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Historian Susan Stryker visits campus, calls for action amid wave of anti-LGBTQ+ attacks

Alan Cohen • Staff Writer • March 7

When Susan Stryker gives lectures around the country, she often starts with the same sentence: “Thank you for inviting me here to commit a thoughtcrime in Florida.”

But when Stryker visited Willamette’s Salem and Portland campuses on March 3 and 4 to talk about local and national transgender history, she noted that what used to be a thoughtcrime in some parts of the country has now become a thoughtcrime nationally.

Stryker is an award-winning historian, professor and filmmaker specializing in transgender American history. She founded the first-of-its-kind Transgender Studies Initiative at the University of Arizona, where she teaches Gender and Women’s Studies and has published books on transgender history, queer culture and gender theory.

Approximately 250 people filled the Paulus Lecture Hall at the Willamette Law School in Salem on the third and more listened from an overflow room. The event was years in the making, according to the Gender and Resource Advocacy Center Director Lisa Logan, who was mentored by Stryker during their time in graduate school.

Q Wilson (’27) introduced Stryker and talked about the impact her work had on his and many others’ views of gender. “I look at my peers, professors, mentors and friends and see a sea of people who have undoubtedly been shaped by this work in a revolutionary way,” he said. Stryker’s research and thinking have also “unequivocally touched” fields like biology, psychology, public health and history, according to Wilson.

Stryker’s talk focused on instances throughout history where trans populations played an important role and how they can help make sense of the present and future of those communities.

One example she discussed is Compton’s Cafeteria, a building in San Francisco where hundreds of queer dissidents crushed a police raid in 1966 — three years before the Stonewall Riots — after years of harassment and discrimination. A transgender woman threw coffee at a police officer, triggering the riot and marking a pivotal moment in the history of transgender resistance. Stryker is one of the leading historians studying the Compton’s Cafeteria riots and interviewed several participants for her 2005 documentary “Screaming

Queens.”

Compton’s Cafeteria is now owned by GEO Group, a multimillion dollar corporation that runs private prisons and immigrant detention centers nationwide. “It’s an atrocity that this historic site of trans resistance to police violence is now a site of incarceration,” Stryker said.

Speaking on the transgender presence throughout history, Stryker noted that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, drag performances and the transgender experience were nothing new, according to Stryker. Brigham Morris Young, the son of Mormon prophet Brigham Young, was known to be a “female impersonator” who performed under the stage name Madam Pattrini throughout Utah. Drag at the time was not considered “queer coded” or “gay entertainment,” which shows that attitudes around gender and cross-dressing change over time, Stryker said.

She also told the story of Frances Thompson, a formerly enslaved transgender woman who gained national attention in 1876 for being arrested in female clothing. Thomson was the first known transgender person to testify before Congress after being raped by a group of white men, some police officers, during the 1866 Memphis Massacre. Both events sparked national debates on civil rights in the South, and Thompson’s story may have impacted the outcome of the highly-contested 1876 presidential election between Rutherford B. Hayes and Samuel J. Tilden, Stryker said.

“There was certainly an explicit attempt to use the weaponization and dehumanization of a Black trans woman in a highly contentious election,” she said, drawing a parallel with recent attacks on LGBTQ+ communities for political gain.

Stryker also explained the Trump administration’s recent prohibitions of using words related to sexual orientation and gender identity on government websites and showed that there is extensive precedent for governments censoring transgender communities. In the Nazi regime, for instance, many burned books were from the library of Magnus Hirschfeld, a doctor and LGBTQ+



Susan Stryker introducing her material on March 3.

Photo by PATRICIA KREPEL

activist who Hitler deemed “the most dangerous Jew in Germany,” according to Stryker.

The transgender community was among “the first things Nazis were after,” she said — the story repeated itself in the United States, as before the Red Scare that targeted perceived socialists nationwide, there was a Lavender Scare that targeted the LGBTQ+ community and perceived them as risks to national security. “There were actually more suspected homosexuals ejected from government employment than communists,” she said in regards to the Lavender Scare during the Cold War.

Stryker highlighted a parallel to the attacks on LGBTQ+ federal employees under the second Trump administration, especially the push against employee resource groups that allow minorities to find community in the workplace, which have existed for decades.

Stryker tries to find snippets of local transgender history wherever she visits to tailor her lectures to her audience. She found that Alan L. Hart, an early twentieth-century resident of Albany — 24 miles south of Salem — was one of the first openly transgender people to gain a medical degree and is believed to be the first person nationwide to get gender-affirming surgery. Hart attended what is now Lewis & Clark College and Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) in Portland and underwent a hysterectomy at the University of Oregon Hospital in Eugene in 1917. Hart excelled as a novelist, doctor and scientist throughout his life and pioneered the use of X-rays in the diag-

nosis and treatment of tuberculosis, according to Stryker.

Stryker’s talk came at a difficult time for queer and transgender communities. Less than two months before her visit to Willamette, Trump signed executive orders to only recognize two biological sexes, remove funding for K-12 schools that supported trans students, deny trans athletes the opportunity to participate in sports according to their gender, and prohibit gender-affirming care for Americans under 19 at institutions that receive federal funding — despite research showing that gender-affirming care can have substantial benefits for trans people’s mental health.

Despite the attacks on transgender communities, Stryker highlighted minor “wins” she deems worth celebrating. The Compton Cafeteria building was recently added to the National Registry of Historic Places and is the first site on the registry that “traces its historic relevance to transgender social history,” Stryker said.

“It’s just one little thing in a tsunami of bad stuff,” Stryker noted. She finds it surprising that it was added during the first few weeks of the Trump presidency, and joked that the current president will eventually blame it on “the deep state.”

In other news Stryker celebrated, the U.S. Senate blocked a bill that would have codified prohibitions for trans youth in sports and punished schools that did not segregate their teams by sex assigned at birth. Republicans failed to reach the 60 votes necessary to end a filibuster just hours before Stryker’s lecture.

She ended the talk by demanding action against LGBTQ+ violence. “Whatever it is that happens to us, whatever things are going on now, that’s a message in a bottle for the future,” Stryker said. “There will be people who receive that message and will know that we were here and we did not comply in advance.”

“We were here and we did not comply.”

—Susan Stryker

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Willamette professors, students join 'Stand Up for Science' rally at Capitol

Robin Linares • News Editor • March 16

Willamette professors and students joined the "Stand Up for Science" rally outside the Oregon State Capitol on Friday, March 7, alongside a crowd of over 500, to stand in defense of science amidst federal defunding of scientific programs.

The "Stand Up for Science" rally was a part of a nationwide movement with over 32 official rallies and nearly 150 other walkouts, all calling for institutions and policymakers to defend science and stop political interference currently impacting the scientific community.

This comes as the second Trump administration has implemented multiple attacks on federal scientific agencies: a freeze of grant funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), the removal of government web pages that include terms discussing diversity, the removal and renouncement of data from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the removal of the U.S. from the World Health Orga-

nization. While some of these moves have been paused or reversed by the courts, disruption and confusion remain.

The Capitol protest brought both young and experienced scientists from across Oregon, with some attendees from Portland, Corvallis and Eugene. Eight highlighted speakers spoke at the rally, which included Congresswoman Andrea Salinas, Dr. Brittany Barker, Dr. Brian Druker, Dr. Bonnie Nagel, Dr. Sue Haig, Senate Representative David Gombert, Dr. Jennifer Krauel, and Dr. Nicki Swann, a neuroscience professor at University of Oregon and a two-time cancer survivor.

In Swann's speech to the crowd, she highlighted the importance of an organization like NIH as a funding organization for her professional research and through the development of life saving treatments. "I am an example of how NIH can save people's lives. Future lives will be lost if we don't save science."

Other attendees also expressed urgency regarding this rally. Megan

Quinn, a nurse and assistant professor at Oregon Health and Science University, listed some of her concerns as a scientist, notably the rise of distrust in the scientific field and the long-term implications of federal funding loss on future research.

Quinn also contextualized the gravity of seeing an event like this: "Scientists are not who we think of on the frontlines," Quinn said. "If scientists are out of the lab, that is how you know something is wrong; that's how you know it's serious."

For some in the Willamette community, the rally was a call to action. In the days leading up to the event, professors sent out emails to fellow faculty and students across the science departments informing them about the event, and two sign-making sessions were held to allow students and professors to create their own posters to bring to the rally.

Biology professor David Craig came to the rally with a poster including a drawing of the Oregon state bird, the Western Meadowlark, a critically sensitive species whose habitat is being preserved by federal funds and federal land. The poster also had the phrase, "She flies with science," a play on the state motto, "She flies with her own wings."

At the rally, Craig explained his reasoning for attending, which included his belief in the value of "knowledge into action." He also noted the impacts he's starting to see at Willamette as a result of these new federal policies. "Specific to Willamette, the number of students who have had opportunities evaporate because the funding has been canceled, it's been tragic," Craig said.

Executive freezes on federal programs and grants have effectively shrunk opportunities for young scientists, as research experiences for undergraduates (REU) opportunities have shuddered, graduate programs are slowing admissions, and job opportunities are shrinking.

"It didn't even take the current administration a month to start shutting down some really important programs that a lot of us would be working in," explained

Anna Hornbeck ('25), a physics major who is currently in the process of applying for graduate schools.

Physics major and chemistry minor Alicia Robbins ('25), who is currently in the process of job searching leading up to graduation, expressed similar concerns, especially due to the federal scrutinization of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. "Due to the cutting of DEI and the misinformation for what it actually stands for and how it helps women, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community, it is going to be a lot more difficult to get jobs," Robbins said. "As a woman in those fields that are mostly dominated by men, it's definitely scary to think about what the future will look like."

However, amidst these fears, Hornbeck acknowledged the importance of having her professors show up to the rally and continue to encourage their students. "Knowing that my professors are here to stand next to me and support me and support people like me is really important," Hornbeck explained. "We're young. We're just entering the field, and having support from people who have been in the field for 20 years is really important, and it gives us a foundation to stand on."

"It is definitely encouraging and inspiring," Robbins added. "Right now it's really easy to hide and have no say or opinions to not rub people the wrong way or to save your funding ... so for professors to be very vocal [and say], 'No, you need to stand up; you need to fight; it's you guys that are going to be affected,' and really support us, it's been really awesome."

Craig highlighted how the rally created a collaborative space for science and was a way to provide opportunities for students to connect with other scientists. He also advocated for self-care and community building amidst these unprecedented times, as well as remaining passionate in whatever scientific interests one may have.

"Don't let the oppression that is coming at the institutions of science and education overwhelm you," Craig said. "If you love sea turtles, or if you love the idea of curing cancer, or if you love birds like I do, keep that in your heart and in your head and keep persisting."



Willamette students Anna Hornbeck ('25) (left) and Alicia Robbins ('25) (right) join protesters gathering in State Capitol State Park to protest the defunding of science initiatives, Salem, Oregon, March 7, 2025.

Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

Immigrant Story, Conversation Project collaboration event displays community-wide attempts to cultivate belonging

Amelia Hare • Staff Writer • March 7

About 75 community members joined the Immigrant Story event on Tuesday, March 4 in Hudson Hall of the Rogers Music Center. The event was aimed to raise conversations surrounding belonging, home and inclusivity, despite college campus polarization being on the rise. The four speakers were immigrants from Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and Afghanistan. In collaboration with The Conversation Project, these events on campus aim to begin the long-winded work of bringing such difficult conversations to Willamette's campus. While occurring at a polarized time for college campuses, the goal of the event remains clear: creating a sense of community among students.

The Immigrant Story is an Oregon-based, volunteer-run organization that uses storytelling as a method of activism, working to open up conversations surrounding issues of immigration and discrimination. Many of the storytellers described experiences of discrimination in school, living in war zones, and more. The Conversation Project is a Willamette-based initiative to "cultivate capacity for honest, transformative dialogue," according to its mission statement. There was also a performance from Joe Kye, a Portland-based artist who focuses on "inspiring audiences to compassion and empathy" through his music, according to his website. During his performance, he asked members of the audience to re-

cord a message to their ancestors.

This event comes at a time when college campuses are experiencing an increase in discrimination. According to a 2023 survey conducted by the university and reported on by The Collegian, the campus climate of divisiveness as discrimination was on the rise.

Along with localized tension, nationwide reports such as The Hechinger Report reflect college campus divisions on the issues of personal identity and politics, with students deciding which colleges to attend depending on state laws. This is due to changes in both federal and state politics, such as abortion bans in some states, which are influencing where students feel comfortable attending

university.

Despite these issues, The Immigrant Story and The Conversation Project are working on fostering an open community and "[being] attentive and receptive of other people's stories," said David Gutterman, co-founder of The Conversation Project and a Politics, Policy, Law and Ethics (PPLE) professor.

The Immigrant Story's visit on campus was almost entirely student-organized, according to Gutterman. Gia Patel ('25), a student ambassador, emphasized, "There is something beautiful about applying knowledge we've learned in The Conversation Project to events like these."

(continued on next page)

The event was held to provide valuable information surrounding the importance of immigrants in communities. Journey Brown ('26), a student ambassador, claimed that “[immigrants] deserve to be heard, and they deserve to be seen.”

This collaboration between the Immigrant Story and the Conversation Project comes at a time when harmful rhetoric surrounding immigrant stereotypes has been perpetuated by Trump in his second administration, leading to loss of immigrant protections and implementation of mass-deportation policies. Additionally, Trump’s recent moves reflect these stereotypes by plans to dismantle Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in schools, seen through the Department of Education’s “Dear Colleague” letter.

“We live in this community where it is so easy to villainize each other,” Patel said. The Conversation Project is working to combat binary ideas of what an immigrant is and looks to “reflect the humanity in all of

us,” according to Gutterman, which was the aim of an event such as The Immigrant Story.

The Conversation Project is working to facilitate these discussions broadly on campus, and The Immigrant Story is only one step in the process, with a “post conversation” that was hosted on March 11 in Waller Hall. Working with organizations such as The Immigrant Story reflects the group’s desire to build community and belonging. Gutterman believes that “we can amplify voices” and give platforms to those who have been historically marginalized.

Brown noted that “[immigrants] are just human beings that live in our community,” and the goal of The Conversation Project is to create a space of compassion and understanding during a polarizing time.



(Left-to-right) Toc Soneoulay-Gillespie, Naw Abikaila Ki, Thao Nguyen, and Mohsin Jamal taking a bow after sharing their harrowing stories at Willamette University’s Immigrant Story Live! event on March 4, 2025.
Photo by MAC CHILDERS

Professor Jeanne Clark to retire after nearly 40 years at Willamette

Alan Cohen • Staff Writer • March 7

When students visit the office of professor Jeanne Clark, they are first greeted with sniffs from her whippet Sammy, whom she occasionally brings to class. Clark has been teaching cinema studies and media at Willamette for almost 40 years and is one of the longest-employed faculty at the univer-

sity. She will retire at the end of the academic year.

Clark has a master’s in Oriental Studies, now East Asian Studies, from the University of Arizona, as well as a doctorate in speech communication with a focus on rhetoric. Although she is known at Willamette for her interdisciplinary work, she

specializes in Israeli and Palestinian media.

“I’ve been fascinated with Israel and Palestine for years,” she said.

Early in her career, Clark lived for 2 1/2 years in East Jerusalem, where she became intrigued with the conflicts of the region and how the experiences of people in both territories were portrayed in the media. She returned to the region in 2002 and was part of a team of observers during Operation Defensive Shield, during which Israeli soldiers occupied parts of the West Bank and increased restrictions on the local population during a period of Palestinian uprisings known as the Second Intifada.

Clark has taught around 20 different courses throughout her career at Willamette. Apart from Israeli and Palestinian film, one of her favorite classes to teach is on the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Reflecting on how the university has changed during her career, Clark remembers that when she got to Willamette, first-year students were especially talkative in class during the first few weeks, which surprised non-first years and created division. It took years to see a shift towards the active and collaborative environment between the entire student body that the university is currently known for.

During Clark’s first years at Willamette, the first-year seminar — then called the “Worldviews Program” — was significantly different from the current college colloquium. Students had a common core of texts that introduced them to how different thinkers have viewed the world throughout history, including figures like Karl Marx, Charles Darwin and Charles Dickens. They also studied the intellectual history of Victorian Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, among other time periods and world regions.

“Gradually, faculty were tired of trying to teach things that were so radically out of their field, and we shifted to the program we now have, which has its own advantages,” Clark said.

Along with other faculty, Clark also led a study abroad program in Greece that focused on archaeology and the origins of Greek

rhetoric. “It was particularly significant for me and for a lot of the students who participated,” she said. The Greece program was one of the many study abroad opportunities created during Clark’s tenure. Willamette students can now spend a semester or year abroad in over 60 destinations around the world. Likewise, research opportunities have greatly increased since she first came to Willamette. The most significant is the Carson Grant, which allows students up to \$3,000 in funding for research projects over the summer, a grant that Clark oversees.

As the director of student academic grants and awards, Clark also works with students who apply for the Fulbright Program, which provides scholarships and grants for recent graduates, current students and professionals to conduct research or teach abroad. “We are fortunate to have five Fulbright semifinalists this year,” she noted proudly when discussing the achievements of the students she works with. “Finalists will be announced later in the spring.”

However, not all changes that Clark has observed during her time at Willamette have been for the better. “I would like to see Willamette returning to a real concern about the humanities. I’ve seen that diminish over the years,” she said. Clark is trying to convince others in the field that without strengthening academic programs in the humanities, teaching critical thinking and problem-solving in higher education will prove ineffective.

The declining interest in the humanities is not an easy problem to solve, but the field must not be neglected, according to Clark. “I have no suggestions for solving the problem. We are facing a demographic cliff and budgetary issues. But I would hope to see more done to restore the humanities,” Clark said.

As an undergraduate, Clark’s professors worked to establish a personal relationship with her. Now, years later, she has attempted to “pass on and repay” this care with her own students. “I have loved through the years sharing my home with students, having them over for meals, sometimes coming over to cook. Just a chance to get to know each other informally,” Clark said.



Prof. Clark posing with her whippet, Sammy, on March 3.
Photo by PATRICIA KREPEL

Hallie Ford keeps head up in the face of short-staffing issues

Aubrey Tuttle • Staff Writer • March 6

The Hallie Ford Museum of Art, at its peak, has sustained around six full-time and six part-time employees. Each of these dozen individuals served a distinct purpose and was an integral part of the community, helping to smoothly operate the museum through preservation efforts, exhibits and daily operations. Today's staff, however, has taken quite the plunge in number, now sustaining two full-time and four part-time employees. Short-staffed, the museum can still run but not without new problems.

Some of these positions were cut alongside the museum's hours after COVID-19 hit, as their hours of operation were reduced from a seven-hour day to just five. COVID, however, was not the main cause of the museum's staffing issue. A lack of funding and a perceived lack of necessity of these individual positions for the museum provided the rest of the blow, according to John Olbrantz, the director of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art. The cut positions that remain unfilled include the education curator and the public relations and membership manager. Other positions, such as the secretary, have shifted to part-time.

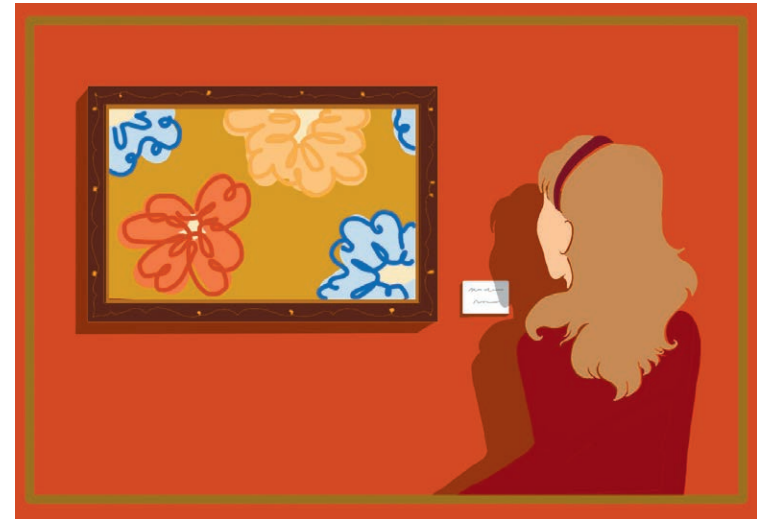
The education curator is in charge of outreach to K-12 schools in the greater Salem-Keizer area and classes at the university. Field trips for

the latter were also often organized by this position, as well as the arrangement and training of a retinue of professors and art docents to guide these tours. The docent program, which consisted of volunteers from local schools that teach art to the students, had a further outreach than just the school districts. These volunteers used to be available weekly on Tuesdays for all visitors to give free guided tours of the museum. Since the education curator position has been left vacant, there have been no weekly tours. In fact, there are no guided tours of the galleries, and there has been a decline in tours given by professors, as the education curator is no longer providing training to those interested in leading tours of the building.

When it comes to the duties of the public relations and membership manager, the university has deemed the position non-essential, leaving the work to be divided amongst the two full-time staff members as well as a consultant for the university's office of communications. Olbrantz commented on these added responsibilities—managing the social media platforms and secretarial work—to his job as well as Jonathan Bucci's job as the curator of collections and exhibitions, saying that even with all of these added pressures, “[He doesn't] think [they] have missed a beat, thank goodness.”

The piling of responsibilities once filled by full- or part-time employees has been weighing heavily not only on remaining staff members but also on community members when considering the full potential of the museum itself. Ann Nicgorski, a current professor of art history and archaeology at Willamette, admitted, “[The museum] has a lot of artworks that students could really benefit from seeing that are in the basement, and there just isn't enough staff to do everything that it takes to get things out and to put something on display.”

Classes that could benefit from these exhibits, such as ones that teach about items that are in the collection, are often not getting the opportunity to view these objects. Nicgorski added, “It makes a big difference to see something in person [rather] than to see it on a screen.” However, without the Education Curator to hold work-



A student in Hallie Ford finds a piece that speaks to them.

Art by ALYSSA DIGGDON

shops to teach professors on campus how to give their own tours or the docents to lead Tuesday tours, there is a missed opportunity for classes to view specific items that pertain to their taught subjects and get an in-depth perspective on the museum in general.

In lieu of these tours and opportunities, there remains a self-guided tour on the website as well as monthly gallery talks—often with the artist of the exhibit—giving attendees a deeper insight into the story behind the gallery.

The Alumni Office shows it's for more than just scholarship support with a submerged Moana screening

Violeta Basenko • Staff Writer • March 11



Movie-goers splash around in the Sparks Pool prior to the screening on March 8, 2025.

Photo by PATRICIA KREPEL

In the Sparks Pool on March 8, Willamette students didn't just watch the movie “Moana” (2016)—they experienced the whole atmosphere of the ocean. The venue transformed from a place to train athletes into a movie theater with snacks and a lot of fun.

Tiffany Newton, director of

alumni & community engagement, shared details about the event's setup, safety conditions and future plans. “This is something I've organized at previous institutions,” Newton said. She thinks that many students, perhaps due to their backgrounds or comfort levels, don't always take advantage of the Sparks pool unless they are involved in sports. Some students do not typically attend on-campus events in general. This event was a great way to make the pool a welcoming space for everyone.

Based on her previous experience organizing university events, Newton believes movie nights are one of the most engaging activities on any campus. For example, when she and her team hosted their first movie night, screening “Wicked” at Willamette this semester, she noticed a lot of international students in attendance, who, in her opinion, sometimes don't have the same comfort level going to other on-campus events. However, at the “Wicked” showing, “everyone was singing and having a

great time,” Newton recalled. For the “Moana” movie night, further efforts were made to ensure attendees had fun and felt immersed in the event; for example, students could grab colorful jewels that mimicked the heart of the sea, diving with them to the bottom of the swimming pool to enjoy their shine.

Before hosting the event, Newton and her team had to coordinate with the athletics department to ensure the pool was available. “We checked in with athletics to confirm the schedule, making sure we weren't disrupting any team practices or competitions,” Newton explained. “We also ensured that lifeguards were on duty for safety.” To her, the safety of students was a top priority, especially because “not everyone has the same level of experience or confidence in the water.” As a former lifeguard and swim instructor, Newton knows the importance of creating inclusive opportunities where all students feel comfortable participating. In addition to professional lifeguards, they had the lights on, a safety band system and a lane rope to keep people out of the deep end.

“I understand that some people didn't like that the lights were on, but as a former lifeguard, I believe safety should come first,” said Fenn Corsello ('26), a Willamette student who attended the movie night. When she first heard about the event, she was concerned about how the guards would monitor people in the dark. However, once Corsello saw the lights were on, she felt much safer. “I will absolutely recommend [similar events] to others,” Corsello said at the end of the night.

Alumni engagement has plans for more screenings next term. A special event has also been planned for Senior Week, exclusively for the class of 2025. “The next round of movie nights probably won't be announced until August or September, when the school year kicks off,” said Newton. “Hopefully, we'll be able to host some at PNCA as well. I have a feeling that

the next pool party will be in September or October, but it really depends on scheduling. As much as we love having access to the pool, we don't want to interfere with the swimming team.”

Newton and her team have a couple of different spots on campus that they keep their eyes on for future events. One idea they have been discussing is to host a screening on the campus quad, inspired by Newton's experience at California State University Northridge in Los Angeles, where large summer movies were shown outdoors with inflatable seating and a slushy machine. This idea comes with different logistical challenges than the pool movie night though: is it dark enough? Will it rain? The Alumni Office will have to plan carefully, but they are always excited about the possibilities.

“The most important thing is hopefully students find it fun,” Newton said. While student events often have a more casual and entertainment-focused approach, alumni programming offers a different experience. “The events we organize for alumni might not have the same ‘cool factor,’ but we host gatherings at the Oregon Historical Society, bring in distinguished speakers, and organize wine and brewery events,” Newton said. “We also offer tours and travel experiences throughout the year.”

Newton hopes that alumni will see the engagement team as more than just an organization that reaches out for scholarship support. “We want alumni to view us as a connector and supporter. Our goal is to support graduates as they transition into their careers and beyond.”

Opinion: It's pop culture's fault; it's time to love our bodies!

Mari Kauffman • Staff Writer • March 12

In addition to establishing new relationships, college is a time where most students express negative feelings about their bodies. From entering college to exiting into the real world, students face challenges from establishing eating habits to finding their worth and love for their bodies because they have yet to learn body positivity. Every day our society is constantly and drastically evolving, including the slow progression of body acceptance within pop culture. From Amy Slaton finding her confidence in a burlesque class in “1000-Lb Sisters” to Lizzo embracing her curves and stretch marks, social media has become a platform where creators share stories about body positivity and inspire their young fans to be more loving of themselves. However, not everyone is comfortable with seeing people showing themselves off to the world, but it's time to love bodies of all shapes and sizes instead of giving a damn about what is deemed beautiful and acceptable in our society.

Programs such as “Supersize vs Superskinny,” “1000-Lb Sisters,” “My 600-Lb Life,” and others depict the lifestyle of individuals in bigger bodies that society once used to abhor. These shows are now viewed by millions of people who find it entertaining, but that doesn't necessarily mean that hatred isn't being expressed against the Slaton sisters who choose to expose their lives or the people who indulge food primarily due to issues stemming from childhood trauma. Furthermore, these shows perpetuate stereotypes about body size: if you're big, stop eating and lose weight or get bariatric surgery. If you're skinny, eat some more meat. But if they're healthy, why should they have to lose weight? It's about self-love and self-worth, not about conforming to society's ludicrous standards and pressure on body weight.

Of course, the issue with these shows is also more complex than that. People are only fascinated with them because curiosity sets in when encountering someone that is bigger

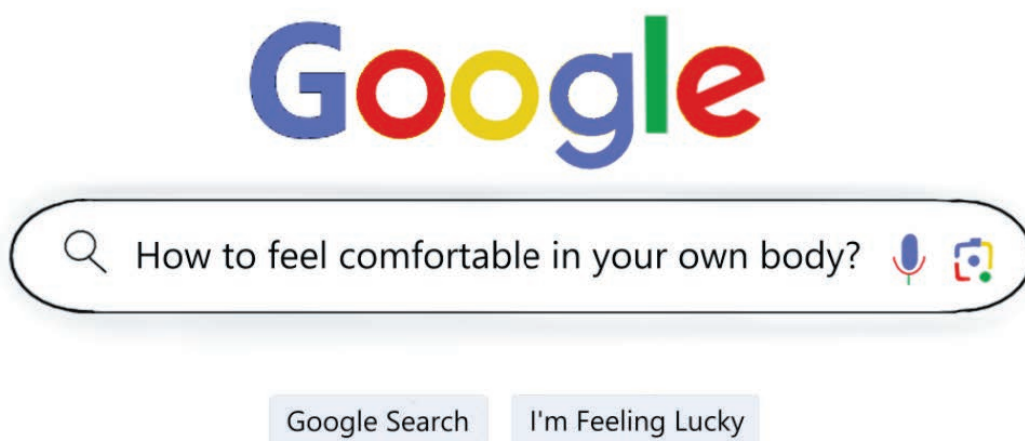
than themselves. Viewers desire to see the diets of larger people and what they do in their lives. This is a problem that pop culture has not gotten better at — people might view these shows due to morbid curiosity and come to accept what they are exposed to, but this is not the same as being personally supportive of all body types. This issue needs to be addressed because it contributes to the many reasons students and the general public struggle to fall in love with their bodies. The

her of taking Ozempic, an anti-diabetic drug that is used to control and manage weight gain. The public had accepted her as a body-positivity advocate, which was problematic in its own right due to Lizzo being the only representation for larger women despite her own controversies. However, those who witnessed her weight gain had zero faith that bigger girls and women can lose that much weight on their own, so many assumed that she utilized the drug to help lose the

be coerced or pressured into losing weight because that's what is expected of them; they are already as beautiful and lovable as slender people and it shouldn't take five seasons, a divorce and a burlesque class to prove it.

Fat is not repulsive. Fat is a connective tissue that everybody has. Having more or less of it does not make anyone less beautiful. If, by their own desire, a larger person chooses to have laparoscopic surgery to lessen their food consumption or lose weight, that's fine. But “Supersize vs Superskinny,” a British docuseries that focuses on two people, one “supersized” and the other “superskinny,” who swap diets for five days and proceed a healthy diet for three months, illustrates a more conservative approach: dieting. For most people, dieting isn't effective for maintaining long-term weight loss. However, that doesn't mean one should give up on loving themselves or their bodies. It's about not caring about what society says about weight loss and the display of body images, and it's about making the time to love one's body and oneself.

The reason so many students and people in general struggle with body images is that pop culture hasn't put a meaningful effort into creating a more accepting space for all body types, specifically in movies and TV shows. The underrepresentation of bigger people shown on TV — and some of the ways they are depicted when they are included, being for entertainment purposes only — is abominable because it illustrates that as a society, portraying issues of self-love and body positivity within film is not significant. Furthermore, larger people are not seen as full people with the ability to love themselves without dieting and weight loss. Ultimately, the world failing to catch up to a more liberal and accepting mindset shouldn't force people to have intense negative emotions when it comes to loving their bodies.



A Google search asking “how to feel comfortable in your own body?”
Art by ELLIE STARR

underrepresentation of body acceptance is at an all-time low and needs to be addressed because the constant negative outpour of big people not fitting the “beauty” standards has lowered people's views and morals of them, including themselves.

Looking to pop culture, so few celebrities are public with their thoughts on body positivity. However, one who stands out is Lizzo, an American rapper and singer who is known for her outward exposure and embracing of her rolls and stretch marks. When Lizzo started making serious changes to her health, most of her fans turned on her and accused

weight, the implication being that she and other bigger people don't have the capability or the stamina to lose weight — an immensely inaccurate belief.

For Amy Slaton, who used to weigh a little over 400 pounds, it was four episodes before the season finale of “1000-Lb Sisters” and a divorce along the way that initiated her journey into self-love and body acceptance. Prior to taking a burlesque class in Episode 5 of Season 6, she acknowledged that her self-esteem was always “eww,” but after doing the class, she stated, “Damn. Maybe I am beautiful.” Bigger people shouldn't

Opinion: The age of aging is upon us. It's time to embrace it

Maisy Clunies-Ross • Staff Writer • March 17

The past few years have been ruled by discourse on women's aging. There's been controversy on the presentation of aging in “The Substance,” on Julia Fox declaring “aging is sexy,” and most recently on a Dolly Parton and Sabrina Carpenter interaction. To promote a new remix, Carpenter and Parton filmed a music video together and shared behind-the-scenes footage from the filming. At one point, Parton joked that she and Carpenter are before and after pictures. “You'll be this old one day,” Parton remarked. Despite the evident self-deprecation of Parton's comment and its implicit commentary that to be older is to be lesser, Carpenter lights up: “I know, I can't wait! I hope I look like you.” This comment, which addressed growing older with excitement rather than fear, resonated with a lot of people, especially considering the current online culture surrounding aging and beauty.

Social media has been overtaken by multitudinous skin care routines consisting of so-called clarifying

and anti-wrinkle products, women in their early twenties are getting “baby botox” and filler to prevent signs of aging before they even begin, and elementary schoolers are investing in expensive skin care to mitigate conditions they're years away from having. These trends are just the newest iteration of an ongoing push to demean and marginalize older women.

As they get older, women are pushed from the workforce, seen as incompetent and expendable by their employers. For some women, this is merely demoralizing. For others, this money is the difference between a comfortable retirement with access to the healthcare they need or a life spent in constant financial and physical turmoil. Many older women live with financial insecurity, and

even those without still face societal ridicule. They're made to feel invisible, disgusting or the butt of a joke instead of being treated with respect. In Susan Sontag's 1972 article, “The Double Standard of Aging,” she highlights the way men's age is celebrated: they're treated as wise, authoritative or even suave, while women are encouraged to devote their remaining years to maintaining a youthful appearance.

In a culture that primarily values women for their caregiving abilities, labor and sex appeal, there's no place for older women. Make no mistake: women are both pressured into motherhood and punished for it, sidelined in the workplace and constantly objectified. However, even in this second-class status, they still have a role in society. Not so for

older women. And thus, they must be cast aside.

It makes sense, then, that many women would resist physical signs of aging for as long as possible in order to maintain their jobs and position in the world. This process is made easy, thanks to the hundreds of cosmetic procedures, skin care and makeup companies all interested in helping women resist the passage of time. Time passing is inevitable, as is aging, so as long as older women face discrimination, these companies have a profitable market. Herein lies the root of social media's new skin care craze: if companies can target younger women's insecurities around their age and appearance, they've unlocked a whole new demographic to exploit and profit from. Now, it's not enough to fight your acne, your body hair, your natural smell, your weight, and your features. You must also prevent your skin from wrinkling, loosening or showing any signs you've led a life.

(continued on next page)

“ Let your face be proof of a life well-lived. ”

—Maisy Clunies-Ross

These marketing tactics are working completely. At least online, personal maintenance has become a full-time job. Skin care routines have gone from being three steps to 15. Elementary and middle schoolers are flocking to Sephora to purchase pricey anti-acne and anti-aging products. These products are a status symbol, a primary component of an aspirational lifestyle. Outside of products, medical procedures to change one's appearance are increasingly popular. Botox and filler are seen as everyday upkeep, so these procedures are visible on young and old women alike.

Many of these women, such as Madonna or "Love Island" contestant Nicole Samuel, have been made public punching bags because of these very same procedures. Samuel and many other women from her season are being mocked online for looking "old" or "scary" for their filler. This commentary rings most hypocritical from the plastic surgeons who have chimed in with their own criticism, considering they make their millions benefitting from the reasonable insecurities of people like Samuel.

Clearly, there's no way to win. Older women are mistreated due to their aging, and younger women are scorned for trying to resist aging. All the while, men remain in power and

huge corporations continue to profit from women's oppression. In an impossible game, the best solution is not to play. However, that's an unfair proposition for those whose livelihoods and wellbeing rely on a certain appearance. To suggest this, one must first advocate for workplace protection of older women and a more robust safety net for retirement, which are worthwhile but challenging goals. For now, decentering the pursuit of beauty from personal identity is a worthy aim.

Yes, women have to play the game. But they don't have to like it. The idea that constant self-maintenance or a multitude of products is somehow "self-care" or "empowerment" is a lie, carefully crafted by corporations who want nothing more than to suck you dry and leave you with nothing but an empty wallet and a husk of self-identity. Don't believe the lie. Instead, defy. Lift your face towards the sun. Wrinkle your forehead in genuine self-expression. Let your mouth and eyes crease due to your smiles. Let your face be proof of a life well-lived.



Preventing the symptoms of a life well-lived is now cheaper than ever!
\$39.99 (plus tax, of course).
Art by ALYSSA DIGGDON

Fore! Willamette men's golf aims to reclaim conference, Whitman a threat

William Weeks • Staff Writer • March 1



Men's golf poses following their Fall Classic victory on Oct. 14, 2024.
Photo courtesy of Lucas Paul ('26)

Winston Churchill once said, "Golf is a game whose aim is to hit a very small ball into an even smaller hole." It happens to be a game Willamette men's golf dominates. The men have won four conference championships in the last five years, but the squad placed second

last season after Whitman narrowly wedged first. Now, using a new championship scoring system, the Bearcats are just ahead of the Blues in a battle to claim the 2025 title.

Willamette returned this season by taking the NWC Fall Classic, finishing 14-under-par.

Whitman finished second, scoring 9-under-par. While the 'Cats lead the race towards conference champions, they have a long road ahead of them. Formerly, NWC golf's three-legged championship scoring system was point-based; first place won 8 points, second won 7, and so on, with the Championship itself worth twice as many points as the Fall or Spring Classics. Now, however, champions are crowned by the lowest stroke total across all three main events: the Fall Classic, the Spring Classic, and the NWC Championship.

Addressing last year's second-place finish, golfer Lucas Paul ('26) stated that the team's ability to bounce back and their depth in the lineup gives them a new advantage over Whitman this year. He mentioned a key contributor to last year's loss was the Bearcat's youth: "Whitman probably has a little bit more experience than us with some older players." Indeed, over 70% of Willamette's team last year were underclassmen.

This year has shown Willamette growing as a conference leader. Dominant players such as Oliver Smith ('26), who finished first individually in the Fall Classic, shooting 9-under-par, and AJ Papajohn ('27), who placed No. 4 individually in the highly competitive Space City Classic on Feb. 25, indicate a strong future.

This year's Fall Classic only vindicates that future. Not only did the team place first, but on the first day, all five players finished under par. This accomplishment has only happened once before in Daugherty's 13 years as a coach, a testament to the team's new ability as they enter the back nine of the season.

Their recent success doesn't necessarily spell an easy return to

No. 1, however. The week after the Fall Classic, Willamette played in the Confluence Classic, hosted by Whitman. Willamette struggled, finishing fifth having shot 16-over-par compared to No. 1 Whitman's 2-over-par. The Confluence was partially played on Wine Valley Golf Course in Walla Walla, Washington, the site of the upcoming Spring Classic.

Luckily for the Bearcats, the Confluence result isn't one of the three events that contribute to the new championship scoring — events where Willamette tends to step up. With the old scoring system, no team that scored outside the top three in the Fall Classic had won the conference. The new system, Paul observed, creates more excitement and allows for more comebacks.

An important note on scoring: only five of the nine players can contribute to a team's score. The other four must compete individually. Although this system could invite unfriendly competition, the Willamette team sees it as an advantage. Paul added, "It just helps us grow as a team because you can understand, 'What can I do to help this guy be the best version of himself?'" Paul described the team as a family. Training around 20-25 hours per week, players spend a lot of their free time together, markedly seen in a team Buc-ee's visit from their latest event, the Space City Classic, in Houston.

While teamwork is a driver for much team success, golf is infamously a mental game. Mistakes are inevitable and common, but the recovery from those mistakes will make or break one's score. For Paul, this means "being able to trust yourself" and "[staying] in the moment, [as] the most important shot is the next one."

There's still a lot of golf left to play for Willamette. With Whitman right on their tail, the season is still up in the air. Either way, the Spring Classic and NWC Championship are bound to excite, though in what capacity remains to be seen.

Art and architecture on the Salem campus

Mac Childers • Staff Photographer • March 14

The Salem campus hosts a number of historical buildings, including Waller Hall, the oldest higher-education building west of the Mississippi River still in use. The Art Building also hosts numerous student projects that are displayed throughout the school year.



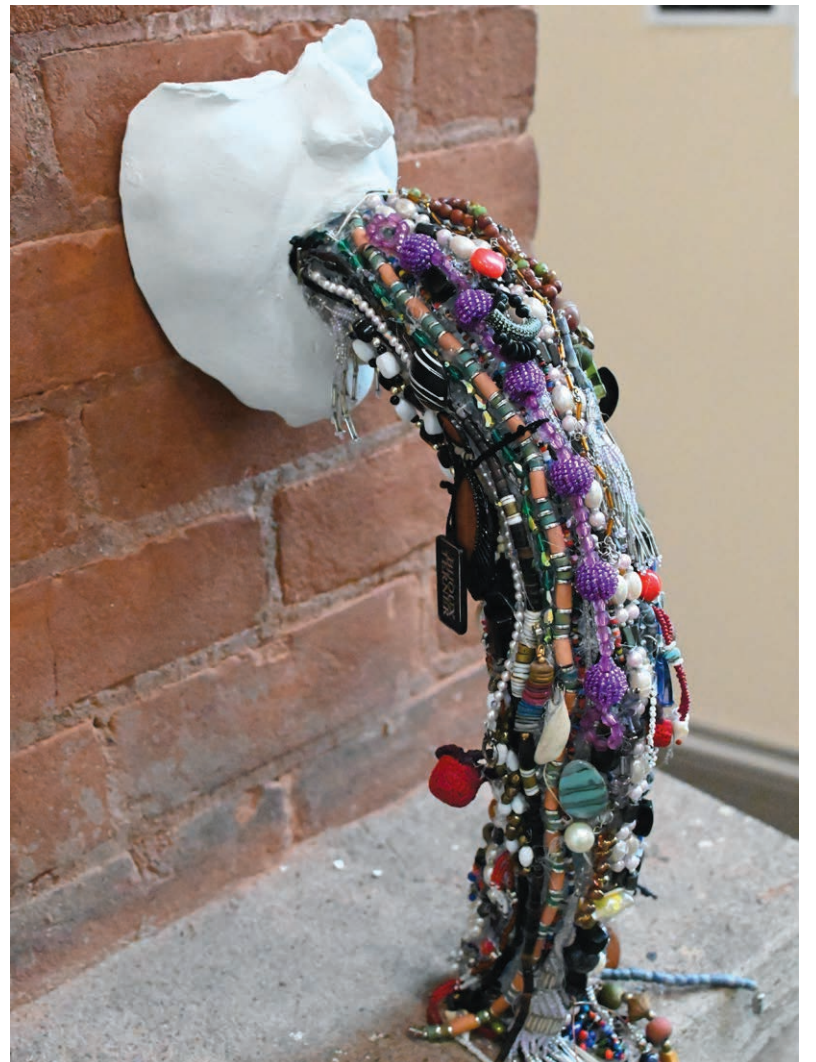
(above) Town and Gown sculpture by Willamette University's Waller Hall, March 14, 2025.
Photo by MAC CHILDERS

(left) Town and Gown sculpture by Willamette University's Waller Hall, March 14, 2025.

Photo by MAC CHILDERS



(above) Leah Howell's "The Bed Warmer" sculpture on display in Willamette University's Arts Building, March 14, 2025.
Photo by MAC CHILDERS



(above) Ava Saidi Litvak's "No Title" sculpture on display in Willamette University's Arts Building, March 14, 2025.
Photo by MAC CHILDERS

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Late March Crossword

Crossword submitted by EZRA NELSEN

ACROSS

- 1 Puncture with a blade
- 5 "Darn"
- 9 Overturn
- 14 Astronomer, Sagan
- 15 Power dept.
- 16 Bay area football player, familiarly
- 17 Word inflections
- 19 Rundown
- 20 Audio employee on a film set
- 22 Comic punch sound effect
- 23 Ear-related
- 24 Inuit knife
- 27 1976 AC/DC single
- 30 "Losing My Religion" band
- 32 Member of the Utah House of Representatives, Steve
- 34 Sported
- 36 Country with Dhaka as it's capital
- 38 Buddhist leader, Daisaku
- 40 Swe. neighbor to the west
- 41 Apple TV+ show, "Ted _"
- 42 Criminal mastermind
- 45 Hamilton's fate
- 46 Aphid eater
- 47 Youngster
- 49 "Gangnam Style" singer
- 50 Snake sound
- 51 Greek god of war

- 53 "_ but a scratch!"
- 55 Sounds as words, and a clue to the beginnings of 20-across, 36-across, and 42-across
- 60 Coca-Cola competitor
- 63 Punctuation faces
- 64 Greeting in Hawaii
- 65 Taboo
- 66 Baby foxes
- 67 1981 Lennon hit
- 68 Aust. island
- 69 Little brat

DOWN

- 1 Wound covering
- 2 Food in a shell
- 3 West coast gas brand
- 4 Goodyear flier
- 5 Dark side of the internet
- 6 Diarist, Frank
- 7 Prefix for dead
- 8 White heron
- 9 Solitary
- 10 Santa Monica landmark
- 11 Opposite of WSW
- 12 Simpsons neighbor, Flanders
- 13 Arid
- 18 Room entrance
- 21 Cultivate
- 24 Depletes
- 25 Defeats
- 26 Not at all sacred
- 27 Ballet flourishes

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- 28 Finnish phones
- 29 Fads
- 31 Administration
- 33 Mesopotamian god of war
- 35 Uptight
- 37 Subtle reference
- 39 Like Mother Teresa
- 43 €
- 44 Pitched drum
- 48 Native American tent
- 52 Apia's country
- 54 Punches
- 55 Workplace welfare org.
- 56 Lots
- 57 "Artemis Fowl" author, Colfer
- 58 Fascinated with
- 59 Helper, abbr.

- 60 Kid's show, " _ Patrol"
- 61 Jeff Lynne's band, abbr.
- 62 Small dog, for short

Read the "Fast Break," Willamette's premier university athletics column ... or else. New issues Tuesday mornings.

SCAN ME

HTTPS://WWW.WILLAMETTECOLLEGIAN.COM/SPORTS

Comic by WES MOWRY-SILVERMAN

