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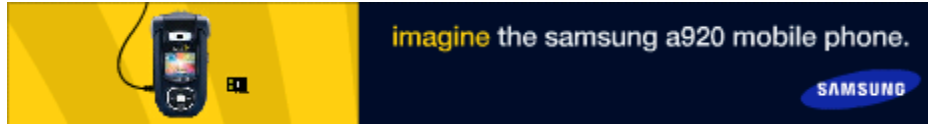
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NEWS

Linking creativity and logic

Allison Deming's poetry depicts relationship between science, art

By Christa Blome and Jocelyne Kravitz

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By Dan Traylor

- **MU Quad holds its 'SIQ'-est event ever**

By Thomas De Vicq and Katrina R. Machorro

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Barometer Staff Report

Allison Hawthorne Deming, essayist and poet, stood at her podium Friday May 12 before an audience of OSU professors and staff members in the Valley Library. Her arms were lifted, enacting her poems as she read them aloud.

"Hemlock," "lichen," and "moss" were a few of the forestry-related words appearing in her poetry.

The poems were based on the exploration during her week-long residency at the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest as part of the Long-Term Ecological Reflections Program.

Her challenge was to weave creative language and her observations of the forest in with scientific terminology, Deming said, introducing her first poem.

Deming laughed while reading her poetry on Friday evening, saying that there is a risk of using a ridiculous metaphor to portray what a forest is beyond scientific research. She added that it helps us understand a deeper meaning in terms of landscape.

"If you like science so much, why didn't you become a scientist?" one woman asked after listening to Deming's poetry reading.

"My sense of wonder is deepened by scientific knowledge," Deming answered.

As a child, Deming describes science as being a part of her imaginative world, adding that it never left her and entered her poetic life.

By learning new terminology and by looking up the real vocabulary of a subject, such as forestry, Deming said she can accurately intermix new vocabulary into her poems and avoid tired, overused words.

Deming asked the audience what would happen if interdisciplinary education were more prevalent in schools. She also asked what gaps exist in the lack of creativity in logical areas.

In specific relation to science, Deming added that this subject "needs to remember that the human experience is not objective," and that creativity must be intrinsically woven into the sciences.

Charles Goodrich, who works for OSU's "Spring Creek Project" in the department of philosophy, helped organize the "Butterflies and Blues 2" event at the covered bridge in Corvallis Saturday May 13.

During the event there was live acoustic blues performed by Billy Lanham and Jeff Hino, as well as poetry read by Deming.

The Spring Creek Project, which coordinated both of Deming's poetry readings, has a mission statement of bringing "together the practical wisdom of the environmental sciences, the clarity of philosophical analysis, and the creative, expressive power of the written word, to find new ways to understand and re-imagine our relation to the natural world."


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Mark Hixon, a biologist at Oregon State, has attended several of the Spring Creek's events.

Hixon described the project as one that "offers a remarkable opportunity for environmental scientists to integrate their intellectual, left-brained worldview with the spiritual, right-brained perspective of environmental writers, poets, and artists."

These events are "essential for successful conservation and sustainability efforts," he said.

Deming concluded her poetry reading by saying, "there are just so many ways that it [science and creativity] could be integrated."

Linking creativity and logic

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