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A Fan's Notes



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A customer methodically flips through the racks at a musty record store, then snatches an album. He checks the vinyl, flips the jacket and pores over the liner notes. "Think about that: When you were taking a chance on a record... you had already read the critic," says Professor John Gennari, author of *Blowin' Hot and Cool: Jazz and Its Critics*.

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Priorities University trustees began discussion of an updated strategic financial plan and a new strategic capital plan and considered how those two plans will mesh and shape the university's future during the board meetings held Nov. 9-11.

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Heart failure is the most common diagnosis among Medicare patients, and costs billions annually. Dr. Martin LeWinter of the College of Medicine is leading a major effort to better understand and treat the condition, especially in cases where it is related to diabetes.

THE WEEK IN VIEW

November 16, 4 p.m.
Panel Discussion:
"Building Healthier Vermont Communities."
Carpenter Auditorium, Given Building.
Information: 656-3281.

November 16, 7:30 p.m.
University Jazz Ensemble.
UVM Recital Hall. Information: 656-3040.

November 18, 1 p.m.
"Winterberry Talk and Tour," Mark Starrett, associate professor of plant and soil science.
UVM Horticultural Research Center, South Burlington. \$10 suggested donation.
Register: 864-3703.

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A Fan's Notes

By Kevin Foley

Article published Nov 14, 2006



The Nation calls John Gennari's book about jazz criticism "an obsessive study of professional obsessives that will circumvent the need for any other." (Cover detail: University of Chicago Press)

Jazz education once looked a little like this: A customer methodically flips through the racks at a musty basement record store, then swoops like a raptor and snatches an album. He checks the vinyl, flips the jacket and pores over the liner notes, which were usually written

by a critic or musician. Only then (and only possibly), did the record go home.

"Think about that: When you were taking a chance on a record, before you ever actually cued it up, you had already read the critic," says John Gennari, associate professor of English and author of *Blowin' Hot and Cool: Jazz and Its Critics*, which was published this summer by the University of Chicago Press. "I was interested in that in and of itself — the fact that my experience was already being influenced by this other person. I got fascinated with who these people were."

Liner notes, of course, are only a small facet of jazz criticism, but their central location - they physically stand between listener and record, audience and art - make them a provocative example of the often controversial ways jazz critics explained, shaped, promoted and intellectually certified the music. But despite the critics' importance, and the rising profile of jazz studies in universities, Gennari's book, written over 15 often peripatetic years, is the first book-length study of the role of critics in jazz.

The intellectual niche was obvious and attractive, but it wasn't primarily an academic calculation that first drew Gennari to studying jazz critics as a graduate student at Penn. It was passion.

Fascinating rhythm

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Gennari began getting seriously interested in jazz as an undergraduate. At first, he says, he found the music "mysterious... hard to access." To learn about it, he prowled record stores, binged on college radio — and read the critics.

From playing the drums, Gennari always felt he had a fairly sophisticated appreciation of jazz's rhythmic finesse; his drumming, he says, is good enough to know when someone is *really* good. But translating rhythmic pulse into prose, illuminating the music's subtleties with words... this seemed impossible to Gennari, despite his own ambition to become a writer.

"... the rhythmic genius of jazz is what caught me," he says. "I wondered, 'How do they do this? How do they feel that time?' And then how does someone actually write about it in a way that evokes the mystery without being too schematic and predatory about it?"

Evoking mysteries: It's not exactly the stuff of academic writing. Neither is looking up to writers and musicians, or responding to them in ways that go beyond rational thought. But as rich as Gennari's book is in documentation, politics and history — Gennari even developed a phone relationship with famed *Village Voice* critic Nat Hentoff because the critic found Gennari's extensive files useful as he worked on his autobiography (Hentoff, a poor record keeper, has also found his FBI file indispensable in his efforts) — he is willing at times to pull back from analysis and express his admiration and affection for the music and the best of the writers.

This isn't to suggest that the book is somehow blinkered. Gennari meticulously documents the dodgy judgments and activities of some critics, listing their multiple and repeated entanglements with the mechanics of the culture industry even as much of their writing made the case for jazz as art.

Ensemble cast

Gennari's account lets the contours of more than 70 years of jazz criticism emerge through individual stories. There's John Hammond, a Vanderbilt heir, social activist and producer who supported Billie Holliday's career — and urged her away from recording "Strange Fruit," the anti-lynching masterpiece. Martin Williams, a Virginian who writes at times as if he wishes race would just go away, but at times engages it in astute and innovative ways. Hentoff, who got props from musicians (and built that FBI file) for his civil rights activism. Leonard Feather, who was adamantly "color blind." Albert Murray and Stanley Crouch, black traditionalists. The uncategorizable Amiri Bakara.

And then there are lesser figures like Ross Russell. The embittered jazz producer and journalist once worked with Charlie "Bird" Parker and later wrote a novel and a "biography" about the saxophonist that betray unhealthy levels of obsession. Gennari unearthed an archived correspondence between Russell and Albert Goldman (the Columbia Ph.D.

turned trashy Lennon biographer) that is creepy and revealing. Gennari's chapter-long untangling of the twisted sexual, racial, aesthetic and political threads of Russell's work, the professor says, both doesn't "fit in the book, and *is* the book."

The arguments emerge from the individual stories. Just as he is contemptuous of the "he's a genius! he's taking it to another level!" school of facile jazz criticism, Gennari rejects convenient or rigid intellectual formulations. This is most apparent in the many discussions of race in a book about the (mostly) white critics of a (mostly) black art form.

"It's been far too easy to look at that racial sociology, and to have that stand as the whole story. Whereas for me, that is the beginning of the story," Gennari says. "... we need to see how the musicians and the critics have negotiated this structure. There's a lot in the book about particular relationships and critics... and how the very fact of their racial difference has been in part a reflection of a larger systemic situation, but in part was been an effort to deal with it and change it."

A white critic might help a black musician cope with the mainstream white world. Or the pale, privileged writer might be more committed to black ideology than the black musician. Someone like John Hammond, Gennari observes, can sometimes behave like the worst caricature of a condescending elitist — and also offer critical support to the careers of canonical black artists. "Both things are true," Gennari says. "And sometimes, they are true on the same day in what he does, or the same action."

"I have a framework, hopefully, but not a formula for that kind of interracial discourse," he says a bit later in the interview, "because I think each individual case is fascinating in its own right."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Lions and Tigers and ... Mosquitoes?

By Joshua Brown

Article published Nov 15, 2006



Research by Nick Gotelli, professor of biology, looks to the northern pitcher plant for answers to some critical questions about why major changes in populations occur throughout the food web. (Photo: Nick Gotelli)

From razed Venezuelan rain forests to sprawling Vermont subdivisions, habitat loss is a pervasive global problem. As natural terrain shrinks, "top predators" like jaguars and mountain lions often are the first to disappear.

But these wide-ranging charismatic carnivores are not the only ones who feel the squeeze. As habitat is destroyed, a cascade of other changes flows through the food web; populations of not-so-top predators, middle level plant-eaters and scavengers, and plants themselves, undergo a complex series of explosions and declines that can end with an ecosystem in sudden collapse.

While this damaging process has been well described, it has been surprisingly difficult to explain why it happens or to predict how habitat loss will affect particular plant and animal populations. Central to this difficulty has been the question of whether it is the habitat loss itself that leads to the changes in the populations throughout the food web, or the indirect effect of the now-absent top predator.

Rather than studying endangered Siberian tigers for an answer, professor of biology Nicholas Gotelli turned to the northern pitcher plant.

A small and complex food web

These carnivorous bog dwellers found across North America contain a miniature food web in the rainwater that pools at the bottom of their tubular leaves. Here no cats roam. Instead, *Wyeomyia* mosquito larvae are the top predators. They eat other insects in the water, which in turn feed on yet other invertebrates and bacteria in a complex network that begins with the shredded detritus of unlucky flies and ants that fall into the plant's trapping tube.

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As Gotelli recently reported in the open-access journal [PLoS Biology](#), he and his collaborator Aaron Ellison from the Harvard Forest, an ecological research site run by Harvard University, artificially created habitat loss (and gain) by changing the volume of water in individual plants they were studying in Vermont's Moose Bog. They also removed the "top trophic layer" (that is, the mosquito larvae and other predators at the top of the food web) and then watched what happened to the remaining species.

"The goal of this study was to say which kinds of models do a better job predicting the outcome of these changes," Gotelli says. He developed several statistical "path models" that each forecast the abundance of midges, mites, flesh flies, rotifers, and protozoans that make up the microscopic watery world at bottom of a pitcher plant. One model focused on the changed volume of water; another on prey availability, like bacteria; and finally, one placed the mosquito larvae in the director's chair as a "keystone" species.

Gotelli says he was surprised that the model with the most predictive power was the keystone model. In this approach, abundances of the other co-dwellers in the pitcher plant were best predicted through mathematical "paths" directly linked to mosquito larvae abundance.

Perhaps more surprising, taking into account the changes in water volume in this keystone model did not make it work better. As Jonathan Shurin wrote in *Nature* in a commentary article about Gotelli's study, "the implication is that the effects of habitat loss on the [pitcher plant] community can be explained entirely as the indirect consequence of its impact on the top predator."

In short, habitat loss may lead to the demise of top predators. But then, if Gotelli's mosquito model is right, the abundance of other creatures down the food chain seems best guessed by looking at their relationship to the top predator and not their amount of remaining habitat.

New evidence at odds with traditional theory

While Gotelli's paper was picked as a "Editor's Choice" in the September 29 edition of *Science*, the implications of his study could rattle some traditional wildlife biologists and land managers. "You can't understand changes in a species you are targeting for conservation by studying it in isolation because at the same time that the target species is changing so are its potential predators and potential prey," Gotelli says. "Simple population models based on only the target species may not do a very good job in protecting that species."

Do the results of this study mean that the population modeling underlying many conservation plans for endangered animals and plants are hopelessly flawed unless they takes a full (and mighty expensive) accounting of the surrounding food web?

"It doesn't mean we necessarily have to measure everything in nature," Gotelli says, "but it may mean we need to expand to consider a couple of

other interacting species that may be important to our target species and following those at the same time.”

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Trustees Discuss Finances, Facilities Priorities

By the view staff

Article published Nov 14, 2006

University trustees focused the majority of their time on the future of UVM's finances and facilities during the board meetings held Nov. 9-11. Though the trustees were not asked to take action on any major resolutions at this session, they began discussion of an updated strategic financial plan and a new strategic capital plan and considered how those two plans will mesh and shape the university's future. The UVM administration also reported on recent action to form a task force addressing student safety issues in the wake of the death of senior Michelle Gardner-Quinn.

Looking at safety

In their comments to the board, both trustee Chair Carl Lisman and President Daniel Mark Fogel spoke of the tragedy of Michelle Gardner-Quinn's death and its impact on the university. Lisman and Fogel paid tribute to Gardner-Quinn's vitality, passion for environmental issues, and commitment as a student. They also expressed pride in the many ways the university community came together throughout the tragedy. Following a moment of silence in Gardner-Quinn's memory, President Fogel told the trustees that her death had driven a resolution from the Student Government Association calling for a review of student safety issues and impelled the administration to "examine the social fabric of our community with renewed intensity. We are committed to examining all the ways we can make this an increasingly safe and secure environment." Thomas Gustafson, vice president for student and campus life, and Gary Derr, chief of staff in the office of the president and provost, will head the task force.

Talking tuition

In the Budget, Finance and Investment Committee, trustees talked extensively about tuition increases and the latest version of the Strategic Financial Plan (Version 5.0). Based on that guiding financial document, which includes three full years of actual financial performance and results, it was determined that some of the capital projects in the original 10-year vision may need to be constructed and funded over a longer period of time.

With tuition revenue being the single largest source of operating income for the university, the majority of discussion focused on a proposed tuition increase of six percent over the next three years with tuition levels returning to four percent in subsequent years. Some committee members felt that six percent was too high and requested a matrix

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showing tuition rates at four percent over the next five years for comparison purposes. Since tuition for the 2007-2008 academic year must be set by the February board meeting, committee members and the administration agreed to hold a special January meeting to look at the tuition rates more intently.

Committee members also expressed concern about the number of out-of-state students versus in-state students (currently a 58-42 percent ratio) and the tuition levels paid by each. Fogel informed them that 58 percent of Vermont's college-bound seniors opt to attend out-of-state institutions, leaving approximately 1,500 of the roughly 6,000 Vermont high school graduates each year going to Vermont colleges and universities. That number is reduced further when looking at the number of students qualified to attend UVM. Some committee members said they wanted to keep in-state tuition (\$9,832 for 2006-2007) affordable, while at the same time not increase out-of-state tuition (\$24,816) at inordinate levels. In addition, a sensitivity analysis regarding financial aid was requested for the next meeting.

Future fundraising

Another hotly debated subject involved fundraising efforts and how they fit into the financial planning of the university. New trustee Susan Hudson-Wilson questioned whether the university's fundraising goals were high enough and asked for a fundraising model showing a minimum achievable goal and a "pie in the sky" goal. She said companies tend to grow faster when they set aggressive benchmarks, adding that the university could also benefit from a similarly aggressive mindset. Fogel said he intentionally keeps fundraising projections at a conservative level when planning and budgeting, but that he remains optimistic that fundraising can increase and plans to remain aggressive in searching out contributions from alumni and other potential donors.

Committee members also reviewed the university's debt policy with Chris Cowen of Prager, Sealy & Company, an investment firm specializing in higher education. The discussion centered on whether the university's current debt policy, which states that its debt-ratio not exceed five percent, is too conservative to allow the university to complete some of the major elements of its 10-year vision.

In addition to approving the acceptance of gifts and grants, committee members approved an FY 2008 state capital request of \$4 million for construction, renovation, and major maintenance. The final phase of a multi-year plan to bring summer tuition in line with tuition costs during the academic year was also passed. Tuition for summer 2007 will be \$410 per credit hour for in-state students and \$1,034 for out-of-state students.

Plant science and beyond

Trustees discussed a new strategic capital plan that maps out UVM's building and renovations priorities for the next 10 years. Improvements to the university's academic facilities are at the top of the list, with the long-discussed plant science building clearly targeted as the next major

new building project on the horizon. The plan builds on an extensive study and report on UVM's academic space needs prepared by Jane Knodell, associate professor of economics.

Provost John Hughes stressed that trustees would not be asked to consider future capital projects on an ad hoc basis, but within the context of a continually evolving long-term plan. For a number of departments, the future of academic space at UVM begins with the plant science building, a project with an anticipated price tag of \$47 million. The university has dedicated the state capital appropriations to this project for the past several years; together with federal support, public money would currently cover \$15.3 million of the plant science work.

Creating a new building for plant and soil science faculty currently in the Hills Building and plant biology faculty currently in Marsh Life Sciences would present the opportunity to renovate Hills and Marsh for a number of other departments on campus. Among the potential renovations and moves in the plan: Hills would be renovated as the new home of the psychology department; Marsh renovations would create space to unite faculty from nutrition and food sciences; renovation of Terrill Hall would create new and unified space for Animal Sciences; and Dewey Hall could be renovated for uses yet to be determined.

Other top priorities identified in the strategic capital plan include filling in the Given Building atrium space with four stories of office space, creating space and flexibility for more lab space elsewhere in Given; renovating and adding space to Cook Physical Sciences for the departments of chemistry and physics and the College of Engineering and Mathematics; and renovating Waterman to create space to bring together College of Arts and Sciences academic departments currently housed in small houses on campus and also to repurpose the building as a center for student service functions.

Provost Hughes noted that while it is clear the university cannot afford to do all of the top priority projects simultaneously, and no immediate timeline has been set, there would be considerable costs to academic quality if the university does not move ahead in this direction soon.

Signatures of Excellence

During a lunch discussion on Friday, Fogel and Hughes solicited feedback from trustees on the university's newly released academic vision, Signatures of Excellence, which the president said grew out of a highly collaborative process involving academic leadership, university faculty, and staff.

In addition to the array of "residential learning communities" the document envisions, Fogel said its emphasis on assessment of student learning, if done right, "could take us farther, faster than anything else, making our students themselves signatures of excellence."

According to board chair Carl Lisman, the document demonstrates that

“UVM is a leader, not a follower” interested in “innovation consistent with our history and the tradition of John Dewey,” UVM’s most famous alumnus.

Fogel was confident that the university can begin implementation of the program quickly, if incrementally.

Describing the residential learning communities, but making a broader point about how the vision will be implemented, Fogel said the university plans to “pilot down the river point by point.”

Other news:

William Neidt, vice president for development and alumni relations, reported that The Campaign for the University of Vermont has raised \$243 million toward the \$250 million goal. The campaign closes at the end of June 2007.

Applications for the 2007-08 academic year are up 33 percent from last year’s November numbers, creating a strong chance of surpassing 20,000 applications for the first time in UVM history.

The Committee on Socially Responsible Investing updated trustees on UVM’s selective divesture of investments in companies doing business supporting the Sudan government. Trustee John Snow presented the report and recommended that the university determine which stocks it has listed in the S&P 500 that have investments in Darfur and the cost of a tobacco-free/Sudan free investment portfolio.

The Budget, Finance and Investment Committee voted to create an Investment Subcommittee to handle many of the issues previously handled by the Investment Committee, including the development of an investment strategy.

Issues that would previously have fallen under the authority of the former Committee on Socially Responsible Investing are now the responsibility of the Budget, Finance and Investment Committee, which voted to send out a request to community members to solicit ideas and concerns related to certain investments. Based on the response, the committee will appoint work groups to study these issues and report back to committee members.

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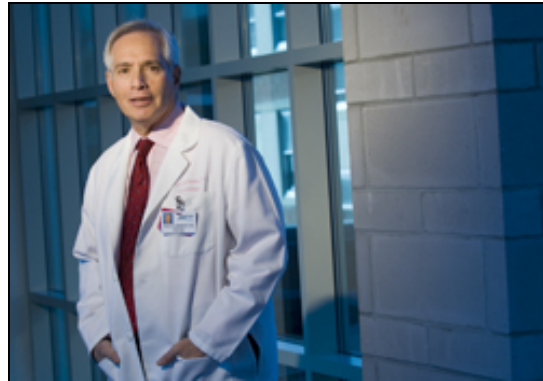
UVM HOMEPAGE

INTERview: Dr. Martin LeWinter

A new grant will make UVM a regional research center probing the causes of heart failure, a common and costly Medicare diagnosis

By Jennifer Nachbur

Article published Nov 13, 2006



Dr. Martin LeWinter, professor of medicine and molecular physiology and biophysics, hopes to make a major contribution to the prevention and treatment of diabetes-related heart failure. (Photo: Rajan Chawla)

Recent statistics from the American Heart Association show that after age 65, roughly 10 out of every 1,000 people per year suffer from heart failure, the ineffective pumping of the heart that leads to an accumulation of fluid in the lungs. As director of the heart failure program in the division of cardiology, Dr. Martin LeWinter, professor of medicine and molecular physiology and biophysics, examines heart failure as a clinician and a basic scientist. Among his many multi-year research studies are two projects designed to identify the molecular mechanisms responsible for a condition that causes heart failure called diabetic cardiomyopathy. LeWinter is the principal investigator of a new, \$1.25-million, five-year grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which will establish a regional consortium for conducting heart failure research in northern New England. Joining UVM in the consortium will be Albany (N.Y.) and St. Peter's Medical Centers, Catholic Medical Center and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire, McGill Medical Center in Montreal, Canada, and the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. UVM is one of eight institutions across the country that received funding to establish a Regional Clinical Center of the Heart Failure Clinical Research Network.

THE VIEW: What causes heart failure and what are its consequences, in terms of related health conditions, as well as from the perspective of economic burden?

MARTIN LEWINTER: Almost any disease process that can affect the heart can cause heart failure — heart valve disease, various types of congenital heart defects, alcoholism and viral infections are examples. However, the

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most important causes are coronary artery disease with associated damage to the muscular wall of the heart, hypertension and type 2 diabetes mellitus. Typically, these three major factors occur in various combinations. There is also a fairly large group of patients with what is termed idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy, meaning heart muscle disease without a known cause. Interestingly, recent evidence indicates that a significant proportion of these "idiopathic" cases are caused by mutations.

The symptoms of heart failure are mainly shortness of breath and peripheral fluid build-up. The severity of symptoms is extremely variable, ranging from minimal disability to patients who are bed-ridden. While the great majority of patients have at least some disability, modern treatment has had a major positive impact. Survival with heart failure 20 years ago was dismal, but there has been significant and progressive improvement. It is still a very serious problem, but there is real reason for hope in the majority of patients.

The economic burden of heart failure is enormous. It is the single most common diagnosis in Medicare patients and the costs are currently on the order of tens of billions of dollars per year.

What prompted the National Institutes of Health to set up regional research consortiums focused on heart failure?

Advances in basic science and technology have resulted in an explosion of potential new approaches to the management and treatment of heart failure and a need for efficient mechanisms to bring these approaches quickly from the laboratory to the bedside. The concept is to put together a group of diverse centers with expertise in heart failure that can accomplish clinical trials quickly and flexibly, with sufficient numbers of patients, and with great expertise. The studies envisioned for this network and the RCCs consist of novel management strategies that are not usually undertaken by the pharmaceutical industry and clinical trials of new therapies that require relatively small studies to test their efficacy in advance of larger, more definitive industry-funded trials. Some of these approaches might not be carried out by industry because of limited financial returns. A second major goal is to quickly disseminate the knowledge gained to practicing physicians, as well as industry.

What is UVM's history in this area of research? What information has your previous work in heart failure uncovered that will aid you in this regional effort?

UVM has a long history of both basic and translational NIH-funded research in heart failure, particularly in the areas of primary diseases of the heart muscle and responses of the heart muscle to chronic stress. The department of molecular physiology and biophysics, the cardiology unit in the department of medicine, and the cardiothoracic surgery unit have collaborated on this effort.

One of the most novel and unique aspects of UVM's heart failure research has involved the use of extremely small biopsies obtained by our cardiothoracic surgery colleagues during cardiac surgery. Though much of our understanding of basic disease mechanisms in heart failure has come from animal models and tissue obtained from end-stage, failing hearts at time of cardiac transplantation, these approaches have some real limitations and uncertainty with respect to their application in typical patients. Our biopsy techniques have allowed us to perform fundamental studies in patients during various phases of heart muscle disease and failure and to capture a more realistic understanding of basic mechanisms and treatment options. Roughly 300 such biopsies have been performed over the last 15-plus years.

The information we have uncovered using the biopsies and in other projects will aid in our regional effort. Our discoveries about the effects of diabetes mellitus on heart muscle have uncovered differences in fundamental aspects of heart muscle dysfunction in male and female diabetes patients, that may help explain some sex differences in long-term outcomes in diabetes patients with heart failure. Another discovery from our biopsy-based research has delineated how patients with heart failure lose the ability to respond normally to changes in heart rate, which has direct implications for treatment.

We understand that there are two research projects planned. What is the focus of these projects and how many study participants do you expect to enroll?

We submitted two proposed projects in applying for this grant, both of which are centered on diabetes and the heart. In the future, we will have opportunities to propose additional trials. One of the projects is a one-year, placebo-controlled, randomized trial of a class of insulin-sensitizing drugs known as PPAR- δ agonists that are used in the treatment of diabetes. Our hypothesis is that these drugs have unique properties (compared to other drugs used to treat diabetes) that will improve the effects of diabetes on the heart muscle. Many diabetes patients have heart muscle abnormalities that can be detected using a ultrasound testing (echocardiography), so we will use this technology to determine if improvement occurs over time with drug treatment. If our hypothesis is correct, this would constitute the first treatment shown to reverse the effects of diabetes on the heart muscle. The projected number of subjects for this trial is around 500. The other project will exploit our myocardial biopsy methods in patients with diabetes as well as hypertension, which typically occur together. This trial will require 160 to 170 patients willing to undergo biopsy during heart surgery.

At the end of the grant's five years, what do you and your colleagues hope to have discovered?

Diabetes has a number of deleterious effects on the heart that account for the fact that it is an extremely potent risk factor for heart failure. At the end of the five years, we hope to have made a real contribution to

the prevention and treatment of diabetes-related heart failure.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

UVM Researchers Provide Insight into Heart Disease

By Jennifer Nachbur

Article published Nov 14, 2006

Researchers from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the University of Vermont have discovered a key molecular mechanism that allows tiny flies and other "no-see-ums" to whirl their wings at a dizzying rate of up to 1,000 times per second. The findings were reported in the Oct. 30 - Nov. 3 online early edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

"We have determined important details of the biochemical reaction by which the fastest known muscle type — insect flight muscle — powers flight," said Douglas Swank, assistant professor of biology at Rensselaer and lead author of the PNAS paper.

The findings will help scientists gain a better understanding of how chemical energy is converted into muscle movements, such as human heart muscle pumping blood. The research also could lead to novel insights into heart disease, and might ultimately serve in the development of gene therapies targeted toward correcting mutations in proteins that detrimentally alter the speed at which heart muscle fibers contract.

Since insects have been remarkably successful in adapting to a great range of physical and biological environments, in large part due to their ability to fly, the research also will interest scientists studying the evolution of flight, Swank noted. The project is supported by a three-year \$240,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health and a four-year \$260,000 grant from the American Heart Association.

"It's exciting to discover how evolution, in terms of muscle performance, turned the family sedan into a race car to 'solve' the problem of acquiring the speed necessary to achieve flight in small insects," said co-author David Maughan, professor of molecular physiology and biophysics at the University of Vermont. "We identified changes that occurred in parts of the engine, the motor molecule myosin, that allowed the wings to operate at incredibly high rates, which is 200 beats per second for fruit flies. By gaining the ability to fly, insects were able to occupy a huge range of physical and biological environments and to emerge as one of nature's most successful living products."

The research is focused on a key component of muscle called myosin, the

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protein that powers muscle cell contraction. Swank's team focused its efforts on the fruit fly and asked a basic question: Why are fast muscles fast and slow ones slow? The researchers discovered that the reaction mechanism in insect flight muscle on the molecular level is different from how slower muscle types work.

"Most research has focused on slower muscle fibers in larger animals," Swank said. "By investigating extreme examples, e.g. the fastest known muscle type, the mechanisms that differentiate fast and slow muscle fiber types are more readily apparent."

In general, myosin breaks down adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the chemical fuel consumed by muscles, and converts it into force and motion. To do this, myosin splits ATP into two compounds, adenine diphosphate (ADP) and phosphate. Each compound is released from myosin at different rates. In slow-muscle contraction, ADP release is the slowest step of the reaction, but in the fastest muscle fibers, Swank's team has discovered that phosphate release is the slowest step of the reaction.

This finding is significant because the overall chemical reaction rate is set by the slowest step of the reaction. "What we have found is that in the fastest muscle type, ADP release has been sped up to the point where phosphate release is the primary rate-limiting step that determines how fast a muscle can contract," Swank said.

The next step, according to the researchers, is to experiment with other fast muscle types, such as the rattlesnake shaker muscle and fast mammalian muscle fibers. "By broadening our research, we will be able to determine if the phosphate release rate contributes to setting muscle speed in fast muscle types from other species," according to Swank.

Vivek Vishnudas, a graduate student in the department of biology at the University of Vermont was also a collaborator on the project.

Note: This article was adapted from a news release published by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute on Oct. 31, 2006.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Fleming Store's Annual Sale Runs Nov. 16-19

By The View Staff

Article published Nov 13, 2006

The Fleming Museum store's annual sale offers discounts of 15 to 20 percent on the store's selection of books, music, prints, jewelry, textiles, glass, baskets, cards, ceramics and more. It runs from Thursday to Sunday, Nov. 16 to Nov. 19.

The store is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Can't make the sale? UVM affiliates and Fleming members always receive a 10 percent discount on store purchases.

Information: 656-2273.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

'Inconvenient Truth' Producer Laurie David to Speak

By Jay Goyette

Article published Nov 13, 2006

Environmental activist Laurie David, producer of the documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth*, which was based on former vice president Al Gore's 30 years of research on global warming, will speak at Ira Allen Chapel on Wednesday, Nov. 29, at 6:30 p.m. The presentation, "Stop Global Warming: The Solution is You," is sponsored by the UVM Alumni Association's Vermont Regional Board and is free and open to the public.

Admission will be on a first-come, first-served basis. No tickets are required. Free parking will be available at the Gutterson Garage on Spear Street, with shuttle bus service from Patrick Gym to Ira Allen Chapel. Buses will run continuously from 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Laurie David has devoted herself to stopping global warming. She founded the [Stop Global Warming Virtual March](#) with Senator John McCain and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., that is engaging Americans from all walks of life in urging the U.S. to address the issue.

In addition to the Virtual March, she has produced several projects that raise awareness of global warming, including the release of her first book, *The Solution is You: Stop Global Warming – An Activist's Guide*, the comedy special *Earth to America!* for TBS, and an HBO documentary on global warming, *Too Hot Not to Handle*, which aired last spring. *An Inconvenient Truth* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and at the Cannes Film Festival, and has been awarded a rare Humanitas Prize Special Award as well as numerous other awards and accolades at film festivals around the world.

In October, David was honored by *Glamour Magazine* as one of its Women of the Year for her work on global warming. Earlier this year, she received the prestigious Gracie Allen Award for Individual Achievement by American Women in Radio & Television and the Natural Resources Defense Council 2006 Forces for Nature award.

Before working full time on environmental and political issues, Laurie David had a distinguished career in entertainment spanning two coasts. She and her husband, comedian Larry David, live in Los Angeles with their two daughters.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Berliner to Deliver Semester's Closing Burack Lecture

By The View Staff

Article published Nov 15, 2006

David Berliner, bestselling author and professor of education at Arizona State University, will deliver this fall's final Burack President's Distinguished Lecture, "Travesty: How federal educational policy corrupts educators while failing to educate America's poor," on Thursday, Nov. 16 in Ira Allen Chapel at 4 p.m.

A Fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Education, Berliner co-authored the 1995 bestselling book *The Manufactured Crisis*, which refuted myths about public schools and defended the institution from those who have criticized its effectiveness and viability.

Berliner's talk at UVM will examine the ways in which the No Child Left Behind policy has distorted assessment in our public schools without addressing inequality of education for the poor.

The talk is free and open to the public. A reception will immediately follow in Marsh Lounge, Billings.

Information: 656-2936.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Lecture Will Address Power of Non-profits

By The View Staff

Article published Nov 15, 2006

Robert Egger, founder of D.C. Central Kitchen, a Washington-based non-profit that recovers unused food and prepares and delivers it to partner social service agencies while training and employing homeless men and women in food service, will speak at UVM on Thursday, Nov. 16 at 5 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman.

The title of his lecture is "Turning Passion into Power: Nonprofits and Their Role in Shaping Change."

Egger is author of *Begging for Change: The Dollars and Sense of Making Nonprofits Responsive, Efficient and Rewarding for All*, which was awarded the 2005 McAdam Prize for "Best Nonprofit Management Book" by the Alliance for Nonprofit Management.

To learn more about D.C. Central Kitchen, visit its [website](#).

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Kunin, Bryan to Debate Term Lengths

By The View Staff

Article published Nov 15, 2006

On Tuesday, Nov. 28, Madeleine Kunin, former governor of Vermont, and Frank Bryan, professor of political science, will debate "Vermont's Two-Year Term: Anachronism or a Bastion of Democracy?" at 7 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building. Emerson Lynn, publisher of the *St. Albans Messenger*, will moderate.

Though Vermont is currently one of only two states that still employs a two-year gubernatorial term, legislators may propose a bill to expand term lengths in the upcoming legislative session. This discussion will consider the prudence of altering the government's structure to lengthen election cycles. It is the first in a series of planned activities to raise awareness about the future of term lengths in Vermont.

The debate is sponsored by The Snelling Center for Government and the Center for Research on Vermont and is free and open to the public.

Information: (802) 859-3090.

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November 8, 2006

Awards and Honors

Courtney Ehlers, a graduate student in the Department of Communication Sciences, received a research grant through the Organization for Autism Research's annual graduate research competition. Ehlers' project will examine the quality of narratives of children with autism spectrum disorders compared to children who are typically developing when presented with various types of tasks and when speaking to different listeners. Ehlers' research proposal was among 19 articles submitted in the OAR competition. The data from her study will be presented as a master's thesis in completion of graduate program requirements. It will also be submitted for inclusion at the national convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and eventually prepared for publication in a professional journal. Ehlers developed her study with the assistance of Patrica Prelock, professor and chair of communication sciences.

A segment of a course developed by **Kathleen Liang**, associate professor of community development and applied economics, won a national award. The course, "Introduction to Community Entrepreneurship," includes an activity that assembles students into small teams to create on-campus businesses with one dollar each in start up funding. The [Dollar Enterprise](#) activity received the National 3E Learning Best Practice Award. The program is made possible through the support of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and is developed and managed through collaboration between Delta Epsilon Chi and the George Washington University Center for Entrepreneurship Excellence.

Liang was also elected to the board of directors for InventVermont, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization with the mission to promote innovation, invention and creativity through educational programs and by providing a mechanism for sharing information among its members and associates. The organization develops and nurtures the capabilities of its members to conceive, develop, patent, market and benefit from the innovation process.

The School of Business Administration's **Vermont Business Center** received a grant from the Vermont Training Program for Manufacturing Businesses, a program of the Vermont Department of Economic Development. The funding provides Vermont manufacturers with the opportunity to attend the VBC's Leadership and Management Certificate seminars, as well as the VBC's Business Coaching Certificate for Leaders

and Managers program, at 50 percent of regular fees. The state training program promotes industrial expansion and encourages the creation and retention of jobs in manufacturing by providing training for new and existing businesses. The VBC taps the faculty and curriculum of the UVM MBA program to support the state's growing businesses. To learn more about upcoming seminars, to register for a seminar or to learn about the grant funding, please visit [Vermont Business Center](#).

Publications and Presentations

Sean Field, assistant professor of history, recently published *Isabelle of France: Capetian Sanctity and Franciscan Identity in the Thirteenth Century*. (University of Notre Dame Press, 2006). The book uses a wealth of previously unstudied material to address significant issues in medieval religious history and draw the life of a remarkable medieval woman who is a significant figure in French and Franciscan history.

David Jones, assistant professor of business administration, conducted a workshop at the fall conference for the Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility. The workshop was co-conducted with Paul Millman, CEO of Chroma Technology, who focused on employee-owned companies. Jones' presentation was titled "Effects of Socially Responsible Practices on the Workforce: Benefits for Firms & Their Employees." He discussed research on the link between socially responsible business practices and organizations' financial performance, and covered the reasons that explain this relationship. Jones offered some practical suggestions and concluded with some preliminary findings from a study in which he is testing his ideas.

Mary Malina, assistant professor of business administration, co-authored an article with Hanne Nørreklit (Arhus School of Business, Denmark) and Frank Selto (University of Colorado at Boulder) which has been accepted for publication in *Contemporary Accounting Research*. The study, titled "Relations Among Measures, Climate of Control and Performance Measurement Models," concludes that effective management control does not require statistically significant cause-and-effect relations in a performance measurement model when other factors create a strong climate of control. Malina, along with co-authors Margaret Abernethy (University of Melbourne), Malcolm Horne (Monash University), Anne Lillis (University of Melbourne) and Frank Selto, received the Management Accounting Research 2005 David Solomons Prize. This prize is awarded annually for the best paper in the view of the editors and the editorial board. Their paper, "A Multi-Method Approach to Building Causal Performance Maps from Expert Knowledge," describes a triangulated approach to building the foundations of a causal performance measurement model.

Susan Maude, assistant professor in early childhood special education, presented the results of a three-year research study with colleagues from the University of North Carolina, the University of Colorado and George Mason University at two conferences this fall. The study, "Crosswalks,"

focused on ways to infuse cultural, linguistic and ability diversity within pre-service early childhood personnel preparation programs across North Carolina. The conferences included the Division for Early Childhood in Little Rock in October and the National Association for Multicultural Education in Phoenix in November.

Matthew Wilson, research assistant professor of business administration and research fellow at the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, has completed guest-editing a special issue in the journal *Ecological Economics: Environmental Benefits Transfer: Methods, Applications and New Directions*. Comprised of 14 peer-reviewed papers, the special issue grew out of collaborative discussions following a workshop jointly sponsored by U.S. EPA and Environment Canada in the spring of 2005 in Washington, DC. The purpose of the special issue is to elucidate the state-of-the-art and science of environmental benefit transfer and to assist practitioners and policy makers in the design and reporting of future transfer research. The articles in the special issue can be accessed via Science Direct at the following address: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09218009>

November 1, 2006

Awards and Honors

Howard Ball, professor emeritus in political science, **Alexander Stewart**, associate professor in the music department, and **Robert Bartlett**, associate professor in political science, were awarded Fulbright Scholarships for 2006-2007. Ball is spending six months at the University of Szeged in Hungary as a distinguished lecturer on American Constitutional Interpretation. Alexander returned in May after spending ten months in Oaxaca, Mexico conducting research at the Black Mexico Association on "Afro-Mestizo Identity: Music and Culture in Mexico's Costa Chica." Bartlett is scheduled to conduct research and serve as a distinguished lecturer on "International Cooperation in Environmental Policy; EU Institutions and Civil Society Governance in Italy" at Polytechnic Institute of Turin, Italy from February to May of 2007.

Judith Van Houten, director of Vermont EPSCoR and professor of biology, received the 2006 Jackie M. Gribbons Leadership Award from the the Office of Vermont Women in Higher Education. The award is presented to a woman who has demonstrated leadership ability, served as a model and mentor, developed innovative programs, and contributed significantly to the institution and profession.

Robyn Warhol, professor of English has been elected to the Supervisory Board of the English Institute. Located at Harvard University, the English Institute has for decades provided an ongoing discussion of new developments in scholarship, literary criticism and literary theory at an annual conference. For a three-year term, Professor Warhol joins nine other board members in planning topics and selecting speakers at the