tyson ponds in March 1980. Seven years later, between February and March, Sexton and his colleagues constructed a drift fence and scattered plastic buckets underground as traps on either side of the fence near Salamander Pond. Frogs collected on the outer side of the fence were counted as immigrants; those on the inner side of the fence were counted as emigrants. At the end of the breeding period, the researchers counted 311 immigrants and 46 emigrants, indicating a "healthy, if not explosive population," says Sexton.

Several requirements must be met, however, before eggs or young can be successfully introduced into a recipient area. According to Sexton, the environment must have formerly supported populations of the species and must contain sufficient favorable habitat to support the introduced population. Furthermore, the source and recipient areas should be geographically close to one another so that the source population would most likely have shared genes with the extinct population of the recipient area.

"I think our study is vivid proof that the successful reintroduction of amphibian populations is possible with care and patience, and compared with costs of reviving endangered species of other organisms, it's quite inexpensive. Amphibians play a significant role in the ecosystem," says Sexton, "yet they're often taken for granted or overlooked. They provide a food source for many other animals, especially snakes and leeches. Losing an important step in the food web takes its toll on other animals in the chain. You're breaking the link."

Tony Fitzpatrick is the science editor at Washington University. William Booth is a science writer for The Washington Post, where excerpts from this article previously appeared.
In 1963 I faced a difficult choice. I could remain at Washington University in St. Louis or take a job at Yale. Washington was, and still is, an endearing university, a fine place to work. Breaking away from 18 years of teaching the brightest students in the country at Queens College and jettisoning the cultural and intellectual advantages of the metropolis for a declining midwestern river town six years earlier had caused me few misgivings, and there was cause for none. During my brief tenure as chairman of the Department of History, I enjoyed dealing with “crude” middle-western types, of which I was one. Chancellor Ethan Shepley and Dean Tom Hall had a standard response to my try at raising the quality of the department. When I pressed for higher library budgets, salary increases, leaves for research, and the boot for untenured deadwood, the answer was almost always, “Go ahead, Jack.”

So six years later it was hard to decide whether to stay at Washington or, at the age of 54, to go to Yale. When I had finally chosen Yale’s offer, I felt that I ought to explain my decision to my old friend Tom Eliot, then chancellor at Washington. I made most of the appropriate points — the great library at Yale, the concentration of old friends in the short strip between Boston and Washington, the itchy feet that wanted me to try one more place before I got plowed under.

I still am not sure how much a crisis, not of identity but of identification, had to do with my choice. A letter from a friend at the University of Edinburgh in 1957 may show where the trouble lay. I had written him that I was moving from Queens College to Washington University. He wondered whether I would like living in the nation’s capital. “No, no! That’s George Washington University.” Or the dozen casual acquaintances from the Atlantic Coast who, during my happy mid-American exile, asked me whether one felt isolated, way up in the northwest corner of the country so far away from everything. “No, not the University of Washington in Seattle! Washington University — in St. Louis.” “Oh, yes, of course.”

I don’t know how much all this mattered to me, but I have a hunch that it would have mattered a good deal less had I not spent the previous 18 years on the faculty of Queens College. “Queens College? How does a Yankee like you get along in the Black Belt?” “No, no, that is the Queens College in North Carolina. This Queens College is in New York City.” “Ah, I know, New York University.” “No, no not New York University!”

A quarter century of confusion over the name of the place where I worked might have been more tolerable if it had not gone in double harness with almost half a century of confusion about the name of the person I am. Before I was old enough to know what my name was, somebody started fiddling with it, and ever since, with occasional remissions, the fiddling has recurred sporadically like undulant fever. We will start at the beginning.
was born on May 25, 1910, in Memphis, Tennessee. In the beginning I was named Milton K. Hexter. My father's name was Milton J. Hexter. His J. stood for Jacobs, his mother's maiden name. My K. stood for Kaufman, my grandfather's first name. In a family whose traditions are notorious for their irrelevance to the facts in the case, the tradition was that I was not given the name Kaufman but just the initial K. to spare me the peril of being called Junior. My twin cousins Marian and Betsy Gates would have none of Milton. Before I can remember, they simply renamed me Jack. Not even the customary inaccurate family tradition explains why they hit on that particular name, but it stuck.

The successful campaign of the twins inaugurated the first period of nomenclatural tranquility in the turbulent history of my name: for all practical purposes I was plain Jack Hexter for five years. The peaceful time ended when my grandmother, Fannie Marks, who raised me, enrolled me in kindergarten at Avondale School in Cincinnati. Although neither before nor after did she herself ever call me anything but Jack, in the family, and among my close friends I was Jack. To all my teachers from kindergarten through the sixth grade I was Milton. Between the two was a broad spectrum of schoolmates who called me Milt, or, even worse, Miltie. It was a situation that I radically rectified at the earliest opportunity when I entered seventh grade at Walnut Hills High School. My grandmother did not come with me to louse things up on the day I enrolled. I seized the chance and signed myself in as Jack Hexter, thus restoring the status quo ante kindergarten and a stretch of nomenclatural peace.

My trouble started again one unfortunate evening in my fourth year of graduate work when I went to a meeting of the Graduate History Club. At meetings we listened to a paper usually presented by a faculty member or a distinguished visiting fireman. Afterward, we stood around and wondered whether a faculty member would speak to us. This rarely happened; faculty at Harvard were not much addicted to speaking to graduate students in the good old days.

For me that particular meeting was a catastrophic exception to the rule. Professor Wilbur Abbott emerged out of the haze of ennui and unease, planted himself squarely before me, cleared his throat, and mumbled something. I did not catch it.

"Pardon me?" I asked.
"I said you'd better change your name."
"Change my name?"
"Yes, change your name!"
"But I don't want to change my name, sir."
"Better change it anyhow."
"But, sir, there's nothing wrong with the name Hexter."
"Oh, Hexter is all right. It's Jack that's the trouble. It won't do."
"What's wrong with Jack?"
"It won't do."
"But what is wrong with it?"
"I'll tell you what's wrong with it," said Professor Abbott with diminishing patience. "Someday you may be a pretty good historian. No one will believe that anybody named Jack is a good historian."
"But, Professor Abbott, I may not be a good historian," I replied. "Then I'll have changed my name for nothing. And I like being called Jack."

He firmed his jaw slightly. "Well, that's too bad. Still, you must change it.

The time had obviously come for a retreat to unprepared lines. Abbott was my dissertation supervisor, and undue intransigence about such a trifle as one's name was not advisable if it ran counter to the orders of one's supervisor. I thought hard and fast.

"Look, how about my using a middle initial? I could just sign with my first and second initials and my last name."

He considered this idea and replied grudgingly, "I guess that might work. What is your middle name?"
"I haven't got one," I said. "I thought I had him stymied. But not for long."
"I have a spare one," he said.
"Pardon?"
"I have a spare middle name. I don't use

A quarter century of confusion over the name of the place where I worked might have been more tolerable if it had not gone in double harness with almost half a century of confusion about the name of the person I am.
It. You could have it."

"I don’t really want a middle name, sir, just a middle initial."

"All right. I won’t give you the name. The initial is H. You can use that."

"Thank you, sir," I said.

We both were good to our side of the bargain. Professor Abbott never told me what his middle name was, then or later. Neither has anyone else, so I don’t know what the H. stands for. And from that day to this, I have done my damnedest to transform myself into J.H. Hexter for official and professional purposes while hanging onto Jack in personal relations, as per agreement.

The trouble is — I have failed. The fight that I thought was won and over when Professor Abbott and I reached our compromise was for me just a beginning that now, more than 50 years later, has not ended. This is one I am not going to win. The time remaining to me is too short; there is too much going against me — the publishers, the bureaucrats, the family, and the late Barnaby Keeney.

Publishers have defeated me by the massive force of sheer stupidity. By 1967 I had written four books, and they had issued two with my name wrong. In 1962 Longmans in England published *Reappraisals in History*. The galley proofs came in — John H. Hexter on the title page. I made the correction — J.H. Hexter. The page proofs, when they came, had it right — J.H. Hexter. The book came — J.H. Hexter on the title page; J.H. Hexter on the dust jacket; all was well. A few days after I got my author’s copies, one slipped out of my hand. The jacket slid off. There, smirking at me from the spine of the book, was John (no middle initial) Hexter.

And then in 1966, Harper and Row published *The Judaeo Christian Tradition* — by J.A. Hexter. I don’t know what the A. stands for, but then I don’t know what the H. stands for either. My next three books had the name right, but they have gone out of print.

With the bureaucrats, private and public, I never can tell in advance. Banks, academic administrations, and the veterans administration are reasonable. J.H. is okay with them on bank deposits and checks, and in university catalogues. The wartime army would not take J.H. or Jack H. I had to be plain Jack. They did not believe in initials. Insurance companies, title guarantee companies, the Internal Revenue Service, and the passport office tolerate the H., but they want a first name. And willy-nilly at the end of all my earthly tribulation, I will have to reconcile myself with dying Jack H. Hexter. That is the way the lawyers said it had to be, and that is the way it is in my last will and testament.

During my stay in London I unwittingly set in train the nomenclatural disaster associated with the late Barnaby Keeney. As far as my name went, the worst was over, I thought. At the moment, the story of how I acquired it might make an amusing yarn. In that spirit I told it one day at lunch to two acquaintances from Harvard, Ted Lampson and John Coddington, who, like me, were doing research in the British Museum.

"I wonder what the H. stands for," said John.

"Yes, I wonder," said Ted.

I answered that I neither wondered nor cared.

"Wilbur Abbott," Ted mused, "Wilbur C. Abbott. He kept the C. and dropped the H. What does the C. stand for?"


"Wilbur H. Cortez Abbott!" said John, infernal enlightenment glowing in his eyes. "Of course! Well, well. I’ll be damned."

"Of course," Ted exclaimed. "That’s it!"

"What is it?" I said, a little irked. They were too old to be giggling.

"Your middle name, my boy," said John. "What middle name? I don’t have any middle name."

"Oh, yes, you do, my boy," said Ted. "Yes, you do, my old conquistador!"

"Your old what?"

Barnaby was the first university president in history to give somebody an honorary degree entirely for the sake of a one-line gag. It was at least symptomatic of a strange but splendid character disorder.

After lunch I felt the need to sit around a while and get myself adjusted to what the world would be like for a man who was moving toward his thirties with the newly acquired middle name of Hernando. It didn’t have to be Hernando. There were, after all, hundreds of names that began with H. Of course. The trouble was that of all those names, the one most likely to be found in company with Cortez was Hernando. I could not figure any way around that. Moreover, at the time there was no way of checking on it. I was going to France in about two weeks. And anyhow, I was not really sure I wanted to find out. I settled down to living with the suspense.

I wasted no time after the boat docked back in New York. I took the first train for Boston and was inside Abbott’s office by 3:00 p.m. The boss was not there, but his secretary, Catherine Crane, was.

I did not waste any time on ceremonious exchanges of greetings. “Look,” I said to her, “is his name Hernando?”

“Yes, great,” I answered. “Is his name Hernando?”

“Is whose name what?”

“His. Professor Abbott’s. Is it Hernando? That middle initial he doesn’t use any more. H., you know. Does it stand for Hernando?”

“No, it doesn’t. As a matter of fact, it’s Wilbur Cortez H. The H. stands for…”

“Whoa. Hold it. I don’t want to know what the H. stands for. I just wanted to know one thing it didn’t stand for — Hernando. You’ve taken a load off my mind. Thanks.”

I told the now-extended and improved story of my troubles with my name to quite a lot of people. I told it to my girl, my roommates, and to a somewhat raffish acquaintance, Barney Keeney.

Early in 1964, I got a letter from Doctor Barnaby C. (for Conrad) Keeney, president of Brown University. I had not lost track of Dr. Keeney in his years between graduate school and university presidency. I ran into him at the first American Historical Association (AHA) meeting I attended after I got my first permanent job at Queens. He was an instructor at Harvard.

From that time on, with an intermission for the war in which I was a stateside soldier and Barney some kind of hero, we dedicated ourselves for more than a decade to preventing the spirits of the AHA from drying up. Years later I even attended Barney’s installation as president of Brown. At the previous meeting of the AHA when news of the improbable appointment was out, I put in a good bit of time lamenting in Barney’s presence his imminent apotheosis into a stuffed shirt, an unselfish concern for his spiritual condition that he did not appreciate. So when I found that I could hit Queens College, where I taught then, for the expense of my trip to Providence, I figured I ought to go for auld lang syne. It was quite an occasion, made special not by the mass of dull dignitaries who are always around for such affairs but by the presence of a sizable delegation of Barney’s old cronies, an assortment of odd characters. None of those who knew Barnaby best could believe that he would make it, unless they saw him do it with their own eyes.

Barnaby made it, however, and no doubt just to falsify my prophecy, he did not turn into a stuffed shirt. The consensus is that he provided Brown with a highly individual, somewhat eccentric, but most successful administration for 10 years. One who suffered, enjoyed, and survived administration à la Keeney tried to catch its peculiar flavor, to describe what it was like for a faculty member. “It was,” he said meditatively, “like being on a wild ride on an endless roller coaster, not having the slightest idea what the hell was going to happen next, yet knowing deep down that you were as safe as gold in Ft. Knox. Barney had the singular gift of going square down the middle of the road and making everybody with him believe it was Wonderland.”

Early in 1964, President Keeney invited me to speak for a half hour at the Brown bicentennial celebration in return for a fairly princely stipend. In my letter of acceptance, I indicated that in view of the disproportion of the reward to the service
demanded, I assumed that some small kickback was expected and that I was ready to be reasonable. I also pointed out to him that he might find it embarrassing if his board of trustees learned how deep into the till his hand had reached. Of course, no blackmail threat was intended. Still, when a few days later another letter offered to cut the stipend in half and indicated that in any case an honorary degree of D. Litt. was to be thrown in, I did speculate on the possibility of a cause-and-effect relation. On this point, as it turned out, I was entirely on the wrong track. Barnaby had other reasons.

On October 4 the convocation of Brown University gathered to hear President Lyndon B. Johnson deliver an address and to witness the granting of honorary degrees on the occasion of the university’s 200th anniversary. Among those listed to receive such degrees was J.H. Hexter, Ph.D., Professor of History, Yale University.

“Professor J.H. Hexter, come forward.”

I walked up to the platform and stood face-to-face with Dr. Barnaby C. Keeney. The marshal went on to utter some further ceremonial formulae that I did not catch. I was anxiously scrutinizing Barnaby and was apprehensive about what I saw. He had added considerable poundage since his elevation to the presidency of Brown, and encased in gorgeous academic robes, he looked like an unreliable Irish rogue elephant, swathed in a brown and orange silk tent with a brown tam-o’-shanter unsteadily perched on its head. He had a glitter in his eye, steely and wild, that I had seen often enough before to know it boded no good.

Barnaby stared at me like a basilisk and intoned, “Jack HERNANDO Hexter.” He came down on the second name like a pile driver.

He continued with the citation preceding the granting of the degree, but again I missed it. I was choked by an incompatible mixture of emotions — astonishment, fury, shock, and admiration. It was a first for Barnaby, all right. He was the first university president in history to give somebody an honorary degree entirely for the sake of a one-line gag. It was at least symptomatic of a strange but splendid character disorder. I had just gotten that far in my meditation when someone draped over my shoulders the Brown University hood of a D. Litt. At the same moment Barnaby released into my left hand the engraved leather-bound copy of the citation he had just recited. He beamed at me with what from the spectator’s angle of vision must have looked like benevolence. I tilted slightly forward on the balls of my feet, beamed back with what from the spectator’s point of view must have looked like affection, and said to him between clamped teeth, “Barney, you son of a bitch.”

Now I had a first to my credit. I was the first Doctor of Letters in history who at the very moment of receiving the degree had called the man who presented it to him a son of a bitch. Barnaby, still beaming, took my right hand in his and shook it with apparent warmth, at the same time saying, “Easy, Jack, it’s an open mike.”

It was an open mike all right. Not, fortunately, to the audience in the hall, but to the broadcasting network that was carrying the bicentennial ceremonies. Barnaby wrote me a note a few days later to assure me that we actually had been on the air, a fact subsequently confirmed by other and more reliable witnesses. He also chided me for what he described as my “vile language” and ended his letter, “Well, Jack, you will long be remembered in these plantations.” I tended to think that he might be right, but I did not feel very badly about it.

In a day of firsts, I had perhaps scored the crowning one. I realize that my initial attempt to comprehend fully the dimensions of my achievement by comparing it with that of Herostratus, who burned the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, was not quite appropriate. That is, indeed, a thing that could be done only once. It is at least possible that at some future time another recipient of an honorary degree, at the moment of receiving it, will call the president who awards it to him a son of a bitch in the hearing of an audience that potentially includes a large part of the population of southern New England. Possible, but on the whole, I think, not very likely.

“You’d better change your name. Someday you may be a pretty good historian,” said Professor Abbott. “No one will believe that anybody named Jack is a good historian.”
Center Court with
William K. Y. Tao

The extra attention a mechanical engineering professor gave to a graduate student newly arrived from China in 1947 helped Washington University make a friend for life.

The late Raymond R. Tucker, then chairman of mechanical engineering at the School of Engineering and later, mayor of the City of St. Louis, assisted William K. Y. Tao, M.S.M.E. '50, not only in getting a good start in his master's degree program in mechanical engineering, but also in finding outside employment to supplement his earnings as a graduate teaching assistant. Faculty and other members of the University community also helped two years later when Tao's wife and infant son arrived from China in one of the last flights out of Shanghai before the Communist takeover. The extra effort and interest encouraged Tao to choose Washington University over M.I.T. and other graduate engineering schools to which he had applied.

Bill Tao's introduction to Washington University sparked a relationship that has expressed itself in myriad ways since Tao arrived in St. Louis more than 40 years ago. Respect for education was embedded in his upbringing and remains a key element of his personal philosophy. In China, one values a teacher almost as highly as one's parents. The son of an engineer whose assignments took his family from city to city, Tao chose to follow his father's profession. He earned bachelor's degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering at two Chinese universities before seeking a master's degree. China's engineering curriculum was modeled on the American system, and U.S. graduate study was a goal for many students.

The Sino-Japanese war interrupted not only Tao's education, but also his personal life. In high school the star athlete, who set a national record in the triple jump, met a young woman, a fellow student. After a five-year separation, their paths crossed again when they met in southwestern China. Bill and Anne Tao married in 1943. In 1945 they moved to the coast, where he prepared to take the exam for overseas graduate study.

When Tao left for the United States in the fall of 1947, his wife was pregnant and could not accompany him. Their first son was born in China in 1948. Their second and third sons were born in St. Louis. After receiving his master's degree, Tao became a full-time instructor at the School of Engineering. He continued as an affiliate faculty member even after he started his engineering consulting business a few years later. In 1965 he added part-time teaching in the School of Architecture.

His company, William Tao & Associates, Inc. (WTA), has become recognized over the past 30 years for designing building systems around the nation and abroad, and many major developments in St. Louis, including the Gateway Arch. Tao is a registered professional engineer in 49 states. His and his firm's interests have grown to include almost every aspect of engineering — mirrored by his multiple professional affiliations. Since he retired as chairman of WTA last year, he has taken on the role of special consultant to the firm's clients in the Far East. On his business trips, he often serves as unofficial liaison to the University's alumni. This summer he joined Chancellor and Mrs. Danforth at events in Taiwan and Hong Kong—two of several visits by University representatives to alumni organizations in the Pacific Rim nations.

"Students from the Far East who graduate from American universities tend to become important citizens in their own countries after they return. Washington has played an important role in educating these leaders." Citing more than 200 alumni in Taiwan alone, he adds, "This is an example of the University's image carried out to another part of the world. And it can feed back to Washington University more qualified students." Although circumstances prevented the Taos from returning to their native land, they are proud to call themselves St. Louisans. "I had a good education and good opportunities here, and my family found a friendly community," says Tao.

One of Tao's most far-reaching ideas for Washington University has had its greatest impact upon the student body. He believes that many people who do not have the resources to endow scholarships would be willing to provide named scholarships on an annual basis. The first such program, based on his suggestion, was established in the School of Engineering in 1974; it subsequently led to annual named
William K.Y. Tao

He currently is a member of the Engineering National Council and the School's Five-Year Plan Advancement Committee. He is a generous supporter of the University: he and his wife, Anne, are Life Members of the Eliot Society. The most visible evidence of Tao's generosity and his belief that universities should develop the whole person is the Tao Tennis Center, established in the mid-1980s during the renovation and expansion of the University's athletic facilities. A tennis enthusiast, he plays the game four to five times a week, wherever he may be.

Bill Tao's resume is filled with honors for his professional achievements, humanitarian work, and community service. Washington University has helped swell the list by also awarding him its Distinguished Alumni Award at Founders Day in 1971 and, most recently, the William Greenleaf Eliot Society's annual Search Award for 1990.

Tao acknowledges having "some major influence" on two of his sons' decisions to earn degrees at Washington University, whose educational quality, he says, is comparable to the top universities anywhere. David, the eldest, received his doctorate in biomedical engineering in 1976. Peter, the youngest, received his bachelor of arts in architecture in 1979. Middle son Richard, also an architect and the only son now living in St. Louis, kept the Taos' Washington University connection intact when he married Charlotte Boman, A.B. '73. And there are four Tao grandchildren.

Though "partially retired," Bill Tao hasn't slowed down personally, professionally, or as a University booster. "Life is to give, not to take," he says. Washington University has been a fortunate beneficiary of that philosophy.

scholarship programs in each of the University's schools (see Washington University Magazine, summer 1988). In 1982, when he received the School of Engineering Alumni Achievement Award, he organized an effort to create a scholarship in memory of his mentor, Raymond Tucker. He enlisted other mechanical engineering classmates and students of Tucker and set about endowing the scholarship.

"A scholarship," Tao says, "is an honor and an incentive, not just for the student, but for the parents, too." Last year, almost 650 students were awarded annual scholarships provided by some 450 members of the University's William Greenleaf Eliot Society. Tao is proud not only that the engineering school set an example for the rest of the University in providing a new avenue of scholarship support, but also that the School's students themselves established the first graduating class gift program to make their own commitment to the University's future.

Tao first served the University in an official capacity as an alumni member of the Board of Trustees from 1975 to 1978, when he was named to his first term as trustee. Although he was appointed trustee emeritus in May, he continues to hold a perennial seat on the Board's Buildings and Grounds Committee. In the community, he also serves on the boards of Goodwill Industries and the United Nations Association of St. Louis, and his wife serves on the board of the International Institute, organized to help new immigrants. He was a member of the Engineering Task Force of the Commission on the 'Future of Washington University and chair of the Engineering Facilities Improvement Program.
Gene Screening: Public Policy or Personal Choice?

Cystic fibrosis is a chronic disease of children and increasingly of adults; one third of the more than 15,000 patients listed in the registry of the North American National Cystic Fibrosis Foundation are older than 21. Respiratory complications account for much of the morbidity and more than 95 percent of the mortality from cystic fibrosis, although exocrine-gland dysfunction in many other organ systems affects all patients to a greater or lesser degree.

Each year nearly 40 percent of those with cystic fibrosis are hospitalized at least once for a week or more. These episodes and the cost of outpatient medical care constitute a major burden for patients and their families and have an effect on the health-care delivery system that is disproportionate to the absolute number of patients with cystic fibrosis.

The recent identification of the cystic fibrosis gene signaled the end of a long search that intensified five years ago when the gene was first localized to chromosome 7. Sadly, this period was marred by controversy among some of the investigators pursuing the cystic fibrosis gene, but this unpleasantness was counterbalanced by efforts of the National Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. This organization promoted cooperation among various factions, facilitated the rapid transfer of information, and provided financial support for the quest for the cystic fibrosis gene.

In a set of three elegant publications produced in 1989, investigators in Toronto and at the University of Michigan identified the cystic fibrosis gene, sequenced its gene product (from which a model of the transmembrane regulator protein of cystic fibrosis was generated), and in an analysis of some 400 chromosomes, established that a specific deletion in the coding region accounts for about 70 percent of the mutations in cystic fibrosis.

Further study of the function of the regulator protein could lead to specific pharmacologic or, in the more remote future, gene therapy for cystic fibrosis. In any event, the identification of the transmembrane regulator protein allows more accurate detection of affected persons and of carriers of the mutant gene. Researchers assume, with ample justification, that other cystic fibrosis mutations will be identified and that a population-based screening program for cystic fibrosis will soon be feasible.

Some would advocate mandatory screening, which has the potential for grave danger. Even voluntary screening programs carry considerable economic and social risk. For instance, would managed health-care systems and insurance companies cover the substantial costs of caring for children with cystic fibrosis who are born to known carriers? In other words, will denial of health insurance coverage for the patients with cystic fibrosis be a condition of payment for the expense of population-based screening?

Moreover, if current studies of the molecular pathophysiology of cystic fibrosis yield, as anticipated, novel therapies that extend the quality and span of life for those with cystic fibrosis to the age of 40 or 50 years from the current median of slightly more than 20 years, will elective abortion of an affected fetus be justified? If not, to what end would a screening program be directed? Personal choice? No doubt, but physicians will be asked to set aside personal prejudice in the formulation of public policy. The rapid evolution of more comprehensive and less expensive methods of diagnosis and improved therapies resulting from recent advances in research on cystic fibrosis will undoubtedly expand both the public and personal choices.

Cystic fibrosis specialist Harvey R. Colten is the Harriet B. Spoehr Professor of Pediatrics and head of the Department of Pediatrics at Children's Hospital/Washington University School of Medicine. A longer version of this editorial was published in the February 1, 1990, issue of The New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 322, No. 5, pp. 328-329.
Engineering progress: The completion of Harold D. Jolley Hall (left of courtyard) in April places the final touch to an ambitious building program for the School of Engineering and Applied Science. The engineering school is now housed in six interconnected buildings. Three of the halls — Bryan, Jolley, and Lopata — were designed by Constantine E. Michaelides, dean of the School of Architecture, in association with architectural firms Smith Entzeroth and Stone Marraccini Patterson. The Lopata Courtyard, pictured above, helps to physically tie together the buildings that comprise the engineering campus. "A first-rate facility of this kind," remarked dedication speaker and University trustee John F. McDonnell, chairman and CEO of McDonnell Douglas Corporation, "can help restore U.S. competitiveness and leadership in science and basic research."
**Reel life:** A lobby poster promoting *The Killers*, based on Ernest Hemingway's short story of the same title. The poster is among the Hemingway first editions, screenplays, and memorabilia to be displayed in Olin Library's Department of Special Collections October 17, 1990, through January 15, 1991. The exhibit is planned in cooperation with the performing arts department conference "Ernest Hemingway: The Man and the Myth," October 17-20, which will offer a critical new assessment of Hemingway's life and works. For information, call (314) 889-5858. Copyright © by Universal Pictures, a Division of Universal City Studios, Inc. Courtesy of MCA Publishing Rights, a Division of MCA Inc.