As most of you know, this is a historic time for The University of Texas at Austin. We will soon be welcoming a new president, William C. Powers, who will take over the reins of the university February 1 upon Larry Faulkner’s retirement. Bill Powers has been dean of the university’s law school since 2000 and a faculty member since 1977. We are delighted at the selection of Bill Powers for this job. He is a superb choice to sustain the direction and momentum that Larry Faulkner put in place. Powers said he will focus on the following key priorities: moving the university into the top ten rankings of public institutions, increasing minority enrollment, boosting state spending on higher education, modifying the Top 10 Percent law and strengthening undergraduate education at the university.

To support the last goal, he and other university leaders will consider a proposal presented by the Task Force on Curricular Reform, in response to the 2004 report by the Commission of 125, to establish a “University College.” The University College would be charged with establishing a core curriculum, including a broad education in the areas of science, technology, the humanities, global cultures, multicultural perspectives, and leadership, for all university students to ensure a well-balanced education. The proposed University College would not award degrees or have a separate faculty.

Within the College of Liberal Arts, we’re also working to strengthen the undergraduate experience for all students through our Writing Across the Curriculum initiative. This program uses a proven approach of low- and high-stakes writing assignments, peer and instructor feedback and opportunity for revision to help students formulate ideas in writing so that they can communicate effectively across all disciplines.

This issue of Life & Letters includes information on many other fascinating initiatives and timely research occurring within the college including: our new Liberal Arts Career Services office, Dr. Ami Pedahzur’s work on suicide terrorism, Dr. Joe Potter’s work on contraceptive use, and Dr. Jane Richard’s research on the negative consequences of controlling one’s emotions.

We hope you enjoy this issue and, as always, we appreciate your ongoing support of the college. Please stay in touch.

Richard Lariviere
Dean, College of Liberal Arts
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Toys are big business, accounting for $27 billion in spending each year. But how many consumers notice the social, ethnic and gender dynamics at play during their toy purchase?

Not many, according to Dr. Christine Williams, a professor of sociology at The University of Texas at Austin, who spent several months on the front lines of toy shopping to research her new book “Inside Toyland.”

“Toy buying offers a glimpse into the commodification of motherhood and the socialization of a new generation of consumers,” said Williams, who has done extensive research on gender issues and professionals in non-traditional occupations. “But just as important, I was able to observe the significant racial, gender and class inequities associated with a low-wage work environment. The dynamics between workers, managers and customers were fascinating.”

Inequities in Toyland
Williams worked for six weeks at a large, discount retailer, which she calls the Toy Warehouse, and another six weeks at a small, boutique retailer, which she calls Diamond Toys. She found that jobs were assigned according to race and gender.

In both stores, white men filled the director and assistant director positions. The next level down, managers, was more diverse and included men and women, whites and Hispanics and, at the Toy Warehouse, one African American woman. The supervisors at the Toy Warehouse were also diverse, although white men held all those positions at Diamond Toys.

At the Toy Warehouse, the cashiers were all white or light-skinned females and the “back room” of the store was staffed almost exclusively by men. Both men and women, most of whom were white, served as cashiers at Diamond Toys, although only women worked in the doll and stuffed animal departments and electronics was predominantly male. The cleaning crews at both stores were Hispanic women.

“The assignment of responsibilities served to support and promulgate racial and gender stereotypes,” said Williams. “Employees conform to this stereotyping to keep their jobs.”

The clientele and atmosphere were very different in both stores. While customers at the Toy Warehouse came from all different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, those at Diamond Toys tended to be upper class and white. In addition, the Toy Warehouse was dominated by children, while the shoppers at Diamond Toys were primarily adults.

Advertising exacerbates problems in the stores by promising customers a friendly, efficient shopping experience, while the work environment promotes high employee turnover, an unknowledgeable sales force and poor attitudes, Williams says.

“In addition to low pay, retail workers typically have no health benefits and no control over their work schedules and they must endure a high level of disrespect from customers and supervisors alike,” says Williams. “In addition, employees are not empowered to take actions outside their narrowly defined job description. When customers are frustrated by what they perceive as inefficiency, stupidity or a poor attitude, they direct their anger at the employee, which only creates more animosity for everyone.”

Williams’ observational study supported previous research findings about racial inequities in the retail industry. She found that white customers were treated better than black or Hispanic customers and that white employees were treated with greater respect by customers, particularly white customers.

“On several occasions at the Toy Warehouse customers wrongly assumed I was the person in charge because I was white,” says Williams. “I also noticed that white, middle class women were the quickest to adopt an attitude of superiority and entitlement.”

Williams, continued on page 20
Dr. Kate Brooks Helps Students Translate Liberal Arts Into A World of Opportunity

“Not only does a liberal arts education help students learn how to think critically, it gives them knowledge that is needed by employers.”

“We haven’t been as effective as we should in that area,” says Brooks. “We need to help students understand the value of their degree in the workplace. That’s what led us to define our mission as helping students translate a liberal arts education into a world of opportunities.”

In order to demonstrate her point, Brooks tells the story of a former student from a film class she taught who earned an internship at CNN. The news team he was assigned to produced a story on conflict in the Middle East and needed a film clip to complement the story. The intern suggested a clip from “High Noon” that he remembered from Brooks’ class. The producers used the clip he suggested and eventually offered him a job.

Hired from Dickinson College in February 2003, Brooks quickly set out to reinvigorate Career Services. She began by reorganizing the staff, creating an advising team and adding a full recruiting staff.

Next she set out to consolidate Career Services from two separate offices into a single office that would be more inviting to students and employers alike. With the strong support of College of Liberal Arts Dean Richard Lariviere and Associate Dean Richard Flores, Brooks oversaw the relocation of Career Services into an expansive new office suite within the Flawn Academic Center.

The new Career Services Center, which opened in September after a $1.2 million renovation, provides students an inviting new space to explore their career interests. The center now boasts an impressive resource library, scheduled advising and four hours per day of walk-in advising services.

The new facility also is helping Brooks achieve one of her top goals: recruiting the recruiters. Employers now have at their disposal a conference room for recruitment information sessions that can hold up to 20 students. The center also has five interview rooms that create a professional but comfortable ambience.

The combination of the new facility and Brooks’ high energy is making an impact. As of September 2005, more than 800 organizations were registered with Liberal Arts Career Services. Those organizations include a diverse range of major employers, including Archer Daniels Midland, Hewitt Associates, Lehman Brothers, Neiman Marcus, the American Red Cross, BASF, the FBI, the Peace Corps and McKinsey & Co.

Through its recruiting program and the AccessUT database, over 2100 jobs and internships were posted for College of Liberal Arts students in 2005. In addition, Brooks has worked to increase the number of large employer events hosted by Career Services, including a Career Expo in October that included 70 employers, and a law school fair that attracted representatives from 110 law schools around the country.

Just as important as the new facility is Brooks’ philosophy and the desire to help students understand the worth of their liberal arts education.
The use of suicide terrorism – a tactic employed so effectively in the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 – has grown dramatically during the past five years. From 1999 – 2004, there were 3.5 times as many suicide terrorist attacks as had occurred during the entire period ranging from 1983 to 1998. In 2005, the number soared even higher, with a significant concentration of attacks occurring in Iraq.

"From a cost-benefit perspective, suicide terrorism is quite effective," said Dr. Ami Pedahzur, associate professor of government at The University of Texas at Austin and a terrorism expert. "A suicide bomber with an explosives belt kills on average four times as many people as an attack with a delayed detonation device or a shooting attack."

In fact, data from the U.S. State Department shows that while only three percent of all terrorist incidents in the world employ suicide bombers, these attacks account for 48 percent of all fatalities.

The success rate is high because the bomb is, in effect, a "smart bomb" that can modify the exact location and timing of attack based on a real-time assessment of the target. In Haifa, Israel, for instance, a suicide bomber stopped from entering a busy shopping mall simply walked 100 yards up a hill from the blockade and detonated himself in a popular, congested restaurant killing, 15 people.

But what makes a person willing to take his or her own life as well as the lives of several, if not dozens, of strangers?

"People’s initial reaction to a suicide terrorist is to think the person is crazy or a religious zealot, but that’s not the case," said Pedahzur, who just released a book on suicide terrorism. "Most suicide bombers see themselves as soldiers carrying out a mission to inflict damage on the enemy."

In addition, suicide bombers are not radical loners operating on the fringes of society. Research by Robert Pape, an associate professor at the University of Chicago, shows that approximately 95 percent of suicide attacks are planned by some sort of structured organization, generally to achieve a political goal.

**Profile of a Suicide Terrorist**

When suicide terrorism first gained notoriety in the early 1980s, scientists set out to decipher the personality of a suicide terrorist. Unfortunately, years of research and several theories were unable to find common characteristics that transcended the personalities of people committing these attacks. Many individuals who become suicide bombers, in fact, could be described as “normal people” who showed no suicidal tendencies prior to committing the act.

While it does not seem possible to identify a single dominant characteristic of suicide bombers, current theories point to societal influences conditioning an individual for a mission as a suicide bomber. Pedahzur’s research indicates that suicide bombers are motivated by a personal commitment to a leader, group, or ideology or a personal crisis brought about by the suffering of family, friends or community members with whom they feel a deep sense of identification. Furthermore, they must be in an environment that supports suicide terrorism.

**Environments that Support Suicide Terrorism**

While the use of suicide terrorism can be traced back as far as the eleventh century, the rise of this tactic in modern times can be traced to Lebanon and Iran in the 1980s. While this tactic spread to groups east and south of these countries, it did not move west. This migration has to do with a number of preconditions that must exist to facilitate suicide terrorism.

"In order for suicide terrorism to be a viable alternative, there must be a culture that supports, even glorifies, death, a sense of supreme hopelessness and an asymmetrical alignment of forces where a small group is confronting a much larger and more powerful force," explained Pedahzur.

In a community that either is, or perceives itself to be, oppressed by the reigning powers and where an improvement in the situation seems impossible, dying in a suicide attack is seen as an honorable way to help one’s community while ensuring eternal salvation.

**Terrorist Networks**

"Terrorist organizations used to be hierarchical and organized like military units. Now they’re more like street gangs," said Pedahzur. "Small cells of terrorists operate on the local level and may or may not be tied in to the larger organization even though they claim an affiliation. The flattened structure makes terrorist networks more fluid and agile."

Pedahzur, continued on page 20
Managing Emotions: For Better or Worse

Your poker face may be costing you more than your money; it may be costing you your memory.

“People who suppress their facial expression during an emotional event may impair their memory of that event,” said Dr. Jane Richards, assistant professor of psychology at The University of Texas at Austin.

While there is definitely a time and place to conceal emotion, concealing emotions during a stressful situation may come at a cognitive price.

In everyday life, individuals actively regulate their emotion in a variety of ways. One common form of emotion regulation is expressive suppression, which entails inhibiting outward signs of emotion.

During a study, 57 volunteers were shown a disturbing film and then asked about their emotional state and how much effort they put into hiding their feelings. People who worked hardest on keeping their feelings in check had the worst recall of the film.

Existing research and common sense would suggest that your ability to remember something in detail depends on how closely you pay attention. In a follow-up study, expressive suppression was compared with self-distraction, defined as turning attention intentionally away from one’s surroundings.

“I thought if you want to better understand the magnitude of the effect of concealing facial expressions, let’s compare it against the worst case scenario,” Richards said. “I actually went in to this thinking that intentionally trying to screen out an emotional event would lead to significantly more memory impairment.”

In the follow-up trial, 175 volunteers were shown a film that depicted a contentious conversation and asked to either distract themselves from the film or to watch the film but try to control their facial expressions. Richards then measured their memory of what was said during that conversation.

“Strikingly, keeping a stiff upper lip during an emotional event exacts a cognitive toll that is as great as intentionally not paying attention,” Richards said.

“This seems to suggest that there is something very demanding and cognitively taxing about simply trying to maintain a poker face.”

This research could have serious implications for juries who often must suppress emotions while having to view very upsetting photographs and/or hearing very upsetting testimonies. Richards is particularly curious if those who choose to conceal their emotions might possibly remember fewer details of the testimony.

“Whereas some people appear to remember emotional experiences completely and accurately, others are left with Cliff Notes,” she said. “What we don’t know is if we could undo the effects by telling people ‘okay this could potentially disrupt your memory so keep that in mind.’”

During a study using emotional conversations, some participants were asked to conceal any sign of emotion. Twenty minutes later they were asked to try to remember what was said during their conversation.

“The suppressers remember significantly less of what they said and what their partner said,” Richards said. “This is something you might expect if they were listening to a speech or watching a film, but you find this effect even in a very active conversational context that you encounter in everyday life.

“One thing to remember in the context of relationships is that often times when dealing with our spouse or child we can get emotional, but we often try to keep

―Hiding negative emotions does not decrease the extent to which these emotions are experienced.‖

Richards, continued on page 21
What would cause progressive, industrialized countries such as those in Western Europe to vote for extremist political parties that may have racist or neo-fascist agendas?

While issues such as immigration, the economy and nationalism have fueled the fire, Terri Givens, an assistant professor of government at The University of Texas at Austin, has found that electoral systems and party strategy play a key role in the outcome for the radical right.

“Different electoral rules in France, Germany, Austria and Denmark have produced different strategies and incentives for parties and voters,” Givens said.

“Radical right parties will have difficulty attracting voters and winning seats in electoral systems that encourage strategic voting and/or strategic coordination by the mainstream parties,” she said. “So working with these mainstream parties will be crucial for success, at least where coalition governments are important.”

Strategic voting occurs when people choose not to vote for their preferred party for fear of wasting their vote but rather vote with the goal of defeating their least-favored candidate. This even occurs here in the United States. Many people chose to vote for a democrat or a republican presidential candidate in the last two elections rather than a third party candidate because they were afraid their least preferred candidate might win. There were even Web sites set up for people to “exchange” votes between safe states and states where the election was going to be close.

Because of strategic voting, individuals are less likely to vote for the radical right in Germany and the radical right is less likely to win seats in France due to strategic coordination by the mainstream parties. However, these parties have gained more seats in Austria and Denmark, where coalition governments and a proportional representation system provide a difficult environment for strategic voting.

“Some voters say ‘I’ve voted all my life for the left and that’s not going to change,’ but some middle-of-the-road voters will vote for the party that is going to have a chance to be part of a coalition.

“We saw that very clearly in the most recent German election,” Givens added. “There have been surveys that show that people voted for a particular coalition versus whatever party they thought was the best, because they are used to having to vote for coalitions; that’s the nature of the voting system.”

In other situations, it can be disinterest or dissatisfaction among moderate voters that gives the radical right an edge. During France’s 2002 presidential election for instance, many voters uninspired by their choices between the two leading candidates and overwhelmed with a pool of 16 total candidates opted not to vote for one of the two leading candidates during the primary election. As a result, the National Front, a radical right party, advanced its candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen to the final round of voting instead of the left candidate, Lionel Jospin. His advancement led to massive protests and a concerted effort by those on the right and the left of the political spectrum to ensure victory for President Jacques Chirac.

“Although many left-leaning voters held their noses as they voted,” Givens said. “Chirac won the second round with 82 percent of the vote.”

Givens is the author of a book titled “Voting Radical Right in Western Europe” (Cambridge University Press) and has interviewed radical right political leaders from the National Front of France, Rebuplikaner of Germany, the Freedom Party of Austria and the Danish People’s Party, as well as mainstream party leaders to discuss their strategies for dealing with the new radical right.

“Normally, the radical right parties themselves strictly avoid violence and keep their distance from the more extreme groups such as skinheads, although they identify to some extent with them,” Givens said.

“The radical right parties strictly avoid violence and keep their distance from the more extreme groups such as skinheads, although they identify to some extent with them.”

“One thing to keep in mind about Europe is that it does not have the same kinds of freedom of speech and freedom of action laws that we have in the United States. Almost every country has some type of law since the Holocaust forbidding the display of Nazi propaganda or doing anything considered anti-constitutional. Radical right groups, especially in Germany, have to walk a fine line between trying to appeal to those people who may have nationalist or even skinhead sentiment while trying to stay above the law.

Givens, continued on page 23
Manasi Deshpande: Finding Her Own Way

Imagine that you’re heading across the Forty Acres, trying to get to a final exam. It’s raining outside, so you have to be careful on the slippery sidewalks. Since the test is not being given in your usual building, you look at the campus map and figure out your best path. Only along the way you’re stopped by one of the numerous construction projects currently happening on campus. You find an alternate route, but of course now you’re running late. Finally, you arrive at the building, only to find that the elevator is out of order. Now imagine that you went through all of that in a wheelchair.

Those slight inconveniences can suddenly turn into major problems for someone like third-year student Manasi Deshpande (Economics and Plan II). That’s because Deshpande, who has been in a wheelchair for seven years, not only has to worry about grades and studying, but how to get to her classes, find accessible buildings, figure out which doors to use and a myriad of other considerations.

“It was extremely difficult when I was a freshman because I was already nervous, just about starting college and fitting in, and then on top of that I had to figure out how I was even going to get inside a classroom,” remembers Deshpande.

All buildings constructed after 1992 are required to meet the accessibility guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any older buildings that undergo renovation are also required...
to upgrade facilities. However, at an institution such as UT, where most of the facilities were built long ago, accessibility remains a problem for students like Deshpande.

Even the act of opening a door can be a battle.

“If it’s not an automatic door, I have to either try and open it myself, which puts a lot of strain on my back, or wait around for someone else to open it for me, which brings up issues of independence,” says Deshpande. “So I have to make a choice between my health and my desire to be independent. No one ever wants to feel like they’re dependent.”

Deshpande recognizes that the university is investing a considerable amount of time and money in improving campus accessibility, but she thinks it’s overlooking some other key improvements that need to be made.

“I think the biggest problem is not just the physical aspects of campus accessibility, but the disability services themselves,” says Deshpande. “No student expects the entire campus to be renovated during their four years here, but the university can improve its methods of informing students about the resources available, and about where they can turn for help.”

One change that Deshpande would like to see is a reworked online accessibility map. The current map shows where there are automatic doors and accessible paths and parking, but not much else.

Deshpande envisions an interactive accessibility map, like those found on Google or MapQuest, where students can input their starting and ending points, and the map gives them different accessible routes, based on their needs. The routes would show where there are ramps and curb cuts for wheelchairs and would be updated frequently to reflect current construction projects. The map also would include ratings of all the buildings. For example, Burdine Hall would receive a low score because the bathrooms aren’t accessible.

Not one to be satisfied by wishful thinking, Deshpande is in the midst of extensive research on campus mobility. She won an undergraduate research scholarship, giving her the resources to conduct a study titled “The Effect of Wheelchair Use on the Perceptions of Campus Accessibility Held by Ambulatory Individuals.” The study seeks to discover if university administrators’ views on accessibility would change after they experience life in a wheelchair.

“I always had this idea that if the architects and engineers and administrators involved in planning a campus were in wheelchairs, things would be a lot different,” says Deshpande. “Administrators feel like they understand how hard it is to get around campus, but I wanted to know if they really do.”

Deshpande uses students who are aspiring to be university administrators as her sample group. She gives them a pre-test, with questions about the state of campus accessibility. Then they use a wheelchair on campus for a few days, and are tested again, to see if their views have changed.

Once the research is complete, Deshpande will formally present her findings, along with recommendations like the interactive accessibility map, to the university. She hopes her research will foster empathy among university administrators and improve the services available to students with disabilities.

Another goal of Deshpande’s is to increase faculty and student understanding in interacting with students who have disabilities.

“I think it’s human nature for people to think, ‘Oh she’s different from me, and if there are 1000 other people I could talk to or be friends with, then it keeps me from having to worry about seeing something that I don’t really want to see,’” says Deshpande. “So part of what I’m trying to do with my work is educate people so that when they see someone with a disability, they can feel more comfortable talking to that person.”

Deshpande goes on to say, “I think the biggest misconception I’ve experienced is that physical disability necessarily means lower intellectual capacity. That’s just not the case.”

Deshpande, who plans on attending graduate school for economics, says that she came to UT because she wanted to be in a place where she could pursue a variety of interests and be part of a diverse student body. She stresses that the diversity that is celebrated throughout the overall student population exists within the disabled community as well.

“We tend to categorize disabled people as one group who are similar because they can’t do something,” says Deshpande. “But we’re all disabled in different ways. I want people to see the person first and the disability second.”

Tracy Harwell
Photos by Christina Murrey
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) delay in making oral contraceptives available over-the-counter has been one hard pill to swallow for some consumers.

Over the past several years, interest in improving access to contraception in the U.S. has grown dramatically. A survey completed in 2004 by the Pharmacy Access Partnership of more than 800 women of reproductive age found that between 40 to 47 percent of low-income or uninsured women not using hormonal contraception said they would start using these methods if they were available without a prescription.

These are critical numbers considering that it is estimated that in the U.S., about half of all pregnancies are unintended. The U.S. continues to have a substantially higher teenage pregnancy rate as well compared to most other developed countries—for example, nearly twice the rate of Australia or Canada and more than four times the rate in France.

An upcoming study led by Dr. Joseph Potter, a demographer at The University of Texas at Austin, will provide insight into whether making oral contraceptives more readily available by offering them over-the-counter will provide women a much-wanted convenience, without sacrificing their health.

The study will explore some of the same criteria set forth by the FDA such as whether the users can self-diagnose their conditions for appropriate use; safely take the medication without a physician’s screening; and take the medication as indicated without a doctor’s explanation. Other factors the FDA considers in approving over-the-counter medications include whether the drug is toxic if users overdose and whether the drug is addictive.

“Policy debate about the prescription requirement has focused on whether women could safely and effectively use oral contraceptives without mandatory contact with a healthcare provider,” said Potter, a sociology professor at the University of Texas at Austin. “Taking more than the prescribed amount of oral contraceptives poses little risk, nor is it addictive. It’s actually safer than aspirin and you can’t overdose.”
and researcher at the university’s Population Research Center.

“Oral contraceptives, when used correctly, can be one of the safest and most effective contraceptives available,” he added. “Taking more than the prescribed amount of oral contraceptives poses little risk, nor is it addictive. It’s actually safer than aspirin and you can’t overdose.”

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development has awarded Potter’s team a $2.2 million grant for a five-year study of oral contraceptive use among Latino women. The study will look at acquisition and effective use of contraceptives obtained over the counter in Mexico versus in health clinics in the United States. The research will focus on low-income Mexican immigrant and Mexican-American women living on the U.S. side of the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as a smaller group of Mexican women on the Mexican side of the border. This study is a joint project involving researchers at the University of Texas El Paso, the Population Council (Mexico office) and Ibis Reproductive Health in addition to the Austin team.

“Our research will answer important questions regarding the appropriate role of medical supervision in oral contraceptive provision and the factors influencing compliance and continuation,” Potter said. “Additionally, it will add substantially to the slim literature on the increasingly important area of Hispanic fertility and contraceptive practice.

“Many people make assumptions about Mexican fertility based off of outdated ideas,” he added. “In fact, there are higher fertility rates among Mexican-origin women living in Texas, than those in Mexico.”

The border separating Ciudad Juarez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas provides a unique setting for the study because women in this region have an alternative to prescription contraception not available to most Americans. They can cross to Mexico to buy their pills over-the-counter in pharmacies at a fraction of the cost for approximately $3 to $5.

“This is very much a natural experiment, meaning that we get to see what people are really doing in this area without having to see an actual change in the law,” said Dr. Kristine Hopkins, co-investigator for the study and a researcher at the Population Research Center. “It’s a particularly good part of the border because you have two large cities on both sides that are very integrated economically and socially.”

Researchers will conduct interviews and track effective use among one group of women recruited from Mexican pharmacies and another from El Paso family planning clinics. These women will be followed quarterly for nine months to assess whether their decision about where they get their oral contraceptives is associated with satisfaction, compliance, continuation, knowledge of effective usage and unintended pregnancy. Researches will also track the effectiveness of a simple written brochure in conveying information to women who obtain pills in Mexican pharmacies.

“If you empower women with easy to understand information that they could take away with them, then it could be a good substitute for the explanation they would receive from a doctor or clinic,” Hopkins said.

Determining if women can self-screen to assess whether or not they are viable candidates for oral contraceptives is an important safety factor. As part of the study, a sample of women in El Paso will be given a simple self-screening checklist that guides them through a review of their own medical history to help them formulate an overall safety assessment. On-site nurse practitioners will then screen the same women to reveal whether they correctly believe themselves to be appropriate candidates or, if not, if they can detect their own medical contraindications.

To provide a more thorough understanding of the motivation behind procurement and use decisions, a $100,000 supplement to the study, led by Hopkins, will use in-depth and follow-up interviews with women of Mexican origin to compare the contraceptive experiences of those who obtain oral contraceptives in the U.S. with those who obtain them in Mexico.

“We know little about motivations of Mexican-origin women to procure contraceptives in one versus another point of service,” Hopkins said. “Strong evidence suggests that social networks increase knowledge about contraception in a variety of settings and this project will help us understand how these networks function in the U.S. regarding contraceptive use.”

The study will explore the role social networks such as male partners, family members and friends play in women’s pill compliance and continuation. It also will

Potter, continued on page 22
Have you heard the one about the lawyer who plays rock shows on the side, pitches screenplays to major film studios and stars on a reality television series? No? Then you haven’t heard about Deep Goswami.

Goswami (Psychology ’96), who earned his minor in music and then went on to Baylor Law School, runs his own Los Angeles law firm by day, is a musician by night and recently starred on “The Law Firm,” a reality show produced by “The Practice” and “Ally McBeal” creator David E. Kelley.

A Los Angeles judge who was impressed with Goswami’s litigation skills recommended he try out for the show.

“I had just won this case and the judge called me to the bench afterwards to tell me about the show,” says Goswami. “My friends convinced me to apply for it, kind of as a joke. Then I went out of town for a month, and when I came back, I had about eight messages from NBC, telling me they wanted me to come audition.”

“The Law Firm” featured 12 attorneys, whittled down from the 30,000 who applied, competing against each other, trying real cases for real clients. Famed trial attorney Roy Black, who has represented celebrity clients such as Marv Albert and Rush Limbaugh, served as the managing partner who decided each week which contestant would be eliminated. The winner of the show received a $250,000 prize.

Goswami didn’t win, but he did make it to the final three and says the show was a valuable experience. Prior to participating in “The Law Firm,” Goswami specialized in criminal defense, so the civil cases he was assigned on the show presented a new challenge for him.

“I had tried and won more than 60 criminal cases in my career,
but had never tried a civil case before,” said Goswami. “Our clients were from different states, so we were flying all over the country, researching the different state laws and then going to court after only two days of preparation. It was like lawyer boot camp.”

And when he wasn’t getting ready for his close-up, he was sneaking in a minute or two of shut-eye. The contestants only got a few hours of sleep each night and had to be on the set at 5:30 a.m.

Despite the grueling hours and intense competition, Goswami thinks appearing on the show was a fantastic opportunity.

“I’ve always admired Roy Black and I followed his career closely when I was in law school,” says Goswami. “Who would have thought I’d end up working with him on this television show? When it got down to the final three, he told us we were the best young trial lawyers he’d seen in the country, so to have that compliment from someone like him was amazing.”

Goswami took advantage of the exposure he got from the show by expanding his firm from mainly criminal defense cases to also practicing entertainment law. He now represents many writers and musicians and often meets with executives at major film studios to help clients pitch their scripts.

While criminal defense and entertainment law may seem like an unlikely combination to some, Goswami thinks the two fields make perfect sense together.

“They’re more related than you might imagine,” says

Goswami with a hint of mischief. “Once you get out to Hollywood, you see that there are plenty of criminals in entertainment!”

Entertainment law also seems like a natural fit for Goswami himself, who can be found strumming his guitar or composing an original piece on the piano when he’s not in a courtroom.

After completing law school, Goswami worked as a prosecutor in Midland, TX for one year, and then took time off to earn a graduate degree from the Musician’s Institute in Los Angeles. He then toured the West Coast with his band Stereotribe, playing in legendary clubs like the Roxy and the Troubadour. In 2005, Goswami won the Lionel Richie Songwriting Scholarship, in part because of a song he’d written that was used on “Dawson’s Creek,” a show that was known for featuring up and coming artists.

“I’m very passionate about both law and music,” says Goswami. “To me, they’re both very creative fields. Most nights I’ll be out playing, sitting in with different bands. I rarely sleep – I play my guitar instead.”

Goswami’s true love though is law.

“I’ve always considered myself a lawyer first. I love music too, but I fell in love with criminal law. The stakes are so high. Someone’s life is on the line and it just seems much more relevant than figuring out record deals and royalty payments,” he says.

It was that passion that viewers got to see each week as Goswami argued on behalf of his clients. He especially connected with a case in Santa Fe, N.M. that involved a wrongful death suit. Goswami represented the plaintiff, a woman whose husband was killed when he was thought to be a peeping tom, trespassing on another woman’s property.

“This woman thought she saw someone outside her window and so she took her gun and went out and carelessly fired shots into the dark, killing my client’s husband,” explained Goswami.

Goswami’s team argued that the defendant was reckless in her behavior because she couldn’t see who or what she was firing at. They pointed out that it could have been a child, or a lost student from a nearby school for the deaf and blind.

“She should have locked her door and called the police,” insists Goswami. “But instead she was responsible for this man’s death.”

Goswami won the case and obtained a monetary settlement for his client.

“Goswami, continued on page 22

“I’ve always considered myself a lawyer first. I love music too, but I fell in love with criminal law.”
By the time John McKiernan-Gonzalez graduated from high school, he had lived in more countries and experienced more cultures than many people do in a lifetime. A native of Queens, New York, McKiernan-Gonzalez started his schooling in Ethiopia where his family lived for three years. During elementary school, they moved to Colombia to be closer to his mother’s family. Middle and high school were spent in Mexico and the United States.

“When people hear how much I traveled as a youth, they assume my parents were in the military,” said McKiernan-Gonzalez, an assistant professor of history at The University of Texas at Austin. “Actually, they were both teachers who just loved to travel.”

Moving regularly and being introduced to so many different cultures gave McKiernan-Gonzalez a unique perspective on people, their communities and their history.

“I’m fascinated with people’s stories,” says McKiernan-Gonzalez. “The experience that truly transformed my life was working for the Student Coalition for Community Health while attending the University of Alabama. My job was to interview people about their health but what I found was how people tied stories about their health to the story of their life, family and circumstances.”

The goal of the Student Coalition for Community Health was to promote health screenings and immunizations to underserved populations. McKiernan-Gonzalez was assigned to Lowndes
County, a black belt county that in 1987 was still largely segregated in practice if not by law.

“When I arrived, people thought that I was white and that the program was some type of new civil rights movement,” he said.

The experience sparked his interest in history and healthcare and so, after completing his undergraduate degree at Oberlin College in Ohio, he worked for two years as an epidemiologist with the Cook County Department of Public Health in Chicago.

“Officially I was hired to conduct the department’s HIV testing, but I ended up fielding calls on a slew of medical issues because I was one of only a few employees who was fluent in Spanish as well as English,” said McKiernan-Gonzalez. “What really bothered me was the lack of concern among the professional staff about the fact that Spanish-speaking clients were not receiving accurate and comprehensive information. Much of this seemed to stem from a feeling that Mexicans were ‘new’ to the United States and didn’t deserve the benefits provided to others.”

For McKiernan-Gonzalez, history offered a way to challenge this sense of Mexican ‘newness.’ He enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Michigan, one of two universities at the time that offered both medical and Mexican American history tracks. While working on his Ph.D., McKiernan-Gonzalez was awarded a graduate fellowship to work at the Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institute.

“It was fascinating work,” says McKiernan-Gonzalez of his time at the Smithsonian. “I was hired to increase the museum’s holdings in the area of Latino history and worked on a variety of projects chronicling history from the U.S./Mexico border, Puerto Rico and other areas.”

While in Washington, D.C., McKiernan-Gonzalez conducted research at the National Archives to document the historical interaction between American public health officials and Latinos along the Texas/Mexico border.

“I was surprised by how outlandish some of the measures taken by the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) were,” he said. “One example is the three-day El Paso Typhus Bath riots of 1917. The demonstrations were staged by Mexican domestics working in El Paso who were required by the USPHS to disrobe and place their clothes in a cyanide mixture and themselves in a kerosene and vinegar bath every time they crossed the border.”

Their demonstration caused the temporary change of the bath to a less invasive homeopathic staphysagra mixture and then to a variety of insecticides.

McKiernan-Gonzalez continues to research community health issues along the border, with his current efforts focused on the timeframe from 1880 to 1939. His other research interests include discovering how people tell stories to represent themselves and their families and what he has termed “racial schooling.”

“When a family moves from another country to the United States, school children are required to take tests to assess their learning level and abilities. Unfortunately, they often score poorly on the tests not because they are not intelligent, but because they are not fluent in English,” explained McKiernan-Gonzalez. “Often, these children end up being pigeonholed in classes for youth with learning disabilities and never achieve their full potential.”

McKiernan-Gonzalez is working to develop tools to educate teachers about the potential for, and consequences of, racial schooling. He also wants to inform

McKiernan-Gonzalez, continued on page 23
Williams was paid $8.75 per hour when working at Diamond Toys, a higher wage than what many employees made and one that translates to $17,500 annually for a full-time employee. At the Toy Warehouse, she made only $7.50 per hour.

“Society today is a far cry from the time when Henry Ford declared that all workers in his factory would be paid $5 a day so that they could afford to buy the automobiles they were assembling,” says Williams. “Now, retail giants fight to keep worker’s pay and benefits low so that they can maximize their own profits.”

Williams found the workers who tended to stay in their jobs for the long haul, which in retail sales translates to a few months or more, typically had personal ties to the store in the form of family members, neighbors or friends who worked there. These social relationships create an attachment to the job and provide emotional support to the employee.

A Consumer Culture
America is a consumer society and children’s earliest exposure to consumerism is often at the toy store. At the Toy Warehouse, Williams observed that many children had their own money and paid for their own toys, learning the value of their funds as well as how to make a purchase. These money management skills are important. A study by Dr. Stephen Kline, a children’s culture and advertising researcher from Simon Fraser University, found that by the age of eight the average child in the U.S. is alone in a shop three times per week.

“Shopping also reinforces a hidden curriculum through which gender, class and race inequities are reproduced in informal and unnoticed ways,” says Williams. “For instance, boys never buy Barbies and girls never buy trucks. In addition, it’s typically the mother shopping with the kids, which reinforces the notion that shopping, and caring for the family, is a woman’s job.”

Children also learn how to negotiate with their parents to get what they want when shopping. In some cases these negotiations are over what item to buy and in others it’s whether the child will spend his or her “own” money versus the parent making the purchase.

“Children will make a huge scene to get what they want in the toy store,” says Williams. “This so dismays most parents that they acquiesce to the child’s demands, which only serves to reinforce the behavior.”

Children also learn how to treat service workers by watching how their parents interact with store employees. The general lack of respect and appreciation for these workers in our society is thus passed down to new generations.

Changing the Dynamic
So is it possible to change the dynamics at play in our consumer society? Williams believes it is, just as unions and concerned citizens helped improve the lives of factory workers early in the last century.

“The first thing we need to focus on is to ensure all employees receive a living wage,” says Williams. “Living wage” campaigns seek to ensure that “full-time, year round employees can support a family at the poverty line.” In addition, Williams advocates healthcare benefits for all employees and a labeling system for products that would indicate fair labor practices were adhered to in the making and selling of the item.

“History has shown us that consumers can make a difference in the lives of workers when they stand firm together,” says Williams. “And, every individual can make a difference immediately by simply making a conscious effort to treat all service workers with courtesy and respect.”

Marisa Rainsberger
Photos by Marsha Miller

Pedahzur
Continued from Page 7

This changing structure has become particularly evident in recent years. “You saw this splintering and flattening in Al-Qaeda after the American invasion of Afghanistan and with Hamas after the Israeli reoccupation of the Palestinian territories in 2003,” said Pedahzur.

Each local cell has one or more individuals who function as “hubs.” Each hub is connected to many other individuals within the cell and, although he may be only marginally connected to figures within the national organization, he runs the local operations. Individuals recruited and dispatched as suicide bombers are not connected to the hub, they operate on the periphery of the group.

Terrorists seeking to recruit suicide bombers look for individuals with the characteristics described earlier who are emotionally vulnerable and have the potential to be inspired by the goals of the network. Individuals are generally recruited by family members, close friends and, less frequently, casual acquaintances.

Once identified, training the suicide bomber can occur very quickly – sometimes in a matter of hours. In addition to conveying basics about the operational side of the mission, the trainer must ensure the recruit’s mental preparedness for the mission. The goal is to ensure that his/her mental state is completely resolved to the task to reduce the chances that he or she will change his/her mind at the last minute.

While Islamic religion condemns suicide just as Christian religion does, terrorist recruiters position the act as “self sacrifice” for a supreme cause – a sacrifice that brings the individual honor and respect and guarantees him or her eternal salvation.

The indoctrination process generally includes showing the recruit persuasive thematic material that supports the effort and exploiting charismatic images to help them internalize the cause. Recruits also are often shown final testimonials from “successful” suicide...
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bombers that reinforce the commitment to die for the cause. It is interesting to note that the conditioning process may occur in such a manner that the recruit is not even aware of what group he or she is acting on behalf of.

Fighting Terrorism

“I am convinced that terrorists are very shrewd politicians with very clear agendas,” says Pedahzur. “The question we must then consider is how do we minimize their followers and support?”

It’s a troubling question as 70 percent of all terrorist attacks happen in democratic countries or countries that uphold democratic ideals and the very traits that form a democracy – freedom of movement, open access, self expression – create an environment in which terrorists can operate with relative ease.

“In the long run, we need to build relationships with moderate leaders in countries where terrorism thrives and work to create an atmosphere of trust and open dialogue that will allow people to see a brighter future,” said Pedahzur. “By working with leaders who have the respect and legitimacy of their people we can try to shift support from the more radical to the more moderate organizations.”

Pedahzur concedes this will be difficult and will require concessions from all involved. However, the alternative is even more disturbing.

Marisa Rainsberger
Photos by Marsha Miller

Richards
Continued from Page 9

those emotions from showing,” she added. “When this happens, there is a possibility that you won’t remember who said what. It could be that being aware of our memories possibly failing could help us avoid misunderstandings and conflict.”

Researchers have begun to emphasize that emotions are a response tendency that can be regulated. Thus, when some event happens, be it an argument or a car accident, experiencing or expressing emotions is not inevitable. Rather, people often think or do things that decrease the likelihood, magnitude or duration of what is felt inwardly or shown outwardly.

When college-aged respondents where interviewed about a recent time they tried to regulate their emotions, half of them described situations in which they focused on their face and tone of voice to suppress how they were feeling. Moreover, among undergraduates who maintained diaries of their emotional regulatory experiences over a two-week period, inhibiting emotion-expressive behavior was reported almost one quarter of the time.

“Factors such as immediate goals or situational constraints likely determined if and how a person will regulate emotion in any given situation,” Richards said. “Interestingly, hiding negative emotions does not decrease the extent to which these emotions are experienced. That is, expressive suppression helps people appear—but not feel—less emotional.

“We have some research that shows when people are trying to conceal their emotions, they’re actually getting more physiologically aroused,” she added. “You tend to see an increase in sweat gland activity and blood pressure. So, not only does suppression take cognitive work, but it also seems to take something out of people physiologically.”

Fortunately, Richards points out that not all forms of emotion regulation have these consequences. Her prior work suggests that a strategy called cognitive reappraisal actually leaves memory intact. It’s a strategy that entails thinking about a situation in a way that makes it emotionally less toxic.

“It’s more relevant to everyday hassles rather than traumatic events,” Richards said. “It is hard to put a positive spin or minimize something such as the loss of a loved one. However, there are many situations where there are a lot of interpretations possible and just entertaining one of them that is less upsetting could be useful. It seems to be a strategy that people can train themselves to use over time.”

For example, if you’re walking down the hallway and you smile and say hello to someone who appears to be ignoring you, a lot of people’s initial reaction would be ‘what’s wrong’ or ‘that’s rude,’ leading them to be emotionally upset. Cognitive reappraisal would entail thinking ‘maybe that person was lost in thought and just didn’t see me.’ Any situation can be thought of in multiple ways, and by focusing on the positive alternatives individuals may be able to short circuit the negative consequences of emotional response.

“I think one lesson is that if you are in a situation where you are emotional and you want to get a grip, try to think about it in a way that makes it less upsetting,” Richards said. “That is the strategy that really can make you look and feel better.”

Michelle Bryant
Photos by Marsha Miller

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“That’s the kind of story that shows how a liberal arts major can use their wealth of knowledge in the work place,” says Brooks. “Not only does a liberal arts education help students learn how to think critically, it gives them knowledge that is needed by employers. Our job is to help them realize the ways the knowledge they’ve gained is of value.”

The other major challenge Brooks faces is reaching out to students in order to invite them to make use of Career Services. With over 12,000 students in the College of Liberal Arts, Brooks and her staff face an enormous hurdle in reaching their customer base.

“We’re currently serving nearly 1800 students,” says Brooks. “That number is too low. We need to be serving more. One of our challenges is that many liberal arts students are in the habit of not thinking about job searching until the spring semester of their senior year. We’re trying to change that.”

Brooks means business. This year the College of Liberal Arts established a registration bar that requires all students in the college to fill out a survey on their career needs and interests. Brooks and her staff will use the data to better understand how to meet the needs of their customers.

“We’ve learned some interesting things from the surveys,” she says. “Our students are very interested in the government sector and real estate. So we’re working now to bring in more of those employers. As we continue to learn what our students are interested in and what they need, we’ll be able to show them how they can compete with business and engineering majors.”

Career Services surveys also have shown that the university’s liberal arts graduates report significantly higher satisfaction with their careers as compared to workers nationwide, 83 percent compared to 50 percent respectively.

“Liberal arts is the bane of many career centers, because they don’t know how to help students understand what they bring to the table for employers. In reality, a liberal arts degree is tremendously powerful when applied intelligently. We just need to help our students understand their value and effectively position their skills and education to succeed in the job market,” says Brooks.

Fred Richardson
Photos by Christina Murrey

Goswami
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“That was very satisfying,” says Goswami. “This woman had been through so much, losing her husband. To win that case for her was really important.”

Goswami hopes that after watching the show, people might think twice before telling their next lawyer joke.

“There’s always been a misconception that lawyers are lazy or don’t care about their clients,” he says. “But I think we showed that we do care a great deal and that we have a great justice system that really does work.”

Tracy Harwell

Potter
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look at what motivates Mexican-origin women in the U.S. to obtain their pills from different sources—U.S. family planning clinics versus Mexican pharmacies—and to obtain a deep and detailed understanding of how these women experience their pill use.

“We’re looking at people’s connection to Juarez,” Hopkins said. “Where they get their pills, their connection or not, what else they do there. How does getting pills fit into their larger experience of crossing the border?”

“If the women are choosing to go to the clinic we want to know how they found out about the clinic. Have they given birth in the affiliated hospital? Was it recommended by a best friend, sister or mother?”

Other research goals are to understand what women do when they experience problems with pill use, what support they get and from whom, and to determine if there are any differences between clinic users and pharmacy users.

Michelle Bryant
Photos by Marsha Miller
Givens
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"Radical right parties have taken very similar positions against immigration and the European Union," Givens said. "They call for immigrants to be returned and equate the number of unemployed in the country with the number of immigrants, implying that immigrants are taking jobs away."

Givens also noted racist propaganda in some radical right party materials.

"I received the magazine of the National Front for a while," she said. "If the cover talked about an immigrant it was always a person of color. They would never be Polish or Eastern European, but always someone from Africa or an Arab country. The magazine cover would say things like ‘we are being overrun by immigrants’ or ‘immigrants are involved in the drug trade.’"

During an interview with a Republikaner politician, Givens admits that she was being tested at first. He told her about how oppressive the government is and how they can’t even use certain words and proceeded to use a racial slur as an example.

"I kept a straight face and said political correctness sometimes goes too far," Givens said. "I had read the Republikaner’s newspaper and on the back page it talked about the issue of not being able to use certain words. It shows how sensitive the German government is on anything that might sound racist."

The Republikaner party is also controversial in its desire to take back the original borders of Germany before World War II, which would mean Germany would get back a large section of Poland.

"He spoke very open and honestly with me," Givens said. "He said ’I feel that our fathers who fought in the war were not treated well.’ It was a very different take on things. That was probably the most surprising interview. He was so open even knowing that I was American and particularly knowing that I was African American."

While her interview with the Republikaner was up close and personal, she had a very different experience in one particular interaction with the Freedom Party, Austria’s radical right party, which was more of an orchestrated public relations event.

"My favorite moment was when I went to the Freedom Party’s annual congress. They had a couple of handlers that were guiding me around and at one point they brought me out on the floor so I could shake hands and be photographed with the leader Jörg Haider, and I thought ‘my gosh, I’m going to end up in the newspaper,’ but luckily none of the pictures surfaced."

The Austrian Freedom Party has been the most successful radical right party in Western Europe. However, the party’s leader Haider has been a controversial figure due to favorable references he has made to Nazi employment policies and his calls for a stop to immigration. In recent years, the Freedom Party has had success in attracting blue-collar workers, who traditionally voted for left socialist parties.

"It’s similar to the phenomenon that took place in the United States when blue-collar workers, often referred to as Reagan Democrats, started voting more on social issues and started voting for republicans rather than democrats," Givens said. "And I think you are seeing the same phenomenon in some European countries, union members and blue-collar workers that you would expect to vote left are actually disproportionately voting right."

Givens continues to research radical right party politics in Western Europe. She is currently working on a book examining topics of race more broadly, issues of discrimination against minorities, politics of race, and anti-discrimination policies.

Michelle Bryant
Photos by Marsha Miller

McKiernan-Gonzalez
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parents from different Latino backgrounds about the resources available to them through the American educational system and their right to use these resources.

"Because I traveled a lot growing up, I learned to listen closely to people to help assimilate myself into new environments," said McKiernan-Gonzalez. "I became aware of ongoing discussions that ran throughout the community and revealed people’s perceptions and prejudices that had been built over generations. These beliefs lead to injustices for immigrants that minimize their chances for success."

McKiernan-Gonzalez is committed to discovering pieces of history that demonstrate the transnational dimensions of American life and provide a sense of the actions and obstacles that ordinary people faced on an everyday basis. Hopefully, by creating a better understanding of our collective past we can build a more equitable present for everyone in America.

Marisa Rainsberger
Photo by Marsha Miller
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College News

Alumni News

Heidi Boutros  (Plan II Honors, Government ‘04) was awarded one of only 43 scholarships given nationwide by The Marshall Scholarship Program. The scholarship will fund a two-year master’s program at the University of Oxford.

Jennifer L. Goloboy  (M.A., American Civilizations) was awarded a short-term research fellowship by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. She will conduct research at the library of the New York Historical Society for her project “Success to Trade: Charleston’s Merchants in the Revolutionary Era.”

Nadia Shihab  (Humanities, Sociology, Liberal Arts Honors) has been awarded a Fulbright grant to conduct research in Turkey. She will be studying the ways in which non-formal education centers address the needs of young women.

Dr. Robert Helmreich  (Psychology) was selected to receive the 2005 Flight Safety Foundation/Boeing Lifetime Achievement Award for his commitment and contribution to enhancing aviation safety.

A. Van Jordan  (English) was honored by The Cleveland Foundation with its Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for his latest work titled “M-A-C-N-O-L-I-A” (W.W. Norton & Company).

Naomi Lindstrom  (Spanish and Portuguese) has been named to the Advisory Board of the Brazilian and Latin American Study Project of the Center for Jewish History in New York.

Art Markman  (Psychology) was selected to serve as the next editor of “Cognitive Science,” an interdisciplinary journal published by the Cognitive Science Society.

Dr. Mark Warr  (Sociology) received the 2005 Michael J. Hindelang Award for the book “that makes the most outstanding contribution to research in the field of criminology.” The American Society of Criminology presented the award for Warr’s book “Companions in Crime.”

Faculty Honors and Awards

Catherine Boone  (Government) won the Mattei Dogan Prize from the Society for Comparative Research for her book “Political Topographies of the African State” (Cambridge University Press).

David Buss  (Psychology) was elected president of the Human Behavior and Evolution Society for a term from 2005 to 2007.

Patrick Carroll  (Psychology) received the Harry Ransom Teaching Award for excellence in teaching.

Maya Charrad  (Sociology) was selected to receive the inaugural Ibn Khaldoun Award for her distinguished service to the Tunisian-American community. The Tunisian Community Organization presented the award.

Dr. Chiquita A. Collins  (Sociology and African-American Studies) was recently named a fellow by the Foundation for Community Empowerment.

Dr. Michael Domjan  (Psychology) was recently elected president of the Pavlovian Society of North America.
Robert Van Dusen’s fascination with Germany started when the U.S. Army recruited him during the Korean War and sent him to Germany in 1952. He had just completed his undergraduate degree in English literature at Harvard University and didn’t realize that his plans of becoming a sports writer were soon to change drastically.

While in Germany, Van Dusen became intrigued with learning the German language, an interest that ultimately motivated him to become a university professor.

“After being honorably discharged from the Army, I took advantage of the G.I. Bill to study for two years at the University of Munich,” said Van Dusen. “But people advised me that to be a professor, I should obtain a graduate degree from a university in North America.”

The University of Texas at Austin was one of seven schools Van Dusen considered based on the quality of their German departments. He ultimately decided on UT because of its commitment to scholastic excellence and the opportunity to teach while he was working on his degree.

“The professors at Texas were extremely supportive and helpful,” recalls Van Dusen. “I worked hard – 60 to 70 hours a week – but I loved what I was doing.”

After obtaining his Ph.D. in Germanic Studies in 1960, he accepted a job at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario and has been living in Canada ever since. However, he continues to feel a strong allegiance to the University of Texas and, after providing several smaller gifts to support its programs, he donated an appreciated insurance policy worth $250,000 to endow the Van Dusen Scholarship and Fellowship Fund.

The endowment, which supports both graduate and undergraduate students, has energized the department according to its director. The first Van Dusen Scholar was able to study in Germany for 10 weeks last summer and new awards will be made in May 2006.
The Texas Politics Project

The College of Liberal Arts’ Instructional Technology Services (LAITS) is a national innovator in using digital technology to advance university teaching.

LAITS has created Texas Politics (http://texaspolitics.laits.utexas.edu), a multi-media-rich, online textbook designed to support and enhance instruction in Texas government and politics. The project incorporates video interviews with political participants and documentary-style video segments, as well as custom-designed interactive graphs and charts. As with most other LAITS projects, Texas Politics is freely available, saving students out-of-pocket textbook costs and enabling The University of Texas to share its intellectual resources with the general public.

Over the next two years, LAITS plans to create new and original features that expand the ability of Texas Politics to engage students and the general public in citizenship and the political process including:

• **Texas Politics In Focus** which will examine subjects that affect the daily lives of Texans, such as public education and transportation. In Focus content will use original text, graphics and short, documentary-style video to provide an accessible analysis of the politics and policy questions of selected issues.

• **Untold Stories** which will be a series of compact documentary videos examining key events in Texas political history that are not widely explored, such as the Constitutional Convention of 1974. The stories will incorporate primary documents, original interviews and archival media resources to provide new explanations of historical events.

The rhythm of the political calendar in Texas demands regular updates to the content of Texas Politics in order to fully exploit the technical advantages of online publishing. Because student fees cannot cover all the costs of these diverse and innovative projects, the College of Liberal Arts seeks to raise approximately $500,000 in private support.

To find out how you can support these and other programs of LAITS, visit http://www.laits.utexas.edu/giving, contact Kathleen Aronson in the College of Liberal Arts Development Office at 512-475-9763 or email mcaronson@mail.utexas.edu.