MU governance is questioned
Leaders do not share, faculty say.

The decision to close the University of Missouri Press was made without faculty input and is just one example of an administration that doesn’t share governance, Stephen Montgomery-Smith told a group gathered on campus yesterday.

Examples date back at least a decade, said Montgomery-Smith, a math professor and vice president of MU’s American Association of University Professors chapter.

He tried to talk about his own experiences in the math department, but the crowd at a joint meeting between AAUP and supporters of the UM Press was more interested in talking about the closure of the publishing house.

Montgomery-Smith, though, thinks the press decision is a symptom of a broader problem of top-down decision-making and an MU Faculty Council he accused of being too passive.

The latter could change this academic year. Several AAUP members, including Montgomery-Smith, have been elected to the council and will serve on its executive committee.

"I think the people who are coming on are much more outspoken," said Sudarshan Loyalka, a curators' professor of nuclear engineering who will lead the council's finance committee. "Many of them have had similar experiences where they're seeing shared governance not being followed."

Loyalka is among them. His academic home, the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute, is facing closure after administrators made a decision to restructure the program without faculty input.

Shared governance is a model that allows faculty groups to provide input on decisions that affect curriculum, research and an institute's academic reputation.

"The rules are very clear that we have primary shared advisory authorities," Loyalka said. "They consistently do not let us exercise those authorities as they are specified. We have to push back."

It's up to faculty to exert that authority, said Nicole Monnier, an associate teaching professor of Russian and a new member of the council's executive committee. Historically, few have been willing to take a strong stance on issues, she said.

"We are where we are because we've allowed ourselves to get there," she said. "We are as responsible for a lack of shared governance as administrators because we haven't said something."

Monnier said the MU Faculty Council this year will make communicating with administrators, as well as student groups, a priority.

"I am worried about shared governance," she said. "I think the best thing we could do to address shared governance is for the faculty to be modeling it."
Meeting focuses on how to fight UM Press closure

University of Missouri Press supporters plan to recruit students, reach out to state lawmakers and raise money in hopes of saving the 54-year-old publishing house.

Those were some of the ideas tossed out during a two-hour meeting yesterday between the American Association of University Professors and those who are fighting the university's plan to close the press and replace it with an experimental model on the MU campus.

"We'll win the fight only when we take it to the street," author William Least Heat-Moon told about 70 attendees during the meeting at the MU Student Center.

In May, UM President Tim Wolfe announced plans to phase out the press by cutting its $400,000 subsidy starting July 1. Last week, the MU campus revealed plans for a new model to be directed by Speer Morgan, an English professor who oversees the Missouri Review literary magazine.

The plan has caused a national stir, prompting letters from academics and authors around the country and generating national media attention.

There are conflicting accounts of how the decision was made. Heat-Moon pointed a finger at Morgan because the new press is now in line to get $800,000 in net sales that the press generates from its backlist. "Follow the money," he said. Morgan did not respond to messages from a reporter seeking comment.

The amount could decrease if authors are successful in getting back their book rights. So far, three have made formal requests that their rights be returned, and Heat-Moon urged other authors to do the same.

He also encouraged protesters to get students on board either through petitions or by asking for small donations.

Jonathon Jones, who is pursuing his doctoral degree in history, attended the meeting because he's worried the closure of the UM Press will devalue his degree. He said he's afraid it will tell future academic employers that he graduated from an institute that does not value academics.

A proposed new press on the MU campus that would heavily utilize graduate students is "a step above slave labor," Jones said. "We work hard, we work our butts off and teach quality classes, but we're not publishing professionals, so we should not be doing that."

Heat-Moon has pledged a donation to keep the traditional publishing house open and said supporters are about a fourth of the way into raising $100,000, a mostly symbolic donation that would further snuff
administration’s argument that the press closure is a cost-savings move. MU also has said the new press will not make a profit and likely will operate in the red when it opens.

Leaders from the national AAUP suggested getting state lawmakers involved. That's how University of Virginia faculty were able to reverse that board's decision to fire President Teresa Sullivan earlier this summer, said Donna Potts, chairwoman of the assembly of state conferences for the national AAUP.

Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, said it would be inappropriate for legislators to mingle. "This is classically an internal decision," he said. "The greater principle here is the right of the university to govern itself."

Sen. Kurt Schaefer, who is chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, agreed, saying legislators should not try to control how the university spends money. That said, Schaefer, R-Columbia, said he has expressed concerns about the press closure to university administrators.

"I have been assured the reorganization will make it a more viable entity," he said. "I'm waiting to see how this develops."

Potts said the national AAUP could get involved if faculty groups take a strong stand. The MU Faculty Council is expected to discuss the press at its meeting tomorrow at 3:30 in Memorial Union South. Morgan is expected to be there.
UM curator's company to purchase KMIZ-TV

A company owned by a University of Missouri curator intends to buy the company that owns four local TV stations, including local ABC affiliate KMIZ-TV.

JW Broadcasting announced Wednesday it had signed an agreement to sell its four television stations — KMIZ-TV, Fox-22, MyZouTV and Me-TV — for $16 million to the St. Joseph-based News-Press and Gazette Co. The deal is subject to approval by the Federal Communications Commission.

JW Broadcasting is part of Boston-based private equity firm Alta Communications. The News-Press & Gazette is led by CEO David Bradley, who also serves as the chairman of the University of Missouri Board of Curators.

The deal is interesting because the university owns and operates KOMU-TV, the local NBC affiliate. In a statement, university spokeswoman Jennifer Hollingshead said Bradley had informed curators of the pending purchase and the potential conflict of interest with regard to decisions about KOMU.

"Curator Bradley will voluntarily recuse himself from any discussions or votes by the board concerning KOMU, which comports with the requirements of the Board’s conflict of interest rule," she wrote.

FCC rules could present a potential problem for the deal. Regulations bar more than one of the top four local broadcast stations from being owned by the same person.

In an FCC filing, the News-Press & Gazette argued that Bradley had no direct involvement with KOMU and as a curator is more involved in broad policymaking for a vast institution.

"Mr. Bradley’s personal lack of any substantial time devoted to or focus on the university’s broadcast assets during the past four years, coupled with his broadly encompassing recusal pledge going forward, reasonably requires the FCC to conclude in these circumstances that he should be deemed to hold ‘no attributable ownership interest’ in one of the university’s specific broadcast assets," the filing says.

The sale is expected to close in November, according to a statement from JW Broadcasting.
KMIZ to be sold to St. Joseph media company for $16 million

Wednesday, July 25, 2012 | 3:40 p.m. CDT; updated 5:22 p.m. CDT, Wednesday, July 25, 2012
BY Zac Boesch

COLUMBIA — The News-Press and Gazette Co., based in St. Joseph, has filed with the FCC to purchase KMIZ-TV for $16 million.

KMIZ-TV is being bought from JW Broadcasting, which is controlled by Alta Communication. Alta Communications is a Boston-based firm that invests in media and communication companies. JW Broadcasting bought the KMIZ-TV station for $3.9 million in 2003. JW Broadcasting operates KMIZ-TV, KQFX-TV and subchannels MyZouTV and Me-TV in Columbia.

Under the agreement with JW Broadcasting, the News-Press and Gazette Co. will buy the two television stations and the two subchannels.

David Bradley, the director and CEO of the News-Press and Gazette Co., is also the chairman of the UM System Board of Curators.

The application for the sale with the FCC goes into detail about multiple ownership rules.

The FCC does not allow ownership of two of the top four rated stations in terms of audience share in a designated area.

Because MU is the licensee of KOMU-TV and Bradley is the UM System Board of Curators chairman, there were concerns over conflict of interest.

The application states that Bradley "has had no personal involvement in any KOMU-TV matter during the last four years" he has served as a curator.

Bradley will recuse himself from any discussions or votes concerning KOMU, according to a press release from the University of Missouri System. Bradley did say he would not recuse himself from conversations involving the School of Journalism unless his counsel thinks there is a conflict.

Bradley said he was comfortable extending business to the Jefferson City/Columbia market. He is the third generation of his family working for the media group and members of the fourth generation also work for the News-Press Gazette Co. Bradley said he intends to keep the staff as it is.

"I could not be happier," Gene Steinberg, general manager of the stations, said about the sale.
Steinberg recognized that Alta Communications was an investment company and they would eventually sell KMIZ-TV. He began to search for possible Missouri media groups to buy the station and found News-Press and Gazette.

Steinberg said he was happy with how News-Press and Gazette handles other small market television stations and their history in Missouri.

"They're the right buyers to take us wherever the future is," said Steinberg.

The filing with the FCC begins the 30 days allowed for petitioning of the sale.

The News-Press and Gazette Co. currently operates one television station in St. Joseph, which it announced in March.

In that announcement, the News-Press and Gazette Co. said it would use the St. Joseph station as a centerpiece in extending services to the St. Joseph and surrounding region. Along with other television stations across the country, the company owns six newspapers in Missouri.
Separate and Unequal: Changing Campus Culture Beyond Penn State

Posted: 07/25/2012 11:33 am

Since the publication of the Freeh report on July 12th, there has been a lively and healthy discussion of the role that sports should play in university culture. Penn State's willingness to open itself to independent investigation is a monumental act of self-reflexivity that should serve as model for other institutions in which sport culture overshadows almost everything else. With its sanctions and penalties, the NCAA has certainly joined the choir in condemning those who, intent on preserving the cult of leadership and brand association that issues from sports culture, covered-up the heinous crimes of a lionized coach.

Mark Emmert cited the Freeh report and argued that the intent of the NCAA was to create a structure that would ensure that Penn State comply with the Freeh report's recommendation to create a "sustained integration of the Intercollegiate Athletics program into the broader Penn State community." Whether the fines, bowl bans and losses of scholarships will help achieve this goal or whether they are disproportionate acts of sanctimonious symbolism (or perhaps, in the case of the Big 10 and its profitable TV network, opportunistic acts of disaster capitalism) should be an ongoing debate, but certainly this desire for a more equitable and proportionate integration of sports culture into the larger fabric of university life is one that could, and should, have ripples across the intercollegiate world. For the role that football played at Penn State is not, as the NCAA seemed all-too-eager to emphasize, a unique situation. Indeed, as the public support for university education in America dwindled over the last 30 years, the power and influence of big money sports over all aspects of university life grew wildly out of control.

American culture is very adept at focusing its outrage on specific cases but not very good at dealing with structural problems when powerful forces are involved. Just look at how we responded to the banking and securities crisis. Rogue agents of too-big-to-fail banks were condemned and some fines were levied, but the structures that enabled the disproportionate power of finance over the rest of culture remained virtually untouched. This too is a kind of cover-up. By not addressing the larger structural issues that help to contextualize what happened at Penn State, the NCAA's punitive actions help to enable the dominance of a golem-like sport culture over American university life. Everywhere, there are signs of what the Freeh report denounced as a "reverence for football ... ingrained on all levels of the campus community."

Just last week, the University of Missouri, whose football coach makes $2.7 million a year, announced it was cutting its academic press, several programs and 180 jobs to balance its budget on the very the same day it announced a $200 million plan to add another 6000
seats to its stadium. Last winter, Nick Saban received a $400,000 bonus and the players on the national championship team at Alabama were awarded garish diamond encrusted rings to commemorate their victory, but the Tuscaloosa campus received a $4.2 million cut in funding, slightly less than the $4.73 million Saban makes per year. These are symptoms of a warped system of values. The Knight Commission revealed that half of all top-tier athletic programs rely on at least $9 million in institutional funding to balance their budgets and in many cases fundraising for athletics actually competes with overall university fundraising.

Stated plainly, sports culture exists in a separate and unequal world on university campuses. Defenders of the status quo say that the university’s general fund gets a cut of revenues from licensing logos and images, or from the trickle-down subsidiaries like concessions, but this financial order only increases the incentive to preserve the dominance of sport culture. What has the NCAA done to address this? The general funds of the universities that provide the spectacle and the brand appeal get little of the revenues the NCAA distributes each year. The money from sports largely goes to support sports. Football’s BCS system, which rewards percentages of revenue to power conferences and Athletic department corporations based entirely upon on-field performance, is even more out of whack. If these immensely profitable arms of the intercollegiate sports complex (not to mention the TV networks) gave up power or kicked a greater share of revenues back to the general funds of the university communities that provide the brand names for their products, this would encourage greater integration between intercollegiate athletics. It would also make it easier to believe the aim of their punishment was true.

In this separate and unequal university culture where big-money sports have all the power and influence, are we really shocked -- shocked -- to find abuses of power? Ignoring the potential victims may indeed, as the Freeh report saw it, show an "utter lack of empathy," but is it incomprehensible that during a period characterized by yearly slashes in state support for education, a handful of powerful administrators at Penn State convinced themselves to look the other way so as to keep the football program profitable and preserve the legacy of a coach whose pristine persona was so tightly chained to the university’s bottom line? In the coercive economic environment created by constant calls for market-based solutions to cuts in public funding for universities, they had more than enough incentive to preserve their best-selling commodity. All across America, a general economy in which higher education is under-supported has created a monstrous moral economy in which intercollegiate athletics operates under different budgets and lives by different rules.

So while the mob screams for another ounce of flesh from an already wounded Penn State, we should not let our collective indignation blind us to the systemic problems that that go hand in hand with our over-valuation of intercollegiate sport culture. Penn State now has every incentive to address these problems of proportion and to shrink the overbearing influence of sports over university life. Hopefully, this will mean greater transparency, more shared governance and more equal distribution of resources. In this sense, Penn State’s situation is quite unique; elsewhere, the cover-up continues.
Pinkel's defense of Paterno is shameful

Editor, the Tribune: Regarding the headline "Pinkel defends Paterno, calls him a 'great man,' " in the Wednesday, July 18, Tribune, I hope Gary Pinkel was misquoted or his comments taken out of context. We do not need this kind of response representing the University of Missouri sports program or any other MU program.

Anyone who has this type of feeling should be vilified in the same way as the defender of the perpetrator. Sports programs or any other university program does not trump child abuse or child abuse cover-up. Shame on Pinkel for supporting this type of action.

Paul Meyer
2100 Chapel Hill Road
J.B. Spann walks across Lowry Mall during his freshman year on the Mizzou campus. The MU Extension 4-H Youth Development program helped prepare him for higher education at the University of Missouri's flagship institution. All of the students who have participated in the 4-H Youth Development program over the past 12 years have graduated from high school and gone on to college — Spann was the 23rd.
The circumstances surrounding Spann’s youth weren’t necessarily ideal. Spann’s mother, Sarah McElroy, had a brain aneurysm in 1995. The resulting damage caused some long-term effects. “I don’t remember much about the kids growing up,” McElroy says.

At the time of the aneurysm, Spann was 6 years old. His grandparents cared for him and his older brother while McElroy recovered. Now, he and his mother are very close. In fact, the situation fostered close family ties all around, and Spann often accompanied his brother to after-school activities.

Although he didn’t know it at the time, one group activity in particular — the MU Extension 4-H Youth Development after-school program — would affect him for the rest of his life. “It was like my second home,” Spann says. “We were a family. We supported each other.”

**Home away from home**

At 3 p.m. almost every weekday, 15 high school students make their way to the basement of 724 North Union Blvd. This is not a stereotypical 4-H program — there are no farm animals, no barns and no corn. Although it has historically focused on agriculture and animal husbandry in rural areas, a new breed of 4-H focuses on urban youth development.

“Whether rural or urban, young people are facing the same kinds of issues,” says Jody Squires, MU Extension urban youth specialist and city program director for the St. Louis program.

Squires, who earned a bachelor’s degree in general studies at Mizzou and master’s and doctoral degrees in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at University of Missouri-St. Louis, is referring to the downward trend in high school graduation rates and the barriers some youth face to attending college.

She and her staff equip students from the St. Louis public school district with the values and leadership skills necessary to graduate from high school and attend college.

Spann was part of the program for nine years. “This is the type of program that helps you define yourself,” he says. “Being part of it kept me off the streets and kept me from doing bad things.”

**Academic prep**

The program emphasizes the importance of education and community service and teaches students such practical skills as managing finances, communicating and teamwork. The group also visits local colleges and takes other field trips. Each student is expected to do well in school, fulfill responsibilities at home and give back to the community through volunteer activities.

Standardized test preparation such as for the ACT — required for most college admissions — can be a barrier to acceptance to a four-year institution for some students. So the 4-H program also helps them prepare academically for college and guides their families through the college admissions process.
Spann’s ACT score combined with his class ranking made him eligible for MU’s Trial Admission Program. Students in the program take two college courses during the summer. Successful students — Spann among them — then start regular course work in the fall.

The transition to college life in fall 2008 was fast, Spann says. “I had to adjust to that, but I quickly learned what to expect.” He graduated in May 2012 with a bachelor’s degree in textile and apparel management from the College of Human Environmental Sciences.

All of the students who have participated in the 4-H Youth Development program over the past 12 years have graduated from high school and gone on to college — Spann was the 23rd.

“I’ll stay involved in the program — of course I will,” he says. “It helped me, and I want it to help others too.”

*Editor’s note: Story updated and republished with permission from MIZZOU magazine.*
July is the 150th anniversary of one of the most influential pieces of legislation in American education history, the Morrill Act. This law, which paved the way for the sixty-nine land-grant colleges in the United States, remains profoundly important today.

The act was introduced by Congressman Justin S. Morrill from Vermont and was signed into law on July 2, 1862 by President Abraham Lincoln. It provided each state with a land grant to sell in order to raise proceeds to establish or improve colleges focusing on practical studies such as engineering, agriculture and military science. The size of the grant was based on each state’s representation in Congress. Each state received 30,000 acres per member of Congress, which mean that every state received at least 90,000 acres of federal land to sell for the funds. The law was passed in order to extend the possibility of higher education to a working class which had been excluded from the elite classical education offered by the traditional system. It also hoped to provide relevant education to a large number of Americans at a reasonable price. Every state and the District of Columbia now has at least one land-grant college.

The parallels between the education environment of the 1860s and that of today are sobering. The country was deeply divided over social issues (in 1862, literally so); it was in a time of protracted war; the economy was doing poorly and the country was in need of more educated workers. The Morrill Act represents a dramatic and necessary change to the face of the American education system by making it much more democratic. While the modern American education system certainly does not need massive endowments of land, the originality of thought and innovation shown in the Morrill Act is needed to meet the needs of today’s society. In a
speech delivered at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in May 2012, Nancy Cantor, Chancellor of Syracuse University, points out that “our nation is living in a ‘crucible moment,’ and we are called to educate all citizens in meaningful ways, and to imagine our world differently by making those tangible connections to community” (3).

Many colleges and universities are beginning to make forays into educational innovation, especially in online learning and degree programs. Dr. Cantor warns, however, that “while there is potential for technology to democratize access to innovation and ideas to connect people beyond the immediate sphere of their local geographies, lasting impact also requires a commitment to listening, to speaking across distance, to reciprocity of interaction, and to rolling up our sleeves together” (4). That is to say, she points out the potential communication shortfalls of relying on the internet to provide the primary connection between professors and students. Connectivity does not necessarily equate to communication. This does not mean that online learning is not the innovation the education system needs; rather we must recognize the potential pitfalls that non-personal interaction might bring. A study published in June 2012 by the Institute for a Competitive Workforce of the United States Chamber of Commerce that grades states on innovation and access to online learning illustrates inconsistency from state to state. In sum, if online education is going to become the land-grant college of the 21st century, some measure of uniformity and mutual understanding needs to be implemented for the benefit of students, professors and administrators alike.

Andrew Smyser has an M.A. from the University of Missouri, Columbia and a B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh. He is a Research Consultant for the Center for College Affordability and Productivity.
Orchestra to play Parkville woman’s new composition at MU festival

By LISA GUTIERREZ

Composing music for living has never been easy. Even a giant like Beethoven had his money problems. So the boost that budding composer Stephanie Berg is about to get Saturday night is priceless.

The 26-year-old Parkville native was chosen to be one of eight resident composers at the 2012 Mizzou New Music Summer Festival in Columbia this week.

The perk: Hearing her work performed by a nationally known orchestral ensemble.

Her composition, “Ravish and Mayhem,” lasts only 61/2 minutes. But Berg has packed years into it.

Technically, she once said, she wrote her first piece when she was about 5, a “cute little piece for piano ... it ended the same way it began ... but how much can you really expect from someone who eats their boogers?”

Berg graduated four years ago from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a bachelor’s degree in clarinet performance. In May she finished her master’s degree in clarinet performance and composition, also at Mizzou.

She’s played clarinet with several ensembles around Columbia, where she lives, including the Mizzou New Music Ensemble and the city’s civic orchestra.

She applied for the festival residency each of the last two years and finally got picked for this year’s festival from 145 applicants from around the world.

She found out in December and spent the last semester of college writing the piece that will be played by Alarm Will Sound, a 20-member ensemble from New York City.

“They’ve dedicated themselves to playing new works,” she says. “It’s something that’s vital for the progression of music. It is so easy, and understandably so, to get stuck listening to Beethoven and Brahms and Mozart ... at one time, their music was new, too. But the next great composer is going to have to start somewhere.”

Her composition could be the soundtrack for a “bacchanalesque, Middle Eastern street festival ... along the lines of Mardi Gras,” she says. “It’s vivacious, a million things happening at once. It has a dance feel.”
(Yes, she knows that “Ravish and Mayhem” sounds more bodice ripper than Bach. She laughs. “To be honest, I wanted something vaguely sexual.”)

Her musician parents, Steve and Joyce Berg, who live in Parkville, will be in the audience when it is played Saturday night. They know she has chosen a career path that will be rocky at times, but they back her, Berg says.

“It’s very difficult. You have to sometimes be willing to wait tables to fill in the gaps,” she says. “But if you get in the right circles, know the right people and are halfway nice to them ... somebody knows somebody who knows somebody who would like to have a piece commissioned. And once you get into that realm, it can snowball.”

She will post Saturday’s concert on sjbvc7.wix.com/stephanieberg.
Sexy Movies May Sway Teens to Have Earlier, Riskier Sex

The amount of sex kids see in movies could influence their sexual behavior later in life, a new study says.

In the study, young teens who watched movies with more sexual content tended to become sexually active at an earlier age, and engaged in riskier sexual behaviors, compared with those who watched movies with less sexual content.

The study found an association, and not a cause-effect link. However, "sensation seeking, or the tendency to seek more novel and intense sexual stimulation, does seem to increase in young people who watched more movies with sexually explicit content," said study researcher Ross O'Hara, a researcher at the University of Missouri.

O'Hara and colleagues analyzed information from 1,228 kids who were 12 and 14 years old at the study's start.

Each participant reported which movies they had seen out of a list of the 50 top-grossing films from 1998 to 2004. These films had been evaluated to measure their sexual content.

Six years later, the participants were surveyed to find out how old they were when they became sexually active, and how risky their sexual behavior was, including whether they used condoms consistently, or had multiple partners.

Teens who reported watching movies with more sexual content started having sex at younger ages, had more sexual partners, and were less likely to use condoms with casual sex partners, the study found.

The results held when the researchers took into account factors that could effect when a person becomes sexually active, including their socioeconomic status, family structure and TV use.

"Few [films] showed contraceptive use or safe sexual practices," O'Hara said. "When safe sex is portrayed in films, it is often in comedies and is presented as an inconvenience or
embarrassment. The motion picture industry could make an effort to show healthier, safer behaviors, just as they have reduced the amount of smoking shown in films," he said.

To minimize risky sexual behavior later in life, parents can restrict the amount of sexual content children view and educate them about the consequences of sexual behavior that are often left out of films, O'Hara said.

The study will be published in an upcoming issue of the journal Psychological Science. O'Hara conducted this research while at Dartmouth College.

**Pass it on:** Young teens who watch movies with more sexual content tend to become sexually active at an earlier age.
Non-fatal attraction? Hollywood should add condoms to sex scenes in same way as it cut out cigarettes, says scientist

- Hollywood films tend to show condoms as 'comical'
- Teenagers who watch films use scenes as a 'script'
- Could have impact on safe sex
- Studios 'should be forced' to add condoms, in same way as on-screen smoking has been cut out
- Children aged 12 to 14 were studied and their sexual behaviour was reviewed six years later

By Rob Waugh

PUBLISHED: 04:32 EST, 26 July 2012 | UPDATED: 04:32 EST, 26 July 2012

Hollywood studios should be forced to add condoms to sex scenes to make teenagers have safe sex, a researcher has said.

Teenagers often use sex scenes in films as a 'script' for their real-life sex - but Hollywood films tend to portray condoms as comical.

A researcher found that watching screen sex led teenagers to use condoms less - and called for regulation.

'One important observation from our evaluation of the films was that few showed contraceptive use or safe sexual practices,' researcher Ross O'Hara from the University of Missouri said.

'When safe sex is portrayed in films, it is often in comedies and is presented as an inconvenience or embarrassment.

'The motion picture industry could make an effort to show healthier, safer behaviors, just as they have reduced the amount of smoking shown in films.'

Watching sex scenes in movies can make children more sexually active from a younger age, research suggests.
Watching sex on screen also makes teenagers less likely to use condoms, said O’Hara.

Around 84% of current Hollywood films contain sex - including series aimed at teenagers such as the Twilight films.

The scenes can ‘fundamentally influence a teenager’s personality’ and make them more prone to take risks he said.

Dr O’Hara said: ‘Adolescents who are exposed to more sexual content in movies start having sex at younger ages, have more sexual partners and are less likely to use condoms with casual sexual partners.

While there’s been much research into the influence of drinking and smoking in movies, sex scenes has been overlooked.

Dr O’Hara said: ‘Much research has shown that adolescents’ sexual attitudes and behaviours are influenced by media.

SEX IN FILMS: HOW HOLLYWOOD PEDDLES PORN TO TEENS

A survey of movies from 1950-2006 found that 84 per cent of movies contain sexual content.

Sexual content was found in:

- 68 per cent of adult rated films
- 82 per cent of PG rated
- 85 per cent PG-13 rated

‘But the role of movies has been somewhat neglected, despite other findings that movies are more influential than TV or music.’

Psychologists studied children aged 12 to 14 and then reviewed their sexual behaviour six years on.

The research, published in Psychological Science, followed 1,228 children over the six year period.

Dr O’Hara said adolescents often have a predisposition for ‘sensation seeking’ behaviour, which peaks between the ages of ten and 15, and leads to a tendency to seek more novel and intense stimulation of all kinds.

His team found that greater exposure to sexual content in movies at a young age actually led to a higher peak in sensation seeking during adolescence.

The sensation seeking behaviour could last well into the late teens and early twenties if young people were exposed to movie sex scenes Dr O’Hara said.
He said: 'These movies appear to fundamentally influence their personality through changes in sensation seeking, which has far reaching implications for all of their risk taking behaviours.'

Teenagers could also learn 'sexual scripts' from the films, using them as examples of how to behave when confronted with complex emotional situations.

Given that for 57 per cent of American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 16, the media is their greatest source of sexual information, they often don’t differentiate between what they see on the screen and what they must confront in daily life, Dr O’Hara said.

The researchers also looked at 684 high grossing films and analysed them for sexual content, such as heavy kissing or actual sex.

Most of the recent films did not portray safe sex, with little mention of using contraception.

Each teenager identified which movies they had seen from a list of 50, randomly selected.

Six years later the teenagers were surveyed to find out how old they were when they became sexually active and how risky their sexual behaviour might have been.

They were also asked if they used condoms consistently and whether they had multiple sexual partners.

The findings revealed the link between exposure to sex on screen and sexual behaviour.

Dr O’Hara said: ‘This study, and its confluence with other work, strongly suggests that parents need to restrict their children from seeing sexual content in movies at young ages.’
Above-freezing temperatures are forecast to return again by Saturday through Tuesday, with a high of 41°F (5°C) on Sunday. This would break the record warm temperature at Summit of 3.6°C set just two weeks ago.

The ice sheet is presently much darker than any point in the last 12 years

Jason Box, a polar climate researcher at Ohio State University, has developed a dataset of albedo - a measure of how reflective or "white" the Greenland Ice Sheet is. The albedo has plunged almost off the chart as the ice sheet is now less reflective, or "darker" than any time in 12 years of measurements due to melting. On Box's blog the MeltFactor, he describes this statistical anomaly:

Averaged over the whole of the ice sheet, for nearly 2 months now, the ice sheet albedo has been ~2 standard deviations below the 2000-2012 average.

Albedo or surface reflectance of Greenland ice sheet from 2000-2012 (NASA/Jason Box)

A similar melting event occurred in 1889 tied to similar atmospheric flow patterns

As warm as it's been in Greenland and as much melting that has occurred, NASA says such an event happened about 125 years ago, in 1889.

Interestingly, the U.S. experienced very warm temperatures for at least a part of 1889 as well - just as it has this year (warmest on record in Lower 48 year-to-date based on data from 1895-2012).

A Science Daily article discussed the similarities, based on research by Anthony Lupo of the University of Missouri. Excerpt:

This past March was the second warmest winter month ever recorded in the Midwest, with temperatures 15 degrees above average. The only other winter month that was warmer was December of 1889, during which temperatures were 18 degrees above average. Now, MU researchers may have discovered why the weather patterns during these two winter months, separated by 123 years, were so similar.

In both years the researchers found La Nina patterns built up large heat ridges over the central U.S. And just as a large heat dome established itself over Greenland this summer, it's reasonable to project it did so in 1889 given the circumstances.

There exist a range of 1) beliefs about the melting's link to manmade climate change and 2) future melting projections

Some researchers have been more cautious than others in linking this event to manmade global warming and projecting the future. But most agree the more these record temperatures and melting events occur, the more likely there is a connection.

STORY CONTINUES...
Retiree health care subsidy eliminated in city budget

The budget proposed by Columbia City Manager Mike Matthes for the 2013 fiscal year makes various changes to city employees' benefits — including taking the first steps of a plan to reduce the more than $100 million in unfunded liability for employees' pensions — but also eliminates a city subsidy for retired workers' health care plans.

Margrace Buckler, the city's human resources director, said the city began to provide the subsidy several years ago after a change in government accounting standards caused retirees' health insurance rates to increase. She said retirees were told at the time the subsidy would not be permanent, and members of the Columbia City Council have expressed an interest in eliminating subsidies.

"It's unfortunate that we can't do that," Buckler said of continuing the subsidy. "But that's never been something that has been promised."

Active employees' plans also receive a subsidy from the city, but Buckler said that subsidy likely would be phased out in the coming years. The budget also contains a proposal for permanent city employees to receive a 27-cent-per-hour raise and for firefighters to receive a 19-cent-per-hour raise. If approved, the budget would be the second consecutive year city employees were given raises. Employees were given a 25-cent-per-hour raise last year after a three-year freeze.

The proposed budget contains no tax increases but does contain myriad fee increases that could provide the city with an additional $13 million — the city's largest source of revenue — over what was projected for collection in the current fiscal year. Fees that would be increased include rental inspection fees, fees for building permits and a $5 increase for parking garage passes, an extra source of revenue Matthes said could be used to help the city offset the cost of cleaning the garages.

Matthes also has proposed to make $100,000 available to study pay compression for city employees. Matthes has said the allocation would be used to hire a consultant to study pay compression within the city's ranks and further allocations would be needed in the future to address the issue.

The budget also contains $50,000 for improvements to the terminal at Columbia Regional Airport, which has been targeted by local leaders as a potential engine for economic growth. Delta Air Lines, the sole carrier, recently added Atlanta as a second destination city for the airport, and local leaders have expressed an interest in enticing the carrier to also add Chicago to the list.

Matthes said in his note contained with his proposed budget that in the "near future" he believes the amount of air service available from the airport could be doubled and that the city has been in talks with the University of Missouri, the Boone County government, the Columbia Chamber of Commerce and the Jefferson City municipal government to pool funds for a $3 million revenue guarantee.
John Blattel, director of the city's Finance Department, said since the city — which owns the airport — receives revenue from landing fees, it likely would offer up a substantial portion of the revenue guarantee, but he said talks have not been finalized.

"We will be putting in one of the largest shares, that's for sure," Blattel said.

The council will discuss the proposed budget at a work session scheduled for Aug. 18 and at a pre-council meeting scheduled for Aug. 20. Public hearings on the budget are scheduled for the council's Aug. 20 regular meeting and at regular meetings scheduled for Sept. 4 and Sept. 17. The 2013 fiscal year begins Oct. 1.