



# Oregon Humanities Center

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## Winter 2018

### George Packer examines American identity in the Trump era

The Oregon Humanities Center is pleased to continue its exploration of the theme “**We the People**” this winter with American journalist, novelist, and playwright, **George Packer**. Packer will be visiting the UO as the OHC’s winter term Kritikos Professor in the Humanities to present lectures on the topic of “**American Identity in the Age of Trump**” on **Wednesday, January 24th at 7:30 p.m.** in **182 Lillis Hall**, UO campus; and on **Thursday, January 25th at 7:30 p.m.** in **Portland** at the White Stag Block, 70 NW Couch St.

In Packer’s view, “The Trump Presidency is a symptom of the fracturing in American society that goes back years and runs deeper than economics and politics to the meaning of being an American. None of the currently available narratives of national identity point a way out of our failure. Is there another way to think of ourselves as Americans?”

George Packer has been a staff writer for The New Yorker since 2003. His work has also appeared in The New York Times Magazine, Dissent, Mother Jones, Harper’s, The Nation, World Affairs, The Atlantic, and other publications. His book *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq* (2003) was named one of the ten best books in 2005 by the New York Times, and won the New York Public Library’s Helen Bernstein Book Award as well as an Overseas Press Club book award.

His most recent book, *The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* (2013) is considered his most ambitious work to date. A New York Times Bestseller and winner of the 2013 National Book Award for Nonfiction, *The Unwinding* focuses on the sense of crisis currently gripping America, and the seismic cultural, political, and socio-economic shifts that, in a single generation, have turned us into a country of



“winners” and “losers.”

Packer tells the story of the unraveling of America over the past three decades (1978–2012) through the lives of Americans from many different walks of life, including “a North Carolina evan-

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### Robin Wall Kimmerer speaks on indigenous concepts of personhood and the notion of the public good



Plant ecologist, writer, and mother **Robin Wall Kimmerer** will present the 2017–18 Robert D. Clark Lecture on **Tuesday, March 13, 2018** in a talk titled “**We the People**” **Expanding the Circle of Citizenship**. The lecture will take place at **7:30 p.m.** in **182 Lillis Hall**.

In describing her talk, Kimmerer explains, “Current debates on the future of public lands call for a focus on who is included in the ‘public.’ Who is inside the circle and who is not? Whose voices are heard, and whose are silenced? Indigenous people have largely been excluded from decision-making involving public lands—as has their sophisticated environmental philosophy

and practice, derived from traditional ecological knowledge. How might the indigenous concepts of the personhood of non-human beings expand our notion of the public good? This talk will explore facets of how respectful engagement with indigenous knowledge might re-draw the boundaries of “We, the People” as we consider our relationship to ancestral ‘public’ lands.”

Kimmerer is a Distinguished Teaching Professor at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, New York. She is also the founding director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment,

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# Cappella Romana presents medieval music masterpiece

On **Sunday, February 4, 2018** Eugene music lovers will have a rare opportunity to hear a performance of the earliest known polyphonic mass setting by a single composer, Machaut's *Messe de Nostre Dame* (*Mass of Our Lady*), with chants for Candlemas, directed by international early music authority **Marcel Pérès**. **Cappella Romana** performs "Machaut Mass and Propers for Candlemas" at **3 p.m.** at **Central Lutheran Church, 1857 Potter St.**



The *Messe de Nostre Dame* (*Mass of Our Lady*) was composed some time before 1365 by French poet and composer Guillaume de Machaut (1300–1377) for the Cathedral at Reims, France

where Machaut served as a canon. The mass is widely regarded as one of the masterpieces of medieval music and of all religious music.

Candlemas, also known as the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord Jesus, falls on February 2. The holy day commemorates the presentation of Jesus at the Temple. On Candlemas, many Christians bring their candles to church, where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year.

Marcel Pérès is a French musicologist, composer, choral director and singer, and the founder of the early music group Ensemble Organum. He is an authority on Gregorian and pre-Gregorian chant.

Cappella Romana is a professional vocal ensemble based in Portland, Oregon that performs early and con-



temporary sacred classical music in the Christian traditions of East and West. The ensemble is known especially for its presentations and recordings of medieval Byzantine chant (the Eastern sibling of Gregorian chant), Greek and Russian Orthodox choral works, and

other sacred music.

The concert, which is free and open to the public, is cosponsored by the **OHC's Endowment for Public Outreach in the Arts, Sciences, and Humanities**. For more information contact Stephen Shoemaker, [sshoemak@uoregon.edu](mailto:sshoemak@uoregon.edu)

## 2017-18 We Be PEOPLE



2017-18 Kritikos Lecture

**Margo Jefferson**  
author of *Negroland: A Memoir*

**Wednesday, May 30, 2018**

**7:30 p.m. • UO campus**

**Thursday, May 31, 2018**

**7:30 p.m. • UO in Portland**

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## OHC Director's Report by Paul Peppis

“We the People”: these plain and profound words open the Constitution of the United

States, emphasizing at the very start the democratic grounds upon which our government is based—a government of, for, and by the people. We at the Oregon Humanities Center have chosen these three words as the theme for our 2017–18 lecture series.

The theme arose in the wake of the most divisive national election in our experience, and the tremendous social division that election has generated. As U.S. politicians and sectors of the media continue to attack and discredit different groups in our country, working to divide and separate us, we decided on the theme of “We the People” to encourage our visiting lecturers to reflect on who we are as a people, to speak from their diverse perspectives about what it means to be American, and to help us think more about and appreciate more who we are in all our differences and shared humanity. It has always been one of the special capacities and strengths of the humanities to explore and illuminate our diversity and to find in that diversity our common humanity.

The series began with an inspiring and challenging talk about who we are as Americans by this year's Cressman Lecturer, award-winning journalist Maria Hinojosa. Before a large and enthusiastic audience of students, faculty, and community members, Hinojosa spoke with eloquence, passion, and wit about her life

as an immigrant in the U.S., her career as a groundbreaking Latina journalist, and the current state of U.S. society, media, and politics. After the talk, Hinojosa provided generous, sharp, and sometimes provocative answers to audience members' urgent questions. It



was just the kind of enlightening and transformative event the OHC strives to provide—demonstrating once more the peerless capacity of the humanities to clarify our complexities and increase understanding across our differences. You can access videos of both Hinojosa's lecture and her UO Today interview on the OHC's website.

During winter term, we welcome two more exciting speakers who will bring their unique perspectives to our theme of “We the People.” In January, we host journalist, novelist, and playwright George Packer. Author of the New York Times Bestseller and National Book Award winner, *The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* (2013), Packer will present lectures on “American Identity in the Age of Trump” in Eugene and Portland. March brings to Eugene plant ecologist, writer, and Distinguished Teaching Professor at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Robin Wall Kimmerer. An enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and Founding Director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment, Kimmerer will speak on the topic of “We the People:” Expanding the Circle of Citizenship. You can read more about Packer and Kimmerer on page one.

Our winter newsletter contains announcements of our 2018–19 faculty research and teaching fellowship winners, and the 2018 Humanities Undergraduate Research Fellows. Also included are stories about other fascinating humanities events we are co-sponsoring during winter term. As

always, our calendar provides details about these events, including our regular Work-in-Progress talks (WIPs), delivered by our resident research fellows, and our occasional Books-in-Print talks (BIPs),

presentations by UO scholars speaking about their recently-published books supported by OHC research fellowships or publication support funds. I look forward to seeing many loyal friends and generous supporters at our upcoming lectures and events in the New Year, as we learn and reflect with our speakers on our theme of “We the People.”

I must conclude this year's Director's Report with a very special note of gratitude and tribute: the OHC's incomparable Associate Director, Julia Heydon, is retiring this year after nearly forty years at UO, the last twenty of which she has served as Associate Director of the OHC. To say that the OHC would not be the exceptional humanities research institute and public humanities institution it is without Julia's devoted and visionary service would be an understatement. Over twenty years of societal and institutional changes, Julia has guided the OHC's operations and programs with the most generous, wise, and humane spirit and vision.



Working tirelessly with three different faculty directors and a range of center staff, she has always ensured the quality and integrity of all we do, bringing to every decision, every interaction her signature strength and kindness, rigor and generosity, passion and wisdom. It has been one of the honors and privileges of my career to have worked with and learned from Julia over the past four years. And I know I speak for the countless faculty, students, administrators, staff, and donors who have collaborated with and been touched by Julia over the past two decades when I say that there are no words adequate to express our gratitude for all she has done to foster, sustain, and defend the humanities at UO, in Eugene, and across the state of Oregon. We will miss you Julia, and we wish you all the best of luck in the next stage of your journey: “Now, voyager, sail thou forth, to seek and find” (Walt Whitman).

## OHC teaching fellow's students curate exhibit

The Oregon Humanities Center's Coleman-Guitteau Professorship seeks to promote the development of new or substantially revised interdisciplinary undergraduate humanities courses which focus on significant intellectual, societal, and cultural questions.

With support from a Coleman-Guitteau Professorship, Mai-Lin Cheng, Clark Honors College, developed a new workshop-style course titled "Book Love" (or, Reading Commonplaces) which was offered for the first time in the fall of 2017. In this class, students explored the origins the commonplace book and how it reflected a love of reading. The prac-



tice of writing commonplace books began in the seventeenth century as an artifact of active reading. Commonplace books are essentially scrapbooks filled with items of every kind: recipes, quotes, letters, poems, tables of weights and measures, proverbs, prayers, legal formulas. Often used by

readers, writers, students, and scholars as an aid for remembering useful concepts or facts, each commonplace book is unique to its creator's particular interests.

Cheng's students explored what it means to be an author as opposed to a compiler, a line that is often blurred in commonplace books in which readers

assemble their own personal anthologies with passages, images, and other elements important to them. The concept of fluidity between the roles of author and compiler is familiar to us in our contemporary practices of cutting and pasting, tweeting and retweeting, liking and linking. Through exploring the history of book making, Cheng's students deepened their awareness of the history of how ideas are curated and shared.

As a final project for their course, Cheng's students selected items from the UO Libraries' Special Collections to create an exhibit titled "**Creative Commonplac-ing: The Facets of Book Love.**" The exhibit is on view in UO Special Collections (2nd floor of the Knight Library) from January 15 through March 15, 2018.

## We bid farewell to a longtime friend and OHC supporter, Maribeth W. Collins

We were saddened to learn of the passing of longtime OHC friend and supporter Maribeth Wilson Collins on October 4, 2017, just three weeks shy of her 99th birthday. Though she chose to stay out of the limelight, Mrs. Collins, a UO alumna (B.A. English, 1940), was a generous and loyal supporter of the Oregon Humanities Center for almost 30 years. She began giving to the Center during our NEH Challenge grant in the late 1980s, and steadily continued and increased her support over the years. Among her many generous gifts were those for the production of the OHC's three-part video documentary, "A History of the University of Oregon" (2008), which would not have been completed without her belief in the project and her steady support.

Mrs. Collins's most significant gift to the OHC was an endowment, made in memory and honor of one of her favorite UO English professors, Ernest G. "Gerry" Moll, for a faculty research fellowship in literary studies. Our faculty research fellowship program is the most important and substantive way in which the OHC supports human-

ities faculty. These fellowships provide faculty with a term off from teaching to pursue a research project without interruption, allowing them to make significant progress towards completing the books and scholarly articles that are essential to their professional advancement. First awarded in 2003-04, The Ernest G. Moll Faculty Fellowship in Literary Studies has now supported the work of 27 humanities faculty from departments and units including English, Romance Languages, Religious Studies, Comparative Literature, German and Scandinavian, and the Clark Honors College. Currently the OHC's only endowment for faculty research, The Moll endowment supports up to two or three faculty fellowships per year, thanks to Mrs. Collins's vision and generosity.

We deeply miss our kind, gracious, and thoughtful friend, whose love for her family, as well as for dogs, goats, modern art, nature, and poetry (among other things), together with her incomparable generosity, will remain with us always. Goodbye, gentle friend. You've left a lasting mark on the world, and will continue to inspire us.



The Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, the Division of Undergraduate Studies, and the OHC are pleased to announce this year's cohort of **Humanities Undergraduate Research Fellows (HURF)**.

**Becca Marshall**, Environmental Studies. "Managing for Mushrooms? Commercial Wild Mushroom Harvesting in the Willamette National Forest." Faculty mentor: Kathryn Lynch

**Jacqueline Huaman**, Japanese and Asian Studies. "Japanese Gendered Language and the Ideal Female Romantic Partner." Faculty mentor: Kaori Idemaru

**Margaret Rodgers**, Journalism and Media Studies. "The Anti-Heroine: An Emergent Television Character Trope." Faculty mentor: Erin Hanna

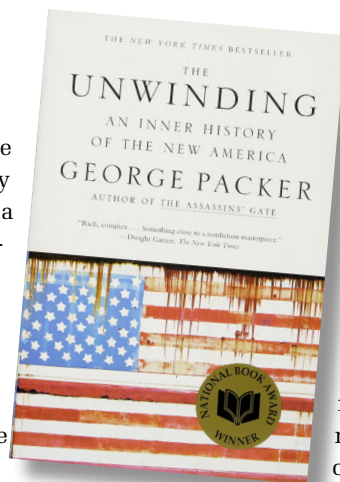
**Matthew Stephens**, Environmental Studies. "Examining Personhood and Environmental Policy: Determining the Benefits and Risks of Granting Legal Rights to Non-Human Entities." Faculty mentor: Steven Brence

**Samuel Beeker**, English and Comparative Literature. "Philosophy, Politics, and Paranoia: Pynchon and the Construction of the Postmodern Subject." Faculty mentor: Brendan O'Kelly

**Sarah Hovet**, English and Journalism. "Sense of Place in Contemporary Female American Poets: Indigenous and Immigrant Voices." Faculty mentor: Corbett Upton

## Packer *continued from page 1*

gelist, son of a tobacco farmer, pondering the new economy of the rural South; a Youngstown, Ohio, factory worker struggling to survive the decline of the manufacturing sector; a Washington lobbyist confronting the distance between his ideals and the realities of the nation's capital; and a Silicon Valley entrepreneur pondering the role of e-commerce in a radically changing economy. Interspersed throughout are profiles of leading economic, political, and cultural figures, including Newt Gingrich, Colin Powell, Raymond Carver, Sam Walton, and Jay-Z. Also sprinkled throughout are alarming headlines, news bites, song lyrics, and slogans that capture the unsettling feeling that the nation and its people are adrift. Packer offers an illuminating, in-depth, sometimes frightening view of the complexities of decline and the enduring hope for recovery." (Vanessa Bush, Booklist)



In addition to his many essays and two works of non-fiction, Packer is the author of two novels, *The Half Man* and *Central Square*. His play, *Betrayed*, ran in Manhattan for five months in 2008, and won the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play. A Guggenheim Fellow in 2001–02, Packer has taught writing at Harvard, Bennington, and Columbia. He currently lives in Brooklyn.

The lectures are free and open to the public. The Eugene lecture will be followed by a book sale and signing. For more information, or for disability accommodations (which must be made by January 17), please call (541) 346-3934, or contact us at [ohc@uoregon.edu](mailto:ohc@uoregon.edu).

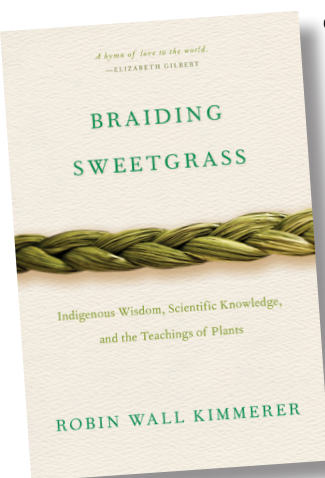
## Kimmerer *continued from page 1*

whose mission is to create programs which draw on the wisdom of both indigenous and scientific knowledge for our shared goals of sustainability. Her research interests include the role of traditional ecological knowledge in ecological restoration and the ecology of mosses. In collaboration with tribal partners, she and her students have an energetic research program in the ecology and restoration of plants of cultural significance to Native people. She is active in efforts to broaden access to environmental science education for Native students, and is engaged in programs which introduce the benefits of traditional ecological knowledge to the scientific community in a way that respects and protects indigenous knowledge.

As a writer and scientist, Kimmerer's interests in restoration include not only restoration of ecological communities, but restoration of our relationships to land. She is the author of numerous scientific papers on the ecology of mosses and restoration ecology, and on the contributions of traditional ecological knowledge to our understanding of the natural world. In addition to her scientific writing, Kimmerer is also the author of numerous literary essays and two books, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* (2013), which was awarded the Sigurd Olson Nature Writing Award, and *Gathering Moss* (2003), which incorporates traditional indigenous and scientific perspectives.

Of European and Anishinaabe ancestry, Kimmerer is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. She lives on an old farm in upstate New York, tending gardens both cultivated and wild. The lecture is free and open to the public, and will be followed by a

book sale and signing. For more information, or for disability accommodations (which must be made by March 6), call (541) 346-3934 or visit [ohc.uoregon.edu](http://ohc.uoregon.edu)



## OHC Work-in-Progress and Books-in-Print talks

Talks by humanities faculty and graduate students on their current research and recent publications. All talks take place on Fridays at noon in the OHC Conference Room, 159 PLC. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### January 12

**Care Across Generations: Solidarity and Sacrifice in Transnational Families.** Kristin Yarris, International Studies

### January 19

**"Discovering Empire: France and the Atlantic World from the Age of Exploration to the Age of Revolutions."** Brett Rushforth, History

### February 2

**"Neorealist stardom, Anna Magnani and the question of authenticity."** Sergio Rigoletto, Romance Languages and Cinema Studies

### February 9

**"Serious Play: From Gaming Technologies to Racial Realities."** Tara Fickle, English

### February 16

**"Cantrix: Female Cantors in the German-Speaking Lands, 900–1475."** Lori Kruckenberg, Musicology and Ethnomusicology

### February 23

**"Earth Matters on Stage: Ecodramaturgy and American Theatre."** Theresa May, Theatre Arts

### March 2

**"1765–1785: Poetological Ecologies, Ecological Revolutions."** Anna-Lisa Baumeister, Graduate Student, Comparative Literature

### March 9

**Three-Text Edition of Thomas Hobbes's Political Theory: *The Elements of Law*, *De Cive*, and *Leviathan*.** Deborah Baumgold, Political Science

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## World Music Series offers classical Indian music concert

Experience the vibrant energy and deep serenity of Indian classical music when the School of Music and Dance's World Music Series presents a concert by world-renowned Indian classical musician **Ustad Shafaat Khan** on **Wednesday, February 21, 2018** at **7:30 p.m.** in **Beall Concert Hall**.

Ustad Shafaat Khan has performed at concert halls, music festivals, and universities throughout India, the United States, Europe, China, Russia, and Japan. He recently performed alongside Stevie Wonder at The Bonnaroo Festival—one of the largest music festivals in the United States. A number of Khan's recordings have been produced by Deepak Chopra.

Khan's musical heritage can be traced back to the 16th-century court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. He is the son of the legendary sitar and surbahar maestro Ustad Imrat Khan and nephew of the legendary Ustad Vilayat Khan. In tabla, he is the foremost disciple of the widely respected Ustad Ibrahim Khan.

Khan's unique concert presentations include Indian classical/folk music on sitar, tabla, and voice; Sufi inspired compositions; and a multi-cultural fusion ranging from western classical, jazz, and rock, to pop, flamenco, and African rhythms.

The concert is cosponsored by **OHC's Endowment for Public Outreach in the Arts, Sciences, and Humanities**. Tickets, \$12 general admission, \$8 students and seniors, are available at [tickets.uoregon.edu](http://tickets.uoregon.edu) or by calling (541) 346-4363.

