

Looking for a Leader

JEFF MILLER



As Chancellor David Ward prepares to finish his tenure, the search for his successor is on. How hard can it be to fill one job? As those involved with the search are discovering, it can be very hard indeed.

By Michael Penn MA'97

If Bernice Durand needed confirmation that this summer would be anything but a respite, she received it in the form of a gift from her husband. Before making their customary summer move to Colorado, Loyal Durand, like Bernice a UW-Madison physics professor, gave her a telephone headset similar to those worn by stockbrokers, telemarketers, and the ultra-connected.

The summer break usually affords the Durands a rare chance to get a change of scenery and recharge for a new year, while conducting in-depth research at a world-class physics center. But two days before the end of the semester, Bernice Durand was named chair of the twenty-one-member committee charged with recruiting and screening candidates to succeed UW-Madison Chancellor David Ward MS'62, PhD'63 when he steps down at the end of the year.

As Loyal Durand recognized, that changed things.

In early July, Bernice Durand acknowledged over the lines of her new headset that indeed things had changed. Her days have been filled with hundreds of phone calls, e-mails, and letters about the quest to find the university's next chancellor. "So far," she says, "the search is ruling my life," adding that at least she can sit on the couch while she's on the phone.

When Ward announced in mid-March that he planned to end his tenure as chancellor, it marked the offi-



Those engaged in the search believe that to achieve their charge of identifying five outstanding finalists, they needed to be heard by thousands.

cial start of a search for new leadership that has entangled dozens of people. To some, it might seem that Ward's notice came with a luxurious amount of lead time. Eight months to fill one position — how hard can that be?

As it happens, very hard. Seeking out and attracting candidates at this level — in a market that has become highly competitive — is something that can rule not only one life, but many.

THE BOSS

Hiring university chancellors is nothing new for Katharine Lyall. As president of the UW System, she oversees all thirteen four-year UW campuses, a network

of thirteen two-year colleges, and UW-Extension, which includes Wisconsin Public Radio and Wisconsin Public Television. That makes fifteen chancellors who report to Lyall, and it seems that, at any given time, at least one is coming or going. (Until 1965, UW-Madison's executive leader was called a president, and some schools still use that term. But the top executives on UW campuses are now called chancellors.)

In fact, since Lyall assumed her post in 1992, she has hired twenty-five UW chancellors. One of her first searches on the job resulted in Ward's appointment in June of 1993.

When facing the task of hiring Ward's successor, Lyall appointed a search committee of eleven faculty, two academic staff, two students, two administrators, and four community members to build a pool of candidates and winnow it down to a selection of finalists. If all goes well, by late fall the committee will present at least five names to Lyall and a subcommittee composed of five members of the UW Board of Regents. Lyall and the subcommittee will then interview the finalists and recommend one per-

son to the full board, which ultimately makes the hiring decision.

When Ward first announced his plans, Lyall expressed confidence that the search process could be completed by the end of the year, meaning that there would be no interim between Ward's last day and a new chancellor's first. That goal of a seamless transition, however, has relied on quick and productive work by the committee during the summer and early fall, when the candidate pool was being built and screened. And perhaps a little luck.

Lyall knows from experience how tight the market for top academic leaders has become. Many experienced administrators are now reaching

Facing page: the chancellor's office, as David Ward has seen it for the past eight years. The first-floor Bascom Hall suite has hosted every UW leader since Bascom's south wing was completed in 1899, and there are many reminders of its history. Ward's Federalist-style desk has been used by administrators since the 1920s, and another table dates to John Bascom's days.

retirement age, paralleling a trend in academia often referred to as “the gray-ing of the faculty.” As a result, dozens of major universities now find themselves in the market for leadership. A list of the schools searching for top executives within the past two years reads like a *U.S. News* rankings list: Harvard, Stanford, Brown, Vanderbilt, the University of North Carolina, Purdue University, Indiana University, and the University of Illinois-Chicago are just a few.

And if they’re not retiring, many university presidents are burning out on the twenty-four-hour-a-day requirements of the job. Once able to focus primarily on campus affairs, modern presidents are pulled by new stresses — the ever-present need to raise private money, the pace of technological change, and the creation of affiliated businesses and enterprises. Those forces are eroding the average tenure of university presidents, especially at public universities. A study published by the American Council on Education found that public-university presidents now serve terms of fewer than six years, the shortest average since the 1960s, and about half the typical term at the beginning of the twentieth century.

“It takes a particular type of personality to be a chancellor,” Lyall says. “You must be secure in your own skills and values, yet willing to let others take the credit. You must be tolerant of ambiguity and external political pressures, yet knowledgeable of the shared governance process and comfortable working within that structure.”

Universities are going to greater lengths to find and keep such people. The University of Minnesota, for example, recently raised the base salary of its popular president, Mark Yudof, to \$335,000 in an effort to keep other schools from plucking him away. It is not rare for well-heeled private universities to offer top candidates packages that exceed \$500,000.

Conversely, schools troubled by financial or other crises are now finding it difficult to hire in a market that favors

the people being hired. At the University of Florida, all six finalists for the presidency dropped out of contention after the state government publicly debated disbanding the school’s supervisory board. The school has now asked its interim president to take the job permanently.

UW-Madison is well regarded nationally and has plenty to make it attractive to candidates, says Lyall. But the university can’t afford to be complacent. “Good people simply won’t become candidates unless we actively court them and make a compelling case,” she says.

Thus, the pressure falls squarely on the search committee. In charging the group, Lyall was unequivocal about the importance of its task. “This committee literally holds the future of the UW-Madison campus in the palm of its hand,” she said.

THE COMMITTEE

At nine o’clock on a late spring morning, the members of the search and screen committee (including two connected via teleconference) convened in a Bascom Hall meeting room to officially begin their search for a chancellor. The mood, says Durand, was somewhere between excitement and fear.

Regent President Jay Smith spoke first, calling the job of chancellor an “awesome task.” He said that Ward’s successor would be expected to “take the university to the next level,” to continue the great progress that UW officials feel has been made under his leadership. Lyall told the group to be prepared to market the university, and that, at first, the best candidates would know more about UW-Madison than the committee would know about them.

Over the next four weeks, the committee took a crash course on leadership at UW-Madison. They learned about the backgrounds of previous chancellors (see sidebar) and became familiar with the many facets and roles of the modern university leader. By the end of the fourth meeting, Durand says, “I think

it’s fair to say that everyone expressed a certain awe” about the magnitude of the position they are seeking to fill.

The stakes riding on the committee’s work are high, probably higher than they have been during previous chancellor searches. UW-Madison is a complex engine with many parts, and a greater share of its funding now comes from private donations and federal research grants. The chancellor position has evolved to be similar to that of a corporate CEO, requiring someone who can be an intellectual icon on one day and a visionary entrepreneur the next.

But it is not an impossible job, Durand notes. “In fact, we are hearing about people out there who are doing great jobs now,” she says.

She adds, though, that the committee will not limit itself to people who are currently running universities. Historically, UW-Madison has hired several successful leaders from its ranks, including Ward, who was a graduate student, professor, and administrator before becoming chancellor. To find someone capable of following Ward — who, Lyall and Durand both say, has raised the standards for leadership at the university — the committee has looked everywhere, both within and without.

Those engaged in the search believe that to achieve their charge of identifying five outstanding finalists, they needed to be heard by thousands. The committee spent the early part of the summer turning every stone and beating every bush to build their list of candidates. The formalities of placing ads in national publications were quickly taken care of. But those tactics alone don’t go very far in the new marketplace, Lyall says.

Durand sent out more than ten thousand letters seeking leads and nominations. The recipients included faculty, staff, alumni, UW and government officials, community leaders, and the heads of national educational associations and every major research university. A Web site {www.news.wisc.edu/packages/

IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

UW-Madison's leaders through history

1849–1858	John Hiram Lathrop	1918–1925	Edward A. Birge	1968–1977	Edwin Young
1859–1860	Henry Barnard	1925–1937	Glenn Frank	1977	Glenn S. Pound (acting)
1860–1867	John W. Sterling	1937	George C. Sellery (acting)	1977–1986	Irving Shain
1867–1870	Paul A. Chadbourne	1937–1945	Clarence A. Dykstra	1987	Bernard Cohen (acting)
1871–1874	John W. Twombly	1945–1958	Edwin Brown Fred	1988–1993	Donna E. Shalala
1874–1887	John A. Bascom	1958–1962	Conrad A. Elvehjem	1993–present	David Ward
1887–1892	Thomas C. Chamberlin	1962–1970	Fred Harvey Harrington *		
1892–1901	Charles K. Adams	1964–1967	Robben Fleming		
1901–1903	Edward A. Birge (acting)	1967–1968	William Sewell		
1903–1918	Charles R. Van Hise	1968	Bryant Kearl (acting)		

* At this time, the UW had both a president, who oversaw external relationships, and a chancellor, who administered campus. Harrington served as president, while Fleming (and every person since) was chancellor.



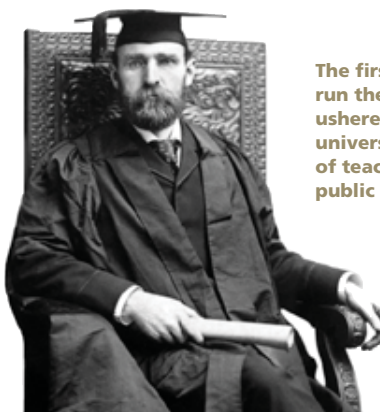
A nationally respected educator, Barnard was highly sought after by the regents, but left after only one year.



One of the only early chancellors not to have a building named for him, Twombly's support of co-education doomed him with the regents.



A New York magazine editor and well-known orator, Frank had no advanced degree and was a hands-off manager.



The first UW alumnus to run the university, Van Hise ushered in the "combination university," with missions of teaching, research, and public service.



Hired from the U.S. Geological Survey to bolster research, Chamberlin helped to create a discipline-based structure before the University of Chicago lured him away.



A labor management expert, Young was recruited to help patch relationships after the friction of the 1960s.



Former president of Hunter College, Shalala, who became UW's first woman chancellor, is often credited for the UW's rise in national profile, especially in athletics.

TODD ROSENBERG

UWMADISON ARCHIVES (6)

chancellorsearch/) was created to dispatch information to candidates and interested parties. The committee also printed a brochure for candidates, distributing three thousand copies to ultimately woo an audience of one.

Committee members began working their personal networks of academic connections. "At the level of talent we're seeking, candidates have many other opportunities from which to choose," she says. "We have to compete for the attention and commitment of these people, just as we do for our top faculty members. The search and screen committee, the regents and myself, and the entire campus must all sell the UW-Madison opportunity vigorously if we are to get the right person."

THE INSIDER

Bill Funk has built a career on his ability to find the right person.

An affable Dallas businessman who until a few months ago had never even been on campus, he's been hired to help recruit the next chancellor, an indication of how serious UW-Madison is about this search.

In a sense, Funk is higher education's ultimate insider, its answer to the Kevin Bacon game: his list of friends and acquaintances includes the top officials at nearly every major American university. Pick any school on the map, and you're likely to find no more than a few degrees of Bill Funk.

Working for Korn/Ferry International, one of the largest executive search firms in the world, he has become the most highly regarded search consultant in education. He has participated in the hiring of more than one hundred presidents and chancellors, including nine of the last ten leaders hired by Big Ten institutions. What makes him so valuable is his ability to play Cupid in an elaborate mating ritual, where the elite must be romanced.

"The really good candidates won't respond to an ad in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and they're pretty blasé about getting a letter from a search

committee chair," says Funk. "They like to *feel* a school is interested in them."

Corporations have long relied on search firms to help them identify top-level executives, and it is becoming more common for universities and other nonprofit organizations to do so. Members of a campus search and screen committee seldom have experience recruiting in such a national marketplace, Lyall says. Without Funk's assistance and counsel, the committee's job would be tougher. Based on the recommendations of Lyall and Regent President Smith, the search committee voted at its first meeting to retain Funk's services.

Since then, Funk has delivered nearly one thousand letters and talked with hundreds of people on the university's behalf. A significant part of his task is to seek out the top prospects — people who are routinely approached by potential suitors — and quietly tug them toward becoming candidates. These are often the most enticing, but also the most delicate, aspects of the search, and they usually take place in private meetings far away from campus.

Durand says that Funk has already brought to the committee's attention outstanding candidates who were not known to committee members. The type of external candidate the committee wants to hear from, she says, is "somebody who is doing a great job; who is happy doing it; and it hadn't come across his or her mind to move. This job may be tempting to those people, but we have to *tell* them to be tempted." It often depends on the discreet pitchmanship of Funk to reel in these trophy fish.

Chancellors and presidents need to be cautious about shopping themselves a round, because so much of their success depends on the goodwill and political capital they generate. Flirting publicly with other positions may make a leader appear less dedicated to his or her current employer, jeopardizing his or her effectiveness. Funk can succeed where a campus committee can't by being a neutral third party. "Many of

these people will trust someone like Bill Funk more than they will trust other people [involved in the search]," says Durand.

Often, Funk's meetings will end with a desirable target saying, "No, thanks," while hinting subtly that he or she might be receptive to another pitch. It's a dance that takes time. One of Funk's clients, Purdue University, recently hired former Iowa State President Martin Jischke after having its overtures rejected for nearly four months.


"The real art to this is learning when no really means no," Funk says.

THE END? HARDLY

Just who has said yes and who has said no is the biggest secret on campus. While Funk's trophy hunts were going on during June and July, he would let on only that he was pleased by the responses he was hearing. "We're having great success. I'm really excited about the quality of people that we're bringing forward," he said.

As of July 31, the process shifted into screen mode, and the committee began assessing its candidate pool. Funk also shifted his role, from promoter to background checker, helping to find and interview references for the most promising candidates.

As exhausting as the searching is, the next phase may be even more so, as twenty-one people of different backgrounds begin to debate the merits of potential chancellors. This is a group without wallflowers, many of whom are known for their outspoken passion on the direction of the university. The discussions have been remarkable, says Durand, and the group is developing some cohesion.

"We're on the same several pages," she says, laughing. There is a long road ahead, and skirmishes are bound to dot the path to progress. But, for now at least, they're happy for the journey. 

Michael Penn is an associate editor of *On Wisconsin*.



Talking Politics

As the nation approaches the presidential election, UW faculty share their tried-and-true methods for sifting and winnowing the inevitable campaign rhetoric.

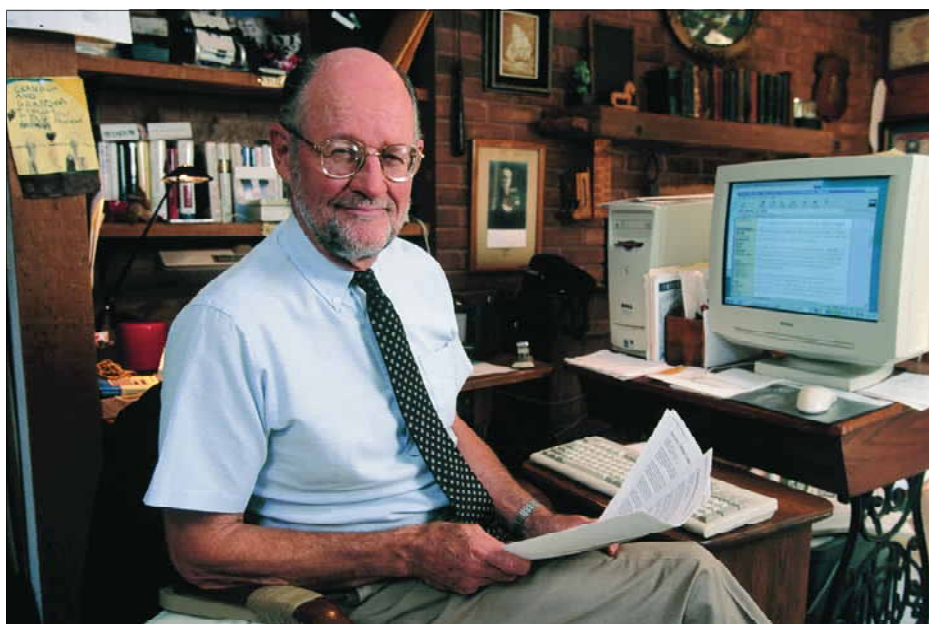
It's enough to give you the willies and the shakes, to say nothing of the heebie-jeebies. The phone jangles, the fax groans, the e-mail box beeps.

Especially around election time, these auditory barbs come zinging day and night into the life of Charles O. Jones, professor emeritus of political science at UW-Madison. Not only that, the flingers of these zingers — reporters from around the nation — often want a response sooner than soon.

Jones, you see, for years has been one of the nation's premier presidential scholars, and reporters know it. So they hunt him down to leaven their stories with his quotes and background analysis.

BY JEFF ISEMINGER MA'93

PHOTOS BY JEFF MILLER



Charles O. Jones welcomes the constant give-and-take of the American political arena, whether he's checking the latest news reports and debates online, reviewing a fax, or answering a reporter's questions on the telephone. The emeritus professor of political science views calls from the news media as another chance to teach. And besides, he says, "good journalists are scholars," so an interview can turn into a learning experience for both sides.

And this happens not just at election time, either. During the excruciating brouhaha over Clinton's impeachment proceedings, Jones received up to eight media calls a day. Symbolic moments such as the State of the Union Address also set off flurries of media queries.

What's surprising is that Jones and other UW-Madison experts such as those featured here accept the media's drumming with such aplomb. They consider it an important — and satisfying — aspect of fulfilling the university's public service mission.

"I see it as teaching," says Jones. "Besides, I learn from them, too."

For example, one of his frequent callers over the years has been Bob Shogan, political reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*, who, like the professor, has written several books on politics.

"Good journalists are scholars, just of a different type," says Jones, adding that he's noticed a change in the nature of his media interactions. "When I was younger, the reporters asked direct questions and wanted quick answers," he says. "But as certain reporters and I have gotten to know each other better, we often have

long conversations about issues, instead of cut-and-dried interviews."

A conversation may produce only a quote or two, but both experts — professor and journalist — are enriched in ways that reverberate well beyond the next deadline.

Jones and other political experts pop up on a reporter's radar screen to begin with through referrals from other experts, mentions in databases of previous articles, or inclusion in lists of experts published by universities (UW-Madison included) and think tanks such as the Brookings Institution, where Jones and UW political science professor Don Kettl are senior fellows.

And professors who are writing books on politics may talk to reporters for their perspectives, as Jones did in writing *Passages to the Presidency*.

Another arena of interaction is the annual conference of the American Political Science Association (APSA), of which Jones is past president. It's common to see David Broder of the *Washington Post* or Adam Clymer of the *New York Times* show up to attend conference sessions and, sometimes, to present them.

This free exchange between academic and journalistic experts infuses both sides with new insights, says Jones. But that doesn't make all media experiences equally fun for him.

"I usually turn down requests from national TV shows," he says. "They often edit a half-hour interview down to fifteen seconds, and to me, that's not fitting for the role of a scholar."

In contrast, Jones enjoys the editing-free zone of *Conversations with Tom Clark*, a live morning talk show on Wisconsin Public Radio, which, like his conversations with Shogan, offers an exploration of the issues.

When you come down to it, that's what experts such as Jones love to do: explore the coves of democracy's shoreline, where theory meets reality. Perhaps to them, that jangling phone at election time doesn't seem so bad because of who's at the other end — someone who wants to talk politics. For the rest of us, however, following election coverage in the media can be like piloting a plane through flak: your chances of getting shot down or taken for a very bumpy ride are much better than learning anything useful up there.

But your chances may improve, depending on your navigator. With the right routing, your ride may smooth out and your view of the political landscape clear up — or at least get a little less murky.

The UW-Madison faculty is full of good political navigators such as Jones. Each of them has politics-related specialties and has found information sources that help cut through the clutter and fluff, make sense of breathless daily news reports, and, when needed, press the mute button on cacophonous TV analysts.

We asked a sampling of these UW experts to share their particular areas of interest and to reveal their sources — which they've graciously done in their own words — in the hope that *On Wisconsin* readers can better navigate their own smooth ride through skies full of political flak.

MAKING SENSE OF PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

The experts tell you where to turn for help



CHARLES O. JONES

Professor emeritus of political science, on political institutions and the presidency:

I read at least three national newspapers every day: the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal*. Each has had outstanding coverage of the candidates, including excellent, detailed stories on their backgrounds and records. I read the Internet edition of the *Washington Post* and frequently scan the Web sites of other major papers (my favorites: the *Boston Globe*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Dallas Morning News*). At least once a week, I go to the national and international news summaries at www.yahoo.com.

I do not ordinarily rely on the major weekly newsmagazines. My weekly news sources include three Congressionally oriented publications with frequent analyses of the presidential campaign: *The Hill*, *Roll Call*, and the *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*. Each has a Web site, as does the *National Journal*, a sophisticated weekly treating national politics.

[See sidebar for a listing of Web sites.]

I occasionally visit the Web sites of the candidates and the political parties. Naturally, they are designed to favor their candidates, but they do provide details on issue positions and travel schedules.

All political junkies rely on the "AllPolitics" Web site, which can be accessed as well through newspaper and television network sites. I do not use this site as much now as in the past. In fact, I am an impatient "surfer." I like the newspaper sites because they provide current information, good summaries of news stories, and access to other data sources (e.g., candidate profiles, issue positions, and polls).

Several organizations in Washington — Brookings Institution, American

Enterprise Institute, Heritage Foundation, Wilson Center, Council for Excellence in Government — have programs under way to encourage the candidates and their staffs to think ahead to the transition and to governing. These organizations (mostly think tanks) have Web sites that provide listings of detailed studies for those who want greater depth of information and analysis.

For example, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and the Brookings Institution conducted sessions on "How Would They Govern." Staffs from the Bush and Gore campaigns, along with political analysts, were questioned about how the candidates would manage domestic and foreign issues. The transcripts are available at the AEI Web site.



KENNETH GOLDSTEIN

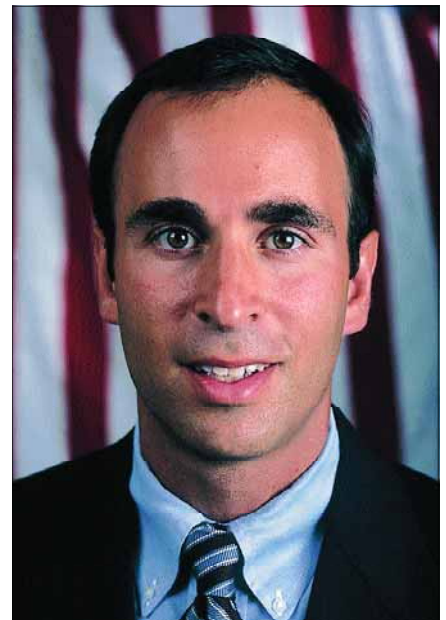
Assistant professor of political science, on political behavior, interest groups, and survey research methods:

The single best resource on the Web for following politics and policy — both in and out of election season — is the *National Journal*. The page contains links to *National Journal* publications that cover lobbying, Congress, public policy, and electoral politics. Unfortunately, access to the home page is expensive. There is, however, a free version of *National Journal's Hotline* available. The *Hotline* is a daily newsletter that compiles and summarizes information from hundreds of print, radio, TV, and Web sources.

The home page of the Drudge Report is also a terrific resource. Drudge obviously has his partisan predilections and obsessions. Still, once you get by the hysterical headlines, it is

the Web page with the single best set of links to media sources, with a link to just about any media source that someone following the campaign might want to read. The set of links to national op-ed writers is probably the page's most useful function.

As a matter of fact, I think that reading a wide selection of national op-eds is the best way to stay on top of policy and political debates. Furthermore, for alumni who are preparing to take LSATs



or GREs, or for parents who want their kids to do better on the SATs, I also think that reading a wide selection of op-eds is better than any expensive test preparation course.

Other sources I look at occasionally include the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) and the Polling Report. The CRP page contains information on campaign finance, including the top soft-money contributors to the parties. It also translates FEC records into a more tractable program and allows one to search by zip code, state, district, and race for campaign contributions. The Polling Report compiles just about every publicly released poll and is a good resource for looking at how races and perceptions of issues have changed over time.

Surfing Politics

Want to keep up your end of a conversation about American presidential politics? UW experts suggest these Web sites:

 National Journal
www.nationaljournal.com/

 George W. Bush
www.georgewbush.com/

 Al Gore
www.algore2000.com/

 AllPolitics
www.allpolitics.com/

 American Enterprise Institute
www.aei.org/

 National Journal's Hotline
www.hotlinescoop.com/

 Drudge Report
www.drudgereport.com/

 Center for Responsive Politics
www.opensecrets.org/

Polling Report
www.pollingreport.com/

Reuters
www.reuters.com/

On Politics
www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/politics/

Presidential speeches
www.news.wisc.edu/misc/speeches/

Public Agenda Online
www.publicagenda.org/

Library of Congress
lcweb.loc.gov/global/

iPOLL
www.iopcenter.uconn.edu/

their staffs, and interviews with reporters, too. Part of what we can do as professors is try to teach through the media. When I talk with them, though, I listen carefully to the questions they are asking (which provides valuable clues about what's cooking out there), and I also ask questions (to learn what the reporters are finding that produces insights that sometimes never appear in print).

It's nice to have a hobby that's also a job. Or, is it the other way around?



STEPHEN LUCAS

Professor of communication arts, on American political rhetoric and rhetoric of social movements:

For readers interested in learning more about presidential contests in our history, there is no better single source than the four-volume *History of American Presidential Elections* (1971). Edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., this work contains comprehensive, top-flight essays on every election from 1789 through 1968. Helpful, single-volume works include Stefan Lorant's *The Glorious Burden: The History of the Presidency and Presidential Elections from George Washington to James Earl Carter, Jr.* (1976); Gil Troy, *See How They Ran: The Changing Role of the Presidential Candidate* (1991); and Keith E. Melder, *Hail to the Candidate: Presidential Campaigns from Banners to Broadcasts* (1992).

Although it is easy to dismiss the speeches of presidential candidates and their surrogates as "mere rhetoric," they have produced some of the most notable public addresses in American history, including Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1932 acceptance speech, in which he pledged himself to "a new deal for the American people." In the national survey I spearheaded last year to determine the top one hundred American speeches of the twentieth century, no fewer than seventeen of the speeches chosen were associated with presidential election campaigns, and



DON KETTL

Professor of political science, on public management and government reform:

I'm a newspaper addict and consume four per day — the *Wisconsin State Journal* and *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* for Wisconsin news, and the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* for national and international news. The *Times* is the gold standard for news; the *Journal* tends not to cover as many issues, but what it does cover in political news, it does better than anyone. The *Journal's* editorial page is very conservative, but the rest of the paper is very balanced. All have Web sites; all but the *Journal's* are free.

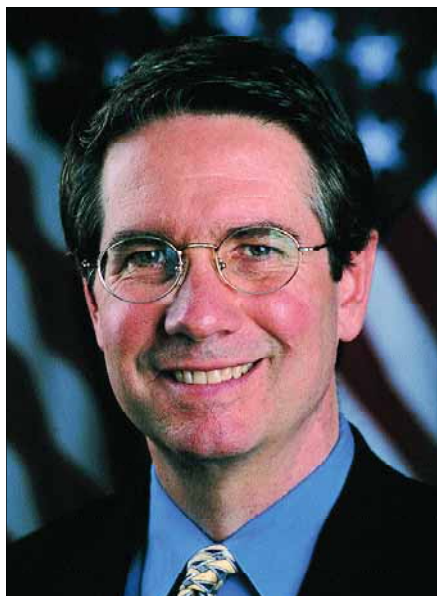
Second, I cruise the Web extensively. Reuters has a nice Web site for breaking news. For candidates, I always check their own Web sites to see how they choose to present themselves. But be prepared for a pitch to contribute to their campaigns.

Third, there are useful background sites. The *Washington Post* is in partner-



ship with MSNBC and *Congressional Quarterly* in presenting On Politics, which includes links to elections, polls, and other helpful resources.

Reading, however, doesn't always cover all the bases. I spend lots of time with my antennae up — lots of background conversations with politicians and



three of the top ten speeches were campaign addresses.

The complete list of the speeches can be accessed on the Web. To locate individual speeches online, enter the name of the speaker in one of the Web's search engines. My personal favorite is

Although it is easy to dismiss the speeches of presidential candidates and their surrogates as "mere rhetoric," they have produced some of the most notable public addresses in American history.

Fast Search (www.alltheWeb.com), which is far and away the fastest search engine currently in operation. Although only about half of the top one hundred speeches are available on the Web, almost all of those associated with presidential campaigns can be found online.

In addition to the party conventions, the major rhetorical events of current campaigns are the presidential debates. The Kennedy-Nixon debates of 1960 remain the most famous and most studied of all such debates. They are covered in brief but edifying fashion by Theodore White in his classic book, *The Making of the President, 1960*. Sidney Kraus's *Televised*

Presidential Debates and Public Policy (2000) provides an up-to-date look at the role of presidential debates in the television age, while Kathleen Hall Jamieson and David Birdsell's *Presidential Debates: The Challenge of Creating an Informed Electorate* (1988) gives a broad historical perspective.



**DHAVAN
SHAH**


Assistant professor of journalism and mass communication, on the psychology of political communication:

Contemporary electoral coverage, even the content found in elite news sources, tends to focus on the "game" or "strategy" of politics. Too often, broadcast and print news outlets attend to who is "winning," as opposed to coverage of issues, legislative voting records, or public support for particular policies. However, a number of readily accessible Internet resources do provide these more



national defense, AIDS, crime, the economy, and the environment.

The second is the Library of Congress's "Explore the Internet" Web page. This page has links to a range of government resources, including the voting records of all members of Congress since 1989, performance evaluations of current House and Senate members by special interest groups, and the full text of bills, resolutions, and public laws. This site is particularly helpful for checking claims about legislative performance made in political ads. A portion of the site also provides links to the executive and judicial branches of government, including recent presidential initiatives and court decisions.

The third site, iPOLL, contains data on trends in mass opinion concerning political issues and figures. One of its features may be among the most comprehensive sources available for examining changes in American public opinion over time. For registered users, iPOLL provides a full-text retrieval system, organized by questions, to sift through roughly 350,000 questions asked on national public opinion surveys since 1935. By filling out a short form, visitors can search a selection of recent national surveys. 

CHANGING THE CULTURE

Could a movement among sororities and fraternities be a sign that binge drinking will soon be socially unacceptable?

BY JAMES RHEM MA'71, PHD'79 / PHOTOS BY BRENT NICASTRO '77

They thought they'd put their houses in order way back in 1989. That's when UW-Madison's Commission on Fraternities and Sororities made its long-awaited recommendations to curb the *Animal House*-type drinking that has earned Madison its "Madtown" moniker.

"It was a bold, but modest attempt to bring about change," reflects Emeritus Professor of Sociology Jack Ladinsky, who was named chair of the commission in 1992 after years of involvement. "We were naïve in retrospect — a paper tiger — because the university has limited enforcement capacity. We can remove an organization from the UW, but that's about it." And even then, he adds, it took four years to remove the biggest repeat alcohol offender on campus. At least that was the case with the "Fijis," more infamous for their parties than famous for their Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired house on Lake Mendota.

Thanks to a five-year, \$700,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Foundation, however, UW-Madison has begun to encourage responsible drinking. Campus units are hosting non-alcoholic events for students and launching advertising campaigns to promote social change. But change is slow to come, experts say. "RWJ has made only a tiny dent" in students' attitudes, says Ladinsky. "What we've realized is that self-governance is the *only* way to make change, and that binge drinking is a deeply entrenched Wisconsin subculture."



"When you say Wis — con — sin," you say a lot about the state's decades-old drinking traditions. And although UW officials declare that they are not concerned with drinking per se, they are increasingly concerned with the harmful behaviors that often accompany overindulging. Nationally, 78.9 percent of fraternity members say that they binge drink, according to a survey by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Moreover, the Provost's Office describes more than 20 percent of each class as "high-risk" drinkers. In an effort to find a path of change, faculty and staff are focusing on what the Greek system — which encompasses 10 percent of the student body — can do to alter a deeply entrenched subculture.

A Day in the Life

Tall, athletic, affable, twenty-year-old Mark (not his real name) could be a poster boy for the native Wisconsin undergrad. This junior, who eventually chose not to join a Greek organization, did go to a lot of fraternity parties not long after arriving on campus. Free beer and "girls" were the primary attractions, he says, calling the non-alcoholic events the UW sponsors "static" in comparison. "They try to make them cool," he explains. "They'll have a deejay like it was a junior high dance."

Like nearly one-third of all entering freshmen, Mark started drinking in high school. A friend of his even died in a car accident playing a high-stakes drinking game called "On the road, off the road." Mark doesn't drink and drive, but says that "drinking and college kinda go together, especially on the weekends."

A look at Mark's typical day and week underscore the differences between the world of the young and the rest of us. He has a part-time job, studies hard until 10 p.m. or midnight, and then still goes out drinking. When the bars close, a "lot of frats have 'after bars,'" he says — parties where drinking goes on way past the 2 a.m. bar-closing time.

The Thursday before we met, Mark's evening went like this: He played some basketball and forgot about eating. When he got back to his room, some friends were in from North Carolina, so they all "kicked back" with a few drinks (four by his count: two gin-and-tonics and two beers) before they went out on the town. Once they got out, "I just forgot sort of that I'd had those drinks." As



they moved through a couple of bars, they met a Swede who was visiting, and he bought shots for everybody, two for each — schnapps. "I did it because I was

Now, more than anything else, it may be the increasing attention given to the problems caused to students by their peers' drinking — things such as unwanted sexual advances, physical injury, and property damage — that are signaling a real social movement in the making.

offered," Mark remembers.

By the time he got home around 1 a.m., Mark estimated that he had consumed about eleven drinks, much more than his usual intake. "Friday I took it

easy," he says, and he "nursed" his way through five or six beers that evening.

"I don't like to be just plastered," he says. "I don't want people to look at me and say, 'He's hammered.'" It doesn't feel good, he adds, but "you have to see what you don't want," meaning that you have to learn from your own experience.

To Mark, alternatives such as going to the movies seem too expensive and less social than going out drinking. He played in a rock band in high school and as a freshman here, but "there are limited places to practice," he says. He likes "ultimate frisbee," and indeed, "That's more fun than drinking, if you ask me," he says. With a certain irony, he adds, "But, you know, it gets cold here sometimes. The cold sure encourages drinking. What else can you do in the winter?"

What Is Socially Acceptable?

Like many involved in the study of alcohol and student life, Ladinsky points to the example of smoking as evidence that



Kegs of beer have been common additions to fraternity/sorority and student parties for more than half a century. Beer has been served at the Wisconsin Union Terrace since 1933. The big difference between the two? "We serve food," says Union food service director Julie Vincent, noting that, on a typical Friday night, 75 percent of her bar stand customers ordered a sandwich. What's more, she says, Union patrons come to listen to music and enjoy the lake view. Destructive drinking just isn't part of the equation.



social movements can change entrenched behaviors and attitudes. Not long ago, smoking on airplanes and in restaurants was commonplace. Today, it's anathema. Thirty years ago, fraternities held "smokers" to welcome new pledges. Today, it's hard to find anyone on campus who remembers that these cigar-filled meetings ever existed.

But it wasn't the first U.S. Surgeon General's report in 1964 announcing that smoking was dangerous to one's health that hastened a change in the culture. It was the 1986 report, which described the effects of secondhand smoke, that turned the tide. Smokers began to be viewed as socially offensive, harming not only themselves, but others. Now, more than anything else, it may be the increasing attention given to the problems caused to students by their peers' drinking — things such as unwanted sexual advances, physical injury, and property damage — that are signaling a real social movement in the making.

Last October, the Commission on Fraternities and Sororities issued a

report. It dealt with much more than the place of alcohol in Greek life, and it was notably straightforward in characterizing the alcohol problem. It called drinking in the Greek world "an affliction," and went on to conclude that, "While it is true that

"There probably is no magic bullet. We are doing dozens and dozens of little things, no one of which will really do much in itself, but all of which taken together will support and encourage a change in the campus culture around drinking."

the UW-Madison fraternity houses have not suffered a major tragedy, most experienced, candid observers — students, alumni, faculty, and staff — agree that alcohol abuse at fraternity parties at this university is widespread and dangerous, that near-deaths have occurred, that sex-

ual assaults have occurred, that trashing of facilities is common, and that the practice is entirely unbecoming and diminishes the ethos of Greek life."

Faced with these kinds of problems, a number of colleges and universities have simply banned fraternities. At Dartmouth, for example, all eighty-two faculty members voted unanimously to dismantle the Greek system there. Why not do that here? Why has the university devoted such time and attention to reforming, rather than eliminating, Greek life? The "ethos of Greek life" offers clues.

"When it works right," says Ladinsky, "the Greek experience can be one of the best all-around experiences students can have."

Aaron Brower, a professor in UW-Madison's School of Social Work and co-principal investigator on the RWJ grant, agrees. His research interest has focused on the factors that make undergraduates successful. "Those students who find a niche for themselves are the ones who succeed," he says. And since 10 percent of students belong to Greek organizations, the UW has a strong interest in making their experiences positive.

Ladinsky goes further: "What I like about Greek life is that it's a comprehensive 'primary group.' It's leadership, philanthropy, and a lot of things all combined." Unfortunately, he adds, a lot of the positive aspects of Greek life have been lost in the last forty years. "Talk to the World War II generation. They're dedicated to the UW, and they still have friends from their fraternity days," Ladinsky continues. "They drank, sure, but today they don't want to visit the fraternity house. 'The place smells of beer all the time,' they say. So when we talk about the positive traditions of Greek life, the sad fact is that the students today don't know what their own tradition is or was."

And it's here that Ladinsky sees an opportunity for alumni to play a role, to get more involved, to set a new example, and create a new model.

"The key is to establish a cooperative effort with the students," he says, "to involve them, to show professionalism, and get more student chapter presidents involved with programming — empowering them to make change." The commission's recommendations encourage a cooperative effort among the university, community, students, and alumni in effecting a new social norm. To this end, the director of the Student Organization Office, Yvonne Fangmeyer, supports the recent creation of a Greek Alumni Council, an affiliate of the Wisconsin Alumni Association.

"When working at its best, the Greek system can provide one of the most in-depth student leadership opportunities available on the campus," she says. It teaches personal and professional skills, she continues, and it provides service to others, supports scholarship, develops financial and management abilities, and creates a sense of belonging. "These aspects of Greek life connect directly with the university's mission," she adds. "It's this potential — what the Greek community *can* be — that provides the impetus for change." In her view, the recommendations of the Greek commission establish a blueprint that will set standards of excellence for the Greek community.

Some of these standards are also being dictated by the national fraternal organizations. Squeezed by the rising cost of liability insurance, many are requiring chapter houses to become alcohol-free. Sororities at UW-Madison have already declared that they won't attend fraternity parties where alcohol is served. Vocal fraternity men responded to that announcement by saying that they simply wouldn't socialize with sorority women. Understandably, feelings among fraternity members on the value of moderation as an ideal norm remain mixed at best. But one thing's for sure, says Ladinsky: "Greek life is going to change; there's no doubt about it." There's a seriousness in the air following a nationwide increase in student deaths, which are 30- to 40 percent Greek-related.

Drinking in Madison is still as common as it was in the days of the Mifflin Street block party. But police officer George Silverwood notes that the level of violence associated with drinking has increased a lot since then. So, too, has there been an increase in the percentage of U.S. students who don't drink at all. "Sociologists don't understand all the elements," says the UW's Ladinsky. "Alcohol reform is just at the front end of a social movement."



UW ARCHIVES



The reform of Greek life currently remains more dream than reality, but the hope is that just as fraternities have been an emblem of student drinking at its worst, they might become a model for student leadership at its best. The cornerstones of ancient Greek wisdom, according to the classics, lie in two sayings of the Delphic oracle: "Know thyself" and "In all things, moderation." The "golden mean" was not about temperance, which has always carried a moralistic tone in American thinking, but about balance and the good of society as well as the soul.

These traditions fuel Ladinsky's vision — a vision that sees fraternities and sororities becoming living-learning communities. Ideally, they could evolve into something akin to the residential, undergraduate housing that the Bradley Learning Community and the Chadbourne Residential College are striving to become.

Gotta Problem with That?

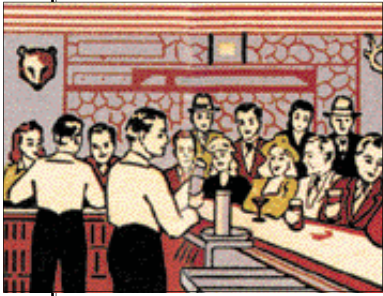
As you head to the all-alumni tailgate party at the Field House on Homecom-

ing morning, or join your friends for a fire-up outside of Camp Randall, consider this: Is heavy or "binge" drinking (five or more drinks consumed in one sitting) a problem?

Almost every story on the subject begins with the assumption that it is. But while heavy drinking is common among students, research indicates that it's a rite of passage, the behavior of a subculture that stops when students graduate. Moreover, the incidence of alcoholism among former "binge" drinkers is no higher than in the general population.

So, *is* it a college thing? The Harvard School of Public Health's national survey of college student drinking shows that 87.5 percent of students drink, and 42.9 percent say they drink "to get drunk." At UW-Madison, 94.2 percent of students drink, and 54.4 percent of them say they drink "to get drunk."

Nationally every year, thirty to fifty college students die from drinking or drinking-associated accidents, but there have been no deaths here. There have, however, been plenty of close calls and serious injuries.



“LUTHER’S CONDITIONS”

UW–Madison wants campus-area bars to voluntarily accept the following conditions on their alcohol licenses — conditions agreed to by the owners of Luther’s, a blues club and restaurant opening near campus:

- Not to give away any drink or sell a drink at a special price.
- Not to increase the volume of alcohol in a serving without proportionately increasing the price.
- Not to offer drink specials that rely on buying multiple drinks.
- Not to sell or give away an unlimited number of drinks during a set period of time for a fixed price.
- To provide at least two nights per month during which all or a portion of the premises will be declared alcohol-free and during which entertainment will be provided.
- To familiarize security staff with the city’s Unruly Patron Ordinance, and to have them contact the police immediately when there is a problem.
- To forbid very drunken people from being served or entering the premises.
- To put security personnel through a training curriculum approved by the Madison Police Department.

Yet some experts ask, “What’s the harm?” And the thirty-four bars (not to mention the four liquor stores and numerous restaurants and grocery stores that sell liquor in the downtown campus area) agree. Why all the hoopla? “Drinking helps us to unwind, relax; it eases introduction to the opposite sex; and is just a lot of cheap fun,” some students say.

Fraternity members especially say that. Nationally, 78.9 percent of them binge drink, according to a survey by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. But it’s not just fraternity members who drink heavily on the UW campus. The Provost’s Office describes more than 10 percent of each class as “high-risk drinkers.” An annual survey by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* released in June found a 24.3 percent increase in student arrests associated with alcohol use nationally, the largest increase in the last seven years.

UW-Madison topped the list with 792 arrests, up from 342 in 1997. That increase results from a number of factors, including that the way incidents are reported can vary from campus to campus. For example, if a street lamp is broken by a group of rowdy students who

have been drinking, UW law enforcement officials might report it as an alcohol-related offense, while on another campus, a similar incident might be reported as property damage.

For some students, the statistics end up reinforcing a point of pride, instead of sounding an alarm bell. Like the Budweiser commercial-tuned-UW-fight-song says, “When you say, Wis – con – sin — you’ve said it all.” For more than half of the UW’s students, going to college and drinking with abandon are synonymous.

The numbers on drinking arrests seem to confirm what most people already think: that Wisconsin is a hard-drinking state where long winters and a Northern European settlement history have created a culture that thrives on beer and brandy. The state’s professional baseball team is the Brewers, and for years, ads have proclaimed that “Milwaukee” means beer. Of the eight cities in the nation with the highest number of taverns per capita, seven are in Wisconsin. Only California — with five times Wisconsin’s population — consumes more brandy. Given the culture, it stands to reason that drinking-

related problems — and how to address them — are n’t the sole purview of college students.

No Simple Solutions

The university identified excessive drinking as the number-one threat to student health as long ago as 1973, according to Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Mary Rouse, former dean of students. Yet it had little success in convincing students to view drinking as a problem or a danger, despite its long-standing and varied efforts to put the negative consequences of drinking in front of them. With one voice, university officials declare that they are not concerned with drinking per se, but with the harmful behaviors that often accompany it.

Many students see the situation differently. They see the drinking age law as hypocritical and unfair, and feel certain that the dire consequences of excessive drinking — well covered in UW-Madison orientation programs — won’t happen to them.

Among students, drinking at, before, or after age twenty-one is seen as a right. Those who’ve studied student drinking observe that no matter what the age, the more disconnected, angry, lonely, or rebellious the student, the more likely it is that drinking to get drunk plays a part in his or her student life.

And there the matter stands: complex, vexing, and seemingly intractable.

Madison Police Captain George Silverwood ’71, who was in charge of policing Sector 403, the campus area, for the last four years, will tell you that the level of violence associated with drinking — the number of batteries and aggravated batteries — has increased markedly since he was a student bartender here twenty-five years ago. But while the statistics cry out for attention, the drinking culture and the drinking problem have the outward appearance of something if not static, at least constant — like the tides or the seasons — something that will never fundamentally change.

But something *is* changing. While the proportion of binge drinkers (those who have consumed five or more drinks at a

Binge Drinking Reflects National Trend

The Harvard School of Public Health released the results of its 1999 College Alcohol Study last spring. The study, which was conducted by Henry Wechsler, shows continued high rates of binge drinking at UW-Madison (defined as five drinks or more in a row for men and four drinks or more in a row for women), and the associated negative consequences, from 1998 to 1999:

	1998	1999
Abstainer	10.1%	7.9%
Non-binge drinker	35.3 %	24.7%
Occasional binging (one to two times in the two weeks prior to the survey)	24.8%	24.5%
Frequent binge drinker (three or more times in the two weeks prior to the survey)	29.8%	42.9%
"Bingers"	54.6%	67.4%

The 1999 numbers for UW-Madison show that, due to binge drinking, 16 percent of students have been pushed, hit, or insulted; 23.4 percent have suffered property damage; and 34.4 percent have experienced unwanted sexual advances.

More Choices

A broad coalition representing the university and the community are working together to offer students attractive alternatives to drinking, with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation:

After Hours

To help steer underage students away from the bar scene, the grant helps support late-night, alcohol-free activities at two university recreational facilities.

Awareness

To foster a better understanding of high-risk drinking, RWJ staff and volunteers present alcohol awareness and safety programs.

Union Activities

Club 770 music and dance events, organized by and for students at Union South, are attracting 200 to 400 students each Friday and Saturday night.

WASB Mini-Grants

The Wisconsin Alumni Association Student Board supports student organizations that sponsor late-night, alcohol-free activities.

ESCAPE

This Web site features events that focus on activities other than drinking, and averages 2,000 visits a month: danenet.wicup.org/escape.



"Greek life is going to change; there's no doubt about it," says sociologist Jack Ladinsky, chair of the Commission on Fraternities and Sororities. The key is to establish a cooperative effort with the students, he says, and to empower them to make change. With the help of alumni mentors, Greeks could create living-learning communities that connect directly to the university's mission — and create a new social norm.

the first time that a six-hundred-person-capacity establishment was about to open right on the university's doorstep, he felt obliged to act.

Eventually, the owners of Luther's (more a blues club and restaurant than a bar, the owners say) agreed to a set of conditions that will be written into their liquor license. These call for, among other things, alcohol-free nights and no "two-for-the-price-of-one" drink specials. The "Luther Conditions" have become a pledge that the university wants other campus-area bars to accept. While tavern owners don't like this initiative, they'd like a 1911 idea recorded in University Archives even less. It called for the establishment of a "dry zone" around the campus in order to discourage the spread of "blind pigs" (speakeasies) and road houses.

Wiley sees the situation this way: Admission standards have been steadily rising at the UW. Accepted students have been carefully screened and ought to be able to do the work. Still, 25 percent of those admitted leave without a degree.

Continued on page 54

sitting three times or more in the last two weeks) in college has remained the same since the early 1990s, the number of students who don't drink at all has been increasing very steadily. In 1993, it was 15.4 percent of the student population nationally. In 1997, it was 18.9 percent, and last year it climbed to 19.2 percent. Some sort of polarization is going on. Scholars such as Harvard's Henry Wechsler, who conducted the research and came up with the five-drinks-at-a-sitting definition of "binge" drinking, says it's unclear why this is happening.

"Sociologists don't understand all the elements," says the UW's Ladinsky.

"Alcohol reform is just at the front end of a social movement."

Where Do We Go from Here?

At the moment, the most visible activism by the university centers on Provost John Wiley's very public involvement in hearings of the Madison Alcohol Licensing and Review Board. That activism hasn't been welcomed by tavern owners, but it has already had some success.

Wiley says that until recently, the university had no evidence suggesting that an increase in the number of bars led to an increase in the amount of student drinking. But when he opened the newspaper one morning and learned for

Changing the Culture

Continued from page 33

"About a third of that number will drop out with a grade-point average below 2.0, which is related to alcohol problems or binging in some way," he says.

In loco parentis didn't work in the sixties, and *laissez-faire* didn't work in the seventies and eighties, but Wiley isn't willing to just let social Darwinism or a "survival of the fittest" attitude take its toll on otherwise capable students. Even though federal law now allows the university to inform parents if their child has gotten into trouble relating to alcohol, the university has made a policy decision against doing so. "We've decided that maintaining a trusting relationship with students is more important than getting them in trouble with their parents," says Wiley. "We try to get them into counseling."

Not everyone agrees with this policy, but most agree with Wiley's assessment of how to change things. "Our feeling is that there probably is no magic bullet," he says. "We are doing dozens and dozens of little things, no one of which will really do much in itself, but all



"Those students who find a niche for themselves are the ones who succeed," says Aaron Brower, a professor in UW-Madison's School of Social Work, whose research focuses on the factors that make undergraduates successful. In addition to encouraging reform in the Greek houses, the university is sponsoring events that help steer underage students away from the bar scene, and back to some of the many other activities available on campus, such as concerts on the Union Terrace.

of which taken together will support and encourage a change in the campus culture around drinking."

"The change I'd like to see," says Professor Brower, "is one where the first thing people think of when they think of Wisconsin isn't drinking. I wouldn't even care if it were the third or fourth. Alcohol is not the evil here. The behaviors are."

The chair of the Commission on Fraternities and Sororities takes that philosophy one step further, putting it into action.

"If we can start empowering 10 percent of the student population — the Greeks — to make a change, then maybe we can begin to reprogram a subculture that we've allowed to grow for forty years," says Ladinsky. "To ask chapter houses to drop alcohol at parties and to go back to traditional values misses the point. One big piece of change has to come from alumni." ■

(Editor's Note: If you are an alumnus of the university's Interfraternity or Panhellenic network and would like to get involved with the future of Greek houses on campus, contact Ed Mirecki, Fraternity & Sorority Adviser, Student Organization Office, mirecki@redgym.wisc.edu, 259 Red Gym, Madison, WI 53706, (608) 263-4597. For an electronic copy of the Greek commission recommendations, refer to <http://soo.studentorg.wisc.edu>.)

James Rhem is a native of Kentucky, and has been fascinated by Wisconsin's drinking subculture since he moved to Madison in 1969 to study eighteenth-century English literature. He founded *The National Teaching and Learning Forum* in 1989, and lectures nationally. His book on photographer Ralph Eugene Meatyard is being published in France this fall.

SOCIAL NORMS

One approach to changing the drinking culture on a campus is called "social norms marketing." Plans call for adding it to the mix soon at UW-Madison, according to Provost John Wiley. Some, like Jack Ladinsky, who've been recommending the approach for a long time, will be glad to see it get a try.

Most students believe that their peers are drinking much more than they actually are. When confronted with an accurate picture of the real norm, students are freed from the tyranny of their "perceived norms" and motivated to conform with what's actually going on.

Michael Haines, director of health services at Northern Illinois University (NIU) in De Kalb, is a leading spokesperson for the value of this approach, which his campus has followed for the last ten years. It has led to a 47-percent reduction in injuries to self among students at NIU, and a 76-percent reduction in injuries to others. It's also led to a 46-percent reduction in heavy drinking, and has been successful at a number of other schools.

"I would bet money that if they surveyed the population, the UW would find positive norms which, if fed back or reinforced in students, would lead to more moderate drinking," says Haines. "People are hung up on [Henry] Wechsler's definition of binge drinking as five drinks in a sitting, but it's the norm that matters in changing behavior."

In July, a national center on social norms opened at NIU. For the time being, more information, including sample "social norms marketing" posters, can be found at www.stuaff.niu.edu/uhs/norms.htm

IN THE LINE OF FIRE

With wildfires sweeping the country, why would someone intentionally set land on fire? At the UW Arboretum, they do just that — to learn about the deadly but multifaceted force of the flame. Here's how they do it without getting burned.

BY MICHAEL PENN MA'97

There is always a moment, usually after the tall grasses are lit and the wicked curl of flame begins arching into the prairie, when Steve Glass MS'88 feels the transfixing Zen of fire.

Burn days are rarely relaxing for Glass, who is the land-care manager for the UW Arboretum, the university's 1,230-acre outdoor laboratory. He moves a round like a symphony conductor in retardant clothing — coordinating fire trucks, supervising field staff, telling

photographers where they may and may not stand, checking and rechecking the weather, and fighting off the background murmur of dread that always accompanies a decision to intentionally set land on fire. Often, in the moments after the crews apply torches to the perimeter of a swath of prairie, he asks himself, "What was I thinking?"

That panic subsides as Glass sees months of planning and preparation pay off, and the fire sweeps into the designated burn area as he has anticipated.

"Once it's behaving as you predicted, and you can see that it's going to be successfully completed, there are a few minutes where you can sit back and appreciate it," he says.

"It's really a beautiful thing to watch. It's like a ballet. It really does seem to be alive — and it is, in some ways."

STEVE GLASS ISN'T THE FIRST

person to look into a flame and see something that lives. In some cultures, fire represents a life force or the human spirit. Fire for some is not only alive; it is the primordial flicker of life itself.

Modern-day researchers are no less fascinated by fire as one of nature's fundamental phenomena. Apart from its appearance, fire has other seemingly vital qualities. A spreading fire, for example, appears to defy physical laws. Where and how hot it burns vary with infinitesi-

mal changes in weather and environment — almost with a human fickleness.

During the spring wildfires that ravaged the forests around Los Alamos, New Mexico, the flames seemed hell-bent on destruction. On one day alone, May 10, the fires torched eighteen thousand acres and destroyed two hundred homes. Some embers rode winds for more than a mile to start new blazes elsewhere, making any attempt at control almost impossible. Yet it is very likely that, on another day, those fires would have been easily manageable — and they would have helped to prevent the very sort of catastrophe that they ultimately became.

In fact, it is fire's ability to help as well as harm that makes it so intriguing. Scientists are learning that fire can help to improve the health and vigor of certain landscapes. Prairie lands, which once dominated the American heartland, struggle to exist without fire, and for that reason many landscape managers consider fire a valuable tool for restoring them and keeping them healthy. Periodic fires also can improve the aesthetic and biological sanctity of old-growth forests.

And such is the great quandary of fire. During the past twenty years, the practice of controlled burning — intentionally setting fires to burn off undesirable elements — has been quietly gaining momentum in the nation's public lands, parks, and conservancies. But in the wake of the disastrous New Mexico incident, which began when a controlled burn set by the National Park Service became anything but controlled, the practice has become controversial, with many now arguing it is too risky. U.S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, long an outspoken proponent of burning, quickly approved temporary injunctions barring federal agencies from doing burns. And several Western states are responding to political pressure by considering limits on the practice — or even banning it entirely.

At UW-Madison, one of the first universities to research the use of fire on landscapes, the interest has not cooled. At least a half-dozen projects involving fire are currently in progress, as profes-

sors here try to find answers to the dilemma. Their work comes as researchers and policymakers alike grapple with the tough questions about setting intentional fires: When and how should they be done? What can be gained? Are the risks too great?

At the UW Arboretum, about ten fires are set each spring — and occasionally a few in the fall — to experiment with the land-altering power of the flame. Mark Leach PhD'96, Arboretum ecologist, allows that the burns carry an element of danger. But, he says, they also greatly assist the Arboretum's mission of restoring lost landscapes.

"If we're going to do our jobs to restore and preserve the biological diversity of these communities, we need to continue to reproduce the pattern of natural disturbances that these plants and animals are genetically adapted to," he says. "We do our fires in a way that the risk is very small, but the benefits are very large."

The restored prairie regions in the Arboretum are fire dependent, which means that they wouldn't survive without fire to burn off the trees and aggressive plant life that would otherwise dominate. Leach says that each fire not only restores a natural landscape, but it gives ecologists a chance to learn how nature regulates its plant and animal diversity.

The fires themselves, though, are anything but trial and error, set with all the coordination and planning of a military offensive. Small areas — usually no more than thirty acres — are designated for burning, and each is closely monitored by a crew of at least six, all of whom carry forty-pound water packs to help contain the fire. Glass keeps constant scrutiny on the weather, watching for the right mix of moderate temperature, light and consistent winds, and mid-range humidity. If any of these elements is remiss, the burn is called off.

Not more than about a dozen days each spring offer those precise conditions. For some areas — such as a patch of oak savanna that lies close to a residential neighborhood, necessitating a

MICHELLE MURRAY (3)



Trial by fire: Prairie burns are carefully orchestrated, following a deliberate, rehearsed plan. First, a line of fire is ignited along one edge of the prairie, top. As the fire moves into the designated area, crew members equipped with water tanks guard the perimeter to keep flames from spreading into new areas, center. Depending on the weather, it may take hours for a piece of prairie to burn completely. Once it has, workers survey the ground and extinguish any remaining hot spots, bottom.

westerly wind to carry smoke away from the houses — Glass is lucky to have two days a year when he can orchestrate a burn. “We’ve had a hard time finding those days where we get a westerly wind and the other factors that will give you a good burn,” he says. In almost every recent year, Glass’s crew has ended up doing fewer burns than they’d originally planned due to uncooperative conditions.

The paradox is that Glass is looking for a day when a fire *will* spread well — but not too well. A day not conducive to fire would defeat the purpose and kill the burn. But if he were to pick a day with high winds, or a swirling breeze that suddenly changes direction, the fire could spread into areas that he didn’t intend to burn.

That was the scenario in New Mexico, where strong winds surprised fire managers and took the flames past lines of firefighters assembled to contain the burn. Glass doesn’t worry about a New Mexico-type fire happening in the Arboretum, however, because the moist vegetation in southern Wisconsin doesn’t burn at all like the dry, piney forests in the southwestern United States. “We would never have a fire [here] like they had . . . because we don’t have that kind of combustible fuel,” he says.

Yet even with careful planning, it is very possible that a fire can get away from the best-prepared crew. Glass says that it is a matter of doing one’s homework to predict the fire’s behavior — to outguess the fire, so to speak — “and having a good back-up plan if that prediction is wrong.

“When you get right down to it, the only thing a fire manager has control over is the planning and the decision to light the fire. After that, you really don’t have control over what’s going to happen.”

THE PRAIRIES THAT GLASS

burns today were among the first places where modern-day scientists sought to explain fire. Professor John Curtis and graduate student Max Partch PhD’49 were trying to recreate the prairie on the Arboretum’s land a few miles south of campus, and not having much luck doing



JEFF MILLER

In early spring, Curtis Prairie takes on a rustic beauty that has made it a beloved campus scene for nearly half a century. Arboretum ecologists say that its vitality and botanical diversity are to some degree owing to fire, a natural force that has shaped the prairie landscape for millennia. The Arboretum’s controlled burns try to replicate a pattern of burning that ecologists believe existed for thousands of years until recently, when we began aggressively fighting fires to protect land and property.

it. In the early 1940s, they began to regularly burn the landscape, based on their knowledge that fire used to be a pretty frequent visitor there.

Historians have long known that many parts of North America were affected in presettlement days by large fires, mostly sparked by lightning. And evidence shows that many Native Americans made use of fire to clear lands.

Setting an intentional fire, though, went against all perceived logic at the time. In that era, one could hardly approach a woody area without encountering the irrepressible figure of Smokey the Bear, reminding all that “only you can prevent forest fires.” The campaign was based on the fervent belief of people in government and science that fires should be suppressed, period.

Monica Turner, a professor of zoology, says Smokey was successful beyond anyone’s wildest dreams, and that fighting fire became ingrained in the collective intellect. “It’s been such a strong influence for so many generations that changing that attitude has been a challenge,” she says. But she became convinced early in her ecological career that the attitude needed changing.

Turner was getting ready to do research in Yellowstone National Park in 1988 when wildfires took hold of the park — and the public’s attention. The professor was one of the few who argued publicly that the fires were not necessarily a terrible calamity for the cherished park. Appearing in several national news reports, she made the bold claim that big fires were a natural part of the historical

patterns of fire there, and they would eventually burn themselves out.

Although there was mounting general support for Turner's opinions among people who studied fire, many segments of the fire-fearing public were openly skeptical. Time, though, may be proving Turner right. In the years following the fire, Turner spent endless summer days crawling through the blackened char of the park to assess how the burned lands were recovering. Her findings have been remarkable.

Although the 1988 fires left nearly half of the area of Yellowstone burned, Turner found pockets that had little or no fire damage. They were seemingly skipped over. She found a plenitude of plant roots living just beneath the burned ground and thousands of new pine trees, birthed when the fire caused existing trees' pine cones to open and release seeds. Now, those new trees are thriving and Yellowstone is well on the path to a healthy recovery.

"I think people are learning that the fire wasn't so bad after all," Turner says. "Yellowstone is turning out to be fine."

It's possible that the outcome marked a turning point in people's perception of fire. Whatever the reason, researchers say that the number of fires set as part of controlled burning has increased significantly since that time. In fact, the federal government's position has almost completely flipped, from one of active fire suppression, to one that endorses frequent controlled fires, with a cabinet official (Babbitt) leading the cheers. Championing the Forest Service's new controlled-burning regimen during a speech in 1997, Babbitt said, "Fire is neither good nor evil. It is part of the natural process of change, a tool, a complex force that can be used to meet restoration goals."

WHEN BURN ADVOCATES SUCH as Babbitt discuss the use of fire, they speak frequently of the "fuel problem" plaguing many American forests, especially those in the Southwest. It's a delicate way of saying that our forests are a mess. By historical standards, they're

denser and more overgrown than ever, full of accumulated deadwood, shrubs, bushes, and small trees such as white fir that have taken hold under the canopy.

This vegetative clutter, researchers say, is the evidence of a century of fire suppression. You wouldn't find so much growth in the forests of one hundred years ago, they argue, because in that era, fairly intense ground fires swept through about every seven years or so. These fires might burn for days or even months, but, since they consumed mostly small grasses and short trees, they'd never climb into the crown of a forest, where they could spread . . . well, like wildfire. Without much fuel, those fires wouldn't become hot enough to kill off the thick-barked trees, so they acted rather nicely as a kind of recycling truck, cycling through to take out the trash.

These days, forests are brimming with what firefighters call "ladder fuel," because all the piled-up overgrowth makes a handy ladder for fire to climb into the canopy. A forest canopy is kind of like a fire superhighway, with plenty of interconnected leaves and branches to usher flames along. Controlled burning is seen as a way to rid the forests of much of this excess fuel, which, if left alone, could cause an otherwise benign ground fire to become a holocaust.

This layers a new rationale for burning onto what researchers Curtis and Partch discovered. Whereas they were primarily concerned with the biological health of the land (and the prairie specifically), the new logic is economic. It argues that if we burn off some of the fuel, we can prevent the huge fires that do millions of dollars in damage.

"I think it is very important to separate those two [arguments], because they're always getting mixed up," says Paul Zedler MS'66, PhD'68, a professor of environmental studies and a research scientist for the Arboretum. Zedler joined the UW-Madison faculty in 1998, coming from San Diego State University, where he studied Western wildfires closely.


When he began working with landscape managers in the 1970s, most

wouldn't dare suggest burning. Now many agree with the economic logic, because, if executed properly, a burn can remove a greater share of fuel than would be possible to remove by hand. But Zedler's experience cautions him to be wary of relying on fire for economic gains, since it is so capable of rendering huge economic losses.

Moreover, Zedler's research demonstrates interesting paradoxes. While Turner found great benefits from fire to the lodgepole pine populations in Yellowstone, for example, Zedler has noted that fire is largely to blame for huge declines in Tecate cypress populations around southern California. That such a tree — genetically similar to the lodgepole — suffers from too much fire shows that sweeping statements about fire can be difficult and dangerous.

"Using fire is like threading a needle," Zedler says, noting that the resources and safeguards required may make it economically worse than the alternative. "It's possible that there is no way — using fire alone — to bring forests back to this hypothetical stage in which fires would tend to be smaller and more controllable," he argues.

Zedler's point — one that is being heard often these days — is that for controlled burning to work, you have to have the perfect fire. You need a fire that spreads just far enough and burns just hot enough to consume what you intend. But no more. That's a challenge for even the best fire managers.

And that's why even the Arboretum's ecologist is reluctant to wholly endorse fire as a management principle. Mark Leach says that "nothing works as well as fire" to achieve the UW's research agenda on the prairie. But when others come to the Arboretum to watch the fires, he worries that they may get the wrong idea. "The danger is that a person can be involved with one or two fires and [go away thinking] that fire can be managed easily," he says. "That's one of my fears." 

Michael Penn, an associate editor for *On Wisconsin*, can barely keep a controlled burn going in his back yard grill.

DOCTORING ALLERGIES

Drop by Drop

Patients flock from all over the Midwest and beyond to receive a novel treatment offered by David Morris MD'54.

BY NIKI DENISON / PHOTOS BY BOB RASHID '87

Allergies. They can be a minor annoyance, or they can make life miserable. In extreme cases, they can be fatal.

People in Austin, Texas, have been known to suffer so much congestion when the cedar trees are pollinating that

they have to leave town for a few days just to catch their breath. Sometimes, these victims of "cedar fever" leave for good.

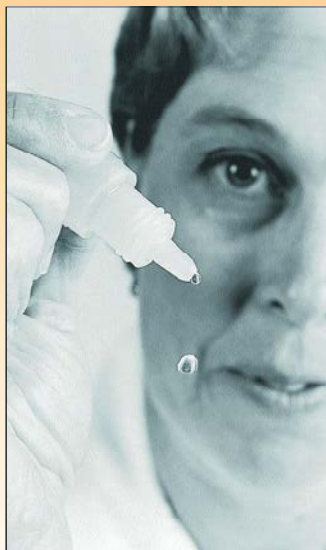
The sorry symptoms of sniffles, sneezing, and itching have been with us since ancient times. King Menes of Egypt is thought to have died from the bite of an insect that caused an allergic reaction in 2641 B.C. But it's only in modern times that allergies have been steadily increasing at an alarming rate, although this increase has been largely restricted to developed nations.

An estimated forty to fifty million Americans, or about 20 percent of the population, suffer from allergies. Some seventeen million Americans have asthma, which is triggered by allergies, and the incidence of asthma increased 75 percent between 1980 and 1994.

No one knows for sure why the number of allergies is soaring. But a recent theory posits that the virtual epidemic may have been fostered by the fact that we have actually created too clean of an environment for ourselves. Improved hygiene, vaccinations, and antibiotics

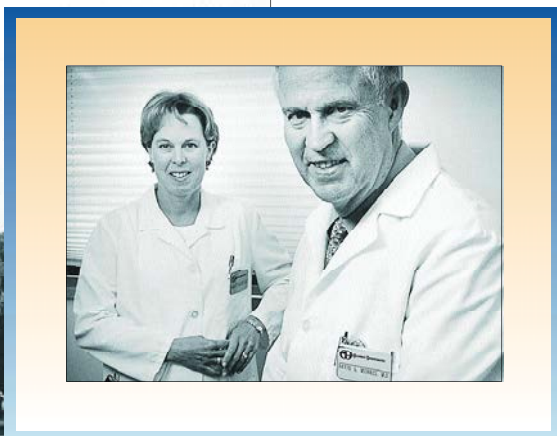
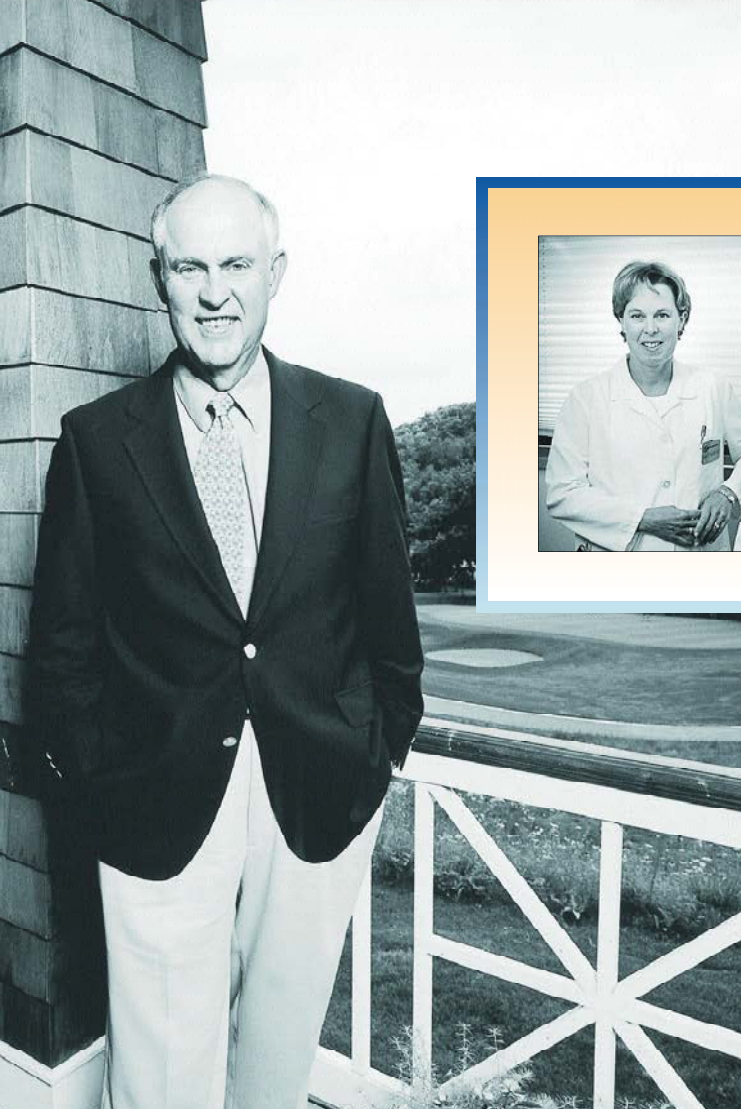
may not give young immune systems enough of a challenge to fully develop.

One researcher has found that farm children, who grow up near the plentiful bacteria of the barn that have coexisted with humans for eons, actually had fewer allergies. It is thought that early exposure to these pastoral microbes may have some sort of protective effect. Other studies have found that having a cat or dog in the house, growing up in a large family, or starting day care before the age of one seem to confer a similar benefit on infants.



Physicians at Morris's clinic use antigen drops under the tongue, rather than traditional shots, to fight allergies.





Mary Morris MD'83 (inset, left) works with her father, David Morris MD'54, at Allergy Associates in La Crosse, Wisconsin. A rising tide of allergic disease, coupled with the popularity of the clinic's less invasive treatment, has attracted some 50,000 families to the clinic in the last 20 years. David Morris, left (at his home in Onalaska, Wisconsin), spends his spare time overseeing the construction of a family retreat near Bozeman, Montana.

A Diet of Rice and Peas

Whatever the causes, the specter of allergy suddenly took on an ominous meaning in the life of Stewart Macaulay, a UW-Madison professor of law. He had always had a severe allergy to crabmeat and lobster, and suffered from hay fever. But when he hit his late forties, food allergies kicked in with a vengeance.

His ability to do his job was compromised, he says, because his tongue became covered with sores and swelled up so much that he sounded as if he were drunk when he gave his lectures. He was worried about his throat closing up. Macaulay says that the only things he could eat without experiencing symptoms were rice and peas. After physicians had ruled out other causes, the professor was diagnosed with food allergies and told he had to live with them.

"Essentially," says Macaulay, "I was being told I couldn't go out to a restaurant, I couldn't go out to a dinner party, and I was being asked to limit the plea-

tures of eating at home to just about nothing."

Fortunately, Macaulay's family physician, Jay Keepman '49, MD'54, told him there was a doctor in La Crosse who had had success in treating food allergies. Keepman, who had gone to medical school with David Morris MD'54, had also gone to his former classmate seeking relief for his own

allergies. So Macaulay went to see Morris, who tested him and prescribed a treatment called "sublingual therapy." The patient was told to squirt antigen drops under his tongue, count for fifteen to twenty seconds, and then swallow, repeating this procedure three times a day.

Morris says that the antigens, which are substances that stimulate the production of antibodies, are made up of the same substance that allergists use for injections. Both shots and drops fall under the category of immunotherapy, which seeks to increase tolerance to allergens by exposing patients to successively higher doses of the offending material.

It took about two years, but "I now eat almost everything," Macaulay says. (He must still avoid milk and MSG.) "I can teach my classes," he continues. "I am a totally satisfied patient."

There's only one problem with this happy ending. Although Morris says that he has been able to help thousands of

patients like Macaulay over the years, the professional organizations governing the practice of allergy in the United States regard sublingual therapy as "unproved and invalid." The drops are also used to treat a wide range of other allergies, including those that cause reactions to mold, pollen, and pet dander. But practitioners who use the novel method of delivering antigen are frowned upon and can even be the targets of hostility from their peers.

Proponents of sublingual therapy say that the drops are less expensive and more convenient, since patients can take them at home and don't have to visit the doctor's office once a week for shots. Advocates believe the approach works especially well for children, who may have a fear of needles.

But much more common is the view of Susan Hefle '83, MS'87, PhD'92, who is co-director of the Food Allergy Research and Resource Program at the University of Nebraska. She says that sublingual therapy "has not been proven to work for food allergies. . . . Currently, there is no treatment for food allergies."

She points out, however, that potential cures may be on the horizon. Researchers are in the process of developing a vaccine for peanut allergy. Another potential new treatment is a drug that blocks the antibody known as immunoglobulin E, or IgE. Preventing this antibody from attacking foreign substances may in turn prevent symptoms from food and other allergies.

Todd Mahr MD'84, an allergist in the La Crosse area, also represents the traditional view. "Sublingual immunotherapy is

controversial," he says. "There are those who believe that it works, and then there are those traditional allergists who need to have more scientific proof. . . . Studies that are larger and better controlled need to be performed."

Macaulay knows the treatment he received was controversial, but he says he doesn't care. His problems were severe enough, he says, that "I was willing to drive to La Crosse for a try, rather than having the locals tell me that they didn't have double-blind tests that would prove decisively that they could do something to control my allergies. Well, while I sat waiting for the double-blind tests, why, I still wouldn't be able to eat much of anything."

After all, he adds, "I was interested in solving my problems, not in establishing great scientific principles. If somebody says, 'Well, maybe it's the placebo effect, maybe it would have happened anyway' — frankly, I don't care. As a university professor, I'm all for science. As a patient, [Dr. Morris] solved the problem. And that's what I care about."

Macaulay still sees Morris twice a year, in the spring and fall pollen seasons. He often shares the drive to La Crosse with his colleague and fellow patient Beverly Moran, a UW-Madison professor of law and women's studies.

Moran says she's had allergies since childhood, but it was only when she saw Dr. Wayne Konetzki in Waukesha, Wisconsin, that she began to improve. Konetzki is another Wisconsin physician who asked Morris to treat his own allergies, and then was so impressed that he learned the sublingual therapy technique from Morris and is now using it in his own practice. "He was my mentor," says Konetzki. "Just as he does, I get patients from North Dakota, South Dakota, Kentucky, Florida, and Texas."

Moran says that she has now become a patient of Dr. Morris, since it



UW law professors Stewart Macaulay, above, and Beverly Moran (inset, right), have both endured severe allergies and sought relief at Morris's clinic. Macaulay, who was down to a diet of rice and peas, says he can now eat "almost everything."

is easier to share the driving with Macaulay. When her allergies are acting up, she experiences symptoms that range from an excessive need for sleep to intense itching and burning in her feet and hands. Moran also visited the Mayo Clinic this summer for an extensive allergy work-up.

"I showed them the test that [Morris] had done for these allergies that I have," she says, "and they said, 'We don't accept this test, so we have to redo the test.' " The Mayo allergists nevertheless confirmed Morris's diagnosis — that Moran was allergic to dust mites, certain hormones, yeast, and mold. "Speaking just from the impression of the patient," she says, "it seems like what he's doing is just as cutting edge as Mayo."

"No One Was Lining Up for Shots"

Morris started treating allergy as part of his family practice in West Salem, Wisconsin. For ten years, he pursued the usual allergy treatments, which consisted of injections complemented by allergy drugs. But, he says, "I was disappointed in what I could do for my farmers, particularly with sinus problems and lung

problems." At a conference in 1966, Morris heard a talk on using sublingual therapy to test and treat food allergies by Dr. Frank Waickman of Akron, Ohio, and he decided to see if it would also work for molds and inhalants.

For three years, Morris gave his patients a choice of drops or injections, and at the end of that period, he says, "no one was lining up for shots anymore." What's more, he says, his patients were getting better. "I still use every standard method and every standard pharmaceutical treatment, but this is a step beyond to help the people whom those things don't help," he says.

Morris shares his practice with his daughter Mary Morris MD'83 and two other physicians at Allergy Associates in La Crosse. David says that the clinic has treated some fifty thousand families since they began keeping computerized records in 1980. The clinic's patients come mostly from the Midwest, but many travel farther, such as the couple who came from Switzerland to get treatment for their child. Morris adds that several physicians in Wisconsin, Illinois, and North and South Dakota routinely send him their "tough" allergy cases.

Morris's medical school classmate Keepman says that this isn't the first time the allergist has been brave enough to try

something new. In the early sixties, before he became board certified to specialize in allergy, Morris was one of the first physicians to use a defibrillator, or "the paddles," on a patient who was experiencing rapid heartbeat outside of a surgical setting. Use of the paddles was originally restricted to a particular type of rapid heartbeat that occurs during surgery. Morris subsequently published a paper on this use of the defibrillator. "At that point I was criticized for using that type of treatment," he says, "but now it saves thousands of lives a day."

Keepman says that although Morris was president of his medical school class all four years, and previously president of his undergraduate class at Carroll College, "he's a leader by default. He just kind of leads by a subtle mode of example."

Although he's not ready to retire, Morris now has another undertaking to occupy his free time. He and his family are rebuilding a retreat on twenty acres near Bozeman, Montana. Near the west fork of the Gallatin River, the West Fork Camp will include two homes and three guest houses at the Yellowstone Club, a private ski and golf resort. They're members of the club through Morris's son-in-law Greg LeMond, the only American to win the Tour de France bike race three times. (LeMond is married to Morris's daughter Kathy. Some readers may remember her as the pregnant wife cheering Greg on when he won the race during France's bicentennial year.)

The family is close. Mary Morris says she was inspired to go into medicine when she worked in her father's office during the summers, helping to file charts. "I'm very happy to be working with Dad," says the mother of three who has been with the clinic for eleven years.

Only the Nose Knows For Sure

Since 1967, David Morris has been crusading for the validity of sublingual treatment for allergy, and most conventional allergists wish he'd just drop the subject. Morris published papers on sublingual therapy

in 1968 and 1970, but professional journals have only agreed to publish one other paper since then. "There's been a lot of prejudice against it," he says.

Why does he continue to swim against the tide? "We've been able to help so many people with difficult problems," he says gravely. "I don't need any more money or any more patients. But really, there are so many people who could be helped who aren't helped [now.]"

But he feels the tide may finally be starting to turn. Morris is honored that he has been asked to speak on sublingual therapy at the International Rhinologic Society meeting (known as "Nose 2000") in Washington, D.C., this September, something he considers to be an unprecedented opportunity. And a recent position paper by the World Health Organization stated that

"sublingual therapy may be a viable alternative" to injection therapy and calls for more studies on it.

The treatment is more commonly used in Europe. Allergist Jean Bousquet, who is researching the therapy in France, says that "sublingual immunotherapy is used in around 30 percent of immunotherapy courses in France . . . and probably 20 percent in Spain and Germany." Italian allergists say that it is used even more frequently there.

Professor Giovanni Passalacqua, who researches the therapy in Genoa, Italy, says that "at present, more and more specialists prefer sublingual immunotherapy to injections, especially in children." This type of therapy, he adds, represents "about 50 percent of immunotherapy prescriptions, but it

continued on page 52

Allergy Treatment through the Years

According to Gregg Mitman MA'84, PhD'88, who will join the UW-Madison faculty in 2001, allergies began to increase after 1860, when they were seen as the bane of the privileged classes. Mitman, who is one of the university's new interdisciplinary "cluster hires," will have a joint appointment in the Departments of History of Science, History of Medicine, and the Institute for Environmental Studies. A severe asthmatic himself as a child, Mitman is writing a book on the history of allergies, which were originally thought to result from the stress of urban living.

During the 1880s, hay fever resorts arose, most notably on Michigan's Mackinac Island and in New Hampshire's White Mountains, which were at that time free of ragweed. Although there was no effective treatment available, says Mitman, wealthy sufferers simply spent six weeks out of the year there to escape the fall pollen season.

"In the late nineteenth century, the term allergy wasn't even used," he says. "It really didn't come into prominence within the popular literature until the 1920s or '30s." The first desensitization shots, which were quite experimental, were developed in the teens and '20s. In the late '30s and '40s, the first antihistamines came out, he says, and the public was very suspicious about them because the danger of drowsiness was even greater than it is now.

In the 1930s, pollen counts became part of the daily weather report, and a bizarre treatment called "parentectomies" arose. Asthmatic children were removed from their parents and sent to a treatment center in Denver, since it was thought that the emotional facets of the home environment gave rise to their symptoms.

Today, the typical treatment protocol may include the injection of allergen extracts via shots, the use of decongestants and other drugs, and efforts to control the home environment through reducing such irritants as cat dander and dust mites. — N.D.

Allergies

continued from page 41

is expected to further increase."

According to one Italian marketer of immunotherapy materials, the 50-percent estimate may be a little high, but it's not too far off. A representative of Stalergenes Italia says that in the first five months of 2000, Italian market share was 54.9 percent for injection antigen and 45.1 for the sublingual variety.

Passalacqua is one of the authors of some forty papers, almost all conducted by European researchers, that have found positive results using sublingual therapy. In the United States, some ear, nose, and throat doctors tend to be more open to the therapy, but Morris estimates that fewer than 1 percent of U.S. allergists currently use it.

An alternate method of delivering antigen does not seem all that revolutionary when you consider one proposed mechanism for action. According to Frank Waickman, the physician whose

talk first inspired Morris's work, "when you inject something in the skin, the dendritic cells pick up the antigen, take it to the regional lymph nodes, and then the regional lymph nodes crank out the necessary antibodies." The area under the tongue is known to be especially rich in dendritic cells, he adds.

So why aren't more American physicians interested in pursuing this novel and less invasive treatment? U.S. doctors, typically more skeptical about trying new treatments than their European counterparts, believe that more comprehensive studies are needed.

Dr. Emil Bardana, president-elect of the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, is one of them. He says that "even the Italians who have done most of the work — most of it has come out of Walter Canonica's area in Genoa, and another big part of the work has come out of the Milan area — even they, if you talk to them, will tell you that though there is some statistical improve-

ment, the results are not really compelling, they're not really overwhelming, and I think what we need are larger studies, better controls, and continued documentation of significant benefit."

Passalacqua, who is a member of Walter Canonica's research group in Genoa, says, "I would like to underline that there is a position paper by the World Health Organization stating clearly that sublingual immunotherapy is a viable alternative to injection immunotherapy." Further studies with larger groups are needed, Passalacqua says, "not to assess the effectiveness, but to establish the optimal dosage and schedule, and in particular to verify whether sublingual immunotherapy has preventive and long-lasting effects similar to injection immunotherapy." ■

As an allergy sufferer herself, Niki Denison has been very interested to learn more about both sides of the treatment issues involved.

www.ShopBadger.com

1-800-Go Big Red!

BADGER MERCHANDISE FOR EVERYONE

GREAT VARIETY * SIDELINE APPAREL * SPECIALS



*For the True Athlete and Fan...
Gameday... Everyday!*



OR VISIT ONE OF OUR SIX STORES LOCATED IN THE GREATER MADISON AREA

PRAIRIE TOWNE • **STATE ST.** • **WESTGATE MALL** • **PIER 37** • **STATE ST.** • **MONROE ST.**
Next to Target West

At Monona Dr.
& the Beltline

Name of
the Game

Across from
Camp Randall