

Centre on Aging and Health

Newsletter

Michelle Bourgault-Fagnou

Newsletter Editor

Email: bourmich@uregina.ca

Inside this issue:

Pain & Public Policy Experts Meet at the U of R	1
An Interview with Dr. Paul Antrobus	2
Unit Review Conducted on the CAH	3
CAH Director Wins CAG Award	3
Funding Success!	4
Brain Awareness Week 2008	4

Expert Group Addresses Public Policy Issues Relative to Pain in Long Term Care

Story by Theresa Dever Fitzgerald, M.A.

On January 23rd and 24th, 2008 the Centre on Aging and Health, University of Regina hosted a meeting of seven North American experts in the areas of pain and public policy. The meeting, funded through a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, was organized by Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos (Centre on Aging and Health and Department of

Psychology, University of Regina) and Dr. Gregory Marchildon (School of Public Policy, University of Regina). Additional experts in the field of pain assessment and/or public policy included Dr. Perry Fine (Professor of Anesthesiology, University of Utah), Dr. Keela Herr (Professor of Adult and Gerontological Nursing, University

(continued on page4)



Back Row (Clockwise): Drs. Perry Fine, & Keela Herr; Front Row (Clockwise): Drs. Sharon Kaasaleinen, Francois Béland, Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, Greg Marchildon, & Howard Palley.

An Inspiring Story: An Interview with Dr. Paul Antrobus

Story by Sarah Chan, B.A.

Dr. Paul Antrobus, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Luther College, University of Regina, has been residing at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre for the past 14 months. In October 2005, while installing a new steel roof on his cottage, Dr. Antrobus sustained a fall from a ladder, resulting in quadriplegia. Now at age 72 years, he is teaching again, on the “meaning of life” through the university’s Centre for Continuing Education and the Seniors Education Centre. I met with Dr. Antrobus to speak with him about his experience with overcoming adversity, and his thoughts about growing older. But we ended up talking about a lot more. Our conversation touched on the planet, U.S. politics, growing up in a religious atmosphere, how people change and overcome their problems – all of which revealed Dr. Antrobus’ engaging and relaxed manner, and his fascination for learning about life, himself, and the world.

When I asked about his physical limitations, Dr. Antrobus responded that he “go[es] places in his head.” He talked about the image on his computer screen, a photograph of a fissure in the desert floor of Ethiopia. Before I arrived, he was reading that due to shifts in the tectonic plates, the fissure in the photograph may be the location of a future ocean, in the middle of the Ethiopian Desert. “The planet

changes, and people change too.” And how has he changed?

Dr. Antrobus did not speak with any anger or bitterness about his accident and subsequent injuries. With a matter-of-fact attitude, he said that his experience has been “a change in lifestyle”. He recalled being in the intensive care unit shortly after the accident, when “[he] was in so much pain that [he] did not care if [he] woke up. But [he] did wake up, and then [he] woke up again the next morning. So [he] asked [himself], ‘What now?’”

To my question about overcoming adversity in older adulthood, Dr. Antrobus replied that he had neither overcome any great adversity nor is he “old”. He described his experience as simply “accepting” his present situation. On a daily basis, he feels pain mainly on the front of his neck, which he lives with and tries to ignore the pain, meditates, and does things that he finds meaningful. Dr. Antrobus described his days now as being filled with perusing the Internet, reading books and current events, visiting with his family and friends, going for outings with his wife, and occasionally counseling others. It was clear that Dr. Antrobus has a passion for learning and it is meaningful for him to continue trying to understand the connections between himself, the

(continued on page 5)

The CAH Newsletter Submissions

The CAH newsletter is currently accepting submissions for the next issue. Your comments, suggestions, announcements, and CAH-related news items are most welcome.

Please address your submissions to:

M. Bourgault-Fagnou,
Editor
Centre on Aging and Health Newsletter,
Department of Psychology
University of Regina
Regina, SK S4S 0A2
PH: 585-5369

Submissions may also be emailed to:
bourmich@uregina.ca

CAH Membership

Those interested in joining the CAH may complete the application form available online at the CAH website or request an application form from Dr. Gordon Asmundson, Membership Committee Chair.

Please mail applications to:
Dr. Gordon Asmundson,
Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies,
University of Regina
3737 Wascana Parkway
Regina, SK
S4S 0A2

Unit Review of the Centre on Aging and Health

Story by Amanda Lints-Martindale, M.A.

The University of Regina conducts a comprehensive review of each campus research centre/institute on a regular basis. As such, the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International) commissioned the first scheduled review of the Centre on Aging and Health which took place on November 22nd and 23rd, 2007. The major goal of the review was to investigate strengths and weaknesses of the Centre as a means of examining what areas could benefit from change. The external reviewer was Dr. Holly Tuokko from the Centre on Aging, University of Victoria and the internal

reviewer was Dr. Raymond Blake of the University of Regina. The two reviewers examined written information and met with members of the University community (including faculty, students and administrators), members of community organizations and seniors.

According to the Centre's Director, the review was deemed to be a success and the outcome was very positive for the Centre. The full review report is available on the web at <http://www.uregina.ca/presoff/vpresearch>.♦

Centre on Aging and Health Director Wins Canadian Association on Gerontology Award

Story by Michelle Bourgault-Fagnou, M.A.

Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos was awarded the prestigious 2007 Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG) Distinguished Member Award. The CAG is a national, multidisciplinary scientific and educational association established to provide leadership in matters related to the aging population. The award recognizes a member of CAG, who has contributed significantly to furthering the objectives and activities of the CAG, and is its highest honour.

Dr. Hadjistavropoulos is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Regina, and the Director of the Centre on Aging and Health. He is considered an expert on pain among seniors and a leading thinker on the ethics of pain management. His

ongoing research has involved the development and validation of a variety of assessment methodologies for seniors who have limited ability to communicate as a result of dementia.

The CAG Distinguished Member Award is one of many honours awarded to Dr. Hadjistavropoulos in recent years. These honours include a 2006 Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Achievement Award, being named the first RBC senior fellow in June, 2006 and receiving a Group Medical Services Saskatchewan Healthcare Excellence Award in March, 2006.

Information about Dr. Hadjistavropoulos and his work can be found at: http://uregina.ca/hadjist/centre_index.htm.♦

Funding Success

(Based on a University of Regina Press Release)

A team of researchers, led by University of Regina (U of R) researcher Dr. Thomas Hadjistavropoulos, has been awarded \$2,408,501 to develop ways to slow down the mental and physical decline that comes with old age and enhance the quality of life for seniors living in long-term care facilities.

More specifically, Dr. Hadjistavropoulos, Director of the Centre on Aging and Health

at the U of R, will lead the Research and Community Alliance for Quality of Life in Long Term Care (QOL Team) that includes co-investigators and collaborators from the U of R, University of Saskatchewan, the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, and the Saskatoon Health Region. The team is joined also by two out-of-province researchers. Many team members had previously collaborated on a research

group on aging that was given start-up support by the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF).

Over the next five years, the QOL team will examine ways to improve senior citizens' nutrition, prevent falls, develop exercise programs, improve pain assessment and management, and enhance person-centred care.♦

Brain Awareness Week 2008

Story by Theresa Dever Fitzgerald, M.A.

Brain Awareness Week 2008 marks the City of Regina's 6th year hosting this event. Brain Awareness Week is a nationwide event aimed at promoting and enhancing public awareness about the progress and benefits of brain research. Organized nationally by the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, Brain Awareness Week is supported by many partnering organizations including the National Institutes of Health, medical and research organizations, government agencies and patient advocacy groups.

Regina's Brain Awareness Week 2007, organized by the Alzheimer Society of

Saskatchewan, the Centre on Aging and Health, and other community organizations, took place from March 10th to 14th. Included in the 2008 Brain Awareness Week Calendar of Events were events such as "When Things Go Wrong with the Brain: An Information Session" presented by the Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association, and a "Get Stroke Smart" presentation, and a public forum "What is Alzheimer's" presented by Dr. Gheis at the Mackenzie Art Gallery.

As part of the week, the Centre on Aging and Health organized a Public Forum which was held at the University of Regina. Dr.

Dennis Alfano, a Professor of Psychology at the University of Regina, gave a presentation entitled, "Head Injury: Long-Term Implications for Health and Aging." Dr. Alfano discussed the relationship between mild traumatic brain injury and dementia in later life. The event was very well-attended by both the university community and the general public.

Brain Awareness was also promoted throughout the week through community displays that were set up at various locations across the city providing the public with information about brain research.♦

Pain and Public Policy Experts Meet at the University of Regina *(continued from page 1)*

of Iowa), Dr. Sharon Kaasalainen (Assistant Professor of Nursing, McMaster University), Dr. Francois Béland (Professor of Health Administration, Université de Montréal), and Dr. Howard Palley (Professor of Social Policy, University of Maryland). The purpose of the meeting was to make clinical and public policy recommendations for the

improvement of pain assessment and management among seniors who live in long-term care facilities. Discussion topics included specific recommendations for the implementation of improved pain assessment and treatment plans for individuals in long-term care, and recommendations to increase the number of nurse practitioner

positions in long-term care facilities. The differences and similarities in the funding structures and legislation in Canada and the United States were considered when developing the clinical and public policy recommendations. The group is now working on the preparation of a consensus paper for publication.♦

And Inspiring Story: An Interview with Dr. Paul Antrobus *(continued from page 2)*

world and other people. Dr. Antrobus spoke about thinking about death, but that he "never wanted to die." This is something he thinks about now as well. He thought that "the bad part would be not being able breathe", but he revealed not being afraid of dying, that he had no regrets, and he believed that a part of him would live on.

Dr. Antrobus explained that the accident interrupted his life in a way that prevented him from experiencing aging gradually, prior to which he was healthy and in excellent physical shape. Dr. Antrobus also explained that statistics on people who became quadriplegic, after an accident similar his, show that

people likely do not survive the first 24 months after the injury. But clearly, he has outlived the statistic and he is looking ahead.

From the way Dr. Antrobus described his experience, it was apparent that he possesses an admirable ability to see his life from a positive and humorous point of view. When a nurse came in to help him put on a headset for a phone call, he remarked jokingly how lucky he is to have people do everything for him now. He looked around his room and said, "I live in a 3000 acre park, with an art gallery, an ensuite bathroom, living room, office and bedroom."♦

Centre on Aging and Health

**University of Regina
3737 Wascana Parkway
Regina, SK S4S 0A2**

**Phone: (306) 337-2537
Fax: (306) 337-2321
E-mail: cah@uregina.ca**

We're on the Web!
**[http://uregina.ca/
hadjistt/
centre_index.htm](http://uregina.ca/hadjistt/centre_index.htm)**