Dream Catchers

They came to Creighton as high school students with dreams. Now they share a milestone.

A Bear Hug From Putin?
Alzheimer’s Team Searches for Hope
God, Chance and the Economy
Islam’s ‘Rogue’ Cousin
Russian President Vladimir Putin seemed right at home during his visit to the United States this past November, meeting with President Bush in a relaxed atmosphere in Crawford, Texas, smiling for the cameras and even fielding calls on a radio talk show. Does this mark a new era in U.S.-Russian relations? Writer Pamela A. Vaughn examines that question with Creighton history professor and inveterate Russia-watcher Ross Horning, Ph.D.
Features

18 Alzheimer’s Team Searches for Hope
Creighton University, through its new Center for Aging, Alzheimer’s Disease and Neurodegenerative Disorders, is working to discover new treatment methods while providing compassionate care to the patients and families dealing with this devastating disease.

26 Profs List Summer Page-Turners
Creighton professors offer their recommendations for good summer reading. Their list runs the gamut, from Stephen Hawking’s The Universe in a Nutshell to an old Dorothy Sayers’ thriller Gaudy Night to Atticus by Creighton alumnus Ron Hansen.

30 Chance, God and the Economy
Why do some people strike it rich, while others, equally capable, strike out? Creighton University Professor Robert Heaney, M.D., examines the relationship between wealth and Lady Luck ... and what God’s calling — and challenge — is for those who are fortunate to live in comfortable affluence.

34 Islam’s ‘Rogue’ Cousin
The foundation for the beliefs of Osama bin Laden and his associates can be found in the radical Islamic ideologies of the past, writes Creighton history professor and Middle East expert John Calvert, Ph.D.

Departments

4 Letters to the Editor

5 University News
Business Leadership
Graduate business students share their leadership experiences with undergraduate business students through the new Waite Graduate Leadership Fellows program.

Last Dance
Valerie Roche is retiring after 37 years of teaching dance at Creighton. She came to Omaha in 1961 as a pharmacist’s assistant and only expected to stay a couple of years.

42 Development News
Reinert Society
Creighton is naming its lifetime giving donor recognition society the Rev. Carl M. Reinert, S.J., Society, in honor of the former Creighton president who is known as the University’s “Second Founder.”

46 Alumni News
On Fire for Service
Creighton graduates Thomas Drexler, BA’82, and Kaela Volkmer, BSW’94, direct the overseas effort of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

Spirit at Work
Check out the photos from this year’s Spirit at Work: National Alumni Day of Service.

55 The Last Word
Creighton law professor Lawrence Raful visited Israel last December with 500 American Jews. He offers his insights as a “typical American of the Jewish faith who is befuddled by the morass in the Holy Land.”

Contact Us
Executive Editor: Stephen T. Kline
(402) 280-7874 skline@creighton.edu
Editor: Rick Davis
(402) 280-7875 rcd@creighton.edu
Associate Editor: Sheila Swanson
(402) 280-2069 bluenews@creighton.edu
Visit the magazine online at: www.creightonmagazine.org
Letters to the Editor

Health series presented sensible, moral solutions

When I retired from Creighton 12 years ago, I never would have believed that I would see such a sensible and moral article as Dr. Frey’s (Is America Ready for Universal Health Care?, Summer 2001). Is it possible that at last a medical conscience is developing?

Before leaving the UK, as a recent medical graduate, I voted for the National Health Service (NHS), which was a first-class system until Mrs. Thatcher got at it, but was dismissed here simply as “socialized medicine,” unworthy of discussion. When I got here, organized medicine, to my amazement, was fighting tooth and nail against a federal proposal to increase the number of medical schools and the number of places in the existing ones.

Since then, every federal proposal that I am aware of to make medical care more accessible and cheaper for the poor and underprivileged has been opposed by the AMA. Each year, the incoming AMA president went to Britain so that he could tell his membership just how horrible the NHS was. They ignored Canada and worse even than Gabon. The figures still are a disgrace, but some of the MDs shouting socialism want to ignore them.

It has always baffled me that anyone can seriously imagine that private insurance is the way to universal health care. The two are at odds. Insurance companies are businesses and will obviously avoid risks. Of course, those most at risk are in most need of protection. Similar arguments apply to the private drug industry (e.g., the protection of patent rights at the expense of AIDS victims in Africa). The only time there is a flurry of activity to develop drugs against tropical diseases is when white armies are sent in. The last war was good for anti-malaria research, for example. When I read accounts of amazing advances, the first question I ask is, “Who will pay?” There are drugs in the UK that cannot be prescribed on the NHS because of cost. Interferon has only recently been allowed.

Regarding the article by Drs. Makoid and Garis (Inside the Cost of Prescription Drugs, Fall 2001), I taught pharmacology at Creighton for 26 years. The subject was taught and examined in our department and in every other one in the world, using generic names only; because we were bright and alert, we sought to get our clinical colleagues to use generic names, as well. We failed. We even got a generic pharmacopia published. Some of our colleagues accused us of presumption in telling them how to treat their patients. They could not see the illogicality and burden to students of two sets, or more, of names for the same agent. Proprietary names vary with the manufacturer, generic ones do not. Sadly clinicians here behave in exactly the same way. They will not use generic names even when the patent has run out — Zantac, for example, instead of Ranitidine.

I look forward to more discussion on this subject.

D.F. Magee, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Physiology
Castlebellingham, Co. Louth, Ireland

Mueller’s approach critical, respectful

I wanted to write in praise of Dr. Joan Mueller’s article (Face to Face: A Theology of Diversity, Spring 2002). In light of Sept. 11, it is especially critical that we approach ecumenism with discernment and insight. Dr. Mueller’s article suggests such an approach, emphasizing respectful
Diversity, Campus Expansion Top President’s Agenda

Creighton University President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., advocated for greater campus diversity and outlined plans for campus expansion during his annual state-of-the-University address in February.

Fr. Schlegel spoke to the need for more minority-focused scholarships and the need to recruit and retain more minority faculty. The University, he said, must better recognize the needs and accomplishments of minority students. He also stressed the importance of making the University’s facilities more handicap accessible.

“As Creighton seeks diversity in its students, faculty and staff, we have to prepare a campus climate that is welcoming, encouraging and responsive,” he said.

In an effort to make the campus “more inviting and attractive to current and prospective students,” Fr. Schlegel said the University’s Board of Directors has approved the physical expansion of the campus eastward. The expansion coincides with several downtown redevelopment projects and construction of Omaha’s new convention center/arena already under way to the east.

“This expansion is both a historic opportunity to enlarge our physical footprint as well as an opportunity to decompres the volume of usage on the center of campus,” Fr. Schlegel said. He said the expansion does not signal any intent to become a significantly larger institution in terms of student enrollment.

The full text of Fr. Schlegel’s Convocation address can be found online at www.creighton.edu/President/Speeches/convocation2002.html.

Fitzgibbons Edits Hernia Textbook

Robert J. Fitzgibbons, MD’74, the Harry E. Stuckenhoff Professor of Surgery at Creighton, was the lead editor for the recently published fifth edition of Nyhus & Condon’s Hernia. The 650-page textbook is generally considered the most authoritative book on the subject of hernia.

Dr. Fitzgibbons also is currently leading a $6 million federally funded national study to determine if patients with asymptomatic, or minimally symptomatic, inguinal hernias might have better quality of life with a “watchful waiting” approach as opposed to surgery. The study will enroll patients until June 30. Patients with inguinal hernias who have few or no symptoms can obtain more information by calling (402) 280-4567.

Creighton Hosts Signing Ceremony for Sister Cities

The cities may be thousands of miles apart, but Omaha and Naas, Kildare, Ireland, will be forever linked through Creighton University. Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey, BA’73, and Naas Mayor Willie Callaghan officially connected the two cities by signing the sister cities documents at a signing ceremony on the Creighton campus on March 15. Pictured above are Mayor Fahey, left, and Mayor Callaghan signing the Agreement of Friendship in the Skutt Student Center.
Calcium and Phosphorus Co-dependent in Bone Development

Healthy bones and soft tissues need both calcium and phosphorus to grow and develop throughout life. Research presented at the National Osteoporosis Foundation Fifth International Symposium March 9 showed for the first time that the nutrients are co-dependent in the health benefits associated with calcium in humans undergoing bone-building therapy.

“The best way to help our patients meet their needs is to use a source that provides both calcium and phosphorus, such as dairy products and/or a calcium phosphate supplement,” said Robert P. Heaney, BS’47, MD’51, John A. Creighton University Professor at Creighton University. He was joined at the symposium by Dr. Ralph Shapiro of Product Safety Laboratories (Dayton, N.J.) and Dr. John J.B. Anderson of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“Women undergoing treatment for osteoporosis today typically are taking calcium supplements in amounts providing 1000-1500 mg of calcium per day,” said Heaney.

“Data shows that, in addition to providing the extra calcium a patient usually needs to slow bone loss or to support treatment-induced bone gain, this amount of calcium can bind up to 500 mg of phosphorus. Although this would present no serious problem for many people, it could impact women over 60 years of age who have diets that contain less than the National Academy of Sciences recommended daily allowance of 700 mg of phosphorus,” Heaney continued. “For these women, the usual calcium supplement, calcium carbonate, may block most of the absorption of phosphorus. If this happens, the calcium won’t do much good because bone mineral consists of both calcium and phosphorus.”

Shapiro and Heaney recently completed a detailed study on the co-dependence of calcium and phosphorus on growth and bone development. The research could affect the formulation of many multi-vitamin and calcium supplement products available to consumers.

It is estimated that people in about 20 million U.S. households take calcium supplements. The popularity of calcium supplements and calcium-fortified foods and beverages has reached record levels in recent years, since a 1984 conference on osteoporosis raised public awareness of the importance of calcium in bone development and recommended new, higher consumption levels for adults.

Since phosphate makes up more than half the mass of bone mineral, the panelists noted that diet must contain sufficient phosphorus if bone is to be built or rebuilt.

Phosphorus inadequacy may be more prevalent than commonly believed, at least partly as a result of changes in diet (e.g., strict vegetarianism) and weight reduction programs. Phosphorus supplements are not widely used in the U.S.

Calcium phosphates have been widely used in analgesics and other pharmaceutical products for many years because of their excipient properties. (Excipients allow medications to be formed into specific shapes and help make them consistent. They may also work as the vehicle for the drug.)

Now, as a result of the panelists’ comments at the symposium, the value of calcium phosphates in nutritional and dietary programs. Phosphorus supplements are not

Expert Stresses Need to Recruit More Minorities to Medical School

By Eugene Curtin

Facing a conference room full of young faces in white coats on April 1, Thomas T. Yoshikawa, M.D., saw firsthand Creighton University’s commitment to improving health care among minority communities.

Yoshikawa, who serves an almost entirely black and Hispanic community at two south-central Los Angeles hospitals, was the keynote speaker at a daylong series of Creighton-sponsored events held to mark Minority Health Month.

Although Yoshikawa declared himself an expert primarily in care of the elderly, he had much to say about minority health care in his address to Creighton medical residents, experienced physicians and community activists gathered at Creighton University Medical Center.

The great challenge facing the medical profession is the recruitment of minority students to medical schools, he said. That process must begin early, Yoshikawa said, when minority children are still deciding their futures and when magnet schools can still hope to draw them into a healthy academic environment.

He praised the Creighton University School of Medicine for being just one of two major medical research schools in the United States to choose a minority as dean.

M. Roy Wilson, M.D., who is African-American, is vice president for Health Sciences at Creighton, as well as dean of the medical school.

“Nebraska should be proud of that,” Yoshikawa said.

But Yoshikawa did not come to praise Creighton so much as to hurry it along the path of greater service to minority communities.

He urged the medical residents to maintain a constant awareness of the special susceptibility some minorities have to specific diseases. The list is long, he said, and contains such slow killers as diabetes, hypertension, stroke, prostate cancer, HIV, heart disease, kidney failure, sickle cell
By 2030, about 20 percent of the population will be 65 or older and the average life span will reach 80 for men (up from 45 in 1900) and 84 for women (47 in 1900).

“These people will be coming to you as part of your practice,” he said.

In dealing with the elderly, Yoshikawa said, physicians should always remember that the great goal is to assure independence.

The darkly humorous acronym DEATH is often used to remind doctors of what they should seek when caring for the elderly, Yoshikawa said. The letters stand for Dressing, Eating, Ambulation, Toiletry and Hygiene. If an elderly man or woman is able to perform all those functions, then he or she will live a contented and productive life, Yoshikawa said.

Yoshikawa, who said he agreed to keynote the Creighton event after being invited by his “good friend” Wilson, brought a lengthy resume to the discussion.

Currently Yoshikawa serves as chair of the Department of Internal Medicine at the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, as well as chief of internal medicine at the Martin Luther King Jr.-Charles R. Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Previously, he served for seven years as assistant chief medical director for the Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

He has published 170 scientific articles, 62 book chapters and 14 books. On July 1, 2000, he was appointed editor of the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

About the author: Eugene Curtin is a freelance writer working in Omaha.
Fellows Provide ‘Real-Life’ Perspective on Business Leadership

A senior vice president at a major insurance firm, who is also a published author. A major in the United States Air Force, who once taught high school math. A former professional ballerina who worked as director of finance at Creighton Prep High School.

What do all of these people have in common?

They are all graduate students in Creighton’s College of Business Administration, and they are the College’s first Anna Tyler Waite Graduate Leadership Fellows.

As such, Edward Horwitz, Eric Meiers and Catherine Demes Maydew have agreed to share their unique leadership experiences and knowledge with undergraduate students involved in Creighton’s Waite Leadership Scholars Program. Robert Moorman, Ph.D., associate professor of management and director of Creighton’s Anna Tyler Waite Center for Leadership, is excited about what these graduate students can offer the program.

“We have access to students in our graduate program who have been leaders in their businesses at a very high level,” said Moorman, who also holds the Robert B. Daugherty Chair in Management. “We decided that we should use that expertise.”

Creighton’s Waite Leadership Scholars Program is a four-year program designed to immerse undergraduate business students in the study of leadership. The program is supported by a $1.1 million gift from Creighton alumnus Donald L. Waite, BSC’54, executive vice president and chief administrative officer of Seagate Technology. The gift honors his wife, Anna Tyler Waite. The Waite Leadership Scholars Program, which is open to all undergraduate business students, currently has about 90 participants.

The Fellows are hosting Leadership Skills Seminars throughout the semester. These seminars are designed to give program participants a “real-life” look at leadership outside the classroom.

“The students have heard enough from me,” Moorman said with a laugh. Through these seminars “they hear perspectives other than those of their professors. I think it makes for a richer experience.”

“We then developed an interface between the experienced leaders in our graduate programs and our aspiring leaders in our undergraduate program.”

The Fellows, each of whom submitted an essay on leadership, are equally excited to give back to the College and to serve as mentors.

“I’m a firm believer in sharing my knowledge and experience, as a way of giving back to the community,” said Horwitz, who wrote a book on annuities in 1998. “I’m excited about interacting and talking with the undergraduate students and helping them find their path in the business world.”

“As a whole, I don’t think there is enough mentoring going on today,” said Meiers, who taught high school math in California for four and a half years before joining the Air Force. Through Creighton’s Leadership Fellows Program, Meiers said he feels “like I’m giving the undergraduate students the information and the tools they need to be more effective leaders.”

“It’s satisfying to me to see that light bulb go on in someone’s head,” said Demes Maydew, who performed professionally with ballet companies in Omaha, Duluth, Minn., and Chicago before embarking on a career in business. “Learning is such an important part of life. Those who have the knowledge and skills should share it to enrich the lives of others.”
Native American Retreat Celebrates Milestone

Growing up on the Rosebud Reservation in St. Francis, S.D., Nicole Haukass saw little interest among her high school classmates in attending college.

But Haukass had a dream. “Growing up, I just had this idea that I wanted to go to college,” Haukass said.

While she had the desire, Haukass also was a bit intimidated. None of her immediate family members had gone to college, and, with little interest among her peers, the dream seemed daunting.

That’s when Haukass’ high school principal told her about Creighton’s new Native American Retreat program.

The year was 1997 and Creighton had just launched the retreat — a three-day visit to Creighton’s campus — as a way to introduce Native American high school students to college life and the variety of studies and careers they could explore.

For Haukass, the retreat opened up a whole new world. “I really liked the environment at Creighton,” Haukass said. “The people were very welcoming.”

And the program’s career tracks, which introduced the high school students to a variety of occupations, including health professions such as occupational therapy, dentistry and nursing, were an eye-opener for many who came from the reservations.

“I didn’t even know what occupational therapy was until I came to the retreat,” Haukass said. “They gave us an opportunity to see all different sorts of majors. They showed us that there are a lot more opportunities than you know about.”

In May, Haukass will earn a degree in nursing, making her the first retreat participant to enter Creighton and graduate from the University. Two other former retreat participants, who took part in the second retreat in 1998, also will graduate in May. They are Jessica Graham, a computer science major, and Nakina Mills, a sociology major and president of the Native American Association at Creighton.

For Creighton’s Tami Buffalohead-McGill, coordinator of multi-cultural student services and founder of the retreat, the graduation of these three students marks something of a milestone. “We had no money to start the program,” Buffalohead-McGill recalled, “but we had plenty of energy and enthusiasm. We were amazed that people came and that it worked. Up until the last minute, I couldn’t believe we were doing this.”

Today, the program is drawing national attention. Buffalohead-McGill said Gonzaga University started a similar program modeled after Creighton’s retreat, and several other universities are making inquiries. Interest in Creighton’s retreat among Native American high school students has grown too, but Buffalohead-McGill limits the retreat to about 60 students annually to ensure individual attention. This individual attention — which includes having the Native American students live in the residence halls with Creighton students — is one of the main reasons for the program’s success.

“That’s why the program is so unique,” Buffalohead-McGill said. “It’s the closest you can come to being in college without being enrolled.”

This spring’s retreat included a mock trial sponsored by the Sarpy County (Neb.) Attorney’s Office and a “Take Off with Aviation” course offered in cooperation with the University of Nebraska-Omaha that had students taking the controls of a Cessna training aircraft.

Harris-Lewis, left, and Douglas

Law School Negotiation Team Wins National Championship

Two Creighton University second-year law students, Angel Harris-Lewis and Karen Douglas, took the National Championship in the American Bar Association’s National Negotiations competition held in Philadelphia Jan. 30-Feb. 3.

Harris-Lewis and Douglas, coached by Creighton Law Professors Edward Birmingham and Catherine Brooks, beat out the University of North Carolina in the final round to claim the title.

Twenty-four universities competed in Philadelphia, including Northwestern, George Washington, University of Texas, New York University and the University of Illinois.

In July, Harris-Lewis and Douglas will travel to London to represent the United States in the international Negotiations Competition where eight countries will be competing. This year’s national championship followed last year’s national championship for Creighton in the American Bar Association’s Criminal Trial Competition.
Three Inducted into Athletic Hall of Fame

At the 2002 Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet on April 2, three former Creighton Bluejays were inducted into the University’s Athletic Hall of Fame.

Bob Harstad, BA’93, played on the men’s basketball team from 1987-1991. During that time, the Bluejays won two Missouri Valley Conference championships and appeared in the NCAA Tournament twice and the National Invitation Tournament once. A four-year starter, Harstad was a three-time all conference selection. He was named the Missouri Valley Conference “Player of the Year” after his junior season. He holds numerous career marks for the Jays and is second in scoring with 2,110 points, and second in career rebounds with 1,126. Harstad is still one of only four Missouri Valley Conference players to record more than 2,000 career points and 1,000 career rebounds, joining Larry Bird, Oscar Robertson and Xavier McDaniel.

Kathy Halligan, BA’93, was one of the best pure shooters Creighton women’s basketball has ever seen. Halligan is the all-time leading scorer for the Jays with 2,159 points, while hitting a career best 309 three-pointers. In all, she is listed in the top 10 on 13 career charts. Halligan was all-conference three straight years, while winning the High Country Conference “Player of the Year Award” after her sophomore year, and the Western Athletic Conference “Player of the Year Award” after her senior season. During that campaign, the Jays won the conference regular season and tournament titles, while securing an NCAA bid. In 1991-92, this District 7 Kodak All-American led the nation in three-point shooting percentage at 56.6 percent, while leading her team to the best record ever in Creighton women’s basketball history at 28-4.

Brian Kamler, BA’94, was a four-year soccer captain and a three-time All-American — the only Creighton Bluejay to ever accomplish that three-peat. Kamler led the Creighton soccer program from 1990 to 1993. In that time span, the Bluejays won 57 games, including back-to-back Missouri Valley Conference crowns and two NCAA Tournament appearances. The MVC “Player of the Year” in 1992, Kamler was a four-time all-league performer. The Creighton career record chart is dotted with his accomplishments including second all-time in points scored with 130, and second in career goals with 53. He played unselfishly with 24 career assists and 129 shots on goal. Kamler is ranked second on the career record list with 13 multiple goal games.

Collaborating with fellow Creighton researchers as well as scientists from the University of Toronto, Johns Hopkins and the University of Nebraska, Lynch confirms suspicions that began in the late 1970s.

“After all these years, we have accumulated sufficient data to characterize an association between the familial atypical multiple mole melanoma (FAMMM) syndrome, which I described with Creighton dermatologist Dr. Ramon Fusaro in the late 1970s and since then, have been developing new facets of the syndrome’s significance which now include evidence for this cancer-causing germline mutation,” Lynch said.

By identifying the particular genetic mutation that causes the multiple mole melanoma and pancreatic cancer, the researchers provide a tool that can be used to improve screening and treatment, especially for melanoma, a treatable disease when caught early. Right now, pancreatic cancer is difficult to detect, and treat, and usually is not diagnosed until its later stages. By collecting samples for further study, Lynch hopes researchers can identify biochemical markers of early disease so that pancreatic cancer can be treated more effectively.
In 1961, a young pharmacist’s assistant stepped off a flight from England, planning a short stop in Omaha before continuing her trek to California.

When she finally got here, she liked it so much she never left.

This May, Valerie Roche will retire after teaching 37 years of dance at Creighton University. Her first teaching position was the product of an amazing stroke of chance (especially since she came to Omaha with no intention of being a dance instructor); that it evolved into an illustrious career is no surprise to anyone who has encountered this dynamic, highly professional teacher and choreographer.

Valerie Roche and her husband, Percy, arrived in the United States in 1961 “to see if it really was the land of opportunities.” Though they didn’t plan to stay any longer than a couple of years, they were attracted by the exciting atmosphere here.

Upon her arrival in Omaha, Roche took jobs in local pharmacies (she fondly remembers a stint at the Beaton Drug Company). A glance in the newspaper started her teaching career. “I was reading the Omaha World-Herald, and I noticed an article about the beginning of a ballet academy,” she said, “using the Royal Academy of Dancing syllabus.” Already trained as a performer in the highly prestigious Royal Academy (which is sponsored by the Queen of England), Roche accepted a teaching position with the Omaha Regional Ballet Academy. She took over its directorship when its original founder’s husband was suddenly called overseas. The Academy’s name was later changed to its current one, the Omaha Academy of Ballet.

A couple of years later, Roche was offered a teaching position at Creighton. Her first studio space was the rifle range in the Old Gymnasium, when dance was offered as an elective by the physical education department. “I used to sweep up the spent rifle casings before each class period,” she recalls, “but it was a wonderful place to dance!”

She later moved into the Fine Arts Building (now the Humanities Center) as a dance faculty member in the newly formed Fine & Performing Arts Department. “Father Lee Lubbers (S.J.) was responsible for getting the dance program started at Creighton,” she said. “He even designed a set for one of our first Nutcracker performances.”

The Omaha Academy of Ballet and Creighton University’s dance program have partnered many times over the years, both to put together quality productions and to find quality space. “There were many years where the Creighton students were bussed up to the Academy spaces on 40th and Cuming for class,” said Roche. Now Academy students take classes after-hours in the Lied Education Center for the Arts on Creighton’s campus.

Many of these students — Creighton and Academy — have studied in prestigious graduate programs. Roche’s students also have performed in major dance companies, such as the San Francisco Ballet, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company, the Houston Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre and dance companies in Germany and other European countries. Others have danced and choreographed professionally in New York.

Brian Bender, who performed principal roles with the Alberta Ballet Company in Canada, and later with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, credits Roche with making this possible. “I was a small-town farm kid from Kansas. I had nothing but an irrational need to become a dancer. Valerie worked with me for three years to mold a professional. Her carefully considered advice is with me even today.”

Her colleagues also applaud her keen eye and ear for good theater and music. Theater professor Alan Klem credits her for saving him on more than one occasion: “When I’m directing a musical, Valerie will come sit down next to me and I always know a critical suggestion will ensue. She never misses a thing. I’ve been very fortunate through the years to have her (there beside me) in musicals.”

The Academy and University are jointly planning special events for May. Many of Roche’s former students will return to perform and wish her well in her retirement, which she says will be spent traveling extensively, and getting reacquainted with her husband.

About the author: Brian Kokensparger is a free-lance writer for Creighton University Magazine. He can be reached via e-mail at bkoken@creighton.edu.
It warmed many an American’s heart to see Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush donning barbecue bibs in Crawford, Texas, last November. Later, when we glimpsed the Russian leader smiling into cameras and heard him fielding questions from American talk show callers, well, it just seemed as if he were at home in the United States. Numbed by the horror of 9/11, it also has heartened us to learn that Putin says he would support unequivocally American efforts in the War on Terrorism.

So, is the ice beginning to melt between the two old rivals?
President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin wave to the crowd at a high school in Crawford, Texas. The stop was part of Putin’s well-received visit to the United States this past November.
Winter Olympics skating gaffes aside, are the Bear and Uncle Sam skating on firmer ice? When Bush visits the 49-year-old Putin in late May, will they have more in common than ever before, especially as American military advisers offer help in the former Soviet state of Georgia? In a new world order of suicide terrorists, anthrax mailings and suitcase bombs, is it “time for us to be friends”?

When Creighton University History Professor Ross C. Horning considers the Russian Federation’s relationship with the United States, he never looks at the surface. For Horning the historian, everything’s connected, every present moment to a time that’s past.

So, all events in history’s panorama, whether a jovial Texas barbecue or a diplomatic show of support, need to be placed into context. For Horning, that context means seeing the world through the other’s eyes and understanding something of the sweep of history that has brought both to the present moment.

“A lot of Americans think that if the
Russians agree with us, then that’s a good relationship,” Horning said with his wry smile. “But (the relationship) is much more complex.”

For Horning, an inveterate Russia watcher, the personality of Vladimir Putin is one key to understanding the present relationship of the two countries. “As a former KGB member,” Horning said, “Mr. Putin knows how to smile. It’s easy for us to be taken in by

This. But remember; Just like Mr. Bush and (British Prime Minister) Mr. Tony Blair, Mr. Putin will be a strong advocate for the interests of his own nation. He will want to strengthen the Russian economy and ensure that Russia is a player on the world stage.”

Another key to understanding, of course, is history. “Putin has relieved some of the old Cold War angst in the United States with his hands-off approach to Eastern Europe’s joining NATO,” Horning said. ‘Eastern Europe wants to belong to ‘The Club.’ Putin accepts this now, though he may not always.” Originally arranged as a post-war watchdog over the Soviets’ western flank, NATO now is bent on

"A lot of Americans think that if the
Russians agree with us, then that’s a

A Bear Hug from Putin?

The Putin Presidency in Perspective

To Creighton University History Professor Ross Horning, Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin “will be a formidable character in the years ahead.” But that’s not a bad thing for either the U.S. or Russia, Horning believes. “Don’t expect leaders to do less than to look after the interests of their own country. You do not want a wishy-washy personality ... You want to know where they stand.”

But, according to Horning, to get at the personality of Putin, you have to know something of his formation — and the government he inherited as president from Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev.

Mikhail Gorbachev

In March 1985, Gorbachev was elected general secretary of the Communist Party, the most powerful post in the then U.S.S.R., and also became president of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev’s driving vision, Horning believes, was to “show that a communist society need not be the harsh, dictatorial life as personified by Stalin and carried on by his successors.” Both of Gorbachev’s grandfathers had been treated most severely under Stalin. One was tortured as a follower of Leon Trotsky, the other sent to Siberia “for not fulfilling his (collective farm’s) sowing plan.”

It was partly out of this past that Gorbachev envisioned his policies of glasnost and perestroika, openness and restructuring of the economy, respectively.

But Horning believes Gorbachev’s biggest impact — “the inadvertent dismantling of his own country” — was born in foreign affairs. As he turned away from the iron-fisted rule of his predecessors along the western flank of the Soviet Union and “indicated that if any Eastern European state wished to make changes, the Soviet Union would not intervene, Gorbachev broke the psychology of the second World War, the Iron Curtain idea. You began to think of the future under Gorbachev,” Horning said, “not of the past.”

What began for Gorbachev as a movement in Eastern Europe, with Poland, East Germany and Czechoslovakia opting to go their own ways, soon spread to the 15-member republics of the Soviet Union (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan; see map on page 17). “It was like a snowball rolling downhill. It got ahead of Gorbachev, and he couldn’t control it.”

To save the situation, Gorbachev, in late 1990, put together the “Union of

Gorbachev at an appearance in Omaha in March.
“solidifying the status quo. The United States wants to enlarge the membership of NATO, so that there’s no danger of attack from one of these former Soviet states. Conversely, NATO also guarantees that an attack on one is an attack on all,” Horning said.

But watch Putin in this, Horning added, as you would observe any leader who has the interest of his country at heart. “If Russia gets to be a big, powerful nation again, they will then challenge NATO,” Horning believes. “And the day will come when, as Russia acquires more strength, it will challenge the U.S., as well, for leadership in Eastern Europe.”

Still, if Russia becomes part of a proposed Russia-NATO Council at the end of the month, all of this may change. Russia and its old rivals may be able to put their differences behind them and join forces on common concerns, including terrorism.

Ultimately, Russia sees itself as European, not Asian. Therefore, it will want to have a role in Europe, especially as the political and economic landscape evolves there, Horning believes.

But there’s a much deeper reason for involvement. Eastern Europe is Russia’s “classic protection.” To Russia, Horning explained, “Eastern Europe is as vital as the Caribbean is to us.” In short, a threat on Russia’s western borders would be as foreboding to Russia as another country’s warships off the coast of Florida would be to us.

Russia has long wanted this protective shield of countries along its flank. After all, Horning said, it doesn’t take much to conjure up from history books — or from memory — the roar of Nazi tanks as they tore into Mother Russia from the west ... or the image of 25 million Russian dead at the hands of the German invaders. Along Eastern Europe, therefore, countries aligned after World War II under the Warsaw Pact as a guard to the Soviet flank: Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia. After the failed Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the ill-fated Czechoslovakian Rebellion in 1968, this policy took on new strength, Horning said. “Every Eastern European country had to be a reflection of the home government, the Soviet Union. No deviation was permitted. The idea came to be known, unofficially, as the Brezhnev Doctrine, with the thought that all Eastern European states are members of one socialist community: What touches one, touches all — and no one state can go its own way.”

Today, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary have joined NATO, and others have applied. Putin, knowing the importance of this area to his country’s well-being, naturally will strengthen his hand along this vital line as Russia strengthens, Horning believes. “Russia is interested in once again being a world player and taking its place in Europe.”

On the other hand, Bosnia and Kosovo will always be supported by Russia “and will probably never be a part of NATO. Kosovo is the ‘Slavic centerpiece,’” representative of what it means to

Sovereign Soviet Republics,” with its formative treaty to have been signed on Aug. 27, 1991. But, on the eve of the signing, five of the 15 states refused to sign. To add to the stress, Horning said, Gorbachev’s vice president led an attempted coup against his own boss.

“That’s where Boris Yeltsin comes in. Gorbachev is in the Crimea (his vacation spot in southern Ukraine). All phone lines to him are cut. Yeltsin calls on Russians to reject the coup, and hundreds of tanks move into Moscow. Yeltsin becomes the hero, as tank commanders refuse to join the uprising.”

On Aug. 24, two of his cabinet members having committed suicide, Gorbachev resigned as party secretary, still retaining his title of president. On Dec. 12, 1991, the Supreme Soviet voted 188-6 to join the commonwealth, which would later become the Russian Federation. Those republics all eventually would become independent nations. Thirteen days later, Gorbachev would resign as president. And, on Dec. 26, 1991, the Supreme Soviet “voted itself out of existence.”

“It comes to an end, this 76-year era, in such a casual way,” Horning said. “Usually this kind of change comes about through war and violence.”

Boris Yeltsin

As Mikhail Gorbachev closed a 12-minute speech announcing his resignation as president of the U.S.S.R., he handed new president Boris Yeltsin the reins of power, as well as the “nuclear suitcase, that is, the codes and communication equipment that launches nuclear missiles.

“By the next day, Yeltsin was in Gorbachev’s former office — and Gorbachev was out,” Horning said.

The breakup of the communist economic and political structure “quickly brought poverty and social instability to Russia. In all this,” Horning said, “Yeltsin can be seen as a transitional figure, trying to cope with the economic breakdown and to create a new political and economic future.”

Gorbachev’s former rival not only was beset with the problems of his country, but his health was a concern, and it “made it difficult for him to govern.” Still, Horning points to the creation of a new constitution in 1993 for the Russian Federation as one of Yeltsin’s most important contributions. Not only did the new document set out

Yeltsin, left, makes a speech atop a tank in front of the Russian parliament building in 1991 during a failed coup attempt by communist hard liners.
be Slavic, to be Russian.
Elsewhere, “Putin’s biggest problem will be Chechnya. Russia has been trying to control Chechnya since Peter the Great (czar from 1682-1725). Stalin tried to deport the Chechens, killing many. They became to him what the Jewish people were to Hitler. Chechnya is a predominantly Muslim territory. Chechens live in mountains like Afghans — and they will never give up their fight for independence.

“But Putin will not want Chechnya to be an independent country. After all, Russia has lost a lot of territory. He will want them to be at least a self-governing province, unable to sign treaties, arrange economic alliances, or own an army or navy. But he would like them to have what a province in Canada has. In other words, Putin would advocate a self-governing type of province arrangement for Chechnya, but he would want foreign relationships to come out of Moscow.”

And the former Soviet state of Georgia — What kind of thin line will Putin have to walk to appease Russian citizens about an American military presence there? “Even though Putin backs a U.S. presence in Georgia,” Horning said, “he’s receiving criticism from his own country for allowing this. It appears to some that he is casually giving in to the Americans all the time.”

Still, Putin has signed on for the War on Terrorism, and at least one area in Georgia has been targeted as a supply line for terrorists, who are believed to be fueling Islamic anger right in Russia’s backyard, Chechnya. So, as Russia’s leader, it looks like a wise course for Putin to support the crackdown on Georgian extremists.

Also vital to Russian interests has been the protection of the Baltic states: Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Why? “This is Russia’s historic gateway to the sea,” Horning said. “It’s in Russia’s national interest to have a safe trade route, free of problems.” Horning sees this policy continuing under Putin.

And, in the Balkans, if it comes again to a struggle, Putin’s Russia can be counted upon to take the side of the Serbs. This alignment with the Serbs runs deep, according to Horning. In fact, it’s “one of several reasons that the Russians were drawn into the first World War,” with the point of ignition appointed him.”

Horning emphasizes the continuity from Gorbachev to Yeltsin and Putin. “Yet, this is a whole new way of life. This is a new society coming on. It will be a challenge to the United States in the years ahead. They will be serious competitors with us in Eastern Europe — both economically and politically. “And Putin is in a good position,” Horning believes. “He doesn’t have too much power. He has just enough.”

Vladimir Putin

Yeltsin’s former prime minister ran for president in Russia’s 2000 election — and won handily. At this halfway point in his first term, there’s no reason to believe Putin won’t run for a second term, in 2004.

“The president is the most powerful person in Russian life,” Horning noted. “There’s nothing else like this in the United States or in Europe. He appoints the prime minister and approves all members of the cabinet that are selected by the prime minister.”

The judo champion of St. Petersburg, avid skier and former head of the KGB has not proven to be a retiring president, either, said Horning, who is quick to offer this glimpse into Putin’s character:

“At age 16, Putin applied to the KGB for a job. Now, you don’t apply to the KGB. They come to you! So, they told him he needed more schooling — in humanities, in the law. And they also told him they didn’t like people who took the initiative. They essentially told him to ‘keep his mouth shut,’” Horning said. So Putin went to university and law school, and then he was approached by the KGB, becoming a full colonel and the organization’s head, eventually leaving to become deputy mayor of St. Petersburg. “Putin did not want to be the successor to the head of the KGB,” Horning said. “But he did accept the post because Yeltsin

Putin flashes a presidential candidate ID prior to Russia’s 2000 election. Will he run again in 2004?
at Sarajevo. “The Serbs have always taken great pride in never becoming Islamic. Even with the breakup and the dispersal of the Ottoman Empire, the Serbs maintained their allegiance to the Orthodox Church. Russia is part of the same church.”

Putin, Horning said, begins a new era in Russian life. “He is leading a brand new society. With economic improvements, other things will follow.”

Horning believes Putin, with his strong personality, is the type of leader that “Russia has always had during its times of greatness. In Russian life, a strong leader, like a czar, has appealed to the Russian spirit. Under communism, the Party, in fact, replaced the czar as absolute ruler. In spite of the Russian economy — and its political challenges — we can probably expect something great coming from Russia in perhaps the next five years. It has a long road ahead, but Russia will rise again.”

Be advised, said Horning, that the new Russia will not be a carbon-copy of the old. Under the old Soviet Union, the communists had a worldwide outlook. “They encouraged communist movements throughout the world. Under Stalin, this national aspiration was to champion Marxism around the globe. The Soviets’ rival in this effort was China.

“Today, Marxism is gone in Russia,” and, as a global perspective, it has vanished so noticeably that Horning said he has to introduce the concept of Marxism to his students, in order for them to begin to understand Russia’s past. “The present-day Russian government under Putin does not have the Marxist outlook of worldwide communism. In some ways, with Putin, we’re seeing a return to nationalism. In a way, we have something like a return to Peter the Great.”

Horning sees Putin encouraging a democratic society for Russia. In fact, on a Vladimir Putin website, this quote is front and center: “We must create such a society and such forms of government that would not stifle democracy.”

Horning calls Putin “a strong leader, but still open.” But Horning also emphasized that the democracy Putin has in mind is, naturally, from a Russian perspective, not from a U.S. point of view. It is born from a desire not to go back to the iron rule of Stalin, but to encourage openness. It is distinctly Russian in character, Horning said. He is open to a capitalist society, as well. It is Horning’s belief that Putin “will not go back to a planned society.” And Russia will succeed as a capitalistic society, Horning believes. It is Horning’s belief that Putin “will not go back to a planned society.” And Russia will succeed as a capitalistic society, Horning believes. In Russia’s favor are its natural resources — including oil and gold. And maybe even the weight of its history. After all, Horning adds with a twinkle, Russia “has been around for more than 1,000 years. How long have we been around?”

Established in 1922 and dissolved in 1991, the Soviet Union occupied nearly one-sixth of the earth’s land surface. At more than twice the size of the United States, it covered 11 of the world’s 24 time zones.
At its inception, Creighton University was designed to change the lives of young people. Today, the University is reaching out to those at the other end of the spectrum. Through its innovative Center for Aging, Alzheimer’s Disease and Neurodegenerative Disorders, the Jesuit school strives to make an impact on the growing problems associated with the aging process, specifically targeting Alzheimer’s disease and other neurodegenerative disorders.

An estimated 4 million Americans currently have Alzheimer’s, including 10 percent of the over-65 population and half of those over 85 years of age. Alzheimer’s is the fourth leading cause of death in adults. Add to these statistics the fact that our overall population is aging, with more than 17 percent past retirement age right now, and you realize the situation will only get worse. Unless there is a cure for this disease, experts conclude that, by the year 2050, some 14 million Americans will suffer from this malady.

Alzheimer’s effects ripple through society, impacting the family, our health professionals, government at all levels and our economic future. Experts claim that Alzheimer’s costs the nation at least $100 billion a year, and that doesn’t include family costs, which could run as high as $100,000 for some caregivers.

Patricio F. Reyes, M.D., heads up Creighton’s Center for Aging. He came to Creighton in 2000 following successful stints at the University of Texas and the
Roger Brumback, M.D., Ruth Purtilo, Ph.D., and Patricio F. Reyes, M.D., are leading Creighton’s fight to develop treatments and enhance care for those suffering from Alzheimer’s.
Jefferson Medical School in Philadelphia. His interest in medicine and public policy, however, began many years before that in his native Philippine Islands.

Reyes earned an undergraduate degree at the University of the Philippines in 1966 and his medical degree five years later at the same institution. He completed his internship and started his neurology residency at the University’s Philippine General Hospital. But, disillusioned with the authoritarian rule of Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos, he fled to the United States in 1973 with only a few hundred dollars in his pocket. In the U.S., he pursued residencies in neurology, anatomic pathology and neuropathology at the University of Kentucky Medical Center and at the University of Miami’s Jackson Memorial Hospital in Florida.

“I was convinced that if I remained in the Philippines, I couldn’t do what I wanted to do in terms of medicine, basic science research, treatment of patients, the education of medical students and the preparation of future brain specialists,” Reyes explained, “so I came here. It was a tough decision, but everyone should have a chance to maximize his potential. I considered becoming a brain or heart surgeon, but have done a lot to correct these trends, but funding for research in this area still lags. Twenty years ago, no one was talking about Alzheimer’s disease. Now there may be too much talk and not enough action.”

Reyes, himself, helped pioneer the first drug ever approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat the symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease. Reyes began work on the drug in 1985, and nearly eight years later, in September 1993, the medication was introduced to the market under the brand name Cognex. The release of the drug, which is still in limited use today, made a dramatic impact on the pace of Alzheimer’s research.

“We convinced the world that something could be done to help those patients suffering from Alzheimer’s,” Reyes said. “Before that, there was no movement at all. We opened up the entire medical and scientific arena.”

Reyes would later help develop Exelon, one of four FDA-approved drugs (the others being Cognex, Aricept and Reminyl) now used commonly to slow the advent of Alzheimer’s.

Reyes’ work with Alzheimer’s, though, stretches beyond the lab. He once examined retired boxers in Philadelphia and became a member of the New Jersey Boxing Commission. He dueled in print with boxing analyst Gil Clancy, arguing for more control and standardization to prevent brain damage, while Clancy called boxing one of the safest contact sports. Reyes explains that research has shown a
relationship between head trauma and Alzheimer’s disease.

In his previous assignments, Reyes also established programs for the middle-aged and elderly, but Creighton’s Center plans to be much more far reaching in both research and service. Located on the first floor of the Creighton University Medical Center, the Center for Aging has multiple functions, from diagnosis and treatment; to research on environmental, ethnic, economic, spiritual and genetic factors; to education and community involvement.

Reyes explained: “We need to treat people in a comprehensive fashion and teach others how to diagnose and treat patients with dementia; we also need to do more than search for causes and cures. We have to be conscious of social consequences and cultural factors that may influence successful treatment. Lastly, we have to extend our mission out into the community.”

To that end, Reyes is working with the Ponca Tribe in Nebraska on research involving diabetes and the brain. Reyes also continues to see patients, some six to 12 a day. Many travel considerable distances to consult with him, including Alzheimer’s sufferers who have followed him during his moves. And a growing number are from the Omaha area.

“It is essential that the community we serve supports our cause. After all, a major objective of the Center is to share our knowledge and expertise with members of our community,” Reyes said.

In person, Reyes is lively, animated, upbeat. No dream seems beyond him, and he can pull you into that conviction. Everything about Alzheimer’s disease fascinates him. He theorizes about possible connections between Alzheimer’s and sleep apnea. He wonders about the Alzheimer’s patient’s observed predilection for sweets and loss of sense of smell. Reyes discovered that the areas of the brain involved with smell are often damaged in Alzheimer’s patients. He listens to any fresh evidence with sincere interest, and he believes something great will come from the Center.

“There are lots of new studies going on, here and elsewhere,” Reyes said, “with all of them attempting to halt or slow the disease or gain a better understanding of Alzheimer’s and the aging process.”

Reyes is also generous in his reminders that the Center is a team effort, involving a number of professionals besides himself — some permanent staff, some visiting fellows, plus numerous support personnel and colleagues in all fields of medicine.

One of his distinguished associates is Roger Brumback, M.D., professor and chair of Creighton’s Department of Pathology. Like Reyes, he was not originally in this specialty, but began as a pediatrician, switching later to neurology. Again, like Reyes, he made other stops before settling in Omaha, most notably at Penn State’s College of Medicine, where he earned his undergraduate and medical degrees, at the University of Pittsburgh and University of North Dakota schools of medicine and more than 15 years at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine. His list of publications is extensive and his reputation brought him to Nightline for an interview with Ted Koppel on the causes of Alzheimer’s.

Brumback has a knack for translating complicated medical jargon into lay terms and has had some success in raising monies for this long-neglected area.

“I lobbied the state of Oklahoma for funds to create a brain bank, to diagnose Alzheimer’s Facts

- Approximately 4 million Americans have Alzheimer’s disease.
- By the middle of this century, that number is expected to rise to 14 million.
- One in 10 Americans over 65 and nearly half of those over 85 have the disease.
- Alzheimer’s costs the U.S. at least $100 billion annually.
- The cost to American businesses exceeds $33 billion (much of that from lost productivity due to employee caregiving).
- A person with Alzheimer’s will live an average of eight years, and as many as 20 years or more, from the onset of symptoms.
- More than 7 of 10 people with Alzheimer’s live at home.
- Half of all nursing home residents suffer from Alzheimer’s disease or a related disorder.
- The average lifetime cost per Alzheimer’s patient is $174,000.

Source: Alzheimer’s Association (www.alz.org)
Alzheimer’s disease is a complex disorder that results in the loss of brain cells. The disease is characterized by the spread of sticky beta amyloid plaques and tangled fibers in the brain that reduce nerve cell connections, eventually leading to cell death and a decline in a person’s cognitive functions.

There are currently four drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration that relieve some of the symptoms of the disease and improve cognitive function — tacrine (Cognex), donepezil (Aricept), rivastigmine (Exelon) and galatamine (Reminyl). However, there is currently no medical treatment to cure or stop the progression of Alzheimer’s. To that end, scientists are making great strides on a variety of fronts. Here are a few of the most promising:

**Anti-inflammatory Drugs.** Studies have shown that ibuprofen and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, including arthritis drugs called COX-2 inhibitors, appear to lower the risk of Alzheimer’s by reducing the inflammation that accompanies plaque formation.

**Enzyme Targeting.** Scientists have identified certain enzymes — enzyme beta secretase and gamma secretase — that are believed to be key to the development of the plaque-building beta amyloid protein. By manipulating these enzymes, scientists may be able to inhibit the development of beta amyloid. “This holds much promise,” Reyes said. “If we can neutralize the enzymes that lead to plaques, we can then possibly prevent or stop the progression of Alzheimer’s disease.”

**Nerve Growth Factors.** An essential chemical in the brain, nerve growth (or neurotrophic) factors promote the regeneration of nerve cells in the brain. Using a gene therapy technique or compounds that promote cell regeneration, scientists could revive or restore brain cells damaged in Alzheimer’s patients to nearly their original state.

**Vaccines.** The experimental drug AN-1792 was found to reduce existing amyloid plaques and prevent further plaque development in mice. However, human clinical trials in France recently were stopped when patients using the drug began experiencing inflammation of the brain. Reyes said the problems relating to this clinical trial point to the need for more accurate research models and careful assessment of experimental information before extrapolating animal data to human subjects. Reyes said the Center is trying to recruit new faculty who would work on developing better animal research models. Another potential vaccine, a nasal spray, also has been shown to reduce the build up of amyloid plaques in laboratory mice.

**Cholesterol-lowering Drugs.** Two studies published in 2000 highlighted a relationship between certain cholesterol-lowering drugs (statins) and decreased risk of Alzheimer’s disease. One study found that individuals on cholesterol-lowering drugs were 70 percent less likely to develop dementia.

**Antioxidants.** New findings, reported at the World Alzheimer’s Congress 2000, suggest that eating high amounts of vegetables rich in vitamin E and vitamin C is associated with lower risks of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

**Memantine.** A drug that acts on a key central nervous system receptor, memantine may help slow the progression of moderately severe to severe Alzheimer’s disease.

**Lower-fat Diet.** A high-fat diet during early and mid-adulthood may be associated with an increased risk of developing Alzheimer’s, especially in people with the ApoE-4 gene, according to recent research.

**Hormones.** Estrogen has been found to promote cell regeneration and prevent cell deterioration, Reyes said. He added that some investigators believe that women who were not exposed to estrogen therapy after menopause have an increased risk for Alzheimer’s disease.

Source: Alzheimer’s Association (www.alz.org), Dr. Patricio F. Reyes

Reyes was instrumental in the development of the first Alzheimer’s drug, Cognex, which paved the way for future Alzheimer’s research.
Alzheimer’s Team Searches for Hope

and evaluate Alzheimer’s patients, to follow up with respite and caregiver training and even to check on nursing homes to improve their work,” Brumback said.

The center Brumback helped establish in Oklahoma City managed to found that brain bank, arrange for autopsies, study the results and then host conferences where relatives could attend and ask questions.

Brumback, who gets impatient with the publicizing of pseudo cures, invariably provides frank and straight responses. On the sometimes cloudy issue of what kills Alzheimer’s patients, he replies simply, “Alzheimer’s kills them.”

The death certificate might cite pneumonia or kidney failure or other ailments but Brumback returns to Alzheimer’s as the cause.

“An Alzheimer’s patient loses control of functions,” he explained. “While we’ve been talking, you’ve unconsciously swallowed a number of times. With the disease, you forget how to swallow and the lungs, for example, get set up for infection. This pooling can lead to pneumonia. Kidney infections occur in Alzheimer’s patients for similar reasons. The brain doesn’t tell them to void.”

The brain shrinks as Alzheimer’s progresses. The typical brain weighs about three pounds, but Brumback recalls a patient he treated for 25 years and, at her death, her brain weighed only a pound.

“The same weight as a newborn baby’s brain,” he said.

Although the notion of a “brain bank” probably conjures up visions in the layperson of a hundred motion picture labs where the mad scientist displays skulls and lots of bubbling vials, these modern facilities are less showy, more clinical. And they serve an important purpose, since, at least for the present, Alzheimer’s signs can’t be detected in the living brain (instead, they show up in autopsies), and the exact cause or causes of the disease are still unknown.

“Once we know the cause or causes, we can develop more definitive and safer treatments for the prevention or cure of the disease,” Reyes said.

Part of Reyes’ current research entails trying to understand the basic mechanisms involved in Alzheimer’s. Scientists have identified a plaque or tangle within the brain that can trigger an inflammatory reaction leading to the death of brain cells. This normally starts in the center of the brain, in an area called the hippocampus, and memory is the first thing affected. It spreads out from there to the frontal lobe, where judgment and reason are located. This may take years or it may take only months.

Diagnosis is now done by a process of elimination, ruling out other causes of the patient’s errant behavior, like Parkinson’s disease or head trauma.

There are early signs and these include memory loss, inability to handle familiar tasks, problems with language, disorientation as to time and place, impaired judgment, problems with abstract thinking, misplacing of items, changes in mood or behavior, personality shifts and loss of initiative. Even though the tests and observations are extensive, they aren’t foolproof. Post-mortem examinations reveal that as many as 10 percent of the diagnoses of Alzheimer’s may be in error. Brumback can detect these lapses in his research.

You’ve probably heard that we use only 20 percent of the brain power we have. Brumback disputes this.

“We may well use only 20 percent of our brain cells, but the other 80 percent serve as backups. We may lose a few of these in the birth process or, later on, through accidents or disease. That’s when the backups take over. An average person may lose 15 to 20 percent of his/her nerve cells over a lifetime. Once lost, they can’t be replaced, not like our skin or other areas that redevelop themselves.”

What happens in the case of the Alzheimer’s patient is that, even if the Alzheimer’s process starts early on, the reserve cells may keep the individual stable. But, once we dip into the final...
20 percent, we begin to exhibit behavioral changes.

Like Reyes, Brumback is also a student of the history of the aging process, reminding people that, before 1800, age was revered. This was a time when the life span was much shorter. Our European ancestors even developed a rule that people over 65 were to be considered senile. This arbitrary time line is responsible for 65 being set as retirement age, even though many people now retire earlier or later.

“Research scientists in places like Vienna and Prague and Munich were trying to determine why people over 65 were demented,” continued Brumback. “They discovered senile plaques and theorized these appeared only in the elderly. That discovery set the stage for a fresh look at the dementia issue, but it has taken the greater part of the past century to get things moving.

Creighton’s Center for Aging is one part of the solution. Its core principles include providing care that is clinically effective, accessible and cost effective; maintaining state-of-the-art equipment and technology; and integrating education, research and patient care to attain the highest level of quality in each area. Like the University, the Center is anchored in ethics and in Catholic and Jesuit values.

That introduces another element in the team approach, the liaison with Creighton’s Center for Health Policy and Ethics. The director of this division is Ruth Purtilo, who received her Ph.D. in ethics from Harvard University and also holds three honorary doctorates. She’s the author of half a dozen books and more than 70 articles on the subject of ethics. Prior to joining Creighton, she held ethics positions in several states, had visiting scholar status in Sweden and continues as a Fellow of the Hastings Center, a think tank in New York.

With all the focus on delaying or curing Alzheimer’s, people may lose sight of the ethical considerations. “There are many ethical problems to confront,” Purtilo said. “Issues about the patient, of course. Like how you address that kind of suffering in a humane way and what it means to address it. And then, caregiver issues as well. How much autonomy should be honored and at what price to the caregiver? And how can we help patients hold on to their identities? We discuss ways to allow more self-determination, to permit the Alzheimer’s patient to optimize his or her autonomy.”

For Haakon Nygaard, BS’00, it was the opportunity of a lifetime.

The first-year Creighton medical student from Norway had read in the newspaper that acclaimed neurologist Patricio F. Reyes, M.D., was coming to Creighton University.

Nygaard, who had an interest in neurology, was among the first to visit Reyes when the esteemed physician came to campus.

“Basically, I just went to his office, and he took me in. And I’ve been working with him ever since,” Nygaard said. “He’s given me fantastic opportunities, both in the clinic and in the research area.”

Nygaard, now in his second year of Creighton medical school, has made the most of those opportunities.

This February, Nygaard’s oral presentation at the Midwest Student Research Forum in Omaha on Alzheimer’s disease and the visual system earned him top honors. He also

Creighton medical student Haakon Nygaard, BS’00, is investigating the relationship between Alzheimer’s and the visual system.
presented his research at the National Student Research Forum this April in Galveston, Texas.

Nygaard began his research on Alzheimer’s disease and the visual system last summer under Reyes’ direction. Reports have shown that a number of Alzheimer’s patients display signs of visual problems — such as blurred vision and reduced visual acuity, as well as diminished sensitivity to color, contrast and motion — yet the pathological basis for these symptoms was not well known.

“An Alzheimer’s patient, for instance, may have a hard time determining what they are looking at, and their sensitivity to motion may be reduced, which can affect activities such as driving,” Nygaard said.

In the lab, using Reyes’ extensive brain bank, Nygaard began examining the brains of Alzheimer’s patients, looking at the parts of the brain associated with vision.

He found a “significant” number of neurotic plaques — the amyloid-containing plaques associated with Alzheimer’s disease — in the visual cortex, located in the very back of the brain.

She adds that there are ethical issues involving society. What can they do? What should they do? How are limited resources to be distributed? And there are justice issues, such as who gets treated and for what.

“We have questions about promising prescription drugs and whether we should give them to patients who may improve for six months and then lapse back into the same dementia pattern. We have concerns for the family unit. Autonomy has a moral monopoly on our thinking.”

Purtilo and her colleagues try to create models of appropriate comfort care along with effective pain management and end-of-life care. Last fall, she spent time at a meeting in the Netherlands to help develop guidelines for Alzheimer’s ethical issues with, as she states, “justice as the centerpiece.”

In addition, there are many legal questions that require consideration.

Should one suffering from Alzheimer’s be allowed to vote, or drive a car, or enter into a contract? What about the terms of any guardianship or the rights of the Alzheimer’s patient when it comes to decisions like a will or a Living Will? How do we view this disability or deal with violent behavior or protect these individuals from crimes?

So Creighton’s Center for Aging is a multifaceted venture, one with great promise and as many challenges. In a newspaper interview conducted with Reyes prior to his affiliation with Creighton, the neurologist said: “I tell people who work with me that this kind of work entails commitment and dedication. You have a tremendous responsibility to patients and their families, both in the clinical setting and in the ethical manner in which you conduct and report medical and scientific research. You will be rewarded but you have to put in a lot of effort, time and good work.”

Already the Center has sponsored workshops and conferences to spread information about dementia, involving not only research issues but also covering related subjects like caregiver responsibilities and their health care needs.

Reyes’ enthusiasm and confidence are contagious. His team members seem to feel it, express it.

“Eventually,” Brumback said, “Alzheimer’s will be conquered.”

When that happy day arrives, the Creighton practitioners feel certain they will have played an important role.

“To date,” said Reyes, “the Midwest has been underrepresented in this struggle, but I’m sure we in Omaha and at Creighton will soon be among the leaders.”

He came to Creighton and played on the varsity tennis team for four years. His “deep interest in science” led him to major in biology, but he also considered majoring in philosophy.

Nygaard said that working with Reyes has been “amazing.”

“He is one of the best teachers I have ever encountered,” Nygaard said. “He lets me do rounds with him. He lets me see patients with him. He is so open to students, and he loves to teach.”

Working with Reyes has made Nygaard even more interested in pursuing a career in neurology and uncovering such mysteries of the brain as Alzheimer’s disease.

“Alzheimer’s is certainly one of my main interests,” Nygaard said. “It may become the epidemic of the 21st century. And neurology is perhaps among the last unexplored areas of medicine. There is so much we don’t know about the brain yet.”

But Nygaard is optimistic about the future.

“The answers are there for sure,” he said. “It will just take some time to uncover them.”
When Creighton faculty head to the back roads and byways this summer, just what tomes will they be toting? Moreover, what do they recommend that you tuck into your beach bag or backpack? Sharpen your pencils: Here are their choices.

The lure of the American West still beckons, with Custer’s *My Life on the Plains*, Cather’s *My Antonia* and Ambrose’s *Undaunted Courage* topping several lists. Another top pick for one faculty couple is Heinz’s *Frank Lloyd Wright Field Guide, Vol. 3, West*. The pair will use the book as they hit the road to explore Wright’s western architectural gems.

Even Omaha’s frontier past has a lure for at least one summer reader whose copy of *A Dirty, Wicked Town: Tales of 19th Century Omaha* heads for the suitcase.

And at least one preconception fell with our survey: Expect our professors to stick with their subjects. Not necessarily so. Sure, there was the film professor who was tackling a couple of cinema books, but he couldn’t wait to crack open the Dorothy Sayers thriller, *Gaudy Night*, an Oxford University-based mystery. And one physician lists Steve Martin’s *Shopgirl*, Peter Maas’s *The Terrible Hours* and “almost anything by James Elroy, especially his L.A. series” as his top picks.

Fiction versus non-fiction was a pretty even draw for summer reading, with our professors even-handedly naming Stephen Hawking’s *The Universe in a Nutshell* just as preferred as a companion in a hammock as Chekov’s *Short Stories* or P.D. James’s *Death in Holy Orders*.

Some wanted a good chuckle, British-style, and recommended Alan Bennett’s *Talking Heads* and *Talking Heads 2*, with plenty of copies of *The New Yorker* tucked in for good measure.

Others favored more serious texts, such as Charles Swindoll’s *Living Above the Level of Mediocrity: A Commitment to Excellence*, or Bill Readings’s *The University in Ruins* or Bruce Wilkinson’s *Prayer of Jabez* and Philip Simmons’s *Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life*. The latter describes the interior journey of an ALS sufferer facing end-of-life issues.

From the English department come some great reading tips, from Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited* to Nicholas Basbanes’s tome for bibliophiles, *Patience & Fortitude*, and alumnus Ron Hansen’s *Atticus*.

And, as with all good reading, several top picks by faculty promise that, “There is no frigate like a book to take us lands away.” Thus, Peter Hessler’s *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze*, Ernest Hemingway’s *Green Hills of Africa*, Kent Haruf’s *Plainsong* and Sandra Benitez’s *Bitter Grounds* take the reader around the world ... and into the human heart.

**Murray Joseph Casey, MD, Ob/Gyn:**
Whittaker Chambers’s *Witness*, perhaps “the greatest autobiography ever written by an American”;

*Mark Twain’s* *Joan of Arc* for its “beautiful language”;

George Armstrong Custer’s *My Life on the Plains*, a “firsthand account of the frontier army ... written as a series of self-promoting articles.”

**Mary Haynes Kuhlman, Ph.D., English:**
Ron Hansen’s *Atticus*, ... “a Colorado rancher searches in a luxuriantly described Mexico for his prodigal son”;

Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*, which “traces a young agnostic’s fascination with a British Catholic family”;

Julia Alvarez’s *In the Time of the Butterflies*, “a beautiful novel about four sisters and an ugly time in the history of the Dominican Republic.”

**Sharon deLaubenfels, M.A., English:**
Alan Bennett’s *Talking Heads* and *Talking Heads 2*, written and recorded for BBC Television in the 1980s. “I am a huge fan of British literature, and Alan Bennett is so very observant of the British way of life — and he is very funny”; and back issues of *The New Yorker*. 
Bridget Keegan, Ph.D., Chair, English:

Bill Readings’s The University in Ruins, “the most provocative critique to date of how the dominance of global corporations has undermined the traditional mission of the university”; and Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker’s The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic. Keegan calls this a “surprising account of the true ‘founders’ of our country.”

Bruce Houghton, M.D., Specialty Medicine:

Steve Martin’s Shopgirl drew plaudits here. “The characters were well-drawn with great attention to small, significant details: a wonderful, quick summer read”; likewise Peter Maas’s The Terrible Hours, and “almost anything by James Elroy, especially his L.A. series. His style is a little odd and the subjects are dark with some fairly damaged characters, but, if you like mysteries and noir, check him out.”

Mark L. Kearley, Ph.D., Chemistry:

Stephen Ambrose’s Undaunted Courage is “mesmerizing.”

Ross Horning, Ph.D., History:

David Gergen’s Eyewitness to Power: The Essence of Leadership. Gergen, on the staffs of Nixon, Ford, Reagan and Clinton, has “a reputation for solid integrity and fairness. His concluding chapter on the ‘Seven Lessons of Leadership’ is especially astute and should be read by every political personality — those who currently hold office, those thinking of running for office, and all advisors of potential candidates”; and, “for a wonderful, light, revealing, read,” David L. Bristow’s A Dirty, Wicked Town: Tales of 19th Century Omaha; Austin Murphy’s The Sweet Season, a “marvelous story of St. John’s head football coach, John Gagliardi.”

Bob Whipple, Ph.D., English:

Lawrence Lessig’s The Future of Ideas: The Fate of the Commons in a Connected World offers a view of the Internet age that has “disturbing consequences for social and moral institutions”; while Nicholas Basbanes’s Patience & Fortitude supplies insight into “the importance of traditional books in a digital age.”

Rory J. Conces, Ph.D., Philosophy:

Peter Hessler’s River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze is a top choice, as Conces wants “to compare Hessler’s experiences as a teacher in China with my own experiences as a philosophy lecturer in Guangzhou”; Gao Xingjian’s Soul Mountain for its “window on modern-day China” ... and Rusmir Mahmutčehajić’s Bosnia the Good: Tolerance and Tradition. Having met the author in Sarajevo, Conces looks forward to learning more from this “remarkable man and thinker.”

James Wunsch, Ph.D., Political Science:

James C. Scott’s Seeing Like A State is a “21st century update of Tocqueville and Madison’s concerns with how democracy can evolve into tyranny”; but a “fun read for the beach or late nights” is Ken Follett’s Jackdaws, on the French resistance in the days prior to D-Day; while Jeffrey Herbst’s States and Power in Africa “takes a new angle in understanding failed African states.”

Dust jackets are provided courtesy of their copyright owners.
Barbara J. Dilly, Sociology/Anthropology:
Randal S. Beeman and James A. Pritchard’s A Green and Permanent Land: Ecology and Agriculture in the Twentieth Century affords “a good summary of how agriculture figures so prominently in public debates”;
Lawrence Thornton’s Imagining Argentina places the reader squarely into the plight of “families of Argentines who disappeared in the 1970s,” and Charles Swindoll’s Living Above the Level of Mediocrity: A Commitment to Excellence is a “spiritual accountability guide to personal development.”

Mary Kay Meagher, Nursing:
Anita Diamant’s The Red Tent offers “a marvelous insight into women’s lives in Old Testament times”;
meanwhile, Sandra Benítez’s Bitter Grounds is a “wonderful way to learn the history of El Salvador in the 1980s”;
and Anita Shreve’s The Pilot’s Wife is riveting reading “for a plane ride or a long wait through security.”

Carol Zuegner, M.A., Journalism:
Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the New York Times, Rick Bragg, is the author of this professor’s top pick, All Over but the Shoutin’, “a fabulous book”;
and Willa Cather’s My Antonia is “on my reread list every summer. I get something new from it every time I read it.”

Geoff Bakewell, Ph.D., Chair, Classical and Near Eastern Studies:
Gerald Durrell’s My Family and Other Animals is “warm and witty” and relates how “odd and endearing creatures share the stage with equally eccentric humans as world-famous zoologist Gerry Durrell recounts the sun-drenched days of his childhood on the Greek island of Corfu”;
and Willa Cather’s My Antonia is “on my reread list every summer. I get something new from it every time I read it.”

Raneta Lawson Mack, J.D., Law:
Richard Meryman’s Andrew Wyeth: A Secret Life affords a great way to learn more about the painter whose “famous Helga paintings will be at the Joslyn Art Museum (in Omaha) this summer”;
while Ernest Hemingway’s Green Hills of Africa will be read prior to “an 11-day trip through southern Africa in September”;
and Thomas Tomosy’s Restoring Classic & Collectible Cameras will help this professor become proficient at her new hobby.

Deborah Wells, Ph.D., Marketing and Management:
P.D. James’s Death in Holy Orders and Elizabeth George’s Playing for the Ashes and For the Sake of Elena are top picks for this relaxing scholar. Great mysteries, full of “psychology, multiple suspects and timeless writing.”
Roger Aiken, Ph.D., Fine and Performing Arts: Rick Altman’s *Film/Genre* and David Bordwell’s *On the History of Film Style* will prepare this Creighton scholar to teach a new senior perspective class; but “the incomparable” Dorothy Sayers’s *Gaudy Night* beckons when the day winds down.

Helen Ayers, M.A., English: Philip Simmons’s *Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life* deals “with life’s deepest and most urgent questions”; and Brendan O’Carroll’s *The Mammy* features Agnes Browne, “widowed with seven children living in the working class section of Dublin in the 1960s.”

Frances C. Moore, Pharmacy Sciences: For a “good spiritual exercise,” Bruce Wilkinson’s *The Prayer of Jabez* ... and “a great mystery, so timely after 9/11 that it’s scary,” Robert Ludlum’s *The Prometheus Deception*.

Brent Spencer, Ph.D., English: Among “the great treasures of the art” are Anton Chekhov’s *Short Stories*. “He’s more than my summer reading. He’s my perpetual reading. I’m constantly impressed by his subtle understanding of human nature and by his way with the language”; Richard Russo’s *Empire Falls* handles the “small industrial towns of the northeast with an engaging mixture of comedy and compassion”; and Nebraska poet and fiction writer Terese Svoboda’s *Trailer Girl and Other Stories* proves “haunting and funny.”

James Woodbury, M.D., Internal Medicine: Stephen Hawking’s *The Universe in a Nutshell* promises a good, lucid read of theoretical physics; while John Sandford’s *Night Prey* chills as a tale of a serial murderer, and Isaac Asimov’s *Foundation* answers both “favorite author” and “favorite genre” for this summer reader.

Gregory Bucher, Ph.D., Classical and Near Eastern Studies: Thomas Heinz’s *Frank Lloyd Wright Field Guide, Vol. 3, West* will guide this Creighton faculty member and his wife this summer in search of Wright’s western gems; while Charles Jencks’s *Heteropolis* offers a fun mix of humor and architecture as he wanders through Los Angeles; finally, “quirky, opinionated” Nancy Mitford and her *A Talent to Amuse* offers a “good companion on a road trip.”

Martin Hulce, Ph.D., Chemistry: Oliver Sacks’s *Uncle Tungsten: Memories of a Chemical Boyhood* provides “graceful recollections of the pleasures of hands-on science in post-World War II London (that) will ring true for anyone who has felt the pull of discovery”; while Guy Johnson’s *Standing at the Scratch Line* details a “bigger-than-life hero ... who roars and dodges his way through the heart of 20th century African-American history”; and Kent Haruf’s *Plainsong* “creates a small town in the high plains of Colorado that has cadence and goodness that Midwesterners will recognize and celebrate as blessings.”
The evening news contained its usual contradictions: another Fortune 500 company laying off thousands of workers, the Dow bouncing back, homelessness increasing, Lexus sales rising. How could one make sense of such seeming opposites?
In my work, I have increasingly come to use computer simulations to explore questions in bone biology. The speed of computers, and their ability to handle dozens of simultaneously changing conditions, allow investigators to compress into just a few hours an amount of work that might have taken a lifetime — perhaps many lifetimes. Could a computer model help me understand what lay behind the seeming inconsistencies of the modern economic world?

Simulations are not reality, but they can be a good substitute. Moreover, simulations manage the playing out of random chance very well. Simulations, in effect, allow one to make the rules and watch the game unfold — then change the rules and watch again.

We can, for example, start the world over, in a sense. Take, say, 10,000 families, and in a hypothetical, uninhabited region, divide the land up so that each family has enough to feed itself with something left over. Over time the surplus should grow and the country as a whole should be comfortably prosperous.

To be realistic, one needs to build in random variability for a number of factors. The parcels of land, while equally fertile, do not all respond to usual weather variations in exactly the same way. Further, the rains are not uniform each year across the entire land. And the inevitable insects and plant pests hit some farms harder than others. Similarly, not all farmers are the same. Some are more industrious than others and work harder; some are brighter and read the signs of the weather better. Some have episodes of illness or injury that temporarily impede their work. And to be completely realistic, some are lazy and others are spiteful and play dirty tricks on their neighbors to avenge perceived slights. These and many similar conditions need defining, but once set up as random variables, it is only a matter of minutes for the computer to give us the results of years of simulated reality.

One finds, at the end of one simulated year, that the average crop yield for the whole country is, as expected, more than ample — enough to feed everyone, enough for next year’s seed and a good-sized surplus to boot. But, given the play of chance, not every farm is average. Some did better, some worse. Some, in fact, did not have a sufficient yield both to feed their families and to set aside seed for next year’s planting. They were forced to go to more prosperous neighbors and borrow from their surplus, promising, of course, to repay, and pledging some of their land as security. The lender levied a certain amount of interest, which we, as master of this universe, determine should be only half the rate of average surplus yield, so that repayment would be easily feasible.

After one more year, the outcomes are similar. Some did better than average, some worse. Most of the farmers who had borrowed grain had a better year and were able to repay some or all of their loans. But not all. Some had two bad years in a row. They had to go deeper into debt to survive.

The third year, simply by chance, was one of those bad years for everyone. Average rainfall was less than normal, and no one did very well. Those with surpluses from prior years had a cushion to fall back upon. But those just squeaking by previously now had to go into debt. And those already in debt went deeper.

The fourth year was better and many were able to recover. Nevertheless, some did not. For some, it only got worse.

As more years tick by, many of those deeply in debt lose their farms and become tenant farmers for others. By our rules, their wage is fair — enough to support a family — but the surplus that the land is capable of producing now goes to the new owner, and the farmer himself has little chance ever to get ahead. Loss of ownership becomes irreversible.

It quickly becomes clear how things are going to turn out. After a few more years, some farms grow and their owners become wealthy. Their land holdings become big enough to be insulated against the year-to-year fluctuations in yield, and so remain stable, while the smaller holdings are, as always, more vulnerable. The country as a whole remains prosperous, but its abundance is now distributed quite unevenly.

Making allowances for differences in complexity, this imaginary land looks very much like the world we inhabit, the one we read about in the evening news.

When we see such unevenness in our contemporary, real world, it is tempting to seek the explanation in terms of merit. Some work harder than others or make better decisions; they deserve more. And those who make mistakes or are lazy? Well, perhaps, they get what is coming to them.

But is that correct? Is that a fully adequate explanation?

Our simulation allows us to test this assumption. What if we were to eliminate the factors of laziness, meanness and bad judgment? By changing a few lines of code we make everybody in our imaginary land equally able, equally deserving. When we run the simulation again, we find, surprisingly, that the results are the same. It takes a few years longer, but the original, evenly distributed wealth still becomes concentrated in the hands of a few. The cause for the difference is now clearly not merit or ability, but the inescapable play of random chance, expressed in the effect of environmental and other non-voluntary forces.

Maybe the interest rate on loans is the culprit. We can test that, too. Cut the rate in half. Same result. Drop it entirely. Again, it takes somewhat longer, but the end results are exactly the same. There is no longer any human controlled factor to blame for the uneven distribution that develops over the years. This surprising outcome forces us to abandon our usual comfortable explanations and ask a different kind of question. If this sort of randomness is built into the way God has engineered creation, what does this arrangement tell us, both about God, and about God’s intentions for the world?

Several of the pieces of this puzzle have been understood for a long time. It was the picture they made when put together that was startling. On the one hand probability and game theorists showed centuries ago that this was how random processes and zero-sum games...
always played themselves out. (That is why, ultimately, the house wins in the casinos.)

In an agrarian world, such as the one in our model, the play of chance is clearly plausible. So many powerful forces are so obviously beyond human control. In a more complex society, such as our own, intelligence, education, and hard work overshadow environmental factors in determining outcomes. But a moment’s reflection suffices to remind us that intelligence is not evenly distributed; nor is education or educational quality or even access to education. Hard work is important in any model, and to an important extent, that factor is under our control. But by itself it may not be enough. We have led sheltered lives indeed if we have not known good, hard-working people bulldozed by circumstances.

John Rawls, a 20th century ethicist, refers to this uneven distribution of talent and resources as a “lottery,” and saw dealing with it as a challenge for society. And, more than 16 centuries ago, John of Syria, an aristocrat, trained in rhetoric and a Christian convert and ultimately bishop of Constantinople, had preached (and written) eloquently on this topic — so eloquently that he earned the Greek surname Chrysostom, meaning “golden mouthed.” His insights are pertinent because his life spanned the time when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. From a marginalized, persecuted sect, Christianity suddenly rose to imperial power and had, for the first time, to confront its own unprecedented wealth. Chrysostom preached about the wealth of his fellow bishops, wealth they had acquired through no apparent merit of their own — just like the wealthy landowners in our simulation. Chance had favored them.

Often we hear (or perhaps even say) of individuals in our own day, similarly fortunate, that “God was good to them.” Or we count our comfortable affluence as a “blessing.” But what kind of God could we have in mind? Is God less good — even mean-spirited — to others less fortunate? While chance seems deeply embedded in God’s creation, God’s goodness needs to be sought, not in the caprice of Lady Luck, but at a more fundamental level — in what God’s intentions might be in setting up a universe that operates in this way.

Chrysostom studied the scriptures deeply and pondered the uneven distribution of wealth he observed around him. He did not so much object to the wealth of his brother prelates itself. In fact, he appears to have thought that the affluent needed special pastoral attention. (So much was at stake!) But he objected to how his fellow bishops used their wealth. They built palaces for themselves, wore luxurious clothes and feasted sumptuously, while the homeless feasted sumptuously, while the homeless

For the great doctors of the early church, who first articulated the church’s long tradition of social justice teaching, to die wealthy, when those around you are in need, is to die a failure.

poor of their cities starved. Chrysostom thought that wrong, and his sermons to that effect ultimately got him martyred.

Chrysostom came to the conclusion that, ultimately, in God’s eyes, we humans did not have real ownership of anything. God retained title, as it were. All we had was the use of what we were given. How we used it made a difference — a life and death difference in fact. St. Basil the Great, writing at about the same time, reached exactly the same conclusion. “The bread you keep belongs to the hungry. ... The gold you have hidden in the ground belongs to the needy.” For the great doctors of the early church, who first articulated the church’s long tradition of social justice teaching, to die wealthy, when those around you are in need, is to die a failure. In one of the strongest statements in the Gospels, Jesus called such an individual a fool (Luke 12:20).

However, Chrysostom did not leap to the simplistic conclusion that one should simply give everything away and own nothing. To whom or what should the surplus be given? What assurance could one have that it would be used wisely? Would that be prudent stewardship or abandonment of responsibility? Chrysostom accepted the apparently inescapable inequalities, and saw them instead as opportunity. With his characteristic oratorical skills, he asked his hearers to ponder the art of a fine cabinetmaker or goldsmith, and to reflect on the effort, experience and skill that go into excelling at such crafts. How difficult it was to be really good at them! But the hardest skill of all to learn, John said, was the right use of wealth.

While wealth and its uses were new problems for the late 4th century Christian church, the Jewish tradition in which Christianity was rooted had addressed this issue centuries earlier.

According to the laws of Moses, as recorded in the book of Leviticus, God said quite explicitly that the land was His alone. To deal with what we now can see as chance effects, jubilee years were to be scheduled every 50 years. At the jubilee, all loans were to be forgiven and all land returned to the original family owners. The slate was to be
wiped clean and everyone was to get a fresh start.

One is struck by the fact that such an arrangement is precisely the only way out of the quandary presented by our computer simulation. Clearly, there was enough abundance in our simulated land for everybody, just as there had been in the original land “flowing with milk and honey.” Chance mixed with human factors — but chance in any event — led some to be lacking and others to have a surplus. If, when debts became unpayable, they were forgiven, then the unevenness of resource distribution would be reduced. Some inequality would remain. Chance alone would see to that. But now a floor would exist below which no one should be driven.

The more enlightened regimes of the ancient world also had a concern for the poor. But in one crucial respect, Israel was different and unique. For the Jewish people, under God’s rule, there simply were to be no poor. Scholars tell us that there is little evidence that the Israelites followed this Levitical mandate, or certainly not very systematically. In fact, there is some evidence that, as jubilee years approached, the doctors of the law worked out ways around the command — waivers of jubilee rights, in effect — simply to ensure that business would go on without interruption. (Who would lend on the eve of a jubilee, with the certainty that the note would be torn up soon?) Still, keeping this law on the books, despite poor compliance, expressed for the Jews, and it expressed for Chrysostom and Basil, what God was like and what God expected of His people.

Our simulation in which, while some were unfortunate, everyone was equally able and equally deserving, is of course far from the real world. But it shows clearly that, under the best conditions imaginable, serious inequalities in access to resources will inevitably develop. Our real world conditions are not the best imaginable. Real people are both industrious and lazy, lucky and unlucky. Chrysostom and Basil had no illusions about human nature; nor had the authors of the Torah. Still, it seemed clear to them that those who have surpluses have them mainly, if not solely, to use for those who have need, and that, to some extent, this must be without regard to merit.

It is not immediately clear how to go about this sharing. John Rawls has argued, in his theory of justice, that the principal goal of societal organization must be the overcoming of this natural lottery and its accompanying uneven distribution of needed resources. Can feasible preventive measures be effectively institutionalized at an organized societal level? What experiences have we to fall back upon? Any systemization of forgiveness of debt when it becomes unbearable — the only solution possible in our computer model and the one mandated by the Torah — would generally be accounted explicitly socialistic. Despite its appeal on ethical grounds, socialism has generally had a dismal record. The collapse of the Eastern bloc economies in recent years does little to recommend socialism as a solution although that collapse may be more a failure of central planning than of socialism per se. The modern state of Israel was set up as an explicitly socialist economy, though it ultimately shifted to a modified market capitalism. The extensive social safety nets of the northern European nations have been justly criticized for their depersonalization of the needed sharing.

On reflection, socialism seems concerned mostly with how the pie is divided, not about making the pie bigger. That is where socialist economies often falter, and where capitalism excels. Our computer simulation involved what was essentially a fixed pie, and included no provision for generating new resources from its surplus. A 40 percent population increase over the years would have wiped out the surplus entirely. Ultimately the economic system, if it is to keep pace with a growing world, has to create a bigger pie.

Capitalism may well be the best system we know for that purpose. Experience teaches us that incentive generates new resources better than does commitment to the commonweal. Whether that reflects human nature or original sin, I leave to others to decide. However, incentive, of its very nature, leads to bigger slices of pie for some.

On reflection, socialism seems concerned mostly with how the pie is divided, not about making the pie bigger. That is where socialist economies often falter, and where capitalism excels. Our computer simulation involved what was essentially a fixed pie, and included no provision for generating new resources from its surplus. A 40 percent population increase over the years would have wiped out the surplus entirely. Ultimately the economic system, if it is to keep pace with a growing world, has to create a bigger pie.

Capitalism may well be the best system we know for that purpose. Experience teaches us that incentive generates new resources better than does commitment to the commonweal. Whether that reflects human nature or original sin, I leave to others to decide. However, incentive, of its very nature, leads to bigger slices of pie for some. Thomas Aquinas, unable to find a base in natural law for private ownership of resources, nevertheless came down on that side of this issue on the very pragmatic ground that it worked better than the alternative.

But there I must stop. I am a bone biologist, not an economist. Large-scale economic systems are beyond my grasp and certainly beyond my influence. Nevertheless, I cannot take refuge in that incapacity to avoid figuring out the right use of my own modest surplus. What the computer simulation had forced me to confront was what Rawls, and Chrysostom, and the authors of Leviticus had concluded from observation — that the inequalities were inescapable, that at least some of my modest affluence (maybe most) and at least some of your need (maybe most) were due to chance. If, as I believe, there is design behind this inescapable randomness, then one must ask: For what purpose do I have a surplus? (And for what purpose do you have need?) Self-indulgence, for those who are lucky, is out of the question. Jesus’ statement about a camel and the needle’s eye suddenly becomes starkly, literally true. At the same time it also is clear that sharing my surplus ought hardly be considered charity. Rather, it is simply using it for the purpose for which it had been entrusted to me.

In the last analysis, while the inequalities may be inevitable, they are not irremediable. I have a choice in the matter. The problem, of course, lies in knowing what to do. Clearly Chrysostom was right: The correct use of wealth is a hard art to learn.
Islam’s ‘Rogue’ Cousin

By John Calvert, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History
The Sept. 11 attacks on America led those who tried to make sense of the tragedy to take a fresh look at two documents authored by Osama bin Laden.

Surely these would supply insight into the worldview and immediate motives of the perpetrators.

The first of these, the 22-page “Declaration of War,” written in 1996, explains bin Laden’s views toward the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia, the land of his birth. The presence of American troops in the Saudi kingdom, the statement reads, amounts to a military occupation, the ultimate goal of which is to spread “disbelief” (kufr) in the “land of the two sanctuaries,” i.e., in the land of the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina.

The statement goes on to relate how the Saudi government and the religious scholars who support it are complicit in this American purpose. By opening Saudi Arabia to “Zionist-Crusader” forces and by choosing not to implement a complete and authentic version of the Sharia (Islamic law), the ruling family cannot be regarded as bona fide members of the worldwide community of believers. They ought, therefore, to be resisted, bin Laden continues, in the name of true Islam.

The second document, a self-styled religious decree in the name of the “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders,” targets the kingdom’s U.S. “protectors.” The killing of Americans and their allies, it declares, is an “individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible.”

Bin Laden does not spell out in either of these documents an overarching strategic goal. Some have suggested that by calling for attacks upon U.S. citizens, bin Laden hoped to provoke a massive American response, which in turn would galvanize the world’s Muslim population against Western power and influence in the Middle East and South Asia.

Although the U.S. campaign against Al Qaeda and its Taliban supporters in Afghanistan has proven to be effective and relatively measured, rash American action against Iraq, Iran or any other Muslim country may yet provoke the “clash of civilizations” sought by bin Laden and the (Al) Qaeda network. The growing consensus in the Muslim world (and elsewhere) is that the U.S. “War on Terror” is providing cover for a more concerted projection of American power in the Middle East.

The Islamist Challenge

Most observers would concur that the ideas expressed in bin Laden’s documents bear little relation to the understandings of Islam held by over a billion adherents of the faith worldwide. Although many Muslims share bin Laden’s contempt for U.S. policy in the Middle East, especially as regards the issues of Palestinian self-determination and the sanctions regime on Iraq, very few are willing to endorse Al Qaeda’s violent methods of response. One cannot deny that handfuls of West Bank Palestinians, smarting under Israeli occupation, celebrated the Sept. 11 attack as a justified chastisement of American policy.

But perhaps more representative of Muslim opinion were the candlelight vigils of sympathy for the victims of Sept. 11 held in Tehran and other Middle Eastern cities, and the vociferous denunciations of the terror that rained down from prominent centers of Islamic learning, including the Azhar, the venerable mosque-university in Cairo.

Osama bin Laden in a 1998 photo ... His belief that an irreligious Western-dominated political and cultural world order is bent on spreading “disbelief” in Muslim societies is rooted in radical Islamic ideologies that date back a generation.

Thousands of devout Muslims congregate at the Jama Masjid mosque in New Delhi for the end of Ramadan. Islam is the world’s fastest-growing religion with some 1.2 billion adherents.

Jihad: Distorted for Terror

ji•had — [Arabic, jiha•d] to “strive” in the way of God.

Most Muslim religious scholars who interpret Islamic law speak of a “greater” and “lesser” jihad. The “greater” jihad is the individual struggle to become a better Muslim. The “lesser” jihad is the effort to spread Islam in the world and defend it from its enemies. These religious scholars have regulated the conduct of the “lesser” jihad: Women, children and seniors may not be harmed, and plants and property may not be destroyed. Since the 1970s, however, Islamist militants have used this term — jihad — to justify their terrorist activities.
One of the world’s largest — and fastest growing — religions with some 1.2 billion adherents. It’s estimated that 20 percent of the world’s population is Muslim — ranking it second only to Christianity, whose estimated 2 billion followers comprise about one-third of the world’s population. Muslims believe in one God, Allah, as revealed through the seventh century prophet Muhammad. Muslims believe that Muhammad was the last in a series of prophets, which include Moses, Jesus and other figures of significance to Jews and Christians. The Qur’an is the scripture of Islam and is believed by Muslims to be the exact and unaltered word of God.

About 18 percent of Muslims live in the Arab world; the world’s largest Muslim community is in Indonesia; substantial parts of Asia and most of Africa are Muslim, while significant minorities are to be found in Central Asia, North and South America, and Europe.

The major sectarian division in Islam is between Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims. The split arose in the seventh century over the question of who should lead the Islamic community after the prophet Muhammad. Shi’ites believe in the legitimacy of the Imams, religio-political leaders in the line of Ali and Fatima, while Sunnis have a more inclusive understanding of leadership.

**Sunni**

The largest Islamic sect, comprising about 85 percent of all Muslims. It is the majority religion in most Arab nations, as well as in Turkey and Afghanistan.

**Shi’ite**

The second-largest Islamic sect, numbering about 20 million. Most live in Iran and Iraq.

**Wahhabi**

A conservative subgroup within the Sunni branch of Islam, most dominant in Saudi Arabia. This form of Islam was spread by Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud, the founder of the Saudi state, in the early decades of the 20th century. It favors strict interpretation of Islamic law. It is the form of Islam in which Osama bin Laden grew up.

**Islamism**

A movement within Islam to increase the role of religion in Muslim societies that are viewed as increasingly secular and Westernized. A few radical Islamic groups, such as Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda network, seek these changes through violence — specifically targeting what they believe are secular oppressors.
Westerners, too, have been careful to make appropriate distinctions. It is telling that North American and European academics have had relatively little trouble convincing their largely untutored audiences that bin Laden “hijacked” Islam for purposes that were utterly depraved. Such assessments of Al Qaeda’s motives are heartening, especially when measured against Western attitudes of fear and loathing toward Islam, which ever since the Crusades have been the norm.

Yet to regard bin Laden and his associates as aberrations bereft of any connection to Islam is both to deny their self-understanding and their linkage to history. Rather, far from being a complete anomaly, bin Laden’s ideological vision must be seen as an extreme manifestation of a particular Muslim response to the Western-dominated political and cultural order of the world. In academic and, increasingly, journalistic circles, this response is known as Islamism.

Islamism confounds easy description. In its most basic sense, it may be defined as Islam interpreted as ideology to support political and social activism. Against the Western hegemony of what constitutes the “good life,” Islamists represent Islam not in terms of privatized religion, but as a comprehensive way of life concerned with all aspects of spiritual, political, social and cultural existence.

Islamists decry Muslims who focus on the devotional practices of individual and community-oriented piety at the expense of seeking significant social and political change. Muslims, according to Islamists, are obliged to challenge the rulerships that have governed their societies since, in some cases, the 19th century. Islamists accuse these rulerships, whether monarchies, republics or military dictatorships, of compromising the Sharia in the name of Western-inspired secular legal codes and, more generally, of imposing Western cultural values on the populations they govern. Moreover, they accuse their governments of being under the thumbs of the Great Powers, especially the United States.

Feeling their Islamic identity to be at risk, the Islamists seek to fortify it by selectively retrieving doctrines, beliefs and practices from Islam’s sacred past. In a pragmatic spirit, Islamist thinkers modify and craft these retrieved elements in ways that purportedly meet the needs of the present, particularly as regards matters of social justice and integrity in public affairs. According to Islamists, once the Qur’anic principles have been implemented in their entirety, Muslim societies will find their God-given potential and slough off the defeatism and malaise that have plagued them over a century. Strengthened thus, the Islamic countries of the world will take their place among the developed nations and be a shining example of modernity imbued with spiritual values.

Since the middle decades of the 20th century, Islamists have employed two basic strategies to bring about their moral revolution. The most widespread and pervasive of these is the effort to build an Islamic society from the ground up through processes of political advocacy and social mobilization. Here the aim is to win the hearts and minds of the majority population in order to pressure the government to accede to the Islamists’ demands.

What Islamist organizations have done in countries such as Egypt and Pakistan is to develop networks of Islamic institutions, including schools, hospitals and charities, which exist independently of the state and make available to the people services that the government is either unable or unwilling to provide. In some countries, Islamists have been allowed to contest elections, though it is doubtful whether any government in the Muslim world
would fully and without hesitation recognize an Islamist electoral victory. When, for example, the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria appeared set to win that country’s elections, the government called a halt to the proceedings, triggering a grassroots Islamist revolt — which is still in progress.

The Islamists representative of this gradualist approach are pervasive in the Middle East and in South and Southeast Asia and may be compared in terms of their ethical demeanor and tactical orientation to elements within the Christian evangelical tradition, which have organized politically in the United States. Both are interested in cleansing the modern state of political corruption and individual selfishness through the provision of scriptural principles.

The second strategy, which in terms of adherents is much smaller, eschews peaceful change from below and adopts instead the model of violent revolution. Here the aim is to knock out the government and impose an Islamic state upon society from above. The Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, in which the Western-supported shah was overthrown and replaced with the spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini, is an obvious example of this tendency in a Shi’ite Muslim setting. But there are important sources of revolutionary inspiration within the more widespread Sunni Muslim tradition, as well. In mid-20th century Egypt, the influential Islamist ideologue Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) wrote that the refusal of the secular governments of the Arab world to fashion polities based solely upon Qur’anic principles qualified them as usurpers of God’s sovereignty. In Qutb’s view, submission to the supervision of secular authorities and humanly devised institutions meant surrender to the whims and selfish interests of imperfect worldly forces. Qutb underscored his denial of the legitimacy of the Arab regimes by equating their moral universe with that of the Jahiliyya, the condition of disbelief and cultural barbarism characteristic of the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula prior to the advent of the prophet Muhammad.

Qutb explained how the restitution of God’s sovereignty was dependent on the formation of a vanguard of believers who would remove themselves mentally from the corrupting influences of the surrounding culture. Once prepared, the vanguard would then strive to realize manifestly the Islamic conception of life. Qutb was not explicit as to what form this “striving” should take, but there was no doubt in the minds of his disciples that it required violent confrontation with the state. Throughout the 1970s, ’80s and ’90s, underground groups such as the Islamic Jihad, of which the (Al) Qaeda lieutenant, Ayman al-Zawahiri was a member, waged a deadly campaign of terror and assassination against the regimes of Egyptian presidents Anwar Sadat and Husni Mubarak.

**Jihad in Afghanistan**

Another source of Sunni radicalism emerged from within the distinctive...
milieu of Saudi Arabian Wahhabism, a conservative, puritanical interpretation of Islam, which was spread forcefully throughout the Arabian Peninsula in the 1910s and 1920s by Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud, the founder of the Saudi state. Against the tendency of religious tolerance and accommodation held by the majority of Muslims, the Wahhabis drew a sharp line of distinction between those who upheld what they considered to be the true and authentic understanding of Islam and “iniquitous” others, including Shi’ites, Sufis (Islamic mystics), and “infidel” Christians and Jews. As the Saudi state consolidated, its ruling house abandoned the movement’s original penchant for territorial conquest in favor of more peaceful methods of propagation.

Beginning in the 1960s, the Saudi royal family actively propagated this conservative brand of Islam throughout the Middle East and South Asia in order to counter Arab socialism and, after 1979, the spread of the Iranian Revolution; the latter sought to maximize its influence in the area. In Pakistan, Wahhabism found favor especially among the equally conservative school of the Deoband, whose core doctrines were in many respects similar. Yet there lurked the possibility that circumstances might reawaken the Wahhabi discourse of opposition and assertiveness, even against the House of Saud. Thus, for example, charges of corruption against the ruling house prompted a group of fiery zealots led by Juhayman al-Utaybi briefly to take over the Mecca mosque in 1979.

Afghanistan provided opportunities for Wahhabi Puritanism and Egyptian-style Islamism to commingle. Beginning in 1980, the Saudis used the social movements of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Pakistan’s Jama’at-e Islami as conduits to funnel money and Wahhabi ideas into Afghanistan. Wahhabi fighters from Saudi Arabia linked up with Arab warriors from Egypt, Algeria and Palestine. Increasingly stymied in their home countries by police action, these latter considered Afghanistan an appropriate and inviting location to engage the principle of jihad, literally, a “striving” in the way of God. The merging of conservative and radical elements was particularly evident in the Islamist organization Hizb-i Islami, headed by the Afghan commander Gulbidin Hikmatyar, which took much of its ideological inspiration from Qutb but was also one of the chief beneficiaries of Saudi money and doctrine.

The mix of Puritanism and jihad was potent. For the fighters in Afghanistan, the war was a source of heroism, solidarity and total devotion to Islam as defined in terms of the Sharia. Many were already aware that the struggle against the Soviet army was a school in which they might learn the violent techniques needed to topple their governments at home.

The Afghan war was the defining experience of Osama bin Laden’s life. A native Saudi who grew up in the devotional environment of Wahhabism, bin Laden was one of the first Arabs to join the jihad. He saw his role there as facilitator and spent his personal fortune to build roads and tunnels for the mujahideen and provide pensions to the families of the fallen. He is reputed to have been involved in at least one major battle. His personal piety and willingness to sacrifice comfort and wealth for the cause of Islam endeared him to his fellows.

After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, Osama bin Laden returned home in triumph with other Saud veterans. When the Ba’thist regime in Iraq invaded Kuwait a year later, he approached the House of Saud and offered to raise a new army of believers to resist Saddam Hussein. When the ruling house rejected the offer, bin Laden became increasingly alienated from the elite social stratum of his birth. His loathing for the Saudi ruling family deepened when it allowed the stationing of U.S. troops in the kingdom during and after the war. In bin Laden’s mind, in aiding and abetting the U.S. “occupation” of the kingdom, the House of Saud, whose legitimacy derived from its protection of Wahhabism, had entered the circle of iniquity.

In his criticisms of the Saudi royal family, bin Laden had at his disposal both the articulations of anathema and the personal piety that had endeared him to his fellows.
developed by Sayyid Qutb and the traditions of rebuke of the very Wahhabi tradition in which he had been raised. Yet while bin Laden was willing, in the finest tradition of Wahhabi dissent, to brand the ruling family as disbelievers, he chose instead to attack the alleged American puppet master operating from behind the throne. In so doing he reversed the order theorized by other extremist groups, which advocated as a first step the eradication of the perceived corruption at home. According to the standard view, the Western “other” should be engaged only once the Muslim world had been strengthened by the creation of a transnational Islamic state. Bin Laden, on the other hand, appears to have desired global confrontation sooner rather than later.

**Theater of Violence**

With this background in place, it becomes possible to address the meaning the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks had for their perpetrators. Not much is known at this point about these young men. Such evidence as has been gathered suggests that many of them lived marginal lives both in their home countries and while in the United States. The social science literature on political violence tells us that such a profile is perhaps to be expected of terrorists.

But others, especially ringleaders such as Muhammad Atta, appear to have come from backgrounds of relative affluence, were educated, and were savvy about the Western environments in which they lived, whether in the United States or Germany. Wearing Tommy Hilfiger jeans and at home in the Internet cafes of Florida, Atta and his companions appeared to those who had contact with them as “cool wired types.”

Wearing Tommy Hilfiger jeans and at home in the Internet cafes of Florida, Atta and his companions appeared to those who had contact with them as “cool wired types.” Almost certainly this “coolness” was in part an effort to blend into the general environment in which they
Islam’s ‘Rogue’ Cousin

operated. We know, for example, that prior to embarking upon their mission in the West, the lead terrorists had been distinguished by their beards and zealous adherence to the example of the prophet Muhammad. What they all held in common was a fervent dislike of the United States and of Western civilization in general, which they defined, in common with other Islamists, as a different and competing alter ego; that is, they saw their virtuous Islamic “selves” pitted against the nefarious Western “other.”

A clue to Muhammad Atta’s outlook may be discerned in his master’s thesis in architecture, which he submitted to the Hamburg Technical University. In his study, Atta lamented the fate of the ancient Islamic city of Aleppo in Syria, which in his own day was under assault by concrete, Western style skyscrapers. In Atta’s mind, the symbols of the new Aleppo bespoke the spiritual emptiness of the West.

The hijackers saw much of the United States during the months they were residents. They viewed the country not with fresh eyes, but through the filter of a preconceived vision. In Muhammad Atta’s case, this vision appears to have jelled in Hamburg, where he became a regular visitor to the al-Tawhid mosque and met ideologically committed veterans of the Afghan jihad. Living outside of his native language in a foreign country, Atta found solace at the mosque but also a cache of ideas that enabled him to transcend his alienation.

Qutb, whom he assuredly read, may not have sanctioned the methods of extreme violence employed by the terrorists, but he would have had little trouble understanding the perverse logic of their purpose. For in the Sept. 11 attacks the hijackers sought to underscore the same point that Qutb and other extremist Islamists had made: that the West and its regional surrogates constitute a conceptual realm of irreligion and vice that ought to be resisted in the name of God.

They defined their actions as the ultimate act of jihad, which called into stark relief the chasm in their minds between the forces of virtue and disbelief. The attacks can be regarded as a genre of “performance violence,” spectacular acts of carnage and death, designed to have a searing effect on the consciousness of their television audiences, which in the case of Sept. 11 numbered in the many millions. Indeed, this reading of the events is confirmed by bin Laden, who related in a videotape seized in the course of the anti-Taliban-Al Qaeda campaign how the hijackers “said in deeds in New York and Washington, speeches that overshadowed all other speeches made anywhere in the world.” Here is dramatic testimony of how the events were understood by the perpetrators themselves, as metaphors for the confrontation between an absolute good threatened with destruction by its absolute opposite.
Armed with a list of 150 Omaha community leaders, the Rev. Carl M. Reinert, S.J., in 1950 set out to rebuild a university much as many parts of the world were rebuilding following World War II. The Ignatian soldier mapped plans for a series of enhancements to the campus that could be characterized as the Reinert Renaissance.

Reinert scheduled five meetings a day with area corporate leaders until his initial list was exhausted. The 37-year-old former high school principal and new president of Creighton told the business community the University did not have assets beyond the $3 million from the original Creighton endowment. By 1960, he had raised $2 million from the Omaha area and $1 million nationally.

Reinert spent nearly 30 years as Creighton’s premier builder, president, vice president for University Relations, president of the Creighton Development Foundation and as a corporate director. In those three decades, the results he achieved were nothing short of miraculous.

His building projects included Brandeis Student Center, Deglman, Gallagher, Swanson and Kiewit residence halls, the Alumni Memorial Library, the Eppley College of Business Administration, a central air conditioning plant, the three Criss buildings and Ahmanson Law Center. During that time, approximately 100 courses were added and faculty salary increases amounted to 50 percent.

Former U.S. Secretary of Energy Charles W. Duncan Jr. said Reinert “could head any corporation in America” and the Creighton Jesuit community called him “the second founder of the University.”

To pay tribute to this great visionary, the University will name its lifetime giving donor recognition society the Rev. Carl M. Reinert, S.J., Society. Within the society, the various recognition levels will include: Patron’s Circle ($25,000-$99,999); Benefactor’s Circle ($100,000-$249,999); President’s Circle ($250,000-$499,999); Circle of 1878 ($500,000-$999,999); and Cornerstone Society ($1 million and above).

The Society recognizes an individual’s lifetime giving to the University for any and all purposes.

The day Reinert was appointed Creighton University president was the very day he arrived in Omaha. When he got to campus, he realized his arrival had preceded the official announcement. “He didn’t want to show up ahead of time,” said the Rev. Jack Zuercher, S.J., “so he went to a movie.” He came back to campus for dinner where they read the announcement.

Reinert was well-known for his ease around people. “When you went in a room, people knew him,” Zuercher said. “He was very present among the civic leaders. It was one of the ways he was able to get money to the campus. He was both a charming person and a leader. You could pick him out in a crowd.”

The Rev. James Quinn, S.J., said Reinert raised money at a time when the University was desperate for additions and renovations. “Fr. Reinert felt personally responsible for the University. We hadn’t looked for money. He began to build facilities we sorely needed. He put up the residence halls.”

Reinert’s fine personality, interest in people and personal generosity stand out in Quinn’s mind more than 20 years after Reinert’s death at age 67.

The Rev. Paul C. Reinert, S.J., who was then chancellor of Saint Louis University, and the brother of Carl, spoke at the dedication of the new wing of the Reinert...

“According to Carl Reinert’s set of values,” Fr. Paul Reinert said, “the externals of university life — buildings, money, maintenance, etc., were only a necessary precondition for an environment in which caring faculty and staff could provide young minds and hearts with the opportunity to grow into their best personal selves.”

Echoes of Reinert’s years at Creighton are everywhere on campus, from the library named for him to recollections of faculty, donors and alumni who considered him a friend. Perhaps his work resonates most loudly in the division of University Relations. Among the positions Reinert held was vice president of the office.

“All of us are the beneficiaries of Fr. Reinert’s vision and what he did,” said Mike Leighton, BA’70, vice president for University Relations. “He laid the foundation for modern, efficient alumni relations and fund raising. He was a tireless, effective leader.”

In his early days at Creighton, Leighton worked in the Admissions Office, and he would try to synchronize his travel calendar with Reinert’s schedule.

“I learned what passion and compassion were all about from traveling with him,” Leighton said. “He had compassion for people and a passion for Creighton. He believed the University was a great place, and he saw it every day in the people who graduated from here. He had confidence in the University and he instilled it in others.”

Reinert’s compassion for people translated to a welcoming environment in the classroom with a focus on gender equity and multiculturalism.

“He loomed large at Creighton and in Omaha,” said Eileen Lieben, Creighton University dean of women emerita. “He was good to everybody and everybody who knew him respected him. I would say that he was pro-woman, not in the sense of the women’s movement, but he was very supportive of women in the classroom at a time when many people were not.”

In 1962, the Omaha Chapter of B’nai B’rith presented its Americanism Citation for Meritorious Service to Reinert. In a speech to the group, Reinert said, “Honesty, more than humility, prompts me to accept this, not only in my own name, but in the name of the University I represent. For just as the man may shape an institution, so does this institution mold the man.”

At the time of his death, Reinert was the recipient of nearly every community honor that could be bestowed upon an Omahan.

If you would like more information about the Rev. Carl M. Reinert, S.J., Society, please contact the Creighton University Office of Development at (402) 280-2740 or (800) 334-8794.

This photo was taken shortly before Reinert’s arrival on campus. Under Reinert’s direction, the campus view would change dramatically.
Family Establishes Scholarship in Memory of Parents

A new Creighton School of Medicine scholarship fund in the amount of $125,000 is a lasting tribute to the parents of Adam, MD’53, and Phyllis Zoucha. The Zoucha and Kuehner Family Endowed Scholarship financially assists Creighton medical school students while it perpetually honors Adam and Phyllis Zoucha’s parents — Adam and Mary Zoucha and Walter and Julia Kuehner.

The elder Zoucha couple raised eight children. The Kuehners had five children.

While the Zoucha children spoke Polish and English at their home in Cedar Rapids, Neb., Adam Zoucha recalls his older brother and sister learning English so they could be admitted to grade school.

Walter Kuehner was an accountant for the Army Corps of Engineers. Tight finances during the Depression prevented four of the older Kuehner children from attending college, so they were especially proud when their youngest child began his post-secondary education.

“Our parents believed in education,” Zoucha said. “This is a great way to pay back the encouragement they gave us.”

Zoucha used the GI Bill as the primary way to finance his Creighton education, but he said he is aware many students struggle with the costs of medical school today. By making the gift, he and his wife hope to encourage additional scholarship endowment contributions to Creighton. “We want this gift to motivate other medical school graduates to do something about medical students’ financial hardships, too,” he said.

Zoucha is fondly remembered by many Omaha residents for his thoughtfulness and caring professionalism. His clinic served South Omaha families for 43 years, providing medical services for three generations of residents. His wife hailed from South Omaha, which led Zoucha to establish his practice there. He enjoyed the neighborhood’s eclectic blend of ethnic backgrounds, eventually evolving to today’s Latino population. Later in life, Julia Kuehner, Zoucha’s mother-in-law, worked in the clinic.

“I thought I would practice in a small community,” Zoucha said, “but once I practiced in South Omaha, I never entertained another thought about it.”

From a modest beginning, Zoucha’s practice grew to become a familiar fixture in the neighborhood. A number of remodeling projects over the years expanded the clinic.

Zoucha retired from his medical practice in 1997. He and his wife spend their time traveling to visit their five children, playing golf, working in their yard and garden and going on bus tours and cruises.

“Creighton was good to me,” Zoucha said. “Because of the education it provided, I enjoyed a fulfilling career. I have a good work ethic, and it was a pleasure to care for my patients.”

Students Answer the Call to Help Meet Annual Fund Goals

Jacinthe “Jay” Ventura, BA’01, reached her goals while she was at Creighton. She received grants to study psychology and will start medical school in 2003. This year, she plans to perform research in Chicago, her hometown, using contacts she made at the University.

Because Creighton helped Ventura reach her goals, she decided to help the University reach its Annual Fund goal.

In the year Ventura spent contacting alumni during the University’s Annual Fund phonathon, she raised more than $50,000 for general operating expenses at Creighton. Gifts to the University’s Annual Fund equate to a yearly subsidy of about $750 per student.

“As I make calls, I learn how much the alumni love this school, and not only by the amount of money they donate,” Ventura said. “Once they understand I’m a student, they want to hear all about campus, professors they know, new buildings and the athletics program.”

With the help of students like Ventura, the Annual Fund raises 40 percent more money today than 10 years ago.

In 1991, the fund raised $3.34 million. In 2001, it raised $4.68 million.

Donors include members of the Edward and Mary Lucretia Creighton
Is a Charitable Gift Annuity Right for You?

By Steve Scholer, JD’79
Director of Estate & Trust Services

Diversify! How many times in the last nine months have you heard or read about the benefits of a diversified investment portfolio? Mutual fund companies, stock analysts and financial commentators have again and again extolled the virtues and prudence of having a portfolio that has a balance of equities and fixed income investments.

There are numerous ways to diversify your savings. Investing in bonds and real estate may be the most popular ways to diversify. But there may be another, less well-known option worthy of your consideration.

Have you ever considered funding a charitable gift annuity as a way to diversify your portfolio, receive an immediate charitable contribution income tax deduction and provide for a future gift to Creighton?

The gift annuity has been part of the charitable giving landscape since 1843 when the American Bible Society agreed to pay a benefactor a lifetime annuity in exchange for a gift.

Creighton’s annuity program is not as old, but the University has offered charitable gift annuities for close to 50 years. Each charitable gift annuity is a separate contract between the donor and the University. The contract obligates the University to pay a fixed lifetime rate of return to one or more named beneficiaries. The annuity rate is based on the age of each beneficiary on the day the annuity is funded. The older the annuitant, the higher the rate.

In addition to fixed income diversification, the creation of a charitable gift annuity entitles the donor to an immediate charitable contribution income tax deduction (see Table 1). While the deduction is not 100 percent of the amount transferred to Creighton, it is usually 25 to 50 percent of the initial amount.

For some, taxable income often generated by bond investments is a deterrent to diversifying their portfolio. To address this issue, Creighton offers a deferred charitable gift annuity. This option allows for a donor to deposit funds today and receive an immediate charitable income tax contribution deduction, but to delay the start of the lifetime income payments until a specified date in the future.

As illustrated in Table 2, the longer a donor defers payment, the greater the lifetime annual annuity rate and the larger the immediate charitable contribution income tax deduction will be.

If you would like additional information on how you can “diversify” through the Creighton University charitable gift annuity program and support the continued success of the University, please call the Office of Estate and Trust Services at (402) 280-2885 or (800) 334-8794, or e-mail me at sscholer@creighton.edu. If you would like to write, the address is 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Annuity Rate</th>
<th>Deduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>$2,665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>$3,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>$4,496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Annuity Rate</th>
<th>Deduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45 deferred to 75</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>$6,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 deferred to 75</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>$5,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 deferred to 75</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>$5,462</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Last December, I visited Israel for a week with 500 American Jews. The editors of Creighton University Magazine asked me to reflect on the trip. As you read this, remember that I am not an expert in the history of the Middle East conflict, nor am I a professor of theology, economics, political science, international affairs or sociology. I’m just a typical American of the Jewish faith who is befuddled by the morass in the Holy Land, and I wanted to see things for myself. And what I learned about life for Israelis and Palestinians deeply troubled me.

My observations from one week in Israel are culled from presentations of officials and army generals, as well as from street discussions with Israelis and Palestinians. Almost everyone I heard said the long-term outlook is optimistic, but in the short term it’s pessimistic. What a Jewish thing to say! I could almost hear my dear Aunt Anna, or even Tevye the Milkman, say the same thing. We heard this many times, that this will be like the Cold War with the Russians, lasting 20 or 30 or 40 years until a new generation becomes leaders and people are simply tired of fighting. It’s a war of attrition — who will give in first? Israelis suffer death and terror and economic slowdown; Palestinians suffer joblessness, despair and hunger. There is no good way out of the cycle, and it’s clear to all that some factions of the PLO see violence as part of the peace process. One speaker called it “instability as a strategy.” And you know what? Everyone I talked to said, “Well, I don’t have an answer.”

The media suggests, “If the occupation ends, peace will come.” But it is not that simple — it is so much more complex. Eighteen months ago, the majority of Israelis were willing to trade land for peace. At the close of the Clinton presidency, after the Camp David discussions fell apart and the phantom intifada, with its purely terroristic goal, started, the majority of Israelis changed their position. There won’t be war, but there won’t be peace either. There is no military solution to this problem of terrorists; and there is no government agenda right now except for one: protect citizens and punish terrorists. It’s clear that the majority of Israelis dislike Ariel Sharon, but for now, they support his policies. Now Israelis have “a confusing reality.” And the sad thing is that much of the business of Israel has slowed or stopped.

Soldiers and government leaders were brutally honest with us. They admitted Israeli mistakes. Israel, speakers said, has simply failed to notice the misery and despair that was created by the economy over the past eight years in the West Bank. Israeli behavior has not been perfect. One speaker said, “Occupation corrupts the Israeli morality, it corrupts our Jewish values. And so does war.” A high ranking Army soldier said, “My major responsibility these days is to make sure that my soldiers do not act like animals.” I was astonished to hear such heart-rending admissions, but I knew that you’d never hear that in a briefing in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan or Syria. Yet these words, this public “al chet” (the Jewish version of mea culpa) strangely lifted my soul, knowing that these soldiers, these politicians, these Israelis, these Jews, still cared deeply about the Jewish soul of the State of Israel.

What interested me, as a law professor, was that once you go to Israel, you realize that all the debates in the United States about Mideast history and rules are worthless. I can give you page after page of legal reasons, and I can argue with you for hours, about why Israel can do this or that. But the truth is that there is no black and white in the Mideast, only shades of gray. In the end, the British Mandate in 1922 and U.N. resolutions 181 and 242 and the Geneva Conference of 1949 won’t help achieve peace. The structure of international law is in place — and there are simply realities:

1. Israel exists as a freestanding sovereign nation.
2. There are three million Palestinians living in the West Bank in miserable conditions.
3. Israel needs peace, and it needs workers — Palestinians need jobs, stability and infrastructure.

The only way that life will improve for Israelis and Palestinians is for them to work together — on security, on the economy, on water rights, on housing, on religious sites, on development of land, and on and on and on. No amount of arguing about what U.N. resolution 242 meant changes any of those realities.

On our last night in Jerusalem, I walked with some despair through the Old City. But I was reminded of Psalm 137: “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither.” And I knew that the City of David, the City of Jesus, the City of Mohammed will one day see peace. I pray to God it is in my lifetime. Amen.
It was a historic season in hilltop hoops.

For the first time in school history, both the men’s and the women’s teams qualified for the NCAA Tournament in the same year — prompting the slogan N-C-Double-Jays.

Along the way, both teams won their respective regular-season and conference tournament championships — the first time in the history of the Missouri Valley Conference that one school has claimed both the men’s and women’s basketball titles.

Creighton coaches Dana Altman and Connie Yori, BA’86, received Coach of the Year honors from the conference for their work guiding the teams.

Junior Kyle Korver and sophomore Christy Neneman were selected as the conference’s Players of the Year, and were named MVP’s of their respective conference tournaments.

The Creighton men finished the season 23-9, including a dramatic last-second double-overtime win in the NCAA’s first round. The Creighton women finished with an equally impressive record of 24-7.

Congratulations to Connie, Dana, Christy and Kyle, and all the players they represent, for an unforgettable season. And thank you to all the Bluejay fans for your terrific support!