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on the cover:
Front – Artist’s illustration attempts to capture the anxiety and uncertainty that prompt some youngsters to refuse to go to school.

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Rebecca Mills Named 1994 Nevada Professor of the Year

UNLV education professor Rebecca Mills has been named the 1994 Nevada Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Mills, an associate professor in instructional and curricular studies, joined the UNLV faculty in 1987. While at UNLV, she has taught 14 different undergraduate, master’s-, and doctoral-level courses and has been an active member of numerous professional organizations and university committees.

In a personal statement she was asked to submit with her entry form, Mills attempted to describe her contribution to the field of teaching.

"My students literally fill the classrooms of our nation’s schools. I can think of no more significant contribution to be made as a teacher," she wrote. "I hope that I’ve influenced their thinking about learning, about students, about assessment, about schools, and about themselves.

"Teacher education is the key to educational reform; if our students are challenged to rethink the purposes and methods of schooling, it is likely that schools will become better places. I hope that my students are better teachers themselves because their thinking has been clarified, their successes have been celebrated, and their voices have been heard."

Bank of America Scholarship Established

Bank of America has contributed $400,000 to UNLV to establish a scholarship endowment and a scholarship fund for minority students majoring in business administration.

The goal of the scholarship program is to increase the number of minority students studying business and subsequently increase the pool of qualified minority graduates who will enter the banking industry, according to Bank of America officials.

The donation, which was made through the UNLV Foundation, will be used to create the Bank of America Nevada Scholarship Endowment for the College of Business and Economics and the Bank of America Scholarship Fund.

Up to 25 scholarship awards of $2,000 each will be made annually to full-time undergraduate or graduate business administration majors in the College of Business and Economics. Applicants must be minority students who can demonstrate financial need, have a minimum GPA of 2.5, and are Nevada residents; preference will be given to students from Southern Nevada.

As research projects change, communication and power lines can be changed to support teaching and research facilities. This building greatly expands both teaching and research facilities. It will enable the physics department to accommodate growth in the faculty that will come as the Ph.D. program is fully implemented. It will also meet the increasing demands of students.

On the Superhighway

UNLV’s National Supercomputing Center for Energy and the Environment is making this service available at no cost to the university.

UNLV Magazine and the Alumni News have gone high tech.

Both publications are now available to Internet users on the World Wide Web (http://www.unlv.edu/). Additionally, alumni who wish to submit their Class Notes entries to UNLV Magazine can do so electronically by filling out an online submission form. The form can be accessed through the magazine, which is listed under “UNLV News & Publications online.”

New Bigelow Physics Building Dedicated

UNLV recently dedicated the new 70,000-square-foot Robert L. Bigelow Physics Building, which was completed in 1994 at a cost of more than $11 million.

The building, named for the father of Las Vegas businessman and UNLV donor Robert M. Bigelow, was designed by Holmes Sabatini Associates Architects and built by Sletten Construction of Nevada.

With teaching and research facilities for some 1,000 students and the 18 faculty members of UNLV’s physics department, the structure itself offers symbolic representations of some of the scientific principles and legends of physics.

Because the study of physics depends so heavily on mathematics, the architects incorporated a sine curve into the two-story undulating glass wall that faces the building’s canyon-like courtyard.

Vaulted roofs above laboratories are reminiscent of the Quonset huts that served as research facilities in the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos, N.M., where the atomic bomb was born during World War II.

Vertical banners in red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet — the colors of the visible spectrum — hang from the ceilings of corridors and lobbies throughout the building.

In the courtyard, palm trees march in mathematical progression, beginning at the intersection of the structure’s two wings and leading out into an open plaza. They represent the expanding universe posited by the Big Bang Theory.

Concentric, colored circles in the plaza concrete radiate like the ripples from a pebble dropped into calm water. The first set of rings begins at the “Big Bang” palm trees. The second set starts at an apple tree — representing Sir Isaac Newton’s theory of gravity — planted near the building’s main entrance.

By intention, the building has an industrial, functional look about it. Conduit and wires are exposed at ceiling level — not just in labs, but in hallways, as well. They give the impression of a work in progress, which, in fact, is the case. As research projects change, communication and power lines can be changed to support teaching and research facilities.
McKinley and Weisner Receive Alumni Awards

UNLV graduate Greg McKinley and university supporter Tom Weisner recently received awards from the UNLV Alumni Association. McKinley, a past president of the Alumni Association, received the Outstanding Alumni Award. Weisner, owner of Big Dog's Hospitality Group, received the Silver State Award, a tribute given periodically to someone who is not a UNLV graduate, but who has made outstanding contributions to the community and to UNLV.

McKinley, a partner with Crigan & Pike Insurance, has worked with the Alumni Association for many years, serving as both first and second vice president. He has been an active association committee member as well, raising funds for the Richard Tam Alumni Center and for scholarships. He is also active in several community organizations.

Weisner, a former Clark County commissioner, is involved with many community groups, including the Rotary Club, the Las Vegas Jaycees, and United Way. He worked with the Alumni Association for many years, serving as both first and second vice president. He has been an active association committee member as well, raising funds for the Richard Tam Alumni Center and for scholarships. He is also active in several community organizations.

Friends of UNLV are invited to travel with UNLV alumni to far-away destinations including China, Greece, Italy, and Ireland as part of the 1995 UNLV Alumni Tours program. The 1995 tours begin with a 15-day trip to the People's Republic of China, which will include visits to Shanghai, Hangzhou, Xian, Guilin, and Beijing. A stop at the Great Wall is included in the trip, which begins March 15 and costs $2,800 per person.

In May, an eight-day trip to New York and Boston is planned. It will begin May 16 and will include a guided tour and a Broadway play in New York City, as well as sightseeing in Boston. The tour includes golfing opportunities at Bally Bunion, Lahinch, Royal Dublin, Portmarnock, Royal Portrush, and Royal County Down golf courses. For non-golfers, a deluxe motorcoach tour of the Irish countryside will be provided. The trip begins June 8 and will cost $2,575 per person for golfers or $2,095 for non-golfers.

In July, a Canadian golfing tour to Victoria, British Columbia, has been planned. The tour will include golfing at the Olympic View, Cordova Bay, Victoria, and Royal Colwood golf courses, as well as tours of scenic Victoria. The trip begins July 17 and will cost $1,599 per person for golfers or $1,300 for non-golfers.

The 1995 tours will conclude with a cruise aboard the Pacific Princess to Spain, Monaco, Italy, and Greece. The tour leaves the United States on Aug. 16 and returns Aug. 29. The price per person, which includes airfare, is $3,195.

For more information, call Claude Rand at 895-3621.

Home Away From Home Program Created

Even students happy at college sometimes feel homesick and lonely when they are far away from their families. To help combat that problem, the UNLV Alumni Association has created the Home Away From Home Program to pair students with local families. So far, 75 students have been matched with Southern Nevada families through this innovative program. The families stay in touch with their students by phone and see them at least once a month. Students might join their local families for a meal, a movie, or a holiday celebration.

"It is heartwarming to hear these students tell me time and time again how much this program means," said program coordinator Sharette Flanagan. "Students feel a sense of security knowing that they have families who truly care about them. These families serve as a reminder that even though these students will have left their last home, they will stay with them long after they graduate."

Those interested in volunteering for the program should call Flanagan at 794-2888, assistant program coordinator Sue Godown at 456-4838, or the alumni office at 895-3621.

Public Invited to Join UNLV Alumni Trips

UNLV Alumni Tours program.

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SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

The questions emanating from Yannick St. Jean's area of study — interracial marriage — are probably more abundant than the answers. But that doesn't stop the UNLV sociologist from looking for them.

BY SUZAN DIBELLA

Issues of race consciousness were not of much interest to Yannick St. Jean until the last few years of her graduate education. Up to then, she simply hadn't spent much time thinking about racial issues.

"I was born and raised in Haiti, which is a black country, as you know," says St. Jean, now a UNLV sociology professor. "And we don't place that much importance on race."

She went on to live in both Canada and France, where, similarly, little emphasis was placed on skin color. Even after she moved to Texas to work on her bachelor's and master's degrees, her academic interests led her elsewhere.

But then St. Jean began her research for her dissertation, focusing on the goals and aspirations of black middle-class Americans. She was overwhelmed at what she found as she examined 209 interviews from a national study of that group.

"What was interesting was that these middle-class men and women wanted some basic rights and privileges and couldn't get them," she says. "I was really surprised. They kept talking about their goals and aspirations, but also about the barriers that they were encountering in trying to reach them. It seemed that color or race was the factor that kept them from achieving those basic rights and privileges — simple things, like buying a house."

"There was so much talk of race in their conversations that I began thinking after the dissertation that if we could have a society where there was not so much race consciousness, what would happen?"

This question opened up a wide path of discovery for St. Jean. It has led her to examine a number of race-related subjects, including immigration and interracial marriage — two of her favorite research topics, which she describes as being at opposite ends on the spectrum of racial contact.

"Interracial marriage is naturally a more intimate form of racial contact, and immigration is more distant. What those forms of racial contact tell us, whether we are talking about immigration or intermarriage, is how a society thinks about color and how a society sees color. They tell us how the way a society sees
color affects the racial thinking of the people of that society. In turn, that racial thinking may actually translate into attitudes and behaviors." And those attitudes and behaviors have important implications for any society, she points out.

When St. Jean moved to Las Vegas to join the UNLV faculty in 1992, she had intended to pursue her research interest in Cuban and Haitian immigration issues. But finding Las Vegas not the most practical place to study that particular subject, she sought a new area to explore. What turned up, she says, was a product of simple observation.

"It was interesting to me that I would see so many interracial couples in malls and other public places. I had an idea that I would be studying interracial marriage. But there seemed to be so many interracial couples that I thought perhaps I should pursue it and see if there were indeed that many." So she started asking questions. "I found out by calling the state demographer that statistics on interracial marriage in Las Vegas were not kept. So I could not support my observation. I had nothing to tell me if what I was seeing was in fact correct. But I decided to pursue the subject because it forced me to think about some of the literature I'd read while writing my dissertation about how interracial marriages or unions might lead, not to a raced society, but perhaps to a reduction of prejudice in society. They might lead to more social equality." She began her investigation of the topic by conducting three focus groups of a dozen Las Vegas intercultural couples to obtain an overview of the subject. "I wondered if the Las Vegas setting itself would create the kind of environment where people were able to do things not accepted in other places."

While she didn't find any evidence to that effect, what she did find was that the couples did not consider themselves intermarried.

"They made it clear that they didn't see themselves as being interracially married because when they are with each other, they don't think about race. They don't think, 'You're black and I'm white.' They think, 'husband, wife, marriage.' So, it was interesting to find that the conception of race changes as people get together, as they intermarry.

"However, race consciousness was still present because of the harsh reactions of society. The comments that people would make reminded them over and over again that they were engaged in a relationship that was not accepted by society."

The issue of disapproval of interracial marriage then piqued her curiosity. She had found in her review of literature that whites tend to disapprove of interracial marriage and blacks tend to approve. (Existing statistics show that 17% of whites find intermarriage unacceptable as opposed to less than 3% of blacks.) At that point, she decided to write a conference paper on societal disapproval of intermarriage, assuming her focus would be on white males. In the meantime, however, she discovered a pivotal book by historian Patricia Morton that changed the orientation of her research on the subject. The book, titled Disfigured Images: The Historical Assault on African American Women, examines stereotypes of black females in social science literature. From her reading of the book, St. Jean came away thinking about black females and why some object to intermarriage. She didn't make the point that some black women would disapprove of intermarriage, but added that she chose the question regarding laws against intermarriage despite its weakness because it was an adequate starting point for analysis.

One of the major findings of her study was that black females who favor such laws seem to have fewer contacts with whites and less familiarity with mainstream American culture. They are more likely to favor such laws if they are over the age of 35, earn less than $15,000 a year, have no high school degree, live in cities of less than 10,000 or in the South Central United States, or are strongly religious.

Through the findings of her study also indicate that the majority of black females disapprove of laws banning intermarriage — perhaps suggesting at first glance a tendency toward approval of intermarriage — she is quick to point out that disapproval of restrictive laws does not necessarily mean approval of intermarriage. Like most sociologists, she is more than cautious when it comes to forming generalizations.

She did conclude, however, that she needs to research the subject further.

"I need better data," she says. "Even if the questions were good questions, they would not tell us what we are looking for. We are trying to understand notions of color and trying to understand how people think about race, and numbers can't give us that kind of information. But American sociologists are impressed by numbers, sometimes regardless of what the numbers are. It's a sad reality, because the numbers don't often tell us much. We have to do qualitative analysis also." Ultimately, St. Jean hopes to conduct both more focus groups and a telephone survey on the subject in order to compare the results and thus form a more complete picture.

In the meantime, she finds herself pondering the larger questions produced by the issue of intermarriage. The one she returns to time and again is why racial consciousness is so prevalent in America.

"As Habib, if you were to look at an intermarried couple, you wouldn't talk about a black/white marriage. If you asked who someone married and it happened to be a white male, the answer would be that she married a Frenchman or an American, not a white male. So color would not be the immediate identifier; the culture would be. Under similar circumstances in America, however, color would be a primary source of identification, she says. "The race consciousness in this country is amazing. And every group seems to be race conscious."

Though she is reluctant to speculate on the origins of this phenomenon, she is dedicated to the pursuit of a greater understanding of it and its effects on Americans, how they deal with each other, and how they deal with newcomers to their country. And besides, she says, searching for answers is what sociologists do.

"After I took my first sociology course, I thought the issues were very interesting, and I moved on to the course on social problems to find out if I could get answers to some of the questions that we had discussed in the intro class. But I didn't find them; there were no solutions. So, I kept taking courses in sociology, searching for answers, until finally I had to major in it. "I tell my students that story. And I tell them that I still don't have the answers, that I'm still searching."
Whether he's in an 800-year-old Swedish castle or his lab at UNLV, Dean Radin explores the unconventional and the unexplained, hoping to unveil what some would call the unknowable. But, hey, in the realm of parapsychology, you have to start somewhere.

BY DIANE RUSSELL

Deep in a castle in Sweden where the thick stone walls created an eerie silence and the air was unnaturally calm, UNLV's Dean Radin found himself drawn to a particular room.

What precisely led him to that spot, he can't say. It was a sense that somehow that room was different from the 20 others in the castle.

"In this place on the third floor in a particular room, I felt something unusual, like a rumbling noise," Radin says. "At a particular spot I felt like there was a motor or something under the floor making a low rumbling growl." Yet, no cause for it was to be found.

After Radin exited, his colleague Raymond Moody entered to see if he could detect anything unusual. He had not been briefed on Radin's experience. Out of all the rooms in the castle, Moody picked the same one to analyze. As he sat quietly before a mirror in that room, he felt an electrical presence come out of the mirror and try to engage him. Eventually, the presence twisted free and disappeared with a flash, apparently frustrated by its inability to communicate.

What is all this prowling through castles in the Swedish countryside? And who are these guys, Radin and Moody? (Hint: "Who ya gonna call?") Ghostbusters!

While that might not be the word that Radin, a parapsychologist, would use to describe himself, it wouldn't be the first time that he has heard himself characterized that way. He is the director of UNLV's new Consciousness Research Laboratory at the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies, where he investigates a variety of unusual phenomena that involve the effect of the human mind on its surroundings. Ghost detection work, such as what took place in the aforementioned study, is just one example of the research that he conducts in some sort of communication.

In the field, Dean Radin searches for the authentic counterparts to the gauze sculpture of a ghost that he keeps in his lab. He uses electronic devices like the one pictured here to detect paranormal phenomena.
Radin, whose background is in both psychology and electrical engineering, tried using electronic equipment to "measure" the phenomenon that he notes. "I have nothing against skepticism," he says. "I'd like to go busting!" (by producing results slower or less frequent than the norm). "Missing" can be just as significant as "hitting," according to Radin, because it might mean that a subject's mental intention is still influencing the outcomes of the test — just not in the way the subject intended.

Once all of the tests are completed, he plans to write several articles on the experiment and submit them for publication in refereed academic journals. Radin's research has not always been in the field of parapsychology. With a bachelor's and master's degree in electrical engineering and a doctoral degree in psychology, Radin began his career traditionally enough, doing research at AT&T Bell Laboratories in Ohio. But there, he began doing some less-than-traditional research as well, overlapping his psychology background with his knowledge of electrical engineering.

He decided to try to test a piece of lab folklore — that some clients have "black thumbs" when it comes to computers and that, as a result, the computers they touch tend to malfunction. It was a deeply held superstition, Radin says, even to the point that the repeated "black thumb" people were asked to make themselves scarce when presentations involving computers were being conducted for VIPs. But was it more than myth? Radin wondered if that effect could be replicated in a laboratory setting.

So, with the company's permission, Radin created some tests based on parapsychological experiments he had read about. And his findings led him to believe that Murphy's Law may have some basis in fact when certain people are involved.

Radin was fascinated with this new line of research. "It was so much more interesting than conventional research that I started to spend more and more time on it," he said. (Continued on page 24)
UNLV alumnus Scott Miller has visited virtually every square inch of the state, studied its biology extensively, and collected pivotal pieces of its past, including steam locomotives and a violin once owned by Abraham Lincoln. Who better to keep Nevada’s museums on track?

BY BARBARA CLOUD

When Scott Miller tells you about the Jay, his eyes sparkle and he speaks lovingly about the shiny black steam locomotive that holds a place of pride in the State Railroad Museum in Carson City.

But then Miller is clearly infatuated not only with the railroads that helped build Nevada, but with all of the state’s history.

Miller, who obtained his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biology from UNLV in 1972 and 1974 respectively, is director of the Division of Museums and History for the state of Nevada. He oversees history and natural history museums in Carson City, Las Vegas, Overton, and Reno, and railroad collections in Carson City, Ely, and Boulder City.

“I’m enthralled almost daily by some of the things we see here that unveil the layers of our history,” Miller says.

He cites as an example a violin accepted by the museum that has been traced to a man who received it from President Abraham Lincoln. “It’s this phenomenal little vignette of history, involving the Civil War, Lincoln, and our statehood, all being intertwined so tightly. It was amazing. We were standing there holding this violin that Abraham Lincoln had held. According to some folks, we’re not supposed to have that kind of depth of history out here in the West.”

Miller’s own connection with the West started in 1954, when, at the age of 4, he moved with his family to Las Vegas from Illinois. They settled in Blue Diamond — his stepfather was a mining engineer with the gypsum mine at Blue Diamond — and he recalls that he and his friends spent the vast majority of their adolescent years “wandering around the desert.”

“That was about all we had at our disposal for entertainment,” he says.

The lizards, tortoises, and other wildlife he observed in the desert and brought home as pets sparked his interest in the study of biology. An inspiring biology teacher at Bishop Gorman High School and the encouragement of UNLV engineering professor Herb Wells, at one time a Blue Diamond neighbor, removed any doubts.

“Herb took me down to the biology department and introduced me to some people who showed me around. That pretty much cinched it.”

Miller remembers his freshman year at UNLV as “pretty much like anyone’s freshman year.” But as a sophomore, he summoned up his courage and volunteered to work in the mammalogy museum run by biology professor...
William G. (Glenn) Bradley.

"That biology department was a unique place then, very small, populated by a pretty hard-core group of field biologists and professors—Bradley, Jim Deacon, Mo Yousef, Wes Niles, Chad Murvosh—guys who had a lot of fire in their bellies. They really wanted to take the world of biology on, straight to the community structure of birds from the creosote desert to the aquatic community of the Las Vegas Wash. After graduation in 1974, Miller continued to work with Baeppler and others on various research grants.

When the position of natural history curator of the Nevada State Museum in Carson City opened in 1977, Miller applied. "I took the tests, and when they told me I was second on the list, I figured I wouldn’t get the job. So, I went out into the field to collect specimens for Don." 

The field in this case was the Smoky Valley in central Nevada. At the agreed upon time, Baeppler met the field crew at Pawnee Creek to get the specimens. That evening when they gathered around the camp’s picnic table, Baeppler produced a bottle of champagne. Popping the cork, he said, “I’ve got a roast.”

“I realized something good must have happened,” Miller recalls, “but had no idea what it was. When Don said, ‘Here’s to the new curator of natural history at the Nevada State Museum,’ I was absolutely floored.”

On Aug. 1, 1977, Miller took up his new duties. The biggest immediate challenge, he recalls, was the limited nature of the museum’s collection. A sizable area of the state—Southern Nevada, in particular—had not been adequately collected and analyzed. "Being a southerner, that had an impact on me," Miller recalls.

In addition, the exhibits at the museum largely reflected the old-fashioned museum approach of displaying specimens according to species rather than in an ecological context. Miller was determined to bring the exhibits up to date.

Miller had been at his post two years when the state Legislature created the Department of Museums and History, which included the Nevada Natural History Society in Reno, the Nevada State Museum in Carson City, and the Lost City Museum in Overton. The Legislature also authorized the creation and construction of the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society in Las Vegas. At the same time, the state parks division turned over a collection of old, rundown equipment from the Nevada and Truckee Railroad to the new department.

As a result of the reorganization, Miller became director of the state museum in Carson City. In early 1982, he found himself once again in Las Vegas; he had been assigned the job of opening the newly created museum by the Legislature.

"We worked like fools for a few and a half months, and it was one of the most impressive things I’ve ever seen," he says, referring to the volunteer staff at the state museum and the historical society in Reno pulling together to develop displays for Las Vegas. "On Nevada Day, 1982, we opened to the public.”

In the midst of the flurry to open the facility, Baeppler, the head of the department retired, and Miller was called back to Carson City to take over. "I commuted to Vegas at least a couple of times a week for about the first year, trying to run both facilities.” But Miller is quick to share credit with his staff of about 70 full-time employees around the state and about 250 “hard-core” volunteers without whose help, he says, “We’d be hamburger meat.”

In addition to his duties at the state museum, Miller and his staff have expanded the collections, and the museums have been transformed from shoeboxes for specimens into centers of education. Most displays at the state’s museums now provide context and understanding for the items shown; the museum in Carson City even takes visitors into a simulated mine shaft.

Another major project undertaken during Miller’s tenure has turned him into an engineer of sorts. Miller has overseen the transformation of stacks of old wood and metal into an operating railroad, the Virginia and Truckee line, which runs around the railroad museum property in Carson City. It showcases the state’s premiere collection of restored cars, as well as offering rides to the public behind steam locomotives such as the famous Zephyr, which has been used in movies and displayed in Las Vegas.

But the V&T comprises only part of the department’s railroad holdings. When Kennecott Copper closed its operations in Ely, it turned over the Nevada Northern Railroad—rolling stock, facilities, records, everything—to Miller’s department and the Nevada Northern Railway Foundation. And when Union Pacific announced plans to tear up its line between Las Vegas and Boulder City, which was built to facilitate the construction of Hoover Dam, then-Gov. Richard Bryan moved to get the train track donated to the state.

The museum is now open in Ely, and a locomotive to be acquired from New London Railroad of Utah—known as the Silver Cruiser—and other stock will provide the genesis for a railroad museum in Boulder City. Miller says he hopes to start construction on a maintenance facility this spring and predicts a full-scale operating facility will be built eventually, depending on funding.

“We’re talking in the $20 million range," he says, “so we are taking it one shot at a time. I’m sure it will be a combined public-private venture.” In both the Ely and Boulder City locations, the long-range plans call for restoring locomotives and cars to operating condition as they are in Carson City.

Miller acknowledges that he enjoys seeing the pieces of dilapidated equipment come to life. "There is a power and a grace about them that is truly amazing,” he says.

His ability to move from the biological to the mechanical is evidence of a versatility that has enhanced his administrative advancement. In 1993, another reorganization was approved, and Miller became the director of the Division of Museums and History in the Department of Museums, Libraries, and Arts. He says the new arrangement facilitates what the various entities were already doing in terms of coordinating and sharing expertise. "We had been doing that long before it became popular in government to consolidate.”

Although Miller says that the biologist in him still likes to get into the field and the classroom, he has become increasingly involved with administrative problems, both by necessity and from a growing interest in the process. The evolution of museums within the political system — "where we fit into that system, where we’re going to be in 20 years..." — has brought much of his attention as he looks to the continued development of the division. He says it’s a challenge to try to project and maintain what is important to the preservation of the state’s history in the face of fiscal constraints and pressures.

"It’s hard for people to realize the importance of history. If you could boil it down to one simple thing, you might say that when you have a feel for where you are, where you come from, or what has occurred in the place where you are currently living, it’s a much more comfortable environment.”

While he acknowledges that Nevada’s tremendous growth in the last decade has brought many newcomers who have little short-term interest in Nevada history, he takes comfort in the fact that "we probably could have been sitting here 120 years ago, worrying about all the new Welshmen, Irishmen, and Chinese, and all the people showing up who have no appreciation whatsoever for the history of the place. But they have become the fabric of our history. Our job is to make sure that we don’t get eaten up in the financial and political struggles of any given time.”

Miller, who is married and the father of three, counts himself lucky to have grown up in this state when he did, lucky to have been exposed to the people he was exposed to. He says he can’t imagine living anywhere else.

"I will never feel comfortable in another place to the degree that I feel comfortable in Nevada. It’s comfortable because I feel like I’ve visited damn near every square inch of the 110,000 square miles of this state at one point or another, because I know the biology, and because I understand the foundation of what this state is.”

And, he says, if he can spread that comfort around to his fellow Nevadans, then he’s doing his job.

Miller, shown here with a violin tuned back to the man who received it from President Abraham Lincoln, says people are often surprised by the depth of history in the West.
Tantrums, Tension, and Tears: When Kids Won’t Go To School

A UNLV professor’s clinic helps children learn to cope with the stresses of the classroom.

BY TOM FLAGG

Psychology professor Chris Kearney started the School Refusal Clinic at UNLV to serve a very specific clientele: the children in Clark County who won’t go to school. Kearney, who specializes in helping children who have problems with fear and anxiety, became interested in working with those who refuse to go to school while he was doing his doctoral work in clinical child psychology at the State University of New York, Albany.

While working at SUNY-Albany’s Center for Stress and Anxiety Disorders, he was seeing so many children who refused to go to school that he established a program to deal with their problems. Later, he developed a similar program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, where he was doing an internship.

“So when I came to UNLV, it seemed like the natural thing to do,” he says of creating the clinic, which was established in the psychology department in 1991. And he has found a natural market for such a clinic in the midst of one of the nation’s largest, fastest growing school districts. The size of the district, the newness of many of its schools, double sessions, and the fact that many youngsters have only recently moved into the Las Vegas area all add to the potential for school-refusal behavior.

“What’s happening is kids come here from California or from some rural place in Nevada, and they are overwhelmed by the size of the schools,” Kearney explains. “They may have been in situations in which they were very comfortable, and now they are facing this gigantic place. They have had no problems whatsoever in the past, but now they are unable to go to school at all.”

Some children and their families have a difficult time adjusting to the half-day sessions that the local school district has resorted to because of overcrowding, he says. “I have clients who go to school from noon until 6 at night, and others who go from 7 in the morning until 1:30,” Kearney says. “That creates havoc with family schedules.”

The students Kearney treats range in age from 5 to 16. Some haven’t been in school for two or three years. Others go virtually every day, but from 6 to 8 a.m., they are throwing tantrums, refusing to go into the school, and clinging to their parents. But once they get inside the school, they are fine.

“For some, the behavior arrives seemingly without warning, catching parents and school officials by surprise. Students in this group typically fall between the ages of 11 and 13. Often, it is at the time the student is ready to move into middle school or a sixth grade center. They are overwhelmed by the prospect of having to go to all these classes, see all these people,” Kearney says. “Maybe they have been zoned into a school where they are not with the friends they are used to being with. They have a lot more homework, and they are having a difficult time.”

One of the most common reasons youngsters refuse to go to school is what Kearney calls “negative affectivity”; in other words, school gives them bad feelings, such as general depression, anxiety, or some specific fears.

“We had a child once who was terrified of the fire alarm,” Kearney says. “But usually these kids won’t be able to tell you what it is they are uncomfortable about.”

Some of his clients become anxious in social situations. They have a great deal of trouble making and keeping friends. Others have trouble in “evaluation settings.” These include situations in which their behavior and performance are being evaluated and monitored, such as during academic examinations, oral presentations, or athletic competition.

Some of Kearney’s younger clients have problems with separation anxiety. They want to stay home and get lots of attention from their parents; they may get control of the situation by throwing tantrums until their parents give in to them.

“They get kids who simply refuse to go to school because it is more fun to be out,” Kearney says. “They are watching television, visiting friends, going to daytime parties, hanging out. They don’t have fear and anxiety problems, but they are not in school.”

Kearney sees 20-30 clients a year in...
Although he occasionally works with only the child himself as in helping a student overcome a specific fear or some situation at school—he more commonly works with the student's parent or parents as well.

“A lot of times there are family issues going on,” he says. “There may be conflicts in the family, or the parents may be giving in to what the child wants.”

When there are family issues involved, Kearney trains parents in such areas as issuing appropriate commands to their children, staying out of school rather than in attending, monitoring attendance, and collecting data. When you are dealing with people's lives, it carries a tremendous responsibility.”

Kearney also encourages parents to talk to their children a couple of weeks before school starts to learn how they feel about going back, particularly if they are going to a new school.

“If there is any way that the parents can continue to talk to their children about what to expect, even if they have to be firm in certain kinds of situations.”

He sees great benefits coming from his clinic, not just for his clients and the school district, but also for UNLV students. The program provides an excellent opportunity for both undergraduate and graduate students to obtain clinical experience. Undergraduates need clinical experience to get into graduate programs, and graduate students use it to collect data and ideas for their master’s theses.

“The students I’ve worked with have been excellent, and I give them a lot of responsibility,” Kearney says. “They actually work with clients, deal with school officials, and collect data. When you are dealing with people’s lives, it carries a tremendous responsibility.”

Kearney focuses on such family strategies as contracting. The child has, for whatever reason, found more rewards in staying out of school than in attending, so the parents and child enter into a contract in which the child agrees to attend school in return for certain rewards or privileges.

“I just did a contract for a child and parent,” Kearney says. “The contract required the student to go to school all week, and if he did, he would earn the opportunity to do extra chores on the weekend in return for a certain amount of money. That way, he is not being paid directly for going to school, but for the chores. He only gets the chance to do the chores by attending school.”

Kearney also emphasizes training in communication and problem-solving skills.

“We teach the parents ways in which they can sit down with the child and formulate a solution to a particular problem instead of being told what to do, which it has been their norm,” he says. It is unusual, although not unheard of, for his clients to have a phobia regarding school, Kearney says. In that case, he deals with a client's fears through systematic desensitization. The client is taught certain relaxation techniques, then relaxation is paired with gradual reintroduction to the school.

Roger Leffel, professor of psychology and coordinator of the psychology graduate program at UNLV, believes that the program is unusual, but effective.

“Many students also benefit from role playing during their therapy sessions. This allows them to practice appropriate behaviors for situations that make them anxious at school—for instance, making an oral presentation in class. In their sessions, they receive feedback on their performance, which enables them to fine-tune their presentations and develop feelings of control over the situation.”
CALENDAR

April 1995

1 Softball: UNLV vs. Hawaii. 1pm. Rebel Diamond. 895-3207.

Nevada Dance Theatre
March 30 - April 2

1 Concert: Bolognini Scholarship Concert. 7pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.

29 Festival: Invitational Band Festival. 8am-11pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

30 Concert: University Wind Symphony. 2pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.


May 1995

5 Spring Semester 1995: Instruction ends.

7 Concert: Jazz Ensemble II. 2pm. Black Box Theatre. 895-3801.

9 Concert: Myron Heaton Chorale. 2pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.

12 Exhibit: "Michael McCollum: Retrospective." Weekdays, 9am-5pm. Donna Beam Gallery. 895-3893. (thru June 23)

13 College Diploma Ceremonies: Health Sciences, 9am, Thomas & Mack Center; Architecture, Construction Management (TMC); Human Performance & Development, 10am, Judy Bayley Theatre (JBT); Science & Mathematics, noon, HCH; Liberal Arts, noon, TMC; Fine & Performing Arts, 1pm, JBT; Engineering, 3pm, HCH; Hotel Administration, 5pm, TMC; Business & Economics, 6pm, TMC; Architecture, Construction Management & Planning, details TBA; Greenspun School of Communication, 7pm, HCH.

14 Concert: Myron Heaton Chorale. 2pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.

15 Summer Session I: Instruction begins.

19-21 Baseball: UNLV vs. UCLA. May 19, 7pm; May 20 & 21, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.

19-25 Nevada Opera Theatre: South Pacific. May 19, 20, 21, 24 & 25 8pm. May 21, 2pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

19-25 Festival: Invitational Band Festival. 8am-11pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

20-21 Nevada Opera Theatre: South Pacific. May 19, 20, 21, 24 & 25 8pm. May 21, 2pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

Christmas Parkening
March 16

June 1995

2 Summer Session I: Session ends.

5 Summer Session II: Instruction begins.


12 Concert: Bolognini Scholarship Concert. 7pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.

13 College Diploma Ceremonies: Health Sciences, 9am, Thomas & Mack Center (TMC); Education, 9am, Thomas & Mack Center (TMC); Human Performance & Development, 10am, Judy Bayley Theatre (JBT); Science & Mathematics, noon, HCH; Liberal Arts, noon, TMC; Fine & Performing Arts, 1pm, JBT; Engineering, 3pm, HCH; Hotel Administration, 5pm, TMC; Business & Economics, 6pm, TMC; Architecture, Construction Management & Planning, details TBA; Greenspun School of Communication, 7pm, HCH.

14 Concert: Myron Heaton Chorale. 2pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.

15 Summer Session I: Instruction begins.

19-21 Baseball: UNLV vs. UCLA. May 19, 7pm; May 20 & 21, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.

19-25 Nevada Opera Theatre: South Pacific. May 19, 20, 21, 24 & 25 8pm. May 21, 2pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

August 1995

11 Summer Session III: Session begins.

28 Full Semester 1995: Instruction begins.

Events are subject to change.
**Class Notes**

**'70s**

Jim Pumpelt, '70 MBA, is an international issues examiner with the Internal Revenue Service in Austin, Texas. He is serving as vice president of the Austin chapter of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants for the chapter's 1994-95 membership year. The chapter has 1,200 members throughout central Texas.

Kris Rosenberg, '71 BA Psychology, teaches psychology at La Roche College and also has a private psychology practice in Timbogue. She is the author of the book Talk to Me: A Therapist's Guide to Breaking Through Haze Silence.

**'80s**

Lena Van Daverkoper, '74 Master of Education in Special Education, retired from the Clark County School District in 1993. She taught for 20 years, primarily at Brushcreek Elementary School. When she retired, she returned to her farm in Thornton, Iowa, where she and her son raise corn and soybeans. She is also a freelance writer and has had more than 3,000 poems published.

Kay Samolевич, '75 Master of Education, received a $25,000 award at the 1994 Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference for her contribution to education. She has been with the Clark County School District since 1968 and currently serves as administrator on special assignment to develop the implementation of alternative scheduling for middle schools. She began her career as a school nurse, taught at Rancho High School, and later held several administrative positions, including principal of O'Callaghan and Smith middle schools.

Kimberly Schellaci, '86 BS Hospital Administration, is an assistant travel industry sales manager for the 42 Omni Hotels across the country. She arranges hotel accommodation packages for the film and entertainment industries. She lives in Santa Monica, California.

Eleanor Cunningham, '81 BA Social Services, retired from Dominican Hospital, where she worked in the field of hospital education. She now works as a certified diabetes educator consultant and as a basic BCP support CFP instructor.

Najeeb Ur Rahman, '81 BS Hospital Administration, is the president of P.T.A. Travel, which offers transfer to Venezuela, Los Angeles, Dallas, Chicago, and New York. He is also the president of T.E.J.T.A., Inc., an import and export business with offices in Las Vegas, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Dubai, and the United Kingdom.

Art Jimenez, '85 BS Communication Studies, is director of sales at Wet 'n Wild, where he previously worked as a senior sales manager. Before joining Wet 'n Wild, he worked as an advertising account executive with Design Arts.

Denise Harlet-Chek, '80 AA Nursing, '85 BA Nursing, is a nurse practitioner in the ambulatory care clinic of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Jill Trione Campbell, '80 BA Sociology, is vice president and general manager of Cox Cable in Bakersfield, California. Previously, she worked for Cox in Oklahoma City.

Eleanor Cunningham, '81 BA Social Services, retired from St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, where she worked in the field of hospital education. She now works as a certified physician assistant and is a basic BCP support CFP instructor.

**'90s**

Mike Middleton, '93 BS Hotel Administration, is an assistant from office manager at The Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas, where he directs operations for the hotel's restaurants.

Kathy Nozajiglia Vojak, '84 BS Hotel Administration, is an administrator of 175 hotel rooms at the Hilton Harbourfront in Toronto, Canada. She is also a partner in the Toronto hotel management company.

Bradley D. Brown, '90 BS Business Administration, is a partner in the accounting firm of Allen Blyden and Co. in Great Falls, Montana. He previously worked as a partner in the accounting firm of Allen Blyden and Co.

Gina Richardson, '90 BS Hotel Administration, is the national sales manager for Prudential Resort & Casino, which owns and operates Whiskey Pete's Hotel & Casino, the Prudential Resort & Casino, and Buffalo Bills' Resort & Casino, all on the Nevada/Caliifornia border south of Las Vegas. She previously worked at the Palace Station, Showboat, and Sands hotels.

Noam W. Julian, '91 Master of Public Administration, is a public relations liaison at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. He is also a partner in the Las Vegas Metro Police Department.

Inga M. Vaughan, '89 BA Athletic Training, is in medical school at the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. She volunteers in high schools as a certified athletic trainer and also does AIDS awareness work as a volunteer.

Barbara D. Persson, '89 BS Nursing, is clinical director of emergency and telemetry services at Sunrise Hospital & Medical Center. In that position, she oversees the emergency room, the trauma department, emergency medical services, and five patient units. She was the nurse-in-charge in the nursing administration category in the annual Nevada of the Year contest, sponsored by the March of Dimes in Southern Nevada.

Elvia E. Juanti, '95 BS Electrical Engineering, worked for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration as an electrical engineer. She lives in Sacramento, California.

**Attention Alumni**

The UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of social and cultural activities. For more information, contact the alumni association, 448-3887.

Please be patient because of the popularity of this Alumni Notes section. UNLV Magazine cannot use every entry or every name. If the information you submitted for this Alumni Notes section becomes outdated, please submit a new entry indicating the change or deletion of information.

**UNLV Magazine**

UNLV Magazine is a publication of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. It is produced by Communications and Marketing in conjunction with the UNLV Alumni Association. Its purpose is to provide information and entertainment to the UNLV community.

We would like to invite all UNLV alumni to submit information about themselves to UNLV Magazine for inclusion in the Class Notes section. Please fill out the form below completely, type or print clearly, and avoid abbreviations. Also, please supply your home and office telephone numbers as we can reach you if there is a question about your entry. We encourage you to submit a black and white photograph of yourself to accompany your Class Notes entry.
**Spirited Approach**

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of my time on it.”

Eventually, this type of research took him to a number of places, including SRI International, a California think tank where he did research for the U.S. government; Princeton University, where he served as technical director of the human information processing group; and the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, where he was a visiting research fellow.

He came to UNLV in 1993 as the result of a generous donation from UNLV benefactor Robert Bigelow, who, Radin says, has long been interested in parapsychological phenomena. Radin notes that the creation of his lab means that now UNLV and Princeton are the only two universities in the United States with laboratories dedicated to the full-time study of the subject.

But where, you might ask, will this type of research lead? To Radin, the answer lies in the mind-machine connection; he believes that someday a person will be able to control a machine using only mental power. A physical connection between man and machine would no longer be required.

While such technology could be used for something as relatively simple as doing away with the need for, say, the remote control devices for garage door openers, there are potentially many more useful applications.

“Let’s say we wanted to communicate with a spacecraft in deep space or a submerged submarine someplace where you either don’t know where the thing is or it’s beyond the reach of conventional electromagnetic signals,” Radin says. “With a device that allows you to communicate mentally with a machine, the machine can basically be anywhere.

“For example, in August of 1993, NASA lost the Mars Observer satellite. It was a billion dollar hunk of hardware that just disappeared as it approached Mars. The only way we had of talking to it was conventional electromagnetic signaling methods.”

If the mind-machine interface had been perfected at that time, Radin reasons, perhaps the satellite could have been retrieved.

Radin believes that such an interface can become a reality in the not-too-distant future. In a previous job, he worked on such a project, which he describes as a mentally-controlled on-off switch. He conducted a successful in-house demonstration of a prototype and was close to applying for a patent. Before he could do that, however, his company was sold to another company, and the funding disappeared. Now, he’s in the process of replicating that device in his UNLV lab.

Although the public may not be generally aware of it, Radin says several psychic phenomena, such as telepathy, remote viewing (“seeing” something that is taking place at a remote location), precognition (knowing something is going to happen before it actually occurs), and micro-psychokinesis (the ability of the mind to affect matter in a microscopic way), have already been scientifically proved to exist.

“The databases in four or five realms of phenomena are so strong that there basically is no reasonable doubt left that they are real,” Radin says. “Four U.S. government scientific review boards all independently reached the same conclusion during the 1980s: The scientific evidence suggests that we are dealing with genuine anomalies associated with the human mind.”

Besides intensifying basic research on these phenomena, what remains now is to harness that knowledge and find useful applications for it, he says.

While something like a sophisticated mind-machine link may be quite some time off, something simpler, such as the proposed mental on-off switch, is not, he says.

But working toward very long-range goals doesn’t bother Radin.

“It seems like 30 years down the line, but you have to start somewhere, and that’s what universities are for. You start funding people for future-oriented work. In any case, all new technologies sound like magic until they become widely available in your local Wal-Mart. Many of the technologies I worked on at Bell Labs in the early 1980s are only now being brought to the market.”

The long-term payoff of understanding and harnessing the power of the human mind could be tremendous, Radin says, likening it to the discovery of atomic power — only greater.

However, before that can happen, much more work needs to be done probing the nature of the human mind, Radin says, noting that such exploration is no small task.

“It has been said that we know more about the moons of Neptune than we do about the workings of the human mind. That’s what makes this research so frustrating — and so exciting.”

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**Tantrums, Tension**

continued from page 18

take their kids into the school for a tour, it would reduce a lot of the anticipatory anxiety, and the idea of starting at a new school wouldn’t be nearly as aversive for the student,” he says.

The School Refusal Clinic is doing so well that Kearney hopes to broaden the scope of his services, possibly in the next year, to include treatment of children with general anxiety disorders, panic disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder.

For more information about Kearney’s clinic, call him at 895-0183.
Your child. Your spouse. Relatives. Close friends. Your estate plan should provide for all the obvious beneficiaries.

But what about the heirs who are less apparent? What about, for example, the students of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas?

A growing number of people are including UNLV in their bequests. Clearly, they understand that they have both the privilege and the responsibility of assisting future generations of students. And they’re using their estate plans as a vehicle.

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If you haven’t yet made a bequest to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, please consider it.

If you’re interested in making a provision for UNLV in your estate plan, you can call the UNLV Foundation at 702/895-3641 and ask about Generations. It’s our program to inform people about the benefits of charitable gift planning.

Ask for our free brochure on estate planning. We’ll send you information about the numerous giving options as well as preferred bequest language for review by your lawyer.
The 70,000-square-foot, $11 million Robert L. Bigelow Physics Building opened at the beginning of fall semester 1994 and was dedicated on Dec. 1. Nobel Prize-winning physicist Arthur Schawlow was the keynote speaker.