



Acting

From the Desk of the Associate Dean

This is the time of year when our friends and relatives who have moved to Petaluma, Miami, or even Nashville like to call and tell us what the temperature is in their particular geographic area. They gleefully comment that it is in the mid-seventies and they're planning to golf this very afternoon or perhaps take the kids to the pool. I tell them that our weather adversities build character and our hard work pays off as seen in our accomplishments. (They are rarely moved by this observation.)

Nevertheless, as you'll see in this newsletter, the hard work of lots of people is paying off. The doctoral and master's admissions committees are reviewing all the applications that were received and we hope to make doctoral offers in the next week or so and master's offers no later than mid-March. We have some terrific students in the pool who have been attracted to Mizzou by the expertise of our faculty and alums.

Our mad scientists in the PRIME lab now have new software that provides faster and more accurate data analysis than before. Students who spend time in the PRIME lab come away with a greater understanding of applied research and many times the research they assist turns into accepted conference papers or publications.

Students continue doing great things as you will see in the article Courtney Flatt wrote about boot camp. The class had the

(Continued on page 4)

New year, new research directions in the PRIME lab

By Jeremy Littau

With the help of some new software, research in the PRIME Lab is going to get a little easier.

The lab, which records psychophysiological readings on responses such as heart rate and facial muscle movement to test media effects, has converted its software used to measure these readings to a new program. The program is called Windaq, and it collects data in such a way that it streamlines the process of compiling and analyzing the data. The software was purchased in part because of a grant from the Center for the Digital Globe here at MU.

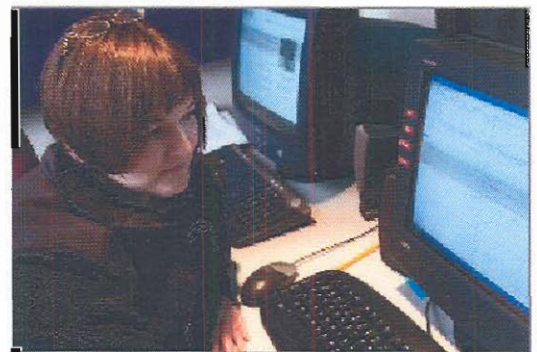
"We're basically eliminating the middle man between the acquisition and analysis of our data," said lab co-director Kevin Wise. "The old software spit out data that had to be cleaned up, whereas now we're getting it in an Excel file it is formatted better."

One example of the change is how the software allows for examining heart rate variability, which is the beat-to-beat changes in heart rate. Heart rate is an important measure in physiological research because it measures concepts such as attention in ways that go beyond merely asking a research subject about their sense of attention to the material. Whereas

the old software still allowed for HRV analysis, the new software makes the process a little easier and also allows to look at HRV in graphic format and see changes a little more easily.

"With the old software, we were forced to look at the data in very small increments," Wise said. "The new software will allow you to look at it all on one screen and see the big picture a lot better."

What this means is new ways of doing research - and coming up with research questions. Wise is leading



Graduate student Rachel Bailey uses the new Windaq software in the PRIME lab.

a research team this semester that will collect physiological data from research subjects while they are doing Web surfing activity. The goal is to look at the data collected compared to the surfing activity and see

(Continued on page 2)

Featured Inside

Doctoral Student Spotlight	3
Mother outlaws	4
Cardinal Foley visits	5
Publications and Presentations	6

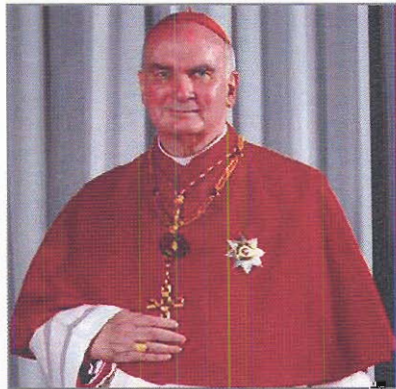
Journalism school gets religion

By Jeremy Littau

MU faculty and students had a rare chance to hear about another kind of good news, as Cardinal John Foley lectured at two different events sponsored by the School of Journalism's Center on Religion and the Professions.

Foley spoke in Fisher Auditorium in a master class and also the following day at an event the CORP co-sponsored with the Newman Center entitled "Is Religion Still Good News?" on Feb. 1.

Foley's visit offered more than a rare chance to hear a Catholic cardinal here in Columbia. In addition to his study and work in the area of theology, Foley holds a masters degree in journalism from the "other" Columbia journalism school (Columbia University in New York) and also has done journalism in both the print and broadcast disciplines. As he has ascended in the Catholic church leadership, he has focused on work in communication, especially in his role as the former president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications at the Vatican.



Cardinal John Foley

His lecture at the Newman Center drew hundreds and he focused on ways the church can both interact with mainstream media as well as influence it. Much of his lecture was aimed at the need for positive stories and role models in media, and how people of faith cannot flee the opportunity to work in media and work as agents of change.

"We need to share the good news of what is happening," Foley said. "People in Hollywood, the mainstream media - they are willing to sit down and talk about it. I have found them to be open and accessible."

Foley spoke during the evening as a person who does not take a negative view of the media. While he acknowledged that the media often can do harm in the way they cover events or in what they cover, he also spoke of the opportunities people in media have to be agents of

good. This did not apply merely to journalism, he said, but also in strategic communication fields such as public relations.

In fact, one of his most interesting statements was made in response to a question of how the religion should treat the issue of information release in times of controversy. Foley did not soft-pedal the issue, directly invoking the news surrounding the priest sex abuse scandals in the past few years. He repeated what he discussed with Cardinal Roger Mahony of the Los Angeles diocese.

"I believe that presenting virtue comes first," he said, "and in the absence of that, candor. We always lose if we don't tell the truth."

Foley's lecture was followed by about 25 minutes of question-and-answer time from the audience. Questions ranged from topics on how to best spread the message of the Church to how people can get involved. Foley said he saw great opportunity for young people to spread their message on the Internet, but he also said to not forget about some of the older forms of media.

"Radio remains one of the most inexpensive and compelling ways to reach people, especially internationally," he said. "We forget about that in the United States sometimes, but in many places abroad, television is quite expensive and it's hard to get a consistent Internet connection. The radio remains a strong tool to reach people."

Reaching people has always been Foley's way. He argued strongly for more training in religion for reporters, noting that journalists often either get elements of the story wrong and inadvertently offend people because of it, or they just miss it altogether. The goal of objectivity, he noted, means journalists don't ask the right questions or sometimes avoid asking important questions out of fear of losing that sense of fairness.

Foley's lecture thus fits perfectly both with the CORP's mission and the work it has been trying to do in the past year in increasing the religious literacy in the field of journalism. The CORP has focused much of its programming this school year on the interaction of media, religion, and politics. In addition to Foley's visit, the Center has hosted an ongoing film series this year on religion and politics. For information on the film series or other events, visit the Center's web site at <http://corp.missouri.edu/> or e-mail director Debra Mason.