In Memory of Linda Mealey

By Aubrey Immelman

Linda Mealey died of colon and liver cancer on Tuesday, Nov. 5 at the age of 46. Linda was born Dec. 17, 1955, in San Diego, Calif. She began her college career in fall 1973 at Wells College in Aurora, N.Y., transferring to Cornell University in 1974. She graduated from Cornell in 1977 with a B.A. in biology, concentration in neurobiology and behavior.

After graduating from Cornell, Linda completed additional coursework at the University of Texas in 1984 with a Ph.D. in psychology, concentration in behavior genetics.

Linda joined the faculty at CSB/SJU in the fall of 1985 as an assistant professor. She was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1991, and to full professor in 2001. She regularly taught two of the foundation courses in the psychology major, namely introductory psychology and research methods and a variety of courses in her specialty areas of biopsychology, animal behavior, human ethology, psychology and the law, and human sexuality.

She will be remembered as a highly talented and much beloved mentor to scores of student researchers, many of whom went on to successful careers in psychology, medicine, law and other professional fields.

Linda enjoyed an active and productive professional life. She belonged to approximately 16 professional and scholarly societies. Linda’s intellectual legacy is impressive. She was a textbook consultant for five publishers, manuscript reviewer for approximately 12 scholarly journals and contributor of approximately 50 entries for a dozen reference works and encyclopedias. During her professional career, Linda published 10 book chapters, a full-length textbook, more than 20 articles in peer-reviewed journals, more than 30 brief communications and commentaries, more than two dozen book reviews and presented more than 50 papers and posters at professional meetings and conferences.

(see Mealy, p. 5)

Psychological and biological factors motivate sniper attacks

By Gina Pustovar

Though we may be far removed physically from the sniper attacks that plagued the East coast since Oct. 2 and ended recently, many of us still feel the emotional and intellectual repercussions. With the two sniper suspects, John Allen Muhammad, 41, and John Lee Malvo, 17, in police custody, and with murder charges already pending in Louisiana, Maryland, and Virginia, many are wondering, “What motivated these men to murder?”

Much research has been performed to attempt to get into the minds of serial killers and murderers in the past; some of this research has resulted in valuable knowledge of the criminal mind, while other research has left both psychologists and scientists baffled. So what is it that led Muhammad and Malvo to begin their rampage? And what was it that kept them going?

According to Alexander E. Obolsky, a forensic psychiatrist at the Health and Law Resource in Chicago, snipers (either one or both) are probably narcissists who methodically planned out their attacks. Obolsky feels that the snipers most likely got an emotional high from planning out their attacks and reveled in the sense of control they got from, essentially, playing God.

“He is looking at his target, a woman or a man, and saying ‘Am I going to let you live today or will you die today?’ That makes him feel good,” said Obolsky.

Does this mean that either one of the snipers are crazy? Not necessarily. “The person [the sniper] is crazy only in the sense that he does not care about people the way typical people do,” Obolsky said. “There is another word for it — evil.”

Forensic psychologist Dr. Neal Dunsieth agrees. “The sniper might have some particular personality traits or be predisposed to strange beliefs, but I haven’t seen a lot that points to a mental illness.”

There may also be a biological factor involved when people commit acts of violence such as serial killings. In the 1990’s, a research team based in Southern California performed brain scans on 25 convicted murderers. The results they came up with are intriguing.

(see Sniper, p. 5)
Psychology

in the News

ADHD affects college students
By Shannon Rooney

Every fall ADHD, a disease once considered to primarily affect children, breaks out on college campuses like an epidemic. The disorder can remain undiagnosed for a decade or more before it finally debilitates with the academic, social and work pressures following high school graduation.

Although many high schools and elementary schools are improving in detecting the symptoms of the disorder early, there still are many students who are undiagnosed before they start college.

Beth Howlett, clinical coordinator in the counseling center at Wilder University in Chester, Penn., estimates that only about one third of students she works with were diagnosed with ADHD before they began college.

The first thing that usually shows up as a problem for students with untreated ADHD is what is called the “burden of reading”—the sheer volume of mastery of the written work requirement in virtually every college course. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, college students with ADHD qualify for a range of accommodations on campus such as therapy, assistance organizing their life, study skills, test-taking skills and securing adequate lecture notes from classes.

When diagnosed early and guided to available resources, students with ADHD will do well.

Source: Healthscout; October 26, 2002

Symptoms of ADHD as reported by Howlett

- Inability to concentrate in class or on homework
- Inability to grasp meaning of materials read
- Difficulty following professor’s train of thought, paying attention or taking notes in an organized manner
- Susceptibility to distractions that don’t seem to affect others
- Reliance on stimulants such as coffee, as means to focus on tasks
- Abusing substances, such as alcohol, drugs, or prescription drugs

Who said it?
"Neurosis is the suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning."

(Answer on page 5)
Hello & Happy November!
We are quickly approaching Thanksgiving Break and I hear the murmurings of students’ saying, “Where did the semester go to?”

My piece of advice to the seniors is to drop what you are doing for a small five minutes every-day to merely sit and breathe. You’ll be amazed at the results when you take this tiny amount of time in a whole day for just yourself!

As for the rest of you encompassing our other three class standings…well, fill every minute, hold on & enjoy the ride – you’ll be here at least one more year!

The Psychology Department is buzzing with as much activity as all of you are! One of the big things we’ve been working on are the courses we hope to offer next year: 2003-2004. It’ll be here before you know it!

As the middle person between the faculty world and the student world, I can say your professors have been just as stressed as the lot of you lately. They worry about their classes and they worry about you students and what is happening in your lives. Some even worry about the stress their classes cause you! They too have deadlines and homework and all those “things that need to get done.” And sometimes they procrastinate just like all of you sometimes tend to do! Point being, just remember the next time you see one of your professors, they are feeling the crunch of the end of the semester approaching - just like you are. Be understanding of each other as the holiday season comes near!

For all of you who came to my mini-graduate school session, thanks!! I hope it helped you, even if you only learned one thing! My outline of the session, along with the supplemental lecture information, can be found on the psychology website. I will also be teaching the annual GRE prep course this spring. It is a free course to our majors; all you’ll need to buy is the book we’ll be using (which is around $30 if I remember correctly). More information about that will be forthcoming in future issues and emails!

Lastly, to all you Johnnie and Bennie Juniors: I’m starting early with putting a bug in your ear about PSYC-399 – the Teaching Practicum. This is the course you can take Fall or Spring of your senior year where you’d actually get to teach the Intro to Psychology Labs. You can apply for this incredible opportunity in Spring 2003. Again, look to future issues of the newsletter, e-mails, and your mailbox for more information next semester ☺
Faculty Spotlight
Anthony Sorem, Ph.D.
An interview with Anthony Sorem, conducted by Jeries Sunneberg

Q: Where did you go to undergrad and graduate school?
A: I got my bachelor’s degree at the University of Minnesota, and then my Masters in Anthropology. I attended the University of Kansas, earning my doctorate in social psychology.

Q: What classes do you currently teach and what is your favorite?
A: I currently teach Introduction to Psychology, Applied Behavioral Statistics, Organizational Behavior, and Social Psychology. Social Psychology is my favorite, because it is the class where I am most truly myself.

Q: What led you to the study of Social Psychology?
A: I was a child in the 40s, where the world was colored by World War II. I was a teen in the 50s, which were not the “Happy Days” of the Fonzie, or the cheerful days of “I Love Lucy.” There was segregation, execution of spies, and McCarthy’s threats of anti-communist investigations. Nations were economically and emotionally recovering from the war, and thousands of people were killed by atomic bombs. Girls who had been my academic competition from elementary throughout high school “collapsed” during their senior year in order to pursue marriages and families. This all led me to ask, “Why do people do the horrible and heroic things that they do?” Social psychology was a way for me to find answers to some of these questions.

Q: Why did you decide to become a Psychology Professor?

Q: What has been your main goal as a Professor?
A: My goal as a professor is to gain insight about why people do things that they do and then to enlighten people. The classroom gives me leverage to accomplish this. Throughout my years of teaching, my role has grown to be a parental role, providing wisdom to my students. My job extends beyond the classroom in that I provide reassurance to students through one-on-one interactions.

Q: Can you tell us about your family?
A: [In response to this question, Sorem smiled and proudly pointed out a framed picture of him and his wife, Deb. After a thoughtful pause, he began.] My family is the center of my life. My family is to me like a briar rabbit in a briar patch—it is my happy place. We love each other and are friends. I recall the cold Thanksgiving Day, on a street corner in Omaha, NE, when I convinced my wife to marry me. It was the best decision I ever made. I’d rather share time with her company than any other person. We have two sons, Andy, who is 28, and Allen, who is 23. Both are SJU graduates, who now live “out west.”

Q: What are your hobbies?
A: Many of my students are familiar with my hobby: buying, selling and rebuilding toy trains from the 40s and 50s. These were the premiere toys at Christmas time, and when I realized that grown men now play with these things, I began my hobby. [He even has business cards reading “Tony Sorem…Train Collector.”]

Q: How do you see the study of psychology (or the world in general) changing in 100 years?
A: Taking into account the extreme changes that have occurred over the past century, it is impossible for me to begin to imagine the next century. Since I began studying psychology, the content and quantity of text material has dramatically advanced. Within the next few decades, we will become increasingly founded in neuro-anatomy and brain chemistry. There will also be a wider and growing appreciation (not just tolerance) of diverse human experiences. I foresee a working (although not perfect) world society—a more united Europe that coordinates the needs, wants, and strengths of diverse people.

Q: What do you plan on doing after your retirement this year?
A: I plan on continuing my role of husband, parent and teacher. Along with various opportunities to keep myself busy, I envision a bench in my garden, where I want to sit with my pipe.

Lev Vygotsky: Psychologist to know
Lev Semenovich Vygotsky was born in 1896 in Homel, Belarus. Vygotsky was interested in literature and literacy analysis in his youth and hoped to become a connoisseur of poetry and philosophy. Vygotsky entered the Medical School at Moscow University but eventually switched to the Law School. He was simultaneously enrolled in a private university where he studied literature, art, history and philosophy. Vygotsky earned his law degree in 1917. Vygotsky did not get formally involved in psychology until 1924 when he became a researcher at the Psychology Institute of Moscow University.

The major theme in Vygotsky's theoretical framework in psychology is the idea that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. “Every function in the child's cultural (See Vygotsky, p. 5.)
**Who said it?**

**Answer:**

Dr. Carl G. Jung
Suggested New Reads
By Norma Dickau

The Normal one: life with a difficult or damaged sibling by Jeanne Safer. BF723.S43S13 2002 at CSB.
Safer gives a disturbing and persuasive examination of the considerable effect that impaired brothers and sisters have upon their "normal" siblings.

Evolving perspectives on the history of psychology, ed. by Wade Pickren and Donald Dewsbury. BF105.E87 2002 at SJU.
"Pickren and Dewsbury have organized the articles in this interesting and useful volume around seven themes, including historiography, emergence of the discipline, and psychology as a natural science and a professional practice."

If you know of any news for upcoming issues of the Psychology Department Newsletter
OR
If you are interested in writing for Psych News,
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THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET, ALONG WITH OTHER AVAILABLE PSYCHOLOGY INFORMATION.
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To see the newsletter go to: http://www.csbsju.edu/psychology/newsletter/default.htm

Happy Thanksgiving!

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