In September 2010, Nadine Small St. Louis ’58 passed away at the age of seventy-three. A distinguished professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, a beloved and generous teacher, a prolific and admired poet, and poet laureate of Eau Claire, Professor St. Louis embodied the best and highest academic and literary ideals and was an inspiration to her teachers, students, colleagues, and readers. What could be more appropriate than that her memory be honored with the creation of two new capstone seminars for advanced English majors? Nadine Small grew up on a family farm near Salem, Oregon. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Oregon with a BA in English in 1958. She continued her studies in literature at the University of Minnesota and the University of California at Los Angeles, where she earned her MA in 1966 and PhD in 1972. That same year, she joined the Department of English at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, where she served as professor until 2000. During her distinguished career, she taught courses on a range of topics, including English composition, drama, science fiction, book publishing, Shakespeare, bibliography, and seventeenth-century literature. Professor St. Louis held a variety of administrative positions: she served five years as English department chair, was the first assistant to the chancellor for affirmative action and the first female chair of the university’s faculty senate. After retiring, she wrote poetry in earnest, publishing Weird Sisters (Wolfsong, 2000) and Zebra: Poems (Marsh River, 2008), and filling notebooks with her poems while she battled cancer. Nadine Small St. Louis was named the first poet laureate of Eau Claire in 2010. The two yearly capstone seminars endowed in Professor St. Louis’s honor were made possible by generous gifts from her husband, Robert St. Louis. He has permanently endowed the seminars not only to show his love and admiration for his late wife, to honor her life and achievements, and to preserve her memory, but for a host of other reasons as well: “to encourage students in the Department of English at her alma mater, who walk the same halls she once walked”; to “help support academics,” the “love of languages,” the “intellectual life,” and “poetry, which she so energetically supported and wrote at home in faraway Wisconsin”; and last, but not least, “to honor her love of Oregon and the family that raised her there.” The St. Louis seminars are research-intensive courses that offer junior and senior English majors opportunities to work closely with faculty members, study compelling literary topics intensively, and pursue advanced research and writing projects. Such courses are often the high point of an academic career. They are also resource-intensive. “Financial pressures and other realities of university culture make it harder and harder to offer the sort of small classes on specialized topics that often change the lives of students,” explains Professor Henry Wonham, head of the Department of English.
Course in the Spotlight: St. Louis Seminar in Literature and Philosophy

Thanks to the generous gift of the St. Louis Seminar Endowment, established by Robert St. Louis in memory of his late wife, Nadine Small St. Louis ’58, the Department of English offered the inaugural St. Louis seminar this past spring term. The seminar, which focused on the seven imitations of literature and philosophy, has allowed me to plot my return to the role we all cherish most, that of full-time teacher and researcher. “It takes a village,” a scholarly with particular (3) a classical, Augustinian confession-story, (4) a personal testimonial, (5) a Jamesian “example,” or (6) a Lapsarian “letter,” and (7) a Tolstoyan reflection. “One of our goals,” Crosswhite explains, “was Socratic midwifery—helping each other give birth to the ideas that we are forming.” Sarah Murphy, a seminar participant, confirms its success in meeting those generative and collaborative goals. Both the “small class size” and Associate Professor Crosswhite’s efforts to motivate students “to read with a balance of critical and charitable thinking,” she explains, “encouraged an environment in which we could give careful and caring attention to how we received the works we discussed as a group. I can’t imagine a better way of learning a subject that is essentially concerned with our way of living!” Sasha Mattingly, another participant, echoed her classmate’s positive comments about the special learning opportunities the class provided: “The great part about the St. Louis seminar was the small number of students and the intimate environment that gave students “the chance to share their thoughts about the literature that we were studying, as well as opening up opportunities for discussion,” which led, in turn, to “a greater understanding of the text as well as personal growth.” The active and collaborative atmosphere the seminar fostered, she continues, “allowed us to really participate in the work of philosophy right there in the classroom.” Given this unique educational experience, it’s unsurprising that Mattingly concludes her comments by urging “every student to take part in a seminar class.” Thanks to the generosity of the St. Louis family, generations of future English majors will have that incomparable opportunity.
A Winter of Content in Literary London

King’s Cross Station, where Harry and Dudley would have their last conversation, the Globe, Shakespeare’s reconstructed playhouse in the British Museum, the National Gallery, the Tate, the Tate Modern, Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament, the Strand, Covent Garden, Soho. London may be the third biggest cosmopolitan city in the world; last winter, a small group of UD students got to experience its incredible mixture of old and new by participating in the English department’s “London Program.”

At the AHA London Centre, a stately Georgian building in High Street in 1727, students could take courses on Tudor history, Victorian art and architecture, contemporary theater, and London culture. In addition, Professor William Rossi taught courses on his two favorite English writers. “Chaucer and Shakespeare,” he would always introduce those names as he pronounces them. “Both were London poets. Getting to teach them in situ with all the cultural materials, it’s hard to put into words how much it adds to stand in the same hall where Twelfth Night was performed, or to walk down Tabard street, where Harry Bailly’s inn once stood, which Chaucer chose as his lodgie when he pilgrims the night before they set out.”

In addition to their courses, the students made day trips to Canterbury, Oxford, and Bath. They spent three days as well in the city of York—one of the most ancient and architecturally splendid settlements in the British Isles, and home to York Minster, the largest Gothic church in northern Europe.

Other highlights included weekly trips to plays at theaters both famous and new by participating in the English department’s “London Program”—on your check (and wise poet and scholar lives on today).

St. Helen’s Bishopsgate, where bishops tower the huge oblong glass building, known as the London Gherkin.

St. Helen’s Bishopsgate

New Faculty Books

Mathra Bayless’s Sin and Filth in Medieval Culture: the Devil in the Landscape (Routledge) offers an important new contribution to the history of the body, analyzing the role of filth as the material dimension of the human body. Bayless, a former graduate student of Professor William Rossi, offers an original and wide-ranging approach to the subject of filth in medieval literature, art, and society. Bayless demonstrates how religious and social meanings of filth and sin influenced the secular world, from town planning to the execution of traitors. She considers the symbolic order of the body and how different aspects of the body were assigned moral meanings. Bayless links the concept of sin to the idea of a new earth, color and religion, and offers an important new contribution to the study of medieval thought and culture. Bayless’s book will be of interest to medievalists, historians of religion, and scholars of medieval literature.

James Earl’s Beginning the Mahabharata: A Reader’s Guide to the Frame Stories (Asian Studies Association) takes an innovative approach to the Mahabharata, ancient India’s epic of war and ethics (dharma) and one of Hinduism’s sacred scriptures (the Ramayana and the Bhagavad-Gita are two of its chapters). A powerful and beautiful narrative, the Mahabharata presents particular challenges for Western readers. It is immensely longer than any Western epic. Even more daunting are its complex structure and unfamiliar aesthetic. It characterizes itself as “oceanic,” and famously claims to contain everything. Anyone wanting to read the Mahabharata in English will find no helpful guidance in print, and helpful guidance is definitely needed. This book opens with a set of framework stories that are the most recent translator calls “frankly confusing, even bewildering.” Earl’s Beginning the Mahabharata guides the reader through the openings and junctures, analyzing the epic’s major themes and narrative strategies. This guide provides an ideal way to begin one of world literature’s greatest reading projects.

Sangita Gopal’s Conjugations: Marriage and Form in New Bollywood Cinema (Ohio State) offers a groundbreaking study of the most recent wave of Indian cinema. Gopal argues that the seemingly endless proliferation of Hindi films defies the global marketplace in the early 1990s, its film industry transformed radically. Production and distribution of films became centralized, advertising and marketing created a largely middle-class audience, and films began to fit into genres like science fiction and horror. Conjugations argues that the films’ evolving treatment of romantic relationships are key to understanding these changes, analyzing recent Hindi films and trends—the decline of song-and-dance sequences, the upgraded status of the horror genre, and the rise of the multiplex and multiplot—the book demonstrates that the form of the colonial duo reflects other social forces in India’s new consumerist and global society and how these relationships exemplify different formulas of contemporary living. A provocative account of how cultural artifacts embody globalization’s effect on cultural politics, Gopal’s book promises to stimulate and energize the study of Hindi film.

Fulbright Visiting Professor Wolfgang Hochbruck has published Die Geschopfe des Epimetheus. Veteranen, Erinnerung und die Reproduktion der amdikanischen Buergerkrieges (The Creatures of Epimetheus. Veterans, Memory, and the Reproduction of the American Civil War) (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft) in Germany. Hochbruck’s book is a frame of reference to the construction of the public cultural memory of the American Civil War in the United States. It offers an account of the interactions between military veterans, popular culture, and the culture and history that started commercializing the Civil War almost immediately—which in his book tells that the Civil War became a cultural and religious history. Hochbruck’s book demonstrates that veterans’ memories played an important role in reproducing the Civil War. This book also engages in an analysis of the actual forms and ideological work of stereotypical images, myths, metaphors, and popular representations and addresses the political and social forces that have informed popular understandings of the Civil War. Hochbruck’s book demonstrates that popular representations and’s imaginative power of the Civil War.

Collins Professor of the Humanities, David Leibovitz’s edited collection, Asian-American Literature (Routledge), answers the urgent need for an authoritative, scholarly, and accessible critical survey of this field. As a result of research on and around Asian-American literature, American writers whose provenance lies in Asia have been producing the most recent translation calls “frankly confusing, even bewildering.” Earl’s Beginning the Mahabharata guides the reader through the openings and junctures, analyzing the epic’s major themes and narrative strategies. This guide provides an ideal way to begin one of world literature’s greatest reading projects.

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Graduate Students Organize a Symposium on Strategies for “Teaching the Environment”

This June, a group of graduate students in English and environmental studies collaborated to organize and present the symposium, “Teaching the Environment: Strategies for Educators and Adjuncts,” during the annual Knight Browsing Room, panelists shared innovative teaching practices and discussed new approaches to environmental pedagogy. The event grew out of a Research Roundtable of humanities that took place this past February as part of UO’s 2012 Graduate Research Forum, “Research Matters.”

In this year’s version, consisting of opening remarks by English Professor Emerita Molly Westling, followed by two panels: “Slow Reading: Environmental Approaches to Literary and Cultural Studies,” which explored what the teaching of literary and cultural studies in English classes means and how students can engage with and understand environmental issues, and “Teaching Environmental Humanities at UO that works to promote innovation, excellence, and diversity in graduate education, the grant will go to support graduate students specializing in the study of race and ethnicity. The proposal is designed to support the development of a new initiative for mentorship and professionalization of graduate students specializing in the study of race and ethnicity. Nationalism and Contemporary African American Women’s Novels, is forthcoming from the University of Virginia Press; the book examines novels by Toni Cade Bambara, Paule Marshall, Gloria Naylor, Ntozake Shange, and Toni Morrison and argues that those writers use their texts to reclaim and revise cultural nationalism as everyday and extraordinary work of women building African American community. After beginning his career at the University of Exeter in the UK, Dr. Whalan joined the Department this fall as the Robert D. and Evi E. Horn Professor of English. His research focuses on early-twentieth-century American culture, particularly the Harlem Renaissance, American modernism, and the cultural impact of World War One. He is the author of American Culture in the 1910s (Edinburgh, 2010); The Poetry of the Harlem Renaissance: The Poetry of Race, New Negro (Florida, 2008); and Race, Manhood, and Modernism in America: The Short Story Cycles of Sherwood Anderson and Jessamyn West (Tannerasse, 2007); and the editor of The Letters of Jean Toomer, 1919–1924 (Tennessee, 2006). He has published articles in the journals American Art, Modern Fiction Studies, Modernist/ Modernism, and American Culture, among others. Mark Whalan is writing a book on American literature in World War One that examines how literature mediated a period of transition in American understandings of citizenship and the state.
Assistant Professor Organizes Symposium on Place and Displacement in African American Literature

This past March, Assistant Professor Courtney Throssell, a specialist in African American literature and "foodways" literature, organized and participated in the symposium "Place and Displacement in African American Literature." The energetic and illuminating symposium, attended by more than a hundred students and members of the faculty and community, was part of a 2011–12 collaboration between two research interest groups (RIGs) at the UO for the Center for the Study of Women in Society (CSWS), the Department of Ethnic Studies, the Oregon Humanities Center, and the UO School of Law.

The symposium presented an impressive group of emerging and established scholars of African American literature. Eve Dunbar, assistant professor of English at Vassar College, specializes in African American literature and cultural expression, Black feminism, and theories of Black diaspora. She is completing her book manuscript, tentatively titled Black Is a Region, which explores the aesthetic and political ties that bind literary genre, Black American nationalism, and Black cultural nationalism in the literary works of mid-twentieth-century African American women. She spoke on the subject "Place and Displacement in the Ethnographic and Literary Writings of Zora Neale Hurston."

Jennifer Williams, visiting assistant professor of women's studies at Goucher College, studies twentieth-century Black diasporic literature and culture; women, gender, and sexuality; trauma and migration; and visual culture, and is working on a book manuscript that focuses on trauma, visuality, and Black subjectivity. She spoke on "The Erotics of Travel in African American Women's Fiction." Assistant Professor Throssell herself, whose first book, Women's Work: Nationalism and Contemporary African American Women's Novels, is forthcoming from the University of Virginia Press, spoke on "Vertamae Grosvenor's Revolutionary Recipes," a part of her new book project, a study of Zora Neale Hurston. When asked to reflect on the event, she explained: "Perhaps my favorite thing about this symposium was that it put UO graduates and undergraduates in conversation with the broad and varied field of African American literature. It was a real thrill to see these brilliant young women and men challenge my students. It’s hard for me to think of anything more fun and downright useful than that." Williams was impressed by the current thinking about Zora Neale Hurston, Lucille Clifton, Nina Simone, travel narratives, and cookbooks. She concludes her analysis, quoting Throssell: "Let me indulge in a bit of Frank Capra fantasy and reflect on how we might be a different place or Al Kitzhaber’s presence here from 1962 to 1980. He was a major force in rhetorical studies and the presidency of the university, and throughout higher education in this country and it deserves to be remembered. Since Al labored in the field of teaching writing to college students, and changed how it was done throughout the country, his work has affected the lives of countless numbers of students. We would not be the same without Al’s decision in 1962 to choose Oregon as a main site of Project English, a major educational initiative of the Eisenhower administration that resulted from Al’s participation in a White House conference on the teaching of English in secondary schools for K–12 students. Oregon students, and changed how it was done throughout the country, his work has affected the lives of countless numbers of students. We would not be the same without Al’s decision in 1962 to choose Oregon as a main site of Project English, a major educational initiative of the Eisenhower administration that resulted from Al’s participation in a White House conference on the teaching of English in secondary schools for K–12 students. Oregon students, and changed how it was done throughout the country, his work has affected the lives of countless numbers of students. 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Members of the English department were saddened this year by the loss of David J. O’Connell, a beloved faculty member and valued alumnus. Brian Geddes Booth 68 passed away on March 7, 2012. Booth attended the University of Oregon and graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1958 with a BA in economics, though took a break in graduate school to travel and study in Europe. Following a stint in the Army, he earned his JD from Stanford Law School. Booth returned to Oregon to begin a career as a corporate lawyer, specializing in securities law. He was a forceful writer for what he called “all things Oregon,” Booth’s notable good works for Oregon’s literary, cultural, and environmental community were recognized with the Oregonian’s Outstanding Alumnus Award in 1999, and he was an unterado at the OUS, wrote a satirical column, “The Skeptic’s Tank,” for the Oregon Daily Emerald and helped organize the first Earth Day in 1970. Over the course of his illustrious career, he headed the boards of five statewide organizations: the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia and had a bone marrow transplant in 2007. The leukemia returned and she spent the greater part of her last few years at Oregon Health and Science University with high hopes of beating the disease and finding a cure. She chronicled this journey through her writing and blog postings.

In Memoriam

Donald Taylor, emeritus professor of English, who was known for his wit and wisdom, died August 14, 2012. Donald was sixty-eight. He was born August 8, 1924, in Portland, Oregon. Donald earned a PhD in 1950 from the University of California at Berkeley, where he was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia and had a bone marrow transplant in 2007. The leukemia returned and she spent the greater part of her last few years at Oregon Health and Science University with high hopes of beating the disease and finding a cure. She chronicled this journey through her writing and blog postings.

Robert F. Garratt, PhD ’72, also recalled “a long relationship that grew in stages from friendship to mentor and back as a friend. His influence on my own professional career is enormous, in scholarship, in teaching and in the ways of the profession as a whole. In that sense, the German word Doktorvater seems more appropriate than ‘tisserand’ to describe his role in my career as a teacher. In the German system, a Doktorvater remains connected to his students as something like an ‘uncle’. This was certainly the case with Kingsley and me.”

By his colleagues, Kingsley was valued for his good companionship and his unfailing sense of humor. In the old days, there was often a small social gathering in his office at the end of the day, when two or three colleagues would assemble for the walk home with Kingsley. Those who knew him will miss him but appreciate his legacy. They say that when Kingsley had gone, they had the good fortune to enjoy his company.

Kingsley is survived by his wife, his children, his grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. The family suggests that those wishing to make a donation in his memory might designate it for the A. Kingsley Weatherhead Professorship of English at the UI.

New Arrivals

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Anne Laskaya received an Oregon Humanities Center Research Grant for fall term 2011 to work on a new edition of William Caxton's Men of the World, the first printed "encyclopedia" in English, published in 1481 and extending only 200 pages. She is aiming to complete the edition in summer 2012.

David Li Collins Professor of the Humanities, was invited in April by the English department and the Center for Humanities at Grinnell College for a talk on the change of the humanities between globalism and neoliberalism, and postdisciplinary rethinking of the issue of "Jia Zhangke's film SJ/Life." The four-volume collection of criticism that he edited, "Asian American" (Routledge, 2011) is forthcoming (also see the related article on New Faculty). He was also promoted to full professor.

Gordon Sayre was awarded a Fulbright fellowship at Université Laval in Quebec, Canada, for spring term 2012.

Steven Shankman coedited (with Dmitri Spirid) and wrote the preface to Christianity and Islam in the Context of Contempt (Königshausen and Neumann, 2011). He has also been promoted to full professor.

Priscilla Ovalle has been promoted to associate professor with indefinite tenure. She will begin as the associate director of the UO's Cinema Studies Program in 2012-13.

Paul Peppis is a "salvaging dialect and cultural cross-dressing in Claude McKay's Conquistador" forthcoming in Twentieth-Century Literature. He also won the Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching (see related article).

Mark Quigley has been promoted to senior associate director of the UO's Center for Latino and South Asian Studies and professor of the Anthropology of Globalization.
Department Notes

Review, and won an Oregon Humanities Center Graduate Dissertation Fellowship.

Mary Ganster has been appointed as one of the two assistant directors of the UO Composition Program for 2012–13.

Hannah Godwin presented “It is All about the Light: A Rhizomatic Mapping of Andrew Wylie’s The Invisible Woman” at the International Deluske Studies Conference in New Orleans.

MARCUS HENSELL participated actively in this year’s International Conference on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University; he participated in two roundtables, presenting “Riccirolles by Besouf” and “Monsters: A Definition,” and organized a panel titles “Aglaeca: What’s In a Name?”

C. Parker Krieg received the Sarah Kirkness Kirby Award for best essay written in an English department graduate seminar, and presented “The Machine Is a Communist: Time, Ecology, and the Modernism of Lewis Mumford” at the Art History Department of the Graduate International Student Symposium at the UO.


Martina Miles presented “Placing the Postapolcalyptic: Exploring Postapocalyptic Representations of the Pacific Northwest” in a panel arranged by the American Folklore Society at the Modern Language Association annual conference in Seattle.

Steven Norton’s article, “The Other Is Not Allowed to Be: Elision and Condenzation in Avatar,” is forthcoming in the Arizona Quarterly.

Sarah Ray Rondot presented “TransFugitives: Dogs, Gendering Transitions on YouTube” at the UCLC Center for the Study of Women’s annual Thinking Gender conference.

Stephen Siperstein presented “Under Mars of Ice and Heaps of Data: The Park Bench in the Media: Challenging Cultural Paradigms” at the April BECAUSE Regionalism in Denise Giardina’s Coal Mine Novels” at the Association for the Study of Literature and Culture conference at Indiana University and “The Flowers Are Not Dying: Narratives and Counter Histories in the West of Salt of The Earth” at the 2011 Western Literature Association Conference in Missoula. He published “Lapses of Ecstasy: The Public Shaping of Personal History in Carlos Burols’s America Is in the Heart” in Disclosure. He has also accepted the position of English instructor and coordinator of the English department at Windward School, an independent college prep school in Los Angeles.

In addition to successfully defending his doctoral dissertation, Chris McGill published a Reading of Ecocriticism in the ‘Short Happy Life of Francis Macdonald’, and chaired a panel, “Pushing the Boundaries of Honor,” at the annual conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. He also received a Noelle Norton Award in 2010.


Kathryn Brenna Wardell, PhD ’10, presented a paper, “What’s in Your Baggage?” at the Willa Cather Studies Conference, and co-wrote and directed a dance/theatre performance of “A Walk in the Park,” which was presented “All Hail Rome”: Prestige versus Pulp in HBO’s Game of Thrones.

In addition to successfully defending her doctoral dissertation, Melissa Sexton has been appointed a position in the English Department at Eastern Connecticut State University in Storrs. Her article “Clarissa Assimilation in Eric Liu’s The Last Great Getaway of the Water Bisons” was published by Green Integer Press in 2010. She is also accepted the position of English instructor and coordinator of the English department at Windward School, an independent college prep school in Los Angeles.

In addition to successfully defending her doctoral dissertation, Chelsea Henson has an article, “Hypereal Blessings: Simulated Realism in the Pardoner’s Tale,” forthcoming in Quaestiones, the online journal for the Appalachian and Renaissance Association. She also won UO’s Excellence in Teaching Award.

In addition to successfully defending her doctoral dissertation, MUTU’S Outstanding Teaching Award of Composition Award.

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A. Alaimo’s “Miles of Ice and Heaps of Data: The Park Bench in the Media: Challenging Cultural Paradigms” at the April BECAUSE Regionalism in Denise Giardina’s Coal Mine Novels” at the Association for the Study of Literature and Culture conference at Indiana University and “The Flowers Are Not Dying: Narratives and Counter Histories in the West of Salt of The Earth” at the 2011 Western Literature Association Conference in Missoula. He published “Lapses of Ecstasy: The Public Shaping of Personal History in Carlos Burols’s America Is in the Heart” in Disclosure. He has also accepted the position of English instructor and coordinator of the English department at Windward School, an independent college prep school in Los Angeles.

In addition to successfully defending his doctoral dissertation, Chris McGill published a Reading of Ecocriticism in the ‘Short Happy Life of Francis Macdonald’, and chaired a panel, “Pushing the Boundaries of Honor,” at the annual conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. He also received a Noelle Norton Award in 2010.


Kathryn Brenna Wardell, PhD ’10, presented a paper, “What’s in Your Baggage?” at the Willa Cather Studies Conference, and co-wrote and directed a dance/theatre performance of “A Walk in the Park,” which was presented “All Hail Rome”: Prestige versus Pulp in HBO’s Game of Thrones.

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In winter term 2012, the students of English 313, Teen and Children’s Literature, conducted research into the field of picture books for younger readers (preschool to second grade). Taught by Senior Instructor Miriam Gershow, Teen and Children’s Literature is one of two English courses integral to the University of Oregon Literacy Initiative, established by Professor Emerita Suzanne Clark and Associate Professor Elizabeth Wheeler in 1998 as a community outreach program of the Department of English. After reading Angela and Mark Gooden’s groundbreaking article, “Gender Representation in Notable Children’s Picture Books: 1995–1999” in *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* (July 2001), students in Gershow’s class generated their own research questions about depictions of gender, race, class, family roles, ability, or sexual orientation in picture books. Using the Eugene Public Library’s voluminous Picture Book Collection, students found at least five to ten books to answer their research question and created poster sessions to share their preliminary findings. These poster sessions were later turned into research papers. The reference librarians at the Eugene Public Library were generous with their time and ideas and helped students to narrow their searches and find suitable books to answer their research questions. The library staff then enthusiastically agreed to display a selection of the best of student poster sessions through much of the month of March.