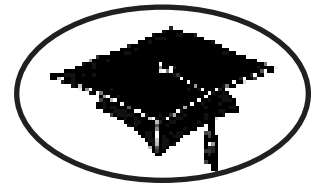

Berkeley Emeriti



T I M E S

September 2005

Professor Emeritus Ervin Hafter
Principal Investigator and Faculty Sponsor
Auditory Perception Laboratory, Department of Psychology

“Shared Attention and Perception”
Saturday, September 24, 2005

We are pleased to bring you Professor Ervin Hafter, our first speaker of this academic year, at the September luncheon. Of his presentation, Professor Hafter, who has the honor of being a 40-year Cal football ticket holder, suggested the alternative title, “Shared Attention and Perception: Watching Football at Memorial Stadium.”

Hafter’s talk will reflect his work at the Auditory Perception Laboratory, where he serves as Principal Investigator. The lab is primarily concerned with issues involved in the higher-order processing of auditory information, especially as it impacts listening in real world situations. The research program concerns the localization of sounds in space, including the ability to integrate information collected from both ears and the grouping of sounds into perceptual objects. The research also involves the various types of attentional mechanisms available to listeners and the tasks that are associated with them, such as the ability of listeners to focus attention on different auditory dimensions and the role this plays in distinguishing relations between elements in those dimensions. A new direction in the lab involves characterizing the mechanisms underlying listener sensitivity to fluctuations in the level of an auditory stimulus. Some of their most recent projects have to do with spatial hearing,

After receiving his undergraduate degree at Purdue University, his Ph.D. at the University of Texas, Austin, and two years at Tracor, an electronics firm, Hafter came to the Berkeley campus in 1966. He is a fellow at the Society of Experimental Psychology and the Acoustical Society of America, where he served as Chair of its Technical Committee - Psychological and Physiological Acoustics. He also served as Chair of the Department of Psychology (1987-92).

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Berkeley Emeriti

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Help for "The People at the End of the Road"

On May 7, 2005 Professor Vincent Resh of the Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management spoke to the Association about the control of river blindness in West Africa. At the beginning of his talk Professor Resh showed a slide of a blind adult being led by a child. For the past several centuries this pathetic sight would have been common in one of the most fertile regions of West Africa. The 20-year long international effort to eliminate this disease Professor Resh described as "...the most successful public health development in history."

River blindness (onchocerciasis) is named for the parasitic worm onchocera. Its vector is the female black fly that bites only in daytime and does not venture far from the rivers where its larva live. Prior to the arrival of European missionaries and colonists, the natives had a strong aversion to approaching the rivers in the day and went there for water only at night or early morning. The Europeans believed that this custom was based on foolish superstition, depriving the people of the use of the most fertile land near the rivers. Within two generations the riverbanks were populated, and river blindness became a major problem.

The disease does not result from a single bite but from the accumulation of worms from many bites (estimated to be about 10,000/year per person in most of the affected population) that stresses the immune system and creates scar tissue in the eye, eventually causing blindness. Other outcomes include ugly skin eruptions, debilitating anemia and stunted growth.

The international effort to control river blindness began shortly after Robert McNamara became president of the World Bank. On a tour of West Africa he was told that if river blindness could be controlled, the standard of living of the people could rise to that of the rest of Africa. This would enable people to resettle the river valleys and raise household income from an abysmal \$100 to about \$400 per year.

A pesticide application was undertaken in which for 20 years helicopters sprayed more than 35,000 miles of rivers weekly to control black fly. A large-scale study determined that fish population and pesticide application were not related, a very important finding given that fish from the rivers are the most important source of protein for the people.

For the treatment of the parasitic worms in human beings the drug of choice was Ivermectin, widely used in the United States for the treatment of heartworm in dogs, but also registered for human use. The manufacturer of the drug, Merck, generously agreed to provide it free of charge (over objections of some bottom-liners and risk controllers). Over twenty thousand community-based volunteers medicated all children over five years of age. The annual distribution of drugs reached seven million people in eleven countries.

The remarkable success of this program has enabled the resettlement of 67.5 million acres supplying food to 17 million people. This good news, so rare from Africa, illustrates what a sustained international effort can do for a relatively modest expenditure. At a cost of about \$500 million the people of West Africa have been liberated from this terrible scourge. Self-help has succeeded. Professor Resh is the last "European" scientist working on the

Continued, page 3

Volunteer Opportunities

The diverse talents among emeriti are often of extraordinary esteem to community agencies. Programs hoping to find someone to fill a special niche include:

- A non-profit, award-winning vocational school serving low-income and under-served students, seeks a volunteer emeritus Business School professor to prepare a business plan for start-up, profit-making enterprises. All profits will be used to replace rapidly diminishing Federal and state grants and loans.
- A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteer professional assistance from the Optometry, Business, Public Policy or Public Health departments to join it in their mission of providing low-cost eye glasses to the under-served in developing countries. The organization currently has clinics in six Central and South American countries and is in its 15th year.

For more information on both of these opportunities, call Arthur H. Rosenfeld, Professor Emeritus, Department of Physics, at 510/527-1060.

"...End of the Road," continued
project; all the others are African.

However, the elimination of disease, while a necessary condition for social and economic development, is not a sufficient condition, and the sustainability of this success is jeopardized by the surge of population into the now habitable land.

Professor Resh's long experience working with the poorest of the poor, per West African expression, "the people at the end of the road," has convinced him of three things: (1) the poorest people are mentally and physically impaired by malnutrition, a cause of poverty; (2) environmental protection pays great economic dividends, and (3) in programs such as this one the social aspects need more consideration.

Cheers to Professor Resh and his colleagues for this impressive achievement of scientific and cooperative effort in the service of humanity!

Larry Waldron

Patron of the Arts Bruce Bolt, 1930-2005

The July 26, 2005 *San Francisco Chronicle* carried an extensive obituary for Bruce Bolt, the seismic scientist, recounting the contributions he made to our community, state, and nation. An important facet of his life concerns his interest in art. In his role as President of the Faculty Club on the Berkeley campus, he was instrumental in the establishment of a Berkeley School collection of art on permanent display in the Club. The collection presents works in oil, fresco, watercolor, gouache, sumi, egg tempera, and charcoal of ten artists who were active in that school from 1930 to 1950, and who have had a great influence on the progress of art education locally and nationally.



The development of the collection had its beginning in early 2003 when Bruce Bolt, knowing that I was a member of the art department, asked me what I might know about the large fresco on a wall of the O'Neill room in the Faculty Club which was not particularly attractive because a glaze of green color had been painted over it. I told him that I had seen the fresco when a student in the late 1930's, and the original colors were brilliant. No one knew why or when the green glaze had been applied; a guess was that it presented male and female figures in the nude and this was found offensive by some club members. Bruce asked me to make tests to determine if the glaze could be removed. Tests showed the glaze to be distemper which could be removed. I had had experience in restoration procedures, and, with two assistants, I removed the glaze and restored the fresco to its original, 1930, glory.

This led Bruce to approve my suggestion that a collection of works by artists who were colleagues of the painter of the fresco, Roy Boynton, be installed in the same room. Among others the room today houses works by Eugene Neuhaus and Worth Ryder, who joined the faculty in 1927, and was largely responsible for the appointment of the other members of the School: John Haley, Margaret Peterson, Erle Loran, Chiura Obata, James McCray, Mary Dumas, and myself.

Karl Kasten, Professor Emeritus

Upcoming Emeriti Survey

As UC emeriti, we are fortunate to have good retirement benefits when many employees across the country are losing theirs. We are also fortunate that the University values us as highly as it does. In these days of tight budgets, it is important that it continues to value us for the contributions we make to its missions.

To ensure that it does, the Council of UC Emeriti Associations (CUCEA), the Committee on University-Emeriti Relations of the Academic Senate and the UC Berkeley Emeriti Association place importance on the upcoming survey, the fifth in a biennial series. It is aimed at providing graphic, detailed and newsworthy evidence of emeriti activities in retirement. The results will be collated by campus and for the University as a whole, and circulated across the UC system to Chancellors, Vice Chancellors, Academic Senate Chairs, the President and The Regents to remind them of the scholarship and service that emeriti, as a group, continue to contribute to the institution.

We are persuaded that the data furnished by past such surveys have served to sustain University support for emeriti programs and facilities, and have spurred efforts to hold down health care costs and maintain COLAS.

The survey form, which will be sent out later this month, should require only a few minutes to complete. In view of its instrumental importance, and because Berkeley has a new chancellor, we urge you to participate.

Errol Mauchlan