

Oregon

QUARTERLY

SPRING 2016

WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BIOMES AND BUILDINGS?
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT STUDY ABROAD?
HOW DO WE BOUNCE BACK FROM DISASTER?
DO YOU LOVE ROBOTS?
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About the Future...

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
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Uncertainty ... and Optimism

Universities are inherently optimistic places.

Students devote years to immersing themselves in learning. Professors spend their careers educating the generations that will succeed them. Even the researchers and scholars who study the past do so to gain a deep understanding that will illuminate the future. On college campuses around the world, there's a shared conviction that our work can help make the future brighter.

"The future is what will happen in the time after the present," states Wikipedia, matter-of-factly. "Its arrival is considered inevitable." Inevitable perhaps, but uncertain all the same. Which brings us to the theme that connects many of the articles in this issue, "About the Future..." In the pages that follow, our writers address this elusive, unknowable apparition that awaits us all, and how the University of Oregon is helping to prepare for it. These preparations may be strategic and practical, like the UO's Incident Management Team's efforts to help other campuses overcome disasters ranging from power outages and disease outbreaks to mass shootings ("Ready, Willing, and Able," page 14). They may be intellectual, as in the work of John Markoff, MA '75, whose writing has examined up-and-coming technologies from "something called the Internet" in 1992 to intelligent robots providing human companionship today ("Robots Among Us," page 45). Or scientific, as explored in "We Are All Pigen" (page 32), a look at research on campus involving the unique microbial clouds that surround each of us, and their implications for our health. And they may be educational—our core mission, after all—such as the study-abroad programs led by journalism professor Ed Madison and his colleagues ("A Passport, a Camera, and Lots of Fresh Batteries," page 38) or the plans our new president, Michael Schill, outlines in his note, "Vision for the Future" (page 6).

So pour a cup of tea or a glass of wine, settle into your favorite chair, and contemplate the future with us. We're not sure quite what it holds, but we're feeling good about it.

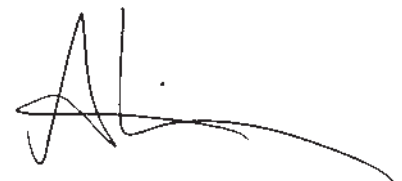
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And now, a personal note. That incongruous cocktail of optimism and uncertainty that is so endemic to "the future" can lead one down unpredictable yet interesting paths. I moved to Oregon four years ago to edit this magazine, drawn, as I wrote in my first Editor's Note, by "the mountains ... the rivers, the mud, and the trees," by a place I'd known as "home" as a child, which I wanted my own children to know as well. My daughter is now a freshman at the UO, a true Duck, and my son has become as at home on trails through fir forests as he is in the streets of Chicago.

Over the short time I've been here, the University of Oregon has seen significant changes—new leadership, surging enrollment, significant increases in diversity and academic preparedness (and some pretty sweet football seasons). Most importantly, it's seen a growing determination to secure its place among the nation's top universities in terms of academic rigor, faculty research, and an outstanding experience for our students.

That's a future I'm eager to support in whatever way I can. To that end, I'll be shifting my focus to leading the UO's marketing and visual communications efforts, helping to convey and articulate what's special about this place. This is my last issue as editor of *Oregon Quarterly*. I'm sad about that—it's been a true privilege to be a part of so many good stories the past few years. But I couldn't be more optimistic about this publication's future. It's in great hands with Jonathan Graham, who has been a wonderful managing editor and will now take the reins as editor, and the team: JoDee Stringham, art director; Rosemary Camozzi, senior writer and editor; Susi Thelen, advertising director; Shelly Cooper, publishing administrator; and Chloe Huckins, intern extraordinaire. If I'm lucky, they'll let me write a story now and then.

Ann Wiens, Editor



awiens@uoregon.edu



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“The problem is, someone saying ‘I’m offended’ tends to be the end of the conversation. But that should really be the beginning.”

—ERIC BRAMAN, GRADUATE STUDENT AND MEMBER OF REHEARSALS FOR LIFE



ON THE COVER

When we chose “Preparing for an Uncertain Future” as a theme for this issue, the OQ team was concerned that our pages might become a little too grim. After all, the unknown does cause worry. So we stewed and fretted about how we would create a cover that would connect to this serious theme, yet encourage readers to open the magazine. And then JoDee Stringham—our art director—thought of the Magic 8-Ball. Brought to market by Mattel in the 1950s, this fortune-telling toy traces its origin back to the 1940 Three Stooges short, *You Natzy Spy*, in which a billiard ball was used to foretell the future. All of which is to say that we know the future is serious business, but we are prepared to have a little fun.



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JOIN IN Submit letters, class notes, and photos for our “Ducks Afield” section.

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FEATURES

WE ARE ALL PIGPEN

Each of us is surrounded by a microbial cloud of our very own. UO researchers are exploring how buildings affect these clouds, and what they can tell us about human health.

BY ROSEMARY HOWE CAMOZZI, BA '96

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A PASSPORT, A CAMERA, AND LOTS OF FRESH BATTERIES

Students in the School of Journalism and Communication are gaining a broader perspective—not to mention some pretty great résumé lines—by traveling and reporting on emerging stories in such places as Cuba, Ghana, Nepal, and Alaska.

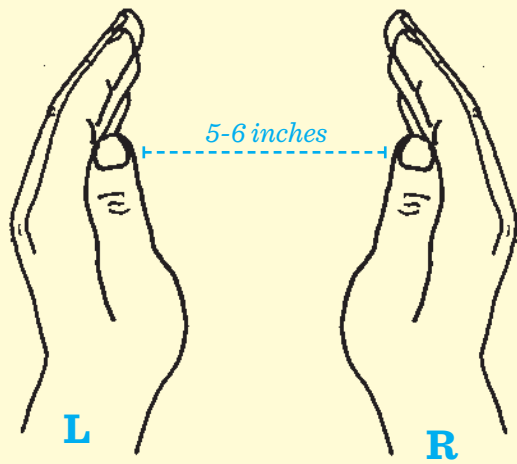
BY ED MADISON, PHD '12

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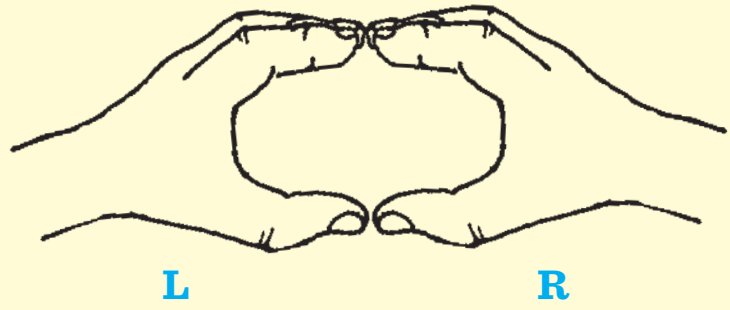
ROBOTS AMONG US

They're in our homes and on our phones. All of a sudden, “artificial intelligence” is getting real, and it's hard to know what to make of it. *New York Times* science writer John Markoff, MA '75, has some thoughts to share.

BY BEN DEJARNETTE, BA '13, MA '15



step **1** Hold left and right hands opposite each other in a vertical position, as if to applaud.



step **2** Curve fingers and thumbs toward each other—maintaining an arc shape through palms—until they are touching.

step **3** YELL “O”!

“O” Throwing 101

Welcome to “Making an ‘O’ with Your Own Two Hands 101.” Some of you will be photographed, some will be on video at a national sports venue, so let’s get this right! Touch your fingertips plus your thumb tips together. Now create a circle; yes, an O is a circle. Well, some of you need to work on that. You’re making a triangle and some of you a pyramid. You will be tested soon! If you can’t accomplish the task, please keep your hands to yourself!

Class dismissed.

Go Ducks!

Don Hansen, BS '72
Hermiston, Oregon



Luther Cressman and Howard Stafford surveying Oregon’s indigenous rock art, 1932. Image courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society.

Have Gun, Will Research

The Winter 2015 *Oregon Quarterly* made mention of Professor Luther Cressman. I recall a photo of Cressman in the *Quarterly* some years ago. He and another professor are standing in front of a 1920s automobile, both dressed for field work in eastern Oregon, looking like Indiana Jones and Hiram Bingham, and packing serious large pistols. Please find some excuse to print that photo again.

Best regards,

James W. Eyres, BA '66
San Francisco

Change Agent

I was impressed with the article regarding Aisha Almaná, BS '70 (“Driving Change,” Winter 2015), instigating the protest allowing women to drive and working on the women’s right to vote—I love her audacity, bravery, and courage in Saudi Arabia, which denies some of the best minds to bloom (many thanks to her father). I want her to know that America was just as backwards in the early 1900s; our right to vote changed in August 1920 when the 19th Amendment was finally ratified. Her perseverance will change the world and maybe, just maybe, raise the consciousness of some of the men in that part of the world.

Peggy Speight, BA '73
Lake Havasu City, Arizona

We want to hear from you.

Please submit your letters at OregonQuarterly.com, to quarterly@uoregon.edu, or by mail to Editor, *Oregon Quarterly*, 5228 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-5228. You may also post comments online at OregonQuarterly.com. Published letters may be edited for brevity, clarity, and style.

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Vision for the Future

I am honored to lead the University of Oregon as it approaches its 140th anniversary. Back in 1876, when our founders' dream of creating Oregon's flagship university became a reality, the five faculty members who taught the first UO students out of a single building could not have imagined what the UO would become. Faculty research in fields such as sustainable chemistry, digital humanities, childhood obesity prevention, and zebrafish genomics would have sounded like fiction of a genre yet to be defined. But some realities remain the same: then and now, the university focused its mission on teaching and research; faced financial challenges; and continually pursued excellence.

As the 18th president of the University of Oregon, I take seriously the responsibility of carrying our school's legacy forward, and improving upon it. My job would be much easier if I could peer into a crystal ball and know all of the challenges of tomorrow. But in our rapidly changing world, what the future holds is uncertain. As we prepare for the next 140 years and beyond, the one constant we can count on is change. It is preparing our students for the change that certainly awaits them that makes our mission of creating and transferring knowledge so exciting and important. We are hiring faculty, investing in research, and expanding scholarship and advising, all with an eye on ensuring our students, state, and nation are ready for the challenges of tomorrow.

This issue of *Oregon Quarterly* is focused on how the UO is preparing students, society, and itself for an uncertain future. Our mission—to produce knowledge for the betterment of society and to create citizens who can question critically, think logically, reason effectively, communicate clearly, act creatively, and live ethically—requires us to strive for the very best.

I call this excellence. And excellence matters.

A colleague recently told me “excellence” does not really mean anything anymore. But I disagree. It may mean different things in different disciplines, and metrics may vary, but excellence always means working to reach your fullest potential.

Striving for excellence drives curiosity, innovation, discovery, creativity, and the production of knowledge. The pursuit of excellence prompts a writer to edit and revise until his prose lifts the spirit and moves the heart. Excellence inspires a scientist to mobilize all of her resources in iterative processes of theory and experimentation. Excellence pushes a journalist or historian to ask more and dig deeper. This constant seeking and striving is how scholars help cure diseases, ease pain, end conflicts, feed the hungry, build cities, provoke debate, prepare leaders, reveal beauty, and create a better society.

The university, faced with persistent public defunding, escalating costs, and churning internal leadership, has not grown and nurtured its research and academic enterprise as it should. Today, with a new board of trustees, permanent leadership, a \$2 billion fundraising campaign, an

ambitious faculty, eager alumni and supporters at our side, and the strongest and most diverse student body in the university's history, we have a plan and a path forward.

I am more optimistic than ever that we will realize our vision of achieving eminence. The university is actively investing in expanding our research and academic enterprise; improving access and success; and enhancing the student experience.

These are a few of the initiatives we have launched in the last year to help achieve these goals:

- Hiring 80 to 100 diverse and outstanding faculty over the next four years who are great researchers and teachers
- Increasing the number of doctoral students by 40 in the next year as a “down payment” toward growing our graduate program
- Creating plans to update or build new academic facilities and research labs
- Expanding scholarships, counseling, tutoring, and timely graduation programs to improve student access and success

These aspirations are expensive. We will need every dollar we can lay our hands on to build our academic program—including state resources, philanthropy, and tuition. We are extremely pleased to be approaching the halfway mark of our \$2 billion fundraising campaign. As we proceed, we will ask our loyal supporters (and those who do not yet financially support us) to dig deeper, to provide us with our margin of excellence to invest in the future of our students and our state. And as we ask our alumni to give more and the state to invest more, we have an obligation to spend every dollar wisely. This is another prerequisite for excellence.

Oregon's higher-education pioneers 140 years ago could only imagine what the future would hold, but they knew that teaching and research would be integral to that future. Today, the University of Oregon is investing in its future, striving for excellence, and helping our students and society prepare for an uncertain tomorrow. Because one thing is certain—whether the year is 2016 or 2156—excellence in teaching and research will continue to drive our future.

Michael H. Schill
President and Professor of Law



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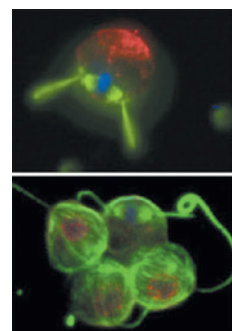
Dreams Preserved

This portrait of the writer Alice Walker is part of a collection of photos by the late Brian Lanker that were recently donated to the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. The celebrated series, *I Dream a World: Portraits of African American Women Who Changed the World*, was featured in a book published in 1989. The images were exhibited at the Cocoran Gallery in Washington, DC. Lanker, who worked for a number of years at the Eugene *Register-Guard*, was a Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist. A retrospective of his work, "From the Heart: Photographs of Brian Lanker," is on exhibit at the museum through April 24.

A Marvelous Mutation

All it took was one genetic mutation more than 600 million years ago. With that random act, a new protein function was born that helped our single-celled ancestor transition into an organized multicellular organism. That's the scenario—done with some molecular time travel—that emerged from basic research in the lab of University of Oregon biochemist Ken Prehoda. The mutation and a change it brought in protein interactions are detailed in a paper published in *eLife*, an open-access journal launched in 2012 with support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Max Planck Society, and the Wellcome Trust.

The research helps address several important questions that scientists have had about evolution, said Prehoda, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and director of the UO's Institute of Molecular Biology. It also has implications for studying disease states, such as cancer, in which damaged cells no longer cooperate with other cells in our bodies and revert back to a unicellular state where each is on its own.



Fluorescence micrographs of choanoflagellates, ocean-dwelling organisms used in the studies.

Mutations can lead to favorable or unfavorable results, or even to a combination of the two, said Prehoda, whose laboratory investigates how proteins work inside of cells.

“Proteins are the workhorses of our cells, performing a wide variety of tasks such as metabolism,” he says. “But how does a protein that performs one task evolve to perform another? And how do complex systems like those that allow cells to work together in an organized way evolve the many different proteins they require?”

Our work suggests that new protein functions can evolve with a very small number of mutations. In this case, only one was required.

“This mutation is one small change that dramatically altered the protein's function, allowing it to perform a completely different task. You could say that animals really like these proteins because there are now more than 70 of them inside of us.”

Grants from the National Institutes of Health to Prehoda and collaborators Joseph W. Thornton (of the University of Chicago) and Nicole King (of the University of California at Berkeley), as well as an early career award from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to Thornton, supported the research.



Toomey and Hooft

UNDERSEA SECRETS

Near the Mediterranean island of Santorini, a team of UO scientists spent a month studying the plumbing system of magma formed by the largest supervolcanic eruption of the past 10,000 years. Faculty members Emilie Hooft and Doug Toomey led an expedition that also included six UO students as well as scientists from other institutions in the United States, Greece, and the United Kingdom. The group gathered data that, if all goes as planned, could allow scientists to map the magma system in much more detail than has previously been possible. This information could help answer questions about a 1956 earthquake and tsunami in Greece. This study was funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation and was based on the US research vessel *Marcus G. Langseth*.



Skilled Workers

Leafcutter ants, found in the southern United States and throughout much of South America, live in massive colonies that gather and process fresh vegetation to use as a base for cultivating a fungus that forms their diet.

Their complex society, which relies on a strong division of labor, was investigated in a recent study by UO physics professor Robert Schofield and a six-member team, who documented the ants' prehensile skills and the layers of

Exhibit Update

The popular “Oregon—Where Past is Present” exhibit at the UO's Museum of Natural and Cultural History is getting a makeover. The \$500,000 project will add new interactive technology, a display devoted to Oregon's Paisley Caves, an enhanced basketry display, and a duck sculpture of mysterious origin.

The stone sculpture of a duck was uncovered in 1956 near Mapleton, west of Eugene. “The duck is unusual,” says Pamela Endzweig, director of the museum's anthropological





behaviors associated with cutting and gathering leaves, delivering them to the nests, and processing them to grow the fungus. “The ants are remarkably handy, often using three legs as a tripod to stand on and the other three legs to handle leaf pieces as they cut, scrape, lick, puncture, and chemically treat them,” the researchers reported. “When the processing is complete, the ants rock the leaf fragments into the comb, much like stonemasons building a wall.”

The findings were published in the journal *Royal Society Open Science*.

A conical burden basket from the Museum of Natural and Cultural History’s “Oregon—Where Past is Present.”

An entirely new exhibit, “Paisley Caves and the First Americans,” will help tell the story of Oregon’s deep cultural past, inviting visitors to re-examine long-held ideas about when humans first arrived in North America. The interactive exhibit will feature 14,300-year-old coprolites (dried human feces) along with bone and wood artifacts that have never before been on public display.

collections. “It differs stylistically from typical Columbia River and Northwest Coast stone carvings, and it comes from an area where few stone representations of animals have been found.”

TICKET TO TRAVEL

Five Oregon students have earned Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships to support their studies abroad. Each student will receive \$5,000 to defray the costs of their international explorations in spring 2016. The scholarship is intended to encourage more students from traditionally underrepresented groups to study or intern abroad. This year, the UO ranked ninth among 358 participating schools for Gilman Scholarship recipients.

A New Voice for KWAX

Peter Van de Graaff, a nationally known radio host, has joined the UO’s classical music radio station as music director and morning program host. A Chicago native, Van de Graaff spent 27 years at WFMT, a fine arts radio station in the Windy City. He is perhaps best



Van De Graaff

known as a host and program director for the Beethoven Network, broadcast on 200 stations across the United States. He will continue in that role after he joins KWAX. Van de Graaff also performs as a bass-baritone, appearing with opera companies and orchestras worldwide. He was recently awarded the Karl Haas Prize for Music Education. He and his wife, Kathleen, also a professional singer, will relocate to Eugene at the end of February. “We are so excited for this opportunity,” says Van De Graaff. “My national show has aired on KWAX for many years, and I’ve been very impressed by the station and its listeners. This is an audience that really appreciates classical music and is interested in learning more. That is a big part of what attracted me to the job.” Around the time Van De Graaff arrives in Eugene, the entire KWAX team will move into a new facility on Chad Drive.



Eyes on the Implant

With a grant of \$900,000 from the W. M. Keck Foundation, UO scientists hope to help those suffering from vision loss. With colleagues at the UO Materials Science Institute, Richard Taylor (physics) is developing a next-generation retinal implant that has the potential to help patients suffering from macular degeneration, a common eye disease among people age 50 and over. The new implant will mirror the structure of neurons related to the eyes and is intended to connect technology and the body as

continued on page 12

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seamlessly as possible. Taylor's interdisciplinary team includes Miriam Deutsch (physics), Darren Johnson (chemistry and biochemistry), and Cris Niell (biology). The grant will allow the team to support six graduate student positions—as well as other costs—as they explore connections between the artificial and natural worlds. The technology used in the retinal implant could someday address Parkinson's disease and depression, and help those using prosthetic limbs.



Science Medal

Geraldine "Geri" Richmond has been chosen to receive the National Medal of Science, the nation's highest award in science. She is one of a select group of prominent scientists and engineers who will receive medals from President Barack Obama during a ceremony at the White House this spring. Richmond has held the UO's Presidential Chair in Science since 2013. She serves as a US science envoy to several countries in Southeast Asia, and is currently president of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. Her research focuses on materials science and the chemical reactions that occur on liquid surfaces. Also a longtime advocate for women in science, she is cofounder of the Committee on the Advancement of Women Chemists.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLIE LITCHFIELD



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Ready, Willing, and Able

The University of Oregon's team of emergency-response specialists stands ready to help in times of crisis, both on our own campus and for universities across the nation.

Within hours of the mass shooting at Umpqua Community College last October, four members of the University of Oregon's Incident Management Team arrived on the UCC campus in Roseburg, about 65 miles south of Eugene. This highly trained team is coordinated by the UO's Emergency Management and Continuity Program and stands ready to help when something goes wrong—either at the UO's own campus, or at another institution. Operating outside the media spotlight, Incident Management Team members spent five days at UCC, providing logistical, business, communications, and management leadership that allowed the institution to continue to function. For much of that time, 12 UO employees worked full-time at UCC. The team then handed over operations to an executive team from Lane Community College, which kept UCC running while Umpqua's leadership focused on their community's grief and trauma—and their own.

BY JONATHAN GRAHAM

“Part of the leadership team at Umpqua was in that building when the shooting took place,” says Andre Le Duc, MS '99, the UO's chief resilience officer. “No one can immediately bounce back from an experience like that and continue to function normally. That is why it is so important that institutions are there to help one another.”

Le Duc is an expert on how to move forward in the aftermath of disasters. He founded the Disaster Resilient Universities e-mail list serve, a source of information and catalyst for conversation for his counterparts at other colleges and universities. The list has more than 1,400 subscribers. He has also put forward a plan to get educational institutions across Oregon to help one another in preparing for and recovering from disasters. While government agencies often take the lead in the minutes and hours following a shooting, severe storm, explosion, flood, or other catastrophic event, there is no agency designated to help get academic, research, and business operations up and running once the initial danger is over.

In the case of UCC, logistical issues in the aftermath of the shooting needed to be addressed with professionalism,



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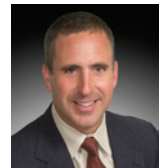
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thoughtfulness, and care so that the college could eventually return to teaching and learning. And when things go wrong on campus, there are important details that are beyond the purview of first responders.

For example, when law enforcement closed UCC after the shooting, more than 300 cars and countless backpacks, phones, and other personal items had been left behind on campus. An organized effort was needed to return those items to their owners—all of whom would have to return to a place where they had experienced trauma in order to retrieve their belongings.

Also, more than half of UCC students had not yet received their financial aid for the term—funds that many needed in order to eat and pay rent. The college needed help from administrators who understand student financial aid and the business practices of higher education to keep things running.

President Obama wanted to come and offer condolences, and UCC needed assistance with the protocols, logistics, and media inquiries related to the president’s visit. The UO Incident Management Team has experts who were able

“No one can immediately bounce back from an experience like that and continue to function normally. That is why it is so important that institutions are there to help one another.”

—ANDRE LE DUC

to help with all these details, and many more. “Smaller institutions generally don’t have the staff and experience to handle all these issues,” says Le Duc. “Without outside help, UCC might have lost an entire term.”

UO trustee and Roseburg resident Allyn Ford notes that Le Duc and his team provided a “critical service” to UCC. “A small community college is not prepared to deal with a situation like that, nor do we expect them to be. But Andre and his team were able to step in and bring order and structure to the situation. I think we owe them a tremendous amount of thanks.”

As it is, the campus has been able to continue its mission of educating students. And that’s exactly

what Le Duc is talking about when he speaks of making campuses more resilient. He has a vision for a future in which all schools in Oregon—kindergarten through graduate school—would have mutual aid agreements in place to help one another in the aftermath of emergencies and disasters. Le Duc is also hoping that other colleges, universities, and school systems in the state will follow the UO’s lead by training their employees so that they are better prepared to respond to crises on their own campuses or at other schools.

At present, the UO is the only educational institution in the state that has an All-Hazard Type III Incident Management Team based on federal training guidelines. The team, which



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draws specialists from across the university, has completed more than 80 hours of training through the Federal Emergency Management Association. Team members meet monthly and regularly participate in practice exercises, and they are ready to drop their other work responsibilities to dedicate themselves to incident response. Many have also received training specific to the roles they would play in the event of an emergency.

“In the case of Umpqua, our team was ready to deploy within a few hours, but unfortunately, UCC did not have a mutual aid agreement in place with us at the time of the shooting, so we needed to wait until we were asked to come to campus,” says Le Duc, noting that the protocol is that a team like his will not deploy at another institution until their help is requested. The UO now has such an agreement in place with UCC, as well as with several other universities nationally, and Le Duc is hoping that more schools in Oregon will soon sign these agreements.

At the UO, Le Duc and colleagues plan responses to a myriad of scenarios that would take the university outside its normal operations—things like power outages, severe storms, fires, and even labor strikes. Their planning also helps the university prepare for major events like the US Olympic Team Trials in track and field, which will take place at Hayward Field in July. Le Duc’s team has been activated 18 times in the last two years, responding to such situations as winter storms and a meningitis outbreak. And the planning stems from the recognition that the university has very particular needs, and it needs to protect its academic and research activities.

“Some of our labs have minus 80 degree freezers where sample genomes are stored. If those thaw, during a power outage, for instance, those materials could be gone forever. Through mutual aid agreements with other research universities we will be able to provide or acquire resources and staff to maintain academic and research continuity,” says Le Duc. “If we have a major earthquake, I may not be able to make a phone call right away, but I will know that my colleagues at other campuses on the National Intercollegiate Mutual Aid Agreement will be ready to support us when we ask. And if help is needed at another institution, our team will be ready to go.”

Jonathan Graham is managing editor of *Oregon Quarterly*.



Best Practice

With protests about free speech and diversity resounding on campuses across the country, a UO theater troupe offers a fresh approach to conversations about thorny issues.

In the graduate student lounge in Susan Campbell Hall, a group of about 30 people watches performers act out a scenario in which one student makes insensitive remarks about another's weight and appearance. "It took a lot of guts to post those photos from Halloween," an actor says. "I wouldn't have had the guts to wear that Wonder Woman costume, if I was as big as you."
All of us in the audience, it's fair to say, are wincing.

BY JONATHAN GRAHAM

The scene brings to mind experiences—at work, school, or social gatherings—when someone says something insensitive and we don't know how to constructively reply. UO theater troupe Rehearsals for Life (RfL) offers students, faculty, and staff members a creative opportunity to talk about, and prepare for, these uncomfortable moments. The troupe, founded in 2009 and sponsored by the Office of the Dean of Students and the Graduate School, offers workshops and performances that encourage audiences to think about—and practice—problematic interpersonal interactions that relate to equity and diversity. In recognition for their exemplary work, the

troupe recently earned a Gold Award from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

“Rehearsals for Life creates a space where people can address issues that we don’t talk about very easily,” says drama therapist Abigail Leeder, who directs the group.

RfL member Eric Braman, a graduate student in nonprofit management, says, “The problem is, someone saying ‘I’m offended’

tends to be the end of the conversation. But that should really be the beginning.”

Audience members are encouraged to do more than passively watch the scenes that RfL acts out. Instead, spectators are asked to call out, “stop” and then take the place of one of the actors on stage. The group then acts the scene out again with the audience volunteer improvising responses that might lead to a happier ending to the scene. In the case of the

cringe-inducing comments about weight and appearance, the audience member who interrupted the scene was particularly effective. A graduate student—who happens to research body image and health—was able to ad-lib a compassionate but firm explanation that a slim figure does not necessarily equal good health. She pointed out that feelings of shame about one’s body are also very damaging to a person’s health.

In this approach, known as “forum theater” and developed by the Brazilian director and activist Augusto Boal, audience members become what Boal called “spect-actors.” They do not simply sit and watch a performance, but they are invited on stage to act out a scene and alter its ending. All of the exercises that RfL presents are based on the actual experiences of group members or spectators. So when the scenes depict racism or other oppressive behaviors, it is a powerful experience to see an audience member rewrite the script.

Of course, these “rehearsals” do not always go smoothly, and members of the troupe emphasize that their goal is not to tell others specifically what to say or not say. Instead, the group simply wants the audience to think and talk more deeply about the potential harm that biased attitudes and remarks can have on others. Group members make clear that they don’t see their work as coddling students or protecting them from reality—two common criticisms of the current higher education environment. Instead, they believe their work provides students with the tools and confidence to speak up in situations in which they otherwise might be silent.

Media commentators have lately been calling for more resilience among students and less hand-holding by colleges and universities—but they rarely offer specifics on how this might be accomplished. RfL, by contrast, offers actual tools to help people on campus enter into productive conversations about race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and other highly personal and often politicized issues.

Another technique the group uses is “playback theater.” An audience member shares a personal story, and then the actors perform a brief improvisation based on that story. The audience member then has opportunity to talk about how it felt to see their story acted out. Such performances also often lead to conversations about how to address bias in classroom or work settings.

“We find that by addressing these issues through theater,” says Leeder, “audience



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“The problem is, someone saying ‘I’m offended’ tends to be the end of the conversation. But that should really be the beginning.”

—ERIC BRAMAN, RfL MEMBER

members are able to connect with the stories and experiences of others in ways that they might not if we were just having a conversation. We can use humor, we can present a wide range of experiences, and audiences can find something of themselves in these stories.”

During a recent workshop, actors performed a “story weaving” in which they shared personal stories in the form of monologues. Later, audience members recounted their own

stories—from experiences with bias, stereotyping, and racism to their uncertainty about how to intervene when they feel others are being mistreated.

For members of RfL, there are no pat answers—getting audience members engaged in deep conversations is the goal. “I find that in the Pacific Northwest, there is this air of social justice, but I worry that it often only exists on the surface level,” says Steve Livingston, a graduate student in counseling psychology. “But here we get the chance to go a lot deeper. Plus, I think acting in theater is a damn good time.”

The 10 members of Rehearsals for Life receive only a small stipend for their participation in the group. They are graduate students from a variety of disciplines, mostly from outside the arts, and each must commit to weekly rehearsals and regular performances for three terms. While a few have a performing background, some bring no theater experience at all.

Members say they reap considerable rewards from thinking deeply about how issues of social justice come into play in their daily lives, and from the feeling of contributing to the common

good. Surveys given to workshop participants suggest that those who attend do feel better prepared for difficult conversations after attending RfL sessions.

And besides, we can all use more practice.

Mariah Acton, a graduate student in both conflict and dispute resolution and public administration, recounted an experience she had during Thanksgiving break. A relative was making statements that she found problematic and hurtful, but she could not figure out how to even begin a conversation about his comments. “I felt like I should call him out compassionately and respectfully, but I didn’t even know how to start that conversation.” She acknowledges that even for those who think about these issues all the time, it can be very difficult to know how to respond in the heat of the moment.

As RfL helps students prepare for difficult conversations with family, friends, and coworkers, they are grateful that there’s always time for another rehearsal.

Learn more at codac.uoregon.edu/services/rehearsals-for-life.

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LEFT: Edward Sheriff Curtis, *Assiniboin Mother and Child* (detail), 1926, plate 632 from the portfolio *The North American Indian*, volume 10, *The Kwakiutl*, photogravure; RIGHT: Wendy Red Star, *Untitled*, 2015, Courtesy of artist.

THE BEST...

Lecture Hall on Campus



April 26, 2015, felt like winter, but the calendar assured me it was spring. Two colleagues and I had entered a competition called the Adrenaline Film Project, in which you produce a short film over the course of a weekend and have it screened and judged the following Monday. It was 2:30 a.m. when we finished shooting for the night, about three hours behind schedule, and at that point I think we were all grateful to finally be leaving that seedy Eugene back alley. My arms felt like they were going to fall off from holding the boom microphone over my head for so long, and my fingers were numb from grasping the cold metal rod to which it was attached. The only thing on my mind was sleep. Unfortunately, we were to be back on location at 7:00 a.m. that same day. Once I finally made it to bed, mere hours from when I would have to wake up, I began to ask myself, “Do I even want to be a filmmaker?”

The film was to be only five minutes, but it quickly felt like it was consuming our lives. We finished shooting at about 2:00 p.m., which was a relief, but there wasn’t much time to celebrate; we were to be editing in the Cinema Studies computer lab by 4:00 pm. There we would spend the next 24 hours. I am not exaggerating.

There’s a certain madness that comes with editing a movie: Some shots just don’t work, sometimes you have to rearrange scenes beyond recognition, and something usually goes catastrophically wrong and you’re forced to redo hours of work. It’s just the nature of the beast. At about 10:00 p.m., two of us had to return to the previous night’s location with our lead actor to reshoot a couple of very specific shots, only one of which we ended up using. Throughout the night, the three of us took turns editing while one would sleep. I couldn’t sleep, though, not with this looming over my head.

BY ROSS KARAPONDO

Once our completed film was submitted, I was physically and emotionally depleted, had only gotten about five hours of sleep in the last 33 hours, and barely had any appetite even though I’d eaten very little. The question lingered—was this really what I wanted to do? At 5:00 p.m., I finally went to sleep, with the screening coming up in just a few hours. I left the door to my dorm room open so my good friend could come wake me up in case I slept through my alarm. Apparently, he had to shake me awake. I do not remember this.

As I made my way to Straub Hall for the screening, I found myself feeling relieved that Adrenaline was coming to an end. I wondered if it was all worth it. I entered Straub and found that it felt nothing like a lecture hall, but more like an upscale theater. The modern, refurbished look, coupled with the two-story seating, made me feel like I was about to present my film before the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Suddenly, I felt like it was all really happening.

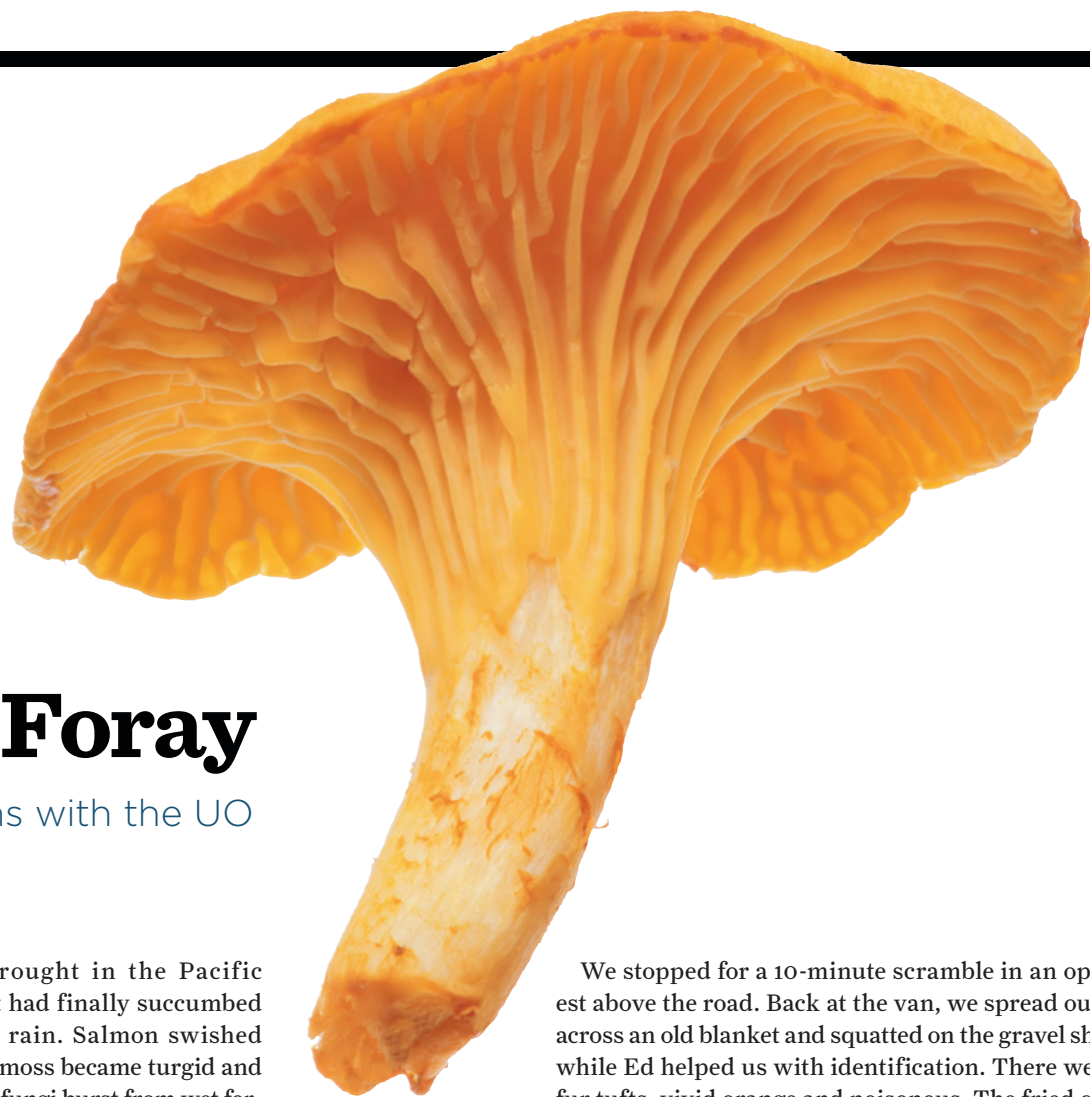
The screening of the film went quickly for me, as I was so familiar with it at this point, but at the exact moment the film ended, I felt an intense sense of euphoria creep up my spine. The applause that filled the room was wonderful to hear, and, truthfully, I got a little teary-eyed. To me, this was a surreal moment: a film that I helped create had just been screened in front of a hundred people, and it actually felt like the film resonated with the audience. It was the happiest I’ve ever been. Right then, I knew I was a filmmaker.

Straub Hall will forever live in my heart as the place where I met my resolve. I suffered that weekend and veered dangerously close to the brink of giving up, yet today I remember it fondly. And it’s all thanks to a little lecture hall called Straub.

Ross Karapondo is a sophomore cinema studies major from Tualatin, Oregon.

Tax Hikes...

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Fungus Foray

Hunting mushrooms with the UO Outdoor Program

Summer drought in the Pacific Northwest had finally succumbed to blessed rain. Salmon swished upstream, moss became turgid and green, and fungi burst from wet forest duff. The frenetic dampness of fall conjured Freudian notions of returning to the wet paradise of the womb.

But mushroom foragers usually aren't psychoanalysts—they just love fungi. Six of us gathered on a gray, mid-November morning for a University of Oregon Outdoor Program mushroom foray. The Outdoor Program was launched as a cooperative in 1967 by students looking to share outdoor adventures. Members suggest and host activities ranging from skiing, hiking, and rafting trips to bike clinics, and the Outdoor Program Barn provides low-cost equipment rentals to students and community members alike. This damp November day, all of my companions were enthusiastic students, their majors ranging from biology to marketing. Our leader was Ed Fredette, a self-taught fungus fanatic with a quick smile and a bare head he calls “a thermoregulatory challenge.” Ed refers to himself as a mushroom enthusiast rather than a mycologist, and his enthusiasm burbles over like a bank-full stream. He and I are kindred spirits, with short attention spans for mushrooms that won't end up in a sauté skillet.

We piled into Mazama, a Mad-Maxian van with dual rear wheels and a gigantic rooftop gear rack, and headed for the Cascade foothills. A coming rainstorm exhaled warm humidity across the autumn landscape. We wound into steep, fir-covered hills, while yellow hands of thimbleberry leaves waved from the roadside. Ed inculcated us in proper foraging techniques. This day, the stated focus was on sampling fungal diversity rather than filling bags with edibles.

BY TOM TITUS

We stopped for a 10-minute scramble in an open forest above the road. Back at the van, we spread our finds across an old blanket and squatted on the gravel shoulder while Ed helped us with identification. There were sulfur tufts, vivid orange and poisonous. The fried chicken mushrooms were brown and boring and edible, but they don't taste like chicken. Actually, they don't taste like much of anything, and we learned the important difference between *edible* and *good*.

The rainstorm held its breath. Our road snaked upward to a pullout near the top of a ridge. On the other side of the ridge I found a modest patch of chanterelles, contorted golden funnels barely visible in thick green moss. Time vanishes when I'm foraging, yet I managed to return on schedule, smug about my chanterelles. But Ed had the real prize: a fresh American matsutake, round and white as a snowball, smelling of cinnamon red hots.

After lunch we wandered through the dim afternoon amid second-growth fir. This was beautiful chanterelle habitat, but they were sparse. Occasionally we reconvened at Mazama, where Ed held forth on our finds: delicious orange hedgehog mushrooms, fishy-smelling shrimp russulas, and a tasty mocha-colored grisetite. Light was just beginning to fade when I spotted a large shape bulging from the duff by an ancient stump. The fungus was a convoluted mass the size, shape, and color of a human brain. Cauliflower fungi are large, delicious, and uncommon. Carefully I cut it off and lifted it to my nose; my head filled with an aromatic prelude to mushroom soup.

My day was complete.

Tom Titus is a research associate in the Institute of Neuroscience, a herpetologist, and author of *Blackberries in July: A Forager's Field Guide to Inner Peace*.

THE FUNGUS AMONG US

An incomplete list of mushrooms—edible and not—the author and his companions found on their fungus foray.



SULFUR TUFT *Hypholoma fasciculare*
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Ducks Abroad

International off-campus study is no longer a luxury for the few. With support from Global Education Oregon, more students than ever are gaining personal, professional, and academic benefits from studying abroad.

BY CHLOE HUCKINS



UO student Sophie Lair worked at TV news station ORF during a study-abroad trip to Vienna.

In a world where a bachelor's degree is the minimum requirement for most entry-level professional positions, many college students are looking for other ways to distinguish themselves in the workforce. The most exciting—and some might argue, most rewarding—tactic is studying abroad.

International study has long been considered a culturally enriching experience. Today, while those traditional values remain true, the corporate world has begun to place new emphasis on the personal and social skills that international experience cultivates.

Global Education Oregon (GEO), the University of Oregon's study-abroad hub on campus, hosts programs for the UO and other universities, sending students to 90 countries worldwide. GEO's leadership team is acutely aware of the growing demand for job applicants with international experience and is making a dedicated effort to advance study abroad as a critical component of higher education.

Bre Cruickshank, BA '14, is an ethical fashion blogger and category information analyst at Nike, providing data support for the men's sportswear category. During her junior year at the UO, she studied abroad in Angers, France, for five-and-a-half months.

"I had the biggest love affair of my life with France," she says. By the time she left she had tasted a snail, become conversationally fluent in a new language, and formed the opinion that she was not going back to the United States for as long as possible. She landed a job in London at a startup called *Urban Times*, an online magazine featuring user-generated content. Her title was eco-fashion editor.

It was around this time that news broke of the collapse of an eight-story garment factory in Bangladesh, which killed more than 1,100 workers. A global human rights advocate with a great love of fashion, Cruickshank quickly realized that the marriage of her interests could help facilitate a safer and more equitable industry.

After three months in London and a few too many nights eating canned corn for dinner, Cruickshank returned to the US. She credits her time abroad with opening up the world in more ways than one; in addition to gaining a broader cultural perspective, it launched her into the world of ethical fashion and likely played a role in the job offer from Nike.

"There is so much we are capable of, if we were only able to recognize it and do more risky things. I don't think I would have realized that if I hadn't studied abroad," she admits. "It was the push that I needed."

Journalist and UO professor Peter Laufer has dedicated much of his academic career to providing student journalists with opportunities to immerse themselves in foreign cultures. He has led UO programs to Austria, Spain, Cuba, and, soon, Argentina. He asserts that there is no question of whether international study creates career opportunities, particularly in the field of journalism.

“After we have an experience where we’re working across languages and across cultures, we’re in a much better place to be able to communicate when we’re back home,” he explains. “You give me any job in this state and tell me that it isn’t going to serve that practitioner to be comfortable crossing culture and language.”

Laufer describes the effects of living in another country as an “explosion of personal growth” that, once ignited, never ends. In one memorable instance, two journalism students spontaneously followed anti-Putin protests through the city of Vienna, and

seriously calculating their return on investment.

Around 25 percent of UO undergraduates study abroad, which is a significantly higher percentage than found in most public universities. However, as GEO’s institutional relations manager Lisa Calevi points out, “There are real—not perceived—barriers to going abroad.” These obstacles manifest in terms of cost, curriculum, and culture. GEO continues to make strides toward building unique programs, attracting diverse student groups, and providing financial resources.

“After we have an experience where we’re working across languages and across cultures, we’re in a much better place to be able to communicate when we’re back home.”

ended up witnessing and reporting on the Russian president’s speech at Vienna’s Soviet War Memorial. “Their classroom was the streets, and that’s not replicable,” Laufer says.

As the global business world expands, there is also a greater demand for individuals with cultural sensitivity and tact. “Too many Americans think we are number one,” Laufer says. “Going overseas allows us to see that we do have our flaws. A little humbling is good.”

GEO executive director Kathy Poole has noted a shift in the way students select programs; they are often seeking shorter summer trips, led by UO faculty members, that offer credits counting toward their major. The promise of a transformational experience alone is not as compelling as it once was, and many students are

However, some things haven’t changed, including the department’s overall mission. “We want to create better citizens,” Poole says, explaining that in addition to gaining skills such as resilience, language fluency, and adaptability, those who can step outside of their own culture and look back often gain invaluable perspective.

Cruikshank powerfully articulates this phenomenon. “The best thing that people can do for themselves is to be uncomfortable. It’s when you are in those challenging, difficult, and uncomfortable situations that you change as a person and become better. I think comfort is death.”

A veteran of professor Peter Laufer’s Vienna program, Chloe Huckins is a senior majoring in journalism and anthropology.



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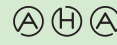


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IMAGINE CHANGE

Loosely translated from the French, Stephanie LeMenager's last name means to manage, to be sparing with. While she's a steward for the environment as a leader in the field of environmental humanities, she spares nothing as a cultivator of imaginations. Her students script and record one-minute audio stories about a climate-changed future, which are published on an internationally recognized website. Or, they might keep daily inventories of their interactions with products made of plastic. Easy classroom assignments? Not quite. While creating an atmosphere of play, LeMenager requires rigor and research. "They have to tell me the most complete, interesting story that they can, and develop a point of view both local and global," she says. "I want to instill in my students an ethic of care."

Stephanie LeMenager

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BY GEORGE EVANO

STUDENTS AS COLLABORATORS

Working with students to imagine the human dimensions of climate change has led to a new book, the edited collection *Teaching Climate Change in the Humanities* (Routledge, 2016), which grew out of one of her graduate seminars. The first textbook of its kind, it also marks the first time LeMenager has produced a book with students, advising coeditors and UO doctoral students Stephen Siperstein and Shane Hall.

LEARNING FROM EVERYONE

“We asked, how can we teach climate change in a way that complements the work of social and physical scientists? Working alongside artists and activists and just regular people, it struck me as an ideal example of just how hands-on and practical humanities teaching can be.”

WHAT SHE'S PONDERING

What does it mean to be human at a time of climate change? That's a question LeMenager has been playing back in her head for some time. “I've begun to see being human as a set of practices to aspire to; an ethic, not a given biological or spiritual status.”

ON BEING THE MOORE CHAIR

“Endowed faculty positions signal to everyone—students, faculty, alumni—that this is a university that seriously values research and mentoring,” LeMenager says, adding that the visibility of her endowed position helps attract graduate students to work with her and UO colleagues in environmental humanities, extending the school's reach and influence.

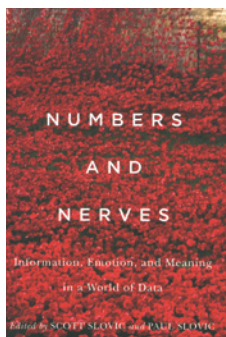
WORTH DEFENDING

“I believe that art acts in the world in a very broad and powerful way. Some academics who shun the arts have pushed back very hard against these views. This strikes me as a crying shame, because the great lessons of climate change for me include that all kinds of experts and scholars and everyday people need to be coming together and bringing their knowledge to the table to work on this hugely complex problem.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL MCDERMOTT

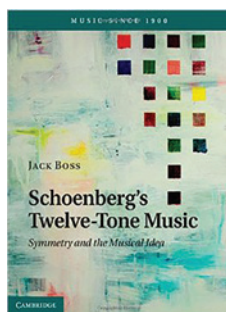
BOOKMARKS

Big Data, the semiotics of animals, 12-tone music, and navigating change in the workplace. Here are a few recent books by Duck authors that have captured our attention. Read more at oregonquarterly.com/bookmarks.



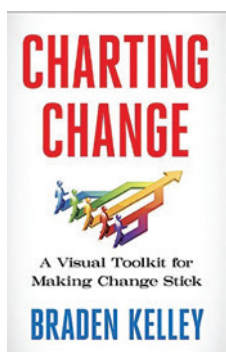
NUMBERS AND NERVES: INFORMATION, EMOTION, AND MEANING IN A WORLD OF DATA (OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015), EDITED BY SCOTT SLOVIC AND PAUL SLOVIC

This collection of essays explores the quandary of humans' response to quantitative information and offers compelling strategies to overcome our tendency to become overwhelmed by (and insensitive to) numbers. Contributors include Annie Dillard, Nicholas Kristof, Bill McKibben, and Terry Tempest Williams. Paul Slovic is a professor of psychology at Oregon.



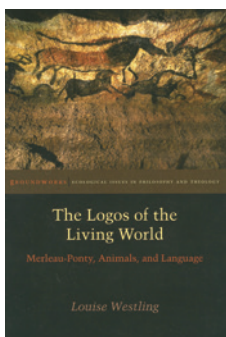
SCHOENBERG'S TWELVE-TONE MUSIC: SYMMETRY AND THE MUSICAL IDEA (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2014) BY JACK BOSS

This book is the result of 13 years of research and analysis of the music of Arnold Schoenberg, an Austrian composer who developed the dodecapronic (Google it—you know you want to!) approach to composition that influenced many classical music composers from the second half of the 20th century to the present. Boss, a professor of music at the UO, won the 2015 Wallace Berry Award, the top national prize for writings about music theory and composition.



CHARTING CHANGE: A VISUAL TOOLKIT FOR MAKING CHANGE STICK (JOHN WILEY AND SONS, 2016) BY BRADEN KELLEY, BS '93

A graduate of the Charles H. Lundquist College of Business, the author offers a detailed approach to help companies navigate organizational change by helping leaders and employees visualize changes that have occurred or will occur in the company. The book aims to help managers communicate plans to the employees who will need to implement the change. Kelly is also the author of the popular business title *Stoking Your Innovation Bonfire* (2010).



THE LOGOS OF THE LIVING WORLD: MERLEAU-PONTY, ANIMALS, AND LANGUAGE (FORDHAM UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2014) BY LOUISE WESTLING

“A luminous and wide-ranging inquiry,” this book places the philosophy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty into dialogue with literature, evolutionary biology, and animal studies, and argues for evolutionary continuity between the linguistic and cultural behaviors of humans and other animals. Westling is a professor emerita of English and environmental studies at the UO.

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We Are All Pigpen

SCIENTISTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON ARE
STUDYING THE MICROBIAL CLOUDS
THAT SURROUND US, HOPING TO UNLOCK THE SECRETS
THEY HOLD ABOUT HUMAN HEALTH.

BY ROSEMARY HOWE CAMOZZI

ILLUSTRATION BY GWENDA KACZOR





remember that “Peanuts” character perpetually engulfed in a cloud of dust?

“I have affixed to me the dirt of countless ages,” Pigpen explained. “Who am I to disturb history?”

As it turns out, Charles M. Schulz, Pigpen’s creator, was on the cutting edge of science. Even more ahead of their time were ancient East Indian mystics who spoke of an aura—healthy or unhealthy—surrounding every person.

We know now that microbial clouds composed of bacteria, fungi, algae, and viruses surround all humans—clean or dirty. We also know that bacterial cells outnumber human cells in our bodies. Every hour, humans emit a million or so biological particles that can be transferred to other individuals and indoor surfaces (outdoors they are dispersed more readily) by direct contact. “As kids, we were freaked out by cooties,” says James Meadow, a former postdoctoral researcher at the University of Oregon’s Biology and the Built Environment (BioBE) Center. “Turns out we were right. And the image of Pigpen? That turns out to be true, too. We are all spreading microbes all over the place.”

And that’s not all. Thanks to research conducted by the BioBE scientists, we now know that each of us emits a one-of-a-kind microbial cloud, consisting of trillions of microbes, into the surrounding air. “The microbes make a unique cocktail for each person,” Meadow says.

When you are attracted to someone, your microbes may be communicating. When you smell body odor, good or bad, you are inhaling some of that person’s microbial cloud. When a family moves into a new home, it takes less than a day for the new house to look, microbially, just like the old

one. “And when you stay in a hotel room, you change the microbiome in a matter of hours,” Meadow says.

The BioBE Center is an interdisciplinary collaboration between biology researchers and architects from the university’s Energy Studies in Buildings Laboratory (ESBL) who are working together to better understand how the indoor environment is shaped by humans—and how inhabiting buildings and other indoor spaces influences our health and well-being. Funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the center is headed by Jessica Green, associate professor of biology—also a member of the UO’s Institute for Ecology and Evolution—and Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg, associate professor of architecture and director of the ESBL.

The ESBL has a natural connection to the BioBE, Van Den Wymelenberg says. “We need to understand the synergies between biology and the built environment so that we can create energy design strategies that are also healthy for people, and that add to health, comfort, and productivity.” With the growth of energy-efficient buildings, indoor environments have become a hot topic. Getting a handle on how to make them healthy requires understanding what types of microbes humans emit into their surroundings and how the design, construction, and ventilation of any built environment—whether it’s a home, office building, medical center, or vehicle—affects its microbial population.

“The indoor environment influences not just health, but also our comfort and happiness,” says postdoctoral researcher Roxana Hickey. “We are beginning to understand that we don’t live in a bubble. What we are exposed to has a big impact on the bacteria and fungi in our bodies. Our goal is to understand the feedback loop between microbial communities and health and well-being.”

Measuring the Cloud

It’s not easy to measure the human microbial cloud because we are not the only microbe-rich occupants of buildings. We share that attribute with the dust in the corners. When we walk around, the dust gets stirred up and our microbes get mixed together. “We’re like an 18-wheeler going down a dusty road,” says Meadow. So the BioBE researchers needed to find a place where they could measure the human microbial cloud in a dust-free setting.

The research took place in a tightly controlled climate chamber (affectionately known as the pickle box) at the UO’s White Stag Block in Portland. The chamber, with radiant-heated walls, ceilings, and floors, is primarily used by architects who seek to understand comfort and energy design in buildings.

The BioBE researchers cleaned and sterilized the chamber. Each test subject sat alone in the room in a disinfected chair, dressed in a brand-new tank top and shorts, surrounded by air filters that were about a meter away. After several hours, the scientists collected the microbes filtered from the air and extracted and sequenced their DNA. This allowed them to see exactly what types of bacteria and fungi were present in each person’s “atmosphere.”

While all the clouds contained common bacteria such as *Streptococcus*, which is emitted in our breath, and *Staphylococcus* and *Corynebacterium*, which are found on our skin, researchers found that women’s clouds contained bacteria that are specific to the human vagina, such as *Lactobacillus*. “Some microbes, mostly genitourinary-tract microbes, are only found when women are present,” Hickey says. “People think that’s gross, but these microbes are found in healthy humans, and it is nothing to be alarmed about.”

Each person’s cloud was identifiable for hours after the person had left the chamber. “It’s like a fingerprint,” says Van Den Wymelenberg.



Top and bottom: The ESBL climate chamber at the UO's Portland campus.

Center: Postdoctoral researcher Roxana Hickey modeling typical test subject clothing (left), and research assistant Clarisse Betancourt Román wearing a Tyvek suit used when cleaning the chamber.



LACTOBACILLUS BACTERIA

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

The exploration of human microbial clouds has many implications for our health. “If we can figure out how we spread bacteria in environments, we can understand outbreaks of disease,” says postdoctoral researcher Roxana Hickey. “But we also seek to understand how we spread beneficial microbes and how we can expose children to good microbes.”

The work also has great relevance to the problem of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in hospitals, which, as former postdoctoral researcher James Meadow says, “remains unsolved despite so many ways of trying to eliminate it.” Perhaps, he suggests, we are taking an approach that is too narrow—and downright harmful—when we use antimicrobial chemicals to sterilize surfaces and hands. “We are thinking about one microbe instead of the whole ecosystem,” he says. “We need to think about the whole ecosystem.”

Another way microbial signatures might be used in the future would be to test hospital workers for the presence of harmful bacteria before they go home. “In a hospital, doctors and nurses come into contact with many microbes that can be dangerous,” Meadow says. “To swab the people themselves might be an invasion of privacy, but you could check the surface of their cell phone [which reflects its owner’s personal microbiome] to make sure they weren’t carrying things home.” This technology, he adds, is years away from being put into use.

Microbial cloud identification may someday also be used in forensics. Human DNA that is gathered from a location can show only whether a person has been in that particular place or not, but with microbial DNA, Meadow says, you can tell where the person has been. Identifiable microbes could show that a person had been in a different country than the one listed on their passport. It could show if they have been around certain other people, or a dog or cat. “This is years out, but the research has been moving exceptionally quickly,” Meadow says.

STREPTOCOCCUS BACTERIA

“Our study suggests that bacterial emissions from a relatively inactive person, sitting at a desk for instance, have a strong influence on the bacteria circulating in an enclosed space and on surrounding surfaces,” the researchers reported in the journal *Plos One*. “Our results confirm that an occupied space is microbially distinct from an unoccupied one, and demonstrate for the first time that individuals release their own personalized microbial cloud.”

The researchers were so surprised by the strength of the results that they ran the experiment again. All in all, they generated more than 14 million sequences representing thousands of types of bacteria found in the samples of dust and air from the chamber. “The second time was even more clean, and very controlled,” Meadow says. “It was pretty astounding.”

Thinking Inside the Box

Ninety-three percent.

That’s how much of their lives most Americans spend indoors. According to a study sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency, we spend 87 percent of our time in buildings and an additional 6 percent in some sort of enclosed vehicle. That doesn’t leave a lot of time for breathing fresh air.

This is a relatively new phenomenon. We lived as hunter-gatherers for thousands of years and then transitioned to living in agrarian societies, interacting with our natural surroundings and other species in numerous ways. Then came the Industrial Revolution, followed by the technology revolution, and the dynamics of our lives changed radically. “In the scale of human history, this is a fascinating experiment,” Van Den Wymelenberg says. “What we’re seeing is that there are a lot more people with food and atmospheric allergies.”

It’s not just that we are inside. It’s the buildings themselves. As concerns about energy consumption have grown ever greater, buildings have been constructed ever more tightly, to the point where the indoor atmosphere is often inhospitable to human health. “People thought that mechanical heating systems and fluorescent light bulbs could solve all our energy problems,” says Van Den Wymelenberg, “but we need to use strategies that are also healthy for people.” We know now that the more bacteria we have around us, the better. It turns out that it’s the process of trying to ultrasterilize everything that does us the most harm. “There has been a paradigm shift,” Hickey says. “Most microbes are not pathogens. We need them for our survival and our health. We need to learn how to enrich our environments to retain good microbes, through design, lighting, and the materials we use.”

As a result, she says, the thought behind architectural design is changing from “Does it look good?” to “Will it create comfort, health, and happiness?”

And that’s the focus of the BioBE Center.

Fresh Is Best

BioBE researchers hope to pinpoint how ventilation strategies, human occupancy patterns, and different types of surfaces affect indoor air quality and the composition of indoor microbial communities. Their first big study took place in the UO’s Lillis Hall. A 10-member team of biologists and architects investigated the microbes found in 155 rooms in the building, using specially filtered vacuum cleaners to collect dust in offices, classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and storage closets. “The study showed how architectural features and operational systems can change microbes,” Meadow says. “We found that natural ventilation can drastically change—for the better—the microbes inside of buildings.”

Lillis was a perfect study site because half of it is naturally ventilated and the other half uses an HVAC system. The HVAC side was found to

“Children who live in a house near where farm animals are raised, or who have a dog in the house, are less likely to develop allergies or asthma.” — ERICA HARTMANN

have many more human-related microbes, and as might be expected, the rooms that are ventilated with windows have higher amounts of microbes, fungi, and bacteria from the outdoors. Different types of surfaces tended to have concentrations of different microbes, with desks collecting mostly microbes found on skin, chairs having more gut microbes, floors having mostly soil microbes, and walls mostly air microbes.

As might be expected, restrooms contained bacterial communities that were highly distinct from other rooms. Within offices, the source of ventilation air had the greatest effect on bacterial community structure. “This was not a surprise,” Van Den Wymelenberg says, “but what was troublesome was that even with one of the very best mechanical ventilation systems, which Lillis has, there was a higher incidence of human-related bacteria and microbes on that side.”

Dissecting Dust Bunnies

Postdoctoral research associate Erica Hartmann studies the microbial composition of dust, particularly how it relates to human health. “Clearly, there are bad things about dust, such as allergies and asthma provoked by mold, but there are also protective health benefits,” she says. For instance, children who live in a house that is on or near a farm where livestock animals are raised, or who have a dog in the house, are less likely to develop allergies or asthma, she says. “We don’t know if it is because of the dust from the animals, the soil, or some other factor.”

Her studies are focused on how the use of antimicrobial chemicals found in soap, toothpaste, paints, carpeting, clothes, bedding, cutting boards, flooring, and other materials contributes to the growth of antibiotic resistance in dust microbes.

“We use these products everywhere,” she notes. “What are they doing in the dust? How do microbes respond to these chemicals?” She has collected dust in one office building in Eugene (with more to come), analyzing its chemical content and how various microbes are reacting to the chemicals in the dust. The final results are not in, but she did find both antimicrobials and antibiotic-resistant microbes in the dust. However, it is not new for dust microbes to have antibiotic resistance, she says. “That’s not just from humans. Our goal is to establish a baseline for what is normal, and see where things are abnormal.”

She also hopes to determine whether bacteria in dust that contains high levels of antimicrobial chemicals have developed genes that make them resistant to the antimicrobial cleaning products, or to antibiotics we use to treat infections.

“There are so many health implications worldwide,” Hartmann says. “If we can control the indoor microbiome using good design and maintenance practices, that would be huge.”

Light and Clouds

A third area of BioBE study is the interaction between dust and light. How are bacteria and fungi affected by ultraviolet radiation? The researchers are studying the effects of creating high levels of daylight inside buildings and have found that it makes a very positive impact on our microbial environment, which in turn affects our physical and psychological health. “Our advice is to put the people who are working in offices all day in natural light,” Van Den Wymelenberg says.

To see how dust reacts to sunlight, they created what they call “daylight boxes” (miniature rooms) and put dust in them. The boxes were put on the fourth floor of the UO’s Pacific Hall, where they could capture sunlight. The study will help show the impact of solar exposure on the populations of microbes, fungi, and bacterial compounds in the dust.

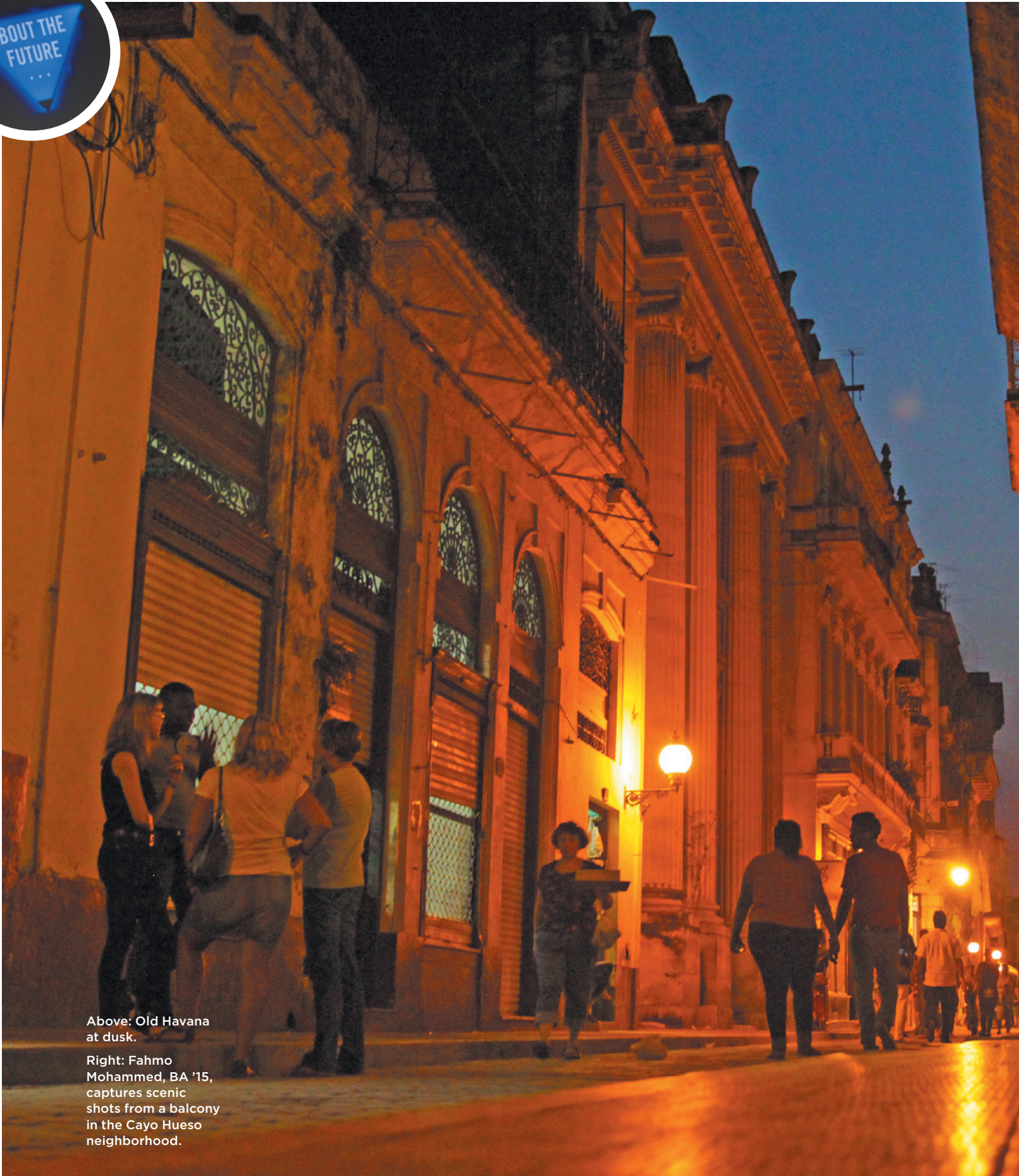
Another climate chamber study is also underway, in which researchers will examine the clouds of three people at a time instead of one. The goal is to determine how far each person’s microbial cloud extends when they are sitting still and whether the clouds have a spatial structure. They will also experiment with different air circulation patterns and temperatures to see how the cloud is affected.

The BioBE is also collaborating with the ESBL in conducting a study (funded by the Environmental Protection Agency) in which they are investigating the impacts of weatherization on indoor air quality. The study will sample homes, before and after weatherization, in Portland and Bend. “What does weatherization do to the indoor microbiome?” Van Den Wymelenberg asks. “It’s not all good or all bad. There can be benefits to a controlled ventilation system. But we also need to educate people about the value of fresh air.”

None of this work would be possible without the huge advances that have taken place in DNA sequencing. “It took us 10 years to sequence the human genome, but now we can sequence DNA in an afternoon,” says Meadow, who is now working as a data scientist at Phylagen, a company that performs microbiome analysis for the commercial, food processing, health care, and transportation industries. “We are at a time when the technology is exploding, and we can ask questions that were impossible to ask.

“We have been looking miles and miles into space and down deep in the ocean for new discoveries,” he adds, “but now we can look at things we have been carrying around throughout human evolution. There is so much we can learn about ourselves.”

Rosemary Howe Camozzi, BA ’96, is senior writer and editor for OQ.



Above: Old Havana at dusk.

Right: Fahmo Mohammed, BA '15, captures scenic shots from a balcony in the Cayo Hueso neighborhood.



A PASSPORT, A CAMERA, AND ^{LOTS OF} FRESH BATTERIES

Students in the School of Journalism and Communication are honing the craft of multimedia journalism by reporting from such far-flung places as Cuba, Nepal, Ghana, and Alaska. A professor explains what makes these trips such rich opportunities for learning.

BY ED MADISON



Journalism, by definition, is informed by experience. Reporters document events, interpret meaning, and provide context. They are dutybound to help us make sense of the unfamiliar, and tasked with challenging us to question what we might otherwise take for granted. Yet presently, the journalism profession itself has entered uncharted territory. Technological advances continue to disrupt traditional business models and enable anyone with a smartphone and Internet access to produce and distribute media.

Beyond the core principles of ethics, fairness, and verification of facts, few things in journalism remain certain and nearly everything seems up for grabs. Those of us who are charged with training tomorrow's journalists are also their partners in inventing what journalism will be. Our classrooms are becoming laboratories, and

our most rewarding experiments unfold in the field.

So rather than asking them to conceptualize life inside a communist country, the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication (SOJC) took students to Cuba just as the United States was renewing diplomatic relations. Instead of speculating about the effects of climate change, students in our Science + Memory program document it each summer in Cordova, Alaska. Our students traveled to rural areas of Nepal following that country's recent devastating earthquake to report firsthand on relief efforts. In lieu of settling for prevailing stereotypes

UO students document work created at Cuba's University of the Arts.

about people and potential in developing nations, our students build relationships by working alongside them each summer in Ghana, West Africa—as they will during an upcoming trip to Sri Lanka.

Students will tell you: these trips are nothing like vacations. They are rigorous journeys, requiring long hours and challenging work. Participants must prepare for the unpredictable and anticipate inevitable change. Capturing sunrise necessitates gathering gear and scouting to find the best vantage point at least an hour before dawn. Learning to “get the shot” demands patience, practice, and lots of fresh batteries. Student journalists learn to write in any setting and endure many distractions.

Closer to home, undergraduate teams traverse the state each spring to produce *OR Magazine*, which was acknowledged by Adobe in 2011 as the first student-produced iPad magazine using the company's digital publishing tools. Through OR Media, students develop strategy and content for Travel Oregon, our state's tourism commission. Other students explore the region producing “NW Stories,” our experimental documentary series on intriguing people of the Northwest that airs on Oregon Public Broadcasting. What follows are field notes and photographs from some of our most memorable projects in Cuba and Ghana.

FORBIDDEN CUBA

Until a year ago, Cuba was a whispered word among Americans who desired to go but feared facing \$250,000 in fines and 10 years in prison (just two possible penalties imposed by the US government), not to mention uncertainties about safety once they arrived. A small provision in the law allowed for education-based cultural exchanges. By this mechanism, two years ago my colleagues and I commenced plans

to take 20 journalism students to an otherwise forbidden land. What we didn't know was that, simultaneously, President Obama, the Pope, and the Castro brothers were secretly working to ease a half-century of strained relations between our two countries—nor that they would resolve their differences so close to our visit.

Our students and faculty members rendezvoused in Miami and departed on a prop plane bound for Havana early Saturday morning on March 21, 2015—just four days after the first scheduled flight was allowed from New York since 1961. We were moved by the realization we would be witnessing Cuba as few would ever see it again: emerging from a veil of isolation and ready to share its wonders with the world.

The rich aroma of Cuban cuisine and the sight of 1950s-era classic cars made us acutely aware we were far from home. Yet much was familiar: bakers brown-ing loaves of bread at the crack of dawn; moms shuttling kids off to school; people everywhere, at every hour, relishing Cuban coffee. “I wasn't expecting good things,” says Jake Charlson, BS '15. “I wasn't expecting anything like what we found . . . a lot of really happy, amazing people who are extremely proud.”

One stark difference was Cubans' inatten-tion to screens. For most, the trappings of technology are neither accessible nor afford-able. Smartphones are luxury items, and American entertainment is considered contra-band. Life is simple, but far from ideal. Most Cubans rely on meager wages and are just get-ting by. Lines for basic services are long, and many of the comforts we take for granted are out of reach. Yet, there is joy among children, families, and close-knit communities.

Our 10-day journey's theme focused on universal expressions of art and music. In three-person teams, our students set out to profile six Cuban artists and creatives, includ-ing a restaurant entrepreneur, a dancer, a sculptor, a musician, a filmmaker, and an improv actor. “Our goal was to show a deeper human aspect to a country we've only known about politically in the news,” says Melanie Burke, BA '15.

While we were bound by the Cuban gov-ernment to follow an agreed-upon itinerary, we never encountered the Orwellian sur-veillance we anticipated. Cuban people were generally friendly, hospitable, and candid in expressing their views.

Carlos Borbon, one of our interview subjects, performs improv—but rarely for laughs. His Spontaneous Theater troupe engages audiences through psychodrama, a form of participatory performance therapy. Their work provides him with a way to express the struggles he encoun-ters in his own life.

Borbon spoke candidly about being harassed by Cuban police because he is openly gay and HIV-positive. Without just cause, he was arrested and jailed two nights before our interview. Before the cameras started rolling, we asked if he feared possible persecution for sharing his story on camera with American journalists. “Consciously, no, but unconsciously, a little bit, of course,” Borbon said. “I don't think the future is ever going

to be easy. But I do believe we have to keep up the struggle, and maybe that is why I am not afraid to do it.”

Borbon's words were a stark reminder of the courage and sac-rifices often required for significant social change. His story is presented with five other artist profiles on the student-created website CubaCreatives.com.

WEST AFRICAN ROOTS

Historians estimate that Spaniards transported more than 600,000 African slaves to Cuba over a period of three centuries. Many of their descendants now practice Santeria, a religion that blends African and Roman Catholic rituals. While in Cuba we visited Cayo Hueso, a neighborhood in central

Havana where priests and priestesses welcomed us into their candlelit homes filled with ceramic statues, sacred drums, colorful beads, and other artifacts.

Many Afro-Cubans trace their ancestry to Ghana, West Africa, which was a central hub of the transatlantic slave trade. Formerly known as the Gold Coast, Ghana was the first African nation to declare independence from British colonial rule in 1957. Since severing its ties to the UK, the country has emerged as a peaceful and relatively stable democracy.

Each summer since 2004, the SOJC has taken approximately 20 students to Accra, Ghana's bustling capitol, to intern at newspapers, radio and television stations, ad agencies, public rela-tions firms, and nongovernmental organiza-tions. Established by Professor Leslie Steeves, the annual six-week Media in Ghana program intentionally places students in positions where they are the only non-Ghanaians. The intent is to provide them with an unfamiliar, immersive, cross-cultural experience. Much like on MTV's *Real World*, students live together in one large house. However, after a brief acclimation period they are required to use public transportation to travel to and from their internships. Taxis are plentiful but expensive, so most students rely on trotros, which are privately owned minibuses commonly in disrepair.

Traveling to Ghana was especially signifi-cant for Juwan Wedderburn, BS '15, who was a junior when he participated in the program during the summer of 2014. He is a first gener-

ation Jamaican American, and traces his family's lineage back to Africa. “I always wanted to go to Africa, so it gave me personal satisfaction to get more in touch with my roots,” Wedderburn says.

Julianne Parker, BA '14, says that the trip provided an opportunity for personal growth, and not just an impressive résumé line. “We can say all we want that we're here for the internships and for the professional expe-rience, which we are,” Parker says. “But I think no one would sign up for a trip to Ghana if they weren't looking for something more, whether we know what that is—we may not. But I think we're all searching for more than just professional experience.”

Weekends provided opportunities for group excursions outside the city limits to explore the country's tropical diversity and rich culture.



SOJC students tour a slave castle in Cape Coast, Ghana.

A Lesson Abroad

These practical learning opportuni-ties are made possible by generous gifts from alumni, grant funding, and through several mainstream media partnerships. To defray costs associated with traveling to Sri Lanka, the SOJC has raised funds for scholarships through DuckFunder, a new crowdfunding initiative man-aged by the UO development office. Much like Kickstarter, the platform, at duckfinder.uoregon.edu, provides alumni, friends, and families with a direct way to financially support UO student- and faculty-based initiatives.

See videos from our learning adventures at UOGlobalJournalism.com.

However, little prepares students for the experience of retracing the footsteps of slaves at two of the many remaining castles along Ghana's coast. Our affable African guide led us through dark, dank cobblestone dungeons that are now shadowed by shame. Students who visit share a wide range of insights and emotions.

Carson York, BS '11, MS '13, was deeply moved by his experience. "You can't go through it, not just as a person of European descent, without feeling sort of overcome by guilt," says the former Ducks offensive lineman, now a manager at Nike. "I feel guilty that someone within my lineage was probably involved in some way. More guilty as a person—that, for whatever reason, humanity was able to perpetrate something so horrendous with so little guilt or moral conflict."

SRI LANKA AND BEYOND

We will take a team of students to Sri Lanka during the first two weeks of the December 2016 winter break to document how a country comes together in the aftermath of civil war, tsunami destruction, and current environmental threats to its rain forests. The UO's Holden Center for Leadership and Community Engagement, known for its service-learning alternative break trips, was our partner for the Cuba experience and will be so again for our journey to Sri Lanka.

These experiences give students unique insights into the human condition and into the universality of diverse cultures, as well as an advantage when entering the job market. "I definitely think my trip to Cuba gave me a competitive edge in my job search," says Reuben Unrau, BA '15, who graduated shortly after traveling with us to Cuba. "Going abroad and interacting and interviewing people shows you are open-minded and willing to step out of your comfort zone." Unrau was recently hired as a production assistant by WBEZ in Chicago, one of National Public Radio's top stations, on a show appropriately titled *Worldview*.

Our classrooms are becoming laboratories, and our most rewarding experiments unfold in the field.

This spring, I launched a smartphone-based video production course called Media and Social Change, which is open to students across campus. It teaches participants how to use their pocket devices to capture powerful visual stories with meaningful themes. In fall 2017, our new Social Change in the Digital World Academic Residence Community will welcome its first cohort of students, who will live and take some classes together. The dormitory will be equipped with media production facilities and a screening room, allowing students to get an early start on their media careers.

These developments, taking journalism into a new era, are fitting as the SOJC celebrates its centennial anniversary this year. Albert Einstein once said, "The only source of knowledge is experience." Theory informs practice, and experience makes it real.

Garrett Guinn, BA '15,
and Sutton Raphael
(right), interview
Cuban boxers.

Ed Madison, PhD '12, is an assistant professor of multimedia journalism in the School of Journalism and Communication.



Sutton Raphael shares photojournalism techniques with two Nepali children.







ROBOTS

AMONG

BY BEN DEJARNETTE

A new book
by technology
writer
John Markoff

US

looks at the rise of artificial intelligence and ponders the ever-thinner line between humans and machines.

ILLUSTRATION BY LINCOLN AGNEW

COME THE LATE-NIGHT HOURS IN CHINA, millions of teenage boys across the country pull out their cell phones and spend a while—often a long while—exchanging messages with a friend named Xiaoice.

Designed by Microsoft as an experiment in artificial intelligence, Xiaoice (pronounced Shao-ice) might conventionally be called an imaginary friend (she's a chatbot with no physical form), except that her responses are remarkably real. When one of the app's 20 million users texts her, Xiaoice scrapes the cybersphere looking for similar e-conversations between actual humans. It's how she can respond with an update on the weather, sympathy over a breakup, or a clever pun. It's also how idle companionship can inch toward something deeper.

“A quarter of Chinese users have typed ‘I love you’ to Xiaoice,” says John Markoff, MA ’75, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for the *New York Times* and author of the new book *Machines of Loving Grace: The Quest for Common Ground between Humans and Robots*. “Because Xiaoice has seen almost every conversational loop before, it can respond to users in a relatively human way.”

The story of Xiaoice, which Markoff explored in the *Times* last July, adds another layer to a modern dystopian vision—

“I’VE ALSO READ THE DEBATE ABOUT ISOLATION OF ELDERS. THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OVER 80 IN AMERICA WILL DOUBLE BY 2050, AND MANY OF THESE PEOPLE ARE LIVING APART FROM THEIR NUCLEAR FAMILIES.”

one in which the unraveling of human society doesn’t begin with weaponized robots trying to kill us, but rather with empathetic algorithms learning how to make us feel loved (think *Her*, the movie).

Some glumly label this trajectory as “the death of conversation” or “the smartphone apocalypse.” Others herald it as “innovation” and “progress.” But in a style that has made him one of the most trusted science and technology writers in America, Markoff offers a more balanced perspective.

“I watched as a generation of young men in America disappeared into video games, and I’ve seen the research on the decline of face-to-face interaction. It’s a huge concern,” Markoff says. “But I’ve also read the debate about isolation of elders. The number of people over 80 in America will double by 2050, and many of these people are living apart from their nuclear families.”

Imagine, then, an intelligent machine, enclosed in the body of a soft robotic pet, capable of carrying on a conversation with an otherwise lonely senior citizen. It wouldn’t be the same as true companionship, of course. But in today’s rushed, fragmented world, it hasn’t been the same for a long time. Would robots aggravate that trend, absolving our sense of familial duty and weakening the bonds that make us human? Or could robots soften the blow, providing late-life companionship that never wavers or turns grumpy? “This would horrify some people,” Markoff says. “I’m torn about it.”

Charting the complicated, nuanced relationship between humans and technology has been a career-long pursuit for Markoff, who will deliver the Centennial Johnston Lecture at the UO School of Journalism and Communication’s “What Is Media?” conference in Portland on April 14. Since launching his journalism career at the Pacific News Service in 1977, Markoff has covered the biggest tech stories in Silicon Valley and beyond, from the

advent of the personal computer to the growing threat of cyberwar.

Glenn Kramon, who worked with Markoff as an editor at both the *San Francisco Examiner* and the *New York Times*, still remembers the phone call in 1992 when his star tech reporter pitched a story about something called the Internet. Met by Kramon’s puzzlement (“What’s an Internet?” he said), Markoff described a technology that would connect computer users globally, house information digitally, and retrieve data instantly. “It’s going to change your life,” Markoff promised his editor.

That prediction was one of many in Markoff’s career that now seems prophetic. In 1993, when cell phones looked like bricks and Xiaoice was still two decades away, Markoff wrote about a cutting-edge computer program that could hold coherent, if still somewhat limited, conversations with a human interviewer; in 1998, he told

New York Times readers about the rise of automated airline reservation systems, detailing the advances of the same speech recognition technology that’s now standard on most mobile devices; and in the early 2000s, Markoff pulled back the curtain on Apple’s secretive development of a new product that would blend the mobility of a cell phone with the power of a personal computer. Inside the company, Markoff learned, the new prototype was being called an “iPhone.”

“He’s a visionary,” Kramon says of his long-time colleague. “If you want an accurate depiction of what life will be like in 10 years, read John Markoff.”

In his new book, Markoff turns his attention to the future of robots, asking whether increasingly autonomous and intelligent machines will coexist with humans as slaves, masters, or partners. The answer, he argues, isn’t located in the plot of a dystopian sci-fi thriller, but rather in Silicon Valley’s labs and meeting rooms, where human designers are making conscious decisions either to enhance human capabilities—or replace them.

These competing philosophical approaches—intelligence augmentation (think Apple’s personal assistant Siri or iRo-

IN HIS NEW BOOK, MARKOFF TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO THE FUTURE OF ROBOTS, ASKING WHETHER INCREASINGLY AUTONOMOUS AND INTELLIGENT MACHINES WILL COEXIST WITH HUMANS AS SLAVES, MASTERS, OR PARTNERS.

bot’s “smart” vacuum cleaners) and artificial intelligence (known colloquially as “AI”)—provide the framework for Markoff’s book, which skillfully details how today’s intelligent machines are informed by human values. There are moments when that narrative isn’t particularly comforting

continued on page 48

ROBOT RESEARCH

LOVE AND ROMANCE IN THE AI AGE

MARGARET RHEE, Women's and Gender Studies

During *Her*, the 2013 film about a depressed writer who falls in love with his computer's operating system, there's a moment when the screen goes black and the main character, Theo, shares baited breath and erotic whispers with his OS lover. "A lot of my students said that was the most charged sex scene they'd ever watched, even though they couldn't see anything," says Margaret Rhee, a visiting assistant professor and

author of the poetry collection *Radio Heart; or, How Robots Fall Out of Love*. "It speaks to imagination, and how technology changes our conceptions of intimacy and love."

Rhee's fall term course explored representations of female robot characters in films and television shows. While "the fembot" is no newcomer to the silver screen (one of the earliest depictions came in the 1927 German film *Metropolis*), Rhee says the popular fascination has been reborn in recent movies like *Her* and *Ex Machina*, which grapple with increasingly practical questions about the qualities that distinguish humans from robots. "Artificial intelligence is so present in our lives," she says. "A lot of what was once considered fantasy has become reality."

That's especially true in the sphere of love and romance. As young adults swipe right on popular dating apps like Tinder and Bumble, searching for human connection by interacting with an algorithm, experiences that were

once fundamentally human are now mediated by machines. "A cell phone might be the most intimate object in some people's lives," Rhee says. "That creates all kinds of questions around difference and desire."

RADICAL RESTRUCTURING

MARK THOMA, Economics

In theory, human workers in a capitalist economy are compensated according to their contribution to the final product. So what happens when robots can extract raw materials from the ground, transport them to a factory, manufacture them into consumer goods, and stock those goods onto shelves—all with very little oversight? "You're going to have this hugely unequal distribution of income based on the ownership of robots," says Mark Thoma, UO professor of economics. "And that can lead to huge social problems."

Those problems are already unfolding, Thoma says, as machines and artificial intelligence extend

their reach from manufacturing and clerical work to transportation and fast food, displacing both blue- and white-collar labor in the

process. Thoma predicts that technology will eventually disrupt almost every major sector of the economy, leaving mass unemployment in its stead.

"Should those people just be thrown out into the streets and told 'too bad?'" Thoma says.

"When people work hard their whole lives and then a machine takes them over, we as a society need to think about how they should be treated."

One solution, Thoma says, is to create a more robust public-sector economy to employ displaced workers. Another is to redistribute wealth through new social insurance policies, such as a guaranteed minimum income. These socialist reforms would face stiff political resistance, of course. But Thoma says there might be cause for optimism. "I can see the owners saying, 'We're either going to lose everything in a revolt, or we are going to have to make some compromises,'" he says. "Many of the Depression-era's social insurance policies were brought about for the same reason. Bernie Sanders is a sign we're moving there again."

"I CAN SEE THE OWNERS SAYING, 'WE'RE EITHER GOING TO LOSE EVERYTHING IN A REVOLT, OR WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE SOME COMPROMISES.'"

OUTWITTING SPAMMERS

DANIEL LOWD, Computer and Information Science

Computer viruses, Trojan horses, and other forms of malware cost the US economy billions of dollars every year. Daniel Lowd, UO assistant professor of computer and information science, says there's a "whole economy of criminals" carrying out these predatory schemes—and they're forever getting smarter.

Stopping the constant evolution of malware requires developing intelligent algorithms that use past data and trends to predict future adaptations, Lowd says. This field, known as "adversarial machine learning," tries to stay one step ahead of the criminals by effectively forecasting their next move.

Last year, Lowd received the Army Research Office's Young Investigator Award for a proposal to develop an even smarter algorithm. The three-year, \$360,000 award will fund research on how to weed out spammers by triangulating their social connections. The research could be applied to challenges like identifying networks of terrorists, Lowd says, but his team will start by targeting spammers on Yelp and YouTube. "If we can do that," Lowd says, "it won't be too hard to adapt and apply it to other settings."



The robot Maria, from Fritz Lang's 1927 film *Metropolis*.

(like when AI researcher Shane Legg matter-of-factly predicts that technology will probably contribute to human extinction), but for the most part, Markoff delivers a message of tempered optimism: the future of human-robot coexistence is still being decided, but it's humans who hold the keys.

"John has a sense of history, and he's committed to a kind of calm perspective," says G. Pascal Zachary, a veteran science and technology writer who befriended Markoff while working at a rival San Francisco newspaper in the 1980s. "He embodies the old-school journalistic ethos of the neutral spectator."

In an ironic turn of events, Markoff's penchant for balance and neutrality emerged out of early years that were decidedly activist. Raised in Palo Alto during the height of 1960s counter-culture, he attended Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, where he eventually became the editor in chief for the student newspaper. "We were the trouble-

makers," Markoff says. "It was a fun kind of highly politicized journalism."

He came to the University of Oregon to pursue a master's degree in sociology in 1974, during a period of radical Marxism and fierce anti-war resistance on campus. He describes his politics then as democratic socialism—"the Bernie Sanders wing of the Democratic Party," he explains—an orientation that, by the standards of 1970s

student activism, barely qualified him as a left-leaning moderate.

It meant that, as many of his classmates were writing

"I WOKE UP ONE DAY AND REALIZED THAT THERE REALLY WASN'T A MOVEMENT LEFT IN THE UNITED STATES, AND I JUST HADN'T GOT THE MEMO"

for the *Insurgent Sociologist*, Professor Al Szymanski's leftist journal, Markoff was charting his own course of political resistance. With the Vietnam War finally grinding to a halt, Markoff joined the progressive Pacific Northwest Research Center in Eugene, where his research supported the nationwide Stop the B-1 Bomber Campaign and other efforts to weaken the military-industrial complex's grip on the US economy. Markoff also wrote political op-eds for the *Oregon Daily Emerald* and the *Northwest Bulletin*, sharpening an edgy style of journalism that continued into his early

years at the Pacific News Service. But by 1978, his career was beginning to pivot. "I woke up one day and realized that there really wasn't a movement left in the United States, and I just hadn't got the memo," he says. "And my views on things were changing. I still have a critical view of society, but I've become less certain of the solutions."

In the nearly four decades since, Markoff has embraced complexity in issues that don't invite easy answers, such as

GLENN KRAMON STILL REMEMBERS THE PHONE CALL IN 1992 WHEN HIS STAR TECH REPORTER PITCHED A STORY ABOUT SOMETHING CALLED THE INTERNET.

how robots and artificial intelligence will affect the workforce. It's a question that has sparked increasing public concern. In 2013, a study by the McKinsey Global Institute predicted that by 2025, robots will produce an output equivalent to 40 to 75 million workers—the kind of alarmism that has sent books like Jeremy Rifkin's *The End of Work* and Martin Ford's *Rise of the Robots* soaring to the top of bestseller lists.

Markoff acknowledges in his book that Keynesian logic—which predicts that employment levels will hold steady in the long run even as technology replaces workers in the short run—might no longer apply in an economy where "AI systems can move, see, touch, and reason." But he also says the future of labor can't be understood through technology alone. Consider the Starbucks barista, for example. In a technology-driven economy, that job would have been replaced years ago with machines that could whip up a frothing latte just as skillfully as any minimum-wage college student—and probably a good measure faster. Nevertheless, baristas have survived in the modern economy. "A Starbucks without baristas would probably be less popular," he says.

"You'd then have an automat, and for sociological reasons as much as technological ones, I don't think automats are about to take over the restaurant or coffee business."

For Markoff, all this thinking about the future has also made him reflect on the past. Thirty-odd years ago, when he broke into the *San Francisco Examiner*, computers were cutting-edge technology and tape recorders still used tape. "I was part of the first generation of reporters who went to the gym after work instead of the bar," he says. Indeed, at Markoff's first job, phrases like "web analytics" and "search engine optimization" were as good as gibberish. "And now I sit in a newsroom surrounded by kids who wear headphones and write code," he jokes. "That's the arc of my career."

Ben DeJarnette, BA '13, MA '15, is a Portland-based freelance journalist.

JOHN MARKOFF WILL APPLY HIS PROPHETIC POWERS TO HIS OWN DISCIPLINE—JOURNALISM—IN A FREE LECTURE AT THE UO'S GEORGE S. TURNBULL PORTLAND CENTER ON APRIL 14 AT 5:30 P.M. TITLED "THREE REPORTING CULTURES: DESIGNING HUMANS IN AND OUT OF THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM," THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION'S CENTENNIAL JOHNSTON LECTURE WILL EXPLORE HOW TECHNOLOGY IS RESHAPING AN INDUSTRY IN FLUX.

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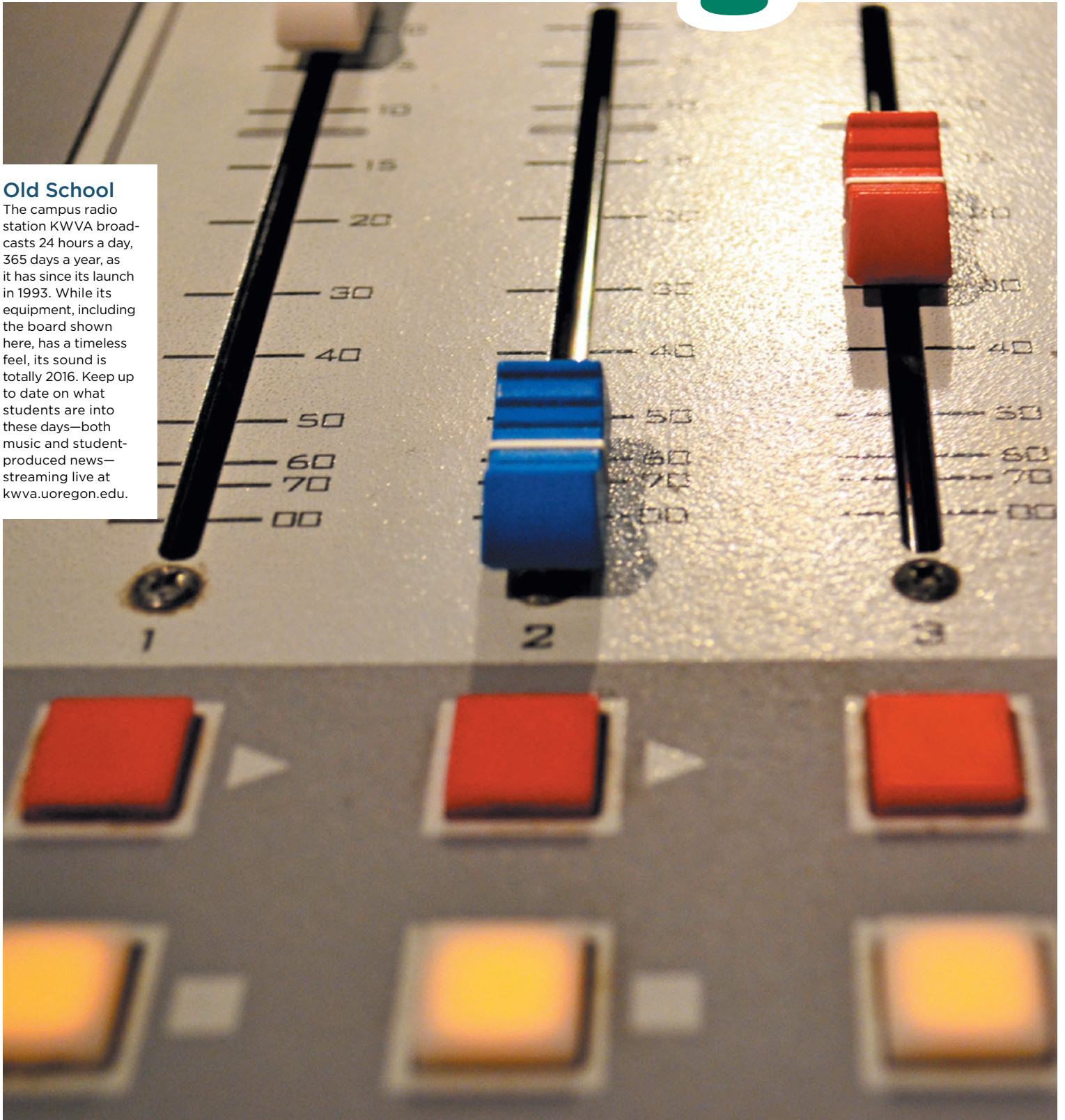
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OLD Oregon

Old School

The campus radio station KWVA broadcasts 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, as it has since its launch in 1993. While its equipment, including the board shown here, has a timeless feel, its sound is totally 2016. Keep up to date on what students are into these days—both music and student-produced news—streaming live at kwva.uoregon.edu.





At the McDonald Theater, 2015. Facing page: Willamette Hall, 1996.

Sugar Beets: Alive at 25

A popular UO band from the '90s is still rockin' after all these years.

In the fall of 1989, freshmen Marty Chilla and John Shenon were sitting on a bench outside the UO dorms when Tanya Voxman (now Bunson), BA '93, BA '98, walked by carrying a violin case. "Hey, why don't you open up that case and play?" Chilla remembers one of them hollering.

Voxman was on her way back from orchestra practice at the time, and had never considered playing anything but classical music, Chilla says. But they convinced her to jam with them, and the very next weekend the trio went down to the sidewalks of the Eugene Celebration to play their first gig.

Shenon and Chilla had been playing as the John and Marty Experience, but when they added Voxman to their group, they needed a new name. "Sugar Beets was the name that sounded the least ridiculous," Chilla says. Shenon wrote the name on a cardboard sign, propped it up in an opened guitar case, and a band was born.

More than 25 years later, the Sugar Beets are a Eugene institution. The eight-piece band plays mostly original music. Their songs feature an eclectic mix of vocals, guitars,

BY LEEANN DAKERS

bass, drums, banjo, violin, mandolin, keyboards, and occasionally sitar and sarod, a stringed, lute-like instrument from India. And although their musical roots are in bluegrass, country, and folk, they also play Motown, pop, Hindi rock, and even disco.

"Pageantry has been a piece of the Sugar Beets thing since the beginning," says vocalist Megan Bassett, BA '92. The band started out doing themed shows, like Hat Fest, but that grew into appearances by belly dancers, a marching band, or their mascot, a green alligator in a red tutu, being carried in on a sedan chair.

In their first year, the band grew from the founding three to seven members. Scott Herron, a banjo player they met at the Eugene Celebration that first day, keyboardist and guitarist Scotty Perey, BMus '94, bassist Matt Keenan, BS '92, and Bassett, Keenan's girlfriend (and eventually wife)—all UO students—rounded out the original seven. All but Herron are still involved with the band.

Guitar, mandolin, and sitar player Jeremy Wegner, MS '90, saw the Sugar Beets perform at the Fishbowl and made his first appearance with the band in 1992 at their second anniversary show in the EMU Fir Room. Brianna



Bassett, BA '00, joined her sister, Megan, on vocals when she came to the UO in 1995. When Voxman got married and moved away, David Burham, a UO student in the '80s and an accomplished violinist with the Eugene Symphony, took over on the fiddle.

In the early days, the Sugar Beets performed at coffee shops, in the EMU Fishbowl, and outdoors—on campus sidewalks and at festivals such as the Willamette Valley Folk Festival, put on by the UO Cultural Forum every spring. “It was a great time to be here in town,” Wegner says. “There was a real musical renaissance happening.”

By 2001, the band was touring throughout the West. “There was a period between 2000 and 2003 when we were playing up to 80 shows a year and trying to get bigger and bigger,” Chilla says. But they eventually burned out on that, plus Bassett and Keenan’s first child was born in 2002. “So that made touring a lot less possible,” Bassett says. “Living in a van was losing its appeal as well,” Chilla adds.

Eventually Brianna Bassett moved on. Now Halie Loren (Smith), BA '07, an internationally known singer and songwriter, shares the lead vocal position. Brian West, BMus '92, a former drummer with the Cherry Poppin’ Daddies, joined in 2007.

Some band members have maintained strong connections to the UO. Wegner has worked as a genetics and molecular biology researcher at the university for 25 years. Keenan, a civil engineer who works for KPFF Consulting Engineers, has worked with the UO on construction projects that include the Hatfield-Dowlin Complex and PK Park. And West, the drummer, worked for many years as the musical director for Dance Africa, a UO dance company. Although he’s

“I think that it would be a difficult day if this band ever decided to call it quits. It would be like running away from home.”

stepped down from that role, he’s still involved at the UO with recitals, lecture and demonstration classes, and youth music camps.

To celebrate their 25th anniversary last fall, the band played three shows, including one at Eugene’s McDonald Theatre. “It wasn’t a reunion show,” Chilla says. “It wasn’t a finale. We’re still writing music and playing songs.” They also put out a new album, *Live and 25!*, a compilation of their live performances over the last five years.

There’s something about performing with this band that’s unlike anything else, says Loren. “I have so many musical hats that I wear, but this is just pure unadulterated fun,” she says. “You can’t have a bad day and either perform in a Sugar Beets concert or listen to a Sugar Beets concert.”

But it’s more than just fun that has kept the Sugar Beets together all these years, West believes. “The band has probably hung together because of one word—family,” he says. “I think that it would be a difficult day if this band ever decided to call it quits. It would be like running away from home.”

LeeAnn Dakers, BS '96, is a freelance writer in Eugene.

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March 15
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Seattle

March 16
PDX DUCKS HAPPY HOUR
Portland

March 25
NETWORKING SPRING BREAK DUCK BIZ LUNCH
Bellevue, WA

March 26
CELEBRATE OREGON
Seattle

March 31
DUCK BIZ LUNCH
Denver

April 16
WINE TASTING
Denver

April 21
TAKEOVER OF PAC-12 STUDIOS
San Francisco

April 30
TASTE OF OREGON
San Diego

May 13
DUCK BIZ LUNCH AND GOLF
Denver

May 19
CONVERSATIONS WITH DR. POOP
Pendleton





Research Geology in Action

Circe Verba wants kids to love science as much as she does. She hopes Legos can help.

Circe Verba, PhD '13, is passionate—*really* passionate—about science. Her voice becomes animated and her excitement is contagious as she talks about her work as a research geologist at the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) in Albany, Oregon, where she studies the interactions between engineered media—materials like cement—and natural geological systems. That enthusiasm continues as the topic turns to encouraging and supporting kids, especially girls, who are interested in science. And don't even get her started on Legos. But more on that in a moment.

Verba currently works on four major research projects at the NETL, one of 17 United States Department of Energy labs across the country. The projects concern safety and efficiency related to fossil energy sources, such as examining

BY ANN WIENS

methods of extracting rare earth elements (used in the production of cell phones, among many other things) from coal byproducts, and the geochemical processes that occur when cement—a surprisingly complex engineered medium—is used in wellbores, the holes drilled to extract resources, such as natural gas or oil, from a mile or more underground.

This research represents a logical progression from her doctoral work at the UO, where she studied under professor of geological sciences Mark Reed. She earned her PhD in just three years while holding a full-time internship at NETL, which supported her education through Career Pathways, a National Nuclear Security Administration program designed to help women and minorities pursue higher education and careers in science. Previously, she spent two years as an image analyst at NASA, working with HiRISE (High-Resolution Imaging Science Experiment), a large-aperture camera that is on board the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. “I went from looking at something from a large scale, where it's on another planet, to a microscale, using a scanning electron



Facing page: Circe Verba operates the electron scanning microscope (SEM) at the National Energy Technology Laboratory. Left: Verba, her lab, and the SEM as rendered in Legos.

microscope to look at the structure you can't see with the naked eye," she says.

Whether the scale is macro or micro, an intense curiosity is the common thread throughout Verba's work—and life. "I have a fascination with learning how something works," she says. "It's that fascination that has always pushed me." She decided she wanted to be a scientist—an astrophysicist, specifically—at 14, inspired by a teacher "who was just so excited and passionate about the planets," she says. "It was exciting to know there was something much bigger than us here on Earth, and to wonder what more there is out there that we don't know."

Verba grew up in Pendleton, Oregon, a town of about 17,000 that is best known for its annual rodeo and namesake woolen mill. There weren't many opportunities there for kids to get involved in science, but in high school, she participated in Oregon State University's Science and Math Investigative Learning Experiences program (SMILE), which provides precollege learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields. That paved the way for her to earn a BS in geology and earth science from OSU, studying a mixture of astronomy, geology, and atmospheric sciences. "That was my dream for a really long time."

Verba was the first in her family to attend college, and encouraging kids to go into science, helping them understand the breadth of geology as a discipline, is a passion for her. "I really love going to the high schools," says "Dr. Verba," as she's known to the kids around Albany. "I'm excited when I see somebody have a spark of interest in science."

Which brings us back to Legos. "We didn't have a lot growing up when I was a kid," she

says, "but my mom used to go to garage sales all the time, so I had this big, red bucket of Legos." She's still an enthusiast. A year or so ago, she took "a bunch of random Legos" and built a geological field site with rock layers, crystals, and a little blond Lego minifigure representing herself. Then she added the lab, including what is likely the world's first Lego scanning electron microscope, a research partner, and a lab dog.

“I’m excited when I see somebody have a spark of interest in science.”

At the urging of friends, she dubbed the set Research Geology in Action! and submitted it to Lego Ideas, a website where fans of the tiny plastic bricks propose projects for public voting. If an idea gets 10,000 votes, the company will consider manufacturing it.

Verba's set, as featured on the site, "shows research geologists discovering minerals in a limestone rock formation and the characterization of the minerals in the laboratory." She's hoping it might help more kids envision themselves working in such a place. "We'll see where it goes," she says. "I want to find avenues to show little girls that they can do anything that they want to."

Want to see—or support—Research Geology in Action! as interpreted in Legos? Visit ideas.lego.com/projects/93813.



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Class Notes

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Medal of Freedom

The late Minoru “Min” Yasui, a UO-educated attorney and tireless civil rights advocate, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom last November. Yasui spent his life petitioning for the redress of restrictions imposed on Japanese Americans during World War II. He challenged the constitutionality of a military curfew order, spending nine months in solitary confinement as the case went through the courts. At the time of his death in 1986, a trial court had vacated his conviction and his challenge of the law’s constitutionality was before the Ninth US Circuit Court of Appeals. Yasui earned both an undergraduate degree and his law degree from the UO, becoming one of the first Japanese Americans to graduate from the school. A documentary, *Never Give Up! Minoru Yasui and the Fight for Justice*, narrated by the actor George Takei, is in production: minoruyasuifilm.org.

INDICATES UOAA MEMBER

1930s

NORMA LOBAUGH, BA '31, celebrated her 107th birthday on October 29 at the Golden Empire Nursing and Rehab Center in Grass Valley, California.

1940s

WANDA BURCH GOINES, BA '43, stirred hearts and made headlines after she starred in a viral YouTube video, in which she recites a self-authored poem about inner beauty titled “The Giftwrap and the Jewel.”

1950s

The Oregon Grand Master of Masons bestowed a 60-year medal on **BILL RUSSELL**, BA '56, acknowledging his enduring commitment to the fraternity, which began during his college years, at the McKenzie River Lodge in Eugene. He served in the Air Force until 1977, when he retired as a major.

1960s

Two-time Olympic gold medal winner and Air

Force veteran **OTIS DAVIS**, BS '60, received the UO’s Distinguished Alumni award, for both his athletic and philanthropic achievements.

JOE M. FISCHER, BS '60, MFA '63, recently completed paintings of two primates with ties to Chimps Inc., a rescue program in Bend: Snowflake (an albino gorilla, now deceased) and Thiele (a 28-year-old chimp).

An early member of UO’s creative writing program, **BARBARA DRAKE**, BA '61, MFA '66, published a collection of essays, *Morning Light: Wildflowers, Night Skies, and Other Ordinary Joys of Oregon Country Life* (Oregon State University Press, 2014).

ERNEST AEBI, BS '62, MD '64, was delighted to hear that his brilliant 10-year-old grandson had gotten a geography question wrong—when asked to name the capitol of Texas, he responded “Autzen.”

ALABY BLIVET, BS '63, was hit by a PedalPub Mobile while crossing the street and reading about himself in the latest *OQ*. At press time, his dutiful granddaughter, **KIMBERLY**, BA '09, was

taking time away from her hoverboard production company to nurse him back to health.

JAMES SHULL, MFA '63, celebrated his 80th birthday with a major exhibition of more than 100 of his drawings and paintings in a downtown Silverton, Oregon, storefront during June and July.

LELAND JOHN, BA '63, will exhibit his paintings at the In Bocca al Lupo Fine Art Gallery in Oregon City this April.

After six years on the alumni board of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, **MARGARET MCBRIDE LEHRMAN**, BA '66, was asked to represent the university on the Alumni Trustee Nominating Committee, where she will help select future trustees.

RON WIGGINTON, MFA '68, exhibited eight artworks at the Fresno Art Museum, all of which were completed while he was an artist-in-residence at the Morris Graves Studio in California.

JOAN C. GRATZ, BArch '69—who was mistakenly absent from our previously published article

FLASHBACK

2006 The UO chapter of College Republicans celebrates “Second Amendment Day” with a trip to a shooting range in Springfield. “We had a blast, pardon the pun,” quips the group’s chairman. He notes happily that the shooting group included both women and men.

FLASHBACK

1986 To mark the centennial of Villard Hall, a time capsule representing 1986 has been added to the cornerstone of the landmark building. Items preserved for posterity include: essays by local schoolchildren forecasting life in 2086, fused sand from the first atomic test blast, Neil and Norma 1986 Oregon gubernatorial campaign buttons, a floppy disk of computer games, videotapes depicting life on campus and in Eugene, and large vials of water and fresh air.

“Hollywood Ducks”—was an accomplished filmmaker who received an Academy Award nomination for her 1981 animated short *The Creation*, and later won Best Animated Short Film in 1993 for *Mona Lisa Descending a Staircase*.

1970s

After 25 years in the nonprofit world, **MARC LEVY**, BS '70, will head up Questa Education Foundation in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The foundation's goals are to increase access to postsecondary education and help students complete degrees with reduced debt and become contributing members of the 21st-century economy.

SUE AHO DOWTY, BS '74, retired in 2014 after 40 years of teaching middle school students language

arts, social studies, and leadership. Last year she published *ABC of Middle Level Activities* (CreateSpace, 2015), a compilation of activity programs based on more than a decade of columns that she wrote for the *Leadership for Student Activities* magazine.

Former assistant professor and director of the Widowed and Family Grief Counselor Program at the Center for Gerontology, **DELPHA JEANNE CAMP**, MS '77, retired after 33 years in the education and counseling field.

FRANK E. ADEN JR., BS '77, published a new book titled *Boise* (Arcadia Publishing, 2015) that chronicles the Idaho city's rise.

Nonprofit executive **JOANIE BAYHACK**, BA '78, was named executive director of the Chicago



DUCKS AFIELD

Signs point to Poland **JERRY GABAY**, JD '75, paid a visit to Arctowski—the Polish antarctic research station in the South Shetland Islands off the coast of the Antarctic Peninsula. The sign he is posing with displays the distance to various Polish cities but, strangely, not to Eugene.

We love to track Duck migrations! Send us your favorite photos of yourself, classmates, family, and friends showing your Duck pride around the world. Attach high resolution JPEG or TIFF files to an email and send to quarterly@uoregon.edu, or submit them online at OregonQuarterly.com.

chapter of Random Acts of Flowers, an organization that recycles bouquets to surprise hospital patients.

1980s

JESSE W. BARTON, BA '80, published his article “Home Free: Combating Veteran Prosecution and Incarceration” in the fall 2014 edition of *Justice Policy Journal*.

JOE SACCO, BA '81, has spent his career working in a combined medium of investigative journalism and graphic novels.

Exemplifying his biting, satirical style is his latest creation, a comic series titled Bumf.

JOYCE REYNOLDS-WARD, BS '81, published two books this winter; *Netwalk's Children* (Peak Amygdala, 2015), a third installment of her cyberpunk series, and the first volume of a high fantasy series, *Pledges of Honor* (CreateSpace, 2016).

A loyal Duck, **CHRISTOPHER GAY**, BS '82, could not convert his son John or daughter Alison, who attended the University

of Utah and University of Portland, respectively. He and his wife Lori are battling empty-nest syndrome while test-driving the condo lifestyle.

Elementary school math and science teacher **JOHN A. HELDT**, BS '85, moonlights as an author; he has published his seventh novel, titled *Mercer Street* (2015), the second in the American Journey Series. He lives with his wife **CHERYL HELDT**, BA '86, in Alabama.

Former Intel President **RENÉE JAMES**, BA '86,

MBA '92, joined California-based computer hardware company Oracle Corp., on the board of technology services.

Brigadier General **TAMMY SMITH**, BS '86, will assume command of the 98th Training Division, a Reserve unit at Fort Benning in Georgia. She will be taking over for Brigadier General Michaelene Kloster, the first female general at Fort Benning. The subject of a previous OQ feature, Smith is celebrated as the first openly gay general in the US Army.

MARIANNE SZLYK, MA '89, published her second book of poetry, *I Dream of Empathy* (Flutter Press, 2015). A professor at Montgomery College, she lives with her husband in Washington, DC.

1990s

KENDRA CAUDLE, BA '90, published her eighth suspense novel *Known* (Montlake, 2006) under the penname Kendra Elliot. She has sold two million books since her debut novel in 2012.

CAMERON BLANCHARD, BA '91, recently became executive vice president of corporate

communications at the media company Condé Nast. Previously, she spent 20 years at NBC Universal.

Former chief of the criminal division at the Seattle Attorney's Office **CRAIG SIMS**, BA '94, has joined the law firm Bergman Draper Landenburg, where he will represent families affected by cancer caused by asbestos inhalation.

MATT CASHION, MFA '96, won the 2015 Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Short Fiction for his story "Last Words of the Holy Ghost," published by University of North Texas Press. *continued on page 58*



DUCKS AFIELD

Ducking for Joy LILLE YOUNGBAUER, age 13, shared a laugh with the Oregon Duck during a UO softball game. Thanks to her grandmother, **GLORIA YOUNGBAUER**, for the photo.

Will Power



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DUCKS AFIELD

Cold Enough for Ya? RICHARD MIRON, BA '00, shown at work in the Prudhoe Bay oil field in Alaska. On this particular day, the temperature was 77 degrees below zero.



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FLASHBACK

1956 The great American poet Robert Frost makes a three-day visit to campus, meeting with students in an informal coffee hour, touring a sawmill in Springfield, and presenting a public lecture before a packed ballroom in the Erb Memorial Union. The Spring 1956 issue of *Old Oregon* records several quips from the bard, including, “Saying a poem in the morning is like having a drink for breakfast.” Cheers!

A former MySpace executive, **MICHAEL JONES**, BS '97, founded startup studio Science Inc. four years ago, which helped launch Wishbone, a new poll-based social networking app that targets teens with the simple boast, “compare anything.”

LAURA EDMONSTON, BA '98, went on to receive a master's degree in

library sciences from Louisiana State University and a certificate of paralegal studies from Duke University. She was recently hired as assistant law librarian for the Washington State Supreme Court.

2000s

Best Lawyers selected **BRIAN MALLOY**, BA '01,

for the 2016 edition of *Best Lawyers in America*. He works at Brandi Law Firm and lives in San Francisco with his wife.

A buyer for Kroger Co. and Fred Meyer Inc., **JEANIE NGUYEN**, BA '06, was inducted into the Accessories Magazine Merchants Hall of Fame in recognition of her retailing expertise and business acumen.

She will be honored at the Fashion Accessories Benefit Ball in May.

JOHN J. CHRISTIANSON, JD '06, was named a shareholder of Gevurtz Menashe, a family law and estate planning firm based in Portland.

SEAN RAY, JD '07, made partner at the Portland-based law firm Barran

Liebman. He regularly represents management and owners in employment law matters across all industries, with a focus on hospitality and engineering clients. He also serves on the Multnomah Bar Association's CLE committee.

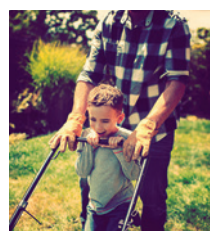
KIMBERLY BLIVET, BA '09, is on leave from her hoverboard production company due to technical difficulties. She is caring for her elderly grandfather **ALABY BLIVET**, BS '63, who was injured in a PedalPub mobile accident.

2010s

JOSH MCHALE, BS '09, and **JOHN ROSMAN**, BA

'09, are cocreators of the five-installment horror series *Hunt for Oregon's Door to the Dead*, in which two documentary filmmakers investigate the sinister origins of a disturbing VHS tape. The series premiered Halloween weekend at the Hollywood Theater in Portland.

ALISON ALTSTATT, PhD '11, is the group vocalist and bass player of Burning Palace, a four-piece art rock group operating out of Cedar Falls, Iowa. Through a trial-and-error process of recording, the band has finally released their first EP in an effort to land more live gigs in the future.



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HOLLY WILLIAMS, BS '13, was promoted to aviation planner within the Portland Aviation division of WHPacific, the largest engineering company entirely owned by Native Americans.

NATALIE MILLER, MBA '14, and **STEVE**

BAER, MBA '14, created Apply101, a free college application management tool that allows students, parents, and counselors to keep track of every step of the process in one place.

IN MEMORIAM

KATE ROGERS MCCARTY, MA '42, died on November 3 at age 98 in Parkdale, Oregon. She was passionate about protecting the land she had grown up on, and devoted her life to conservation *continued on page 60*



CLASS NOTABLE
Making Waves in Seismology

BRANDON SCHMANDT, PhD '11, has earned the Donath Medal (for outstanding achievement by a scientist age 35 or younger) from the Geological Society of America (GSA). Schmandt is an assistant professor in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at the University of New Mexico. "I am honored to receive an award from GSA because the main motivation for my research in seismology is to address geologic problems," he says. Schmandt received the award at the 2015 GSA Annual Meeting and Exposition in Baltimore, Maryland. In accepting the award, he thanked his UO mentor, **GENE HUMPHREYS**, and the Ducks with whom he shared an office: **LELAND O'DRISCOLL**, PhD '12, **HAIYING GAO**, PhD '11, and **MAX BEZADA** (a former postdoctoral researcher at UO).



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FLASHBACK

1996 *Oregon Quarterly* looks back at George Streisinger's groundbreaking zebrafish research during the 1970s and describes how the UO has come to lead the world in an increasingly important area of genetics research. Scientists trained at the Institute of Molecular Biology have gone on to start zebrafish labs around the world.

advocacy. She founded the Hood River Valley Residents Committee and Friends of Mount Hood, helped charter 1000 Friends of Oregon, and was an active member of countless other organizations.

BILLY "GENE" NOLAND, BS '49, MS '51, died on August 28 at the age of 91. He served in the Air Force as a B-24 pilot and then married his wife Jean before attending the UO. He spent 34 years teaching in Oregon schools, and after retirement devoted much of his time to creating art.

ALEXANDER BRUCE CLEARY, BBA '50, died on May 22 at the age of 89 in Bay Pines, Florida. A decorated colonel, he served in World War II, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam over the course of 28 years. A beloved father and grandfather, he was interred with honors at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, DC.

ROBERT ALVIN DOAK JR., BS '52, MS '53, died on May 16 at age 87. He began his career as a petroleum geologist for Texaco. He later worked

independently, making major oil and gas discoveries in the US and Papua New Guinea. A great believer in hard work and high ethical standards, he is remembered for his great generosity.

ALBERT MARTIN, BA '53, died at age 83 on October 15 in Portland, Oregon. A member of Beta Theta Pi, he was coached by Bill Bowerman and lettered in track and field. He served in the Navy and later worked as a sports editor for several years before becoming a financial advisor. He loved life, golfing, and spending time with his family.

GAIL (WEST) MCLAREN, BS '56, died on November 26 at the age of 81. She met her husband Richard at a university dance, and they married one year after her graduation. She is remembered as a loving mother, wife, and philanthropist.

ROBERT ALLEN KEAR, MArch '59, died on January 3 at age 80 in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. A well-known local architect and painter, he also worked nationally on building projects for Xerox and Monsanto. He

was an active community member, and loved to spend time painting landscapes of his surroundings.

MITCHELL P. SCOTT, class of '64, died on October 22 in Charbonneau, Oregon. During school he was an Alpha Tau Omega brother and a sports writer for the *Daily Emerald*. He enjoyed a successful career in marketing, and was eventually elected first national officer of the American Advertising Federation.

THOMAS W. MARTIN, PhD '66, died on June 15 at age 81 in Lafayette, Colorado. He served with the Air Force in Korea, and worked as a sociology professor at Temple University, Southern Illinois, and Colorado State. Fondly termed a "renaissance man," his intellectual curiosity was boundless.

MARK JEROME MALINAUSKAS, PhD '70, died on December 8 at age 76 in Murray, Kentucky. He taught in England, worked as an entertainment director for the Third Army, and served as director of

theater at Murray State University for 15 years. He was a distinguished professor at MSU, received the Suzanne M. Davis Memorial Service Award, and wrote several theater studies textbooks.

EDWIN C. CADMAN, MD '71, died on September 23 at age 70 in Corvallis, Oregon. He served as chair of the Yale School of Medicine's Department of Internal Medicine for almost 10 years, and ended his career as dean of the University of Hawaii's School of Medicine. In addition to earning numerous awards for his research and teaching, he was a competitive runner.

ROSAMUND "ROBIN" JAQUA, MEd '71, PhD '75, died November 9 at age 94. Well known for her work as a Jungian psychoanalyst, she was also a high profile philanthropist in the Eugene area, supporting family welfare programs, environmental protection, and the arts. She and her late husband **JOHN JAQUA**, BS '49, BL '50, were also leading supporters of the UO. The law library, an academic center for student athletes, and a library for Jungian studies in the College of Education all bear the Jaqua name.

PAULINE KUNG BJOREM, DMA '05, died on November 15 at the

age of 45 in Dallas, Texas. At age 14, she became the first Malaysian to be accepted to the prestigious Yehudi Menuhin School of Music in Surrey, England, where she majored in piano performance. A celebrated musician, she performed throughout England, Wales, Malaysia, and the US.

ANGELA UYS, BS '14, died in November at age 26 while rock climbing at Yosemite National Park. A South African native, she is remembered as a bright student, a great friend, and happiest when in nature. She had planned to attend medical school.

continued on page 62



FLASHBACK

1966 The art museum is offering more than 400 paintings by 100 different artists for rent by businesspeople, doctors, faculty, and even students. The supervisor of the operation says many students are particularly drawn to abstract paintings, "mainly because of the wild color combinations. Some paintings just can't miss. They go with everything."

The logo features a large, stylized white letter 'O' on a dark green background. Below the 'O', the text 'UNIVERSITY OF OREGON' is written in white, 'PIONEER' in yellow, and 'AWARDS' in light green. At the bottom, the year '2016' is displayed in a large, bold, white font.

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DUCKS AFIELD

Who Has Two Thumbs? It's all blue skies and lapping waves at the Hilton Bora Bora. We agree with BRUCE BERG, BS '75—thumbs up!

FLASHBACK

1976 An article in *Old Oregon* recounts campus shenanigans from the first two decades of the 20th century. One memorable tradition involved heating an iron cannonball in a furnace, and then rolling it noisily down the stairs from the top floor of Friendly Hall. At the bottom floor, an indignant, night-shirted instructor who lived in the building grabbed the hot metal ball, “then a sharp yell and a final thud put a period to the night’s symphony, and filled some miscreant with silent glee.”

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DUCKS AFIELD

Duck Meets Penguins

SAM MILLER, MEd '75, PhD '84, took a break during a kayaking trip in Antarctica to show a little school spirit. He tells us those are gentoo penguins in the background.

FACULTY AND STAFF IN MEMORIAM

Professor Emerita of geography **SUSAN HARDWICK** died on November 11 at age 70. She received her PhD from the University of California, Davis, and became a UO professor in 2000. The recipient of many awards, including the George J. Miller Award for Distinguished Service and the Outstanding Professor Award for the entire California State University System, she was also a well-published scholar and a leading member of multiple professional organizations in the field of geography.

An accomplished author and beloved writing teacher, **EHUD HAVAZELET** died on November 5 at age 60 in Corvallis, Oregon. Born in Jerusalem

and raised in a tight-knit Orthodox community in New York, he graduated from Columbia University and later worked at Oregon State University before settling at the UO. He was a two-time winner of the Oregon Book Award, in 1999 and 2008.

A former director of animal care at the University of Oregon Medical School, now known as OHSU, **ALLAN LESLIE ROGERS** died in October at age 93 in Wilsonville, Oregon. He received a degree in animal husbandry from the University of Connecticut, where he met his wife Dorothy. They spent many years raising dairy goats, thoroughbred horses, and perennial plants, in addition to their five children.

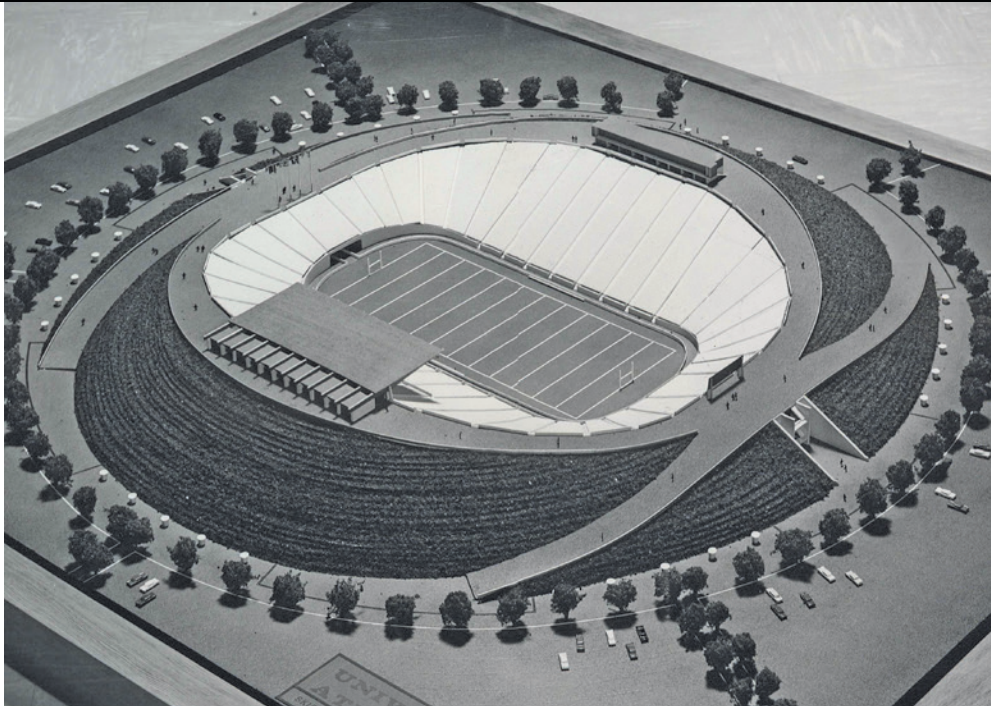
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Autzen: From Dream to Reality

Marshall O. Bessonette, a contractor and avid Ducks fan, helped design Autzen Stadium and suggested some of its most distinctive features. His daughter offers this remembrance.

In 1953, the Oregon State Beavers debuted a new football facility, Parker Stadium, and just a few years later, in 1956, the Beavs reached the Rose Bowl. The Ducks were still playing their home football games either at Hayward Field or at Multnomah Stadium in Portland, a commute not enjoyed by Coach Casanova. This led to talk of a new stadium for the UO. Trips to the 1960 Liberty Bowl and the 1963 Sun Bowl gave “Cas” the bankroll to start planning in earnest.

My dad, Marshall O. Bessonette, was both a contractor and an avid Ducks fan, and he volunteered to conduct research on the new stadium at his own expense. He and his good friend Leo Harris (then UO athletics director) began traveling across the country to visit college stadiums. A couple of times I heard my father interviewed in the press box of some distant stadium, as they watched games and took notes and photos.

No matter where he was traveling, Marshall always took note of the design and construction of buildings. I remember him visiting me (now grown and with a family of my own) in Salt Lake City in the mid '60s. Dad visited a construction site for a theater-in-the-round, where a large earthen bowl had been constructed with the intent of placing a stage at the bottom and covering it with a roof. This, as I recall, prompted his idea for the bowl shape that became Autzen Stadium.

Dad also designed a cantilevered roof for covering the reserved seating section, offering demonstrations with a hinged wooden ruler and a

BY NANCY BESSONETTE

hammer, showing that the roof could be suspended with literally no anchor. He'd then laugh and say, “Of course, no engineer would approve of the ‘no anchor’ idea.” At one point he also advocated for putting parking spots on the bowl so that donors could watch the game from their cars. This was discarded as impractical, but Dad would remain a faithful tailgater throughout his years.

After lots of research, reviewing, arguing, and figuring, Dad drew some blueprints, and along with my brother, Lynn, built a large tabletop model of their ideas for the stadium. I wondered why Dad could not be the contractor as he had on other buildings. He would say, “Because I have no degree in architecture or engineering.”

The model and the ideas for the stadium, along with ideas for financing, were formally presented at a University of Oregon program attended by many dignitaries. Later, “Cas” Casanova and Leo Harris would travel the state trying to raise funds from donors using Marshall’s model as an important prop to demonstrate their ideas.

The stadium, designed by Portland architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, opened on September 23, 1967.

Dad kept his seats on the 50-yard line even after his beloved wife, Joy, passed away, attending games until he couldn’t climb the steps to his seat. He passed in 1993.

Nancy Bessonette worked in the insurance business in Eugene for many years. During that time, she volunteered in the UO ticket office and officiated at various track meets on campus. She is, of course, a lifelong Ducks fan.



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