Professor admits to killing

Psych professor divulges that he killed dorm-mate in 1955

By Jesse Lewis
Arizona Daily Wildcat

Robert Bechtel, professor of environmental psychology, told his two classes that after a life of being bullied, he snapped when he was a 22-year-old college junior and killed a student in his residence hall June 12, 1955.

Bechtel is the subject of an independent research project being filmed on campus and decided to go public with the information this week after keeping it secret for 50 years.

"There was a wide range of reaction. Most people were thoroughly shocked, a lot came up to me after and thanked me, others said they had been bullied," said Bechtel of his class reactions.

Bechtel met with UA President Peter Likins and Alfred Kozlowski, head of the psychology department, to get permission for the film crew before he told his classes and to tell his story. He said Likins gave him his blessing.

Bechtel said he had been bullied from the time he was 4 years old until he was in college. His residence hall manager when he was a proctor, or a resident assistant, at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania in fall 1954.

"They would pull my bed into the hall and urinate on it and tell me I deserved it," Bechtel said.

The bullies moved his bed out of the dorm and into the hall and urinated on it.

Bechtel also heard a chorus of "Bechtel will eat shit" as he moved through the hall.

Bechtel said he would be hit and kicked often and always with a crowd of people around so as to see his humiliation.

Over the years the bullying built up and Bechtel said he couldn't deal with it any longer. He went home for winter break and obtained two guns with the intent to cease the bullying by killing his tormentors.

Bechtel said, "I was going to stop it all by shooting up the whole place."

After shooting and killing one student, he said, "the feeling dissipated" and he stopped. He turned himself in to police later that day.

"I was to blow away the whole dorm, but only shot one person," Bechtel said.

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Megan McGee, a secondary education sophomore, has smoked "on and off" since she was 12. "It's a stress reliever. The national smokeout at the UA targets students like McGee by encouraging them to turn in packs of cigarettes for free draws.

Smokers try to kick the nic for a day, then for good

By Jennifer Amler
Arizona Daily Wildcat

Jennifer Huang knew the media might pick up on the story of the UA when a student approached her and said she quit smoking permanently.

Huang is the co-chair of the American Cancer Society at UA last year and did it again because she realized the impact of her involvement after speaking with the girl she helped.

"That made me happy last year. It made it all seem worth-while," Huang said.

Huang said she realizes the importance of reaching out individually to students who smoke.

"The point isn't to help a million people out there. As long as we can get to a couple of people, then we've helped," she said.

SHAC will be on the Mall today from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to hand out gift certificates to local restaurants in exchange for cigarettes and a 24-hour pledge to stay smoke-free for the day.

"The goal of the event is to students and faculty, or whoever comes by our booth, to quit smoking for 24 hours and hopefully take the next step to get the call for help," Huang said.

Danaelle Wheeler, a media arts senior, said one day is not enough time to encourage students to stop smoking.

"It takes three days for nicotine to leave your body. One day wouldn't help me, it would drive me crazy," she said.

Wheler said she plans to quit smoking at the end of the semester, so she won't have the stress of school while she kicks the habit. She said she probably wouldn't help me, it would drive me crazy," she said.