

THE PULSE

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University of Oregon Medical School

February 16, 1970

SEXUALITY OF MEDICAL STUDENTS at the University of Pennsylvania was recently studied by Dr. John Mudd and Dr. Richard Siegel. Among their results was a positive correlation (p less than 0.001) between the number of coital partners and the feeling of sexual competence in social situations. They also point out, however, that the patterns of anxiety during various patient contacts were remarkably independent of prior coital experience or feelings of social confidence. --- NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE, Vol. 281: 1397-1403

WIDENING PATIENT-MD GAP Over the decade 1955-65, the increase in physicians who went into patient care was less than population growth. In the five years since 1965, according to the NEW REPUBLIC (Jan. 7, 1970), this gap has widened.

SAMA MOVES Office space for SAMA has been allocated by Associate Dean M. Roberts Grover. Room 4352 in Outpatient Clinic building will serve as the new headquarters for SAMA. Originally designed as a resident's room, the new facility has built-in desks, a few chairs, a blackboard and files. This office will be used by the PULSE editors; the recently hired PULSE Executive Editor, Miss Trudi York, and the students involved in various projects. Any student attempting to initiate a project is welcome to use the available facilities.

APPALACHIAN PROJECT Two hundred health professional students will be placed by the 1970 Appalachian Student Health Project for work in the Appalachian areas of eight eastern and southeastern states. Nine-week preceptorships are available for the year beginning in June of 1970, and stipends are provided for each student. Further information on the planned project is available from Paul Wright, Division of Community Health, Student American Medical Association, 2635 Flossmoor Road, Flossmoor, Illinois 60422.

ZERO POPULATION MEETS on Tuesday Feb. 17 at 5:00 PM in Room 1162 of the Administration Bldg. A film, The Squeeze, will be shown. All members and interested persons are urged to attend the Health Professions Chapter of Zero Population Growth.

PSU COURSES Anyone interested in enrolling in outside courses at Portland State University can do so without charge by obtaining a note from the Registrar.

Dear Readers,

For the past two years the editors of The Pulse have attempted to present a representative and stimulating newspaper for your scrutiny. With growing financial, administrative and scheduling problems, it was decided among those students interested in preserving this form of communication to change the entire Pulse image.

Starting with this issue, the Pulse will come out every two weeks as a four-page newsletter. The Pulse will remain a medical school community effort. One page will relay general news, one half page will be reserved for SAMA news and the remainder will present articles, letters and editorials from students, faculty, administrators and Oregon physicians.

Financially, the Pulse was faced with extinction unless some change was instituted. Formerly, each issue was costing about \$250 with the OMA providing staff and lay-out work. With the newsletter format, the costs will be cut to at least one-third of the original amount.

The Pulse is also changing its editorial board---thanks to an influx of enthusiastic and optimistic freshmen. Bud Nicola will act as coordinating editor. There is a large new staff and most of the former editors and contributors will continue their involvement.

We sincerely thank all those who recently contributed to our cause. We would appreciate any comments or advice you may have and hope to continue with much improved service.

Thank you for your patience and good faith.

Diane Williams

TO THE EDITOR:

This year as in the past, medical students and doctors will receive many free gifts from the various drug companies. Although the name of the generous company may be quickly forgotten and much value obtained from the gifts, one should consider certain topics before acceptance.

The pharmaceutical industry has a unique position in our economic system concerning the marketing of its products. Those who buy their products do not order, and those who order do not buy. (I am referring, of course, to prescription drugs.) This is without question the way it should be, so that drugs will be used intelligently and not misused. This situation makes it necessary for the drug industry to aim its advertising not to the recipient of their product, but to those who order. Over the years drug promotion and advertising has gotten somewhat out of hand with drug companies spending about \$3000 per year for each physician in the U.S. This totals up to \$800 million per year, this amount being added to the price of drugs.

Since a doctor is paid for services rendered, the patient should not be taxed in addition, via the price of drugs, for free gifts for the doctor.

Stephen Thomas, MS III

NERVE GAS AND ENVIRONMENT

Jack H. Fellman

(Ed. Note: Dr. Fellman of the Biochemistry Department received his PhD in Biochemistry at the University of Kansas. Following Post-doctoral work with Dr. Quastel in Neurochemistry at McGill, Dr. Fellman joined the UO staff. His primary research interests include metabolism of neurohumorals and inborn errors of metabolism associated with mental deficiency.)

The proposed shipment of nerve gases from Okinawa for storage in Hermiston raises another issue of contemporary concern; that is, the issue of environment. Earlier last year the Army's Chemical Warfare Division hit upon another such questionable transshipment plan. They seemed determined to transport by rail an estimated 27,000 tons of deadly gases from Colorado to the East coast. The nerve gases were to be loaded on ships and dropped into the ocean. It took a major effort on the part of many Congressmen to persuade the army to alter its plan. Congress passed legislation requiring the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and the Surgeon General to determine the hazards of such shipments and to recommend appropriate procedures to withdraw from the controversy and set up procedures to destroy the gas in Colorado. In that instance the issue was closed.

Many interesting attitudes surfaced in that contest, attitudes which we must change if we intend to occupy this planet. Firstly, the decision to ship these deadly materials was made without initially apprizing the public of the hazards. It seems to me only fair that if our lives are being placed in the balance, we are owed at least the evidence that this act is taken for sound reasons. Furthermore, I am more than casually concerned as to the nature of the hazards and what measure can be taken to diminish the risks. All sorts of odd thoughts stream in -- in a nation so rich with marksmen, I wonder about the gifted psychopath who hopes to work out some demented notion by taking careful aim into a trainload of explosive-laden shells filled with nerve gas. What measures are taken to protect ourselves from such? Again, I wonder about the possibilities of accident or misadventure along the route. I know of no transport system that lacks some risk. And if some accident were to occur, what measure could I take other than prayer to protect myself and my biological world? Finally, I am disturbed with the cavalier use of my ocean and my land. Certainly it would take some time for these shells to corrode and for the nerve gas to leak to the surface. Indeed, I am sure that no toxic material would be found at the surface given that shells are dumped into a deep ocean valley. Hydrolysis of the toxic chemicals would eventually take place, but the number of marine organisms killed off before all gases were dissipated might be considerably greater than I'm willing to see sacrificed. We must abandon the idea that there are dumping grounds for such substances. The price that this generation pays is only a part of what biology must pay for massive assaults on the environment.

We have witnessed with dismay and disgust the willingness of nuclear weapons tests to persuade us that fallout from testing was "harmless." Thus I cannot trust the Atomic Energy Commission to estimate the amount of radiation I can sustain "with impunity." Happily an atmospheric testing ban

NERVE GAS (CONTINUED)

treaty signed by some of the major polluters has diminished the fallout radiation. It is clear that the major outcry against this attack on our environment was responsible for the support this treaty enjoyed. Many informed scientists voiced their concern; radiation pollution is not a reasonable price to pay for security. That became clear and we discontinued the atmospheric testing. (These atomic toys are still in the necromaniacal hands of this agency. They assured us that underground testing is safe. I can only hope that in the long run they are correct.)

Attitudes such as these are frequently exhibited by munitions oriented agencies. The incident at Dugway in which accidental drift of nerve gas killed thousands of sheep showed that the Pentagon gives little attention to ecology. The agency concerned never admitted it was responsible for killing the sheep grazing in the nerve gas affected area. Nevertheless, they paid the ranchers, whose sheep died, an adequate compensation for their loss. The large number of rabbits and other beasts found dead in the valley were dismissed without comment. The Army was testing in an adjacent valley, also part of my planet, also altered by caprice.

The plan to ship nerve gas for storage in Oregon must be viewed in the context of risks to the environment. These chemicals are alkylating and acylating agents that kill man and the higher organisms by blocking the respiratory center in the brain and the myoneural junction in the diaphragmatic muscle. But these agents affect other organisms. They can kill at suitable concentrations most organisms because their activity effects many enzymes. An environment exposed to these agents would be seriously altered. It is not only that man cannot survive such assaults - his fellow inhabitants could not survive. Our knowledge of this evil should make us hesitate to gamble our heritage, and a gamble it is indeed. A misadventure on Okinawa first brought to our attention the presence of these nerve gases on that island. The removal of this material at the request of the Japanese government has happily coincided with the announcement that our government supports the now ancient agreement to ban the use of war gases from the armamentarium of civilized nations. Then why store them? Why shuffle them back and forth? Why engage in pointless "tests" to demonstrate what - that we are honorable in our intention to support the ban of such weapons? We as informed members of the biology of this planet recognize the dangers implicit in major revisions of our environment, and must act to lessen the chances of a catalysmic event. We cannot hazard all biology for the deceptive shibboleth "security."

NEW EDITORS

THE PULSE - Office OPC 4352, Ext. 425

The Pulse has undergone a change in editorial staff and a revision in format and is now published by the Student American Medical Association. It will be issued on a bi-monthly schedule.

Editor-in-Chief: Bud Nicola
Associate Editors: John Kitzhaber, Joe Rapp, Sue Birkemeier, Ben Podemski,
Mason Smith, Mike Mundell
Business Manager: Wayne Burton

Executive Editor: Trudi York

PRECEPTOR PROGRESS REPORT

In the second year of its existence the enthusiasm for preceptors increased by 300 percent. This is primarily an indication of its success last year. Nearly all the reports from both physicians and students have been extremely positive.

At present the situation looks like this. Forty-five sophomores are currently interested in participating in the program this summer. Their reasons for electing this program include a desire to gain clinical experience, a desire to close the gap between student and physician, or a curiosity towards a particular type of town or particular type of practice with respect to career goals. Aid is being extended to these students in their search for a preceptor from many sources. Doctor Daniel Labby of the Medical School faculty has been coordinator of the program. The Oregon Medical Association has been lending its full support and has set up a committee to study and further advance the program. Several specialties, most notably the Oregon Society of Internal Medicine, have become involved and have extended their enthusiastic support.

The student body is very appreciative of this backing. At present several are already set and looking forward to the summer. However, more physicians are still needed, especially in the Portland and rural eastern Oregon areas. If you are a physician who feels that you can be of help, why not get in touch with us?

Jim Allen, MS II

FAMILY PRACTICE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

(Ed. Note: Dr. Laurel Case, former president of the Oregon Academy of General Practice, is now a fulltime member of UOMS involved in the planning of the new Family Practice residency.)

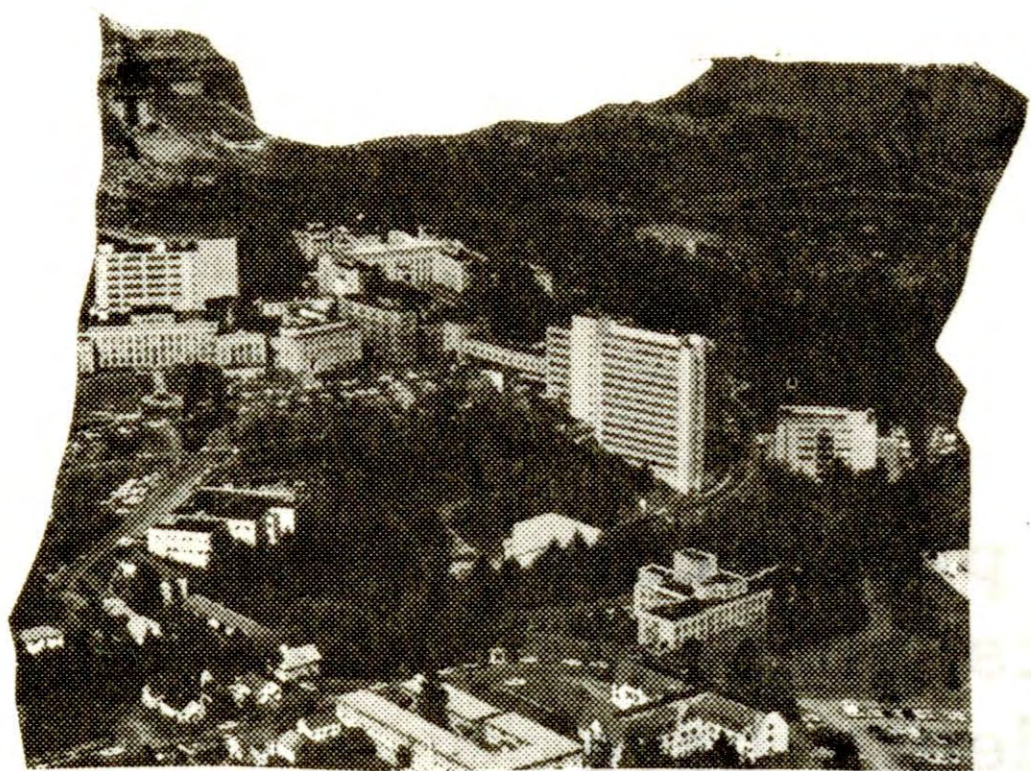
"The American Board of Family Practice," or the Certifying body for specialists in Family Practice, became a reality just one year ago. Today, there are thirtyone residency training programs in the United States which have been approved by this Board. Fourteen of these are organized in medical schools and the remainder are in community hospitals, some of which are affiliated with medical schools.

This may sound like a success story but the real evidence of success will not be seen until there is a significant increase in the number of graduates from this type of training actually engaged in the General and Family practice of Medicine. Success must also be measured by the quality of medical and health care being delivered.

I recently attended a meeting of the "Society of Teachers of Family Medicine" and learned that the variations in these training programs are legion, attesting to their experimental nature.

In developing a training program which has any possibility of meeting the needs, we must test every step by two questions: Will it provide relevant and quality learning? Will it attract Medical graduates?

Laurel Case



THE PULSE

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON MEDICAL SCHOOL 3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Rd. Portland, Ore. 97201

Dear Doctor:

For years now The Pulse has served the current U. of O. Med School students and faculty as a source of information and an open forum for opinion and exchange of ideas. Yet this dialogue has taken place in an academic vacuum, generally without the participating of the majority of members of the profession, the physicians in practice. It was the hope of The Pulse staff that there is indeed an untapped interest in this type of dialogue, and that the doctor in practice might find a use for such a pool of information and opinion. With this youthful idealism we set forth on a quest for aid from the OMA in distributing our plea to members around the state. To our astonishment aid was immediately forthcoming in the form of a two month subsidation by the OMA, during which time The Pulse was to present two issues to member physicians for solicitation; this is the first of such issues.

There are, of course, several obstacles to the continued bi-monthly operation of the paper after the current OMA funding has ceased: 1) The major enemy of most "youthful idealism" - money. We hope to bridge this gap by soliciting (ahem) yearly subscriptions (contributions, if you wish) to the bi-monthly Pulse at a rate of \$6 per nine month period. 2) The second major hurdle - lack of interest. If you have any comments, articles, inside tips, announcements, advice - anything of possible interest to such a diversified readership - please send it in (yeah, even though ye be not a subscriber). Without your observations and opinions, The Pulse is rather like a volcano making an ash out of itself.

Bud Nicola, Editor

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- I support active dialogue
 - I would support youthful idealism if I knew what it was
 - I disapprove but I enjoy a good argument
 - I believe in volcanoes

Instructions: 1) Check any two of the preceding questions. 2) Enclose \$6.00 contribution in the enclosed envelope. 3) Receive our humble gratitude - Thanks!

Name

Address

Zip Code