LIFE IN THESE PARTS...
Profile of a Physician Activist
(From MidWeek, June 2, 99)

"KEKUNI BLAISELLE...is the rarest of men—
he balances living in two very different worlds,
and makes it look easy. He is one of Hawai‘i’s best
physicians, specializing in blood disorders. But
he is also a Hawaiian activist who believes that
Native Hawaiians should live as much as possible
according to traditional ways..."

"I've refused to be bleached, which is what they
tried to do to us when I was at Kamehameha
Schools...They wanted to make us like everybody
else, to de-Hawaiianize us."

Kekuni credits his teacher Donald Mitchell
who came from Missouri, and taught him to
be proud of his culture and to live it. And encour-
gaged him to be a doctor....

A Congressional report by the Native Hawaiians
Study Commission "highlighted the health,
cultural and economic plight of the Native Ha-
awan, but nothing was being done about it.
Again, the policy was to make us like everybody
else."

By 1988, with the help of Senator Dan Inouye,
Kekuni helped set up a health care system for
Hawaiians. "But that is being threatened by the
Republican Congress... Fortunately, Dan Inouye
is helping us and will submit new legislation to
keep the program going. There is certainly a
need. From the 1980s to the 1990s, life expect-
ancy was up for all other groups in Hawaii except
for Hawaiians, and ours was down. Our efforts
have been health education and disease prevention,
but we want to include nutrition and fitness and
native healing programs." Kekuni helped
start the UH medical school and the Native Ha-
awan Physicians Association.

“We have to go back to eating the traditional
Hawaiian diet and to do that we need land and
water to grow taro. Health isn’t just diet, it’s a
whole way of life, and for that we need our land
and resources."

FINDING FALICITY IN OLD SAYINGS
(Excerpts from Mid Week Editor Don
Chapman’s column)

Don satirized: “In life as in driving, you don’t
want to spend too much time looking in the rear
view mirror. It can be hazardous to your future.
Glancing back recently, it became apparent that
some of the things our parents taught us — and
that we’ve passed on to our kids — aren’t neces-
sarily true.

“You can always trust your doctor.” (Unless
he/she has a gun pointed at his/her head by an
HMO...Which stands for Hopeless Medicare Options.)

“A penny saved is a penny earned.” (If you
found a penny on the sidewalk everyday for a
year, you’d have almost enough to take a family
of four for 99 cent burgers)

“Always respect the president of the United
States.” (I cannot tell a lie, the only thing I’ve
ever done with a cigar is light it up...Let me
repeat myself: I did not inhale...And bombing
Yugoslavia really is in the best interest of all
Americans.)

“Life is what you make of it.” (So you make
plans for a picnic with family and friends in a
beautiful spot and a mountain collapses on top of
your head)

“All you need is love.” (Half of all marriages
end in divorce — Half of all divorces are nasty and
costly)

“Keep your nose to the grindstone.” (Ouch!
A dog is man’s best friend.)

“Two heads are better than one.” (So how did
five hand-picked heads bring down Bishop Es-

tate?"

“America, land of the free, home of the brave.”
(America, land of the greedy, home of the traitor-
ous — Or is it lazy and incompetent?)

“Democrats always look out for the little guy.”
(Little means any income between that of the
 governor and a Bishop Estate trustee)

(Ed. Guess the Mid Week editor has
to vent too...)

POTPOURRI...
I was filling in as a receptionist at my husband’s
dental office when a patient called to cancel an
appointment because, he said, he felt a migraine
coming on.

“You should talk to your husband,” I offered,
“He gets migraines too, but he has a prescription
he takes before the headaches immobilize him.”

I also advised, “It might be helpful if you have
a cola drink right away.”

After he hung up, my husband asked me, “Who
was that?” I told him.

“Oh yeah?” said my husband. “He’s the head
of neurology at the University Hospital.”

How Do You Do?
(Stitches Dec ‘98)

While doing a locum in general practice, I was
not always oriented as to how the doctor greets his
patients...

I opened the exam room door and was flattered
by the clean, fresh young man standing up as I
entered.

Initially I ignored the proffered right hand,
introduced myself and sat down because both my
hands were preoccupied with the chart, stetho-
scope, pen, prescription pad.

The insistent young man remained standing
with his right arm extended...Etiquette prevailed...I was forced to stand up and return his
handsake.

“So, how can I help you today?”

Without hesitation, he replied, “Well, I’ve come
about these infected blisters on my hand.”

Dr. Lora Morrice, Sidney B.C.

Oups in the OR...
Muriel is one of our OR nurses who rotates...One
day following a long morning of assisting our
gynecologists in their usual procedures, she was
assigned to a carpal tunnel case...While scrub-
binding the middle aged male’s fingers, she was
heard to ask, “Now, spread your legs.”

Dr. Edwin Janka, Yarmouth N.S.

CONFERENCE NOTES...
The Schroeder Doctrine...
Case A: Middle aged man with diabetes and
hypertension...BP 150/98; FBS 325; creatinine
1.6; BUN 24; 2+ proteinuria; EKG: silent MI;
Carotid angiogram; Stress ECHO; lipid panel.

HTN Rx: Use ACE (Lisinopril 5-10mg qd)
qd or Amldipine 2.5 - 5mg qd...Don’t use bid or
tid drugs.e.g.Captopril which is tid.,target BP
120/80. (Claudication can be an ache in the
butt a/c exercise)

Diabetes Rx: Glyburide and Insulin (70-30);
Follow with HbAlc... (Don’t use Glucophage c
creatine 1.6)

Lipid Rx: Use a “statin” eg Lipitor...Target
lipid levels: Total cholesterol 150mg and LDL 60
- 80mg

Case B: Elderly white man with RT carotid bruit,
BP 180/70. Studies: carotid ultrasonnd, lipid
panel, EKG: LVH and TPR interval..

HTN Rx: Choice of diuretic and CaCb (eg
Amldipine...Avoid betablockers and ACE in
elderly.)

* Discussion: 60 - 70% of population over age
70 have ISH (Isolated Systolic Hypertension.
(ISH is the most undertreated group) Check
serum creatinine and prevent diabetics 2°
BP Rx. Use CaCb’s: (DPP-4CBB reduces CVA’s
and lowers cardiac end point) CaCb are more
effective in elderly pts with ISH.

RX of ISH: Do treadmill and eye exams...Stop
smoking (the most cost effective) Cholesterol
goals: TC: 150 & LDL 60 - 80 Treat ISH with
CaCb’s...If pt has erectile dysfunction, offer
Viagra (provided they can climb 2 flights of
stairs) ED may be 2° to BB and diuretics...or
Fear of Failure” The pill is the cheapest part
of sexual activity...ie “One hour wait for a five
minute ride...”

Case C: 38 yr black man with BP 160/100. Fundi:
AV nicking: maximal impulsion in 6th i.s. EKG:
LVH; Creatinine 1.8...

HTN Rx: Calcium Channel Blockers (Blacks
have high rate of ESRT) LVH: independent risk
factor: Combination of CaCb + ACE can reverse
LVH

Case D: 60 yr old man with HTN, angina and
hyperlipidemia.

Treat hyperlipidemia with Lipitor or Zocor...

HTN & Angina: Use CaCb’s...CaCb’s are
antiatherosclerotic viz reduces atherosclerosis...

(John Speer Schroeder...Prof of Medicine,
Stanford-Hypertension Symposium at Hawaii
Prince May 23...Sponsored by Pfizer)
PEARLS FROM MEDICAL REPORTS...
(STITCHES...May99)
She should continue to wear her tennis elbow...
He hurt his hip, leg and growing area.
He has previously had a stone in his carotid duct.
The CT scan shows an annual disc bulge at L4-5.
In addition to those aforementioned problems, he has had further surgery by myself.

SCARRY:
"An eight-and-a-half pound daughter came to frighten the home of Mr. & Mrs. Brown"
(Greenville Advocate)

Sounds Like Fun:
"Sunday breakfast meeting has been planned for the official board of the church with the Rev.
Mr. Blank undressing the group."
(Jackson State Times)

CONFERENCE NOTES
"Type II Diabetes Treatment Strategies: Implications of the UKPDS"
(Visiting Prof Ralph DeFronzo, MD Prof of Med and Chief Diabetes Div, U of Texas
Health Science Center 7/9/99 QMC Fri Am Kam Aud)
A. Incidence Type II in US: 6% of population...Cost: $104 billion/yr ($1 out of every $7 health care dollars)
Prevalece: Steady rise (1958 to 1993 stats esp with aging population)
B. UKPDS (UK Prospective Diabetes Study) 20 yr study: Purpose: Compare Conventional vs Intensive Rx...Goal: Micro vs Macrovascular Complications of Type II

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***FDA recommends Traglitazone as combination Rx, not as mono Rx...***

**MEDICAL TID BITs:**

The Dec 10 NEJM reported that surgery may be riskier than no treatment for patients with small brain aneurysms. A major study by the National Institute of Health discovered that the danger of rupture of small aneurysms was less than 1/20 of 1% per year...

*FDA approved the first at-home-laser for less painful blood tests. Robotics Inc’s “Lasette” vaporizes a tiny hole in the finger replacing the lancet. Diabetic experts however warn that the laser may be too expensive for many patients and too bulky to carry around...*

*(Time Jun 21 ’99)*

**Sludge Report:** Data on 45,000 men show that 2 or 3 cups of coffee may cut the risk of gall stones by 40%. Researchers think that coffee helps flush out the gall bladder and somehow alter bile fluid...

*Researchers have found that girls who are relatively lean at age 10 and those who grow rapidly during adolescence have a significantly increased risk for breast cancer...*

**Estrogen Reprieve:** The jury is still out on HRT and breast cancer risk, but there is some reassurance. A study of 37,000 women found little evidence that estrogen is linked to the common cancers such as ductal carcinoma in situ...but may increase some uncommon forms which are slow growing and easily treatable...

**MEDICAL TIDBITS...**

**Designer Estrogens:** A June JAMA report seems to tip the scale in favor ofRaloxifene over Tamoxifen...Researchers at UCSF reported that: Raloxifene (3 1/2yr study) reduced breast Ca risk by 75% (in a low risk group) whereas Tamoxifen (4yr study) reduced the risk by 45% (but in a high risk group)...Raloxifene also lowered LDL and the risk of uterine Ca...*(A head to head comparison will become available in 5 years)* *(Time Jun 28 ’99)*

**Brain Strain:** Researchers injected volunteers with cortisol (stress hormone) and found that those receiving the highest dose for the longest period (4 days) had the most trouble recalling a story that had just been told. Memory was completely restored a week after the injections were stopped.

**Mommy Track:** Government report

1990: vaginal delivery mom averaged 3.2 hospital days
1995: “Drive-by delivery” average 1.7 days
1999: Average 2.1 days

**Got Rhythm?** In atrial fibrillation, defibrillators don’t do the trick in 20% of cases. A new study shows that defibrillators work in problem cases when the patient is first treated with ibutilide.

**POTPOURRI...** *(Dr. Daniel Andrew Waterloo, Ont Stitches May ’99)*

Although chronic pain and headache management is heavy duty, it’s not without its lighter moments.

A few weeks ago, I put a lady on a beta blocker for her migraine headaches. I explained to her that I never put men on beta blockers because it causes impotence and decreased libido.

The lady thought for a moment and said, “Would it be O.K. if I give some of these to my husband, for my headaches, Doctor?”

**How Reassuring:** *(Evelyn Ray Hudson, Fla., Stitches Dec ’98)*

The idea of cardiac catheterization strikes fear in even the most stoic patients — so in our cardiac lab we have a repertoire of jokes to lighten the tension eg “Well, we’ll have that gall bladder out in no time.”

But one patient topped our routine with his story: “I was really scared. The technicians came two hours earlier than I expected. They apologized with the usual excuses and reassured me that I was fortunate to be going first, because I’d get the really clean instruments.”

**The Wrong One:** *(Dr. Charles Pett, White City Sask.)*

A young woman came to our ER complaining of chest pain. By history and physical it was clearly a chest wall pain. After an EKG, I explained the benign nature of the pain and offered her analgesics which she declined. She’d called her minister to attend her in the hospital and wanted to wait for him in the exam room.

A few minutes later, an older priest came through the front door. Seeing his collar, I led him down the hallway into the young woman’s room and closed the curtains behind him.

He left the room a few minutes later with a puzzled look. “Who was that young lady?” he asked. “I don’t even think she’s Catholic. I came to have my sore back looked at. Where do I register?”

Eventually the appropriate minister arrived and I saw the priest for his back pain...

**MISCELLANY...**

There was once a newspaper headline that read: “SOCIALITE WEDS M.I.T. GRADUATE” The NewYorker quoted the headline and it commented, “Dodz nize.”

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