

Global Reach in Health Sciences

DRUG-RESISTANT MALARIA. “Risk factors” such as tobacco, alcohol abuse, and poor diet. “Delivery issues” from the training of healthcare providers to the design of health systems. Statistical tools for program evaluation. Drug discovery and intellectual property rights. The philosophical and public-health ethical issues surrounding human trials of new medicines or procedures. That breathtaking agenda and more are fair game for Harvard’s emerging “global health initiative,” now taking shape through consultations with faculty members across the University. In charge is Christopher Murray, Saltonstall professor of public policy in the School of Public Health (SPH), who returned to Harvard in September after five years at the World Health Organization (WHO), where he led the 350-person policy-analysis unit.

Murray aims to shape a supra-school program built on the expertise of the 80 to 100 professors whose work already touches on these issues, or could. Some of those scholars began thinking about Harvard’s opportunities before he arrived, as part of a working group convened by Provost Steven E. Hyman.

Common interests have emerged. Dyann Wirth, professor of infectious diseases and director of the Harvard Malaria Initiative at SPH, seeks molecular mechanisms to defeat drug resistance in protozoan parasites, while Daniel L. Hartl, Higgins professor of biology in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), uses molecular tools to study the evolution and population dynamics of the malaria parasite. Work on AIDS is even more widespread. At the Medical School, Finland professor of medicine Raphael Dolin is involved in both AIDS vaccine research and clinical trials. The Harvard AIDS Institute, chaired by Myron Essex, Given professor of infectious diseases at SPH, runs facilities and research trials in Botswana. And FAS economist Michael R. Kremer, Gates professor of developing societies, who has lived in Africa, has devised ways to create incentives for vaccine development for diseases like

Riverside Rezoned

It was June 1970 when Sandra Graham and other Riverside neighborhood activists stormed the stage at Harvard’s Commencement, demanding affordable housing in their Cambridge neighborhood. Resentment about the construction of Mather House and Peabody Terrace during the 1960s reached a head that spring as Harvard appeared ready to expand again. As a result of the local activism, Harvard donated a parcel of land for affordable housing. This past October, 33 years later, Harvard and the residents of the Riverside neighborhood put decades of distrust and uncertainty behind them and reached a compromise agreement governing University development at the parking lots north of Mather House and at the site of the Mahoney’s Garden Center along Memorial Drive. Harvard will again provide affordable housing in a deal tied to recent zoning changes.

Under the pre-existing zoning, Harvard had the right to build up to 120 feet high, though “from the outset, Harvard realized that it would never build to those heights,” says Mary Power, the University’s senior director of community

relations. Harvard’s original development proposal for the Memorial Drive site was for two low, glass- and wood-clad buildings housing a museum of modern art. A vocal group of local residents vowed to stop that project and demanded instead that the land be turned into a park. They petitioned to have the area downzoned.

The University countered by offering instead to build housing—the predominant use there today (Mahoney’s notwithstanding). Residents at first rejected this option outright as well, but eventually a deal was struck that was attractive to both parties, although it will cost Harvard at least \$15 million, according to the rough estimate of one city official. Under the terms, building heights will be capped at 65 feet along Memorial Drive, at 55 feet on Cowperthwaite Street, and at 35 feet on Grant and Banks Streets. Harvard also agreed to give the corner of the Mahoney’s site bordering Memorial Drive and Western Avenue to the city for a park, and to build at least 30 units of affordable housing in a former industrial building that is part of the Harvard-owned Blackstone power plant on the street corner opposite.



malaria and AIDS that plague lower-income nations.

Hyman outlined the program rationale before alumni in London on November 15 (see page 81). Health, he said, is not a luxury that developing countries acquire as

their economies grow, but rather a precondition for and source of that growth. To help them, it does not suffice to discover a treatment for, say, malaria or drug-resistant tuberculosis; an effective delivery system must also be created.



Harvard has reached an agreement with residents of the Riverside neighborhood and the City of Cambridge that will allow the University to construct housing for affiliates between Cowperthwaite and Grant Streets (opposite page) and along Memorial Drive. Harvard will donate land for a public park at Memorial Drive and Western Avenue (above, left), on the corner now occupied by the Mahoney's Garden Center, and also construct 30 units of affordable housing in a former switch house it owns (below), once part of the Blackstone power plant (above, right).

For itself, Harvard plans to build affiliate housing, mostly configured as small units for graduate students. Said chief University planner Kathy Spiegelman, "Some of the buildings will be at the scale of the three-deckers and the small buildings that are in those neighborhoods now; these will have larger units that might be for graduate students, but might also be appropriate for faculty." The University expects to accommodate 250 beds at each of the two sites, where it will replace existing parking with underground facilities.

Two teams of architects will prepare designs for Harvard: Bruner/Cott and Chan Krieger & Associates at the river site, and Elkus/Manfredi Architects at the Cowperthwaite and Grant Streets site.

Harvard has no redevelopment plan for the power plant proper, so the new zoning agreement acknowledges the existing power generation as an allowed use; this will let the University make improve-

ments without going through extensive permitting processes. "But if we want to build new buildings or if we want to move existing uses out of the existing buildings," notes Spiegelman, "there would be a public, special-permit process."

Spiegelman attributes the success of the negotiation in part to the way it was structured: as a combination of base zoning—designed to be unattractive to both parties—and incentives. The base zoning allows buildings too large for the neighbors to be comfortable with, and too small to be efficient for the University, while the incentives (affordable housing, the public park) were tailored to the wishes of the neighborhood and accompany increased capacity for University housing at both sites. Harvard originally proposed that the park be situated farther into the Mahoney's site, so that a building would shield it from the busy intersection of Memorial Drive and Western Avenue. But for many residents and

some city councilors, says Spiegelman, "the public visibility of having [the park] on that corner overrode" other concerns about noise and the increased difficulty of building the underground parking.

The park and the affordable housing will be turned over to the city only after all of Harvard's occupancy and other permits have been issued. The University expects to move quickly on the design phase and will bring its plans to the Cambridge planning board for review as soon as possible.



Further, economists will have to work on payment mechanisms and intellectual property—Kremer's problem of poor patients in poor nations and manufacturers' need for some return to justify research and development costs. And there remain huge issues of governance (South Africa's refusal to face up to HIV transmission) and human rights (the risk many African women face if they undergo AIDS screening and test positive).

In this sense, Hyman said, global health

represents powerful intellectual opportunities for scholars and students, while promising a real impact on lives. It is, he said, "a perfect example of how we have to go from molecules to culture" in the widest sense, and therefore a natural University initiative for Harvard.

Making a coherent program out of this spectrum of expertise falls to Murray and Shawn Bohem, the initiative's administrative director. As a scholar, Murray's interests are themselves global. He pioneered

the "Global Burden of Disease" study in the early 1990s, the first comprehensive, international assessment of mortality and disability attributable to infectious diseases, chronic diseases (cardiovascular illness, for example), and accidents, injuries, and violence. The results of that work, as it happens, were reported to the World Bank and its then-chief economist Lawrence H. Summers. During his WHO so-



Christopher Murray

journal, Murray began studies of the most effective organization of healthcare, the first fruits of which have just been published in a massive coedited volume

titled *Health Systems Performance Assessment*.

Bohen, who will take on the grittier details, is a veteran of multidisciplinary projects at Harvard. She helped organize the medical school's division of addictions and substance abuse and then the University's interfaculty program on mind, brain, and behavior, both launched by Hyman during his professorial days. Her most recent assignment was managing the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations at the Kennedy School.

Murray expects that the health initiative will have refined its initial subjects of inquiry by the end of the academic year. In the meantime, he anticipates three modes of action. The first is education. As President Summers told an SPH gathering in October, "I hope and I expect that we will provide instruction to our undergraduates in issues relating to global health that will bring together in an interdisciplinary way their thinking in the social sciences and in the sciences in much the same way that we do with issues like environmental sciences." (Discussion within FAS is only exploratory so far, given the current work on revising the College curriculum overall.) Graduate and postdoc-

toral study would be augmented, too.

Second is a selection of research priorities. Murray envisions comparative work, possibly including American healthcare and systems in other developed nations, as well as those in the industrializing world, and scholarship on problems of inequality. Based on his meetings with colleagues thus far, he can readily imagine involving professors from SPH, the Medical School, FAS, the Kennedy School, the Business School, and the Law School, to "harness the enormous advances that have come and are coming" in biomedical research, and more sophisticated social-science and ethical analyses.

Finally, the initiative expects to promote large doses of international travel and study abroad—for students and faculty members based in Massachusetts, and for experts from other nations coming to Harvard to collaborate. Bohem terms this two-way process "engagement." She sees it as an important pilot for the globalization of the University envisioned in the undergraduate curriculum review—and so an initiative that crosses Harvard boundaries and international ones as well.

Creating Community, On-line and Off

THE WEEKS leading up to Thanksgiving were especially busy for Harvard bloggers.

Robert John Bennett '68, who's writing a novel on-line, posted chapters 4 through 12 of Part V ("Harvard—The Fourth Year") on his blog—short for Weblog, or on-line journal. Another blogger, Cynthia Rockwell, a sociology department staff member and freelance movie reviewer, debated the value of scholarly film criticism: "Does this kind of criticism illuminate, or does it bleach raw? I don't know. Do artists need critics? I don't know." Harvard Law School (HLS) librarian Vernica Downey used her blog to remind readers about National Children's Book Week ("The theme this year is 'Free to Read'"). And in his blog, Nathan Paxton cheered that month's landmark state-court decision lifting the ban on same-sex marriages. "This is great," the Ph.D. candidate in government wrote.

"The issue of the place of gays in our society is going to be the hot-button culture-wars issue of 2004."

Meanwhile, one particularly prolific commentator, known on-line only as The Redhead, waxed wistful about single life. "How is it that some people find their soulmates (if there is such a thing) at 16?" she mused one bleak November afternoon. "Where are all the beautiful souls in this city (they're too young, or they're married, or they're smokers, or they're in love with someone else)? There's no justice in the universe."

Welcome to Weblogs at Harvard Law, an experimental community where more than 350 students, faculty and staff members, and alumni have signed up to publicly express their thoughts about everything from social issues to software, from literature to love. Based at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society, the initiative is free and available to anyone with a Harvard.edu e-mail address. And except for a few private blogs limited to specific

classes, all Harvard-hosted blogs can be read by anybody on the Web.

Harvard's blogging project stems from a November 2002 conference, sponsored by the Berkman Center, to examine the University's "digital identity." Provost Steven E. Hyman challenged those present to use the Internet to unify their famously decentralized institution, building bridges among isolated departments and schools. "The question became how we could set up the different parts of Harvard to talk to each other better," says center director John Palfrey '94, J.D. '01. Participants also hoped to create exciting new on-line communities and fresh ways to use technology in teaching.

With their grassroots appeal, blogs seemed like a good first step. Shortly after the conference, the center recruited a new fellow, blogging pioneer Dave Winer, to spearhead the on-line community. Winer's own tech-talk journal, DaveNet, was among the Internet's first blogs; founded in 1994, it predated the term identifying it by several

years. "I found this way of telling stories that didn't have a filter, and it worked," says Winer, who went on to found UserLand Software Inc. of Los Altos, California, which makes Web-publishing products, and to launch an even better-known blog, Scripting News. After arriving at Harvard in early 2003, Winer quickly adapted his blogging software, Manila, for the University's Weblog community and launched the program in March.

BLOGS ARE public on-line journals, written in reverse chronological order, with the most recent entries at the top. Unlike most graphic-rich Web sites, they consist primarily of unadorned text and links to other sites, although serious bloggers also upload photographs, audio, and video. Blogs usually present a single author's voice, but increasingly groups and organizations are using the format as well: the law school's LL.M. class of '04, the library at Harvard's Rowland Institute, and the Berkman Center itself, among others, maintain Weblogs.

All are part of a fast-growing worldwide community dubbed the "blogosphere." About five million blogs now exist, according to Perseus Development Corporation; the Braintree, Massachusetts-based market-research firm expects that number to double before 2005.

What draws people to blogging? First, of course, they have something to say. "I blog to talk, to let it out, to experiment with words, to Be Heard," The Redhead writes. "I miss standing onstage in plays I believed in; I miss projecting my voice across a thousand seats. I'm loud for a reason. I have a lot to say, and a strong set of lungs, and passion. And maybe out there, someone's got a question I can help answer."

In addition, blogging is refreshingly simple, requiring virtually no technical design know-how, or special software. Harvard users simply go to the project's website (<http://blogs.law.harvard.edu>), where they can create a blog in two or three minutes by following the instructions. From there, they can post text, links, and photographs as easily as they send e-mail messages.

Blogging is also a cheap—or, in the Berkman Center's case, free—form of publishing using existing space on University

Recruiting vs. Rights

Caught between its nondiscrimination policies and a federal law governing military recruiting on campus, Harvard has decided not to file suit challenging the Solomon Amendment. The amendment, enacted in 1996, has since 2001 been aggressively enforced at law schools around the country: military recruiters insist on the right to interview applicants on campus (most had been accommodated at locations off campus), even though the armed services' ban against homosexuals conflicts with schools' policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The government wields a blunt enforcement tool: the ability to withhold research funding—for the University, \$416 million in fiscal year 2003, little of which supports work at Harvard Law School (HLS).

In October, 47 of 81 HLS professors signed a letter to President Lawrence H. Summers urging Harvard to join a lawsuit by a consortium of 15 law schools styled the Forum of Academic and Institutional Rights (FAIR). FAIR contests the amendment's constitutionality, arguing that the Defense Department's "don't ask, don't tell" policy violates the schools' commitment to nondiscrimination.

In a late November letter to members of HLS Lambda, a student group, Summers called the recent use of the amendment "unsound and corrosive public policy." He wrote that the underlying policy on military service "offends ideals of nondiscrimination and individual dignity" and deprives the armed forces of talented personnel, and that threatened enforcement against universities which are "providing military recruiters with effective access to students" is "draconian." Considering all factors, however, he determined that Harvard would not confront the government "through the quintessentially adversarial act of filing a lawsuit."

Although Harvard will not litigate, faculty members may do so on behalf of the students involved. Summers wrote of his full support of "the prerogative of interested individuals in the Law School community to pursue their arguments" as they see fit. The University, meanwhile, will pursue political ways of making its case to the government.

computers. And from a user's perspective, it's wonderfully liberated from editorial interference. "You know that old saying that freedom of the press belongs to whoever has the press?" Winer asks. "Now *everybody* has the press."

As Harvard's diverse blogger population illustrates, "everybody" isn't the stereotypical bored, barely literate teenager. Today lawyers, librarians, and researchers use on-line journals for networking and sharing information; entrepreneurs use them for marketing and customer service; college professors and students use them to extend in-class discussion. They're increasingly popular among journalists, too. Several correspondents (and at least one Iraqi citizen) maintained high-profile blogs at the height of last year's war in Iraq, and Harvard's Nieman Foundation for Journalism devoted a chunk of the fall 2003 issue of its quarterly magazine to examining the role of blogs in newsrooms. Politicians are adopting blogs

as well. By late 2003, nearly every presidential candidate had one, though most real blogging was being done by campaign staff members.

At Harvard, as elsewhere, blog styles are as different as the people behind them. Many are on-line diaries, often featuring an on-line persona or alter ego. The Redhead—who by mid November hadn't missed a single day of blogging since the project's launch—writes about anything on her mind: her job, a class, a party, a conversation, an observation. "I let myself have fun, but I try to make sure there's a point," she says. Sometimes she prepares a single long entry first thing in the morning or late at night; sometimes she writes several and posts quick-hit entries—one or two sentences on a single topic, written as rapidly as an e-mail message—throughout her day. (Fortunately, The Redhead, a.k.a. Wendy Koslow, is program coordinator for the Berkman Center, where occasional on-the-job blogging

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is not only permitted, but encouraged.)

Many Harvard bloggers specialize. Veronica Downey, the HLS librarian, writes primarily about research, rare books, and children's literature. Her blog, titled "Thinking While Typing," draws a small but loyal audience of regular readers. "I'm very popular among German librarians, for some reason," says Downey, who writes primarily outside work. HLS fellow Christopher Lydon, a former public-radio talk-show host, uses his site to explore the social and cultural effects of blogging. He posts extensive text and

is as a testing ground for new material. "When I go onstage, I have five to seven minutes. There's no room to try out something you're taking a risk on—certainly not at first," she says. "So I find it very valuable to have this forum. I try to write something of length three times a week." Then she collects feedback from regular readers—friends, fellow comics, other bloggers, her mother in Texas—and revises her routines before performing them.

Like other communities, Harvard's Weblog project relies on rules. Users can't run businesses or political campaigns

using the University's technology, and they can't imply that Harvard endorses anything they write. At the same time, the project's coordinators—who believe the experiment will work only if bloggers know they can publish freely—never censor content. That is a critical factor for participants, who tend to become passionate about free speech. "I feel like I

banned from University computer systems for a year if it happened again. Slater, backed by the Berkman Center, argued that posting the memos fell within the copyright law's "fair use" provision. In November, Harvard's general counsel agreed, saying the University no longer considered the matter a violation. Diebold later dropped the complaint.

DESPITE BLOGGING'S POPULARITY, it has some drawbacks. The biggest problem: many blogs are downright boring. The worst offenders take the most mundane material imaginable and share it with the world. One typical example, from a Harvard-hosted blog: "After approximately 20 years of use, my GE toaster oven broke last night. Today I went to Target to buy a new one....They had a very nice Black & Decker toaster oven for \$29.99 and I purchased it. My mother purchased a toaster oven for less about a year ago. However, hers does not work. But she won't admit it."

Another pitfall: abandonment. Perseus, the market-research company, says two-thirds of all blogs languish unattended (which researchers define as having no posts for two months), while one-quarter are "one-day wonders," created and then forgotten. Not surprisingly, the Harvard project's directory is littered with apparently abandoned blogs. In one case, an incoming freshman kept a detailed diary of his first few days on campus this past fall, even creating Dickens-style headings for his chapters ("In Which I Do Something Entirely Unexpected"). By the following week, though, he'd apparently lost interest; he never blogged again.

Because the Web is a public medium, bloggers occasionally attract unwanted attention. Koslow's high-spirited site briefly attracted a male fan whose constant e-mail messages made her uncomfortable. "I e-mailed him and said, 'Please don't contact me anymore,'" says Koslow, who doesn't know whether the man was part of the Harvard community. "The second time I did that, it worked." The experience made her more cautious about posting personal information: she took her work e-mail address off the blog and now uses nicknames or initials when referring to friends and colleagues.

Despite the growing pains, most blog-



Blogging pioneer Dave Winer, a Harvard Law School fellow, heads the University's experimental Weblog community.

audio interviews with leading bloggers, including some of those managing the on-line presidential campaigns.

Some educators use blogs as teaching tools. John Palfrey, a lecturer at both HLS and the Extension School, posts syllabi, reading materials, and lectures on class blogs; he encourages, but doesn't require, students to use them. He views the technology as a way to extend the classroom experience, and to provide a new forum for people who might be too shy to speak up in person. "This helps us explore how people express themselves," says Palfrey, who also maintains an HLS blog on legal issues.

One Harvard staff member blogs to support a blossoming stage career. Erin Judge, an assistant to two HLS professors by day, does stand-up comedy in Boston-area clubs at night. Her blog, "On Being (un)Funny," prompts some people to see her shows, she says. Its real strength, though,

can say whatever I want," Judge says. "If anybody else I know had a blog at the place where they work, they wouldn't feel comfortable posting certain things."

Asked how coordinators would handle, for instance, a blog containing hate speech, Palfrey says that hasn't been a problem—yet. "The community is self-policed, and that works remarkably well."

Until late October, the University hadn't interfered, either. But then College junior Derek Slater posted internal memos from Diebold Election Systems, an electronic voting-machine manufacturer, on his blog. The documents, which described possible security flaws in the company's equipment, had already been widely circulated on-line. After Slater posted them, Diebold complained to Harvard, arguing that Slater—and Harvard, as host—had violated U.S. copyright law. Initially, Harvard told Slater to "cease and desist" and warned him that, in keeping with school policy, he would be