

## Nemerov: "Out of Fashion No Matter What I'm Doing..."

By MATT MATTINGLY  
Current Staff Writer

Poetic inspiration is just another way of saying someone has an idea, according to poet Howard Nemerov.

"Have you ever reflected that when you have an idea it could be expressed as 'God said to me in a dream,' or 'An angel came down to visit me'?" he remarked during a recent interview. "How do ideas come?"

"Sometimes, I suppose, you have them by thinking real hard about a problem, but very often, that's not what happens at all. You get an idea and you write a poem.

"You're so happy about that, you don't stop to ask 'How did that idea get here?' You just take it to be the part that's given, which is like a clue--you keep following it until it leads you in Jerusalem's gate, as Blake says."

Nemerov, who teaches creative

writing at Washington University, will lecture and give readings from his works Dec. 1, at 1 p.m., room 105, Benton Hall.

Characterizing himself as "out of fashion no matter what I'm doing," he listed as his usual topics, "birds, bugs, stones, running water, standing-still water, garbage dumps, landscapes, the Bible--that gets into my poetry quite a bit; I guess I was scared by the Old Testament when I was a kid and it just stuck."

He emphasized his concern for "clarity, which makes my verses particularly susceptible to attack practically all the time. I was once told I wrote beat poetry fifteen years before it started. I can see how that may have been: no one knows what you're doing unless you write a manifesto about it; the manifesto will tell them what

they're supposed to think about it. "Painters are particularly strong on that these days. They'll put up a blank canvas, and next to it an essay about purity of intention."

Nemerov questioned the division between conventional and avant-garde poetry.

"Very often when you hear people discuss the matter it's all a question of free verse against rhymed metrical stanzas," he explained. "I would guess I write free verse about a third of the time, rhymed stanzas somewhat less because it's difficult, and in blank verse more than the other things because it's easy for me, it sounds the way I talk.

"You've got to find your own speaking voice and locate your poetry where you're comfortable.

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Education is the necessary first step to combat social problems arising from drug abuse, according to Dr. Raymond Knowles, associate director of the state Division of Mental Health. Knowles spoke at a 1-day seminar on drug abuse here Saturday.

Current Photo by Carl Doty

## Education Called Best Way To Control Drug Problems

By CARL DOTY  
and MIKE JONES  
Current Staff Writers

Emphasizing the potential dangers of drug use throughout the educational system, from grade school to college, is the way to control drug abuse, according to Dr. Raymond Knowles.

"A national consensus has apparently been reached," he said Saturday. "The appropriate approach to prevention is through education."

Knowles, associate director of the Missouri Division of Mental Health, was one of two principal speakers at the one-day drug abuse institute sponsored by the university and St. Louis Federal Executive Board. A near capacity crowd attended the session, held in room 105, Benton Hall.

He agreed with State Rep. Kenneth Rothman (Dem., 36th District), who also addressed the program, that a lack of financial resources is the major ob-

stacle to expanding the educational programs.

Adequate drug abuse information could be provided to instructors and educators throughout the country for \$3.5 million, Knowles said. He noted that this amount, in comparison, would not be sufficient to maintain the Vietnam war for the duration of "two breaths."

Rothman, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, stated that recent legislative efforts towards curbing drug abuse have included the appropriation of funds for pilot programs in the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

He indicated, however, that the fiscal crisis in Missouri is the limiting factor in the expansion of new programs. Only the approval of a tax package by the legislature could facilitate progress in the area of drug abuse.

Public interest in drug abuse eight years ago, when he first became involved in the problem, was not as widespread as it is now, Rothman said.

"You could have held a meeting on drug abuse in a telephone booth," he claimed. "Drugs were things that were used in the ghetto and among the criminal element. The so-called decent people weren't supposed to get involved with it."

Until recently, the creation and enforcement of extremely severe laws against the sale and use of drugs was considered the best way to stop drug abuse, Rothman stated. He said that this approach has not stopped a tremendous increase in drug usage in Missouri in the last four years.

Rothman's plans for new drug legislation would provide assistance to law enforcement officials "to get at those people who deal in narcotics as a business."

He also favors an enlarged program of rehabilitation of narcotics users and the mandatory education of children and young people in drug abuse through the school system.

A university-wide committee of students is presently studying possible nominees for the four seats on the Board of Curators which will be vacant Jan. 1.

In a similar effort, students are continuing to demand direct voice in the selection of a new university president.

The student committee, which calls itself the Student Commission on Curator Selection, is composed of five university-wide student government leaders and two staff members. It hopes to submit its recommendations to Governor Warren E. Hearnes by Dec. 10.

Curators are appointed by the governor with the consent of the state senate.

The commission will coordinate five search committees composed of students from all four cam-

pus of the university. Each search committee will select nominees from a particular congressional district.

State law provides that no two Curators may come from the same district. The four new Curators must come from four of the five districts in which the committees are working.

The five districts to be searched are the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 9th, and 10th Congressional Districts.

The Curators whose terms will expire include: William Billings, Pleasant Smith, Curators president, and Doyle Patterson. The remaining two years of the term of Oliver Ferguson, who resigned earlier this month, must also be filled.

There is speculation Hearnes will reappoint Billings, his former college roommate, to the board. Ferguson and Billings both reside in the 10th district due to a realignment of congressional districts after their appointments were made.

Two UMSL students are serv-

ing on the search committees. Pete Muckerman is on the first district committee, and Gerry Benz is on the third district committee.

A spokesman for Hearnes said that he will take any recommendations from the groups into consideration.

Meanwhile, the drive to secure direct student voice in the selection of the new university president has continued.

It has been learned that, on at least one campus, student leaders are planning to approach the faculty governing body with a request that it not cooperate with the 10-man commission charged with screening nominees for president due to the lack of students on that committee.

The student presidents of the four university campuses will ask the 10-man selection committee to, at a minimum, invite them to all meetings of the committee. It is hoped that the students will be allowed to participate in the committee's activities.

## Council Re-elections Scheduled Dec. 9, 10

Ending a six-month conflict with the Student Court, the Central Council agreed at a special meeting Sunday to hold new elections for day school representatives Dec. 9 and 10.

The council also adopted a bylaw designed to solve its recurring problem of securing quorums for its meetings.

The dispute arose over the decision of a council election subcommittee last spring to invalidate votes cast on a voting machine that contained incorrect voting instructions.

After a challenge to the subcommittee's decision, the court ordered a reballoting by mail. The mail vote failed to secure the 90 per cent return required by the court.

Chief justice Herb Bittner has stated that the court then ordered a new election for the day school members. The order has been

contested by members of the council, who have pointed out that there are apparently no records indicating any such decision.

The deadline for filing as candidates in the election is 5 p.m. Dec. 2. All day school students are eligible to file, according to John Heithaus, newly elected chairman of the Appointments and Elections Committee.

Heithaus was unanimously elected to the position by the council earlier in the meeting. Former chairman Pete Muckerman resigned Oct. 27.

The bylaw passed by the council will effectively reduce the number of members needed for a

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# Nemerov on Poetry: "...a Series of Peaks..."

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Otherwise, it's a matter of one screech, one grunt, and nothing in between.

"But if you look at what is called avant-garde--modern, I suppose, is a better term, silly as it is--you find that it doesn't divide up that easy. You have somebody like E. E. Cummings; you look at those intricate typographical arrangements on the page, and it takes you ten minutes to realize you're reading a sonnet.

"Similarly, Yeats and Frost rhymed a great deal of the time, almost always in the case of the former; while Eliot, who started so much of the tradition of what is called free verse, did not himself believe he was writing free verse at all, but an English heroic line based on a kind of variation on the Elizabethan. But it's more mixed up than that."

Poetry as such never gets better or worse, Nemerov asserted, "it never gets."

"I think this is an age of amazingly fine, multifarious and varied talents in this country, with a lot of energy spent on pieces of work being done," he said, "but there is no such thing, properly, as poetry to get better or worse. If there were, then you would certainly have to say that things have got steadily worse since Shakespeare, since nobody has ever been able to do anything like that. But you can see that would be silly. You don't think of Wordsworth as inferior to Shakespeare because he couldn't do Shakespeare better."

He described poetry as "a series of peaks, not a progression. Somebody arises and says something and, by God, that's it for a century. Yet even when you characterize a half-century as the Age of So-and-so, you know there were a lot of other quite fine people writing at the same time."

Nemerov denied having any special poetic mission.

"When you're young," he explained, "it's natural to think you do something by having an opinion about it, so you decide first that you're going to do this and then you do it; whereas so many things happen by accident, not as the result of some overall decision. It's only after many years that you start building up a myth about how you were divinely ordained to be a poet. I've tried not to build up any such myth."

"Maybe it's a good confidence game in the sense that it fills the poet with confidence--that is, if he can believe it--and in the sense that he's fooling himself. You can see it, for example, when Wordsworth writes his *Prelude*, which is a poem about becoming a poet. It's a beautiful poem, but that he became a poet by writing such a poem seems to me a bit mythological, a little bit

after the fact. It may have happened that way--I have no way of knowing--but I rather suspect it was a little more accidental and made up of the helter-skelter of life than it sounds.

"But if you're going to write history at all, even your own, you have to tell it as if it were a story. We feel that tomorrow is free, but as soon as it's happened, we feel that it is determined. So all history has a necessary predestinarian quality somewhere in the background. You always have an object, taking pains to show that history goes in the direction your myth about it says it ought to."

Minimizing the political influence of poetry, he admitted that "very often poets think they have" such influence.

"Of course, if they wrote propaganda they might for a time have some influence, but how could they tell what it was?" he continued. "You notice that some popular poets do a great deal of prophetic singing about how you ought to repent and love everybody--you don't notice the world getting any better on this account."

"Undoubtedly, *Hamlet* had a tremendous influence on the mind of the world; but what was it? What specific changes did the writing of *Hamlet* bring about? It did bring about some, and I suppose a few other works like *Faust* and *Don Quixote* had similar wide-ranging but obscure effects. Great poets like Shakespeare change the mind of the world, but you can't tell even afterwards in what direction they've changed it, for

better or worse," he said.

Nemerov commented that there were "some very fine" political poems, "but they don't really enter the political arena of the world."

"Since the Romantic revolt, at any rate," he added, "it's been consistently fashionable to say nasty things about governments of all sorts in all countries, but I don't think governments have ever been required to take this with the utmost seriousness or any seriousness whatever. It still may be a valid expression because, in a real sense, poetry really doesn't relate directly to settled beliefs, or it needn't all the time."

"If you are in a mood for twenty minutes when you feel like cussing the hell out of everybody, and eternize that mood in a poem, you give people a model for one aspect of the human condition, one everybody will recognize as

happening now and again. It doesn't mean that's the way you feel all the time.

"Maybe lyric poetry does simply try to capture the implications of moments, things that everyone feels without making them part of what you pretentiously call a philosophy of life. If it's a beautiful morning and you like the birds flying around in the air, you might write about that, and it might or might not amount to any poetically. That's something you can't tell."

## Theater Tickets

A group is being formed to see the play *1776* at the American Theater Dec. 7. Seats usually costing \$9 are available for \$6.50. Reservations must be made by Nov. 30 with Bernice Miner, Room 206, Administration Building, 453-5174. Money must accompany reservation.

## Library Internships

Interviews for the internship program of the Missouri State Library will be held Dec. 8 for interested sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Ten internships for next summer will be awarded on a competitive basis to those planning a career in the public libraries. Interns are paid \$275 a month. Appointments for the interviews must be made in the Placement Office, room 211 Administration

building, before Nov. 25. Interested students who cannot arrange an interview can contact the Library Career Consultant, Missouri State Library, 308 East High Street, Jefferson City, Mo. 65101. The deadline for applications is Feb. 15.

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Francis Goellner (left, 52) fights Doody Rohn (30) for a rebound during the recent Meet the Rivermen scrimmage. Playing as teammates at Carbondale last Saturday against the Salukis, both were cited for standout performances by head coach Chuck Smith.

Current Photo by Mike Olds

## Seeks Federal Aid For Summer Program

Last week Larry Berres, director of the campus version of the National Summer Youth Sports Program, journeyed to Washington, D.C. as a member of the NSYSP evaluation committee. The program is directed by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, which sets up program guidelines and regulations.

Primary in the minds of committee members was a bill requesting \$5 million in direct federal funding for continuation of the program.

Berres told the Current at the end of the meetings that the UMSL summer playground program could not continue without the federal funds.

However, if the bill were to succeed, Berres said that the money could be responsible for the "addition of facilities. It (the playground program) could be expanded in terms of staff, student help and the numbers of children served."

The national program, which consists of some 99 projects very close in structure to UMSL's, is aimed at the 8-16 age group. Berres said that the "program is for poor, deprived children who otherwise could not afford such a program during the summer months."

UMSL deals with an age bracket consisting of 10-12 year olds, the junior high school student. "The famed "Green Monsters," so to speak.

An important facet of the proposal which the NSYSP supports is direct federal funding to the program. As of now the project depends on the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Office of Economic Opportunity for money.

Success of the bill is debatable, according to Berres. "You don't know what to expect from a lame-

# Rivermen Sharpen Up On Salukis

By MIKE OLDS  
Current Sports Editor

Ten o'clock on Saturday morning is hardly the ideal time for a basketball scrimmage, especially with a powerful NCAA university division team.

But desirable or not, that's the time the UMSL Rivermen took the court at Carbondale, Illinois, last Saturday in a pre-season scrimmage with the Salukis of Southern Illinois University.

The 11 cagers and 3 coaches left UMSL at 7 a.m. in three university station wagons for the 110 mile, two hour trip. "We got 'em goin' early," chirped assistant varsity coach Larry Berres.

"The team has come a long way since the Meet the Rivermen Night game," head coach Chuck Smith

said, referring to quality improvement rather than miles traveled, "but they still have a ways to go."

Berres also was impressed with the team's progress, pointing out that the first line Rivermen played shoulder to shoulder with the respected Salukis. "There was a difference, perhaps, of eight points."

No official scores or statistics are kept in pre-season scrimmages. Nothing about the game is standard, including the periods. The SIU game, for instance, went three 20 minute "halves."

"That's good conditioning for the boys," Smith noted.

He went on to single out Clarence Slaughter and Mark Bernsen for fine offensive performances. "They had a little trouble on defense, though," he added.

"(Glen) Rohn and (Ron) Carhum turned in good performances at both ends of the court at forward," Smith said, "and (Jim) Buford and (Francis) Goellner were both good at center."

"If Greg Daust comes around, we'll have three centers," Smith said, not altogether unhappy at the prospect. Daust suffered an injury of his recently operated right knee during the Meet the Rivermen Night game.

With reference to the improvement in the team over the past week, Smith said, "I think some of the veteran players were embarrassed that they didn't play well at Meet the Rivermen Night."

UMSL opens its regular season December 1 in a 7:00 p.m. game at the Arena with that other SIU team, Edwardsville.

## Final Harrier Clash Cancelled

On November 11, the Rivermen harriers were to have closed out a something less than sensational season with a dual meet with Greenville College.

However, the Rivermen were spared the final effort due to the last minute cancellation of the meet.

Bobby Hudson, UMSL's leading runner the past two seasons, was unable to run due to his back cramps and when Joe Tuthill, late of Florissant Valley Junior College, took ill the Rivermen were forced to seek the cancellation. The meet does not count as a loss.

UMSL finished the season with a dual meet record of 1-10.

duck' Congress, but the legislators we spoke with were unanimous in support of the proposed bill."

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