Editor William Rees-Mogg inaugurates T.S. Eliot series here

BY DAVID MESSINGER

Fact: In a recent confidential survey, 37 percent of Washington University students reported that they drank no alcoholic beverages while partying. But, conversely, when asked to judge the typical number of drinks that exchanging responsibilities implies at a party, not one of the 306 respondents said none. Closure of the gap on this perception-vs.-reality continuum is chief among the tasks of Washington University's newly formed Committee on Alcohol. In fact, the title of the ongoing committee’s first report — “Between Overreaction and Complacency” — spells out the reorientation necessary. Tugging on one end of the rope, national studies reveal that Washington University students imbibe 25 percent fewer alcoholic beverages while partying than their counterparts, with 18 percent fewer engaging in “binge drinking” and 20 percent fewer purporting in “frequent binge drinking.” Data shows that most students here drink responsibly, with 75 percent having four or fewer drinks when they party and 87 percent declaring to six or fewer days per month.

On the other end, anonymous data from the Emergency Support Team (EST) indicate that there are, on average, 99 calls to EST per semester for alcohol-related problems. Students have increasingly escaped death from alcohol consumption; serious drunk driving accidents have occurred. Falls from balconies, in particular, represent a constant danger. More than $10,000 a year is allotted to alcohol-related injuries. Harm to others — 9 percent of WU undergraduates have reported being taken advantage of sexually, for instance — is a central concern.

“As members of the Washington University community, we start from the assumption that each of us will act responsibly,” said Joel Anderson, Ph.D., assistant dean in the College of Arts & Sciences, assistant professor of philosophy and co-chair of the Committee on Alcohol. “This is in keeping with the university’s mission.”

See Alcohol, page 6
Students Meenakshi Rao (left) and Stephanie Baker (right) pose for a photo with Washington University Women's Society president Jane Mitchell at the society's annual meeting, where they received the group's 2000 leadership awards.

By CHERYL FARMER

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

20-year dream of WU education comes true for mother of Women's Society scholars, colors awards

Joan Jondorf's long-time dream of attending Washington University will finally come true this fall, thanks to the University's Women's Society.

Jondorf, a wife and mother of four currently attending Meramec Community College, where she is earning a degree in social work, said she has been looking forward to attending a major university for many years. She was determined to make it a reality for her children, she said.

Working toward that goal, Jondorf said, she joined the Women's Society's scholarship selection committee two years ago.

"I was looking for a way to give back to the university," she said. "I wanted to be part of something that would help others achieve their dreams." 

Jondorf's son, David, is a freshman at Washington University.

The society also presented two scholarships to graduates of the Meramec Community College, which Jondorf said is a testament to the university's commitment to education.

"It's wonderful to know that the university is supporting our local community, especially at a time when many students are facing financial challenges," she said.

Jondorf said she hopes to continue her education at Washington University, where she plans to pursue a degree in social work.

"I want to make a difference in the lives of others," she said. "I want to help others achieve their dreams, just as the university has helped mine."
Sleep expert outlines help for insomniacs

If you’re counting sheep all night, you’re not alone, because insomnia affects one in three Americans. But if untreated, says a School of Medicine expert, it can have serious consequences. They include excessive use of prescription medications, alcohol abuse, self-treatment with over-the-counter medications, stiffness, sleep disorders and other health risks.

The March issue of Postgraduate Medicine, Hrayr P. Attarian, M.D., reviews ways to treat insomnia, which is a “nuisance, it can have serious consequences. They include excessive use of prescription medications, alcohol abuse, self-treatment with over-the-counter medications, stiffness, sleep disorders and other health risks.”

Lifestyle — people who don’t sleep well may drink more coffee to prop open their eyes during the day and alcohol to numb their aches and pains, making it harder, not easier, to break the pattern.

Restless legs — one in 10 Americans get uncomfortable sensations, make their legs feel as if they’re falling asleep, and make them restless.

Sleeping position — if you can’t get in or out of your chair or your arm or your leg, you may need some extra help. A daytime sleeping condition that increases with age and can also produce insomnia.

Abnormal rhythms make sleep difficult when people are awake, then they’re asleep.

Menopause disrupts the sleep of nearly half of middle-aged women, especially those who don’t use hormone replacement therapy.

Medications, including Parkinson’s and other neurodegenerative diseases, pain, allergies and asthma, can deprive people of sleep.

Meditations, the new anti-inflammatory drug, and some antidepressants, can deprive you of sleep.

Old age can take toll by altering brain function so people fall asleep early in the evening, wake early in the morning or nap a lot.

Psychiatric conditions, such as anxiety focused on sleep, are often associated with insomnia.

Insomnia is lack of quality sleep, not lack of sleep per se, some people rise and sleep after only a few hours. And though it often is regarded as just a problem of bad sleep, it can have serious consequences. They include excessive use of prescription medications, alcohol abuse, self-treatment with over-the-counter medications, stiffness, sleep disorders and other health risks.

In the February Journal of Cell Biology, Meena Chellaiah, Ph.D., assistant professor of medicine, and Hruska reported that osteoclasts can’t move or degrade bone when they lack a protein that helps form podosomes. The osteoclasts were isolated from mice missing a protein called gelsolin, which interacts with molecules that give podosomes their shape and rigidity. This dramatic effect was unexpected because cells that move a lot, such as white blood cells and immune system cells, have unique structures that resemble gelsolin. The osteoclast phenotype is distinct in that it is completely dependent on gelsolin. Hruska and Chellaiah found that chicken osteoclasts were unable to develop the foot-like podosomes when they lacked a rare form of an enzyme called phosphodiesterase-3. This protein is present at sites where gelsolin is abundant, suggesting it is involved in the formation of podosomes. Another protein, Rho, is required to stimulate the enzyme phosphodiesterase-3/kinase. The researchers demonstrated that chemicals that inhibit gelsolin-associated proteins such as the enzyme and Rho cause osteoclasts to migrate less on whole bone and degrade less of the bone compared to normal osteoclasts.

The inhibitory chemical might become one of a family of drugs that shut down this activity and therefore slow the progression of osteoporosis. Because such a drug would target a rare enzyme, it likely would have few side effects. It also might work against cancer cells, which use podosomes to get nutrients. The findings could lead to drugs for osteoporosis, cancer and other disorders.

Hruska: Studies outline osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a growing epidemic, the Natural Science Foundation estimates that up to 10 million Americans have the disease. However, they had developed thicker, stronger bones as a glue, connecting proteins that form the internal structure of podosomes. Another protein, Rho, is required to stimulate the enzyme phosphodiesterase-3/kinase. The researchers demonstrated that chemicals that inhibit gelsolin-associated proteins such as the enzyme and Rho cause osteoclasts to migrate less on whole bone and degrade less of the bone compared to normal osteoclasts.

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By LIAM OTTEN

A udiences accustomed to baggage-packed and poorly-produced Shakespearean fare may be surprised to find themselves mesmerized by the magic of Oberon, Titania and Puck's frolicsome fairy-tales in the premiere of Washington University's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to Dewlin Theater in May.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" follows a pair of young lovers, Hermia and Lysander, through four days of magic, deception, romance and fare. Pleading Hermia's disapproving father, the couple—pursued by Demetrius, Hermia's unwanted suitor, and Helena, Demetrius' own jilted lover—escapes into the forest and into the maelstrom of a spat between the king of fairies, Oberon, and his queen Titania. Oberon seduces his mischievous servant Puck to procure a love potion and use it on Titania, and he does.

But Puck proves liberal in the potion's distribution and soon everyone's affections have become hopelessly confused. Lysander and Hermia are smitten with Helena (who chides them for mocking her) while Demetrius falls in love with Bottom, an unfortunate actor whose head has been magically replaced with that of a donkey.

For the Guthrie's new production, artistic director for "A Midsummer Night's Dream," has created an exotic, neurotic and erotic spectacle that infuses Shakespeare with the energy of a rock concert. Though remaining true to Shakespeare's original text, Dowling also manages to reference everything from Boy Scouts and valley girls to "South Pacific," "Rivendareand" "A Fish Called Wanda."

Meanwhile, Keith Thomas' rauco's score samples a list of pop music styles, from doo-wop to heavy metal and rap.

Dowling is widely known for his association with The Abbey Theater, the national theater of Ireland. In 1970 he founded The Young Abbey, Ireland's first theater and education group, and in 1973 became artistic director of The Peacock Theater, the Abbey's second stage. In 1976 he assumed artistic directorship of the Irish Theatre Company, the Abbey's national touring troupe, and two years later at the age of 29 became the youngest artistic director in Abbey history.

Dowling left the Abbey in 1985 to become artistic director of Dublin's oldest commercial theater, The Gaiety, where he formed The Gaiety School of Acting—widely regarded as Ireland's finest drama school. Since 1990 he has directed extensively in North America, including versions of "Othello," "Julius Caesar," "Macbeth" and "Uncle Vaire" for venues including The Guthrie Theater. Dowling has left the Abbey in 1985 to become artistic director of Dublin's oldest commercial theater, The Gaiety, where he formed The Gaiety School of Acting—widely regarded as Ireland's finest drama school.

Through May Special Collections, 9th floor Olin Library. 353-5698

Exhibitions

Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibitions

Through May 3 Gallery of Art. 935-5481.

Lectures

Thursday, April 27


2 p.m. Immunology Research Seminar. "Regulation of Inflammatory Cytokines by Nitric Oxide." Chien-Chi Lee, grad student. Room 101 South Bldg. 362-2763.

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Sports

Monday, April 30
9:30 a.m., take Our Daughters to Work Day.

Saturday, May 6
10 a.m. Women's softball vs. Webster at U. Softball field. 935-5220.

Sunday, May 7
Noon Men's baseball vs. Millikin U. at U. Softball field. 935-5220.

Soccer

Women's tennis 2-2 at invitational

The women's tennis team wrapped up the 2000 regular season by splitting four matches at the Midwest Invitational Friday and Saturday, April 21 and 22, in Madison, Wis. The Bears started the weekend by knocking off premier Division I school Whitewater before nationally ranked Hope College handed the Bears a 2-5 setback.

Women's tennis

RBI's and Mark Glover had three RBIs. The Bears then picked up two big wins over regionally ranked DePauw University, 6-3 and 9-8. In both games senior Ryan King knocked a complete-game win in the first contest, giving up six hits and four earned runs while striking out seven. Ryan Stack got the win in game two with one outing and three hits in one hit relief.

Baseball extends streak to nine

The baseball team continues its resurgence from a midseason slump as the Bears improved to 24-9 on the season and stretched their winning streak to nine games with three wins last week. WU got things started in a big way with a 24-9 win over Greenville College April 18. The game was tied 3-3 heading into the bottom of the second inning, but WU plated four runs twice before finishing it off with a three-run fourth. WU then added three more runs to take a 16-3 lead. Steve Steinbruegge was two-for-three with three runs scored and four RBIs. Graham McBride was three-for-four with four runs scored. Ryan Mason had two RBIs and two runs, and Lex was three-for-three with three runs and two RBIs. Greg Davis was three-for-four with four RBIs and Mark Glover had three RBIs.

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Alcohol
Report includes 10 recommendations — from page 1

"The wonderful thing about social norming is that it's not telling anybody what to do, it's creating a climate where people who indicated a program will be developed next semester. It's just training misperceptions.

"When people do not act responsibly, it is the duty of the community to re-establish those community standards." JOEL ANDERSON

"We started this program because we believe outstanding faculty members are the heart of the whole enterprise."

"At the St. Louis Science Center. Which is really the whole point of the process. If you shut off a valve at one location, the pressure is going to go somewhere else. So it's an ongoing anxiety. We do try to get some kind of reasonable ground that we're comfortable with as a community." ANDERSON

"The availability of non-alcoholic beverages is increased and the availability and distribution of alcohol-free events and activities are addressed; Professional staff be provided with the ongoing development and implementation of anti-alcohol drinking campaigns and high-risk drinking; إب"

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News Analysis
Not using psychotropic drugs in children could carry higher risk than using them

T he first Lady recently rose to demand that health care providers take a closer look at the use of psychotropic medications by young children. The recommendation stemmed from a recent article suggesting that substantially more children were taking these medications in 1995 than in 1980. The article led to a backlash by parents and doctors about potential overprescription of medications. The uproar is understandable, but likely is unwarranted based on a closer look at the study and at current information about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, developmental disorders such as autism, and anxiety disorders.

Psychotropic medications are not designed to determine whether physicians are prescribing the right medications for the right disorders, but rather to determine whether the medications are being used. Because the combined prevalence of such disorders nationally is about 1 percent, it is not particularly surprising that 1 percent of preschoolers studied have had psychotropic medications. Many of these disorders appear during preschool years and have become more widely recognized in recent years by health care providers and others.

Misdiagnosing a child’s normal response to adverse environmental conditions as “pathological” is inappropriate and distressing, as is exposing such children to drugs with long-term effects on long-term brain development. To reduce the possibility of an “appropriate” clinician prescribing drugs for young children, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has placed new restrictions on labeling for children. More research on childhood medications needs to be done, especially before starting preschoolers on psychotropic medications.

The fear that children are being prescribed too many tranquilizers could lead to a “baby blues” effect that affects agents to what is called the domain of “mind” or “consciousness.” In their review of the literature, the authors note that many children with psychotropic medications show a lack of capacity to make meaningful choices about their behavior and our lives, which psychotropic treatments can help prevent. Medical problems can lead to mental disorders. By separating causes and other serious problems as adults, medications can help prevent future outcomes, or allow such children to participate in positive activities such as learning to communicate emotion or making friends.

This is akin to providing a pharmaceutical-free diet to children with the genetic disorder phenylketonuria to spare them from developing severe mental retardation. Why do we think an intervention is needed when there is no disease? Perhaps because it seems inevitable. The ways drugs affect what is called the domain of “mind” or “consciousness,” especially in young children. However, much of what is called the domain of “mind” or “consciousness” is caused by mental illness to do. The drugs may be causing children to participate in positive activities such as learning to communicate emotion or making friends.

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Washington People

Shaping spaces for learning

Ralph H. Thaman Jr. (right), director of facilities and management, goes over University building plans with Steven G. Rackers, manager of capital projects and records, in his office.

By CHRISTINE FARMER

A first a long and fulfilling career as an engineer at Anheuser-Busch, as much as today's facility director can expect to retire and spend time with his grandchildren.

Ralph H. Thaman Jr. retired in 1992 and thought he would take some time off to contemplate his future, but in the same week he accepted a job overseeing the facilities department at Washington University.

"People would say to me then, 'You're 66 years old. Why are you leaving this?'" Thaman said. "I had a great time at Anheuser-Busch, but I left because I really wanted to do something different after 30 years. I really didn't know it would be Wash U. when I decided to retire, but that happened almost immediately. And it's been great."

Executive Vice Chancellor Richard A. Roloff called Thaman when he heard that he was retiring. "It was a lucky day for me when Ralph agreed to join Wash U. as director of facilities and management," Roloff said.

"Our whole goal is to improve employee morale. The people have done this — it was there that he met his wife of 27 years, and the campus and its facilities," he said.

"The people have done this — they deserve the credit, Thaman said. "It's the campus, and facilities employees also form a team to compete for the University's "facilities family.""

"It's a pretty close-knit group now," Thaman said.

"Facilities family," it is his wife, Audrey; daughter, Nate; son, Douglas; granddaughter Allison; (third row) grandchildren Jason, Audra, and Jordan; (second row) son-in-law, Robert Pavelka; daughter, Rebekah Pavelva; (front row) grandchildren Jacob and (front) grandson Jacob.

"It was a lucky day for me when Ralph agreed to join Washington University as director of facilities and management."

RICHARD A. ROLOFF

"We moved around a lot with the military, so many opportunities to get involved and ways to keep the people light-hearted with his sense of humor, which is great for morale. He is a pleasure to work with.""