



Fall 2023

OHC celebrates 40 years of impact at the UO and beyond

This year the Oregon Humanities Center (OHC) celebrates its 40th anniversary. Founded in 1983 with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the mission of the OHC expanded in 1987 to include research, teaching, and public programming. Since then, the OHC has funded the research endeavors of hundreds of UO faculty and graduate students, developed two programs for undergraduate research, supported the creation of dozens of new courses in the humanities, hosted and cosponsored hundreds of free public events, and produced over 850 episodes of its interview program *UO Today*.

To celebrate its 40-year impact on the University of Oregon and the wider community, the OHC's focus will be on the theme Humanities Matter(s). This year's events will amplify the substance and value of the humanities. Humanities give meaning and shape to our shared human experience while helping us address society's



John J. Stuhr



Steven Shankman



Barbara K. Altmann



Paul Peppis

most challenging questions and issues so we can discover productive ways forward. The humanities help us understand the past, comprehend the world in which we live, and conceptualize a better future.

Events will primarily highlight the research and findings of UO humanities faculty by asking: What are the various matters that make up the humanities? Why do the humanities matter? What place do the humanities hold for our shared future? How do we bolster the humanities at a time when they are increasingly under attack?

The first event, the OHC Directors' Roundtable Discussion and Reception on Friday, November 3, 2023 from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Knight Library Browsing Room, will feature the three former OHC directors and current director Paul Peppis. They will discuss the history of the OHC and the importance of the humanities in education and society.

See the Director's Report on page 3 for more information about this year's 40th-anniversary celebration.

Symposium explores the history of women in science

Scientific inquiries, achievements, and debates shape and are shaped by human culture. The examination of science and technology in their cultural and social contexts is vital to understanding both our society today, in which science and technology play such large roles, as well as scientific practice. This exploration situates the humanities and the sciences as interrelated enterprises in ways that can inform both.

A symposium, "History of Women in Science," will be held on Monday, November 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Knight Library Browsing Room. The symposium will explore the often forgotten stories of women in science from the 16th century to the present. This history can shape how budding and practicing scientists imagine themselves, the arc of their careers, their fields, and even their subjects of research and the way in which it is pursued. Through the

history of science, we can re-imagine how science can connect to social justice.

The symposium has been organized by Vera Keller, professor and department head of History at the University of Oregon. According to Keller, "The history of science is not a well developed field at UO. As a result, we have a divergence on our campus between the humanities and the sciences which the history of science could bridge, showcasing to scientists how perspectives from the humanities can and should shape current



Polish astronomer Elizabeth Hevelius (1647–1693), shown in 1673, in the volume she edited, *Machinae coelestis*.

practices of research and innovation. . . I am hoping that this event can be transformative for our campus by introducing the discipline to many who may not be familiar with it."

During the symposium, a wide slate of scholars will address issues surrounding the history of women in science from the 16th century to the present. Events will include participation from scientists and student advocacy groups for diversity in STEM. By putting scientists and historians in dialogue, the organizers aim to illus-

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trate the continuing importance of historical perspectives, as well as collections and archives, to current practices of science.

Alisha Rankin, History, Tufts University, studies early modern European history, the history of science and medicine, the history of pharmacy, and women's history. Her talk title is "Chemistry for Ladies? Women and Distillation in Early Modern Europe."



Michele Pflug, a PhD candidate in History at the UO, was a 2023 Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellow and a 2022–23 OHC Graduate Research Support Fellow. Her talk title is "Object of Empire: Materiality, Gender, and Insect Collecting in the Early-Eighteenth Century."

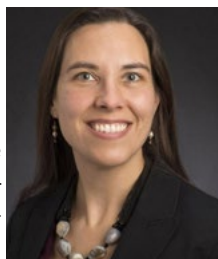


Margaret Carlyle, History, University of British Columbia, Okanagan, is a historian of medicine, science, and technology with specialization in early modern France in both European and global contexts. Her talk title is "Phantoms in the Classroom: Obstetrical Training in Enlightenment France."



Elizabeth Hoiem, School of Information Sciences, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, explores the history of technological innovations in children's literature—from early children's books and toys to contemporary applications of

digital pedagogy—and looks at modern technology through a historical lens. Her talk title is "The Forge and the Fireside: Gendered Spaces in Victorian STEM Books."



Elizabeth Yale, History of Science and Medicine, University of Iowa, is a historian of science and the book in Britain and Europe. Her talk title is "Neither Invisible, nor Hidden, nor Forgotten: Changing How We Remember Women in the History of Science."



Jenna Tonn, Professor of the Practice, Human-Centered Engineering, Department of Engineering, Boston College, teaches courses on the history of science, technology, and engineering. Her research focuses on the social and cultural history of technical knowledge, with a specific interest in women and gender in STEM fields. Her talk title is "How to Create a Life in Science: Class, Social Status, and Sexuality Among Women in Zoology."



Keynote speaker Lisa Weasel is a professor and department chair in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Portland State University. Her research investigates intersections of gen-



der, race, class, and sexuality in cell biology, molecular genetics, and immunology. Her talk title is "Gender in the History and Future of Science: Seeing the Forest for the Trees."

Mid-day, students from UO's Women in Graduate Science and Alliance for Diversity in Science and Engineering will offer commentary and identify themes from the morning session. And a tour of related materials in Knight Library's Special Collections will be offered, though space will be limited.

The symposium will conclude with a roundtable discussion "Connecting Science with Social Justice," which will be chaired by Alex Cohen, Science and Risk Communication, UO School of Journalism and Communication. A reception will follow.

The symposium, cosponsored by the OHC's Endowment for Public Outreach in the Arts, Sciences, and Humanities, is free and open to the public. For the full schedule, go to: blogs.uoregon.edu/hwssymposium. For more information contact Vera Keller, vkeller@uoregon.edu

Help us raise \$40,000 in honor of the OHC's 40th anniversary!

Your gift can support:

- UO Today episode: \$300
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OHC Director's Report by Paul Peppis

This year marks a momentous milestone for the Oregon Humanities Center (OHC). Forty years ago, in 1983, the University of Oregon (UO) first established the OHC with the help of a challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Four years later, in 1987, with the help of a second NEH Challenge Grant and the support of a major capital campaign that prioritized the OHC as one of the UO's highest priorities, the Center was expanded to fulfill its current three-part mission: 1) supporting and disseminating faculty, graduate, and undergraduate humanities research to create new knowledge and advance interdisciplinary scholarship; 2) fostering the development of innovative humanities courses to enhance and enlarge educational opportunities available to UO's students; and 3) offering timely public programming in the humanities to enrich the knowledge and lives of Oregon's citizens. These crucial aspects of the OHC's mission are interrelated and integral to its role as a leading UO research center, the only one of UO's myriad research centers devoted entirely to supporting research, teaching, and programming in the humanities.

As a fitting theme for the lectures, events, and activities we'll sponsor and co-sponsor during our 40th year, we've selected "Humanities Matter(s)." We mean that theme in two key senses. First, we want to highlight and celebrate the wide and varied range of matter that UO scholars and students who work in the humanities and the humanistic social sciences and professional fields study and research. Second, we want to highlight and celebrate the ongoing and urgent value of the humanities in all their richness and variety. At a moment of continuing social and political uncertainty, upheaval, and controversy, a moment when divides of every kind have riven our society into a series of antagonistic and intolerant camps, a moment when pundits and politicians alternately bemoan and applaud the "crisis," "decline," or even "death" of the humanities, we at the OHC believe, more determinedly than ever, that the humanities—at UO and beyond—remain strong, vibrant, and relevant. Indeed, we believe that the diverse matter humanists study, the knowledges and skills we teach, and the values we defend—cultural literacy, critical thinking, clear and persuasive communication, tolerance and open-mindedness—are

today more relevant than ever.

To open our 40th anniversary celebrations, we're hosting a keynote panel featuring all the OHC's directors, past and present: John Stuhr, Emory University Professor of Philosophy and the OHC's first director (1983–1994); Steven Shankman, UO Professor of English (emerit), UNESCO Chair in Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue, and Peace, and the OHC's second director (1994–2008); Barbara Altmann, President, Franklin & Marshall College, and the OHC's third director (2008–2013); and myself, Paul Peppis, UO Professor of English, and the OHC's fourth and current director. Scheduled for Friday, November 3rd, this keynote panel invites the OHC's distinguished panelists to reflect on the OHC's history, especially the key accomplishments of their respective terms as director, and to share their thoughts and advice about the future of the humanities at UO, in the academy, and beyond. I hope you will be able to join us!

We will follow that exciting keynote panel with a series of talks, panels, and events across the academic year featuring UO humanities scholars who will discuss the various matter they study and why what they study and the knowledge they produce matters. Another key event in our 40th anniversary consideration of "Humanities Matter(s)" is this year's Cressman Lecture, scheduled for March 7th, featuring UC Santa Barbara Professor of English (emerit) Christopher Newfield, today's leading scholar of "Critical University Studies," who will share some of his cogent insights into the current state of the American academy and the academic humanities and about how we can work to keep the humanities strong and vibrant despite declining academic and political respect for and investment in the humanistic disciplines.

The following pages and our calendar of events provide details about our 40th anniversary kickoff panel and the other exciting arts and humanities talks, events, and exhibits occurring this term, many sponsored or co-sponsored by the OHC, as well as our research fellows' Work-in-Progress talks. As you'll see, the offerings provide strong evidence that the humanities still

matter.

To recognize our 40th anniversary and to help propel the OHC into its next chapter, we are also hosting a special DuckFunder campaign during the month of November. We hope to raise at least \$40,000 in gifts to strengthen and expand our research and teaching fellowship programs, especially those that support undergraduate and graduate students. Please help us reach—and perhaps exceed—that goal! Your gifts help ensure that the OHC will continue to thrive for another 40 years!

As I come to the end of this year's Director's column, I need to share my gratitude and admiration to all those who helped the OHC carry out its critical mission to promote and strengthen the humanities and humanities research over the last 40 years: our amazing staff, Faculty Advisory Board, external Board of Visitors, and all those countless devotees of the humanities



HUMANITIES
MATTERS
Oregon Humanities Center • celebrating 40 years

who support and advocate for the humanities. Your generous faith and support keep us going every day as they have for 40 years!

I want to close on a more personal note: this year marks not only the OHC's 40th anniversary. It also marks the final year of my term as OHC director. For the past decade, I have had the incomparable privilege and pleasure of helping to guide this incredible institution. I have worked hard to advance the OHC's crucial mission and to support vibrant humanities scholarship, programming, and teaching in every way I could. Serving at the OHC has been the high point of my career as an administrator, scholar, and educator. And I am endlessly grateful to everyone I've had the opportunity to work with and learn from over the past ten years for the kind friendship, generous support, and incomparable lessons you have shared with me.



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land of the Kalapuya people.

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ohc.uoregon.edu



The University of Oregon is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To arrange disability accommodations for OHC events or to obtain this report in an alternative format, call 541-346-3934.

Indigenous Comics Speaker Series kicks off in October

This academic year Native American and Indigenous Studies, English, and Comics and Cartoon Studies will present the Indigenous Comics Speaker Series.

The series begins with Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas, an award-winning visual contemporary artist and author, on Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 4 p.m. in the Knight Library Browsing Room. Yahgulanaas's publications include national bestsellers *Flight of the Hummingbird* and *RED, a Haida Manga*. His most recent publication is *JAJ: a Haida Manga* (May 2023).

Yahgulanaas became a full-time artist after many decades working as part of the Haida Nation's successful campaign to protect its biocultural diversity. He is a descendant of iconic artists Isabella Edenshaw, Charles Edenshaw, and Delores Churchill, and he had early training from exceptional creators and master carvers. In the late 1990s, after exposure to Chinese brush techniques, he consciously began to merge Haida and Asian artistic influences into his self-taught practice, and created the art form called "Haida Manga."

Haida Manga blends North Pacific Indigenous iconographies and framelines with the graphic dynamism of Asian manga. It is committed to hybridity as a positive force that opens a third space for critical engagement. That hybridity becomes woven through the artist's art, books, and speeches, and offers an empowering



Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas

and playful way to view and engage with social issues.

Exploring themes of identity, environmentalism, and the human condition, he communicates a worldview that is, while particular to his ancestral North Pacific archipelago of Haida Gwaii, also relevant to a contemporary and internationally-engaged audience.

In addition to his public talk, Yahgulanaas will visit two classes and engage with the Native American and Indigenous Studies Academic Residential Community at the Many Nations Longhouse.

The series will continue in winter term with Cole Pauls, a Tahltan comics artist, illustrator, and printmaker from Haines Junction, Yukon Territory; and in spring term with artist Arigon Starr, an enrolled member of the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma and one of the founders of the Indigenous Narratives Collective (INC), a group of Native American comic book writers and artists.

The Indigenous Comics Speaker Series, cosponsored by the OHC's Endowment for Public Outreach in the Arts, Sciences, and Humanities, is free and open to the public.

