Research in Action

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*Cover photograph courtesy of
Federal Bureau of Prisons*

*Note: The scanning electron
microphotographs on pages 13-15 of
the Spring 1983 issue were taken by
Dr. W. J. S. Still, university
professor of pathology.*

A joint venture

It wasn't so long ago that "high tech" was an esoteric term primarily used in mystical reference to Silicon Valley gurus. Most recently, however, high tech has been referred to as a foundation for the revitalization of the American economy, an industry which typically depends on a more highly skilled work force and one in which research and development play a greater role than ever before.

In recognition of the increasing importance of scientific and technological advances in today's society, and the need to coordinate high tech research among educators and to share those findings with industry, VCU recently hosted a day-long conference on industry/university relationships in science and technology.

Keynote speaker John S. Toll, president of the University of Maryland, addressed chief executive officers and vice-presidents for research and development from national industries with operations located in central Virginia, as well as government officials and VCU faculty and administrators. Various perspectives on industry/university partnerships were presented by Shepard Pollack, president of Philip Morris, U.S.A., Michael J. Pelczar, president of the Council of Graduate Schools of the United

States, and Monte C. Throdahl, senior vice-president of Monsanto Company.

Afternoon sessions focused on VCU's research intitiatives, highlighting ongoing research in the areas of recombinant DNA, cellular and macromolecular structure, catalysis, and hybridoma biotechnology. In addition to demonstrated faculty commitment to scholarly research activity, tangible signs of VCU's status as a major research university were noted in that its approximately 350 sponsored projects last year totaled over $30 million.

T. Justin Moore, Jr., chairman of Virginia Electric and Power Company, and chairman of the Governor's Task Force on Science and Technology in Virginia, also addressed conference participants. Recognizing the potential involved in university/industry partnerships, the Governor's Task Force recently accepted a proposal by VCU, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and University of Virginia, to create a joint Center for Innovative Technology. Governor Charles S. Robb, following the Task Force's recommendation, endorsed the proposal in July, thus acknowledging industry's position as a prime force in taking research-generated knowledge from the laboratory to the marketplace.

As Robb said in remarks during the VCU conference, "This situation—the generally recognized need for closer collaboration and cooperation between industry and academia—exists throughout the United States today. Even those indifferent to high tech and advanced scientific research would have to admit that in order for us to maintain and improve our current quality of life in a world of exploding environmental challenges, more complex, and more sophisticated approaches to problems are necessary. Only science and technology can help develop

the knowledge necessary to provide the answers that will help us manage our future in the increasingly competitive world of commerce and industry, as well as in the fields of medicine, government, agriculture, and defense. Historically, knowledge has always been equated with power; it also holds the potential key to prosperity. And now, to an increasing degree, knowledge derived from research must be used to forge our future and to ensure our survival."

No longer a phrase restricted for dreamers and name-droppers, high tech has come into its own. It can indeed form the foundation on which America's economy can rebuild, and it is helping to form this foundation to which VCU has committed itself.

This issue of *Research in Action* is the first since 1975 that David Mathis, director of VCU Publications, hasn't edited. Mathis, editor since the magazine's inception, currently is on educational leave. Dr. John J. Salley, vice-president for research and dean of the School of Graduate Studies, has named Cynthia McMullen as Mathis' replacement. McMullen has worked in VCU Publications for two years.

Under Mathis' leadership, *Research in Action* has been recognized frequently as a leader in its genre, not only by professional organizations, but by its peers. As 1982-83 co-chairman of the University Magazine Research Association, Mathis has continued to represent the university's interests in documenting and sharing its research activities.✥

Computerizing psychological assessment
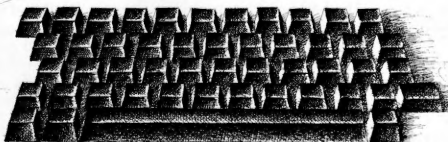
By Albert D. Farrell and
Leigh McCullough

The advent of inexpensive micro-computers has made these machines a common sight in places where computers were seldom seen in the past. The power of these small computers has resulted in increasing efficiency in many areas and has had a profound impact on the way in which business is conducted. One place where these devices have begun to have an impact is in the offices of mental health service providers. Until recently micro-computers in these settings have primarily been used in a traditional manner such as in record keeping and billing. The application of these systems has ex-panded into many new and exciting areas, one example of which is computerized psychological assessment.

Recently a microcomputer-based information system was developed jointly at Butler Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island, and at VCU to enable mental health service deliverers to evaluate the effectiveness of their treatment programs. This system, called the Computerized Assessment System for Psychotherapy Evaluation and Research, or CASPER, was designed to bring empirical research and accountability to the practice of psychotherapy on a routine basis.

The hallmark of clinical psychology has been its application of a scientist-practitioner model which emphasizes the integration of research and practice. In order to maintain this model clinical psychologists complete training in both research skills and in the practice of psychotherapy. In recent years, however, there has been growing dismay over the apparent gap between clinical research and clinical practice. Practicing psychologists frequently do not conduct research, and often are not influenced by research done in academic settings. While psychologists are fully trained to conduct research, many practical problems may impede their use of these skills. This problem suggested the need for a system which could facilitate research activity by practicing clinicians.

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A second factor leading to CASPER's development is increasing concern over accountability. The mental health field has voiced a growing awareness of the need to demonstrate the results of its activity. Many articles have addressed the need to document the effectiveness of treatment procedures and to justify psychotherapy to government and third party payers. Researchers in clinical psychology have also encouraged accountability and "learning through feedback" by emphasizing the need to integrate research into ongoing clinical practice.

Strong pressure for such a system also comes from outside the field. In a 1982 article in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, M. B. Parloff, quoting from *Science* magazine, notes that, "The field's most insistent critic at the moment is Congress which has begun to demand hard empirical proof of psychotherapy accomplishment before agreeing to finance under Medicare." He goes on to outline a series of federal regulatory attempts to deal with the problem of research evidence. These include the establishment of the National Center for Health Care Technology in 1978 to assess eligibility of therapies for Medicare and Medicaid, and the Office of Technology Assessment that cited cost benefits and cost effectiveness as necessary evidence for psychotherapy reimbursement.

The CASPER system was developed in response to these needs and to facilitate psychotherapy research. It provides efficient means of obtaining specific behavioral data from both client and therapist.

The CASPER system's prototype was the Major Problem Rating System (MPRS) developed by Leigh McCullough in 1982. The MPRS is a computerized interview during which clients are seated at a remote terminal connected to a main frame computer. The purpose of the MPRS is to identify the client's relevant major problem areas, or areas which cause the client great personal distress or interfere with daily functioning. Examples of major problems include sadness, anxiety, or tension, fears or phobias, strange or unreal thoughts, and use of drugs or alcohol. Clients taking this computerized interview responded "yes" or "no" to a list of major problem areas derived from a comprehensive survey and reported in the records of over 800 psychiatric inpatients. Once these problem areas were identified, progress on each area was charted by the client's therapist using a problem-oriented record keeping system.

Results of research on the MPRS have been encouraging. The basic psychometric properties of this instrument, including reliability and validity, were very good. In addition, much to the surprise of many skeptical clinicians, clients described the interview process as very pleasant. This finding is consistent with previous research in which subjects reported they are more likely to be truthful in a computerized interview than in a traditional psychiatric interview. Additional analyses indicated that when clinicians were provided feedback from the MPRS system in the form of problem area listings, treatment plans were altered and their clients experienced more favorable treatment outcomes than clients of therapists who did not receive such feedback. Finally, the data base provided by this research was a fruitful source of information about optimal major problem area-treatment combinations.

The CASPER system, although based on the MPRS, expanded upon it in several important ways. The most important of these changes resulted in a system which is much more comprehensive and automated than the MPRS. At the same time it is more efficient and practical, thus less expensive and more widely available. Also, while the MPRS was developed for use with an inpatient population, CASPER was developed for use in outpatient psychiatric settings.

The most dramatic change in CASPER was its reprogramming for use with a relatively inexpensive microcomputer. The MPRS required access to a large main frame computer through use of a remote terminal and a time-sharing system. While this system represented an innovative use of the computer, it was in the long run likely to be impractical and too expensive for more widespread application. A system which could be used by the individual clinician in independent practice was needed. The greater availability of personal or microcomputers and their increasing use by clinicians for billing, scheduling, and record keeping, suggested the potential value of developing a system for use with the microcomputer. CASPER was designed for use with an Apple II microcomputer with a minimal amount of hardware, a system available for under $2,500. Presently the system is being revised for use with other microcomputers, an aspect which puts it within reach of most independent practitioners and of potential use on a large scale basis.

Unlike the MPRS, which made use of the computer for the interview only and relied upon hand-written progress notes for treatment codes, CASPER represents both a computerized interview and a fully computerized problem-oriented record system. All data from start to finish are input directly into the computer and stored in a complete data file for each client. These files are stored on computer diskettes which can be accessed at any time and used to generate reports. The CASPER system was designed to require only a few minutes of a therapist's
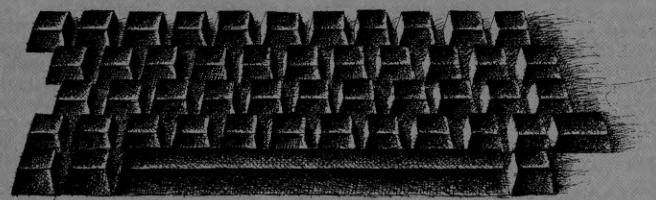
time per client per week. Clients coming for intake are given 30-minute interviews consisting of 127 frequently asked questions concerning 13 fundamental problem areas identified from analyses of the most frequently used psychological inventories. These major problem areas include physical symptoms, mood, thought, behavior, life tasks, leisure, social behavior, social support, family relations, sex, self-concept, environment, and life satisfaction.

This interview provides a signaling system to identify potential problem areas and indicate areas needing further testing or assessment. It is a tailored assessment procedure, in that questions are asked of an individual subject only if they are relevant. For example, subjects who are unmarried and living alone are not asked about their spouses/partners. Similarly, the interview is programmed to follow up questions in certain areas, if appropriate. Subjects who indicate depression, for example, are questioned in detail about any suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Immediately following the interview a list of major problem areas indicated by the client during the interview is printed out. The client has the opportunity to review this list and delete any problems as needed or to indicate additional major problem areas by typing them into the computer in the client's own words. Once the major problem list has been revised, the client rates the duration and severity of each of these major problems. This problem list, which can be updated by the therapist at any time, provides a set of individualized measures for each client.

When the interview process has been completed, the computer prints out a full report of the client's responses during the interview and a listing of the client's major problem areas, their duration, and rated severity. During the first therapy session,

Looking ahead with CASPER

Since its presentation at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association last year, response to CASPER has been positive. Since that time over 100 requests for information have been received, and software and program manuals have been sent to over 40 practicing clinicians in 36 states whose assistance was requested in testing the system.

At present plans are underway to implement this system on a routine basis at the Psychological Services Center in the doctoral training program in clinical psychology at VCU, and in the outpatient psychiatric clinic at the Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City. In addition a small group of clinicians in independent practice throughout the United States will be employing this system on a subset of their clients, and will pool their data with VCU. The goal of these preliminary studies is to further refine the properties of this system including reliability, validity, cost-effectiveness, utility, and user satisfaction. In addition the data base provided by pooling data across these three settings will provide a good basis for basic and applied research on psychotherapy. A grant to support this research program is currently under review at the National Institutes of Mental Health.

A recent theme found in literature on bridging the gap between scientists and practitioners in the mental health field is that "the practicing clinician is not lacking in training or dedication to research," but just lacks "tools for the task." This program of research is attempting to create an essential tool for the task.

the clinician and client go over this list and decide upon which problems to focus on during treatment.

Each client's file is updated after each session. At this time the therapist rates client functioning and several important therapy process variables (for the therapist, these variables include factors such as the client's motivation to change), and assigns a psychiatric diagnosis. The client's major problems are then listed on the computer screen and the therapist rates the severity of each major problem since the last session. Finally, the therapist indicates the treatments used

(from a treatment code book) for each of the client's major problem areas. This entire process requires less than five minutes.

After each session, clients are asked to rate their overall functioning since the last session, complete ratings of their therapist on several therapy process dimensions (how they perceive their therapist, for example, or whether they feel their therapist understands them), and rate the severity of each of their major problem areas since the last session.

Following the final session, clients are asked to take the computerized interview again or to complete a brief computerized update in which they rate the degree of improvement in each of

their major problem areas since treatment began.

Among psychotherapy researchers the consensus seems to be that some measurement of therapeutic variables is crucial. The CASPER system can readily accomplish such measurement by providing data on presenting complaints, major problem areas, psychiatric diagnoses, treatments used, therapy process variables, and session-by-session ratings of progress on general dimensions and on individualized problem areas. Thus CASPER can function as a survey tool on several different levels. For the clinician in independent practice, the CASPER system could represent a relatively inexpensive, efficient method for ongoing assessment which could provide detailed or summary data on client functioning. These data could be used to provide the clinician with feedback on therapy process as well as the outcome of treatments with various clients, and could provide a basis for automated data collection for single case studies. Used in a clinic or group practice setting, this information system could be used to summarize data for program description and evaluation. Administrators would be able to determine characteristics of the clients they serve, and the effectiveness and even cost-effectiveness of the various types of treatment employed. For clinicians in training, the problem-oriented approach and record keeping provided by CASPER could serve as a useful structure for developing case management skills. In addition, reports and feedback generated by CASPER could provide useful material for supervision.

At a more ambitious level data obtained from many different clinics and independent practitioners could be pooled on a national or regional level. These data could provide an enormous amount of survey information on psychotherapy and would allow the generation of norms for such things as problems presented, treatments offered, number of sessions, and therapy outcomes. Such a data base would provide unprecedented opportunities for basic and applied research on psychotherapy. As this system is further developed and data accumulated, it is anticipated that it will become possible not only to collect data, but to provide information to clinicians for determining optimum treatment programs for particular clients.❦

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Serving time: island inmates

By Paul W. Keve

On the afternoon of June 30, 1981, the superintendent of an old federal penitentiary and several of his remaining staff members left their island prison. They took the 20-minute launch ride across the blue waterway to the mainland dock a few miles south of Tacoma, Washington, thus ending 106 years of federal operation of the McNeil Island Penitentiary in its splendid Puget Sound setting. The officials were not leaving empty cell blocks behind them, however. A new staff was already in place, a new contingent of prisoners was locked in, and the prison was in operation the next morning as a Washington state facility.

McNeil Island was a unique institution. The oldest of the federal prisons, it seemed an especially appropriate subject for historical study when I became acquainted with it in 1978. With a research grant from the National Institute of Corrections, it was my good fortune to spend two years studying the background and character of a prison which enjoyed probably the most beautiful setting of any prison in the country.

I did not undertake the research because I admire prisons; I have been too closely involved with them and know too much about their deteriorating effects on people. Nevertheless, I could recognize that the McNeil Island Penitentiary had achieved a standout quality, at least in its last 30 years. Both staff and inmates who had experience at other prisons consistently said that McNeil Island was a safer, quieter, and easier place to work or to serve time. Some of the statistics supported this feeling. For many

years the rate of either fatal or nonfatal assaults at this institution was about half that of other federal penitentiaries. The institution never had a major riot. It was observed that some of the tougher prisoners, sometimes received on transfer, seemed to relax and become more tractable at McNeil Island than they had been in other prisons. This was true even of some of the Alcatraz prisoners who arrived after the closing of that island prison in 1963.

McNeil Island was originally a territorial prison, operated by the U.S. Marshal for Washington Territory. It received its first prisoners in May 1875. In its condition and general prospects at that point it richly deserved to fail. The prison had one building, a stone cell block with a wooden lean-to at one end where the cooking was done. There was no plumbing and not even a source of water on the property. The site was one of serene beauty, but it had nothing else to commend it. It consisted of 27 acres of very poor soil on one edge of an island about three miles from the mainland. Prisoners worked under the gun, tending gardens or cutting trees. There was no recreation, no newspapers to read, and the men bathed themselves weekly in barrels cut in half to make tubs. Water obtained from the spring on the land of an obliging neighbor was warmed in the tubs by dropping in a few stones which had been heated in an outdoor fire. Access to the mainland was by row boat or sailboat, but only in good weather.

Administration of the facility called for great adaptability. The guards were on duty 24 hours a day, every day of the week, with two days off each month. The

marshal had no budget from which to work, but had to depend upon decisions by his boss, the attorney general, about monies that could be made available from time to time. The geography gave this process some fascinating aspects. The marshal was over 2,500 miles from the attorney general in a frontier area only recently wrested from the Indians and only recently reached by a telegraph line. The attorney general, accustomed to the settled and orderly seat of government in the East, consistently found it difficult to comprehend the needs of a primitive prison on an island in a remote wilderness.

Over the years the logistics of such a difficult operation led to repeated plans to close or move the institution. When the territory became a state in 1889 the attorney general offered the institution to the new state, but the governor turned it down. Because no one could think of a better option, the Department of Justice continued the operation. Eventually some necessary improvements were made. Better buildings and a good dock were built. During the 1930s the government expanded its holdings until it finally owned all of the island's more than 4,000 acres. By the 1950s and 1960s McNeil Island was one of the most "programmed" prisons anywhere. Several thousand volunteers from the area came to the island every year to help with various self-improvement programs.

Still, the institution was by then very old, its buildings obsolete, and its island location made it expensive. But when the Bureau of Prisons began resolutely to phase out the institution, the state of Washington, contending with its own overcrowded institutions, successfully persuaded the federal
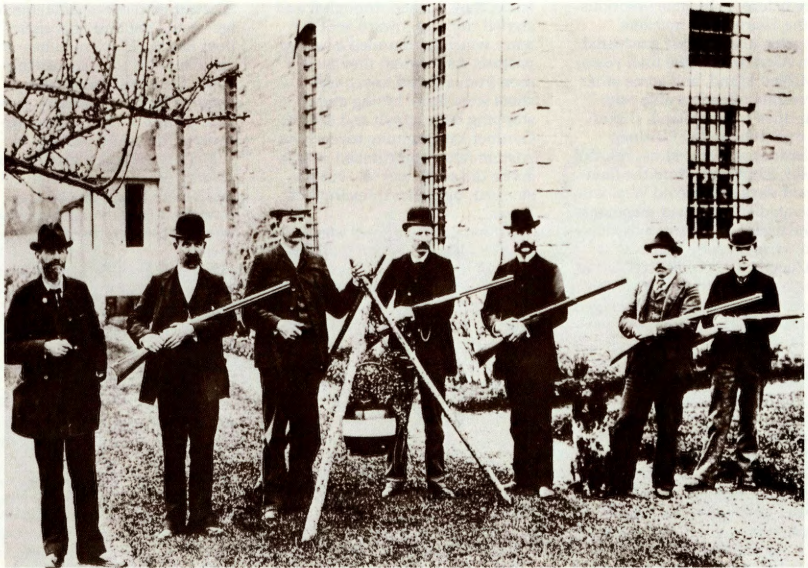
During the 1890s this group was the penitentiary's full staff. Each man was on duty 24 hours a day with two days off each month.

government to transfer the facility to state control instead of shutting it down.

Over the years the facility hosted some prisoners who gave their own kind of seasoning to the island's history. Robert Stroud, later famed as the "Birdman of Alcatraz," had his first prison experience and committed his first prison murder there. Much later, Charles Manson served time there before he became notorious for the Sharon Tate murders. Gangster Alvin Karpis graduated from Alcatraz to a few final years at McNeil Island, and some other interesting offenders also paid their dues on this island, including train robber Roy Gardner.

Gardner was a reckless, colorful bandit, a holdover from the flamboyant days of the Wild West who cultivated and enjoyed the image of the daring and elusive holdup man. Whenever he was caught and locked up he practiced also at being an elusive prisoner. When sent to McNeil Island he managed to make an unauthorized departure within a few months.

Gardner was only one of many prisoners who escaped from McNeil Island during its century, but he managed to turn his escape into a more interesting episode than most. The fact that he managed to elude bullets that were cutting down his fellow escapees guaranteed a certain newsworthy quality to the episode. As one historian told it:

Gardner, the notorious bandit, confined at the federal prison on McNeil Island, staged another of his spectacular escapes on September 5th, 1921, miraculously escaping the shots of guards, and completely disappearing from sight for the time. In the break with Gardner were also Lawardus Bogart and Everett Impyn . . . serving life sentences. Impyn was killed outright by the shots of the guards, and Bogart received wounds from which he died. Gardner, sought all over the Northwest and the object of a nation-wide search, was finally captured . . . at Phoenix, Arizona, following an attempt to rob a mail car.[1]

The escape happened at a baseball game on the prison grounds. The three men took advantage of an exciting moment in the game to drop through the bleacher seats to the grounds and crawl to the fence in back. They were prepared with the necessary tools to cut some strands of the fence; they pushed through it and started running toward another fence which surrounded a nearby pasture. As they ran they were seen from a guard tower and shots were fired, hitting and stopping both Impyn and Bogart. Gardner kept running toward the pasture fence and climbed over it. As he did so he was hit, but not stopped, by a shot from another tower.

At that point Gardner was able to take advantage of an unlikely piece of luck. A prison crew had been clearing the adjacent land to enlarge the pasture and some piles of brush had been set afire. At the same time, the institution's dairy herd was grazing in the pasture. To make this all work in Gardner's favor, the wind was in the right direction to blow the smoke across the pasture toward the guard tower. Once over the fence Gardner ran across the pasture, dodging among the cows which, together with the smoke, kept the tower guard from getting another clear shot at him.

Gardner later explained he had fashioned a sort of body armor from layers of magazines sewn together and packed around his torso. It was believed he actually had been hit, but that his magazines served their purpose. There also was a strong suspicion that one of the island residents secretly hid him and at night ferried him to the mainland. It could never be proven.

Gardner never returned to McNeil Island. When he was recaptured he was quickly moved to Leavenworth, and some years later to Alcatraz. There were no more escapes and he served his remaining time as a reasonably tractable prisoner.

The former train robber provided one more anecdote to complete the story of his prison career. When he finished his sentence and was discharged from Alcatraz he chose to remain in the San Francisco area and get an honest job as a guide on one of the harbour tour boats. Former Alcatraz employees still remember seeing the tour boat circle their island. They could hear the familiar voice come across the water from the loudspeaker as Gardner, with an insider's savvy, pointed out the interesting features of the island prison.

But it was his last hurrah. Law abiding life was lonely and dull, and before long Roy Gardner brought it to an end himself by opening the gas jets in his apartment.

In the mid 1920s McNeil Island received one of the most competent swindlers ever to charm the rich and naive, to their loss and his profit. Frederick Emerson Peters was a middle-aged, affable man who had the bland, ordinary, but respectable appearance ideally suited to a person who enjoys making a good living by gentle, artful thefts from wealthy victims. Peters was educated, articulate, and poised. He dressed well and could be entirely convincing in any role he assumed. Having no particular distinguishing features, he could leave his victims frustrated in trying to remember his appearance or give police a useful description.

When Peters was caught in one of his swindles, convicted, and sent to McNeil Island, he arrived during the tenure of Finch Archer, one of the more colorful wardens. Before the Bureau of Prisons was created, wardens like Archer were individualists, subject to very little bureaucratic control. Peters turned his swindling talent to good use by ingratiating himself with the warden and making life in prison comfortable. It was an easy job. Archer

READING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT
G.L. PALMER, WARDEN.
FRANK MOONEY, GUARD.
ROBERT TROUTMAN, GUARD.
JOHN DEVOIN, GUARD.

On outside work details custody was maintained by keeping the prisoners in a group, with leg-irons on and with armed guards nearby.

succumbed completely and if ever there was a "warden's pet" it was this suave and pleasant swindler.

Peters soon became the warden's completely trusted chauffeur. Whenever Archer and his wife took business or pleasure trips to Tacoma, Seattle, or Olympia, Peters drove them in their Auburn. While Archer was engaged in business, Peters was free to take the car and occupy himself as he wished until time to pick up the warden.

At the institution Peters was under no dreary requirement to live like other convicts in the cell house. He and another trusty were allowed to live in a small shack on the grounds where they had some privacy. Peters was not required to be on hand for the usual evening count. As the warden's chauffeur he might arrive at the institution at any time of night, park and lock the car, let himself in through the gate with his own key, and go on to his quarters without being challenged.

Peters' solid contribution to the institutional program was his service as creator and editor of the inmate publication, the *Island Lantern.* Undeniably he had talent. Under his direction the *Island Lantern* began with a unique journalistic quality. Certainly this was part of his continuing swindle, part of the image he maintained in order to impress his custodians and sustain his privileged status. No doubt he also enjoyed the editorship for its own sake. To have the *Lantern* as a vehicle for his creativity was probably of real satisfaction to someone so inventive. Under Peters the *Island Lantern* did not have the small talk and mainly in-house news chatter so typical of prison publications. This one had a highly professional format and content. It was even alleged that Peters wrote to ask George Bernard Shaw (unsuccessfully) to write an article for the *Lantern.*

Fred Peters' most colorful achievement at the penitentiary was his contribution to the institution's "navy." In about 1930 Warden Archer was informed by the nearby Bremerton Navy Yard that it had a decommissioned repair ship with all types of shop equipment available for sale as surplus. Archer promptly sent his chief clerk to Bremerton to see what might be useful to the penitentiary. Peters went along to chauffeur and to aid the staff member. Peters, though, proved to be the more impressive personality of the two and virtually took charge. When Navy personnel assumed he was a top McNeil Island official he made no effort to disillusion them.

On their return the staff member and Peters gave an encouraging report, so Archer sent a tugboat and two scows to Bremerton to load and bring back all the machinery obtainable. With the necessary staff in charge, there were a dozen or more inmates who went along, including Peters. He went separately, however, and stayed where he wished in town instead of living on one of the scows with the other prisoners during the several days they were there.

With the Navy still supposing him to be an official, Peters played the role handsomely, designating which articles were to be acquired. Before the week was over the yard personnel found out Peters was a convict. They were understandably annoyed, though by then the job was essentially finished. Everything was legal; this time the deception was benign. Peters had the fun of his old masquerading tricks while actually doing nothing worse than serving the interests of his custodians. With his very effective help the prison received far more than a few machine tools from a decommissioned repair ship. Peters had persuaded the Navy also to give them two boats, a subchaser, and a 65-foot motor sailor. The subchaser was tied up at McNeil

Island and used for parts, but the motor sailor, again with Peters' help, was refitted with a better engine and adapted for passenger service.

After a seven-year sojourn at McNeil Island Peters was discharged. He left with a flourish. As a former employee remembers it, "Fred Peters was eventually discharged, with the Warden holding a general assembly in the dining room and presenting Peters with a watch in recognition of his services to mankind."[2] It was just the kind of show of affection that the trusting, impulsive Finch Archer would bestow upon a loyal friend.

But was the swindler rehabilitated? Ready to be a law abiding citizen? Not quite. His first stop after release was in downtown Seattle where he went on a grand, self-indulgent shopping spree, buying shoes, suits, luggage, whatever he fancied. He charged it all to Warden Archer and resumed his interrupted career as one of the country's smoothest swindlers.

Peters was the kind of person who could not only make his victims believe him, but—mark of the true artiste among swindlers—could make them want to believe him. A wry testimony to this quality was an editorial tribute to the incomparable Peters written by the *Lantern's* new editor on the occasion of Peters' discharge. It must have come off the press just in time to add to Archer's embarrassment as reports of Peters' new pecadilloes came in.

In the varied history of all penal incarceration there has seldom appeared such ability. . . . F.E.P.'s success in his undertakings is not only a tribute to the man himself, but to the judgement of Warden Archer. From the beginning to the end he was trusted by that judgement, and it is a matter of almost glorious record in prison annals that the trust was never betrayed.[3]

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Not only was it essential to clear land for gardening, but firewood continually had to be cut. Wood was used as fuel for all cooking and heating at the prison.

Also in a class by himself was a San Francisco attorney, Vincent Hallinan, who came to McNeil Island in 1952 for contempt of court. There was great controversy at the time about the control of the San Francisco waterfront and at the center of the issue was Harry Bridges, president of the Pacific Coast Longshoreman's Union. With an aggressive personality and effective organizational skills among a highly physical group of workers, Bridges was a natural lightning rod for trouble. When he was taken to court he took with him an attorney as aggressive and flamboyant as he. It was a case certain to put a great strain on conventional courtroom decorum.

At the conclusion of the Bridges trial Hallinan was given a six-month sentence for contempt of court, which he appealed. Meanwhile, he had been politically active in the Progressive party; while his appeal was pending he was nominated as the party's candidate for president. A week after his nomination the Supreme Court refused to review his appeal and Hallinan was admitted to McNeil Island.

Incarceration was a considerable handicap to a man who was trying to campaign for the presidency, but the effort continued. The Hallinan family campaigned on behalf of the candidate, and from time to time a bannered boat would cruise past the island to help keep public attention on the candidate and the Progressive party.

In addition to his political concerns, Hallinan became involved and militant on behalf of the prisoners' interests, though with no great effect. He discovered the ineffective inmate advisory council and worked aggressively to energize it, not altogether to the satisfaction of the institution management. He was as militant in attacking per-

ceived injustices inside as he had been in defending the victims of perceived injustices outside. He noted, for instance, that the prisoners were segregated not only by race but also according to Indian tribes. He later wrote about his reaction.

I came across a speech by President Eisenhower in the *New York Times* in which he declared that whenever the Federal Government held power, segregation would not be permitted. I looked out on the grim tiers of steel where Negroes were segregated in cells, as well as in the dining room, living in a prison within a prison. That day I wrote a letter to the warden, calling attention to the *Times* article, and suggesting that dining room segregation be ended. Further, I said that I would ask other white inmates to help me, so that there would be no disturbing incidents. The letter was ignored.[4]

In August 1952, a few weeks before election day, Hallinan completed his sentence and was released in time for some last minute campaigning. He was met at the dock by a band and a noisy contingent of enthusiastic party supporters. That November he received 140,178 votes for president, compared to 33,937,252 for Dwight Eisenhower and 27,314,992 for Adlai Stevenson.[5]

Certainly the most publicly prominent prisoner at McNeil Island was the ebullient Dave Beck. He was a Seattle native, a man who, as a teenager, drove a laundry truck. By the time he was 30, with time out for Navy duty in World War I, he was secretary of his teamsters local.[6] He went on to become a skilled, effective organizer who soon dominated the labor movement completely in the Northwest. He gained a high degree of acceptance among businessmen and the "establishment" generally for his appreciation of the fact that employers have to make a profit if labor is to hope for good wages.[7]

Beck eventually was Seattle's most prominent citizen, and it became apparent he was headed for still more power. "Despite his comic-opera aspects, he is able, ruthless and charged with boundless ambition. He is a master organizer; in the past eleven years he has herded 290,000 duespayers into his Western jurisdiction. In 24 years he has risen from truck driver to economic boss of the rich Northwest."[8] In fact, the Northwest was not big enough to contain the aggressive Dave Beck; in 1952 he became president of the national teamsters organization.

Along with his rise as a labor leader Beck was pleased to accept a broader sort of tribute with appointments to certain civic responsibilities of some prestige. One position held by this future prisoner for about three years during the 1940s was membership on the Washington State Board of Terms and Paroles. Another was appointment to the Board of Regents of the University of Washington. It was a responsibility which he took seriously, to which he gave considerable time, and which culminated in his becoming president of the board. Finally he resigned from it to protest a raise in student tuition.

When Beck moved to national office other honors were offered. He claims to have been offered the cabinet appointment of secretary of labor by three different presidents.[9] These offers were all refused.

Though it was his administration of teamsters affairs that led to his conviction for crime, this did not occur until after Beck had resigned the teamsters' presidency. In 1956 Robert F. Kennedy was the chief counsel for the Permanent Investigations Subcommittee of the U. S. Senate Committee on Government Operations. The validity of his investigation and prosecution of Beck has been both challenged and

defended. Whatever the merits of the case, Beck was convicted of submitting a fraudulent United States Annual Return of Organization and was given a five-year sentence.

Probably no more telling test of a person's strength of ego could be devised than for him to serve time as an ordinary prisoner after having been so wealthy, influential, and prestigious. Whatever Beck truly deserved, it must be said that he survived the test with credit. He approached it with a determination to endure and to learn.

Hey, it wasn't so bad. I had few complaints. A federal prison certainly beats a state pen. And, hell, the food, comfort, and conveniences sure surpassed the way we lived in World War I. Besides, I had mentally prepared myself for McNeil. I knew I wasn't over there for a picnic. I was there to do time. It was just a matter of adjustment.[10]

Beck's recollection of the McNeil experience generally agrees with memories of him by former staff. Though the dock was jammed with reporters and photographers when he arrived, and again when he was released, the institution did not otherwise have problems with Beck's outside connections. The general perception was that Beck was smart and balanced enough to serve his own best interests by cooperatively fitting into the routine. He remained a quiet and responsible working prisoner. He wanted to be assigned to the prison farm where there would be more physical activity and outside work, but that was denied him. Instead he was assigned to be in charge of the men working in one of the storage areas. He handled the job dependably and uneventfully. He exercised by jogging in his free time, and seems to have avoided entirely any problems with fellow inmates.

In December 1964, after two and a half years on the island, the paroled Dave Beck walked through a crowd of reporters at the dock and went back to his private life in Seattle. There will always be varying views of his character, as a ruthless, selfish wielder of power who clearly earned his time in prison, or as one of the more accomplished labor leaders who was unfairly prosecuted. For what it is worth, he acquitted himself well in prison, and he is the only one of these exceptional prisoners who later was favored with a presidential pardon—from President Gerald Ford in 1976.

On these men and the thousands of others who spent time on McNeil Island, the prison had varying effects. In its later years when its managers made genuine efforts to have a constructive impact upon their prisoners, the philosophy was best expressed not by a warden, but by a prisoner who penned an editorial for the *Island Lantern*.

A gentleman in an eastern state recently rose on his highly moral hind legs . . . to say, 'There is altogether too much coddling of prisoners in the United States prisons. Men are not made to realize the seriousness of their crimes.'

It is obvious that this gentleman has never been deprived of his liberty. . . . You can't coddle a man who is deprived of his liberty and pursuit of happiness. You may make life a little more bearable for him; you may decently give him a new set of values through humane treatment and education, but you can't coddle him.

Only free men can be pampered.[11] ❧

Footnotes

[1]W. P. Bonney, *History of Pierce County, Washington* (Chicago: Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1927), II, 775-76.
[2]Lawrence Delmore, former McNeil Island associate warden. Letter to Paul Keve, September 11, 1980. Other data about Peters' institutional activities, the Navy Yard episode, and his release, are taken from issues of the *Island Lantern* and from personal recollections of former staff members.
[3]*Island Lantern*, July 31, 1931.
[4]Vincent Hallinan, *A Lion in Court* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1963), p. 296. When Hallinan refers to remarks made in the summer of 1952 by "President" Eisenhower he seems to forget, or else presumes that his readers will forget, that Eisenhower was not yet president at that time.
[5]Svend Petersen, *A Statistical History of the American Presidential Elections* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1963), p. 106.
[6]Murray Morgan, *Skid Road*, rev. ed. (New York: The Viking Press, 1960), pp. 222-23.
[7]*Ibid*, p. 253.
[8]Joe Miller, "Labor's New Strong Man", *New Republic* (August 1, 1949), p. 15.
[9]John D. McCallum, *Dave Beck* (Mercer Island, Washington: The Writing Works, Inc., 1978), p. 114.
[10]*Ibid*, p. 158.
[11]*Island Lantern*, August 17, 1937.

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Photographs courtesy of Federal Bureau of Prisons and Historical Society of Seattle and King County
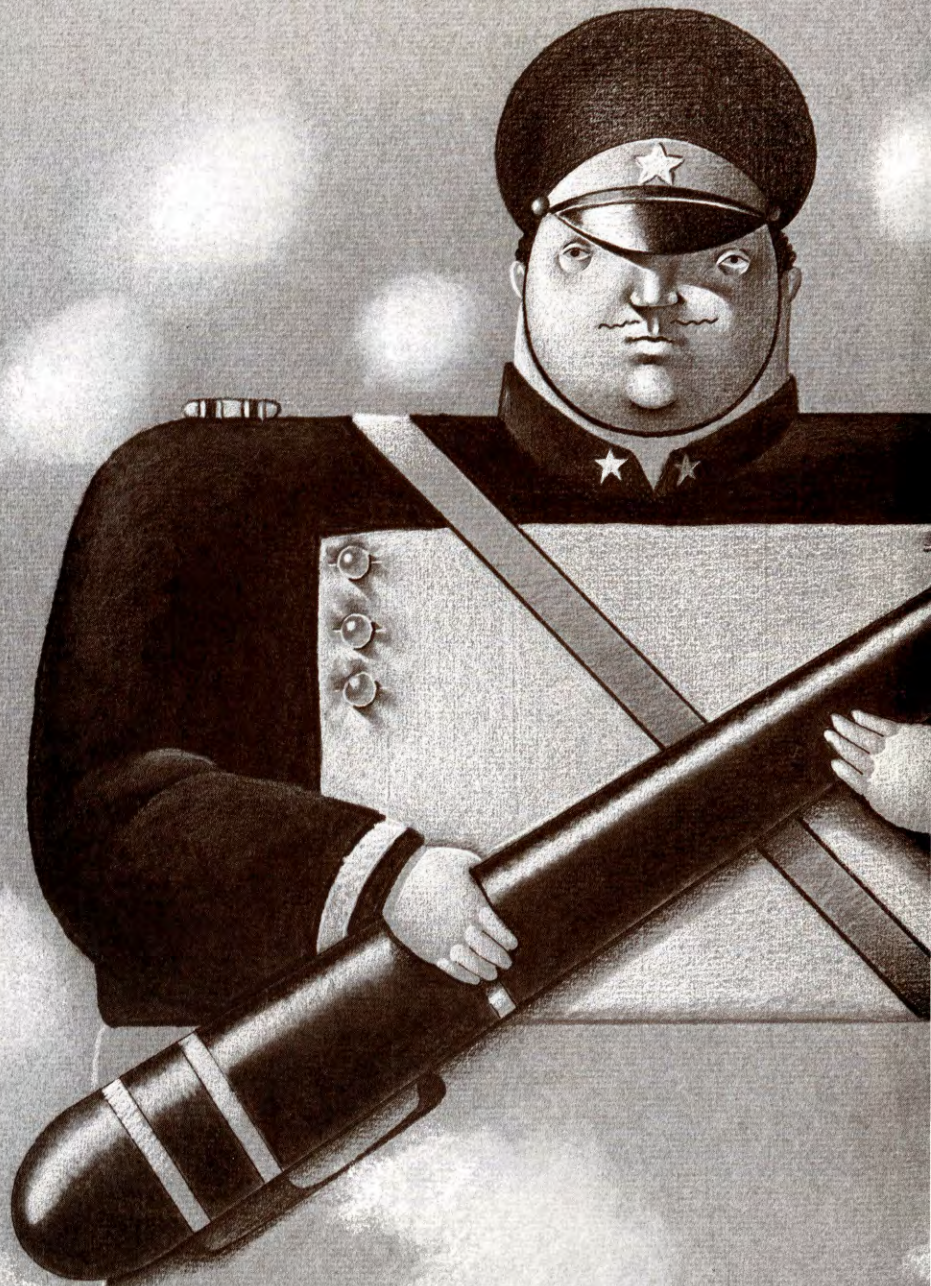
Gabriel García Márquez:
the novelist as mythmaker

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"Man's strongest impulse is not to destroy the empirical world; rather it is to transform it into the mythical world, to regain Eden in this life and to synchronize, once and for all, mythical and empirical reality."

By Robert Goldblum

We live in a world without myths. Few, I think, would argue this. Outside of television and the family unit (which has eroded in recent years), there are almost no common denominators among us, no systems of belief, traditional stories, or institutions that bind us in a collective spirit.

From time to time our national leaders achieve a mythic dimension, a timeless, larger than life quality, because they seem to represent what is best in all of us and have the ability to inspire and unify an entire country. John Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. were such men. In a world where belief in anything outside of the individual was becoming increasingly difficult, they gave us something to believe in and symbolized the values we admire most: strength of character, conviction in the face of adversity, and commitment to human rights and individual dignity. More importantly they transcended the particular historical moment and, like myth, represented that which is universal. To some, especially the young and young at heart, certain sports heroes and their achievements take on a mythic quality and give us cause to believe in something greater and larger than ourselves. Hank Aaron's career home run record, Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak, and Babe Ruth pointing to the bleachers in center field and hitting the next pitch there for a home run are examples.

In this century's literature, perhaps only Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County novels have achieved a mythic dimension. By dramatizing the conflict between the aristocratic South, represented by the Sartoris family, and the Snopes clan, representative of the new, morally corrupt social order taking over the South after the Civil War, Faulkner's fiction seems to go beyond the small Mississippi county he wrote about and become, as Malcolm Cowley states, a "myth or legend" of the entire South. In a sense his novels transform life into myth. They transcend the immediate locale and create a mythical sense of time and place where blood relationships between family members are most important and where past and present can exist in the same moment.

This idea of the novelist as mythmaker, one who transforms the real world into a mythical one, lies at the core of Dr. Robert Lewis Sims' research on Nobel Prize-winning Latin American author Gabriel García Márquez. Sims, associate professor of foreign languages at VCU, recently published a critical study of the author entitled *The Evolution of Myth in Gabriel García Márquez: From La Hojarasca (The Leafstorm) to Cien Años de Soledad (One Hundred Years of Solitude)*, Miami: Ediciones Universales, 1982. In the monograph Sims traces the development of García Márquez' mythic vision from his earliest short stories, where the elements of the myth of Macondo first emerge, to his critically acclaimed *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, where all the mythic elements are set down.

Central to Sims' analysis of García Márquez is the notion of historic and mythic time. The former represents the social, economic, political, religious, and artistic climate at a given historical moment. Mythic time, on the other hand, represents a reality that transcends the particular historical moment, one in which individual experience is linked to a collective, universal experience. Ritual, for instance, exists on the level of mythic time. In *The Evolution of Myth*, Sims argues that early in his writing career, García Márquez rejected the naturalistic, political novel so prevalent among Latin American authors in the 1950s. This type of novel holds a mirror up to life and carefully documents the social and/or political reality of a particular time and place. Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Theodore Drieser's *Sister Carrie*, Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men* are examples from French and American literature. In García Márquez' case, this meant reflecting the political unrest and bloodshed of Colombia's post-independence period from 1948-63.

Though García Márquez wrote several novels in the naturalistic tradition, Sims argues that he soon rejected this depiction of reality in favor of a mythic approach to the novel, one that gets him beyond the narrow bounds of political reality and beyond the limited range of narrative forms explored by the previous generation of Latin American writers. By rejecting the political novel and embracing a narrative form that transforms the immediate political situation into something universal, Sims feels that García Márquez "moves toward reinstating myth as a collective experience expressed in written form." In other words García Márquez attempts to give to human actions a significance beyond the historical or actual by identifying them with the mythical and linking them to archetypal patterns men have repeated many times.

In order to analyze García Márquez' use of myth, Sims employs a structuralist approach to his fiction. Structuralism, which has, according to anthropologist-critic Edmund Leach, "come to be used as if it denoted a whole new philosophy of life" akin to "Marxism" or "existentialism," is a way of studying the products of culture (language, literature, myth, ritual, etc.) which seeks to find the underlying patterns or "structures" that are common to all cultural products. Though the structuralist approach first surfaced in connection with studying language such as the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobsen, it was quickly

adapted to other disciplines such as social anthropology and literary criticism. Among the social anthropologists, Claude Lévi-Strauss' structuralist approach to studying myth and kinship theory is by far the most important. Of the many structuralist literary critics, Roland Barthes with his insistence that a writer is influenced more by the structure of language itself than by his life and times, is perhaps the most influential.

Much of structuralist thought begins with de Saussure's distinction between *langue* (the total system of words, conventions, and usages in a given language) and *parole* (an individual's use of that language to communicate). If we think of language as one particular kind of code—a code made up of sound elements—then an individual's use of that language constitutes a message, something he wants to communicate (code and message are terms from information theory). But there are many kinds of possible codes or "languages." For example, we use clothes as a code, or kinds of food, or nonverbal gestures and postures. For the structuralist, all of these are "languages" or "systems" that communicate messages.

In *Elements of Semiology* (semiology being the study of signs and symbols that represent other things. Language and mathematics, for example, are sign systems), Roland Barthes extends de Saussure's notion of *langue* and *parole*. Barthes' discussion is perhaps the most accessible explanation of the structuralist theory. He states that the structure of all communication, both verbal and nonverbal, can be explained by a vertical axis and a horizontal one or, in Barthes' terms, a paradigm and a syntax. In linguistics, the vertical axis represents individual words or parts of speech; the horizontal axis represents the combining of individual words to form a sentence, a syntactic unit.

In other words, all communication is based on the structure of selection and combination. Barthes' example of a restaurant menu is illuminating. Most menus are made up of three sections corresponding to the different courses of the meal: appetizer, entree, and dessert. In order to create a meal (i.e., the sequence or juxtaposition of courses, a "food sentence," if you will), we select one item from a paradigm (list) for each course: juice, salad, or soup for the appetizer; beef, fish, or poultry for the entree; cake, pie, or ice cream for dessert. In other words, we "read" menus both vertically and horizontally. Certain combinations of food, according to Barthes, communicate certain messages. For instance, the combination of roast turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie signifies the Thanksgiving meal.

The same principle of selection and combination applies to language. When the sentence, "The kid ran down the street," is constructed, each word in the sentence has been chosen from a paradigm and combined into a syntactic unit. The paradigm for "kid" might include child, teen, and youth. For "ran" the paradigm might include raced, hurried, and sped. For "street" it might include road, block, and avenue. According to Barthes, the same holds true for the "garment system" (i.e., the "language" of clothes). We choose from different clothing elements—slacks, shirts, jackets—to create an outfit. Some outfits, a three-piece suit for one, communicate one particular kind of message while others, like a sweat suit, communicate totally different messages. Musical scores operate on the same principle. They are structured and can be read vertically or harmonically for the chords and horizontally or melodically for the melody. In fact, the principle of selection and combination is one that "structures" our entire life.

In *The Evolution of Myth*, Sims uses Claude Lévi-Strauss' structural study of myth as a model and applies it to García Márquez' most important work, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Like all types of structuralism, Lévi-Strauss' model is rooted in the structural linguistics of de Saussure and Jakobsen. In analyzing the structure of myth, Lévi-Strauss uses a three part division he compares with Saussurian linguistics. The first level is the individual telling of the myth *(parole)*, which exists in time. This corresponds to Barthes' vertical axis. The second level is the form and conventions of the myth *(langue)* which vary from version to version and from which each telling derives. The third level is the basic message which is communicated intact from version to version and which exists across time. This corresponds to Barthes' horizontal axis. In traditional literary studies, this three part division would include the individual work in question, the conventions of its particular genre, and the theme or moral, if there is one, in the work.

Lévi-Strauss claims that "myth, like language, is composed of constituent units" and the third level, which communicates the myth's fundamental message, is made up of mythemes (akin to the linguist's phoneme or morpheme) which "are the elements common to all variants of the myth" (*The Evolution of Myth*, p. 10). The central mytheme in García Márquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, for instance, is the family unit. According to Lévi-Strauss, myth not only communicates its message like language, it also "employs a logic as rigorous as that of modern science." He explains that the function of myth is "to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction" (*The Evolution of Myth*, p. 10). In other words,

myth offers solutions to problems because its basic message stays intact through time and can be reordered in an endless series of versions. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the central problem is the conflict between patriarchal and matriarchal family rule.

In applying a Lévi-Straussian model to study García Márquez' use of myth, Sims also discusses the anthropologist's idea of the narrator or storyteller of myth as a *bricoleur*. A *bricoleur* is Lévi-Strauss' term for what might be called a handyman, tinkerer, or jack-of-all-trades, one who uses all the tools and raw materials at his disposal, not just the most precise and efficient ones, to complete a given project. Unlike an engineer who chooses precise equipment and works in the most direct, efficient way, the *bricoleur* works through indirection and expansion. He is, in a sense, like a jazz improvisor who in the process of soloing on a particular melody, expands it by creating new melodic lines, while at the same time remaining true to the spirit and structure of the original melody.

Lévi-Strauss' point here is that the storyteller or narrator of myth works like a *bricoleur*. By using all the variations of the myth at his disposal and adding new variations along the way, he creates an individual, original telling of the myth, while at the same time communicating its basic, timeless message. In other words, myth exists in time, on the level of the individual telling, and across time, regarding its timeless message. It is at once historical and ahistorical. The concept of the *bricoleur* is central to Sims' study for it explains how García Márquez achieves a narrative viewpoint akin to the oral nature of mythic storytelling. By using elements of the myth of Macondo that first appeared in García Márquez' early fiction and combining them with new variations of the myth, the narrator of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* gives the

A master storyteller

Gabriel García Márquez, 54-year-old novelist, short story writer, journalist, and winner of the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature, was proclaimed last year by a Spanish newspaper as "the most popular (Spanish language) writer since Cervantes." He is, along with Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and Argentinian author Jorge Luis Borges, largely responsible for the renaissance in Latin American literature over the last two decades.

The best-selling master storyteller was born in Aracataca, a tropical village in Colombia's banana country. Aracataca is the model for the part real, part mythical town of Macondo in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, a book which has sold over 10 million copies.

One of 16 children, García Márquez spent his first eight years with his grandparents, a colonel who told endless stories about the country's civil wars, and a grandmother who "was always telling fables, family legends and organizing our life according to the messages she received in her dreams." She was "the source of the magical, superstitious and supernatural view of reality," García Márquez said in a *New York Times Book Review* interview last year.

His days spent as a journalist in the coastal town of Barranquilla when he was in his 20s also helped to develop his literary style. During that period he read DeFoe, Dos Passos, Camus, Virginia Woolf, Joyce, Hemingway, and the great Russian writers. But the "tricks you need to transform something which appears fantastic, unbelievable, into something plausible, credible, those I learned from journalism. The key is to tell it straight. It's done by reporters and country folk," he said in the *Times* interview.

García Márquez' political activism, which began when he was a law student at the University of Bogotá, continues today in his outspoken journalistic criticism of rightist regimes. The Nobel Prize Academy referred to the Latin American writer as being "strongly committed on the side of the poor and the weak against domestic oppression and foreign exploitation." He is a defender of Fidel Castro, though not a member of a communist party, and his opposition to his own government has made him a self-exile for the last 20 years.

Of García Márquez' 11 books, many of which are based roughly on his own life, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *The Autumn of the Patriarch* are the most popular. His latest novella, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, was published last spring in the United States.

The author has lived in Mexico City since he went there in the 1960s to write film scripts. Besides beginning work on a new novel, García Márquez also plans to publish his own newspaper in Colombia some time this year.

novel the feeling of an ongoing oral performance. In this sense, García Márquez succeeds in reinstating the art of storytelling into the modern novel.

Of the seven chapters in *The Evolution of Myth*, Sims devotes five to an analysis of the use of myth in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. There are chapters analyzing each of the novel's component parts: plot and structure, narrative point of view, characters, and place. In each of these chapters, Sims explains how García Márquez achieves the level of myth in handling the various elements of the novel. For instance, how the narrator functions as a *bricoleur* or the storyteller of myth, how the central characters represent mythical archetypes, how the circular sense of time is in tune with myth, and finally, how the part real, part mythical sense of place allows García Márquez to transform Colombian and South American history into a myth. (The two chapters preceding his discussion of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* detail two of García Márquez' earlier works, *The Leafstorm* and "The Big Mama's Funerales." These works represent the first two stages in the evolution of García Márquez' mythic vision.)

Like Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County novels, García Márquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is a family epic, one that chronicles six generations of the Buendía family and the foundation and eventual destruction of Macondo, the Colombian town in which they live. In the discovering and founding of Macondo, García Márquez' novel parallels Spain's discovery, conquest, and settlement of South America much in the same way Faulkner's fiction parallels the post Civil War history of the American South. The novel also encompasses the civil wars in South America after it gained its independence from Spain in the early 19th century as well as American intervention in South America (in the form of the

United Fruit Company, the leading producer and exporter of bananas) at the end of the 19th century. In its final stage, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* presents the destruction of Macondo after the departure of the banana company. Along the way there are fanciful visions, ghosts, droughts, deluges, massacres, acts of incest, rains of flowers, and even an ascension.

Clearly *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is more than a novel that merely mirrors Colombian and Latin American history. In the end García Márquez' magical realism transforms that history into myth through the timelessness of Macondo, a place like Yoknapatawpha County, designed to be a microcosm of the world, where past, present, and future converge and linear, chronological time gives way to a circular sense of time more in tune with myth.

In a larger sense, the plot of the novel represents the story of the Bible from Eden to Apocalypse. The founding and discovery of Macondo parallels the Genesis story and the eventual destruction of the Colombian town parallels the Book of Revelations. Similarly, the Buendía family and the novel's family saga is representative of the family of man. It is at once the first family and all families. And ultimately it is in relation to the family that Sims explains the fundamental message of the myth of Macondo. Using Lévi-Strauss' definition of the function of myth (myth "provides a logical model for overcoming a contradiction"), Sims claims that the myth of Macondo resolves the opposition between matriarchy and patriarchy. In a broad sense the message of the myth of Macondo is that of the primacy, perhaps indestructability, of the family unit. The patriarchal and matriarchal families which dominated García Márquez' earlier fiction are combined into one unit in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

And even though Macondo and the Buendías disappear at the end of the novel, both, according to Sims, are representative of archetypal, mythic patterns that men have repeated many times: guilt, love, expulsion, persecution of innocence, the act of establishing a human settlement, expulsion, and most importantly, the search to regain Eden and return to paradise.

If Scholes and Kellogg are right in their assertion that man's strongest impulse is to make myths, to transform the real world into a mythical one, then it makes sense that the maker of fictions, the novelist, should become a central figure. After all, it is the novelist who has the impulse to tell "false stories," one of the popular definitions of myth. And it is the novelist who has the impulse to impose form upon history, to reorder, or more accurately, reinterpret human experience through his storytelling. In the end, it is through the master story telling and unifying vision of novelists like Gabriel García Márquez that human experience at a given place and time is reinterpreted and ultimately linked to certain universal, collective experiences common to people everywhere. And it is in the novelist's reinterpretation of life in the structuring of the story itself that our experiences take on a significance beyond the self and beyond the time and place in which we live.✥

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Illustration by Scott Wright

The evolution of a profession

By Jack Burkhalter

In the early 1800s, the dons of Oxford University in England bore the full responsibility of teaching, yet they could not consider themselves as members of an academic profession. Dons derived their income from fellowships which were awarded for life, provided they took holy orders and remained unmarried. These requirements insured that, within ten to 15 years, they would cease being teaching fellows or "tutors" as they were called, and proceed along a career path to a country parsonage. To have remained academic tutors would have meant a celibate life in an occupation offering no possibility for advancement or specialization. In short, they would have become "teaching drudges" without the promise of professional status.

By the end of the century, all this had changed. Teaching was no longer considered an interim activity before a true profession in the church; the work of Oxford dons became a lifetime career. They could marry without losing their fellowships, holy orders were not mandatory, pension funds had been created, and better, albeit limited, opportunities for research and for advancement to higher levels of professional status had been provided.

The events which transformed the Oxford don from a future country parson to a university teacher are the subject of the book, *From Clergyman to Don: The Rise of the Academic Profession in Nineteenth-Century Oxford*, by Dr. Arthur J. Engel, associate professor of history at the university. Engel's analysis begins with the status of academicians in Oxford in the early 1800s and ends at the time of World War I.

At the beginning of the 19th century the University of Oxford consisted of 19 autonomous colleges governed by their fellows and by the heads who were elected by the fellows. Fellowships were incomes derived from the landed property of the colleges and awarded to Oxford graduates. Open competition was limited, however, since most fellowships were restricted to men who had been born in particular localities or who had attended certain schools. In some cases, those who could prove their descent from the founder of the college also had to be given preference in elections. Once elected, a fellow held this prize for life if he would take holy orders within a specified time, remain unmarried, and not exceed a set income from a church living or from another source.

Each head selected a few of the fellows who were to live at the college and perform teaching and administrative duties. These were the tutors. Those left were prize fellows who had no specific responsibilities and were free to use their fellowships to begin a career, usually in the Church of England. The colleges owned advowsons, or church offices with incomes, to which they could appoint fellows, in order of seniority, when the offices became vacant.

The professorships were few in number and often in subjects outside the exclusively classical and mathematical curriculum. Many professorial chairs were poorly endowed and most professors were not members of the

governing bodies of the colleges. The result was that there was little demand for professorial teaching and many professors ceased to lecture regularly. These factors combined to place the official responsibility for teaching students entirely with the tutors. Unofficial private coaches, however, became a regular feature of academic life after reform of the examination system in the early 1800s. These coaches, often denounced as "crammers," met a need for individual and intensive instruction not provided by the tutors who had become burdened by the demands of the new system and an increasing student population. These developments served to emphasize the role of teaching in the colleges and raised questions about the conditions and methods through which coaches had become a necessary component of academic teaching.

Critics cited various problems with university education. Among them was the fact that tutors were not necessarily appointed according to intellectual merit. Another problem was that as a college officer a fellow knew that teaching was only an interim activity until a church position came his way. Some critics argued that the prohibition against marriage prevented most fellows from pursuing an academic career.

Some reformers in the 1840s wished to see a "professorial system" dominant at Oxford. They called for a larger professoriate more involved in teaching and with greater opportunities for a professional career. Within this group of advocates for a professorial system were two factions with sharply different ideas about how the new system should be structured. One group emphasized curriculum changes to include more career-oriented education. Another, the "learned research" group, wished to provide a progressive career for tutors by rewarding with professorships those who made substantial contributions to science and

learning. These schemes did not engender enthusiasm among those tutors who were satisifed with their traditional clerical role or who saw in these plans a threat to their personal or collegiate autonomy.

Declining public confidence in Oxford and its leaders prompted Parliament to form the Royal Commission of 1850 to propose reforms. Although all members of the university community were united in their opposition to government intervention, that did not prevent interest groups from publishing their own views and grievances. Having recognized the growing significance of their work as teachers and strengthened by a developing group consciousness, the tutorial fellows founded the Tutors' Association. They understood the benefits of a united front against the commission, but they could not afford merely to agree with the official university government report which defended the status quo. Through the Tutors' Association they were able to articulate their two major complaints with the existing system: the transitory nature of their occupation and the lack of opportunities of specialization. College teaching could not develop into a profession, they argued, until these obstacles were removed.

The Royal Commission published its recommendations in 1852, leaning heavily toward the research-oriented version of the professorial system, but application was thwarted by opposition in both Oxford and Parliament. Disregarding the commissioners' report, the government enacted the Oxford University Bill of 1854 which mainly provided each college the right to alter its statutes. There were, however, steps taken in the Act of 1854 which inched the tutors along their way to becoming professionals. Fellowships were to be offered in open competition according to

"personal merit and fitness," and the various family, locality, and school restrictions were abolished. The tutors' cause was advanced indirectly through the restructuring of the university legislature which gave fellows engaged in college work an effective voting plurality. Overall, the effect of the Act of 1854 was to reduce greatly the power of the heads, to avert domination by the professors, and to expand the influence of the tutors.

Despite their efforts, the tutors' main complaints were left unresolved by the 1854 act. The religious requirement was not eliminated and, more importantly, the marriage restriction continued to block establishment of a tutorial profession. A dilemma confronted the tutors in that the very reforms often proposed by others to turn their occupation into a profession also carried the danger of diminishing the status of their work. A fellowship, which was legally a type of property rather than a salary, did not specify any duties and could be held for life. The independence and high status of the fellows largely derived from these conditions. But a reasonable fellowship turnover rate was necessary, and the celibacy criterion indirectly fulfilled that purpose. Thus, although they wanted changes, the tutors were at the same time fully committed to defending those terms of the fellowships which conferred a high social standing.

The Act of 1854 also had failed to satisfy the tutors' call for opportunities to specialize. The structure of the university (separate and autonomous colleges each with its own core of teachers) frustrated this development, at least temporarily. During the 1860s some tutors took into their own hands the specialization problem and devised a "combination system." In this system the tutors of a particular examination school would meet informally to decide which classes were to be

taught the next term. Classes were divided among them, and a tutor was free to teach a topic not covered by the others. Students could attend the lectures of any of the colleges participating in the combination system. The effectiveness of the system varied considerably among the groups of tutors or colleges which organized them, but it broke the collegiate isolation of students and teachers and encouraged specialization while making better use of teaching resources.

An important event in the transformation of the academic structure of Oxford was the report of another commission formed by Parliament, the Cleveland Commission of 1873. This commission's task had been to analyze the finances of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and to report on the prospects of their income and on their expenditures. The 1873 report, which was not a call for reform, revealed for the first time that the colleges did not use their large incomes from land for educational purposes. Money spent on professorships and scholarships barely exceeded the combined incomes of the 19 college heads, and the sum spent on professors' incomes was less than that devoted to increasing the incomes of former fellows holding church offices. The report portrayed colleges as wealthy and destined to become richer from their property holdings.

The financial report of the Cleveland Commission gave tutors the first statistical information they could exploit in their quest for an academic profession. They used the information on the enormous and questionably distributed wealth of the colleges to bolster their demand for a greater allocation of incomes to teaching. Others, however, thought the university's endowment should be used not to support college teachers but to advance learning, which they saw
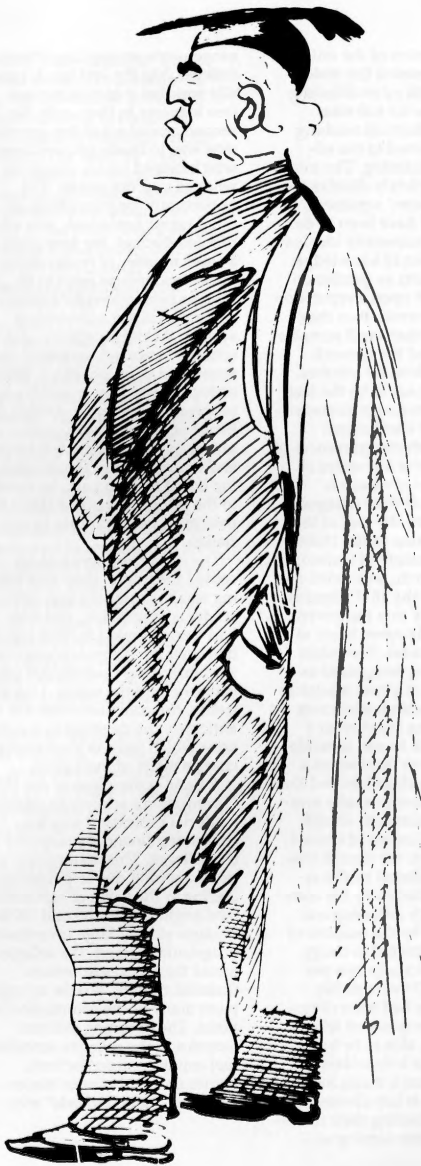
as the true mission of the university. They advocated the endowment of research by establishing career positions for full-time scholars freed from all teaching duties and devoted to the advancement of learning. The tutors could not completely dismiss the research advocates' argument, for to do so would have been to deny the traditional university ideal of the advancement of knowledge. Their social status as gentlemen was partly built upon a reputation for scholarly pursuit; thus they recommended that small sums be set aside to fund the research activities of individual scholars. Nonetheless it was to be the task of another government commission to attempt a settlement recognizing both the grievances of the tutors and the advocates of the endowment of research.

In a reversal of their antagonistic stance toward the task of the Royal Commission in the 1850s, the academic society of Oxford, as well as the church, welcomed the intervention of the 1877 Commission. Each party saw the government as the only agent likely to assist its own cause. The tutors wanted teaching recognized as the basic work of a new academic profession. Research advocates saw the teaching function in a role subordinate to and separate from the research function of a university. The church hoped that a Tory government, usually sympathetic to its interests, would halt the secularization of Oxford. As it turned out, the church was bitterly disappointed by the reforms recommended by the commission. Church influence was further eroded by the number of fellowships restricted to clergy being reduced to only two per college. Only 27 years earlier nearly all tutors had been clergymen, and the majority of fellowships had been able to be held only by those in holy orders.

The tutors won a major battle in that they were at last allowed to marry while retaining their fellowships. There were varying ar- -

rangements among the different colleges, but the end result generally was that most tutors were free to marry in their early 30s. A second crucial act of the commission was to create pension funds which helped tutors view their work as a secure career. The opportunity for promotion, another career aspiration, was addressed through the formation of a small number of readerships. These readerships were to be used as promotions for tutors successful in the combination system. As the prosperity of the colleges increased, so would the number of these positions. Readerships opened the possiblity for progressive academic careers. A Board of Faculties was given power over university teaching and examinations. The creation of the board was, in part, an answer to the tutors' complaint about the paucity of opportunities to specialize.

The commissioners had accepted the tutors' view that teaching was the essential task of an academic profession, and they had demonstrated in their report that their main concern was with supporting the professional advancement of the tutors. Unfortunately, the commissioners did not anticipate the developing conditions which were to profoundly change many of their plans.

A basic assumption of the 1877 Commission's scheme to establish a tutorial profession was the continuing financial prosperity of the colleges. This assumption was proved wrong due to persistent decline in the value of agricultural land beginning in the mid 1870s. Because of their large investments in agricultural land, the colleges found themselves in serious financial trouble, unable to implement many of the commission's plans. The declining external incomes of the colleges served to fuel conflict among factions. Battles ensued between the entrenched "aging radicals" who

had benefited from the settlement of 1877 and the new younger dons, "Young Oxford," who saw little chance for the fulfillment of their career aspirations. The younger dons allied themselves with nonacademic members of the university government to block reforms of which they did not approve. In the opposite camp was an unlikely union of those who had anything to gain from the settlement of the 1877 Commission: scientists, professors, researchers, and older official fellows. From the often emotional clashes between these two factions emerged lasting concepts of the nature and functions of the academic profession at Oxford.

The members of the 1877 Commission had been fully aware of the success in Germany of using university science to aid advances in industrial technology, and they wished to see an English version of this accomplishment. They had moved to expand and improve the facilities for teaching the natural and physical sciences at Oxford. An expansion of scientific education would have prompted indignation from nonscientific academicians at any time, but during the financial crisis it aroused among the young dons a "virulent animosity" against science. The hatred of science became a hallmark of collegiate loyalty, and scientists reciprocated with a hatred of the collegiate system. Young Oxford was unable to reverse the support of science implemented in 1877, but the academic war had the effect of creating a dichotomy between the advancement of science and the health of the collegiate and tutorial systems. The two distinguishing characteristics of the university, research and education, were locked in rigid opposition.

The progressive career plan for tutors also was vitiated by the agricultural depression. The 1877 Commission had envisioned a steady growth of readerships concomitant with the growth of

college income, but expansion beyond the modest original seven positions did not occur. While most dons first appointed to teaching posts between 1881 and 1900 obtained permanent academic positions, only 25 percent ever advanced in Oxford beyond the rank of official college fellow.

Between 1882 and 1914 economic necessity and increases in the number of official fellows led to the virtual elimination of prize fellowships. Church interests were considered a low priority in Oxford despite the fact that many tutors at the end of the 19th century remained in holy orders. Their identity was with academic society rather than with the clergy. During this same period there were few gains for the cause of research beyond those expansions enacted by the 1877 Commission, but after 1895 its endowment was viewed more favorably. Contributing to this were the improved financial prospects of the colleges and the perception, accompanied by fear, that German military and economic achievements were linked to successful exploitation of academic research. Many blamed the dominance of literary culture in English universities for Britain's technological inferiority. Research also came to be viewed by the tutors as a way of relieving teaching drudgery. As a result, research activities were encouraged with research fellowships, increased stipends, and sabbatical leave for tutorial fellows. The enhanced power of the tutors, gained through reforms in the university government, also was used to remove remaining restrictions on freedom to marry, and to obtain and protect better pension arrangements.

Within the overall pattern of professional advancement, however, were some setbacks. An increased student population during the Edwardian period led to a slight reversal of the trend toward lessening marriage restrictions due to the need for more resident officers for discipline. More serious problems, however, were created by the disastrous inflation of the World War I years. The decline in the real income of the colleges necessitated the curtailment of sabbaticals and other benefits. The establishment of new posts to give college tutors better opportunities for promotion was also frustrated.

By 1914 the basic form of the academic profession had been established. Through persistent efforts the tutors had secured the right to marry while retaining their positions, to be free of church requirements, to shape their futures through adequate representation in university government, and to specialize in their chosen subjects, all without relinquishing their status or independence. The conflict between the values of teaching and the benefits of research remained unresolved, nevertheless, and has continued to serve as an enduring subject for academic debate.❧

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A risky business

A grant designated to study the effectiveness of "health risk appraisal" has been awarded Dr. Chun-Wai Chan, VCU's director of student health services, and Patricia Davis, acting co-director of the Family Nurse Practitioner Program.

The research grant, awarded by the Metropolitan Life Foundation of New York, will support a study of health risk appraisal as a potential health education tool among young adults. Freshmen at the university will be randomly selected and asked questions concerning their habits and health behavior. Each participant's life expectancy will be assessed, based on the assumption that their present health behavior will be continued. Evaluation will be made with the aid of a computer program.

An intense intervention program with various health education modules will be aimed at increasing students' life expectancies by changing their health behavior. The study is being conducted in an attempt to identify the most cost effective tool for promoting good health practices among the college-aged population.

Doctoral demand

Conventional theory states that the number of physicians in an area has a direct relationship to the amount of medical services and operations performed. However, a recent study by two health economists appears to refute this theory.

It is the reimbursement system rather than the number of physicians that determines the use of medical services, according to the
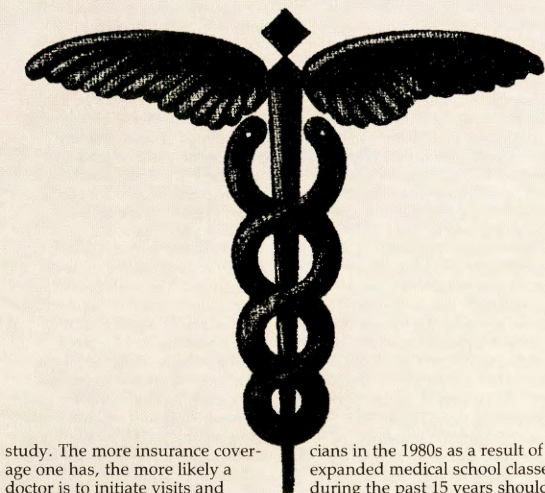
study. The more insurance coverage one has, the more likely a doctor is to initiate visits and related expenditures, such as laboratory tests.

The study's authors are Dr. Louis Rossiter, assistant professor of health economics at VCU, and Dr. Gail Wilensky of the National Center for Health Services Research in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The study, titled "The Relative Importance of Physician Induced Demand for Medical Care," also looks at whether the number of physicians practicing in an area stimulates them to create demand for health services. Results showed that a heavy geographic concentration of physicians will not increase the likelihood of patients undergoing surgery or total physician initiated expenditures for health care. The physician-to-population ratio is more important in explaining variations in the frequency of physician initiated ambulatory visits, their numbers, and costs.

The predicted surplus of physi-

cians in the 1980s as a result of expanded medical school classes during the past 15 years should have little impact on physician induced demand for medical care and health care costs.

"Furthermore," say the health economists, "the increased number of physicians may facilitate the growth of alternative delivery systems, such as health maintenance organizations and primary care networks."

According to the study the effect of the increased number of physicians on their fees is minimal. But a higher physician-to-population ratio will increase the time spent with each patient.

The study refers to concerns about the demands that a comprehensive reimbursement system, like national health insurance, would place on medical care resources. Rossiter and Wilensky describe these concerns as well-founded. They said, "Not only would individuals increase their demand for medical care, but physicians would initiate more visits as well."

Treatment for leukemic children

Research by a VCU physician may help to improve treatment for some pediatric patients with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), the most common form of cancer found in children.

The work of Dr. Nancy Dunn, assistant professor of pediatrics, focuses on cellular enzyme changes in patients with ALL and provides an understanding of how these changes aid physicians in making prognoses and designing therapy. Since 1978 Dunn has been investigating three different enzymes. Of the three enzymes, one—hexosaminidase—has provided the most promising results.

As part of the study lymphocytes from blood samples of leukemic patients at MCV Hospitals were tested at the time cancer was diagnosed, and at designated intervals as treatment was administered. Using a laboratory process called column chromatography, enzymes in the samples were broken down into component parts (isoenzymes) and analyzed.

Blood samples from 41 patients with various types of leukemia were studied. The most interesting result was found among patients with the most common immunologic subtype of ALL (leukemic patients are divided into subtypes on the basis of the immunologic properties of their blood cells). Of these 31 patients, 21 were found to have one elevated component (called the I peak) of hexosaminidase at diagnosis. Anti-leukemic treatment was then administered which effectively decreased the I peak to normal levels. Of the three patients who had subsequent relapses while under study, two showed a rise in the component to abnormally high levels.

"The data suggest this enzyme pattern may prove useful as a leukemia marker—a factor that disappears with treatment and reappears when there is a relapse," said Dunn.

Additional results also indicate the degree of elevation of the I peak component may have prognostic value. Among patients in the study, 16 of 20 with low I peaks remained disease-free for a median of 19 months, while only three of nine with particularly high I peaks remained in remission for nine to 17 months.

Dunn said advances in treatment for leukemic patients helped make her research possible.
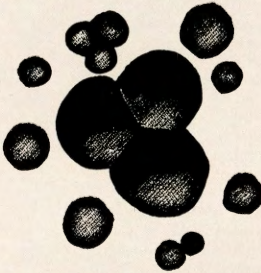
"Before the 1960s we were seeing children with leukemia dying quickly, giving us little time to study the effects of our intervention over time," Dunn explained. "With longer survival times we are better able to evaluate our treatments."

A major part of the advances in treatment involved the recognition by cancer specialists that certain clinical and laboratory features of leukemia patients could be of prognostic value. With this information research projects like Dunn's were initiated which looked at factors of potential use in predicting outcomes for patients and in directing therapy.

Specific to Dunn's research was the discovery in the 1970s that ALL could be divided into three or four subtypes by immunologic techniques. With these classifications patients can be grouped on the basis of their chances for survival and appropriate treatment regimens administered. For patients with less chance of survival, more aggressive therapy is ordered. "Ultimately, we're trying to improve the odds for these patients," Dunn said.

While the researcher warned her results are in no way definitive, she suggested "hexosaminidase may be a key enzyme in the battle against acute lymphoblastic leukemia."

Service-oriented research

A Survey Research Laboratory (SRL) intended to provide public opinion and survey research services to organizations functioning in the public interest has begun operation at the university.

Director J. Sherwood Williams said the laboratory expects to serve educational institutions, agencies at all levels of government, and nonprofit community service groups. Its staff will conduct scientific planning, research design, and analysis.

According to Williams, survey research can be used to acquire citizens' viewpoints, assess client or employee satisfaction, evaluate public services, determine needs of special groups such as crime victims, assess community life quality, and obtain the perceptions of specific populations such as income groups. Williams believes that the laboratory is the first of its kind in Virginia. Most states have at least one university offering services of the kind the new facility will provide, he said.

To date, activities undertaken by laboratory personnel include an exploration of student views and surveys on drug use, firearms ownership, and psychosomatic illness.

Survey Research Laboratory services are provided on a fee-for-service basis, says Williams. Clients may contract for any or all available resources such as data collection, computer analysis, graphics, consultation on survey problems, advice on sampling procedures, help with data base development, report preparation, and other assistance.

Since SRL is affiliated with VCU, a nonprofit institution, charges are based on incurred costs, including personnel, equipment use, supplies, services, and overhead. Williams said the organization attempts to keep costs at a minimum while providing professional service of high quality.

Fighting a functional blindness

Blepharospasm. It's not a well-known disorder but its victims can testify to its devastating affect when it causes functional blindness.

In March 1979 Mildred Liniado noticed her right eyelid would involuntarily close, sometimes so hard that it was difficult to raise it. Several months later the same thing began happening to her left eyelid. "I would be driving and I would have to pull over because my eyes would just close," said Liniado. She found the episodes would last only briefly, but "I was petrified." By March 1980 she gave up driving.

As the disorder progressed her eyelids closed more tightly and more frequently. She often had to pull her eyelids open with her fingers and sometimes could see only through tiny slits that remained when her lids clamped shut.

Liniado began to feel helpless and vulnerable. Things became rapidly worse, she said. "I couldn't read or watch TV. I
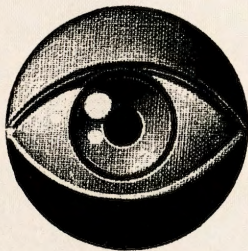
couldn't lift my eyelids." Although nothing was wrong with her eyesight she had, in effect, become blind.

After seeing five ophthalmologists who were unable to diagnose the problem, Liniado's optometrist recommended that she see Dr. John B. Selhorst, associate professor of neurology and ophthalmology at VCU. He diagnosed the disorder as essential blepharospasm, or spasm of the eyelids. "Essential" means that its cause is unknown.

According to Selhorst, behavioral scientists have thought for years that blepharospasm was a psychological disorder. Neurologists, however, consider it a movement disorder in the same way Parkinson's disease is a movement disorder. Selhorst said that, like Parkinson's disease, blepharospasm may be the result of a biochemical problem such as a deficiency or excess of a substance involved in transmitting nerve impulses. Whatever its cause, the disease is progressive, tends to occur in middle age, and strikes women more frequently than men.

Two to four new cases are seen each year by three physicians in the Department of Neurology. Treatment appears often to be frustrating for both patients and physicians. Although some drugs work in about 30 to 40 percent of patients, Selhorst says finding the appropriate treatment is still a matter of trial and error.

One surgical method of treatment involves cutting the nerve branches that supply impulses to eyelid muscles. But, says Selhorst, possible undesirable side effects include the inability of eyelids to completely close which, through drying of the cornea, could lead to infections and other complications. Also other facial muscles can be affected and nerves can regenerate over a period of time, causing the problem to reappear. To patients who are functionally blind, however, the operation's potential problems may be acceptable.

The procedure used in Liniado's case involves removal of most of the eye muscles. While recovering from her operation, Liniado says she has been able to return to her usual activities. She operates her own business and, she says, "I drive, I read, I watch TV, and I function normally." Although her appearance has been altered somewhat around the brow and eyes, Liniado feels "it was a small price to pay."

Preventing drunken driving

Prom night is not the only time of year when teenagers party, drink, drive, and often end up seriously injured or killed. "Dad, may I have the keys to the car?" is a question asked by teenagers every day. And every day statistics show a grim record of alcohol-related accidents among teens.

Richmond, like many communities across the nation, is responding to the call for programs to educate teenagers in an attempt to prevent the alarming increase in alcohol-related accidents.

A program developed to implement an experimental curriculum for predriving youth recently was cosponsored by VCU's School of

Social Work, Richmond City School System's Department of Health and Physical Education, and ADAPTS (Alcohol, Drug Abuse Prevention, and Training Service). The adolescent drinking and driving prevention program tested two junior high school classes placed in experimental and control conditions. The experimental subjects, aged 12 to 14, attended ten classes of films and lectures and two driver simulation sessions during regular school hours. A middle school teacher or a peer counselor from ADAPT's peer counselor program led each class.

To measure the impact of the curriculum, the volunteer student participants were given specially designed knowledge and belief tests before and after the program. Students in the experimental group showed significant changes in knowledge and positive changes in beliefs. The control group showed no changes in either knowledge or belief. An interesting side light showed that peer-led groups seemed to do better than teacher-led groups. Researchers, led by Dr. David N. Saunders, associate professor of social work, hope other agencies will be interested in using the curriculum to address the problem of adolescent drinking and driving.
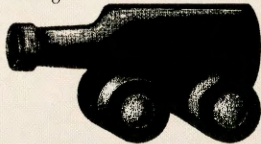
Specializing in success

The age of specialization, no longer an abstract concept, is here to stay. In today's highly technological world, however, some people are stronger candidates than others in qualifying as specialists. A question frequently asked by organizations and institutions is how to measure the strengths of the specialist applying for a position.

Nursing schools, like many institutions that train the new specialist, are particularly concerned that personnel have the ability to keep up with rapidly changing medical technology. According to Dr. Jeanette Kissinger and Dr. Barbara Munjas, professors at VCU's School of Nursing, "Nursing educators have known there are students who 'just don't have it,' or 'don't understand the nursing process.' " They acknowledge that "Up until now there were very few ways to identify those qualities which the student might lack, nor agreement about what personal attributes contribute to student success in understanding and using the nursing process." But now they think a way has been found to measure the qualities needed.

Kissinger and Munjas explain in a current research paper that a recent longitudinal study conducted by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) focused on the measurement procedure. Results indicate that three short tests, in addition to SAT scores, can help admission committees identify students who have the potential to successfully complete a nursing program.

The tests measure verbal ability, vocabulary knowledge, convergent thinking ability (i.e., the ability to arrive at one correct answer from multiple options), and field independent perceptual style (a measure of problem-solving capabilities). The study determined that these skills, out of a range of additional data tested, were the best predictors of success.

Both Kissinger and Munjas are confident that the test used in the SREB study, which takes only 26 minutes to complete, will be of value to their incoming upper division students. They anticipate this will help the admissions procedure in determining those students who have the potential to successfully complete the university's nursing program.

Herpes and stress

The potential relationship between a herpes victim's mental state and the frequency of the disease's recurrence is currently being studied at VCU.

Paul Silver, a graduate student seeking a doctorate in the university's clinical psychology program, will head an effort to establish whether or not stress, the individual's method of coping with it, and the support he or she receives are factors in the frequency and severity of herpetic lesions.

Silver is recruiting at least 60 men and women who had diagnoses of genital herpes at least 12 months ago to participate in confidential questionnaires designed to provide answers about mental stress and the disease.

Project designers hope to gain new information on how psychological well-being affects physical well-being and vice versa. Silver said volunteers for the initial

study will be given first opportunity to take part in a later treatment program.

About 20 million residents of the United States now suffer from genital herpes, according to the National Center for Disease Control. Upward of half a million new cases are reported each year.

The disease, which is caused by a virus, is recurrent and incurable. But the frequency of recurrence varies widely among affected persons. Silver said the psychological and medical impact can range "from mild to catastrophic."

Research conducted elsewhere has shown that some herpes victims have periodic depression and a sense of isolation. Emotional difficulties reported have included impotence or diminished sexual drive, plus self-destructive feelings.

Some victims indicated herpes was a factor in the dissolution of a marriage or long-standing relationship, or in loss of a potential relationship after the other party was told about the disease. Others said their work performance suffered as a result of lost self-esteem.

The study will test possible emotional problems caused by having the disease, but also will seek evidence of a possible correlation between emotional dysfunction and the frequency and severity of herpes symptoms' recurrence.

Transplanting for life

Adult and pediatric patients suffering severe liver disease can now find help through MCV Hospitals' recently established liver transplantation program.

Although several liver transplants were performed at MCVH in the late 1960s and early 1970s,

the main emphasis since that time has been on heart and kidney transplants. Transplants of bone, skin, and corneas have also been done.

The program was established due to refined surgical techniques and new drugs to fight rejection of donor organs, both of which have made liver transplantation a viable form of treatment. In addition, according to program director Dr. H. M. Lee, the procedure offers hope of genuine rehabilitation for patients.

As an extension of existing transplant programs, the liver transplantation program will use the same organ procurement program and transplantation laboratories to evaluate prospective recipients, match donor organs, and monitor patients for rejection of other complications.

The program will be run jointly by the Departments of Surgery, Pediatrics, and Medicine, with cooperation from hospital support services in anesthesia, nursing, social work, and the blood bank. Surgical aspects will be coordinated by Dr. Gerardo Mendez-Picon, associate professor of surgery; pediatric services by Dr. Wallace Berman, director of pediatric gastroenterology; and medical services by Dr. Robert Carithers, associate professor of gastroenterology.

Liver transplants have been considered experimental rather than therapeutic surgery, and previously have not been covered by insurance. A recent National Institutes of Health conference, however, concluded that liver transplants can be therapeutic for end-stage liver disease and deserve broader application.

Illustration by Scott Wright

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