

## Romance and abstinence attracts teen girls to Twilight series

BY LAURA STONE, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

OTTAWA — Vampires aside, it's really just a simple love story.

The reason teenage girls have fallen hard for the Twilight book and film series has to do with its portrayal of a traditional, romantic relationship, new research from the University of Missouri shows.

In the series, vampire Edward Cullen doesn't want to harm or bite his teen love interest Bella Swan, which means they can't have sex.

"With teens, we actually found that they appreciated the messages of abstinence," said **Melissa Click, an assistant professor of communication** who surveyed 4,000 Twilight fans, aged 11 to 70.

Click and her co-authors' research primarily addresses the reasons behind the teenage-madness for Twilight, a four-book series with two films so far.

The newest movie, The Twilight Saga: New Moon, opens Friday, and has already busted Cineplex Theatres' records by selling \$1.5 million in advance tickets across Canada. The first film, Twilight, grossed more than \$190 million in North American revenues.

The Missouri research found that many teen girls — who make up the core of Twilight's audience, along with a few moms — are drawn to the story about love beyond the physical.

"The media environment is saturated with teens in sexual relationships," said Click, who plans to publish the findings next spring in a collaborative book Bitten by Twilight: Youth culture, media and the vampire franchise.

"(Twilight) does provide something different for girls. I've had girls say to me, 'I'm going to wait for my Edward.' And they think that's really cool."

Her colleague, Jennifer Stevens Aubrey, called the series a "backlash to the 'hooking-up' culture."

Edward represents an anomaly in the minds of many teenage girls. He's romantic, protective, and most important, cares deeply for who Bella is, and not just what she looks like.

And for 18-year-old Twilight fan France-Renee Miron, that's a good thing.

"Most boys now around our age, all they want is to get you in bed. They don't care about the romance part," said Miron, who is from Green Valley, Ont.

"In the book and in the film, (Edward) doesn't want to have sex. It's really different."

Miron's friend, Valerie Lefebvre, 18, said she found solace in the book's messages about abstinence.

"By reading the book we find out we're not the only ones who could have a good relationship without being sexually active," said Lefebvre.

Click said that many girls interviewed felt a sense of relief that Bella and Edward couldn't yet have sex.

"They liked that it was the man putting the brakes on sexual activity. For them it probably highlighted the development of the relationship — the romantic relationship — between the two, instead of the sexual relationship," said Click.

The study is comprised of online surveys and in-person focus groups. Researchers found 70 teens for the focus groups at a fan convention held in Dallas last summer. About one-third of those surveyed were teens.

Despite an increasingly sexualized youth culture, the desire for romance among teenage girls has remained, said Mike Farrell, a partner at Toronto youth research firm Youthography.

"There are some fundamental things that haven't changed that much. And one of those, especially with girls, is the focus on a search for meaningful love that is hopeful, passionate, real," he said.

According to Youthography research, only a quarter of young teenage girls were interested in sex, while more than half said they thought about marriage and having children.

In a 2008 Canada-wide study, Youthography surveyed around 500 teen girls ages 14 to 18 about 50 different "values" affecting them, from current events to sex. They've been tracking values for research for the past nine years as part of Youthography's quarterly study called, Ping.

But there can be a danger to Twilight's traditional romance story too, say experts.

University of Victoria political science professor Janni Aragon said that the books, while she enjoys them, enforce "good old gender stereotypes," such as Bella being clumsy and Edward acting condescending and all-knowing.

There's also the message that Edward doesn't trust himself around Bella.

"Woven within these pages is also that boys get to a certain point in which you can't tell them 'no,' or they can't control themselves. And I'm not sure an 11-, 12-, 13-year-old, maybe even a 15- to 18-year-old, understands that."

Xania Khan, editor-in-chief of Toronto's Vervegirl teen magazine, said that the hysteria surrounding Twilight may blind teens to real-world relationships.

"Some girls have a hard time distinguishing fact and fiction," said Khan. "They might look for something that's not real."

That won't be a problem for Miron and Lefebvre's friend, Embrun, Ont.'s Marjolaine Bourdeau, also 18. While she said she's a fan of the books, Bourdeau won't be waiting on a perfect vampire boyfriend anytime soon.

"I know that's not possible," she said. "Girls who haven't been in a real relationship. They don't know what relationships are like."

© Copyright (c) Canwest News Service

## Stroke patients need more recovery time

Published: Nov. 19, 2009

COLUMBIA, Mo., Nov. 19 (UPI) -- A U.S. scientist says the health system isn't giving stroke patients enough time to regain any lost function because it underestimates what the brain can do.

**University of Missouri-Columbia Professor Guy McCormack** says such patients need more time and motivation to reclaim lost functions, such as the use of an arm, hand or leg. With today's therapies, it is possible for patients to regain more function than once ever thought possible, McCormack said.

"Patients are able to regain function due to the principle of neuroplasticity, or the brain's ability to change, especially when patients continue therapy long after their injuries," McCormack said. "Therapists once believed the brain doesn't develop new neurons; but now they know neurons change their shape and create new branches to connect with other neurons, rewiring the brain following an injury or trauma."

He said the evidence suggests the nervous system can recover, but it needs time and encouragement -- two things McCormack says are hard to obtain. With U.S. healthcare reform being discussed, McCormack said he hopes legislators will investigate supporting long-term intervention therapy.

"It seems like the current system of rehabilitation isn't conducive to rehabilitation because we don't give patients enough time to rehabilitate," McCormack said. "We need to look at long-term therapies. In the end, they might prove to be more cost effective."

He presented his views in a recent issue of OT Practice Magazine.

© 2009 United Press International, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

## MU Faculty Council discusses incorporating MU in the Evening

By [Carla Jimenez](#)

November 20, 2009 | 12:01 a.m. CST

**COLUMBIA – The MU Faculty Council heard a motion Thursday afternoon to discontinue the MU in the Evening program as a separate degree program and incorporate it into the traditional education structure at the university.**

MU in the Evening is a program that allows people to finish or start their bachelor's degree with other working adults. Students earn a bachelor of general studies and are allowed to take classes from whatever field they choose.

The evening program was started for MU staff that wanted college course options. According to J. Wilson Watt, an associate professor in the School of Social Work, the focal group is gone. Almost all of the staff have gone through MU in the Evening or earned their degree some other way, Watt said.

"This isn't the right mode anymore," Watt said. The review committee established to examine the program agreed MU in the Evening was no longer serving the need.

The review committee found that the evening program is viewed by the public as a second-rate option to a conventional MU degree. Watt referred to it as "MU lite."

Even the human resources department at MU wouldn't accept applicants with MU in the Evening degrees, Watt said.

He was also quick to say this does not mean night programs are going away. The motion would simply integrate the program to the core campus educational structure.

The motion is the result of research and discussion between all the departments and the provost's office. The council will vote on the motion when it reconvenes in January.

The council also discussed the motion to have nontenure track faculty serve on campus-standing committees. The issue was raised at the last meeting and the council voted unanimously Thursday to allow it.

The council also talked about:

- the strength of MU's Academic Progress Rate, a standard of measurement for the NCAA to determine the academic success of student athletes; MU's score is among the highest at public universities;
- the town hall meeting with UM President Gary Forsee scheduled at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 9 at Monsanto Auditorium in the Life Sciences Building; and
- the faculty evaluation system and a possible revision that could include more specific questions.

# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN



## MU leaders' spouses read, play with preschoolers

By [Hayley Tsukayama](#)

November 19, 2009 | 9:40 p.m. CST



Anne Deaton (center) sings the "Five Little Monkeys" song after reading to preschoolers at the Robert G. Combs Language Preschool on Thursday. From left to right, Parker Quinn, Karen Hecksel student clinician, Jackson Moore, Cole Donigian and Caitlin Dawdy lead student clinician sing along with Deaton, while playing with paper monkeys and a blanket. "I got to read to the leaders of tomorrow," Deaton said. | [Calin Ilea](#)

**COLUMBIA — Perched on carpet squares, the students of MU's Robert G. Combs Language Preschool worked hard to keep fidgeting to a minimum as they listened to their guest teacher, Anne Deaton.**

During this semester, the students have had visits from four prominent MU spouses: Deaton, who is married to MU Chancellor Brady Deaton; Sherry Forsee, who is married to University of Missouri System President Gary Forsee; Lerke Foster, who is married to MU Provost Brian Foster; and Carol Oliver, who is married to the dean of the School of Health Professions, Richard Oliver.

Each woman has spent time in the classroom, reading books and participating in activities and games with the students.

Carol Oliver started the program a couple of months ago, calling it the First Ladies Reading Program — a reference to her nickname as the "first lady of the School of Health Professions."

Oliver was inspired to start the program after she spoke with Dana Fritz, preschool director and a clinical professor in communication science and disorders, about the morning preschool, which specializes in speech and language instruction. Although the school is open to all children between ages 3 and 5, most of the students have problems with speech or language. There also are peer models, students without speech problems, in the class.

"Every child deserves to meet their greatest potential," said Oliver, who kicked off the program with her reading of Laura Joffe Numeroff's classic children's book, "If You Give A Mouse A Cookie."

The students at Combs work closely with the school's clinicians, all of whom are MU seniors studying communication science and disorders, but Fritz said that having visitors helps the preschoolers apply what they learn in their preschool lessons to other situations.

"When people come in to read, it puts our kids to the test," Fritz said. "One thing that we struggle with, with these kids, is transferring the skills they learn with our clinicians (to situations) with different people and in different places."

Deaton read one of the students' favorite books, "Going to the Zoo" by Tom Paxton. In between pages, Deaton — who has a doctorate in adult education and has worked with children throughout her career — asked the students what they thought of the book's illustrations.

After the book was finished, Deaton narrated an imaginary safari, leading the children in pantomimed hiking, swimming and tree-climbing to find a dangerous lion.

"I was privileged to be asked," Deaton said, after a near escape from an imaginary lion. "I have worked a lot with children, professionally and as a mother and grandmother. I believe in quality early education and think reading is fundamental."

Oliver said she plans to ask other "first ladies" to lend their time to the preschool, including Columbia's first lady, Axie Hindman, Missouri's first lady, Jan Nixon, and yes, even first lady Michelle Obama.

"I'm delighted to be able to do what I can," Oliver said. "I would love to grow the program; we're just getting started."



## **University of Missouri President Secretly Meets With Old Foe**

November 19, 2009 03:21 PM ET | Jeff Greer | [Permanent Link](#) |

They were two of the three candidates to become president of the University of Missouri system back in 2007. When the top choice rejected the offer, Gary Forsee beat out former congressman Kenny Hulshof for the job.

But now, Forsee may be helping Hulshof join the University of Missouri anyway, the Associated Press reports. Hulshof, who served six terms in Congress and lost the 2008 gubernatorial race, met privately with Forsee at least three times in recent months, but neither will talk about the meetings.

"I meet with lots of people on lots of different topics," Forsee tells the AP.

A professor involved in one of the meetings tells the AP that Hulshof wants to create a statewide competitiveness council that would focus on economic development. But beyond that, no one seems to know what Forsee and Hulshof discussed.

Thursday, November 19, 2009

# Hulshof floats his ideas with Forsee

Ex-lawmaker once sought UM post.

**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Former congressman Kenny Hulshof isn't letting his unsuccessful attempt to lead the University of Missouri System keep him away from University Hall.

Public records obtained by The Associated Press show that Hulshof has met with university President Gary Forsee in at least three times in recent months at Forsee's campus office. Both men declined to discuss the private sessions.

"I meet with lots of people on lots of different topics," Forsee said yesterday.

Hulshof was one of three finalists for the four-campus system's top job in 2007. University curators later hired Forsee after New Jersey businessman Terry Sutter, their preferred candidate from the initial three finalists, declined the job.

Hulshof is a Columbia Republican and former special state prosecutor who spent six terms in Congress. He won the Republican nomination for governor in 2008

but lost in the general election to Democrat Jay Nixon.

Plant sciences Professor Gary Stacey attended one of the meetings with Hulshof at Forsee's request. He said Hulshof was interested in creating a statewide "competitiveness council" focused on economic development, including luring federal stimulus money to the Kansas City region.

After leaving politics, Hulshof joined the law firm of Polsinelli Shughart PC as a member of its public policy team in January. He keeps offices in Kansas City and Washington.

Stacey helped create the Missouri Energy Institute, a Jefferson City-based not-for-profit designed to bring together utilities, environmental groups and researchers. "They were concerned that we were kind of at cross purposes," Stacey said, referring to Hulshof and Forsee. "I didn't see it that way."

The Hulshof-Forsee meetings were listed on the president's monthly schedule, which are routinely provided at the AP's request. Hulshof did not respond to repeated requests for comment.



**Kenny Hulshof**



**Gary Forsee**

## COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

# Agreement to freeze tuition hides MU's grim financial prospects

By George Kennedy

November 19, 2009 | 3:31 p.m. CST

I wish I could be happier with the governor's announcement about the university's budget.

For those who've been too busy thinking about Thanksgiving dinner to read the front page the past couple of days, Gov. Nixon has offered and our university's leaders have jumped at a deal that provides a second year of no tuition increases for in-state students and a budget for higher education that's just under 95 percent of this year's budget.

At one level, and for some bill payers, it's a good deal. **I'm sure that's why President Forsee and Chancellor Deaton were quick to sign on. As the governor said, keeping higher education affordable is a good thing.**

However, all parties must recognize that it's another step backward. Even this deal isn't a sure thing, by any means. And if it comes to pass, it makes a bad situation worse.

I thought the comments of Rep. Chris Kelly, as reported in Thursday's Missouriian, were ominous. Keep in mind that Chris is a strong supporter of the university and a loyal Democrat. So when he points out that the legislature — not the governor — has the real budget authority, he's both stating the obvious and warning that with the economy still floundering and federal stimulus money largely spent, 95 percent may well be a hope rather than a reality.

Chris also urged university officials to do a better job of pressing their case with the legislature. That's important, and President Forsee is already doing it; but it's hard to envision much legislative largesse in such troubled times. Better economic circumstances have yielded a decade of declining state support.

The reality is grim. As President Forsee noted Wednesday, the funding model for higher education in Missouri is broken. He added, providing no details, “The time to start reforming that path is now.” Perhaps the direction of the path will be clearer after the on-campus conversations the president promises for the next couple of months.

A few numbers tell the story: This year’s general operating budget for the campus is \$483 million. That’s what Budget Director Tim Rooney told the faculty meeting last month. If the 5.2 percent cut in state support promised by the governor is passed along proportionately, that translates to about \$25 million less for our campus next year.

Now remember that university budgeters have been planning for 2 percent salary raises for next year. Higher salaries, they’ve said, are a high priority. Rooney said that modest raise would require another 5 percent of the general operating budget. Unless that priority has drowned in red ink, as I’m guessing it has, there’s another \$24 million needed.

Math isn’t my strong suit, so I won’t try to calculate how big an increase would be needed in out-of-state tuition and the fees that aren’t frozen in order to generate \$50 million or even \$25 million. I doubt that even Tim Rooney could make those numbers work.

The only financially feasible alternative to the governor’s deal that I can see would have been a whopping increase in tuition for all. Hypothetically, an increase of \$1,800 in annual tuition for all 30,000 students would yield \$54 million. (That would have put our in-state tuition at about \$10,300 a year. By sheerest coincidence, that’s the level being proposed for the University of California system, which has long been regarded as setting the quality standard among public universities.)

That’s not going to happen here, of course, so more cuts seem inevitable at an institution from which the fat has long since been surgically removed. If only “world class” meant being in the same fix as the rest of the world of higher education, we’d be on our way to being world class after all.

*George Kennedy is a former managing editor at the Missouriian and professor emeritus at the Missouri School of Journalism.*

# theman eater

## Nixon speaks on tuition freeze, budget cuts

*Of the \$42 million in cuts to higher education funding, about \$11 million would come from MU.*

**By Wes Duplantier and Zach Toombs**

Published Nov. 18, 2009

Gov. Jay Nixon spoke on an agreement with the presidents of Missouri universities to accept a 5.2 percent budget cut and freeze in-state tuition in the next academic year at a news conference Wednesday at the Reynolds Alumni Center.

The plan, which awaits approval from the Missouri General Assembly, includes a tuition freeze for in-state undergraduate students but wouldn't rule out increases to student fees. Nixon said it's too early to say whether tuition would rise for out-of-state and graduate students.

Gov. Jay Nixon first announced the agreement during visits to UM-St. Louis and Missouri State University on Tuesday and said keeping the cost of higher education low for Missourians is essential.

"Keeping education affordable is the best step we can take to turn this economy around," Nixon said. "The link between education and economic recovery is clear."

The agreement is an amended version of the tuition freeze for the current academic year which kept funding stable and calls for a \$42 million cut in the \$807.9 million allotted to Missouri's 13 public universities. MU's tuition had increased every year for the past decade before the current freeze, with the largest increase in the 2003-2004 academic year.

According to a news release from the governor's office, public colleges and universities nationwide raised tuition by an average of 6.5 percent last year, while Nixon froze Missouri's in-state undergraduate tuition.

UM system President Gary Forsee said he agreed to the plan because he had feared the possibility of larger cuts from the state.

"It's an indication of this governor's support for higher education," Forsee said at the news conference. "It's a clear indication of the importance we all place on access and affordability for Missouri students to stay in school and get that degree."

Of the \$42 million in cuts, about \$21 million would come from the UM system's four campuses, and the majority of that — about \$11 million — would come from MU. Forsee said the 5 percent cut is one of the best scenarios the university could have hoped for.

"This agreement mitigates the magnitude of the cut that higher education would otherwise have received and enables us to hold undergraduate tuition flat for one more year," Forsee said.

The announcement comes just weeks after Nixon announced a second round of double-digit cuts to the budgets of several state agencies in an attempt to close a budget deficit projected earlier this year at \$261 million.

Despite the agreement between the governor and university presidents, future Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, said in a news release Nixon is speaking too soon.

"We have yet to determine the coming year's budget consensus revenue," Mayer said. "That means we do not yet know how much money will even be in the state's bank account to fund the critical functions of state government."

The governing boards of each university, including the UM system Board of Curators, would also need to approve the agreement before it becomes official.



## Three ancient crocodile species unearthed

By Dan Vergano, USA TODAY

Ancient Africa's swamps and rivers swarmed with plant-eating and dinosaur-gobbling crocodiles some 100 million years ago, *National Geographic* paleontologists reported Thursday.

In the online journal *ZooKeys*, Paul Sereno of the University of Chicago and Hans Larsson of Canada's McGill University detail discoveries of three new species found beneath the Sahara: the plant-eating RatCroc, so nicknamed for its eating habits; the saber-toothed BoarCroc, a 20-foot-long, dinosaur gobbler; and the PancakeCroc, a flat-bodied specimen.

Skeletal remains of two previously discovered crocodiles, the DuckCroc and DogCroc, were also found.

"Africa really was a world of dinosaurs and crocodiles then," says Sereno. The November *National Geographic* magazine and a National Geographic Channel show, *When Crocs Ate Dinosaurs*, airing Saturday, feature the five prehistoric crocodiles. "We wanted to bring people this veritable menagerie of crocodiles," he adds.

The study shows crocodiles came in all sizes:

- *Kaprosuchus saharicus*, or BoarCroc, found in Niger, was equipped with three rows of slashing teeth.
- *Araripesuchus rattoides*, or RatCroc, was a 3-foot-long, bucktoothed plant-eater found in Morocco.
- *Laganosuchus thaumastos*, or PancakeCroc, was a 20-foot-long, flat-headed fish-eater (judging from the teeth) found in Niger and Morocco.

The DuckCroc was a Pinocchio-nosed 3-foot-long fish eater and DogCroc, a galloping plant-eater with a short muzzle.

"It's really interesting that we're seeing these communities of crocodylians that have such diverse members," **says paleontologist Casey Holliday of the University of Missouri**, who was not part of the new study. "So, big picture ... crocs were clearly far more diverse and specialized during the Cretaceous (Period, 140 million to 65 million years ago), compared to what we have left today."

Similar finds have cropped up in Madagascar and Brazil in recent years, Holliday notes, painting a picture of the southern continents some 100 million years ago with crocodiles performing

many of the roles — gnawing on small forest flora and fauna — occupied by mammals such as weasels and badgers today.

Africa, South America and Australia were part of a southern supercontinent called Gondwana which split apart in this era. "I suspect these crocodiles likely kept mammals out of these niches," Sereno says, until the end of the Age of Dinosaurs some 65 million years ago.

Today, some 23 species of crocodiles still roam the Earth, survivors of that era, with some species such as the American alligator thriving, and others endangered.