

Prominent UO researcher in child development dies

Psychology professor Beverly Fagot died on March 22 after battling breast cancer

By Teri Meeuwse
Higher Education Editor

They used to swim to the deep end of the pool and see who could stay afloat, but she always lasted the longest.

Late psychology Professor Beverly Fagot (pronounced Fag-oh) was in excellent shape. She was a competitive swimmer during her high school years in Phoenix, Ariz., and continued to compete at Occidental College in Los Angeles, where she earned her bachelor's degree in 1960.

Before Fagot, who was 60, died from breast cancer March 27, she would swim in Gerlinger's pool or at the Easter Seal pool three times a week with psychology peer Bill Strange and her graduate professor, Richard Littman.

"By the time we were done with one lap, she would have already swam three," Littman said.

That's why it came as such a surprise when he found out Fagot — his student, colleague

and friend of about 30 years — was suffering from breast cancer, he said.

"I had to hear it from a friend of a friend," Littman said. "Students aren't supposed to die before their professors."

Fagot earned her doctorate from the University in 1967. She began her career at the University in 1965, working in the Office of Academic Advising. She was an instructor and assistant to the director before serving as director from 1969-77. She worked as an assistant professor and then an associate professor in the psychology department from 1978-87, when she became a professor.

From then on she divided her time between the psychology department and the Oregon Social Learning Center in Eugene, where she worked as a research scientist since 1984.

Fagot was a prominent figure in child development research, said Jerry Patterson, a fellow research scientist and primary investigator for OSLC.

"When we first hired her, she helped build a lab in which she drove around, and families went

through [the lab] for some of our research," he said. "It was a school bus. The breaks didn't always work and the tires went flat, so she got to deal with that."

Other stories like this one were shared during Fagot's 60th birthday party March 22 in her bedroom at her Eugene residence, Littman said.

"By that time she was in hospice care, so we all knew this would probably be the last time we got to see her," he said. "Everybody was there — students, her kids, her husband and some research people from the OSLC. She was laid flat out and had just had her hair done. It was very pleasant. We shared anecdotes, but she kept correcting us. She was tired and kept fading in and out, but woke up to correct us. She was in control."

Fagot had always been in control, Littman said.

"She was always very direct," he said. "She didn't play games. She was very valuable to have in the psychology department. There was nothing shallow about her or her work. She had a lot of impact in child development re-

search and had a lot of get-up-and-go."

Fagot was very interested in studying the role of temperament and genetic traits in the early years of childhood and in how sex differences factor into behavioral development, Littman said. She conducted studies on the impact of families on child development and behavioral problems and on ways to prevent those problems.

Fagot printed numerous essays, edited a psychology journal and was a member of many grant panels and review boards, including the National Institute of Child Development and Life Span and the Prevention Review Committee, Littman said.

But not all of her time went to work, literature and review boards. She was also very interested in petroglyphs (ancient art markings) and was recognized by both the Utah and American Rock Art Research associations.

"She was very active in the wilderness," Patterson said. "She would drive her jeep into the southwest woods and look at petroglyphs with a small party of naturalists or determined stu-

dents. She was very dedicated and committed in everything she did, including looking at petroglyphs. She had a whole collection of posters, pictures and an outstanding set of slides."

Her outdoor pursuits also included kayaking and rafting, he said.

"The whole staff would go on picnics by a river and she would be sure to bring along her kayak," he said.

The psychology department will hold an affair later in the term, but the wake, held at an arboretum on Mt. Shasta last Friday, was very private, Littman said. Students, family and friends shared more anecdotes in memory of Fagot.

"There was a striking number of students there who had their careers launched with help from Beverly," Patterson said.

Fagot is survived by her husband, Robert Fagot; her two sons, Brian Fagot of Portland and Clark Fagot of Eugene; a sister, Vicky Cooley of Manhattan Beach, Calif.; a granddaughter, Alexis; and her parents Dorothy and Albert Fields of Phoenix, Ariz.

Experts: Make pesticide use public

The EPA estimates that 2.2 billion pounds of pesticides are used nationally each year

By David Ryan
Freelance Reporter

No one knows the amount of pesticides used in Oregon.

That was the catalyst behind a forum OSPERG held last night on the Oregon Pesticide Right-to-Know movement.

Randy Tucker, state toxics advocate, and Neva Hassanein, a representative from the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, spoke about the findings of the Right-to-Know movement and its plan to encourage legislators to make pesticide use public.

"Pesticides are chemical or biological agents that are intentionally introduced into the environment to kill or maim living things," said Hassanein. "This includes herbicides. The problem is that pesticides don't distinguish the nervous system of a bug from that of a human."

Nationally, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that about 2.2 billion pounds of pesticides are used each year; howev-

er, the key word is "estimates."

"What we're trying to do is set specific knowledge about pesticide use," said Tucker. "Anybody that is using pesticides professionally would be made to report what they're using, where they're using it and how much."

The Right-to-Know movement would accomplish this through the state Department of Agriculture.

"The Department of Agriculture already licenses exterminators," Hassanein said. "We figure why not license the people that use pesticides."

Not everybody that uses pesticides would be forced to report their use under Right-to-Know legislation.

"Who we are not trying to require to fill out a report are average citizens who go to the store and buy pesticides for use in their homes," Tucker said. "But what we do want is to capture those numbers by making stores report how much pesticides they stock."

A study of the Willamette River conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey found that 48 different pesticides were used at 60 tested sites along the river. It also found

Amazon Creek in south Eugene to be the most pesticide-infested stream in Oregon.

"Getting location-specific information about pesticides is important," Hassanein said. "We can't even talk about problems until we know the source of that problem."

The agricultural industry, which could be viewed by some as an opponent to the Right-to-Know movement, has actually shown support.

"There are articles and editorials in [agricultural industry newspapers] that government statistics on pesticides are inflated and unrealistic," Hassanein said. "They're all for more specific information. They feel — and we do, too — that agricultural industry is not the whole problem."

Tucker and Hassanein said that many other groups supported the Right-to-Know movement.

"It's got strong support from every group in the state ... Republicans, Democrats, people that live in Eugene and people that live in Portland," Hassanein said. "The thing about Right-to-Know is that who is going to attack that you have a right to know?"

"It's not that we're banning chemicals, we're just finding out about their use."

ASUO: Office should be receptive to all

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sponsibility to tell [student groups] and work with them."

If elected, the pair plans to make the ASUO office receptive to everyone by making it more inviting to the average student and adding couches and round tables. They also want to allocate ASUO resources — computers, fund-raising personnel and office space — to student programs that need help.

"I guess it's a cliché to say we want to clean up student government," Kriegel said. "Actually, we just want to clean up the office."

The ASUO Executive is supposed to enable student groups and programs by becoming a tool for students to use, he said. The Executive office itself should not be the focus of student government, according to Kriegel and Labavitch.

"The student population on campus is extremely active," Labavitch explained. "We

need to push student government into the background and push student programs into the spotlight."

Kriegel and Labavitch want to involve more students on campus. Non-traditional students, such as parents, law students and older students, need to be able to get involved, they explained. Kriegel and Labavitch plan to visit co-ops and eat with undergraduate students in the dorms.

"We want students to feel the effects of better student programming even if they are not involved in student government," Kriegel explained.

Campus safety, student parking options and a tuition- and incidental-fee freeze are also issues Kriegel and Labavitch want to address if elected.

Most of all, Kriegel and Labavitch would want to get out of their office. "Our skills would be wasted if we sit in the office all day," Kriegel said.



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