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Photo by Bill Hoffmann

# CLA NEWSLETTER

Winter 1984

College of Liberal Arts

University of Minnesota

## New liberal arts associate dean takes on all arts

By Joyce Wascoe

There are liberal arts and then there are LIBERAL ARTS. Craig Swan, new acting associate dean for CLA, plunges into all kinds of arts: manual, physical, fine, with a little "dismal science" of economics thrown in.

He doesn't just putter around the house, he rebuilds it; he doesn't just jog, he runs marathons; he doesn't just like music, he helps guide the Minnesota Opera, and he's considered an expert on national housing markets.

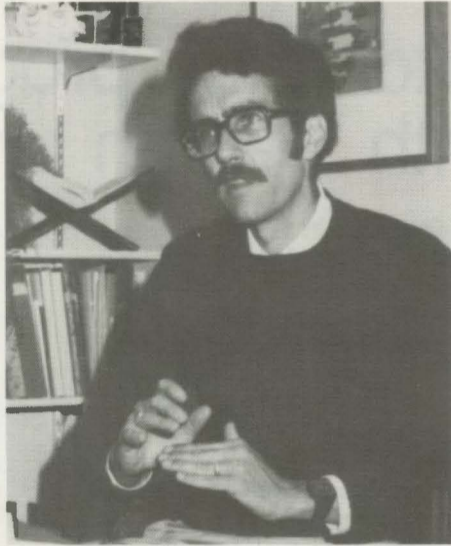
When he started his temporary position as acting associate dean last September, he worked overtime learning the intricacies of the CLA budget, his prime responsibility as executive officer of the College. After only a few months on the job, Swan knows firsthand the problems facing the College.

He is critical of the College planning process, which is usually done in two-year stages. In a time of declining enrollments, Swan said, "we've got to think of the long-run decisions we make. I don't think we have a planning process that does that in a serious way."

If the College adjusts its priorities only every two years, he said, "you run the risk of 'nickel and dimeing' yourself to death. You run the risk of eroding quality."

"It seems to me that the College is still, and in the next ten years is going to be, in a very difficult period financially. It's more important than ever to make the right decisions. It's more important than ever that you don't lose sight of what you want to do."

The College must support its areas of strength, Swan said,



Craig Swan

Photo by Bill Hoffmann

otherwise no one will believe it's going to be good at anything. He added that the College needs budgetary flexibility so it can build in some areas and act on opportunities that might come along.

A search for a permanent associate dean will start in a few weeks. No one knows if his several months in the position will be his Swan song, however. He wouldn't say if he plans to be one of the candidates for the job.

Swan's involvement in the manual arts started in 1974 when his wife pointed out to him that the 75-year-old house they were about to buy east of Lake of the Isles didn't have a kitchen.

The house, which had been home to a commune, had more problems than that. An architect friend warned him that there wasn't a surface in the house that he wouldn't have to touch.

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## New humanities center begins lectures, conferences

Several humanities lectures, conferences, and colloquia are being held on campus this winter and spring under the auspices of the new CLA Center for Humanistic Studies.

The Center, which was approved by the CLA Assembly last year, is designed to promote the humanities and encourage cooperation among the humanities disciplines. Several of these first programs are co-sponsored by the Center and CLA departments.

*(A story on the development of the Center will be published in the spring issue of the CLA Newsletter.)*

The 5th annual two-day Humanities and Arts Colloquium, on Feb. 23-24 in Coffman Union, will be sponsored for the first time by the Center. About 20 faculty members and students are expected to give papers on the theme "The Historical Dimension."

Another series, "Performance Art: The Subversion of Taxonomies," which will tentatively begin March 2, is co-sponsored by the Center and the Departments of Music, Studio Arts, Theatre, and members of the local arts and academic communities.

Future programs include "Modernity and the Development of Mass Culture," "Unstable Categories: Ambiguities of the Hollywood Studio Film," "Science and Technology in East Asia: Non-Western Classifications," and "Nationalisms Within One State." Information about upcoming programs is available from the Center office, 304 Walter Library, or by phone at 376-8322.

## CLA project will help students meet new language standards

By Joyce Wascoe

Practicing the declension of foreign language verbs may become as common an activity in Minnesota high school study halls as reading English literature, if a College of Liberal Arts (CLA) program is implemented.

In the face of proposals to tighten second language requirements for CLA bachelor of arts students, the College has instituted, and hopes to find funds for, the Enhancement of Second Language Acquisition (ESLA) project to help high schools and the College meet the additional requirements.

Graduation requirements under consideration by CLA committees would demand six quarters of one second language for students at the college level instead of the present five. It would eliminate the Route II or "scenic route" that now allows students to take some culture courses to fulfill the requirement.

An entrance standard, not a requirement, would be established to encourage entering students to have had one year of high school language if they enter CLA in 1986, two years if they enter in 1987, and three years if they enter in 1988. Students who do not meet the standard would be required to take one of the three most commonly-taught foreign languages, French, German, or Spanish, for *no credit* until they meet the standard. They could then continue on in the same language or start a different language and fulfill the six-quarter graduation requirement. Another way to meet the standard would be to take a less commonly-taught language, such as Russian or Japanese, for *credit* until they fulfill the six-quarter requirement. CLA offers study in more than 28 languages. (One quarter of college language credit is considered equivalent to one year of high school study.)

Changes in the requirements and standards are expected to be acted on by the CLA Assembly in March, giving high school students about two year's notice before the entrance standard goes into effect.

The ESLA project is intended to make it easier for students by developing curriculum materials, improving language laboratories, training teachers in proficiency testing, and offering incentives to high school

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Jermaine Arendt

Photo by Bill Hoffmann



Ray Wakefield

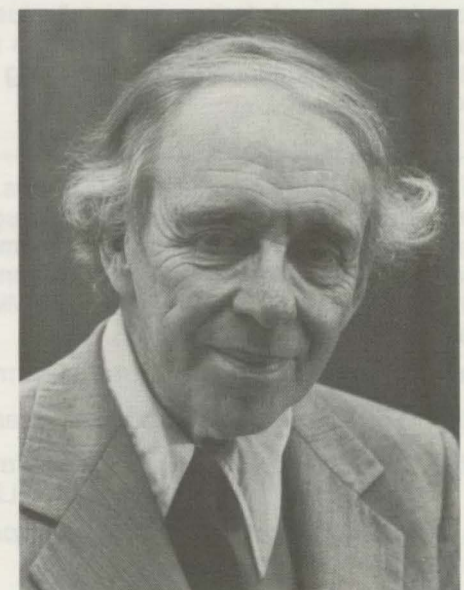
Photo by Bill Hoffmann

## Mulford Sibley wins public lecture award

Mulford Q. Sibley, professor emeritus, Political Science and American Studies, has been selected for the Minnesota

Humanities Commission's second annual public lecture award for his "Socratic commitment to public discussion of the fundamental values of the polis, to serious inquiry into supposedly ephemeral topics, to the habit of disciplined self-examination, and to teaching those willing to engage in dialogue."

The award includes a \$1,000 prize and the opportunity to present a major public address. Sibley will deliver the lecture on Thursday, March 1, 8 p.m., at the Landmark Center, St. Paul. The public is invited.



Mulford Q. Sibley

Photo by Tom Foley

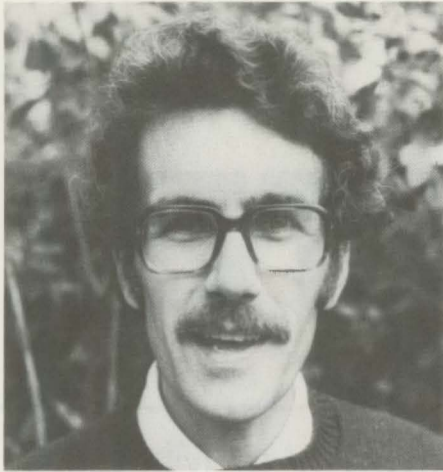


Photo by Bill Hoffmann

## The Dean's List

Associate Dean Craig Swan

*Editor's Note: The Dean's List is written this quarter by Craig Swan, acting associate dean and executive officer of the College. A story about Swan, who is an associate professor in the Department of Economics, appears on page 1.*

Alumni, undoubtedly, have different pictures in their minds when they think of the College of Liberal Arts. For many alumni thoughts of the College conjure up memories of classes from September to June. Perhaps they took a class one or two summers, perhaps they only worked or traveled during the summer. For others, contact with the College has been in the evening, registering for what are commonly called "extension classes."

In reality, the picture has blurred. The lines of demarcation between what made a traditional day, evening, or summer school student are no longer clear. The characteristics of today's day students—on the average they are older, they work more, and they take longer to complete their studies—means we teach much the same kind of student whether it be during the day, evening, or summer. For a number of years now, evening classes have constituted a substantial proportion of the instruction offered by CLA departments.

Funding for day, evening, and summer instruction, however, is quite different. While the University's day classes from September to June are heavily supported by state funds, evening and summer instruction are not.

Currently, it is state policy to provide the University enough support for day instruction so that tuition need cover only 32 percent of the cost. Instruction during the summer and evening is essentially on a pay-as-you-go, tuition-only basis. Within the State of Minnesota, this pattern of budgetary support is unique to the University. Community colleges and the state universities receive substantial financial support from the state for all instruction—day, summer, and evening.

This lack of budgetary support at the University has increasingly negative implications for the College's ability to provide a quality educational experience for all students. In this time of tightening budgets, state support of all instruction becomes necessary. Fees and tuition for summer and evening classes cover only a small proportion of the total cost of instruction, and the regular College budget can no longer subsidize them.

Many necessary support services for summer and evening instruction have been provided out of budgets intended to support instruction during the day. Budget cuts over the 1970s and the retrenchments of the last two years, however, have seriously eroded the College's ability to provide appropriate faculty planning time, civil service staff, and equipment support.

The College runs serious risks in terms of the quality of instruction it can offer as its support services stretch to their breaking point.

All is not bleak as there are signs that the inequities of the present system of support will be addressed. A legislative task force on the funding of higher education and the Andersen Commission on the future of higher education in the state have both expressed strong interest in the basic principle that there should be appropriate state support for all types of instruction—day, summer, and evening.

This proposed financial support from the state demands appropriate responses from the University. In particular, full support for all instruction requires comprehensive curriculum planning that recognizes special student needs at different times of the day and year. The College has embarked on just such comprehensive curriculum planning that will consider all types of instruction.

Experience with a Geography Department experiment which integrated day, evening, and summer instruction suggests a number of positive benefits for students and faculty. Many students took advantage of the greater flexibility afforded by the course scheduling. Faculty favored the systematic review of course offerings that were a necessary part of the development of an integrated curriculum. Faculty also found that the greater flexibility in their own schedules was more conducive to research out in the field.

The College needs to take on this responsibility to think through its total curricular offerings in a way that makes educational sense in terms of students' needs and desires and intellectual sense in terms of the subject matter of the disciplines. The College can move ahead with its planning, if additional financial support for the evening and summer classes is forthcoming.



Russell Hamilton, CLA associate dean for faculty affairs (center), visited Yemen with his guide, Mahammad Sharafadeen (left), who teaches English at the University of Sana'a, and Abdullah, a driver, who is wearing the traditional jambia dagger in his belt. The mountainous country is located south of Saudi Arabia and across the Red Sea from Ethiopia.

## Exchange program begins with Yemen university

The final step in the implementation of an exchange program between the University of Minnesota and the University of Sana'a in Yemen was taken in December when CLA Associate Dean Russell Hamilton traveled to Yemen to meet with Sana'a officials.

Dean Yusuf Abdallah of Sana'a's Faculty of Arts will reciprocate with a one-quarter visit to CLA starting in March.

The program seeks to strengthen Sana'a's program in American Studies, while Sana'a faculty will enhance Minnesota's advanced Arabic, literature, and culture studies. In addition to teaching regular courses, faculty will give informal short courses and seminars both on and off campus. Nassif Youssif, a University of Minnesota library bibliographer-

cataloguer, is the first Minnesota faculty member to be sent on the exchange program. He will help organize Sana'a's library collections during spring quarter.

This exchange marks the University of Sana'a's first official ties with an American university, and it is Minnesota's first exchange with a university in an Arab country.

Professor Caesar Farah, professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic History, who has conducted research in Yemen, will administer the program.

The agreement calls for a reciprocal exchange of one faculty per institution each year during the initial three years. The \$280,000 cost of the first three years will be shared by the two universities and funds from the United States Information Agency.

## Swan . . . continued from page 1

He honed his skills on all those surfaces and then added a study at the back of the house. He learned about carpentry, plastering, and wiring as he went along, he explained, because his father never did that kind of work around their house in Berkeley, California, where Swan grew up.

Among his colleagues in the Economics department, his prowess with a hammer and nail is probably his least well-known talent, because at work he concentrates on his research, and when this Ph.D. graduate from Yale steps into the classroom, he gives it his all.

"People just love to take his courses," according to Department of Economics chair Jim Simler. Swan's known as an excellent teacher, Simler said. Fall quarter, in addition to his duties as dean, he taught the introductory macroeconomics course to 400 students.

Since starting in the dean's office, Swan said he has been too busy to continue his economic research, but he said he plans to find time to work on projects on the relationship of mortgage markets to capital markets, and the relationship of renter and owner housing markets, as well as the foreclosure risk associated with mortgages.

From 1977 to 1982, he worked as managing editor, along with another CLA economist Ann Krueger, on a magazine called "Portfolio." It reprinted what he called the best of North American economic thinking and was distributed by the United States Information Agency to policy makers in foreign countries. Krueger is now a vice president of the World Bank.

At 39, Swan rose to the

position of chair of the University Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs. He had to give up that job when he became an associate dean.

Regents' Economics Professor Leonid Hurwicz, who served with him on the faculty affairs committee, praised Swan for being "non-abrasive," but said he was "still able to get things done."

Phil Shively, chair of the Political Science Department, agreed and said Swan's most unusual characteristic was his trust in other people. When he works on a committee, Shively said, he assumes until shown otherwise, that other people are trying to do the best thing. That may be related to Swan's own "immense integrity," Shively said.

By his long, lean frame, one could guess that he is a runner. He is not just one of those amateur joggers around Lake of the Isles, however. He has five or six marathons to his credit, and he usually runs a half dozen 10-kilometer races during the spring and summer.

It was one of his colleagues who encouraged him to go further in his interest in music and become a member of the board of the Minnesota Opera Company. He is in his third year on the board. He and his wife Janet also enjoy local theater productions.

His job as associate dean cuts into the time he can help her around the house, Swan acknowledged. Janet shares a job as a librarian at the Federal Reserve Bank. He still finds time to cross-country ski with the family, which includes Andrew, 11, and Alice, 9. And he helped establish the computer program at his children's school, Jefferson Elementary in Minneapolis.

The CLA Newsletter intends to raise issues. It is not meant to be the official voice of the College of Liberal Arts. Opinions are welcome. Comments should be addressed to the editor, 225 Johnston Hall, 101 Pleasant St. S.E., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455.

Dean . . . . . Fred Lukermann

Editor . . . . . Joyce Wascoe

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Photo by Bill Hoffmann



Group shot of the 1982 team. William Coulson is standing at far right. Each team was made up of about 30 people, half of whom were students.

## Classicist explores Egyptian excavations

By Jeff Litvak

When visions of a typical classics professor are conjured up, the image of a studious don perusing dusty Greek and Latin archives comes to mind.

Professor William Coulson, chair of the Department of Classics, and his colleagues have been bucking that notion, taking classics out of the library and into the field.

The department is unique among other Classics programs around the country, Coulson said, because of a broad-based view of classical research.

In fact, in 1981 one of its professors won the highest archaeological award given in the United States. Regents' Professor William McDonald, now an emeritus professor in classics, was awarded the gold medal for archaeological achievement from the Archaeological Institute of America for his work in Greece.

Coulson is continuing the department tradition, having just completed field work on a 5-year project in Northern Egypt at Naukratis, possibly the only permanent Greek settlement in Egypt during the Ptolemaic era, about 2,000 years ago.

Among the artifacts Coulson found were buildings and pottery suggesting the city may have continued to exist until the beginning of the seventh century A.D.

Two sets of tombs were unearthed, containing the remains of children whose bodies were oriented toward Mecca. Coulson said the bodies, buried 200 to 300 years ago, demonstrated an Islamic influence in the area following the ancient period.

He said it was not unusual to find newer artifacts above older ones. When a building collapsed, he said, it was leveled and new structures built on top of it.

According to Coulson, the Naukratis site is slowly being worn away by farmers who steal the phosphorus-rich soil at the dig for use as fertilizer.

"Supposedly, every site has its own guard, but very often these guards have other jobs. They're farmers, they're out in the fields, and, of course, they're not there at night when most of this (stealing) takes place. They're (the sites) miles apart, and we just don't have the guards to cover everything."

Water erosion from the nearby lake and canals is also destroying the site, Coulson said. "I hope that nothing serious happens, and through our efforts there is a greater consciousness."

His researchers have back-filled the excavation, hoping to protect it from being torn apart. But, if the current destruction rate continues, there will be nothing left of the site in 10 years, he said.

Most of the funding for the \$250,000 project came from the National Endowment for the Humanities, with other funding coming from the Graduate School, CLA, and the Office of International Programs.

*What the professors are doing*

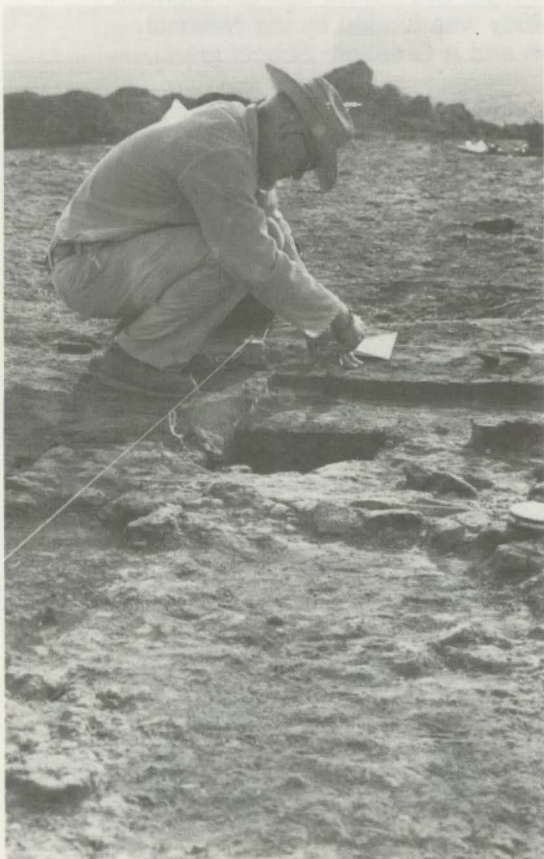


Excavators are laying out squares 4 meters by 4 meters for digging. The buildings in the village, behind, are similar to the ones being excavated. Architecture has not changed significantly over the centuries.

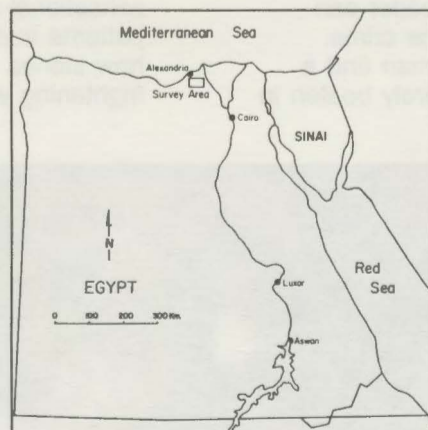
Other Department of Classics faculty members are researching artifacts and writings found in the field. Eva Keuls is attempting to piece together lost scenes of Greek plays through an analysis of the drawings of Greek drama on vases found in Italy. John Miller is comparing the relationship of Greek poetry from about 100 B.C. to the poetry of Ovid, a Roman who lived about that time.

The department is undergoing a period of reorganization, Coulson said, and will be renamed the Department of Classical Studies in an attempt to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of the field.

Professors from other departments are adjunct faculty members and lecture in the department, including Regents' Professor Rutherford Aris from the Chemical Engineering department, who teaches paleography, the study of ancient modes of writing, and Tom Clayton, English, who teaches courses in classical traditions.



Researcher brushes away soil particles.



Photos courtesy of William Coulson



Each tag shows a different archaeological strata. The bottom level represents 300 B.C., and the top level is about 300 A.D.

# What the professors are doing

Lloyd Ultan, director of the School of Music, last year was named a Norlin/MacDowell Fellow. The award was presented by the MacDowell Colony, a sanctuary for exceptionally talented artists.

Jo-Ida C. Hansen, adjunct professor of Psychology and director of the Center for Interest Measurement Research, was awarded the E. K. Strong, Jr. Gold Medal at the Annual Convention of the Minnesota Psychological Association for her outstanding contributions to the field of interest measurement.

Michael Metcalf, director of the Center for Northwest European Language and Area Studies, received a \$125,264 award to support the center's activities from the U.S. Department of Education's National Resource Center for West European Studies.

David Baldwin, Music, and the 16-member Brass Choir have released albums titled *Etudes Transcendantes* and *Masterpieces for Brass*, respectively, on the Alonzo Records label.



Mei-Ling Hsu Photo by Bill Hoffmann

Mei-Ling Hsu, professor of Geography and director of the China Center, represented the University of Minnesota in Washington D.C., Jan. 11, at a reception hosted by China Premier Zhao Ziyang. Professor Hsu also coordinated a tour of China by the Minnesota Trade Delegation, led by Speaker of the House Harry A. Sieben, Jr. in November.

Gerald Siegel, Communications Disorders, received \$199,784 for the CLA Center for Research in Human Learning, from the National Institutes of Health-Child Health and Human Development.

Charles Speaks, chair of Communication Disorders, has received a \$66,832 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to study communication disorders in handicapped children.

Thomas Bouchard and Leonard Heston, Psychology, received \$57,895 from the Pioneer Fund for a psychological and medical study of monozygotic and dizygotic twins who are reared apart.

Clarke A. Chambers, History and American Studies, received an Alumni Achievement Award from Carleton College, recognizing his contributions to social welfare history and his dedication to the advancement of humanities in American education.



# Crime close to home scares people; crime far away reassures them

By Bill Hoffmann

The closer crime is to home, the more fear it generates is one theory confirmed in a study of how newspapers shape people's views of crime.

The study also makes specific suggestions for refining newspaper policies about writing crime stories to avoid raising unnecessary fear in readers.

"Readers like the grass to be browner on the other side of the fence, and the browner the better," Linda Heath, assistant professor in CLA's Department of Psychology, concluded in her study, "The Impact of Newspaper Crime Reports on Fear of Crime: A Multi-methodological Investigation."

"Far from being frightening, reports of grizzly, bizarre crimes in other cities are reassuring," Heath observed in the study, which used telephone interviews of 335 readers of 62 newspapers and analyzed the contents of 1,926 newspaper articles.

"The more newspapers print articles about criminals in other places running amok, picking victims at random and trampling social norms, the more secure readers feel in their own environments," she said.

The tables are turned, however, when the crimes occur locally, Heath points out. "Sensational aspects of local crimes need to be presented with caution because reports of such local crimes arouse fear among readers."

Heath's interest in research on crime began when she was a graduate student in Evanston, Illinois. She realized that fear of rape was keeping her out of the office during late night hours. She decided to find out "how did people get the idea that the world was so scary?" Heath, 33, who grew up in Ohio, has been at the University since 1979.

Earlier studies which simply counted crime stories in newspapers led to the wrong conclusion that newspaper crime reports do not influence the levels of fear, she said. But, her study found that details in articles do make a difference in the effect on readers' perceptions of crime.

The three main areas measured were crime location, sensationalism of crime, and apparent randomness in selection of the victim.

Judging from the results, she said, the most frightening type of crime would be one that is local, sensational, and apparently random.

Heath said the study found that there is a "big psychological difference" when the reader can understand the causes that lead to the crime.

For instance, one story told of a man and a woman who were accosted and severely beaten in

their home in a middle-class neighborhood. No robbery was committed, and the assailants were still at large.

One local newspaper ended the account there. The other newspaper added the information that the male victim had recently been indicted on several counts of promoting juvenile prostitution.

In the first account, the crime appeared to be random and lacking motivation. The second account included a possible "precipitating" factor and made the crime seem less random, she said.

"Without some indication of victim 'precipitation' evident in the newspaper article, readers cannot convince themselves that they could not also be victimized by such a crime.

"The wholesale exclusion of such information in regard to local crimes causes readers to experience high (and probably unwarranted) levels of fear."

Therefore, journalists and editors should use caution in using "filler" stories that likely lack details about possible motivation, she added.

Even so, local, sensational crimes still raise fear even if details about the victim's actions that might have provoked the crime are included, she pointed out.

The fear of crime "is not attributable to a sensationalist reporting style on the part of the newspaper, but, rather, to the sensationalism intrinsic to the crime itself," Heath explained. "Journalists don't do sensational stories any more," she said, although she noted that some papers report a lot of sensational crime while others don't.

Heath said she has been surprised over the past five years of research on the subject about how receptive journalists have been. "They've been... really concerned that they might be creating misperceptions and might be frightening people unnecessarily."

Journalists are interested in learning ways to report in a more responsible way, but at the same time maintain newspaper circulation, she commented.

The two-year study was funded by the National Science Foundation and a Graduate School grant totaling \$35,000.

Heath said she expects to expand her crime reporting research to television and also plans to use a computer program to analyze the content of sensational crime stories. It will look for word-use patterns and tone, she said, and "maybe find out how stories can be written in an even less frightening way."



Photo by Bill Hoffmann

Ira Flatow (center), science correspondent for National Public Radio and host of the new "Newton's Apple" television program, talked with alumni members Phil Sandahl (left) and David Speer. Flatow gave the luncheon address, "Crisis in Computer Education," at Spectrum '83, "The Liberal Arts in the Computer Age," last fall. The annual program, sponsored by CLA and the CLA-University College Alumni Society, featured lectures by CLA faculty. More than 100 alumni and students attended.



Linda Heath Photo by Bill Hoffmann

# Guest commentary Computers demand we "ask right questions"

*Editor's Note: "The Art Of Asking The Right Questions," is excerpted from a speech given by Kenneth H. Keller, vice president for academic affairs of the University of Minnesota, at Spectrum '83: "Liberal Arts in the Computer Age" last fall. The program was sponsored by the CLA Alumni Society. The complete text is available from Keller's office, 612/373-2033. \*indicates a portion of the original text has been deleted.*

The computer, we are often told, is a tool—an extraordinarily powerful tool for storing and manipulating information. It gives us an enormous capacity to answer questions and, as a consequence, it places on us an enormous burden to ask the right questions. I suggest that a question properly asked should reflect:

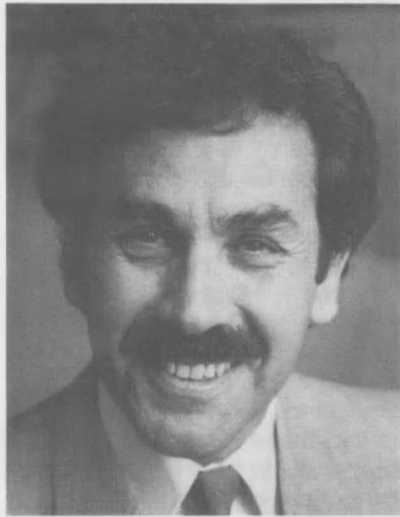
1. *Self-awareness*—an understanding of who we are, what our values actually are, how they are affected or determined by the context of our age, and how they compare with our own ideals.
2. *Purpose*—a sense of what we want to accomplish through the question or its answer, and how that intention might also be shaped by the context of our age.
3. *Process*—an understanding of the way the mechanisms of the society work which can guide us in determining what information we need and how it can be used to accomplish our goals.

I believe that a strong argument can be made that developing the capacity to deal with these issues is precisely the goal of liberal arts education, and therefore, in this computer age the liberal arts takes on even greater importance. The computer age raises a challenge to our abilities to live the "moral life," a phrase which suggests a purposeful connection between values and actions; a notion that clearly includes asking the right questions.

The computer's power derives from the most conceptually simple of information storage devices—a binary element—capable only of being on or off—of saying yes or no—out of which, through miniaturization and through clever organization, we build a machine capable of an extraordinary speed of manipulation of numbers or other symbols (of the order of a billion per second), a machine capable of outstripping by the quantity of its calculations the much higher quality but slower speed of individual human thought. Because the computer can do so much more, we accept the lower quality of its so-called thought, struggle to improve the subtlety of its processes, and try to be alert to the flaws inherent in the output of what is, essentially, an idiot-savant.

In attempting to improve the thought processes of the computer, we must cope with the rigidity of its calculational algorithms and with its absence of context. For example, Douglas Hofstadter, in discussing his research on artificial intelligence in a recent *N.Y. Times* article, pointed out that it is relatively easy to program a computer—a robot—to build a precision machine tool, but it is well beyond its capability to build a bird's nest. It cannot deal well with uncertainty, with irregularity, with the need to adjust to unexpected circumstances. A computer can generate unending volumes of regular data, but has great difficulty generating a series of random numbers. It can detect patterns, but it has a hard time avoiding them. If we must adjust our questions to the computer's abilities, we may often find ourselves asking the question the computer can answer, rather than the one we believe should be answered. The challenge, of course, is to avoid that—to insure that we provide to the computer the context it needs to answer our questions or that we formulate the questions in such a way that we keep control of the process and its outcome. In a sense, we face the intriguing and almost paradoxical situation of having to ask questions simple enough for a computer to understand, yet sufficiently complex to warrant its use.

When we have developed a device with such an extraordinary capacity to store, manipulate, and deliver information, it should come as no surprise that our age suffers not from a lack of information, but from a surfeit of information. In such circumstances, we must learn to develop a better sense of what information is important to a given goal, a better idea of what we mean by quality of information, a clearer notion of how the form in which we obtain information affects our judgments. We should not lose sight of the fact that while



Vice President Kenneth Keller

Photo by Tom Foley

information may be readily available, it may be limited in quality by the limitations of the device that produced it. As Artemus Ward once said, "It ain't the things we don't know that hurt us. It is the things we do know that ain't so."

From a somewhat different perspective the computer, with its overwhelming ability to inundate us with information, is like a chorus of loud voices which may prevent us from hearing our own inner voice. For the first time we are faced with the serious problem of avoiding information.

There is a phrase in vogue today that the world is totally connected. It is usually taken to mean that our ability to communicate, to transmit information is so universal and so close to instantaneous that it is as if we were all in the same place at the same time hearing the same things.

I do not think it unreasonable to suggest that being totally linked by a bond of communication and information may dampen an independence of thought—the random, unhampered, uninformed meandering into new concepts or original ideas which often forms the basis of creativity.

Finally, the consequence of producing a machine that answers questions so easily is that the long and tortuous process of searching for answers is no longer necessary. Since we have often depended on that process to provide us with a new line of questions, a new direction for investigation—to uncover more interesting problems than those posed originally—the efficiency of the computer may deprive us of the means to correct an inappropriately posed question or an incomplete question. This, too, points to the need for much more sensitive attention to the initial formulation of a question.

But, the computer does not affect us simply as a tool. It creates its own paradigms, its own models, its own values. They can form the hidden context for our questions.

The computer affects the way we conceptualize problems. For example, the notion of networks has become an all-pervading one. It seems to me that a focus on systems analysis, on cybernetic descriptions, lead us in the direction of modeling all phenomena as complex linkages of simple elements. Our focus is on the sophistication of the linkage which, in mathematical and perhaps in conceptual terms, requires us to simplify our notion of each element in the linkage in order to create tractable problems—to ask answerable questions. However, it may well be that there are more interesting questions to ask about each element or certainly questions that are at least as interesting. At the very least we must remain sensitive to our simplifications and not fall into the trap of believing them.

The computer's forte is its efficiency in dealing with large scale problems; problems requiring the manipulation of great amounts of data. One might raise the question of whether this leads us to focus on framing questions or seeking answers in those same large scale terms—large scale technology, the statistical behavior of large groups or collections of data, the economies created by scale.

As a final example, consider how the computer has led us to a discretized version of the world—digital watches, dot-matrix printers, matrix representation of continuous mathematical expressions, digitized sound. This discretized view is certainly consistent with our molecular theories of the structure of matter. But, interestingly, there are a number of important scientific questions that have been and continue to be answered precisely because that molecular reality is ignored in favor of models of the world as a continuum. Is it possible that a formulation of questions based on discrete concepts may lead to our missing insights that could arise from viewing matter, events, ideas, not as a connection of discrete elements, but as a true continuum?

The computer has changed our lives—in many ways for the better. It has created new opportunities for solving problems, for learning, for aesthetic experience. It will do even more for us in the future. But as with any age it creates a new context and we must strive to understand that context if we are to know what questions we really want to ask—if we are to lead moral, purposeful lives.

And in that respect, the disciplines of liberal arts

—which teach us not a particular set of values, but the process of developing one,

—which teach us to be sensitive to the connections between our values and our actions,

—which teach us to synthesize and to integrate all aspects of our knowledge,

are our key to the constant refinement of the art of asking the right questions.

Let me conclude by quoting Robert Graves, who said: "To know only one thing well is to have a barbaric mind: civilization implies the graceful relation of all varieties of experience to a central humane system of thought."

That is as true in the computer age as it ever was.

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Photo by Layne Kennedy

Two CLA graduates attracted more attention than the average student when they went through Commencement exercises Dec. 4.

With several Twin Cities television stations in the audience and most of their combined total of 14 children, 50 grandchildren, and 24 great-grandchildren cheering them on, Barbara Annett, 82, and Mike Fadell, 81, crossed the Northrop Auditorium stage to receive diplomas from Dean Fred Lukermann. Their fellow graduates rose to give them a standing ovation, and stories about them were carried in many Minneapolis and St. Paul newspapers.

When Barbara Annett finished high school in 1919, there wasn't much chance for a girl to go to college, and there weren't many careers open to women. She turned her energies to raising eight children.

Fadell quit the University in 1927 to take a job with KSTP radio, just 9 credits short of graduating. He started a successful public relations agency and helped establish the Minneapolis Aquatennial.

Both said their grandchildren encouraged their return to school, Annett in English and Fadell in Journalism.

# Language . . . continued from page 1

students to improve their language skills.

The project is directed by Ray Wakefield, assistant professor of Dutch, and director of language instruction and Dutch Studies in the German Department, and co-directed by Jermaine D. Arendt, retired consultant in modern languages for the Minneapolis Public Schools, and present director of the Minnesota/Baden-Württemberg Student Exchange Program.

Since October, they have held a series of discussions with foreign language teachers from secondary schools and foreign language supervisors from the Minnesota State Department of Education regarding proposed changes in CLA requirements and possible ways to implement those changes.

Response from high school language teachers was enthusiastic, Arendt said. "I think they regard this as long overdue."

One teacher from St. Paul replied, "This is too good to be true," Wakefield said.

Language teachers were disappointed in the early '70s when the University added the Route II alternative to the language requirement, Wakefield said, but now they see the University reversing itself, not just with words, but with action behind the words. The University's decision is going to "have enormous impact on the high schools."

They are, of course, concerned, Arendt cautioned, that methods taken to implement the report be carefully thought out.

The most expensive of the proposed ESLA projects, with a cost of \$271,000, would install a separate language laboratory with microcomputers in CLA.

The present listening center in Walter Library is at least 15 years behind the times, Wakefield said.

He and Arendt would like to see a facility that sends programs to student listening stations from a central console, that enables students to record their own voices in the pauses on a language tape and play it back to compare their own voice with the foreign language speaker, and that allows an instructor to listen in while a student is working on a language tape and to intervene and assist the student. Some high schools have had that kind of equipment for years, Wakefield said.

Many CLA language classes already have computer-aided instruction, Wakefield pointed out, but CLA has no microcomputers and language students must share inadequate facilities with students from all other colleges within the University.

Wakefield added that he is convinced that more computer-aided instruction would be developed if facilities were available. "A number of interested faculty and students are standing back, because they don't know what they can do."

ESLA is also proposing a Talented Youth Program patterned after a Department of Mathematics program. Qualified high school students would enroll in courses for University credit during the regular academic year and in the summer. These classes might be taught in their high schools or in CLA. Also, outstanding high school students would compete for scholarships that would enable them to study languages in college.

Wakefield and Arendt would like to guarantee that summer intensive courses in the lesser-taught languages are offered. These languages are often only available at the University, and now such courses are given only if enrollment is high enough.

Wakefield said it's important that "we know in advance, guarantee,

and publicize" those courses. Languages such as Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and Hebrew, would be offered at levels to serve college students, high-aptitude high school students, and teachers who wished to improve their language skills or learn a third language.

This summer, ESLA plans to offer its first workshop to train high school and college language teachers in proficiency testing, with the idea that students in the future will be advanced based on their level of proficiency in a language rather than on the number of years or quarters they have completed. Teachers will learn techniques to test students on their listening, speaking, reading, and writing foreign languages abilities, following the guidelines established by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language—Educational Testing Service.

This will be the "beginning of an effort that will place Minnesota at the cutting edge of language proficiency testing," Wakefield said.

Drawing on their experience with proficiency testing, the teachers in these summer workshops would begin to develop new curriculum materials for language classes.

Approximately 51 percent of Minnesota school districts, serving 13 percent of Minnesota high school students, don't offer foreign languages. ESLA would like to "explore ways we can help those districts initiate programs," Arendt said, perhaps working through professional teacher organizations.

Arendt and Wakefield estimate the first year ESLA budget at \$568,000. CLA's Educational Development Fund will underwrite a portion of the summer proficiency workshops. The College will seek other support from the legislature, and public and private foundations.



David Speer

Photo by Susan Gilmore

## David Speer's gifts ensure teaching awards

David Speer, president of Padilla and Speer Inc., a Minneapolis public relations firm, was honored at a reception and dinner in November for his contributions to the CLA Distinguished Teacher Award fund.

Two years ago, Speer made a commitment to donate \$1,000 a year to the fund for ten years. Last year, he added a bequest in his will to eventually endow the awards permanently. The remainder of the money from the endowment may be used by the College at the discretion of the Dean.

The College usually awards three Distinguished Teacher Awards of \$500 each to outstanding faculty members each year. The awards have been supported for the past twenty years by the CLA Alumni Society.

Speer is a past president of the Alumni Society. He also served as chairman of the Alumni's Spectrum program on China in 1981, and he has been active in the University of Minnesota Alumni Association.

## Calendar of Events



Photo by Tom Foley

"Learned Ladies," by Moliere, Feb. 23-26 and March 1-4, Rarig Center. Call U Theatre for tickets, 373-2337.

### MARCH Lectures

- 6 "American Underestimation of Japanese Industrial Policy," Chalmers Johnson, Political Science, University of California, Berkeley, sponsored by World Affairs Center, others, noon, East Wing, Campus Club, \$8.50 luncheon, reservations by March 5, call 373-3799
- 14 "United States-Soviet Relations," Thomas Simons, Jr., director, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C., sponsored by World Affairs Center, others, noon, Sheraton Midway Hotel, Midway I Room, St. Paul, \$10 luncheon, reservations by March 9, call 373-3799

### Author's Reception

- 1 Frederick Manfred, participant in English 3920, American Authors in Person, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Minnesota Book Center, Williamson Hall

### APRIL Lectures

- 18 Peter Kann, associate publisher, Wall Street Journal, 3:15 p.m., Heggen Room, Murphy Hall
- 17 and 19 "Fantastic Visions, Forgettable Facts: Toward a Cultural History of American Advertising" and "A Matter of Taste: Corporate Cultural Hegemony in a Mass Consumption Society," Jackson Lears, American Studies, University of Missouri, times and locations to be announced, call American Studies, 373-3667, for information

### Conferences

- 5-7 "1984," sponsored jointly by CLA, IT, and the Dept. of Conferences; call Conferences, program #6003, 376-2579, or Tom Trow, CLA cultural liaison, 376-4249, for information
- 20-21 "Rethinking Post-War America," interdisciplinary conference, visiting scholars Jackson Lears, Carl Schorkse, Warren Sussman, Ruth Milkman, Tom McCormick, Clifford Clark, and others, call American Studies, 373-3667, for information

\*indicates admission charge

## CLA NEWSLETTER

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