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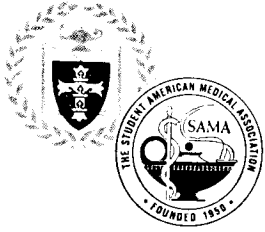
The Arena

1966-12

The Arena: December 1966

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THE ARENA

Student American Medical Association Boston University School of Medicine

December 1966

TOY DANCE

Last Friday night SAMA sponsored the Annual Christmas Toy Dance. In the few years since its inception, this event has become highly regarded, both for its charitable nature and fortunate timing. For it is during these last few weeks before Christmas vacation that the tension of exams and studies builds, and the student's world becomes quite small.

It was a night that pleased all that attended. The number of people there was at an all time high; with many of the faculty and wives accompanying Dean and Mrs. Ebaugh to the festivities. There were two bands that alternated in providing the music. The Ruby Quender's band played to those who enjoy ease in their dancing and for the swingers were the Townsmen.

The latter group generously donated their skills and enthusiasm. Their kindness is most appreciated. Their music was great! At the infrequent moments of intermission, door prizes of fruit cakes and bottles of liquor were given to the lucky.

There were many who could not attend, yet still sent presents. The pile of gifts was quite high at the end of the evening. We agree with what Dean Ebaugh said as he accepted our thanks for paying for the use of the Harvard Club facilities, "We ought to have a dance like this more often."

To The EDITOR

Having been intimately involved in the planning and arrangements of last year's Christmas Toy Dance, I am well aware of the difficulties and aggravation involved. It is for this reason I felt SAMA deserved a special note of congratulations on the 2nd Annual Christmas Toy Dance. Not only was it a superbly organized and thoroughly enjoyable evening; I feel that as a result of this year's turnout, the Christmas Toy Dance has become a significant and valuable tradition at BUSM.

SAMA has, by such functions as the Toy Dance, Christmas Party at BCH, Scholarship, and Annual Symposium, become an active and respected citizen of the BUSM community. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Paul A. Levine
BUSM III

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS ONCE OR TWICE

This year in Boston there are many cultural events which are rewarding and relaxing. Most noteworthy is, of course, the Boston Symphony Orchestra whose conductor, Mr. Erich Leinsdorf has decided this year to perform in the course of the season the symphonies of Gustav Mahler. The most recent program includes
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Brahms' Suite No. 3 in D major, Sydeman In Memoriam -JFK and Schuman Symphony No. 1. Although tickets are often difficult to get, the Friday afternoon performance has seats in the second balcony for 60¢ if one stands in line.

Boston University and Harvard have active theatre groups which often present the work of modern playwrights, Brecht, Sartre, O'Neill as well as reformation drama and the great Shakespeare. In addition to drama, there are groups at both these schools as well as at MIT doing musical comedy and light opera, i.e. Gilbert & Sullivan. All these performances usually come at a reasonable price.

In addition downtown Boston has several companies performing interesting plays. The Charles Playhouse has produced Congreves Love for Love and Genet's The Balcony. The theatre company of Boston recently produced the Morat/Sade drama of Peter Weiss which is a fascinating and eloquent questioning of life and was quite well performed.

Boston has a ballet and an opera company both of which perform in the first 3 months of the year, the opera series lasting until May. Last year, the series were very exciting with exciting guest performers, marvelous scenery and were a total enjoyment. For anyone fond of these arts either one is a real bargain. Unfortunately, it is generally necessary to purchase a subscription to the entire series. If you have binoculars, the cheapest seats are fine and you can hear well anyplace in the Back Bay Theatre where both groups perform.

In addition to music, drama and the dance, art itself is not neglected here either. On November 22 a new exhibit of India and Nepalese art opened at the Museum of Fine Arts. This is reputed to be one of the finest such exhibits in the country. In addition the museum's other collections are good and fascinating -- Impressionists, Expressionists, Abstract. Also available are the Isabelle Stewart Gardner Museum, and the Fogg Museum at Harvard. For the more up-to-date developments in art, visit the Institute of Contemporary Art on Newberry Street.

Boston has many opportunities to enrich the heart as well as the mind. In observing the admonishment, "Physician, heal thyself" perhaps here is a good place to begin. The

opportunity is now and may well not be available during the years of internship and residency either due to poor location or lack of free time, but most of all, it will not be available afterwards when the practice of medicine makes the greatest demands of all.

Anne Lowe

INTERNSHIPS

Last year when the then junior class recovered from the shock of their last BUSM exams their attention began to turn to 1968; internships. It was suggested to the new seniors that they might be helped if the resources of the Faculty were made available to provide council and assistance for the procurement of intern appointments. The idea was to set up a system where students could contact interested instructors for evaluation of the students' opportunities at different institutions and the desirability of various appointments. While there is some assistance available from the school administration, nothing approaching a program of this sort has been established.

Internship, despite the NIMP program, is an extremely difficult job to apply for. Whatever a person's class rank, he has to be sure to apply to a group of hospitals that will give him everything he wants and a group which will satisfy him, but are not quite so exclusive as to make his selection unlikely. Given infinite free time, total disregard for the amount of work on people writing recommendations, and a callous attitude toward the overworked people in Building A, an applicant could probably apply to twenty or thirty hospitals. This of course assumes that he has the money, as well as the time, to visit the more important choices. It is obvious then that the student must make some form of intelligent decision. Added to this is the huge number of institutions offering internships, the varied nature of their programs, and the lack of any clear label of quality. If a student is interested in cardiology he needs the advice of

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a cardiologist who can tell him not only where the great men teach, but about institutions of less prestige, but with exciting new programs and good teachers. The questions are innumerable. Of what value is a "prestige hospital" versus a smaller hospital with an interesting program? Is a particular "famous" clinician actually beyond his prime, or a terrible teacher? Does work under a certain man give you an "in" for later appointments; does an internship at his hospital give you a better chance for his residency? More, junior members of the faculty can give information about what sort of place the hospital(s) is(are) to work in, how house officers are treated, whether the locality is a pleasant one to live in.

All of this avoids the question. There is no question of the valuable source of information that is our faculty, the question is that there is a need for the student to best utilize this resource. Since the school has not officially established a program, it is up to each of us in the senior class to seek what aid we can find. For those with better grades and established friendships within the faculty this is not too difficult, it may be harder for others.

Perhaps the greatest misfortune is the following classes. At least to me it seems that the better internships my class gets, assuming that we perform well, the better things will be for those to follow. Furthermore, if you can remember back to the days of application to medical school, one parameter of desirability was the number of people admitted to better hospitals. It is interesting that it has been claimed that members of earlier classes have not applied to enough prestige institutions and they have, therefore, not gotten as many choice appointments.

The answers must come from the faculty and the administration. The help provided now is far less than what could be done. As a start, perhaps the dean's office could compile a list of faculty members willing to act as advisers. Members of the faculty should also be asked to supply Mrs. Gowing's office with the names of institutions which they feel might be interested in B.U.S.M. students.

Stephen Mark Schwartz
BUSM IV

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council has continued to meet every other Thursday. Its efforts have been primarily directed towards completing the form of the course questionnaire.

The purposes of the course questionnaire are at least two fold: 1. to improve communications between the faculty and the students concerning matters of mutual interest and 2. to provide a channel for constructive criticism and evaluation of the students, faculty and curriculum.

The course questionnaire will be distributed at the end of each semester during the first two years and at the end of the year in the Junior and Senior years. The results will be tabulated and then distributed to the Dean, the Assistant Dean, the Associate Dean, the Curriculum Committee and the Department Heads. Copies, of course, will be available for the students.

Why take the time to fill one of these out? First of all, the time involved is negligible 10 minutes with an opportunity to spend more for those students who desire to do so. Secondly, from previous trials with a similar form, the Dean and the faculty have enthusiastically accepted the results and used them as an aid in modifying some of the courses.

The Student Council is anxious to establish this form on a permanent basis. The full cooperation of the students is required to make a go of it. Please take it seriously --- the Faculty does!

Charles Hamon
BUSM IV

EAST OF BOSTON

OBSERVER, JUNIOR
"Sail Away"

Would I do it again?

Yes,...without qualification

This past summer five BUSM students (Peter Lodewick, Michael Weiss, Howard Levy, and Gail Dubiel and I) tripped off to London to study medicine and the English way of life. My destination was St. George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner, the home of such notables as John Gray, the anatomist, Bence Jones, John Hunter, and Jenner. (A cowhide covers one wall of the library. It is said to be THE cow from which Jenner obtained his vac-cinia.)

My reasons for going to England were not so lofty. I was eager to sample a different approach to medicine and I wanted to live with the English for sev-eral months. In no way was I disappointed. At my hospital I was, quite unexpectedly, treated as a VIP. All teaching facilities were thrown open to me. I was able to attend all the best medical rounds and outpatient clinics. I acted primarily as an observer, but was free to examine any ward patient. During the typical day, morning and afternoon rounds, each lasting one-five hours were punctuated by mid-morning tea, high tea in the afternoon and a pint bitter (pronounced BiTT-TTah) in the school bar before supper.

The teaching was almost always stimu-lating, but low-powered by our standards; others might call it wholesome, and down-to-earth.

One of the great revelations for me was to find top-grade medicine outside of Boston. For this reason alone the summer was worthwhile. I will be glad to speak with anyone who is interested in spending a summer East of Boston.

Edward Fineberg
BUSM IV

Once upon a time there floated in Boston Harbor (known today as the Bay of Pigs) a hospital for children. In those unpolluted days a period away from the foul humors of the city adrift on this spacious craft was good for what ailed you, except seasickness. My own grandmother was a patient there as an infant ante the Great Bellum.

It came to pass that there was a fire, and after some casting about the Floating Hospital became a concrete building supported by dry land in the middle of Boston's downtown where she will remain moored relatively safely, sinking only as fast as all of Boston sinks (which according to the political opposition is no mean rate).

The physical layout of the Floating captures Boston's essence. It is not as large as its reputation, is a bit crowded, and is easy to become lost in. For example, the third floor is connected to the fifth by a ramp with no sign of the fourth which is best found by going to the basement and starting over - but beware of the stairs leading to the base-ment because they will probably land you in the kitchen where you are as likely as not to end up in an expensive chicken loaf sandwich. Once you are oriented however, it becomes very easy to get lost.

The Captain of the ship (and a right good Captain, too) is the man responsible for the Yearbook of Pediatrics among other publications. This Dr. G. and his crew run a trim ship and care for their little passengers in every sense of the word. If an occasional trip is doomed to a tortuous or short course, the special tenderness evoked at all levels is gentle, intimate, and appropriate beyond re-proach.

There are many pleasures for house staff and students. The cookie tins are usually filled with chocolate chippies or Oreo's and the refrigerators are stocked with Coke. Since children can be counted on not to eat all they get, there is often some spare toast or bacon crumb to be fingered by the crew on morning rounds in strict order of seniority. And, too there is the touching faculty of even the worst-off youngster to respond to

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"How do you feel?" with "Fine", instead of the customary positive review of systems such a question touches off on adult wards.

One evening as I was leaving I chanced to pass the tiny House Officers' Lab when a bright and eager third year student named Irwin zoomed out of the lab and cried "Hey, do you know anything about stools?" I looked at him blankly. "I mean about looking at them under a microscope," he added. "Well, ho ho", I replied, "what's the story?"

He told me that there was a baby upstairs with severe diarrhea. The resident, Dr. Connelly, had dismissed the idea of enteric pathogens, but perseverant Irwin decided to look at fresh stool under the scope; Dr. Connelly promised to make him chief of the service if he found anything. And what to Irwin's delighted eyes should have appeared but lots of wiggly beasties scurrying hither and thither, bumping into things and cleverly moving around them. Under low power they looked large and fierce. I scrutinized the field, puffing knowledgeably on my pipe and remarked, "Well, there are lots of wiggles, aren't there?" "That's no diagnosis", he cried and ran out to fetch Connelly who presently sat down at the scope puffing bemusedly on his pipe and observed, "Well, I'd say that there certainly are lots of ...". At this moment Irwin and I caught a glimpse of Dr. G going by in the hall.

Irwin was by now thoroughly distracted. "Do you think we should ask Dr. G?" "Why not", I replied definitively, and Irwin darted into the hall to fetch the Captain who soon entered puffing amiably on his pipe. He sat in front of the microscope, and the occupants of the room waited for the Word expectantly. Dr. G chortled between puffs and said, "I think your energy is terrific. Keep up the good work. What we have here are a lot of gram negative motile rods that you see anytime you look at fresh stool."

By now the room was so full of pipe smoke that it was difficult to see, but even so Irwin's flaming blush was clearly visible. Dr. G patted him sympathetically on the shoulder, positively re-inforcing him as best he could, and led the group out of the lab with Irwin trailing, everyone else laughing. Just then Dr. Connelly turn to Irwin.

"Say, Irwin, you know about rounds

tomorrow at 8?"

"Sure", said Irwin.

"Don't come."

Richard Goldwater
BUSM IV

THE TEAR

Fragile drop

Now quivering,

That sets upon a cheek-

How thy mistress?

Is she quivering?

DEATH

Thou goeth wherever I go

Thou cover me with sleep

Now laying in mine own bed

While women start to weep.

Michael Salcman
BUSM II

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THANK YOU FOR COMING TO THE TOY DANCE.
WE RECEIVED 80 TOYS.

REPORT: The BSNS"

At the November 4th meeting of the Boston Student Neurological Society, Professor Patrick David Wall of MIT addressed himself to the physiological, anatomical and evolutionary aspects of the problem presented by the apparent duplicating of sensory input mechanisms in vertebrates. The two systems, as Dr. Wall defined them, correct antaneous sensory endings of muscle afferents to higher centers (sensory cortex or vestibules - cerebellar areas), either via a direct path in the dorsal columns, the spinothalamic, spino cerebellar and spinoreticular tract, or by a more diffuse path through the dorsal substantia gelatinosa to the same higher centers. The evidence for reduplication comes from two sources; Clinical findings in tabes Dorsalis and in dorso lateral spinal section for intactable pain, and laboratory findings in mammals after spinal section.

In most textbooks Tabes Dorsalis, a syphilitic neuropathy, is considered to be the clinical example of dorsal column disease when at the same time, many clinicians recognize tabes as a peripheral sensory neuritis. The characterisitic symptomatology is classically one of decreased tactile localization, two point discrimination of vibratory sense, and inability to identify objects placed in the hand. Contradicting this classical syndrome, patients tested after recovery from unilateral dorsolateral spinal section show no impairment of function when one side is compared to the other by means of a routine clinical test. Identical spinal cord section in monkeys with similar results further suggested the existence of two parallel sensory systems.

The diffuse sensory system is far older phylogenetically than the direct system; nevertheless not a great deal is known about this "Secondary" system. The dorsal nucleus cells are somatotopically arranged as in the direct system. On the other hand peripheral specificity does not exist. Cells that respond to hair bending also respond to touch. Furthermore there is powerful descending brain spine control of excitability upon this upward cascading neuron system. And curiously one finds that each step down the phylogenetic seale, along with increasing predominanee of the diffuse path over the direct path, brings an increase in downward control of sensory input. If it is true, as has been demonstrated, that two point discrimination can be transmitted by the cascading system, it is important to ask why we need the dorsal columns, and why they figure so prominently in the gross anatomy of higher mammalism nervous systems.

As Dr. Wall pointed out the assumption of duplication of biological systems in the same organism has never led to the right answer. The assumption that the loss of a single nerve cell doesn't matter is, as Dr. Wall said, a judgement on the entire nervous system.

Two experiments, one on man and another on rats, both observed after section of the dorsal columns seem to delineate the separate functions of the two sensory systems.

Two types of responses were elicited from rats upon application of minute stimuli to the skin: indifference, or orientation towards the stimulus and re-examination of the area stimulated. This latter form of behavior was universally absent in experimental animals.

A man, whose dorsal columns were sectioned for recurrent phantom limb pain, gave many "False positive" reactions to the "non-application" of sensory stimuli, indicating that the laboratory or clinical set may mask any determination of much subtile functional differences. The individual above was compared with a normal individual in responses to the clinical tests before and during agitation on a mechanical vibrator. The experimental individual showed dramatic increase in threshold to stimulation of the vibrator, whereas the control did not.

Clearly the test stimuli applied to the neuropath were being filtered out with the "noise" introduced into the system by the vibrator. The normal individual on the other hand, was receiving stimuli directly at the cortex without the interposition of filters, along a fast transmission path which is so specific in respect to modality that it eliminates noise.

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If one were going to design a nervous system, as Dr. Wall explained, he would take into account at least two factors: (1) selection of a series of events unimportant for the specific organism, and interposition of filters to eliminate extra neurons stimuli; (2) an extensible repertoire which, since motor systems are limited, involves modifiable filters. This second factor has been most important in developing the plasticity of behavior of higher vertebrates. As Dr. Wall mentioned, however, the kinds of specificity that are necessary in such a system even with the virtual removal of interposed filters, are dangerous for the animal in question, because "he's betting on what will happen next." The human being is monitoring a continual stream of uncensored events (only a few of which are responded to), and is thus less vulnerable to unfavorable environmental changes. The reptile, it seems, is censoring most of the incoming stimuli, and responding only to those stimuli which are clearly species specific. ("Attention phenomena" in such animals do not exist as such.) The vulnerability of such animals is well illustrated by the extinction of the giant reptiles in the cretaceous period.

Dr. Wall suggested in closing that it would be interesting to examine the extent of the control exercised by the newer, direct system over the diffuse system, and the extent to which the direct system tells the older system how to respond to the subtle distinctions possible in the available repertoire of sensory endings.

Edward Famiglietti, Jr.

BUSM II

THE CHARGE

"And with this rod a temple build, so great so strong,
That nevermore will others eaten by this snake,
Leave their temples fevered, without a soul mindless-
To give to Death his victory and his take.

And let them, these temples, parade in garb
Which has no portent of a fear nor thought less
Than that of purity-- to which these mortal stones
Be sworn; if true, the populace to bless.

And that house which breaks thy word - the false-
Shall fear for that which pain they give,
Nor ever bear their father's name if tales they bear to others...
Go forth Aesculapius, my sons must live!"

MICHAEL SALCMAN
BUSM II

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL