

Shifting Dullness

May, 1994



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Crystal Bernstein

Everybody's talking about it. It's the subject of grand rounds throughout the medical center. It brings itself to our attention by the way of booklets distributed to residents enumerating the cost of various laboratory tests and medical procedures. Yes, it's cost-effective health care, and we're reminded daily of the need to live by its doctrine. Yet despite all the talk, medical students rarely find themselves actually practicing cost effectiveness. We blithely order our daily CBCs, Chem 7s, VDRLs, coronary catheterizations, full-body MRIs and the like without batting an eyelash. Many of us wouldn't even know how to practice cost effectiveness if given free reign in our clinical doings. And the medical school administrators have decided it's time to change all that.

Starting next year, second-year medical students will take a class to learn how to be more cost effective. How will this fit into a year that's already 14 months long? Well, the psychiatry rotation will be shortened from eight to six weeks, and the class will be taught during the two weeks gained. The actual mechanics of the course are still being worked out in twice-monthly meetings held by the directors of the class, Dr. Lloyd Michener and Dr. Victoria Johnson, both of the department of community and family medicine.

The class will most likely consist of lectures and small group discussions aimed at assessing cost effectiveness. Students will also have some interaction with patients and their medical records. Some time will be devoted to reviewing patients' charts, examining what studies and procedures have been ordered, how much money these cost, and how necessary they are. Students will look at how the cost of medical care has changed over the years and try to determine whether it's possible to practice cost effective health care in the 90's.

Students will spend one to two hours each day

in lectures, Johnson said. They will also perform detailed assessments of patient cases gathered from sites around the medical center. These assessments will involve talking to the patient and the patient's family, looking at the patient's medical record, and evaluating the patient's hospital bill. Students will be given two to three days after their initial assessment to consider the patient's case and alternative treatments and diagnostic methods that could have been used which would have cost less. They will present the patient's case in a small group meeting at the end of three days and then start to work on a new case. Each student will present three cases, write up one of the cases, and turn in a final project. Options for this project will include a cost effectiveness comparison of different drugs used to treat a problem or different drugs within a certain class or a recommendation for a system or process change at DUMC. Eighteen to twenty faculty members from around the medical center have volunteered to lead small groups. The class will first be given in October of this year for second year students who have psychiatry as their first rotation. Dr. Johnson is now trying to trouble shoot and iron out any glitches that may arise..

The implementation of a cost effective health care class is one of several changes that will occur in the medical school curriculum within the next few years as changes in health care policy make their way down to "big, slow-moving, sleeping things in North Carolina" (in the words of Dean Ralph Snyderman), namely, Duke University Medical Center. In order to help us better understand and appreciate maintaining continuity of health care in patients, Duke students will eventually begin following patients in their first year in a Clinical Arts-type class and continue to follow them throughout their second, third and fourth

(cont Page 4)



A Look to the Future of Shifting Dullness

As new editors of Shifting Dullness, we are seeking to continue the proud tradition of the newspaper. We are also attempting to add our own creative ideas in order to create a paper that is interesting for you. We need your input. For those of you that are familiar with us, please do not hesitate to criticize what you perceive as mediocre and praise what you find exemplary. If you have never met us, we are available at 490-5703 and are eager to hear your opinions about what is being published.

You can expect to see some changes to the newspaper which could even be more revolutionary than new fonts. We plan to have a new PERSONALS section, which would be utilized for students to send messages and publish any announcements that may not be considered official (i.e. selling textbooks, movie nights, birthdays). We will feature a monthly personal interview column with a prominent faculty member to allow students to become better acquainted with our teachers. I.M. sports high-

The Editors lights will be published monthly, and the most agile among us may be honored with the "Athlete of the Month" award. Finally, we plan to expand advertising in Shifting Dullness, as we will allow local businesses and possibly pharmaceutical companies to submit advertisements.

To implement these proposed modifications to our paper, we need dedicated and ambitious people who are willing to contribute as writers, artists, photographers, pundits, and advertising coordinators. We would appreciate any regular time commitment. We have occasionally heard the contention that Shifting Dullness is a newspaper that is neither read nor even given a passing thought by most medical students. If this statement is true, then the student body as a whole is to blame because of a lack of effort. If you feel Shifting Dullness is inadequate, then we expect you to help to actively change it. We, as editors, plan to assemble a document that will change your life and move your soul. Join us!

Shifting *STAFF* Dullness

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Any and all submissions are welcome and need only be placed in the "Shifting Dullness Box" located underneath the candy shelf in the Deans' Office. Please submit your material on a 3.5 disk utilizing Microsoft Word. Word Perfect programs on IBM software are also acceptable.

Englegate Revisited

E. Bach

Dear Shifting Dullness,

I would like to write a response to Chris Woods' eloquent appeal on the merits of the Engel Society. I have no argument that the society is a distinguished, long-standing memorial to a fine man. I would like to share my experience, as a nonmember.

When I finally heard about the Engel Society, it was not in sophisticated conversation and it did not arise from discussing medical, legal, ethical or humanitarian issues with one of the Engel members. Instead, I felt excluded from the Engel Society by their very covert existence in an otherwise open environment. I felt as though I had received my condign censure for having failed to distinguish myself and my convictions to the elder Engel cognescenti, who fraternally chose members from our class.

Whom did they choose? Actually, the members were not in mine and others' estimation the individuals who espoused the ideals that the Engel Society purports to embrace. In fact, they were individuals with whom I rarely had a conversation the likes of which was evidently standard at the cloaked Engel Society meetings. I was even willing to bring my brandy sniffer.

If this sounds defensive, then I regret. We on the fringe below the mean don't regret diplomatic efforts in secret club elections. Your clandestine activities don't threaten the huddling masses. We only ask that you don't hide

behind a cloak of undeclared, uncertain and unsworn ideals, claiming to be the direct descendants of the dignitaries that line the amphitheatre walls. Can't you send some of your minutes to the New England Journal for the greater edification?

The Engel Society may have changed. In particular, the graduating members of this year's class form a cadre of fine students who would be a pleasure to dine with, converse and proceed with the matters that Engel would have us probe. This letter is not addressed to this year's class, except insofar as Dr. Woods' letter is concerned.

If the Engel Society became democratic, it would lose the advantage of kin selection. Secret cabinets work because they only include members that work together well, and are not derived from the electorate. Had I been talented enough to make first team Engel in a democratic vote, I would not want to dine informally with some of the lunchmeats who had the strongest opinions. So, Engel Society, keep your selection process, but spare us the self-aggrandizement.

In my experience, in the class of '91, the honorable society was regarded as a secret social quill and dagger society by the majority of nonmembers. Maybe it would have been different if Engel Society members had populated some of the nonmedical conferences? It must be different now. Vive' Engel!

(Crystal Ball cont)

years. Though the details of this sort of class have not yet been worked out, people have begun to toss around ideas about how a class could best be structured.

It's clear that changes in health care policy are starting to trickle down to medical students. We can only hope these changes will decrease the shock we experience as we become licensed medical practitioners.



MS II's Awarded Prestigious Scholarships

—Matt Hepburn

Eighteen students of the class of 1996 have opted to take full advantage of their third year research experience by obtaining one-year scholarships for their efforts. Through programs such as the Hughes Medical Research Training Fellowships and the Stead scholarships, students receive tuition grants and sometimes stipends for laboratory research and travel.

The Hughes Medical Research Training Fellowships involves the students developing a research proposal by December of their second year in close coordination with a lab preceptor. Sixty students throughout the country are chosen for the award according to the merits of their research plan. Since the Duke curriculum is well-suited to the requirements of the scholarship, Duke students traditionally have met with much success in being awarded this scholarship. This year is no exception. Ten students have received fellowships for the academic year 1994-95. They are: Anjali Advani, Louis Brenner, Ketan Bulsara, William Downey, Jeffrey Hardacre, Brian Krol, Carla Macguire, Shannon Putman, Joseph Paydagar, and Jason Weinberg. These scholars are anticipating fulfilling lab experiences, as Shannon Putman suggests that, "I am looking forward to next year because I can't wait to see our basic science knowledge applied in a laboratory environment.

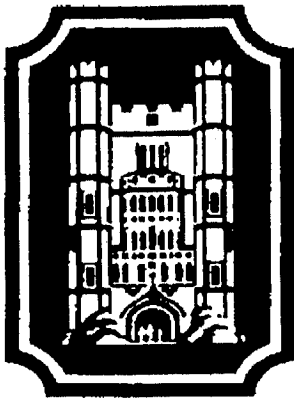
Plus, I no longer have to worry about the tuition bill for at least one year."

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute also sponsors a scholarship in conjunction with the NIH Research Scholars Program for students to research for 9-12 months in an NIH lab. Housing is provided in "The Cloisters" on the NIH campus. Thirty students are chosen each year for the program. Jay Rao has been selected to participate in this program beginning in the fall.

A number of Duke research scholarships have been awarded to second year students as well. Five students have been awarded Eugene A. Stead Research Scholarships, which involve a similar process of selecting a lab, designing a project, and applying for the scholarship before February 1st. Each of these scholarships is associated with a particular person. The winners are Paul Baird (Nicewander scholarship), Linda Fetko (Hartford Scholarship), Christopher Gamard (Hartford Scholarship), Charles B. Hare (Loo Ghee Scholarship), and Ben Yeh (McDaniel Scholarship). The Gorrell Award For Research In Psychosis has been awarded to Matthew Flynn.

The Stanley J. Sarnoff Society Endowment For Cardiovascular Science is a year-long fellowship to sponsor cardiovascular research by a student who can study anywhere in the United States but outside their own medical school. The student is also provided funding for travel to the American Heart Association's annual conference. Albert Chang has been selected to be a Sarnoff Scholar for the academic year 1994-95.

These scholarships help to stimulate interest in basic science and inspire these students to conduct quality research as Stead Scholar Chris Gamard explains, "The scholarship has motivated me to be more ambitious about what I can accomplish during my third year research project." The office of Dr. Galen Wagner (286-8829) coordinates the scholarship programs available for third year students and can be contacted for more information.



Update from the Student Computer Interest Group

—Emile El-Shammaa

NEW MEDLINE — The Medical Center Library has switched over its Medline system to the unix-based OVID to allow more features and more versatility in the system. The general structure of medline is unchanged, but there are changes in access by modem, printing/downloading, and other minor things. The library has made a special effort to make the transition as smooth as possible, and there are several useful information sheets available in the library.

SPOTLIGHTED SOFTWARE — In case you haven't heard about this already, the Med Center Library and CTL have teamed up to present a multidisciplinary set of presentations & demos of medical-related software for students and faculty. Some of the upcoming topics include: Power Point, Universal Precautions, Gerontology, and Anatomy. The presentations are at different locations, and most take place from 12 to 1pm. Stop by CTL or the library for more info! DOS — If all you PC users are like me, you haven't been going out and buying a new version of DOS every time they come out with a new one (ie every month). In fact, I've been on DOS 3.3 for about

a zillion years now (any DOS 2.x users out there?)! Well, I hate to say it, but I finally upgraded. The new DOS 6.x is out, and it has bunch of very useful features. First of all, it saved me from buying a new hard disk with its disk compression utility, Doubledisk. It also has a virus checker, backup software, a memory manager, and many useful utilities. If this saves you from going out and buying special software for each one of these, it'll save you a good deal of money. So if you're a DOS user, I highly recommend upgrading.

Finally, interest in the Student Computer Interest Group had waned over the last few years. If you are interested in providing a computer-related service to the medical center students, like serving on committees, shareware, evaluating software for CTL, writing articles for Shifting Dullness, arranging for guest speakers, etc., please contact Michael Jones at 286-2752. Thanks!

Community Service Update

Duke Children's Miracle Network Fair....Sunday June 5th is the big day!!!! Med students traditionally have organized and run this carnival which, held on the grass adjacent to the Bryan Neurosciences building, is attended by patients from Duke North, the Ronald McDonald House, Lenox Baker as well as by Duke and Durham community kids. One of the highlights of the afternoon is the Kiss-A-Pig Contest. The contest consists of a month-long competition between five or six high-profile members of the Duke community to raise money for Duke Children's Hospital. The contestant who raises the most money at the end of the month has the honor of kissing a pig at the Children's Miracle Fair. Last year the Kiss-A-

—Steven Crowley
Pig Contest alone raised over \$7000.00!!! This year's contestants include Dr. Michael Frank, Dr. Charles Hammond and several other Duke and Durham celebrities. Help organizing the contest and the fair is needed. Please call Steve Crowley @383-1047 if you are interested in getting involved.

Habitat for Humanityis REALLY in need of extra hands this time of year as they lose Duke undergrads until September. Contact Claire Horton (490-6316) if you are interested in spending a few hours on any Saturday this summer.

Muscular Dystrophy Association.....The MDA Summer Camp in Chapel Hill is currently seeking volunteers for their camp which pro-

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Shifting Dullness



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Andrea Coviel
President



Steve Crowley
Community S



Julie Lapp
Intramural Sp

May, 1994

The New Davidson Executive Council '94



Andrea Coviello
President

This council has a lot of potential to make medical school worthwhile and fun for everyone. I am looking forward to the challenges of bringing our medical school closer together.



Vickie Ingledue
Secretary

As Davison Council Secretary, I want to provide a strong link between the Davison Council and the medical student body. The Davison Council is involved in a diverse array of activities in the medical center and the community. During the next year, I hope to find better ways to inform the entire medical school of the Council's activities and the opportunities for involvement.



Steve Crowley
Community Service Chairperson

I am hopeful about the future of community service at Duke because Shifting Dullness offers such a fine means of publicity.



Martin Clowse
Treasurer

Martin is currently on his surgery rotation and not available for comment. He has served on the Davison Council for two years and organized the note service for the class of 1996. We are convinced that he will make an outstanding treasurer.



Julie Lapp
Intramural Sports Chairperson

I plan to approach this job with the vigor and enthusiasm with which I led the Class of '96 softball team to two perfect seasons. My goals are to get more students involved in IM sports and to help reduce the collective stress of the medical school. It would also be nice if we earned a few wins.



Greg Della Rocca
Social Chairperson

I am interested in a strong social schedule for the medical school. I will do what it takes to assure a social schedule that caters to all of the widely-varied interests of the medical students here. Thanks for your support.

May, 1994



Community Service Update continued from page 6

vides a week of fun and activities to kids suffering from Muscular Dystrophy. The camp is being held from Saturday June 18th to Sunday June 26th. Call your local Davison Council Rep or Officer for details.

ONGOING.....

Homeless shelter..... Opportunities to lend a hand abound at Durham's homeless shelter..Call Steve Crowley if you are interested in volunteering at Durham's homeless shelter.

Soup Kitchen...On the 2nd Sunday of every month 2-3 students donate two hours of their time to help prepare, cook and serve meals at a local soup kitchen. Call Betsy Rollins (688-7378) if you are interested in helping out.

Battered Women Coalition Update.....Volunteers have been staffing the Duke Emergency Room since December 1st. Anyone interested in becoming involved next year with the project should contact Raquel Buranowsky (383-6109).

DAVISON COUNCIL NEWS

Vickie Ingledue, Secretary

--The rerun election for MSIV Davison Council representatives will be held from May 20-June 15. MSIVs, ballots are in your boxes. ALL MSIVs, PLEASE VOTE!!

--Great Escapes hiking trip to Stone Mountain--Saturday, June 4. Call Andrea Coviello for details.

--Next Davison Council Party--Saturday, June 18 at the Ponderosa House. The residents' band "Slow Down, Deaf Cat" will perform!

--Orientation plans for the incoming MSIs are underway. Contact Lisa Criscione if you'd like to be involved.

--IM softball season underway as of May 19! If you are interested in playing on the Duke Med team, call Julie Lapp (419-8422) for details.

--The Medical Center Library wants a medical student to serve on the library advisory committee. The committee meets over lunch four times per year and lunch IS provided. The next meeting is July 25. If interested, call Andrea Coviello (286-2574).



Announcements

***Study Away Information for Rising Fourth Years:** If you are interested in doing a rotational away form Duke during your fourth year, the Study Away Elective Booklets are located in the Medical Center Library in the Reserve section in a file drawer labeled "Study Away Elective Booklets." For other information and an application to study away, contact Barbara Gentry in M129 Davison, Medical Education, or call 684-5901.

Women in Medicine Group and all others interested:

An informational/organizational meeting will be held on June 8th at 6:30 in the South Amphitheater to discuss chartering an AMWA Chapter at Duke. Dr. Dell, National President Elect of AMWA, and Dr. Susan List, Psych. Resident and former President Elect of the Amwa Chapter at the Medical College of Ohio, will be present to facilitate discussion and answer questions. We hope to see you there!!! If you can't make the meeting and have questions, please call Andrea Coviello(286-2574) or Allison Evanoff Rooney (383-7067).

MSIVS:

1. Residency/Match Info: The Dean's have scheduled a Class Meeting Thursday, May 26, 1994 at 5:00 pm in the South Amphitheater to discuss the Match, study away, military match, early match programs, and any other concerns you might have about fourth year.

2. Residency Info.: Preprinted postcards are available in CTL to mail to residency programs to request information. The first 20 cards are free, after which they cost 2-3 cents per card.

SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT:

For those of you doing rotations at the VA: Although the Security Alert Vans do not pick up students at the VA during off hours, Public Safety will pick students up at the VA at any time and take you to your car in PG3 or other parking areas. Call Public Safety at 684-2444 to request a ride from the VA to your car. Please be aware that walking to PG3 and other remote parking areas is not safe at night.

Shifting Dullness

Roadside Assistance

It was a gruelly light of day since while walking to completed back-roughly one hour time for a Sa uninitiated, the today: mediastin read anything. hour, I'll skim what I can. Okay corner to Dr. begins. That w and-so, you rea well. Have a se here come the :

We're now l Already, two of the Great Scre have migrated my impression appears direct obscuring my overhead proj dark wood. In wood-frame dangled some sat and adm Slides clicked this Object la drapes rustle Slides clicke wafting past dogwood and outside) and

"Mr. DiC you like to s Waves room.

Oops. A strict such a situ Sympatheti maximum.

Roadside Assistance, cont. from page 10.

It was a grueling Tuesday. I hadn't seen the light of day since Saturday, and that was only while walking to the parking deck. I had just completed back-to-back call nights, getting roughly one hour of sleep per night, and it was time for a Sabiston conference (for the uninitiated, these are important). The topic for today: mediastinal masses. Lucky me, I haven't read anything. No problem, I've got half an hour, I'll skim the Big Red Book and absorb what I can. Okay, it's time, I take my seat, catty-corner to Dr. Sabiston, and the conference begins. That was a fine presentation, Mr. So-and-so, you really covered your patient's story well. Have a seat. *Dting*, out go the lights and here come the slides.

We're now halfway through the slide show. Already, two of the four televisions surrounding the Great Screen in the Endosurgery Center have migrated around the walls (at least, that's my impression). Then, out of nowhere, an object appears directly between Dr. Sabiston and me, obscuring my view of him. It was shaped like an overhead projector, only larger, and made of dark wood. In place of the projector head was a wood-frame basket, and from this basket dangled some rather luxuriant green drapes. I sat and admired this great Object for a while. Slides clicked past. I began to believe that in this Object lay the secret of Peace and Life. The drapes rustled as if in a cool, spring breeze. Slides clicked past. I imagined that breeze wafting past me, imagined the heady scent of dogwood and cut grass (after all, it was spring outside) and . . .

"Mr. DiCuccio, given this X-ray, what would you like to see next?"

Waves of dead silence rolled across the room.

Oops.

A strict analysis of one's brain function in such a situation might run something like this: *Sympathetic system on. Adrenal function to maximum. Sphincter tone to high. Verify eyes*

open, look forward. Get that !@#\$\$% Object out of the way. Cremasteric tone at maximum. Danger, danger Will Robbins . . .

On the screen was a PA chest film, with a noticeable honker in the left upper lobe. I sat, bewildered, completely lost. We could have been talking about Rumanian cattle husbandry for all I knew. I stuttered. I stammered. I thought for a split second, *This isn't so bad, I can wrangle my way through this.* No reasonable answers came to mind, and so I bailed. Fast. "Uh, I'm sorry, Sir, I don't know. I'm sorry." Funny, I remember saying "I'm sorry" quite a few times.

(P.S. - For those of you who may benefit from this in the future, given the topic of "mediastinal masses" and a PA chest film, the answer is always "Sir, I'd like to see a lateral, please." Engrave this upon your brain. To their benefit, half the class whispered this answer to me, but as sheer terror had seized my brain, I did not hear them. Incidentally, the correct follow-up to this particular film was a chest CT, not a lateral film. So much for hard-and-fast rules.)

The conference rolled on, and another brave soul correctly answered Dr. Sabiston's question. I continued in a state of hyperarousal, and the lovely Object, behind which lay Peace and Tranquility, never reappeared. I attempted to repair my hopeless situation by correctly answering a question or two later on, but all was lost. Against all my better judgement, I had been nailed by the Boss for sleeping in His lecture. Pray this never happens to you, gentle readers, for this is bad.

Needless to say, I, like so many other students who have slept soundly hugging their knees in the Endosurgery Center or who have fallen asleep on selected attendings' shoulders, survived Surgery. People ask how one survives on four hours of sleep a night for seven weeks - and the answer is, "You do." Really, time passes quickly and your obligation is brief. And then, my friends, you may sleep, and, perchance, dream.

"Sleep, or what we wish we were doing . . ."

"To sleep - perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub . . ."
Hamlet III.i.65

The sleep-deprived mind is certainly a force to be reckoned with. It can wreak havoc with one's personality and turn one into a mindless beast with but one goal: reaching a comfortable bed as fast as possible. For those ignoble peons preparing to begin clinical rotations or internships, or perhaps for those rising third year students eagerly anticipating a much-deserved break, a short course in relevant sleep terminology may be in order.

We are all indebted to the Surgical service for generating the most fascinating sleep term of all: *rack*. Four hours of sleep at night with perhaps an hour long snooze during a lecture does not constitute a meaningful rest, and so this pseudo-sleep is renamed rack. This word is equally useful as a noun or verb, in such memorable phrases as "He's racking like a big dog," or "Man, I got one of the nicest hours of rack in that lecture." And of course, there's always Grand Rack, er, Rounds. Remember, arrive early; wall seats go fast.

Then, of course, there's the phenomenon of *cephalic dyskinesia*. Many of you may recognize this as the familiar "head bobbing" action of one whose reticular activating system is, shall we say, somewhat hypofunctional. The nice thing about this phenomenon is that a well-placed head bob can often be misinterpreted (or rationalized) as a tacit agreement with a lecturer's comments, cleverly hiding one's true condition. The amazing thing about cephalic dyskinesia is its essentially unlimited duration. I have personally witnessed many who, in attempting to remain awake for potentially interesting lectures, will remain in a state of subawareness with active cephalic dyskinesia for twenty minutes or more.

One must also consider forms of sleeping during lectures or grand rounds. For this, the official Olympic system may apply in awarding points for style. There is the classic *head prop*, in which one props one's head in an upright position against one's hand in an attempt to maintain a forward and balanced gaze while one sleeps; this is the most benign of all, but carries a significant degree of difficulty due to its power and grace. The head tuck is also commonly practiced with good effect. Countless are the times when, peering across a row, one can witness one's classmates sitting upright, chin touching chest, a thin rainbow of drool trailing out of their mouths. The more spectacular fetal tuck involves curling into a complete fetal position in one's chair - a feat only accomplished by true Rackmasters (you know who you are). Degree of difficulty: 3.9. Finally, to mention point deductions, there are those unfortunates who inadvertently fall asleep on an attending's shoulder during grand rounds (don't worry - we know who you are).

No problem greets the chronically sleep-deprived with a greater vengeance than outright hallucinations. One easily enters a psychosis-like dream world in which Forms of Unknown Origin (FUO) appear randomly. I personally have witnessed floating clipboards replete with pages of neatly arranged "To Do" boxes. This is not an isolated phenomenon; many friends have confided in me that they, too, have experienced such problems after back-to-back call nights. Nowhere, however, can hallucinations betray oneself than in *really* important lectures - say, a Sabiston conference. This I have also experienced. What follows, then, is not pretty, folks.



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