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# Berkeley Emeriti

# T I M E S



January 2011



John Ohala, PhD

Department of Linguistics

## “Sound Change in the Laboratory”

Saturday, February 5, 2011

The Faculty Club

Looking at Professor Ohala’s CV brings to mind a well-known song from the musical “My Fair Lady.” The lyrics of the tune “The Rain in Spain Stays Mainly in the Plain” go something like “Ay not I, O not Ow, say Rain not Rine.” So instructed Professor Henry Higgins as he tirelessly instructed Eliza Doolittle to shed her Cockney speech.

While Professor Ohala is not trying to change the way speech is pronounced, he is focused on understanding how pronunciation changes over time. Ohala explains that sound change is the change in pronunciation over time (and thus in regional dialects). It is why Aussies and Brits sound different from Americans; why Latin ped, Greek pod- and English foot not only mean the same thing but were derived phonologically from a common Indo-European root.

His presentation will emphasize a new approach to understanding such changes, namely using laboratory means (on speech articulation, aerodynamics, acoustics, and perception) to explain the whys and wherefores of such changes. The end result is an improvement in reconstructing the phonological roots (and ‘routes’) of pronunciation change over the centuries and millennia.

Currently Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, Chicago-born Professor Ohala earned his AB at the University of Notre Dame in English and went onto UCLA for his MA and PhD in linguistics. He joined the Department of Linguistics at Berkeley in 1970, becoming full professor in 1977.

Like many academics he has travelled extensively around the world lecturing and conducting research. His globe-trotting brought him as a lecturer to the Arab School of Science and Technology in Morocco, and the Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas. He also served as an Exchange Professor at Leningrad State University and Visiting Professor at City University of Hong Kong. Among his awards are Fullbright Fellowship at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Tokyo, and a National Science Foundation Post-Doc at the University of Copenhagen. His research interests are in experimental phonology and phonetics and ethological aspects of communication.

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**Berkeley Emeriti**

**TIMES**



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## Murder on Ice: *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*

*Note: If you were unable to attend the November meeting, you'll want to read this insightful summary of the presentation. Thanks to Betsey Warrick for preparing it.*

Linda Rugg, PhD, Associate Professor of Scandinavian Literature, brought her enthusiasm for Scandinavian crime fiction and interest in how such a genre came about to the audience at the Association's November meeting. How is it that Sweden, with its low crime rate and ongoing search for the perfect society, would generate such an unlikely literature?

Early in the 1800's French detective writers had used Napoleon's establishment of a police department to create the role of a detective. This led to different perceptions of what a detective should look like, how he should behave and what aspects of culture should be revealed. Sherlock Holmes epitomized the detective finding crime solutions based on logic and deduction which became a model for American writers with a significant additional element: violence. Russian writers explored the moral aspects of crime in their works. In all instances, it was and is clear that detective fiction mirrors the society it reflects while exploring morality, gender roles, government agencies and crime of various types.

Scandinavian detective fiction began in the 1960's with two prominent married authors, who, while trying to uphold the values of the society, also took literary aim at government agencies. Their attacks often focused on the police, portrayed as fascistic and reactionary. The writers envisioned increased violence in Sweden.

In 1986 Prime Minister Olof Palme was assassinated. His murder shocked the Swedish people who were struggling with increased fear of foreigners, racist government policies and evident violence against women. Stieg Larson, journalist, found his voice for these social concerns with his books, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, and its sequels, *The Girl Who Played with Fire* and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest*. This trilogy captured readers worldwide. USA Today (12/23/10) reports that 50 million copies of his books have been sold in 46 countries, 14 million in the U.S. alone. Larson's characters are compelling; the plots are complex. His female protagonist is unique, a "maverick" who is a brilliant computer hacker with a photographic memory.

Upon Larson's untimely death in 2004 due to a heart attack, questions about royalties surfaced. It appears that his parents from whom he was estranged gained the money. His long-time partner has his computer. Is there a fourth book caught inside? Time will tell!

*Editor's Note: Stieg Larsson was named Author of the Year in an online poll conducted by USA Today. His books have been made into movies which remain true to the narrative and character development of the books.*

### Future Association Luncheons

Saturday, March 26, 2011

Saturday, May 7, 2011

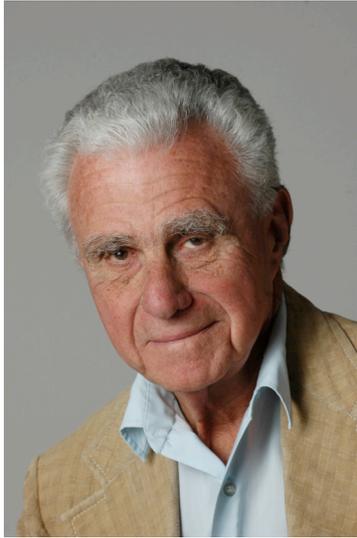
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## Meet Your UCB Emeriti Association Board

As we begin a new year, some valued Board Members will leave us; all have served well, and it seems appropriate to share a little background about those people who represent the 400-member Association on the Board. Those profiles not appearing in this issue will appear in the next.

### **George Leitmann**

Professor Leitmann served as Second Vice President for the past two years. Professor Emeritus in the College of Engineering Science, Leitmann's accomplishments are many and diverse. He is still adding to them and will be receiving the Bellman Control Heritage Award of the American Automatic Control Council at their forthcoming June meeting. Leitmann joined the Association 20 years ago to stay in touch with fellow emeriti and stay abreast of emeriti affairs. More importantly, he wanted to have input into issues and assist in resolving them. He is particularly interested in topics having to do with medical plans and taxes as well as cultural and scientific topics. He advocates exploring avenues where the extensive and specialized expertise of Association members can be directed toward service on boards and committees. "After years of faithful service, George has retired from his position of Second Vice President, but I hope he will continue to offer his thoughtful advice and guidance," says Association President Glassey.



### **Caroline Kane**

Emeritus Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry, Caroline Kane is a relatively new member of the Association having joined two years ago when she retired. She moved into the Second Vice President role with the new year. She wants to support the Association and finds it valuable in providing her



with campus news and information on issues. Given the attention the healthcare reform legislation has attracted in the last year, it is not surprising that she wants to hear more about it and its impact on seniors from a knowledgeable source. One area of service she suggests for members' consideration is setting up volunteer opportunities in local K-12 classrooms to share the experience as well as content knowledge as a teacher's classroom assistant.

### **Louise Taylor**

Professor Taylor spent 34 years in the Chancellor's Office followed by eight more years in the College of Engineering to help establish the Dept. of Bioengineering, at UC Merced to create a 10 year budget for the new campus, and at the Office of the President helping with the California Initiative for Science and Innovation. She previously served as Association President and chair of the Council of UC Emeriti Associations (CUCEA) and is currently Information Officer of CUCEA. Taylor is a 1998 recipient of one of the highest honors bestowed at UC Berkeley—The Berkeley Citation awarded for extraordinary achievement in one's field coupled with outstanding service to the Berkeley campus. She was awarded the Emerita title upon her retirement.

She joined UCBEA 10 years ago having been invited by those in leadership roles. She, too, wanted to remain active with the University and has an interest in seeing members explore a mentoring program for students and for assistant professors, similar to what UC San Diego offers.

### **President's Message**

I'm pleased to announce that the Emeriti Times has a new editor. Joan Trezek, who has an extensive communications and public relations background, has taken on the role. Her husband, George Trezek, is an Association member and Professor Emeritus in the College of Engineering. See her note on page 4.

Also of note is a new book by John Letiche, Dept. of Economics, to be released in March, "Crises and Compassion: From Russia to the Golden Gate." More details on Amazon.com.

*Roger Glassey*

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### **UCB on YouTube? You Bet!**

As the new Emeriti Times Editor, it was helpful to go online and dig out some information to add interest to the newsletter copy. Of course, it is no surprise that Googling “UC Berkeley” yields numerous paths to follow. I learned at the UCB News Center that Steven Chu, Energy Secretary, was named the 2011 Alumnus of the Year by the Cal Alumni Association; that the Psychology Dept. reports that folks over the age of 60 have a hard time keeping a lid on their feelings when viewing heartbreaking scenes, but are better than their younger counterparts at seeing the positive side of a stressful situation.

If you’re not a frequent visitor to YouTube, you might be unaware that there is a wealth of videotaped info on the UCB site; lectures in diverse fields, ranging from five minutes to perhaps 35 minutes; commencement addresses, speeches of visiting dignitaries. Video clips are grouped by date, most frequently viewed, as well as ratings under the categories Campus Life, Events, and Cal Athletics.

Does anyone look at the site? You bet. Some posts indicate several hundred views; others display nearly half a million—for physics, computer science, integrative biology. Check it out at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/UCBerkeley>. You’ll be surprised what you find.

*Joan Trezek, Editor*

### **UCBRC Constituent Survey - Please Respond**

The UCB Retirement Center needs your opinion! To participate in a survey about current and potential programs and services: 1) go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/retireesurvey2011> or 2) call the office (510/642.5461) and ask to have a copy mailed to you. You can even enter to win one of six \$50 Cal Student Store gift cards upon completion of the survey. Please respond by February 4, 2011.