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University of Massachusetts at Boston

Volume 10, No. 5

September 28, 1976

International Studies On Death, Dying and Bereavement

Dr. Robert Kastenbaum, Psychology, is the newly elected president of the Division of Adult Development and Aging of the American Psychological Association. Before he had the chance to get the feel of the gavel, however, he was off to Stockholm, Paris, and London to participate in planning three international projects.

In Sweden, the issues centering on life-and-death control in patients with advanced cancer took precedence. In collaboration with the staff of Radiumhemmet, the nation's major cancer treatment and research facility, Dr. Kastenbaum helped to develop plans for a clinical study of direct and indirect suicide and passive and active euthanasia. These sensitive problems will be studied in Stockholm and, if feasible, also in other nations including the United States.

The task in Paris was to help organize a series of international congresses in the broader realm of the human relationship to dying, death, and bereavement. The planning sessions were sponsored by the Institute de Thanatologie, a mostly French scholarly society recently developed to parallel the Institute le Vie. The first Congress has been tentatively scheduled for June, 1978. In the meantime, a book derived from presentations made at the just concluded meetings will be published. According to the host, Biologist M. Marois and his interdisciplinary colleagues, psychosocial work in the area of dying, death, bereavement is much more advanced in the United States as compared with Europe. Nevertheless, scientists and clinicians from around the world can learn from each other on this subject, as already demonstrated by the small, intensive meetings recently completed.

The London project involves a series of books in the area of human development intended for the intelligent layperson, both in Europe and the United States. Work has already started on the first 12 titles, each of which will appear in three languages. This would be followed by a related project to provide audiovideo learning materials to help people apply general psychological principles to "real-life" situations.

Music Department Concert

The Music Department announces a concert of arias and songs to be given by Valerie Walters, mezzo-soprano, accompanied by Gait Sirguy, piano. Ms. Walters holds degrees from the New England Conservatory where she is

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Music Department Concert
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now a member of the vocal department. In the past two years the University of Mass-Boston has been most fortunate in having her services in conjunction with the applied music program, and many music majors have benefited from her teaching. She has sung extensively in the Boston area, both in concert and on stage. She portrayed Susan B. Anthony in Virgil Thompson's opera The Mother Of Us All, for which she won unanimous critical acclaim.

The program, which will be given in the 010 Auditorium on Thursday, September 30 at 12:30 p.m., includes works of Purcell, Handel, Brahms, Strauss, Poulenc, and Canteloube.

Poetry Series

The Library Poetry Series started its second year last Wednesday with a reading by Prof. Ronald Schreiber and Prof. Jeff Schwartz. There will be two more readings this semester, Thadious Davis on Wednesday, October 13, and Cornelia Veenendaal on Wednesday, November 3, and three in the spring semester. The series will once again be held on the tenth floor of the library, and will continue to present, in the main, poets from the UMass-Boston community. Eleven of the poets who read last year are faculty, students, alumni, or staff of UMass-Boston.

Steamer on Judicial Accountability

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Robert J. Steamer is the author of an essay in the Human Life Review, published this month, on "Judicial Accountability." Steamer's article, and those by other scholars, including Archibald Cox, comments on the U.S. Supreme Court's abortion decisions, including the Roe and Doe rulings on January, 1973, and the Danforth 1976 decision.

Beginning with the intentions of the framers of the Constitution in 1787, and noting the evolution through the rhetoric of constitutional adjudication which speaks of "fundamental rights", Steamer says this is a "phenomenon that leads the Court to construct new rights without adequate guidance from constitutional materials and to distort the scope and definition of rights that have claim to protection."

Dr. Steamer says the current period of extended protection of individual rights began in the late 1930s and continues unabated to the current day. "Certainly the Supreme Court is well suited," he says, "to its role as protector of the individual against arbitrary government, but it ought not to assume that the major problems of society are justiciable."

Steamer asks questions about the Court's accountability. "Who should alter the existing law? Majorities democratically chosen or courts? I would argue that unless a principle is clearly stated in the Constitution or may be derived from the Constitution with a sense of logic that the people can respect, the decision is more properly left with representative bodies who can be held to account by their constituents. Furthermore, to make every private desire into a public issue of constitutional law is to trivialize the Constitution and to turn the Supreme Court into a moral and social preceptor. The Court's currency is limited and it should not be squandered in attempts to promote reform which

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Steamer on Judicial Accountability
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failed to muster support in the legislature. If neither reason nor tradition can bring about a broad consensus within which the community agrees to accept, in Allan Bloom's phrase, "a compelling horizon of values," the Supreme Court cannot create it and the Constitution cannot guarantee it."

Violent America

The Law and Justice Program inaugurated its "Violent America: The Crisis in Criminal Justice" lecture series by Former Governor Francis Sargent before a Standing Room Only audience and with a lengthy, interesting question and answer period by students and the speaker.

Sargent charged that the criminal justice system in the nation is not working and that the "System itself, as a System, is a myth."

Although, he said he painted a black picture about crime in the United States and admitted the nation has failed in fighting crime, he said, "we must try harder and more intelligently than we ever have before."

All the pieces of criminal justice--from the victim and offender to the police, courts, and correctional institutions--must work together responsively. "God knows we are not getting anywhere now," he said.

He described the opening lecture as an overview of the problem of violence in our streets, on television, and in athletics. He added he will get into specifics in upcoming lectures.

The next lecture is to be held on Tuesday, October 5, at 12:30 p.m. in the Small Science Auditorium, and the faculty, staff, and students are invited to attend.

Chancellor Golino introduced the former Chief Executive of the Commonwealth, describing him as a "caring and very humane human being."

Prof. Larry Foster, Director of the Law and Justice Program, is directing the lecture series with assistance from the Law and Justice faculty and students.

Fergusson Elected

Prof. Frances Fergusson, Art, has been elected to the Executive Committee of Radcliffe Institute Society of Fellows. The Society of Fellows is the organization which represents all present and former fellows of the Radcliffe Institute. The Executive Committee has planned several events for the year, beginning with an evening on the Massachusetts E.R.A., with Lucy Benson, Mary Bunting, and Barney Frank, October 7, in Longfellow Hall, Radcliffe.

College of Public and Community
Service

In the survey made by Coit Butler at the College of Public and Community Service, based on interviews with 315 continuing students in the Fall semester, it was noted that 73 per cent of the students come from the "target areas of the inner city;" 71 per cent of the students are over 26 years of age, including 15 per cent who are 40 years of age and older.

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Community Service
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The ethnic background of students: 25 per cent Black Americans; 70 per cent White Americans; five per cent Native American Indians, Spanish-Americans, Asian-Americans, and others

New England American
Studies Association

The regional meeting of the New England American Studies Association will be held at the Harbor Campus of UMass-Boston on Saturday, October 2.

Scholars and students from New England colleges and universities devoted to American culture will attend, including those in the fields of history, literature, sociology, anthropology and other disciplines.

Dan H. Fenn Jr., Director of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, will speak on "The Kennedy Library: Programs and Plans." Olaf Hansen, Amerika Institut, University of Frankfurt, will give a paper on "Randolph Bourne and Cultural Politics: Randolph Bourne's Search For a Rational Community."

Prof. Leo Marx of MIT, President of the National American Studies Association, will be the luncheon speaker. He is one of the nation's leading authorities on American civilization.

At the afternoon session Prof. Mary-Anne Ferguson, English Department of UMass-Boston, will speak on "The Myth Of The Pioneer Woman." On the same panel, which is focusing on interdisciplinary teaching, will be Prof. Andrew Buni of Boston College who will speak on "The Boston Experience," and two MIT scholars Michael Folsom and L. L. Bucciarelli who will speak on "Culture and Technology."

Chancellor Carlo Golino will give the opening address.

Preregistrations will be \$3.50, registrations on October 2 will be \$4.00, student fee is \$3.00. These fees include luncheon costs.

Orientation

Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate at the opening of a series of orientation seminars for new students at UMass-Boston on Friday, October 1 at 12:30 in the Science Auditorium. Addresses will be made by university administrators and student governance members, including Chancellor Golino. After presentations are made a reception for the new students will be held at the second floor lounge in Building 020.

Other seminars on various aspects of university life will be held during October and November.

TV Program

Prof. Philip Hart, College of Public and Community Service, will be appearing on WBZ-TV's public affairs program Roots to discuss higher education in general and the CPCS program specifically. The program will air on Saturday, October 2 at 7 p.m., WBZ-TV.

DAEDALUS

The Summer 1976 issue of DAEDALUS, The Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, is devoted to Edward Gibbon and contains two articles translated from The French by Prof. John Anzalone, French. One of these, by the well-known critic Jean Starobinski traces the decline of erudition in an effort to determine "Gibbon's Response To French Thought," and the other by François Furet analysis "Civilization and Barbarism in Gibbon's History."