Martha Storandt marks 50th year with Department

By Randy Larson

I
n 1958 Martha Storandt left Little Rock, Arkansas, to attend Washington University in St. Louis. She has been here ever since.

She completed her BA at Washington University, earned her PhD at Washington University, and completed her clinical internship at the Jefferson Barracks VA center. After that she obtained a research position in the Psychology Department at Washington University in 1966, became a tenured associate professor of psychology in 1977, and was promoted to full professor in 1983.

She rose up through our ranks at a time when women faculty were rare at Washington University. Her 50 years of involvement with the Psychology Department makes her the longest serving member of our current faculty. This year, Martha will begin a phased retirement program, and we thought it would be a fitting time for a retrospective look at her career in psychology at Washington University.

During her undergraduate years, Martha changed her major several times, starting first in chemistry, then physics, then math, and finally psychology. She had a love for numbers, and psychology offered many statistics and psychometrics classes. She took all of Professor DuBois’ classes, which were heavily mathematical. This affinity for numbers has served her well over the years, both in her research and teaching careers.

After finishing her BA degree, Martha worked for two years at the St. Louis County Health Department. The research examined cognitive development in K through 2nd grade. This experience solidified her interests in cognitive development, and throughout her career she has, in one way or another, always been focused on cognitive changes, particularly those associated with aging and with diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease.

Martha elected to stay at Washington University for graduate school. The Psychology Department had a new training grant in aging, and Martha was an early trainee on that program. The department required all graduate students at that time to take two semesters of experimental psychology, which culminated in an independent research project. For her project, Martha undertook a research examining cognitive losses, and how their learning, and

Alumni Profile: Nathan Dardick, AB 1971

N
ate Dardick was an undergraduate at Washington University in the turbulent but exciting era of the late 1960s. He came from a typical Midwestern, middle-class background, and held down several jobs while attending Washington U., including repairing typewriters for IBM, writing scripts for local radio shows, and serving as a teaching assistant in several classes.

Like many undergraduates, he tried several majors before settling on one that fit. Nate had a strong interest in numbers so he started out as a math major. He recalls enjoying the math classes, even calculus, because of the creativity of pure mathematics. Then he took an economics course and became excited about the possibility of combining the rigor of mathematic- ics with real-world human and financial consequences, which intrigued him. So he switched to an economics major.

A short time later, Nate took the “Introduction to Psychology” course from Professor Robin Tucker. The more he learned about psychology, the more Nate came to realize that economics is really about how people respond to incentives, both gains and losses, and how their learning, and hence future behavior, can be shaped by those incentives. Nate wanted to learn as much as he could about why people behave the way they do, so he switched his major to Psychology.

Nate’s second course in psychology was “Psychological Statistics” taught by Professor Philip DuBois (Note: today the statistics lab in the Psychology Building is dedicated to the memory of Professor DuBois and has a large portrait of him prominently displayed in the classroom). Given his talent with numbers, Nate did extremely well in that class, and his competence did not go unnoticed by the instructor. Professor DuBois offered Nate a job as a research assistant in his laboratory, where they were doing learning research for the Navy. To this day, Nate expresses his gratitude to Professor DuBois for giving him this break as well as introducing him to the scientific side of psychology.

Other psychology professors with active research programs began to take notice of this bright undergraduate in their midst and hired Nate to work in their laboratories as well, including Professors Bunch, Fox, and Tucker. When it came time to graduate, Nate elected to sit for the oral exam to determine if his degree should be awarded “Summa cum laude.” The five professors who formed the examining committee had each, at one time or another, hired Nate to work in their laboratories and so knew him very well. After a perfunctory few questions they adjourned and took Nate to lunch to celebrate his degree with honors.

Upon his graduation, several psychology professors encouraged Nate to go on to graduate school in psychology, and were pushing him to apply to Harvard. Nate was interested in helping people, but thought psychology was too slow. He decided that law might provide a better avenue, and so enrolled in the law school at the University of Chicago.

“All I really disliked law school for the most part,” he reports, “especially after having such a positive experience with psychology at Washington U.” But he stuck it out and was helped along the way by a few positive experiences during this time, including a summer job working with law professors on a landmark study of the effects of the federal gun control act of 1968 (published in the Journal of Legal Studies, 1975, vol. 4, p. 133). Another positive experience during law school was a course Nate took on securities law and taxation. His love for numbers and math gave him an edge in the course, and he decided to specialize in securities law.

After law school, Nate took a position with a small firm in Chicago where he helped them specialize in class action suits over securities violations. He also handled banking law, real estate and leasing law, and partnership law. Nate claims that his training in psychology helped him become a better lawyer. For example, the social skills he acquired in Professor Robin Tucker’s psychother- apy research came in handy in negotiating with clients as well as in

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Another year has flown by and writing this column provides an opportunity to pause and reflect on recent events. Last year I reported that we finished construction on the 16,500-square-foot addition to the Psychology Building. This year we have begun filling that up with new faculty members and laboratories. This fall three new members joined our department. Ian Dobbins (Ph.D., University of California-Davis) was recruited from Duke to join our faculty. He studies the neuroscience of memory and is a great addition to our program in Behavior, Brain, and Cognition. Simine Vazire (Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin) also joined our faculty after completing a post-doctoral year at the University of Virginia. She studies how people construe the personalities of others and will bolster our program in Social and Personality Psychology. In addition, Heather Rice, who just finished her Ph.D. at Duke, joined our faculty as a lecturer and has become a valuable asset to our teaching mission. We also hired a new faculty member to start next fall — Lori Markson (Ph.D., University of Arizona) was recruited from Berkeley to join our faculty. She studies the development of language and social cognition in infants and toddlers. She will anchor the lower age span in our Development and Aging program. Currently, we are interviewing for potential new faculty in the areas of behavior genetics and women’s studies.

Last year we conferred 217 bachelor degrees in Psychology, more than any other department at the University. We also taught over 10,000 credit hours to undergraduates, again more than any other department at the University. Besides teaching a lot of courses, we also do it very well — over 80 percent of our course evaluations are above the University average. We also do extremely well in research. For example, our faculty received $7.7 million in new research grants this year. Our graduate program remains strong, with 82 graduate students. This year we received a new training grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences to prepare graduate students for research careers at the interface of psychology, neuroscience, and genetics. We now have three training grants that are used to support excellence in graduate education in our Department.

We continue to add new and interesting courses to our undergraduate curriculum. New courses this year include “The Science of Sleep” and “Critical Thinking With and About Psychology.” Also, after several years off, we have reintroduced courses on “Positive Psychology” and “The Cognitive Neuroscience of Film.” We are also offering a section of “Statistics” that is taught in tandem with a section of “Experimental Psychology.” And our “Psychology of Learning” course now has a “Laboratory” section. Our graduate program continues to expand and attract some of the top applicants in the country. All in all, our Department continues to improve along every dimension.

Washington University just finished a decade-long program of improvement, called “Project 21.” This initiative propelled the University to new levels of success in every area, including increased enrollments, attracting higher quality students, recruiting outstanding new faculty, and building first-class laboratories and classrooms. Psychology has certainly contributed to, and benefited from, this push to excellence. Our national reputation has increased dramatically, and we now compete with the best institutions in the country. This year every unit in the University has been working on formulating a new 10-year strategic plan, which will be announced by the chancellor in 2008. The new strategic plan will build on our strengths but also add new goals to work toward. We in the Psychology Department look forward to participating in a new era of achievement as this plan comes online.

The Department of Psychology has just finished another interesting and productive year. I hope reading about our accomplishments in this newsletter will make you proud to be associated with our Department. I certainly feel honored to be chairing the Department during these exciting and productive times.

Randy J. Larsen
Chair, Psychology Department

Chairperson’s Corner

Martha Storandt

Martha Storandt from page 1

One of the focuses of Martha’s recent research is on understanding the longitudinal course of Alzheimer’s disease and the transition from healthy aging to very mild dementia. She also conducts research on enhancing memory performance in normally aging older people. A current emphasis is on understanding the personality correlates of memory complaints and how these may influence treatment. Martha has also served on the National Advisory Council on Aging (the advisory body for the National Institute on Aging) and is now a past editor-in-chief of the Journal of Gerontology. She has also served as the chief editorial advisor for the American Psychological Association’s journals and publication program. She has received a number of awards from the American Psychological Association—for outstanding contributions to the study of aging, as a master mentor, and, most recently, for her seminal contributions to the development of the field of clinical geropsychology.

The Department of Psychology at Washington University has indeed been fortunate to have Martha Storandt on its faculty. She has contributed to the tremendous growth in our reputation over the past few decades, has been a master teacher in our department, and has been an enthusiastic leader in a large group of aging and Alzheimer’s researchers.

This year Washington University announced a phased retirement program, whereby senior faculty members can cut back on their commitments to the University gradually over several years. Martha has elected to begin this phased retirement, primarily by cutting back on her teaching role. She still intends to do some teaching and to maintain a smaller scale research program in aging and Alzheimer’s disease. She hopes now to devote more time to developing her hobbies, which include traveling with her husband, Duane, snorkeling, and reading science fiction. The whole department wants to wish her well as she begins this transition and to thank her sincerely for her many years of outstanding service.
Alumni Updates

Please email Jim Clancy at jclancy@wustl.edu to include information about yourself in next year's issue.

'50s

Donald H. Kaesler, PhD '51, gave a talk on memory and aging in November 2007 to Washington University alumni living in central Missouri. Professor Kaesler is emeritus professor of psychology at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

'60s

Robert I. Williams, PhD '61, is completing a book on the history of black psychology. The book will include the beginnings of black psychology in 1968 and will include biographies of outstanding black psychologists Kenneth Clark, Martin Jenkins, etc. Recently he was on a lecture tour discussing his latest book on racism learned at an early age through racial scripting.

Everett Gairson, PhD '62, is now 86 years old and is still going strong. He has an office and contracts with Social Security disability and mental disability client evaluations. In the spring through the summer it is TENNIS, TENNIS, TENNIS. Everett lives at Washington U. in spirit and great memories. He would like to hear from classmates or professors at 22 Common St., Groton, MA 01450; e-mail: egairson79@yahoo.com.

Charles S. Cleland, PhD '66, is chair of the Department of Symptom Research and the McCullough Professor of Cancer Research at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

Walter Nord, PhD '67, is teaching at the business school at the University of South Florida. He and his wife, Ann, also a WU psych grad, are completing a book on the philosophy of organization studies to be published by Earthbaum.

Denis Brophy, MA '68, PhD, Dennis's fourth article in a continuing series about his research on the nature of creative problem solving and who may be most suited (individuals, small groups, organizations) to do it appeared in the Creativity Research Journal last fall.

David A. Crenshaw, PhD '69, has written two books on strategies in child and adolescent psychotherapy and co-authored two books on working with agressive children. He is director and founder of the Rhinebeck Child & Family Center in Rhinebeck, New York, which consults and does training with agencies working with at-risk children as well as a private practice that focuses on children and families.

'70s

Michael W. Mills, PhD '70, worked in Washington, D.C., for 26 years with the Federal Government and now has an independent practice in Plainfield, New Hampshire.


Ken Waldman, MA '71, PhD, is director of Counseling and Psychological Services at the University of Houston and has had a private practice since 1977.

David A. Bremer, PhD '73, is working as a VA psychologist in Honolulu and is currently the psychology internship training director for the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System.

Mark Troy, MA '74, is associate director of Measurement and Research Services at Texas A&M University where he has worked since 1988. Mark's responsibilities at A&M include assessing the university's institutional effectiveness, evaluating courses, and conducting institutional surveys.

Nancy Berland, PhD '75, is in a private practice group in Birmingham, Alabama, specializing in eating disorders. She would love to hear from her classmates at nancy.berland@gmail.com.

Marsha Grannard Greenstein, PhD '76, is continuing in private practice in Newton, Massachusetts, where she specializes in the treatment of children and adolescents. Following an advanced traineeship in the Children and the Law Program through the Harvard Department of Psychiatry, Marsha also serves as a guardian ad litem, making recom- continued on page 10

Department Award Winners

The Hyman Meltzer Memorial Award in Psychology was created to honor Hy's teaching, research, and practice, and his devotion to the betterment of others. His work helped to shape the field of psychology in general and Industrial/Organizational Psychology in particular. The Meltzer award is given to a student who has demonstrated superior scholarship and outstanding research and also demonstrates special character. The 2007 recipient was Kevin Mulqueeny. Kevin was involved in a research project that examined what preschool children know about the written word that is most important to them — namely, their own name. In his junior year, Kevin studied at the University of Sussex, England, on our study abroad program and undertook research that culminated in a poster presentation at the Psychonomic Society meetings. Kevin's honors research thesis was entitled: The Effects of Talker Variability on English Vocabulary Learning.

The 9th annual John A. Stern Undergraduate Research Award was established in honor of Professor John Stern for his support, encouragement, and efforts on behalf of undergraduate research. The award recognizes a student's undergraduate record of achievement in research, not merely a single research project. The 2007 recipient was Elizabeth R. Scholer. Liz majored in psychology and in classics, graduated with honors, summa cum laude, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She also was the recipient of the Eugene Tavener Prize for academic excellence in classics and received honorable mention from the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program. Her honors research thesis was entitled: Going from dip to dippidid yange It received the Influence of Phonological Neighbors. The 1st annual Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award recipient was Denise Martin Zona. "Denise has clearly demonstrated the capacity to be an effective and charismatic teacher. She also has been successful in providing individual guidance and support to students having difficulty in the course. Over and above her important contributions to teaching she has been effective in contributing to a positive emotional atmosphere — one that enriches the class as a whole." The 4th annual Outstanding Teaching Award recipient was Jan Duchek. "She teaches in a manner that relates very well with students, she's funny, and very knowledgable of the subject matter. Her courses stick out as some of the best that I've taken at Washington U. Her lectures are always clear and organized. The exams and projects she assigns have really challenged me." Faculty

Dave Balota won a “Distinguished Alumni” award from the University of Missouri-St. Louis this year. Deanna Barch won the 2007 NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill), St. Louis Outstanding Scientist award. Deanna was also appointed by the American Psychiatric Association to the DSM-V workgroup for psychosis.


Leo Green was the invited Master Lecture at the 28th Annual Meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine in Washington, DC, March, 2007.

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Psychology Department FY07-08 Donors

W e greatly appreciate donations from the following individuals, foundations, and corporations to support programs of the Psychology Department. We apologize for any omissions due to the publication date.

Dr. Robert Assael
Dr. James Russell Bailey, MD
Mrs. Mark Randolph G. Ballinger
Dr. Walter F. Ballinger
Mrs. Carol Ann Benhassat
Dr. David Samuel Blash
Mr. James Francis Fowler
Dr. Andrew Mark Futterman
Dr. Elizabeth Frey Grodky
Dr. James N. Hood
Dr. Carl F. Hoppe
Mr. Mark Jacobs
Dr. Samuel Karson
Dr. Mary Ann Keckler
Dr. Robert E. Lamp
Dr. Peter Alexander Lichtenberg
Dr. Frank L. Mammio
Ms. Lisa MacKenzie
Rabbi Melinda M. Messack
Raj K. Narayan
Dr. Tina M. Narayan
Dr. Peter Nathan
Dr. Rudy V. Nyelegger
Ms. Thomas Frederick Oltmanns
Dr. Daniel Jay Simmons
Dr. Lin Wang
Dr. Amy Ruth Wollson
Dr. Candace Young

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New Faculty and Staff

Ian Dobbins joined the department as associate professor. Ian completed his BS in psychology at the University of Washington in Seattle and after a four-and-a-half-year tour in the U.S. Navy, went on to complete his PhD at the University of California in Davis. Following a four-year appointment at Duke University as an assistant professor he joined Washington University as an associate professor in the fall of 2007. Ian conducts research that focuses on the intersection of episodic memory and decision-making using behavioral studies, simple mathematical models and simulations, and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) during memory problems. Recent work in his lab has focused on the contribution of prefrontal cortex in the deliberate retrieval of memories. This NIH-funded research tries to tease apart the contribution of various prefrontal cortex regions in recovering episodic memories. A second line of research revolves around what are loosely referred to as decision criteria, or the standards by which we judge a memory as sufficient for a given situation. As an example of this research, recent work in the lab suggests that implicit, reward-based learning may drive people towards cautious or lax memory decision tendencies without conscious awareness that they are changing the basis for their memory judgments. This is potentially important since decision criteria are usually altered in the laboratory by giving subjects explicit verbal warnings about their performance. Hobbies include basketball, fishing, and crude attempts at woodworking and carpentry.

Heather Rice joined the Psychology Department in August 2007. Heather completed her BS in Psychology at Arizona State University and her PhD in Cognitive Psychology at Duke University. Her research examines cognitive processes involved in memory retrieval. More specifically, Heather is interested in the role of visual images during retrieval, such as how they affect the type of information recovered from memory and their influence on individuals’ phenomenological experience during retrieval. Currently, her work focuses on the effect of using first-person versus third-person perspective imagery. She is also interested in applying memory research to improve teaching practices. Heather teaches “Experimental Psychology” and “Introductory Psychology.”

In her free time, Heather likes eating good food (especially desserts), listening to local music, watching movies, and jogging with her dog. She recently has been dabbling in “trying not to kill plants,” which is the closest she’s ever gotten to gardening. And she enjoys putting up with her partner, Ian Dobbins, who is also in the Psychology Department.

Simine Vazire joins the Department as assistant professor. Simine received her undergraduate degree from Carleton College and her PhD in social/personality psychology from the University of Texas—Austin in 2006. She conducts research on the accuracy of self and other perceptions of personality. Her current work examines differences between how people see themselves, how they are seen by others, and how they behave. The overall goal is to understand the limits and function of self-knowledge, including the interpersonal and intrapersonal consequences of knowing one’s own personality traits and behavior. For example, how does a person’s self-awareness of their own personality affect their well-being? How does it affect how much others like them? Another line of research examines how feedback affects self-knowledge, personality, and well-being. Simine also likes to think about methodological issues involved with measuring behavior, self-reports, and peer reports. In her spare time, Simine hangs out with her dog, Bear. She also likes to travel and read.

Heather Grogan joined the Psychology Department staff after graduating from Washington University this past May. In the meantime, she works as a research assistant in the Emotion and Psychophysiology Lab, moving to the front desk as an administrative assistant during the afternoon hours. In the future Heather would like to pursue a degree in landscape architecture, focusing specifically on restorative gardens. Leisure activities include running, drawing, and strolling through the park with a friend.

Amy Toenjes is the Department’s new payroll coordinator. Previously, Amy worked at the Residential Life Office where she handled student meal plans, bi-weekly payroll, and accounts payables for the Congress of the South 40. Amy lives in Belleville, Ill., with her husband, Dave; five-year-old daughter, Celia; and miniature dachshund, Chloe. In her spare time she loves to run and completed her first marathon last April. Amy is also very active in the Parent’s Club at Cathedral Grade School where Celia is in kindergarten.

Norma Urani is the Department’s new morning receptionist. Norma graduated with a BS in Business Administration from the medical school campus in neurology and the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center (ADRC) and was the administrative secretary to Dr. Leonard Berg, founder of the ADRC, and to Dr. John Morris, now the director of the ADRC and director of the Wu Harvey A. Friedman Center for Aging.

Norma lives in South County with her two Persian cats, Alee and Simon, is a gardener, and loves to work in her large yard. She belongs to the Alfa Romeo Owners Car Club and has a red Spider Graduate. An annual Spring Fling (May) in Washington, Missouri, along with the Kansas City and Chicago Clubs ends with a “Rally” to a winery and banquet. The club members also participate in the annual Columbus Day Parade on “The Hill.” In her spare time she is an avid reader, enjoying a wide variety of books, she also sings in a church choir. She loves to travel, having been to Europe, England, and Ireland.
2006–2007 Publications from the Department of Psychology

Following is a list of some of the recent publications of the members of the Department of Psychology. If you are interested in receiving a copy of any of the articles, feel free to drop a note to the author. Department of Psychology, Washington University in St. Louis, Campus Box 1125, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130-4899.

Note: Bold names are department faculty, italicized names are department graduate students or postdocs.

Books and Book Chapters


Densobach, N.U.F., Petersen, S.E. "Attentional Networks." In press, New Encyclopedia of Neuroscience and Used in Fund-raising Campaigns and for PR.


urine. In M. Garry and H. Hayne (Eds.), Do Justice and Let the Sky Fall: Elizabeth F. Loftus and Her Contributions to Science, Law, and Academic Freedom (pp. 105-116). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum


Dobson, N.U.F., Petersen, S.E. "Attentional Networks." In press, New Encyclopedia of Neuroscience and Used in Fund-raising Campaigns and for PR.


Publications in Non-Refereed Journals, Book Reviews


Roediger, H.L. (2007). Twelve tips for reviewers. APS Observer 20:4

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Psi Chi Corner

The Washington University chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology, was established on February 29, 1984. This being our fourth leap-year anniversary, it is appropriate to point out the purpose of the organization. As stated in our charter, “The purpose of the organization shall be primarily to advance the science of psychology; and secondly, to encourage, stimulate, and maintain scholarship of the individual [student] members in all academic fields, particularly in psychology.”

Our charter, in addition to supporting the purposes of the organization, exists to provide service to our undergraduate majors and minors, as well as the University and local community. Foremost, the chapter recognizes outstanding students of psychology, and this year the chapter welcomed 44 undergraduates into the Society. The initiation ceremony was conducted by the officers of the chapter along with the Psychology Department’s undergraduate coordinator, Dra Koscieniak. Held in the Great Room of Lopata House, the ceremony was followed by a reception at which the initiates received their membership certificate as well as a Psi Chi mug.

As part of its tradition of serving our students, Psi Chi held its annual fall session on “Preparing for and Applying to Graduate Study in Psychology.” The evening’s session included two psychology faculty who spoke on and answered questions about how to prepare for graduate study during one’s undergraduate years, the steps involved in applying to graduate programs, and the details about the selection process. In addition, a graduate student offered personal experiences and recommendations about considering graduate programs, whom to contact, and when. Another session sponsored by the chapter provided information on PsyD, PhD, MSW, OT, and PT programs and comparisons among the graduate programs were discussed, and details about the professions and careers offered. An admission counselor from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, an admissions recruiter from Washington University’s Programs in Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy were present, along with a few graduate students from the respective programs.

Several chapter members also attended and spoke at the Psychology Department’s Freshmen Open House, welcoming entering first-year students and their families, the Sophomore Convocation, and a special freshman session organized for first-year students who might be considering a major in Psychology. A special movie night, held at Ursa’s on the South 40, included free popcorn as the Barry Levinson movie Rain Man.

Several members of Psi Chi were involved this year in several activities that exemplify service to the broader community. For example, in November, students spent an evening at the St. Louis Area Foodbank where they packaged and organized food for St. Louis residents in need. Then in December, students spent an evening at the Mary Ryder Home helping nurse home residents decorate holiday cards.

Several members of Psi Chi volunteered for the psychology-student-developed program “Parents’ Night-Off.” Created by a Psi Chi member, the Night-Off Program provides a free evening of child sitting monthly for families with a child with autism, along with providing respite care and support at bi-monthly events organized for children with autism. The Night-Off Program also held a fundraiser with the proceeds contributed to MO-FEAT, the Missouri Families for Effective Autism Treatment. The executive director of MO-FEAT mentioned at its board meeting that the contribution from the students was especially gratifying and appreciated.

The chapter has its own Web site, providing information to its members and all our students, including announcements about research and job opportunities, upcoming scientific meetings and conventions, along with links to other psychology-related organizations:

http://artssci.wustl.edu/~7emich/home
diary, which was first developed in the spring of 2005. The course is a naturally-occurring retirement community of psychologists and cognitively oriented film theory to better understand the experience of a movie viewer. We also read a bit of neuroscience, and discussed questions for future research. Psychology 488/PNP 488 starts from the notion that to understand movies, one probably depends on psychological and neural mechanisms that they “borrow” from the mechanisms used to understand real life. The readings use results from psychology and neuroscience to try to better understand the experience of a movie viewer. We also read a bit of cognitively oriented film theory to see how the practices and lore of film artists bear on psychological hypotheses about perception. For example, one question we take up is how viewers process cuts, the points where two film clips are joined. Hollywood film lore has lots to say about how to make a cut unobtrusive, and much of this agrees with results from psychology and neuroscience having to do with motion processing and responses to visual brightness transients. Film lore also heavily emphasizes the importance of avoiding so-called “continuity errors,” for example when an actor’s hairstyle or clothing doesn’t match from one film clip to the next. In this case, film practice doesn’t comport well with the scientific results—studies by Dan Levin, Dan Simon, and their colleagues show that people are in fact quite poor at detecting continuity errors, and don’t seem particularly troubled by them. (For fun examples of the ubiquity and invisibility of continuity errors, have a look at www.continuity.com or www.moviemistakes.com.) This spring, I’ll be teaching the course using a scheme I first tried last spring in Psychology 4702, “Current Debates in Psychology.” Each week students write a brief reaction paper, which they post to a discussion board using Teletis, our course management system (http://teletis.wustl.edu). The papers are posted at least one day before the class meets, and the other participants have the opportunity to post comments on them. Last spring, the students and I found this process went a long way to getting everyone “onto the same page” when we sat down for discussion. The cognitive neuroscience of film is a frame through which we can look at some of the most exciting topics in perception, comprehension, and memory—so there should be lots to talk about.


**Awards and Highlights** from page 3

“On choice and self control: What’s the future worth to you?”


Tom Oltmanns was elected to the Board of Directors of APS.

Martha Storandt received the 2007 Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging, from the Committee on Aging, American Psychological Association.

“The award was given in recogni- tion of Martha’s tireless and selfless work for more than four decades to help establish and advance the scien- tific study of the psychology of aging, translate that knowledge into practical results, and educate other psychologists and the public on aging issues. Her significant research accomplishments include the early demonstration that dementia is a dis- ease condition outside of normal aging as well as her ongoing efforts to differentiate across types of dementia. She has translated her research results to professional prac- tice by developing neuropsychologi- cal assessments that are both easily administered and accurate. She has contributed to gerontology education and the training of clinical geropsy- chologists by her dedicated and car- ing mentoring. She helped establish the APA journal, Psychology and Aging, and published Neuropsychological assessment of dementia and depression in older adults: A clinician’s guide in support of con- tinuing education in aging for prac- ticing psychologists.”—APA Aging Issues Newsletter, November 2007.

**Post Docs**

Christina Fales received a NARSAD Young Investigator grant for two years (2007-2009) that funds a neuro- imaging study of cognitive control in clinical anxiety.

**Students**

Pooja Agarwal received the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship in March 2007.

Amanda Calver has been selected as the 2008 Experimental Analysis of Behavior Fellowship recipient awarded by the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis. The EAB fellowship is awarded annually to a doctoral stu- dent who has generated a strong pro- gram of research in the experimental analysis of behavior and demon- strates a promising career in academia.

Andrea Goldschmidt won the Academy for Eating Disorders/ National Institute of Mental Health Junior Investigator Travel Fellowship. Anne MacKay won the 2007 Elderhostel Award, the Elderhostel K. Patricia Cross Doctoral Research Grant. Elderhostel awards this merit- based grant to a doctoral student whose doctoral research will have a significant impact on the field of life- long or later-life learning. This award will be used to conduct Anna’s dissertation, “Training Attentional Control in Older Adults.”

Emily Pornesky was a winner of the 2007 Applied Social Issues Internship for a project titled Evaluating a home-based program for dementia caregivers. The Applied Social Issues Internship Program encourages research that is con- ducted in cooperation with a com- munity or government organization, public interest group, or other not- for-profit entity that will benefit directly the community it serves.

Nate Rose was a recipient of an Early Career Researcher Award from the Cognitive Aging Conference. Nate presented a paper at the confer- ence at University of York in England.

Veronica Sheal (1st place) and Bianca Moehlman (3rd place) were Graduate Student winners in the area of Social Sciences of the 12th annual Graduate Research Symposium, sponsored by the Graduate Student Senate, Graduate- Professional Council, Association of Graduate Engineering Students, and the Student Advisor Committee.

Alfred Yu received a SMART scholarship for the remainder of his graduate studies. SMART is a full tuition and living stipend package funded by the Department of Defense. Alfred is a civilian employee assigned to work with the U.S. Army Operational Test Command (OTC) at Fort Hood in Texas. The OTC is responsible for conducting large-scale operational tests to evaluate warfight- ing systems. Alfred’s role is to be the “cognitive guy” as much of their focus is on the evaluation of human- machine interactions, vehicles, GPS devices, or command and control interfaces.
mendations to the courts regarding children of divorce.

Mark Schaefer, PhD '76, is currently a full-time forensic psychologist in a small corporation of forensic psychologists working in the Boston area. His specialty is assessing sexually dangerous persons, risk assessments, custody evaluations, and prescreening public safety officers. Mark was a therapist but has almost phased that out, given the time and energy needed to handle the forensic work.

Eric Wish, PhD '77, has been the director of the Center for Substance Abuse Research (CESAR) at the University of Maryland in College Park since 1990 and is a professor in criminology. Eric was a visiting fellow at the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Dept. of Justice between 1986-90, where he designed and launched the national Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program.

Blas Espinoza-Vargas, PhD '78, is associate professor in the Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City.

Betsy A. Gard, PhD '78, is currently past-president of the Georgia Psychological Association. She is chair of the Georgia Disaster Response Network, a joint program with the American Psychological Association and the Georgia Psychological Association. Betsy lives with her husband and 17-year-old son in Sandy Springs, Georgia. Their two older daughters are in San Jose and Pittsburg.

Laura Schweitzer, PhD '79, is chief academic officer at Bassett HealthCare in Cooperstown, New York.

Vicky Weiss, PhD '81, is a research professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Center on Children, Families, and the Law and directs the Nebraska Court Improvement Project.

Andy's career morphed from traditional academics and research into mostly mental health administration. He is director of accreditation and standards (licensing, compliance, and related regulatory affairs) and director of environmental of care (overseeing all physical facilities) for the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ)-University Behavioral HealthCare. Andy is also an associate professor of psychiatry in the Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, at the UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Michael Grunenthal, MD, PhD '81, is chair of the department of neurology at Albany Medical Center in Albany, New York. Michael is married to Laura Schweitzer, WU PhD '79.

Their oldest son graduated from Washington U. in May '07 with a degree in biomedical engineering/systems science. Their youngest son is a junior at Washington U. majoring in physics.

Bill Robinson, PhD '81, recently was promoted to professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Minnesota Medical School and received an award from the Association of Psychologists Postdoctoral and Internships Centers (APPIC), recognizing his work on behalf of psychology internship training. Bill co-chaired this year's conference of the Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers (APACHC), and he was elected to president-elect for the Association of Psychologists in Academic Health Centers.

Shirley R. Baron, PhD '80, is in Chicago practicing half time in the Sex and Marital Therapy Program at Northwestern University's Department of Psychiatry and the rest of the time in private practice.

Edna Herdman, PhD '80, was working as an organizational psychologist for the federal government in a top secret classified position at one of the intelligence agencies. Edna and her husband retired in 2003 to Jacksonville, Florida.

Andrew C. Coyne, PhD '81, is in private practice, custody evaluations, and treatment team for preschool children many of whom face the autism spectrum.

Eric Hallman, PhD '83, and his wife, Elizabeth Woodman, are living in beautiful, historic Hillsborough, North Carolina, where he was just re-elected to the town's board of commissioners. He is launching his third biotech company but would rather be playing jazz trumpet.

Jeff Levine, PhD '83, while still maintaining a license to practice psychology, has been working full-time in the WestLUT education and is now director, Academic Affairs, Atlantic Health, in New Jersey. In that role he has over-sighted of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing medical education for a two-hospital system in Morristown and Summit, New Jersey. Feel free to contact Jeff at jeff.levine@ahsys.org.

Phyllury Platte, MA '83, is senior vice president of Boys & Girls Town of Missouri, a Midwest children's services agency specializing in the treatment of children with severe behavior and emotional disorders. Phyllury lives in St. Louis with her husband, Joe Antosek. Her son is a freshman at Tulane University.

Amy Newman, PhD '84, is in private practice in Chicago and is busy raising two teenagers. In the past Amy has worked at two area hospitals and taught as a part-time faculty member at several universities.

Alan Tomkins, PhD '84, has been directing the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center since 1998. Prior to starting the center, Alan was a faculty member in UNL's Law/Psychology Program.

Erie Van Denburg, PhD '84, is the clinical psychology internship director of Jesse Brown VAMC in Chicago, Illinois. Eric has 20 years of experience in the VA system.

Mark A. Cook, PhD '85, his wife, Victoria, and their daughter Molly (age 9), recently traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia, to complete the adoption of an infant girl whom they named Madison Katherine Cook. Mark is in private practice in St. Louis County.

Steve Kurtz, PhD '85, is married to Bonnie Kurtz (Washington U., MA '81) coming on 30 years! They have 2 fabulous daughters, 19 and 23 years old. Steve is the clinical director of the NYU Child Study Center's ADHD Institute and co-director of their Selective Mutism Program. Steve earned his ABPP Diplomate along the way and is active in AABS/ABCT and in teaching interns, externs, and post-docs at the Child Study Center. He’s an assistant professor at the NYU School of Medicine in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Julia L. Bienias, MA '86, PhD will begin a new position in February 2008 as director, section of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Department of Preventive Medicine, at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. She has been on the faculty at Rush since 1997. Prior to that, she worked as a statistician for the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington, D.C., and also earned her doctorate in biostatistics. She can be contacted via e-mail: bienia@alum.wustl.edu.

Margaret Charlton, PhD '86, is working for the Aurora (Colorado) Community Mental Health Center as a specialist in adapting treatment for children with developmental disabilities and major mental illnesses. She’s been with the agency for 10 years and has collaborated in adapting DBT and T-CBT for this population. Margaret volunteers with Aurora’s Children’s Work with Con- suits with a local animal assisted ther- apy program. She runs an APA approved pre-doctoral internship program for clinical psychologists, plus practicum placements for psychology training at different levels.

Robert Robbins, MA '86, is currently a clinical psychologist in private practice, specializing in children and families. He lives with his family in Rochester, New York.

Marsha Pik-Nathan, PhD '87, is currently a staff psychologist at Belmont Center in Philadelphia and has a small private practice. Over the years, she received rabbinic ordination from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College outside of Philadelphia. Marsha lives in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, with her three children, Shira (15), Eitan (11), and Noah (9).

Susan Boland, PhD '87, is associate professor teaching psychology at Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania (LHUP). Susan has been at LHUP since 1990 where she met her husband, Dr. John Reid, who teaches physics.

Ruth Davies Sulser, PhD '88, is a clinical psychologist at the VA in St. Louis in the areas of Extended Care/Geriatrics and OIF/OIF Polytrauma survivors.

Anthony Delito, PhD '90, is currently professor and chair, Department of Physical Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, at the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Dear Friend of the Department of Psychology at Washington University,

We have written *A History of the Department of Psychology at Washington University: 1924-2006*. This book covers events, people, and locations in our department from its founding in 1924 through the current day. Whatever your connection to psychology at Washington University, you should find something of interest in this book. You may obtain a copy of this book by making a $50 donation to the Psychology Gift Fund. Several of you have already made contributions to the Psychology Gift Fund. These funds provide the department with flexible resources that we can use in creative ways to improve the experiences of the students, faculty, and staff in Psychology. For example, we use these funds to provide research awards to students, teaching awards to faculty, and to fund student travel to scientific conferences. We have also drawn on these funds to purchase computers for student use and to buy video recording equipment for use at our Psychological Services Clinic for student training.

The Psychology Gift Fund is an important and flexible resource for us to make the Psychology Department a more vibrant and interesting place for the provost and interim director of the Office of Assessment, Information, and Analysis.

Bradley Frank, PhD '92, and his wife, Laura, have been married for 13 years and have three children, Kyle-10, Sara-7, and Sam-7. Bradley has remained in Houston and is a partner in the private practice that he entered when he completed his Baylor College of Medicine internship. When not at work, Bradley is usually at one of the kids’ baseball games, art classes, etc.

John Yost, Ph.D. ‘92, is an associate professor of psychology at John Carroll University, in the eastern suburbs of Cleveland, Ohio. John lives in Bainbridge Township, Ohio, with his wife, Mia, stepson, Alex (11), and 3-year-old twin sons, Michael and Maximus (Max).

Beverly Field, Ph.D. ‘93, is an assistant professor in the Departments of Anesthesiology and Psychiatry at the Washington University School of Medicine where she works in the area of pain management. Her e-mail is fieldb@wustl.edu.

Susan Robinson-Whalen, Ph.D. ‘93, is working at Baylor College of Medicine’s Center for Research on Women with Disabilities (CROWD). The research primary focuses on mental health and health promotion interventions for women with physical disabilities.

Dean D. YonDras, Ph.D. ’93, is a tenured associate professor with joint appointments in the Psychology and Human Development Programs at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. He is active in life-span oriented research, examining self-diagnostic perceptions of age-associated illnesses, and exploring effects of everyday stress on memory performance. Dean is currently chair of the executive committee of the Faculty Senate and chair of the Instructional Development Council. He and his wife, Mary Elizabeth, are expecting a new baby on March 17, 2008.

Rebecca S. Allen, Ph.D. ‘94

Rebecca’s lab at the University of Alabama continues to focus on interventions for older adults and their families facing decisions about care near the end of life. She is interested in intergenerational interventions and applied decision-making and has started to examine end-of-life decisions among older prisoners.

Gayle Brosnan-Watters, Ph.D. ’96, currently assistant professor of psychology at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, achieved tenure last year. Gayle is married to Otis Kinney, who lives in Sun Lakes, Arizona. She is planning to retire soon and join him there (Gayle was 50 when she received her Ph.D from Washington U.), and hopes to continue to teach and continue her research after leaving Pennsylvania.

Miri Hardy (Goldstein), Ph.D. ’96, recently moved to the western coast of Puerto Rico with her husband where they opened a pottery studio. Miri can be reached at miririncon-pottery.com.

Sara Wilcox, Ph.D. ‘96, is associate professor in the School of Public Health and Director of the Behavioral Science Laboratory at the University of South Carolina. She and her husband, Jeff Schatz (also a Washington U. alum, see below), have a 21-month-old son who is helping to keep them busy and fully entertained.

Alison Chasteen, Ph.D. ’97, is an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto. Her lab investigates age-based stereotyping and prejudice, both from the perceiver’s and the target’s perspective. Alison’s e-mail is chasteen@psych.utoronto.ca.

Jeff Schatz, Ph.D. ’97, is currently an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of South Carolina. Jeff’s wife, Sara Wilcox, is also on USC’s faculty.

Wanjiang Du, MA ’98, went into corporate finance after leaving Washington U. to work at a Fortune 200 company where the analytic and quantitative training received from

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To donate to the Psychology Gift Fund, please fill out the form below, cut out and mail your contribution to: Arts & Sciences Development Office, Campus Box 1210, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130.

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Randy J. Larsen, Ph.D.
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Keeping It All in the Air: A Profile of Graduate Student Steve Balsis

By Brian Carpenter

The world record for juggling running chainsaws is 86 successful catches. (If you were wondering, “successful” means the chainsaws don’t hit the ground and all limbs are preserved.) Students in the graduate program in psychology are not doing a lot with actual chainsaws, but they are doing their own challenging juggling act as they progress through their training. Steve Balsis, a graduate student in the clinical psychology program, is one example of a student who has learned to keep many things in the air at once.

Steve came to Washington University in 2001, after completing his BA at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts and then working as a research assistant for two years at Brown University’s sleep research lab. Like most first-year students, Steve began his career here immersed in course work — in his case, statistics, clinical assessment, advanced psychopathology, and a course in gerontology, the focus of his research and clinical interests. But it was in the second year that the juggling really began.

In addition to more course work—neuropsychological assessment and theory and techniques of psychotherapy—Steve began seeing clients for individual psychotherapy at the Department’s Psychological Services Center (PSC). The PSC fulfills two important roles: It gives students an opportunity to learn and practice their psychotherapy skills under the supervision of a licensed psychologist, and it provides low-cost psychotherapy services to the St. Louis community. So, Steve was balancing all the usual reading and writing, along with seeing his weekly clients.

But wait, there’s more! Also at this time Steve was developing a research idea for his master’s research project. This was a project Steve designed himself, focused on the patronizing, baby-talk-like speech that is sometimes used with older adults. (“C’mom over here honey and let’s get you to take these pills for me, OK sweetie?”) In this project Steve was interested in exploring how people react when they see others using that kind of “elderspeak” with older adults. Results from his project suggested that both the people who use elderspeak and the people who are its targets are judged to be less competent and more impaired. A summary of his research appeared in the Clinical Gerontologist, the first of Steve’s many scientific publications.

In his third year, Steve picked up more clinical experiences in a wide variety of settings, on top of more course work and research. He completed a practicum at the St. Louis Veterans Affairs Medical Center (that’s 10 hours a week for an entire academic year, for those of you who are counting) and began running support groups at the Alzheimer’s Association. In addition, Steve began teaching “Psychology of Personality” and “Abnormal Psychology.”

Soon Steve completed another major milestone in his graduate training: passing his comprehensive examinations, which involves reading and integrating a vast amount of information in preparation for a two-hour oral examination, grilled by three faculty who were free to ask Steve just about any question in psychology to test the depth and breadth of his academic, research, and clinical preparation. Another gold star for Steve, and he was next on to his dissertation.

Steve’s interests turned to personality disorders in older adults, an underserved area in clinical gerontology but one with implications for the health of older adults. So Steve joined Tom Oltmanns, the Edgar James Swift Professor of Psychology at Washington U., who is a widely recognized expert in personality research.

The criteria used to diagnose personality disorders have been the focus of debate within psychology for many reasons. One criticism is that the list of criteria may not take into account real differences across age groups. For instance, one of the diagnostic items for avoidant personality disorder asks about interpersonal difficulties on the job, a criterion not relevant for retired older adults. Steve’s research focuses on determining whether the current diagnostic criteria are valid for older adults and whether (and what) criteria might be more useful. Steve’s publications in this area, in journals such as the American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry and Psychology and Aging, have already made an important contribution, and his dissertation research promises to yield much more. In fact, Steve’s work in this area has been supported by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, further validation of his potential as a scholar.

Oh, and while he’s been working on this groundbreaking research, he moved to Houston, got married, and had a baby.

In the past year, Steve has been working as a clinical psychology intern at the Houston Veterans Affairs Medical Center. This full-year, full-time clinical experience is designed to round out Steve’s clinical training, and it’s given him the opportunity to establish professional connections in Texas. That’s been useful because next fall he will start as an assistant professor in the Psychology Department at Texas A&M University, joining his wife, Lisa Geraci, a cognitive psychologist and graduate of the program at Washington U., who is also an assistant professor there. Both are getting their own hands-on training in developmental psychology with the recent birth of their precious and precocious son, Owen.

So let’s review. Extensive course work, intensive clinical experiences, rigorous research training. Add to that moving to a new city, starting a new job, gaining a spouse, and welcoming a baby. Steve makes it all look easy. And by comparison, chainsaws don’t look so hard.

Psychology greatly helped his career. Wanjiang is currently a managing director at Arab Financial Services, LLC, a new and quickly growing education finance company that focuses on providing low-cost private student loans.

Barbara Mazer Gross, MA ‘99, and John Gross (LA ’98) married in 2000 and are living in St. Petersburg, Florida, where John has a sports medicine/family medicine practice and Barb is the director of development for a performing arts center.

Saeeda Khan, PhD ‘99, is an associate professor of social psychology at the University of San Francisco. In their spare time, she and her husband, Matt, chase after their two young boys, Riahan and Samad.

‘00s

Gregg Belle, PhD ’01, is a forensic psychologist in Massachusetts. For six years Gregg worked at Bridgewater State Hospital conducting various forensic assessments of mentally ill criminals and sex offenders. In August 2007, he joined Forensic Health Services, Inc. to become the Program Manager of a contract with the Massachusetts Department of Corrections for sex offender evaluations at the Massachusetts Treatment Center for the sexually dangerous.

Ann Pearman, PhD ’03, is an assistant professor in the Gerontology Institute with a joint appointment in Psychology at Georgia State University in Atlanta. Ann recently received a GEM Internal Grant to fund a project on Neuroticism and Memory in Young and Older Adults.

Sherry Beaudreau, PhD ’03, graduated from the joint fellowship program of the Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) through Stanford University and the Palo Alto VA. Sherry is currently an instructor in research through the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University School of Medicine and associate director of the MIRECC Hubsite fellowship program. She spends her free time with her husband, two cats, and learning to play guitar.

Nicole Speer, PhD ’05, started a new job in December ’07 as a research associate in the Mental Health Program at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Nicole will be working in the area of mental health policy research, assessing the mental health needs of communities in the Western United States and helping to make sure there is an adequately trained workforce to meet those needs.

Jen Breeneiser, PhD ’07, accepted an assistant professor position at Valdosta State University (GA) in the Department of Psychology and Counseling. Jen was married to Quinton Campbell in October 2007.
During these times of reduced funding, it is appropriate that the Department takes pride as having one of the oldest (if not the oldest) continuously running training grant in the country.

The Aging and Development training grant developed out of the recognition by Marion Bunch, chairman of the Psychology Department in the '50s, that as the population ages there would be a burgeoning need to understand the psychology of aging. At the time, the Department had strengths in experimental psychology with emphasis on learning and memory. Bunch thought it was “a natural” to extend the study of these areas to older adults. After considerable review, a proposal with Bunch as Principal Investigator, PI, was submitted to the Aging Program of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and approved in 1958 as the first training grant dedicated to studying aging in a psychology department in the country. The grant initially only supported graduate students but began to support postdoctoral fellows in 1969.

The first major appointment in the new program was Professor Robert W. Kleemeier, who took over as PI on the training grant, until his death at age 51 in 1966. Kleemeier was recognized for his contributions to the area of social gerontology, and the prestigious Robert Kleemeier Award is still given in recognition of outstanding research in the field of gerontology. Bunch returned as PI for the training grant after Kleemeier died.

The Department then recruited Jack Botwinick from Duke University. He became director of the training grant in 1971 and changed its name to Aging and Development. Jack was known for his work in learning and memory and was earned many awards including the Kleemeier and Brookdale awards for distinguished contributions to gerontology. Botwinick died in 2006 but left his mark through his research and the mentoring of students. Although Kleemeier and Botwinick were outside faculty recruited to continued on page 14

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detecting lies and misdirection in depositions. Nate was so successful that he started his own law firm in 1977. At the same time, he bought a seat for himself on the Mid-America Commodities Exchange, and he spent some time periodically in the pits trading in commodities. Here his background in probability theory, the basis of psychological statistics, served him well.

Both his law firm and his commodity investments prospered. However, in 1983 he became seriously overextended on a soybean futures contract. “I lost everything I owned except my home and my law firm,” he reports. “I had to start over.” He refocused his energy on legal work and over the next decade his firm handled over 800 corporate debt restructuring cases. Meanwhile his interest in investing was restricted to the safer arena of municipal bonds. He also became chief operating officer of a conglomerate corporation at this time. “I worked day and night,” he reports, and he became very successful for a second time in his life.

In 1996 Nate retired from his law firm and started his career over for a third time by creating an investment company. In the early years he ran it as a hedge fund, where he focused on buying underperforming companies and restructuring them to become profitable. “In psychology I learned how to interact with people, how to motivate them,” says Nate. This translated into strong negotiation skills, which served him well during this time. “I also liked the scientific and analytic part of psychology,” he says, crediting these skills with giving him a basis for sound decision-making in this area. These days Nate has trimmed his investment company pretty much into a one-man operation. “I sit in front of a laptop in my home on Captiva Island. When I look up I often see dolphins playing out in the Gulf of Mexico,” he reports. Nate is currently focused on the derivatives market, an exotic investment arena that few people understand and even fewer are good at. But it is here, Nate says, that he finds the most pure application of psychology. “This market is not rational,” he says, “instead, in the short term, it is pushed and pulled by psychological forces, such as fear and greed and loss aversion.”

Nate has become a student of the field known as “behavioral finance,” a new but rapidly growing area of psychology. This field has already established a few basic principles, some of which Nate finds useful as the basis for his investing strategy. For example, people place different weights on prospective gains and losses, the implications of which form the basis of “prospect theory” (the work for which psychologist Dan Kahneman won a Nobel Prize in economics). Individuals are much more distressed by prospective losses than they are made happy by equivalent gains. For example, investors typically consider the loss of $1 about twice as painful as the pleasure received from a $1 gain. The same principle (“bad is stronger than good”) has been found in marital satisfaction research, where John Gottman has found that one bad argument with your spouse needs to be balanced by five good interactions in order for a marriage to be deemed satisfying over the long term. The point is that bad events, like stock losses or arguments, loom larger than good events.

Another principle of behavioral finance that Nate finds useful is that people respond differently to equivalent situations depending on whether they are presented in the context of losses or gains, a phenomenon known as the “framing effect.” For example, an investor could be advised to sell now to “lock in gains” or to sell now to “avoid potential future losses.” Researchers have also found that people are willing to take more risks to avoid losses than they are to realize gains. Faced with sure gain, most investors become risk-averse, but faced with sure loss, investors become wild risk-takers. Another principle is a version of the “fundamental attribution error” where people see their own decisions as rational and based on information, whereas they attribute the decisions of others to their dispositions or other personal characteristics.

Consequently, people are often overconfident in their own decisions, even when the information they have may be irrelevant to the decision. A great deal of trading volume is based on this overconfidence effect, even though the level of investor confidence in investment decisions does not correlate with the success of those decisions. There is also the “familiarity/liking” effect, such that people will prefer to invest in a company they are familiar with. For example, there is some evidence that investment analysts who visit a company develop more confidence in their stock picking skill involving that company, even though there is no evidence to support this increased confidence.

These are just some of the principles of the new field of behavioral finance that Nate finds relevant in his investment activities. Nate has encouraged the Psychology Department to push for more research and teaching in the area of behavioral finance, mainly because of its broad applicability to the real world. “Don’t let the economics department claim this area,” he advised, in part based on his experience as a former economics major as well as his enthusiasm for psychology in general. “I know where psychology and economics could work together in an interdisciplinary fashion.”

Nate has four children and his youngest child, Justin, graduated from Washington University in 2006 with a degree in psychology. Like his father, Justin is now trading commodity futures in Chicago. Nate returned to visit his alma mater in November 2007, when he met with Randy Larsen, the chair of Psychology, and toured the Psychology Building. That meeting formed the basis of this article. Nate has been a strong supporter of Washington U. throughout his career, and articles on his contributions to the University can be found at:

Lindsay Casmaer: Miss Missouri and Research Assistant at Washington University

Lindsay Casmaer is a research assistant in Dr. Denise Head’s lab. Though only one year in “pageant life,” Lindsay won the Miss Missouri title, which qualified her to compete in the Miss America pageant this past January. Her talent for the competition was Ballet en Pointe.

As a research assistant, Lindsay is involved in structural and functional MRI data acquisition and manual and automated fMRI-based brain morphometry for research investigations on Alzheimer’s disease and non-demented aging. She is also involved in MRT and PET data acquisition for a study investigating amyloid deposition in adult children of individuals with and without Alzheimer’s disease.

Lindsay is planning eventually to obtain a Doctorate of Medicine and to practice women’s health with an emphasis on preventative medicine.

In psychology I learned how to interact with people, how to motivate them.

50 Years and Counting

She also worked with the “Training the Trainers” program in Philadelphia developing a working infrastructure for computer classes within under-served communities and promoting internet safety awareness through education.

Lindsay Casmaer

Spearheaded the work in gerontology, it was the “home-grown” Martha Storandt (see article about Martha in this issue) who took the program to another level. Martha was a student of Kleimeer’s and was also mentored by Botwinick. Martha took over the training grant in 1984 and for 23 years led the program with amazingly clear direction. This past year we were awarded another five years of funding, with myself as PI. I obviously have some tough acts to follow. The success of a training grant is not reflected by its longevity but by the success of its trainees (see, for example, the article about Jane Berry in this issue), although the two are highly intertwined. Our recent trainees are tenured or are holding tenure-track positions at such institutions as Boston College, Dartmouth University, Davidson College, Georgia Tech University, University of Alabama, University of Michigan, University of Kansas, among many others. We are looking forward to seeing many of our past students and postdocs at our 50th year celebration that will be held at Washington University in June 2008.
Dr. Herman T. Blumenthal (1913-2007)

By Randy J. Larsen

Jane Loevinger (1918-2008)

By Henry J. Larsen
By Martha Stonard

Jane Berry is an alumna of the Psychology Department at Washington University through and through. After her AB in 1979, then her MA in 1983, followed by her PhD in 1986. Now Chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Richmond in Virginia, Jane has published widely on memory, aging, and depression. She currently serves on the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of psychological science. A favorite pedagogical tool is to bring the arts and humanities into discourse on psychological science. For example, she has provided her students in an advanced seminar on memory read empirical articles on memory and cognitive aging and then read The Memory of Old Jack (Wendell Berry, 1974) in order to investigate whether literary authors depict cognitive aging accurately. One of the most gratifying teaching experiences of Jane’s career is currently under way. She recently joined the faculty and she is currently under way. She recently joined the faculty who teach a required freshman year-long core course that includes analysis of the human condition over time and cultures in great works (e.g., Plato, Shakespeare, Marx, Darwin, Freud, DuBois, de Beauvoir, Baldwin, and Morrison). Her most gratifying experiences as a teacher are to get students to make connections across disciplines, to see the value of statistics, and to read closely, think critically, and write well. Beginning in the fall of 2007 Jane assumed the role of chair of the Psychology Department at the University of Richmond and the day-to-day demands of running a department with nine full-time faculty (and three new hires for 2008 and 2009) and 120 undergraduate majors (25 minors). The department fosters close faculty-student mentoring relationships by offering opportunities for undergraduates to work closely with faculty members. Jane typically has 10 undergraduate research students per semester and supervises the internship field placements of a dozen or so majors. One of Jane’s recent honors students is now a doctoral candidate at Berkeley and has an article on black identity forthcoming in the journal Assessment. She is also revising the curriculum, moving from a credit-to-unit system, and revamping the large introductory psychological science course to small sections, thereby bringing all courses in the psychology curriculum into accordance with the liberal arts model of small class sizes that feature critical reading, writing, and discussion. Appointments to several university committees and task forces keep Jane busy serving the broader mission of the university. Jane has played an active role on the national scene as well. She was program chair for APA’s Division on Adult Aging and Development in 2007 and secretary of the division from 2002 to 2005. She is currently the chair of the division’s election committee. She served as guest editor for Developmental Psychology and the Journal of Research on Personality and a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences. She has also served as a reviewer for a large number of other journals and for the National Institutes of Health where she was a visiting scientist at the National Institute on Aging from 1998 to 1999. She is currently advising a forthcoming volume for the series, Aging in America: Psychological, physical, and social issues (Greenwood) edited by John and Christine Cavanaugh.

Recently Jane’s colleagues in the department nominated her for the McEldin Trawick Chair, a six-year endowed chair (2008-2014) that will allow Jane to focus on her research on memory self-efficacy and aging, facilitated by the hire of three successive two-year postdoctoral fellows. Most recently this work was supported by a five-year research grant from the National Institute on Aging. In a series of four intensive studies with data on 1,000 adults ranging in age from 20 to 89 years she found that memory self-efficacy explains 7 to 10 percent of the age-related memory variance across four episodic memory tasks. These studies also indicated plausible explanatory mechanisms: task effort, strategy use, working memory, speed of processing, trait memory ability. Other results from this program indicate that older adults are more real than younger adults in their assessments of their memory abilities, but when those assessments are negative they contribute to poorer memory performance, even when initial memory ability is controlled.

Jane reports that besides the joy her family brings, her time at Washington University as an undergraduate and graduate student in the Department of Psychology was among her most precious life experiences.

Balancing Act: A Profile of Jane Berry, Ph.D. ’86