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[Home](#) | [Editor's Note / Letters](#) | [Features](#) | [UpFront](#) | [Old Oregon](#) | [Class Notes](#)

UPFRONT

EXCERPTS, EXHIBITS, EXPLORATIONS, EPHEMERA

[Finally!](#) | [The Art of Reading](#) | [Bookshelf Valuable Rockwell discovered](#)

[What Do You Think?](#) | [The Tarot of Temptation](#)

UPFRONT

NEWS, NOTABLES, INNOVATIONS

[A Gleaming Campus Gateway](#) | [Fast-Forwarding Mendel](#) | [Thinking Inside the Box](#)

[Legislature Passes Higher-Ed Reforms](#) | [In Brief](#) | [PROFile: Barbara Altman](#) | [Around The Block](#)

Finally!

Women who competed in thirteen sports at the UO between the time of the Second World War and the early days of the Reagan administration gathered in Matthew Knight Arena for an event thanking them for their pioneering spirit, their sacrifices, and their "love of the games" they played without the acknowledgments that women receive today. Attended by more than 600, the Women in Athletics Celebration honored 250 former Oregon women athletes and coaches whose efforts took place before the UO granted letters in women's sports. Alexandra Notman, MA '11, wrote the following story, "Letters from the Past," about three of the honored athletes—all current UO student affairs staff members. It appeared, along with the photo by Isaac Viel '10, in the newsletter of the Division of Student Affairs.

"The UO had an excellent women's athletics program but no one knew about it," says Peg Rees '77, MS '91, leaning back in a desk chair at her Esslinger Hall office. The former UO athlete, who played basketball, volleyball, and softball in the 1970s, has a framed felt yellow "O" proudly hanging in the middle of one wall—the letter she was awarded retroactively at the special ceremony at the Matthew Knight Arena on May 7. "Looking back, we had one of the best programs in the U.S. But that's hindsight."



ISAAC VIEL

Peg Rees, Sue Wieseke, and Wendy Polhemus display their long-delayed letters.

Rees was one of several hundred former female UO athletes from the forties to the eighties who were honored that night with the letters they never received when they were students. Before

WEB EXCLUSIVE



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PHOTOS | See additional historical images of the Hoedads.



PHOTOS | View a slideshow of Sarah Szekeley's Rancho La Puerta spa.



VIDEO | Watch filmmaker Aaron Godfred's award-winning student documentary on Vietnam War protests at Oregon.



VIDEO | See footage captured by student videographer Michael Ciaglo on safari in Ghana.

the 1980s, female athletes at the UO were not granted letters, nor did they receive much financial support.

The delayed recognition of female athletes was largely because the U.S. Congress did not pass Title IX until 1972, perhaps the most revolutionary legislation ever passed for collegiate athletes. Title IX stated that equal opportunities must exist for both genders in athletics at any educational institution that receives federal funding. Even with Title IX, the University of Oregon did not start awarding female athletes letters until the 1980s.

Wendy Polhemus, “An Amazing Night”

“There was a lot of pride,” says EMU interim director Wendy Polhemus ’81, MBA ’94, about the letter ceremony. “These women accomplished things without support.”

Polhemus came to the UO from California in 1973 in search of sports. Her father taught her how to hit a baseball when she was six, and from then on, Polhemus was hooked. By the time she was in high school, she was playing softball, volleyball, and basketball. At the UO, she played on the same teams as Peg Rees under less than ideal conditions. “Basketball had no full-time coaches. GTFs were coaches,” Polhemus says, laughing. “We were no good.”

Her volleyball coach Karla Rice was a mentor for Polhemus. In fact, when Polhemus had to write a paper about the three most important mentors in her life, she chose Rice. “She was a great coach,” she says. “Approachable and fair.”

Polhemus was happy to receive her letter alongside her fellow athletes. “It was an amazing night,” she says. “The athletic department did a great job.” She does hope that the women who could not make the ceremony will still be acknowledged. “Those people deserve their letters no matter where they are. Or a nice letter of recognition,” she says.

Wendy Polhemus played basketball, volleyball, and softball her freshman and sophomore years before joining the military. She will retire this December after serving for more than thirty years and earning the rank of colonel.

Sue Wieseke, The Love of the Game

Sue Wieseke ’83, an accountant in the Department of Physical Education and Recreation, came to the UO in 1977 as a physical education major and as an athlete. “It was definitely a novelty still for women in athletics,” she says. Like Polhemus, Wieseke played softball, volleyball, and basketball in high school. She was also a competitive swimmer. In the late seventies, Wieseke appreciated the passion in women’s sports. “Women’s athletics was filled by women who loved to play,” she says. “There were no perks. We just purely loved playing.”

Several of the eleven women’s teams at the time had to share uniforms. “We were pretty rag-tag looking,” says Wieseke. She cannot believe the vast transformation of UO athletics since she was a student. “It’s both cool to see and stunning,” she says. Wieseke was also happy to receive her letter that May evening. “It was well done,” she says. “I thought they did a good job recognizing women.”

Peg Rees, Defining an Era

Peg Rees, now the associate director of physical education at the UO and former volleyball coach, has loved sports since she was a young child in Los Angeles. “Whenever I had an opportunity, I’d try it,” she says, whether it was softball, basketball, tennis, swimming, or baseball. “I can remember I loved playing. I loved the anticipation.”

In 1967, Rees came to Oregon from California. In high school, she played many sports but retrospectively, Rees recognizes the lack of support for female athletes at the time. “I’m sad



about it. Even though I was named an outstanding athlete at my [high] school, no coach or teacher encouraged me to continue.”

Before attending the UO, Rees was unaware that there was a women’s athletics department. During the first week of classes in 1973, Rees found out about UO women’s athletics by accident. While strolling by Gerlinger Hall on a September day, a woman approached Rees and asked her if she played volleyball. She said yes. “She told me where to show up at 5:00 p.m. to join the teams, and I showed up,” says Rees.

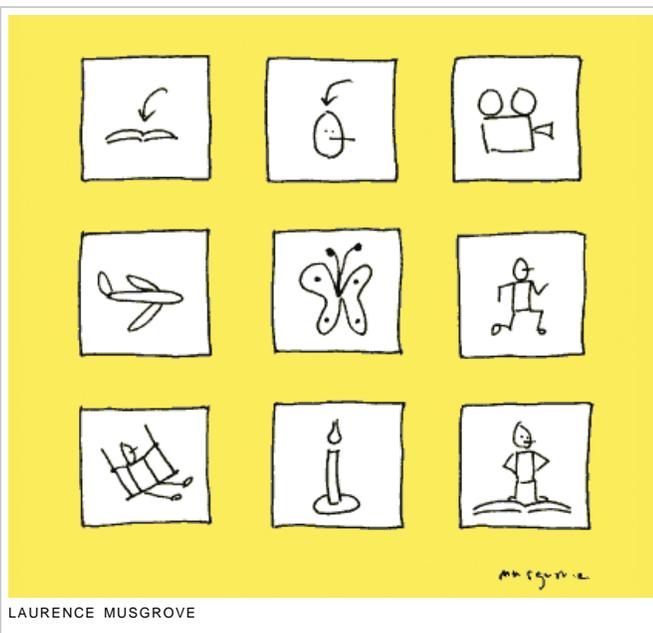
She also remembers female athletes paying for their own uniforms, paying for their own meals, and at times sleeping on her parents’ floor while the teams were traveling. “We can all tell crazy stories of how much we did with how little we had.”

The May letter ceremony had been in planning for eight years, says Rees. Tracking down all the female athletes itself took three to four years but it was well worth it. Rees had not seen some of her teammates for more than thirty years. “We knew each other the moment we saw each other,” she says. Her favorite moment of the night was the video presentation when a handful of women were called on stage at the Matthew Knight Arena to represent a decade of UO sports history. Rees represented the seventies. “It was special to me to stand up and represent these women athletes of the seventies,” she says. “We are really proud of what we did with the few resources we had. It defines the whole era.”

[» back to the top](#)

The Art of Reading

We all use reading to help us learn and think about the world, but how do we think about the act of reading itself? An unusual investigation that sought to answer this question has taken place in university classrooms in Texas. A professor asked undergraduate and graduate students in his writing and literature courses to draw a picture of what happens when they read. “I think students can benefit from thinking visually about what they’ve read,” says Laurence Musgrove, MA ’89, PhD ’92, head of the



LAURENCE MUSGROVE

Department of English and Modern Languages at Angelo State University in Texas. “By thinking visually, I mean the ability to think with and about images. Visual thinking includes the analysis, manipulation, and creation of images.” His study of the students’ drawings revealed nine metaphors we use regularly when we talk and think about reading. The images associated with these metaphors—entering, absorbing, making, traveling, changing, moving, liberating, believing, strengthening—are shown below in an illustration from Musgrove’s book, *Handmade Thinking: A Picture Book on Reading and Drawing* (CreateSpace, 2011)

[» back to the top](#)

Bookshelf

Selected new books written by UO faculty members and alumni and received at the Oregon Quarterly office. Quoted remarks are from publishers’ notes or reviews.

Coffee: Grounds for Debate (John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2011) by Scott F. Parker ’04 and

Michael W. Austin. This latest installment in the series *Philosophy for Everyone* serves up “essays covering broad ground such as the ethics of coffee agriculture, caffeine as a performance-enhancing drug, and the centrality of the coffee house to the public sphere.”

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Oregon: A Field Guide (Oregon State University Press, 2011) by Steve Gordon '73 and Cary Kerst. Intended for amateur and experienced naturalists alike, this “first field guide devoted solely to Oregon’s fascinating and abundant odonates features stunning full-color photographs of every species currently known in Oregon.”

The First Day of the Rest of My Life (Kensington Publishing Corporation, 2011) by Cathy Lamb '89, MS '90. The fictional story of a woman with a haunting childhood memory and her decision to “reclaim her past—and her future—no matter where they lead.”

Mine (CreateSpace, 2010) by Lin Sten, MS '69. This science fiction novel stars Selena Castillo, who publicly claims to be an extraterrestrial, but is she telling the truth? *Mine* asks, “Would you become her follower?”

Oregon Favorites: Trails and Tales (Navillus Press, 2011) by William L. Sullivan, MA '79. “For armchair travelers and adventurers alike,” Sullivan’s latest guidebook arranges sixty-two trip ideas by seasons.

Parents Behaving Badly (Touchstone, 2011) by Scott Gummer '86. “This is the perfect melding of the modern American blood sports of Little League and wedlock: harrowing and warm-hearted.”

Reflections on Big Spring: A History of Pittsford, New York, and the Genesee River Valley (AuthorHouse Press, 2010) by David McNellis, MBA '68. In this nonfiction historical work, McNellis explores the “home of several of the world’s most prestigious business enterprises and the birthplace of a wide variety of revolutionary technologies” including xerography and cream-style mustard.

Sonny Montes and Mexican American Activism in Oregon (Oregon State University Press, 2011) by Glenn Anthony May, UO professor of history. “By viewing Mexican American resistance between 1965 and 1980 through the prism of social movement theory, May’s book deepens our understanding of the Chicano Movement in Oregon and beyond.”

E X C E R P T E D I N T H I S I S S U E

Handmade Thinking: A Picture Book on Reading and Drawing by Laurence Musgrove (CreateSpace, 2011).

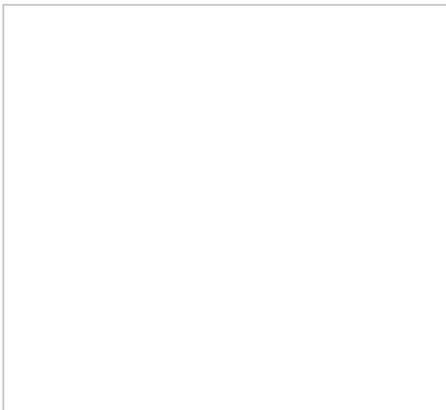


HANDMADE
THINKING
A PICTURE BOOK ON
READING AND DRAWING
LAURENCE MUSGROVE

[» back to the top](#)

Valuable Rockwell discovered, now on exhibit at the UO

The popular PBS television program *Antiques Roadshow* taped a series of segments in Eugene early in June—and unearthed one of the most valuable finds in its fifteen-year history. Some 6,000 event participants brought in their collectables, among which was a painting identified as Norman Rockwell’s *The Little*





Norman Rockwell
The Little Model, 1919
oil on canvas
31-1/2 x 17-1/4 inches (framed)
Private Collection

[» back to the top](#)

What Do You Think?

Earlier this year Oregon Quarterly conducted a survey of our readers, and we heard from more than 650 of you. Results showed that 95 percent of alumni respondents rely on the magazine for news about the UO: 47 percent of respondents get all or most of their news about the University from OQ, with the next highest source being UO e-mails at 22 percent. In addition to questions with multiple-choice answers, the survey offered opportunities for open-ended responses and, as you might expect, readers were generous with their opinions. We received hundreds of comments. Here's a sampling.

When asked to indicate ways in which *Oregon Quarterly* strengthens their ties to the UO, 87 percent of respondents selected "Reminds me of my experience at the institution," and 39 percent picked "Serves as a source of continuing education" and "Encourages me to support the institution financially." But many put it in their own words:

- Helps me keep up with an institution I value highly.
- Makes me proud to be an alum.
- Bolsters my esteem for the UO.
- Thought-provoking content.
- Nice to read about success stories of graduates.
- Helps me to feel more in touch with my student.
- Keeps me connected.
- Broadens my views and perspectives.
- Helps me gauge the value of my UO education.
- I just like knowing about the great university that was a part of my life.

. . . And several questions called for direct responses:

Are there any changes or improvements you would like to suggest?

- More emphasis on the remarkable UO faculty.
- More student-written articles.
- Too provincial.
- More coverage of campus conflicts and controversies.
- More pictures, shorter articles.
- Balance. Move away from left-wing viewpoint. Let opposition be heard.
- About four pages thicker would be good.
- More encouragement of the older alumni to return to campus and have relevant activities for them.
- Less focus on the faculty's accomplishments.
- Stimulate more participation in Class Notes.
- More photos of the campus.
- Add a crossword puzzle.
- Less emphasis on sports.
- More on sports.
- Profiles of foreign students.
- More descriptions of facility changes on campus.
- More articles about grads who really helped change the world.

Please suggest any new topics that you wish *OQ* would cover.

- More about recent UO technology transfer success stories and future opportunities. Biotech partnering and codevelopment.
- More about research outside of the sciences.
- For those of us who live in Portland, we want to know about local events, speakers, etc.
- The writing needs to be aggressive, penetrating, fast, colorful. So does the design.
- Philanthropy.
- Information on recruitment efforts.
- Travel opportunities or discounts connected to the university.
- Stories of alum who have made contributions outside the U.S.
- The growth of Internet education.

What is it that you like least about *Oregon Quarterly*?

- Not enough sports and alumni updates.
- I am totally disinterested in sports.
- Not all stories resonate with me, but I understand the target is wide and varied.
- The constant drumbeat of political correctness.
- I do not read the publication online—HATE IT. Only read the old-fashion print version.
- Tired of reading about sustainability and fluff issues like that. Tell me how U of O is strengthening the curriculum. What programs are worthy of sending my kids to U of O and how you're training them to get jobs!
- Sometimes it seems to sermonize on diversity at Oregon.
- Difficult to read online, I like receiving the magazine.
- Letters to the editor.
- Seems that most stories are about either social or environmental issues. Isn't UO doing any great scientific research that can be shared?
- Articles are a bit long for my attention span.
- Often there is only one or two items [in Class Notes for] the entire '50s and '60s. Develop an outreach program to reach those groups—not certain I could tell you how to do it, but there must be a way.
- Knowing I am reaching the last pages of *OQ*.

What is it that you like most about *Oregon Quarterly*?

- Anything that reflects that the institution is increasing its standing academically.
- It is our connection other than Autzen Stadium.
- The reminder quarterly of what I had, my daughter had, and the students that are there now have.
- The depth of articles that are written in beautiful detail.
- I receive four alumni magazines (*OQ*, Oregon State, University of Arizona, and James Madison University). *Oregon Quarterly* is the most individual of the four—and best represents its university.

- Historical articles.
- Like to learn what sets U of O apart from other institutions.
- Progress reports on building achievements such as the Alumni Center and the new Knight athletic facility.
- I am never sure what I am going to get when I open it to read it cover-to-cover in one sitting, but I always enjoy the experience.
- Gives me information I don't find anywhere else.
- I like getting it online & often read it on my cell phone.
- I am a volunteer college counselor at Clackamas High School. I use the quarterly as a recruitment tool for parents and students.
- Reminds me of being in college—a time in my life that I loved.

[» back to the top](#)



EDWIN OULETTE

The Tarot of Temptation

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* ran a playful special section earlier this year (“Vices”) featuring student writing about the attraction to what could be called the seven deadly sins of a twenty-first century college student: Facebook, fast food, smoking, sleeping, sex, drinking, and shopping. The feature is in no way parochial in tone (it begins with a quote from Abraham Lincoln, “It has been my experience that folks who have no vices have very few virtues”), but it also frankly acknowledges the perils of overindulgence. The cautionary theme is underscored in the accompanying illustrations by Edwin Ouellette '11, whose modern tarot cards highlight the dangers of too much fun.

[» back to the top](#)

UPFRONT

NEWS, NOTABLES, INNOVATIONS

A Gleaming Campus Gateway



JOHN BAUGUESS

The Matthew Knight Arena (top) is home to lots of sports action, but has also provided a large-capacity entertainment venue for shows ranging from Cirque du Soleil and Elton John to the rodeo and a monster truck competition.

Mouseover photos for captions

If you haven't been in Eugene for a few years and approach campus from the east along Franklin Boulevard, you might be surprised by what you see. Three new buildings have transformed what used to be an ugly jumble of parking lots, chain-link fences, and dilapidated retail space into a gleaming campus gateway.

The **Matthew Knight Arena** dominates the skyline. Construction of the \$227 million, 12,500-seat arena began in early 2009 and the doors first opened for a men's basketball game against USC in January. The arena is the setting for UO men's and women's basketball games, volleyball matches, and a variety of other university-related events, as well as concerts, lectures, and other gatherings.

Adjacent to the arena is the four-story, \$33.6 million **Cheryl Ramberg Ford and Allyn Ford Alumni Center**. Opened in June, it houses the University of Oregon Foundation and the University's Alumni Association, student orientation services, and development department. The 60,000-square-foot facility is the first place prospective students visit when they arrive for a campus tour. It also provides a welcoming starting place for returning alumni. A 2,000-square-foot interpretive center includes an interactive multi-media installation that celebrates UO heritage and history and informs visitors about current and upcoming events.

In January 2010, the glass-faced **John E. Jaqua Academic Center for Student Athletes** began providing UO student athletes a place to gather as a community focused on study and learning. The Jaqua Center includes ninety-two rooms, with assigned study carrels, library, lounges, and nearly 700 computers. The 40,000-square-foot structure is also available for general student use, with class and meeting spaces, tutoring rooms, and a coffee shop.

[» back to the top](#)

B I O L O G Y

Fast-Forwarding Mendel

UO researchers invent a key to quickly unlock DNA.

Nineteenth-century monk Gregor Mendel spent eight years painstakingly planting and crossbreeding more than 30,000 pea plants in the garden of his Austrian abbey. Along the way, he rather unknowingly founded the science of genetics. For many decades after his death, anyone interested in Mendel's science used a relatively similar technique: mate, wait, and analyze. But with advances in our understanding of DNA and the advent of computers, the pace of discovery increased dramatically, opening the door for sequencing the entire genetic makeup of an organism.



LEFT: COURTESY WILLIAM CRESKO; CENTER: COURTESY MICHAEL MILLER; RIGHT: JOHN BAUGUESS
DNA Speedreaders Codevelopers of enhanced genome sequencing technique Eric Johnson and Michael Miller, along with Florigenex CEO Nathan Lillegard

Once mapped, the bases of DNA—the fundamental A, T, C, and G—reveal the blueprint of an organism, from what diseases it can resist to how environment influences development. Even with the power of computers, however, accessing that information required a slow, complicated, and expensive process. That is until RAD, a technology created at the University of Oregon that unlocks the code of life at unprecedented speed.

In a process akin to speed-reading, RAD (restriction-site associated DNA) offers volumes of genomic information using a fraction of the resources required by older methods, says RAD cocreator Eric Johnson, associate professor of biology at Oregon. A genome sequence, he explains, is much like a book. “When people talk about sequencing a genome, they want to read all the words in the book,” he adds. “The RAD method takes the shortcut of reading only the first sentence of each ‘chapter,’ so it takes a lot less effort to read just that much.” Comparing “first sentences” allows researchers to figure out where certain genes are. The result is a streamlined method of decoding anywhere from ten to fifty times faster than traditional techniques.

Such speed was unthinkable in 1990 when scientists around the world focused their energies on the historic Human Genome Project. The international effort involved twenty academic institutions, hundreds of scientists, and billions of dollars. In all, the venture to map the human genome spanned thirteen years. Now, thanks to RAD, a similar task took UO graduate student Michael Miller '06 less than six months.

As an undergraduate, Miller cocreated RAD in Johnson's lab, developing the technology with input from Johnson and others in the biology department. Now a graduate student, Miller recently used RAD to sequence his first genome: the steelhead salmon.

“To think that now some graduate student like me could scrape together some money and do that is just unbelievable,” Miller says. “These are really the first cases where single people are starting to sequence genomes from really important, interesting species.”

Miller and Johnson invented RAD with help from UO associate professor of biology William Cresko. Cresko's research animal of choice, the stickleback fish, was one of the first sequenced using RAD. Initially, Miller says, he didn't fully grasp the significance of the group's work.

“The thing that sort of woke me up, that made me realize this is the real deal, was *Science*,” he says. As is tradition for the prestigious research journal, every December the editors publish a list of the year's most significant breakthroughs. In 2010, RAD made the list alongside a pair of heavy-hitters, the first plug-in electric hybrid car and the malaria vaccine. “Just thinking of RAD on the same level as the malaria vaccine, it's pretty phenomenal,” Miller says.

Long before RAD reached *Science*, however, it had already caused a stir on campus. When MBA student Nathan Lillegard '98, MBA '06, first heard of the technology in summer 2005 he knew he'd discovered the idea that could put his degree to good use. Johnson agreed, and in 2006, a year after Johnson and Miller filed a patent with the UO's Office of Technology Transfer, RAD became a business: Florigenex, with Johnson as chief technology officer and Lillegard as president and CEO.

The company, which works out of the UO's Riverfront Research Park with labs in Portland, has six full-time employees—all Ducks. The group has worked with organizations including the

USDA and, more notably, Monsanto. The Fortune 500 company has dominated the genetically modified seed market since the early 1990s and is a customer Lillegard describes as “the most well-known but not necessarily everyone’s favorite.”

By genetically altering seeds, Monsanto and other Floragenex customers attempt to breed new varieties of plants with marketable qualities, like stronger disease resistance. Prior to RAD, clients had to take Mendel’s route to figure out which seeds did what.

“If you were a soybean company in the old days of five years ago, you would take two soybeans you liked, cross them, plant hundreds of thousands of seedlings, and check them out to see what happened,” Johnson says.

RAD allows breeders to skip the seedling step by showing which sequences equal which traits. That means more food grown more quickly, the type of output needed to feed a world bustling along to an estimated nine billion people by 2050.

Despite its name, Floragenex doesn’t deal only with plants. That’s where Biota comes in. Founded by Jason Boone, PhD ’08, the Floragenex subsidiary works with animal DNA. One project involved the cousins of beloved Oregon Zoo resident Chendra the pygmy elephant.

Chendra’s fellow pygmy pachyderms live in the jungles of Borneo, where an estimated 1,500 fend off extinction as humans encroach on habitat. Figuring out where these elephants live is the first step toward saving them, but the traditional method of using tagging darts led to unfortunate consequences. The darts’ anesthesia inhibited the elephant’s sex life for an extended period, a potential death sentence for an endangered species. Because RAD quickly reads genomes, Biota offers a solution: collect dung for its DNA, match the poo to the elephant, and track the animal as it roams.

It’s impossible to know the full reach of a technology that quickly shares DNA’s secrets. The possibilities even astonish the cocreator.

“DNA—it’s the book of life,” says Miller. “There are so many applications that RAD can be used for. How do you even begin?”

One way, as Johnson and Cresko have found, is to sequence individual human genomes and apply that information to medicine.

“Some drugs will work on you that don’t work on me or vice versa. To some extent that has to be due to our genetic makeup,” says Cresko. “At some point you’ll go to the doctor and have your whole genome sequenced so drugs can be tailored to you.”

Cresko and Johnson are also investigating the genetics of a person’s microbe communities, which can cause illness when not functioning correctly. “I wouldn’t be surprised if a few years down the road you go to the doctor and samples are taken not only for sequencing your genome but also for all the microbes you have in your teeth or your gut or on the scalp of your head,” Cresko says.

But RAD—and what it promises for the future and has already delivered—may never have existed if not for a bit of serendipity, a lecture Cresko gave to fellow UO faculty members in summer 2005. After hearing Cresko’s plan to map the stickleback fish genome using traditional methods, audience member Johnson mentioned a new project he’d just begun.

“If I hadn’t given this research talk and Eric hadn’t talked to me and we didn’t have our students in our labs working together, maybe the RAD technology wouldn’t have worked,” Cresko says.

But it did. Now much of the UO’s newest scientific research uses the technology.

Down the hall from Cresko’s lab, assistant professor Hui Zong seeks out genetic mutations in worms that could someday lead to earlier detection tests for cancer. One building over, fellow professor John Postlethwait decodes the Antarctic icefish, whose unique genes for bone density could lead to breakthroughs in studying osteoporosis. Even Miller continues to use the technology. Due to RAD’s game-changing nature, any topic the grad student explores is likely to be influenced by the very work he cocreated.

“We’re really at a revolutionary time in biology right now,” he says. “RAD empowered us to study whatever we want.”

For Miller, that means more salmon DNA. Next up, Chinook.

—Elisabeth Kramer

[» back to the top](#)

CULTURE

Thinking Inside the Box

Two years ago in San Francisco, Garron Hale '00 didn't know what he was heading for. He was visiting his brother and had been promised a night on the town—something special. He knew something was up as soon as he saw the line snaking along the sidewalk for two blocks. There was a definite buzz. Something exciting in the air. Rock show? Poetry slam? Going directly to the front of the line, Hale and his brother were greeted and sent on in.

"I had no idea what was going on," he says.

There, in what he recalls as a "modern, hip" setting, a bar with a large, open central space, they found a seat and waited. It was

only then that his brother told Hale what was going on—a Pecha Kucha night. His brother was a key organizer.

Pecha Kucha. It means, roughly, "chit-chat" in Japanese. Founded in Tokyo in 2003, it's an antidote to "death by Powerpoint," say enthusiasts, "show-and-tell with beer," twenty chances to tell your story, share your fascinations, or present details of a project you are particularly interested in or proud of—all in the constrained format of twenty images projected for twenty seconds each (6:40 total). In San Francisco, the night began with an architect extolling the ecological virtues of building green, his specialty. Next up, two women performing a combination tightrope act and poetry reading—using the slides not as visual aids, but theatrically, as scene-setting backdrops.

Founders Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham, architects based in Tokyo, created Pecha Kucha as a venue for designers, especially young ones, to present their work. Since then it has grown in scope and sites, with more than 400 gatherings held regularly from Amsterdam to Zagreb, Boston to Bali, Dubai to Delhi, on every continent except Antarctica and in at least a dozen cities on the West Coast. One of those gathering places is Eugene, where local enthusiasts Hale and Dan Schmitt have been the driving forces behind Pecha Kucha since 2009.

In his professional life, Hale, forty-six, is associate director of information technology at the University of Oregon College of Arts and Sciences. Schmitt, thirty-seven, is a ceramics artist and teacher at Lane Community College, as well as a master-level adult swim coach and student in product design at the UO.

They share a nearly evangelical commitment to Pecha Kucha. "It's a chance for people to hear your story," Schmitt says of the gatherings, "to give your work more meaning. I walk away with passion. I get fired up about what I'm doing."

Think your story might not be interesting?

"Sometimes," Schmitt says, "we're not as aware of how interesting we are."

"It's human nature," Hale says. "But if you have a heartbeat, there's something interesting about you."



GWENN SEEMEL

Variations on a Theme These four images by Portland artist Gwenn Seemel were part of her Pecha Kucha presentation that explored the challenges of artistic creation. Can you find the differences?

"It's the modern version of a variety show," Hale adds.

"The art salon idea," Schmitt says.

Recent topics? Ready?

Why genocide continues and people don't act; making B movies in Eugene; a painting of mother and dog; small-scale interiors (think doll houses) and the fears of childhood; iPhone map apps; sculpture and politics; adult graphic novels; the ideas of ceramics; how to think about food.

One presentation that stood out for Hale and Schmitt was that of Richard Johnson, who owns Eugene's Midtown Pipe and Tobacco. Johnson's presentation was on fire, they say—but not with burning tobacco. Burning Man.

Johnson had just returned from the community-oriented, self-discovery and creativity-based event that takes place annually in the Nevada desert. "I love to share that experience," Johnson says. At the Pecha Kucha gathering, he had the opportunity to focus his bubbling enthusiasm. "I was able to show them how important that experience was to me." And he did, vigorously, "with my heart, my head—my crotch—I hung them up by their toes."

"In talking about Burning Man," Hale recalls, "this incredible passion came through. I've never seen as much passion."

Pecha Kucha, Johnson observes, is the perfect format. "It's fast, it's a cool environment, and you can see an entire person in that experience."

Still a relatively new idea, the gatherings are something of a work in progress. "We'd like to see more younger people participate," Hale says, "broaden the spectrum, see the projects they are working on."

They also would like to see more women participate. "Right now it's about ten-to-one male," Hale says.

One female who skewed the ratio the other way was artist Gwenn Seemel. Though she lives in Portland, where Pecha Kucha also meets, she says the vibrant Eugene art scene interested her. At first she feared she would be boring. "Then I realized that I could only bore so much in five minutes—and the audience would only have to suffer for five minutes," she says

She chose for her topic a portrait she'd painted of her mother with her Brittany spaniel on her lap (not unlike Renaissance paintings of Madonna and Child). "It was something I wanted to talk about," she says. Using the slides to illustrate her points, she took the audience through the process of creating the painting, demonstrated the evolution of the work, related its backstory, and detailed the trials of creation. She explored "the challenge of thinking you are doing something right, then not having it work out."

Again, Pecha Kucha was the perfect format, its limitations offering freedom. "People often think there should be no limits in art," she says. "That's hooey!" You need boundaries, she explains. "You need to think inside the box, then push the boundaries of the box. With Pecha Kucha, working within the rules, you can be really creative.

"It was inspiring to think in those five-minute terms," she adds. "It was a great way to communicate."

Another way of communicating with images was mapped out by Ken Kato, MS '00, assistant director of the UO Department of Geography's InfoGraphics Lab.

"Mapmaking," Kato offered, "is in effect telling stories in space."

Using the mobile mapping project he and his fellow geographers have been working on as an example—a mobile phone app with multipurpose maps of the entire UO campus—he demonstrated the level to which those stories can be told. (The app, which recently won the prestigious Special Achievement in GIS Award, has gone public and more than 14,000 people have downloaded it. More information is available at www.uoregon.edu/mobile.)

Kato says he found the informal setting of a restaurant bar to be more comfortable to work in than the usual square-room-with-lines-of-chairs space typical of a conference center. In that relaxed atmosphere, he also connected with a UO colleague, psychology professor Paul Slovic.

On the night of Kato's presentation, Slovic had talked on the subject of some of his research: why genocides continue to take place regardless of the opposition people express regarding such horrors. The coincidence of the presentations got Kato and Slovic talking, sharing ideas, exploring possibilities of using technological capabilities from the InfoGraphics Lab to learn more about some of the darkest corners of the human heart. A research project was born.

"We realized that there was overlap," Kato says. "It spawned a collaboration that probably would not have been made without Pecha Kucha."

With Pecha Kucha popularity booming across the globe, Hale and Schmitt hope that more people will be attracted to the local events. Meeting four times a year is their goal for Eugene. In the past, these have taken place at local restaurants and pizza joints, with announcement of the events spread mostly with posters and by word of mouth. They have personally paid for necessary equipment: a screen, digital projector, a laptop, and audio speakers. "An expensive hobby," Hale quips. He and Schmitt believe Eugene needs Pecha Kucha and, as a community, benefits from it. The next Eugene meeting is scheduled for September 15 at the White Lotus Gallery.

"It allows you to see the diversity of people in Eugene," Schmitt says. "People complain about how provincial Eugene is, but there are some fascinating, creative, brilliant people in Eugene."

And Pecha Kucha brings them out.

—*Jim McChesney '90*

[» back to the top](#)

Legislature Passes Higher Ed Reforms

The 2011 session of the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed historic higher education reform bills that set the stage for further changes to come. "The legislature redefined the relationship between the entire Oregon University System and the state this session through passage of SB 242 and SB 909," says UO President Richard W. Lariviere.

SB 242 removes the OUS from state agency status, giving it more autonomy and flexibility, and creates the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to oversee higher education policy. SB 909, a top priority of Governor John Kitzhaber, MD '73, establishes the Oregon Education Investment Board to oversee education in Oregon from preschool to higher education. To allow the legislature to focus on Kitzhaber's proposed reform, Lariviere agreed to set aside for this session the UO's "new partnership" proposal calling for a local governing board for the UO and creating a public endowment to provide funding for the University. Those proposals will be considered by the Oregon Education Investment Board and future legislative sessions.



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The legislature also passed a bill, SB 405, that would allow the State Board of Higher Education to authorize the UO or any of the state's public universities to establish its own police department. The transition of the UO Department of Public Safety to a police department would occur over approximately six years, according to preliminary University estimates.

Funding was approved for several UO capital construction projects including the Lewis Integrative Science Building (\$10 million), the Allen Hall expansion and remodel project (\$5.3 million), steam service replacement (\$2.5 million), Barnhart Hall envelope restoration (\$1.7 million), Bean Complex exterior improvements (\$1.5 million), and Earl Complex fire system improvements (\$.75 million).

I N B R I E F



JACK LIU

The University of Oregon football team served as Grand Marshal of the Spirit Mountain Casino Grand Floral Parade during the 2011 Portland Rose Festival. Members of the football team (on truck), cheerleaders, President Lariviere, and The Duck made their way along the 4.2-mile parade route that stretched from the Memorial Coliseum to downtown Portland.

Grateful Grads

In June, graduating seniors were given Celebrating Champions T-shirts that they could present to their favorite faculty or staff members as a thank-you for making a difference in the students' lives. To see video of forty-five students honoring their mentors, go to [champion .uoregon.edu/celebration-memories](http://champion.uoregon.edu/celebration-memories).

Faculty Excellence

UO chemist **Geraldine "Geri" Richmond** is among seventy-two U.S. scientists elected this year to the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest accolades awarded to a scientist or engineer in the United States. She was also honored by being named a 2011 fellow of the American Chemical Society. Another chemist, **Brad Nolen**, is among twenty-two 2011 Pew Scholars in the Biomedical Sciences, a recognition given to promising early-career scientists pursuing research deemed important to medical breakthroughs and treatments. The Pew Charitable Trusts will provide him \$240,000 over four years to pursue his research without restriction. UO architecture professor **Michael Fifield** has been elected to the College of Fellows in the American Institute of Architects. Fewer than 2 percent of the 80,000 current AIA members have received the honor. **Jill Hartz**, executive director of the UO's Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, is now president of the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries, the leading educational and professional organization for academic museums, galleries, and collections.

Documenting Labor

The UO has entered into a new partnership with PCUN, or Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United) to preserve and make available for research through the UO Libraries Special Collections and University Archives a collection of historic documents that chronicle the labor union.

Athletics Expansion Projects Begun

A privately funded expansion of the Len Casanova Athletic Center and other facilities now under way around Autzen Stadium is slated for completion in fall 2013. The project will add a new football operations center to the west and north of the existing Casanova Center as well as a new women's soccer and lacrosse complex at the east end of Autzen Stadium.

[» back to the top](#)

PROFILE

Barbara Altmann

Professor of French

Director, Oregon Humanities Center

Barbara Altmann is on a quest. She's familiar with what's required, having spent decades steeped in the epics of medieval France. Altmann's mission, however, is more difficult than the standard slaying of foes or saving of maidens: she's got to convince modern college students that the Middle Ages matter.

"Generally, in ten weeks I can get people to see what a dazzlingly complex and sophisticated period it was," Altmann says. People, she adds, don't initially understand how such ancient history affects them, but examples aren't hard to find.

"There's religious warfare, for one," Altmann says. "It's a very sobering view to see that the same ideologies were in conflict 800 years ago."

Altmann's research focuses on fourteenth- and fifteenth-century French poetry; she teaches the language and its history to the full range of college students, from incoming freshmen to master's candidates.

"It's a move that I made deliberately," she says. "Teaching such a wide variety is one of the things I like best about my job because it keeps me fresh."

Altmann's upper-level courses are taught in French; no matter the tongue of study, however, she wants each student to walk away a skillful user of language.

"That's what we do at a university: teach people to express themselves through language," she adds.

The methods she uses—which include debunking French stereotypes with freshmen to capture their interest in the culture—work well. Glowing student praise for Altmann has led to numerous teaching awards with her career bookended by the UO's most prestigious teaching honors: in 1997, she won the Ersted Award for exceptional new teachers; fourteen years later she received the Herman Award, given to senior faculty members with outstanding teaching records.

"It never occurred to me I'd be at any one campus for my career," she says. "This is a university where there's always been something interesting to do. I have yet to have a moment where I felt bored."

Neither, it seems, have her students. "My favorite comment on student evaluations is 'It wasn't nearly as bad as I thought it was going to be.' I take that as high praise."

Name: Barbara Altmann

Education: PhD '88, University of Toronto

Teaching Experience: Joined the UO faculty in 1989.



COURTESY BARBARA ALTMANN

Awards: Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching, 1997; Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching, 2011.

Off-Campus: Altmann enjoys cycling and gardening. She has two sons, one of whom will become a Duck in fall 2011.

Last Word: "Time with students keeps me humble, it keeps me honest, and it keeps me working so I have something of significance to bring to them."

—Elisabeth Kramer

[» back to the top](#)



White Box Visual Laboratory

The word *laboratory* generally conjures up images of white coats and double-blind trials. In one special corner of the White Stag Block, however, a remarkably different laboratory is undertaking explorations of a nature not generally associated with the scientific method.

The White Box Visual Laboratory is a 1,500-square-foot artistic exhibition space located on the ground floor of the White Stag Block. Dedicated to hosting the "exploration of contemporary creativity and critical inquiry," the White Box is an unusual and intriguing venue, neither a traditional art museum nor the sort of commercial gallery that populates downtown Portland. Instead, White Box exhibitions offer speculative, experimental, and often collaborative art created by student and emerging artists, local talent, and international contributors.

"You're likely to see thought-provoking, challenging, innovative work [in the White Box], and that's the whole mission of the space," says Kate Wagle, who heads UO

Architecture and Allied Arts in Portland and chairs the White Box Advisory Committee. To date, such work has included *Ontologue*, a four-artist show investigating ontology—the study of the nature of being—which drew inspiration from both Edith Piaf and the periodic table; and *Song of the Willamette River*, a multimedia documentation of two artists' five-day trip from Eugene to Portland in a handmade canoe and featuring a replica of the entire Willamette River.

Visual artists aren't the only ones who benefit from the White Box's local presence: recent Arts and Administration Program graduates serve a one- or two-year term as White Box coordinator, an "art gallery boot camp" position that entails everything from marketing to fundraising to helping the artists install their artworks.

The White Box is celebrating its second birthday this fall and, appropriately enough, has just received a birthday present from the Ford Family Foundation allowing for completion of the technical build-out for the White Box's digital media room. Once installation is complete, artists will be able to project digital images onto all four walls while also using advanced audio channels to create multisensory experiences for viewers, offering exhibition



PHOTO COURTESY OF WHITE BOX VISUAL LABORATORY
A view from the *Changing Place* exhibit

possibilities found nowhere else in the city.

As it enters its third year, the White Box will continue to welcome discovery, innovation, and any and all curious visitors to Old Town. "We feel like part of our mission here is to create new knowledge," Wagle says, "and the more people we have with us, moving in and out of the space, the happier we are."

Coming events in the White Box Visual Laboratory

Changing Place

through September 3
Open noon to 6:00 P.M.
closed Sundays and Mondays

Robert Mantho and Michael Wenrich, of the collaboration Locus, have transformed the White Box into an immersive architectural experience exploring altered perceptions of space.

Changing Place represents the fifth iteration of Locus's international interventions where the architect-artists re-envision the found space and challenge visitors' physical and visual perceptions.

David Eckard

September 23 through November 12

In celebration of the twentieth year of the Bonnie Bronson Fellowship Award, the White Box will host an exhibition of works by the 2011 award recipient, Portland's David Eckard.

For more information, visit the White Box online at whiteboxuo.wordpress.com.

—Mindy Moreland, MS '08

[» back to the top](#)