

## SOME MEMORABLE FACULTY MEMBERS AT PACIFIC UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY IN THE EARLY 1970s: PART 2

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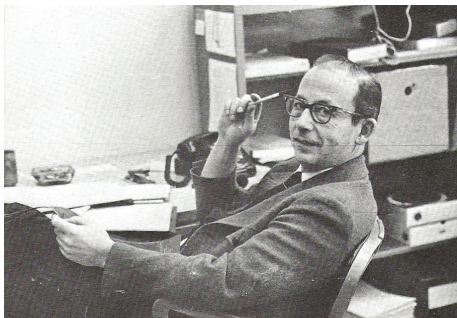
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### Continued from Volume 49, Number 1

Most optometry schools have non-optometrists holding PhD degrees in various optical and biological fields who teach some of the basic science courses. That was true of Pacific University in the early 1970s. This article will present brief profiles of some of those instructors at Pacific University in Forest Grove, OR based on my recollections as a student and on some recent research.

### John R. Gerke, OD (1927-2004)



John R. Gerke (photo from 1971 Pacific University yearbook, page 14)

John R. Gerke was born in 1927 in New York City.<sup>1</sup> He served in the United States Navy during World War II, after which he received a BA degree from Duke University (1947), an MS from the University of Illinois (1949), and a PhD from Rutgers University (1964).<sup>2</sup> At an early stage in his career, he was employed by Squibb and Hoffman-LaRoche to do pharmaceutical research.

At Pacific University College of Optometry he taught courses in

biochemistry and microbiology. I remember him as being mild-mannered and smoking a pipe, and giving weekly quizzes which required considerable memorization. He did research on pseudomonas at Pacific. Later he did research at the Oregon State University Marine Science Center in Newport, OR. His obituary says that he enjoyed outdoor activities, including hiking and nature photography.<sup>1</sup>

### Margaret Shea Gilbert, OD (1908-1990)



Margaret Gilbert (photo from Heart of Oak, Pacific University yearbook, 1976, page 112. Pacific University Archives, Forest Grove, Oregon).

Margaret Gilbert was born in 1908 in Canton, Ohio.<sup>3</sup> She earned a BA degree from Oberlin College (1930), an MA from Wellesley College (1932), and a PhD from Cornell University (1935).<sup>2</sup> In 1937, she and her husband, Paul Gilbert, moved to Appleton, WI, where he taught physics at Lawrence University from 1937 to 1966 and she

taught biology from 1946 to 1966. After briefly teaching at Hawaii Loa College, they moved to Forest Grove in 1967. At Pacific University College of Optometry she taught the course in ocular anatomy and physiology and a course on general and ocular pathology. I remember her as a kindly person who had a good knowledge of ocular anatomy and embryology and who prepared detailed materials for class.

In 1938, Gilbert published a book entitled *Biology of the Unborn*. Written while Gilbert herself was pregnant, the book described fetal development for a lay audience and featured her own drawings.<sup>3</sup> It received a \$1,000 award from the Williams and Wilkins publishing company for the "best manuscript on a science subject for general reading."<sup>4</sup> In 1963, she published a revised edition of the book. A review of the revised edition stated that: "The reputation of the original edition for accuracy, lucidity, and the excellence of its illustrations has been maintained in the new edition."<sup>5</sup>

In 1970, Gilbert published a monograph entitled *Synopsis of Health Science Terminology for Optometrists*. It defined various prefixes, suffixes, and stem words, and gave examples of their combinations in common ocular and health science terms. A review of the book stated that "any student (or optometrist) who will review this material an hour or two a day for a fortnight will definitely have acquired the tools for understanding the words he will be using all of his professional life."<sup>6</sup>

After she retired from Pacific University in the mid-1970s, Gilbert

volunteered at the Forest Grove library and wrote a series of articles on Forest Grove history. She also annotated a historical photo album of Forest Grove for the Pacific University Museum.<sup>3</sup>

## Morton Gollender, OD



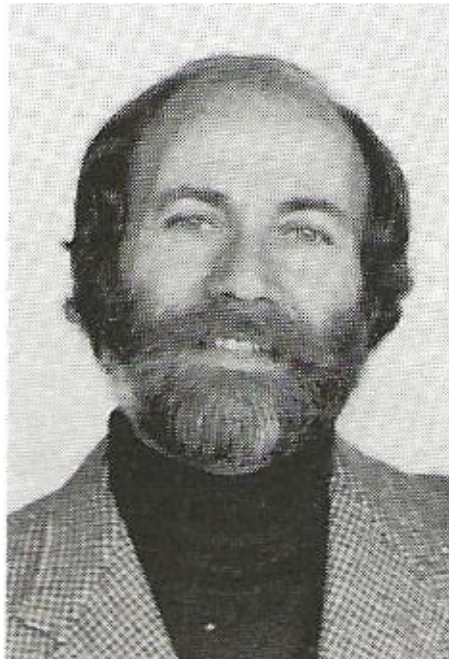
*Morton Gollender (photo from 1971 Pacific University yearbook, page 15).*

Mort Gollender was born in 1922 in New York City.<sup>7</sup> He entered Stanford University along with his twin brother Warren in 1941 before their education was interrupted by World War II. Warren was killed in 1944 in the Battle of the Bulge.<sup>8</sup> Mort was in the U.S. Army infantry in Europe and later in the Pacific theater.

Gollender returned to Stanford in 1946, where he participated in ROTC and crew and completed a BS degree in industrial engineering in 1949. He then attended Columbia University, earning an MS in industrial engineering in 1953. After working in industrial engineering, Gollender turned his attention to psychology, completing an MA at the University of Michigan in 1960 and a PhD in experimental psychology at Indiana University in 1965.

Gollender taught experimental psychology and physiological psychology at the Pacific University College of Optometry. I don't recall a lot of personal interaction with Gollender, but I do remember being pleased when he told me, "I like the way you write" after reading lab reports I had written.

## Leonard Levine, OD



*Leonard Levine (photo from Levine NR, Levine L. A study of applicants to colleges of optometry in the U.S. J Am Optom Assoc 1976;47:616-623).*

Leonard Levine earned a BS degree from Rutgers University (1950) and a PhD from Columbia University (1959). After his PhD he had a U.S. Public Health Service Postdoctoral Research Fellowship to work with Nobel Prize winner Sir Bernard Katz at City University London.<sup>9</sup> Levine published papers in electrophysiology early in his career. He taught courses in physiology and neuroanatomy/neurophysiology at Pacific. When our class started optometry school in 1970, there was no course exclusively devoted to pharmacology in the

curriculum. Levine could foresee the upcoming expansion in scope of optometric practice and the need for a course in pharmacology, so he established and taught one. He also published papers on ocular pharmacology. I remember his courses as being very well-organized and authoritative, and his lecture style as being deadpan and formal, but informative and easy to follow.

Levine's wife, Nira Levine, was also involved in the optometry school. She completed MEd and EdD degrees at the University of Virginia and was an Assistant Professor of Counseling and Director of Student Services at Pacific.<sup>10</sup> She chaired the Optometry College Admissions Test (OCAT, now the Optometry Admissions Test or OAT) Committee for the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry.<sup>9</sup> She was involved in the establishment of the OCAT. Our class did not have to take it for admission to optometry school, but we were test subjects for her while in optometry school. She administered various similar tests and early versions of the OCAT to assist her in its development when we were first-year students.



## Jurgen Meyer-Arendt, OD (1921-2000)



Jurgen Meyer-Arendt signing his book *"Introduction to Classical and Modern Optics,"* in the Pacific University Library, 1970s. Pictured left to right: librarian Lou Flannery, professor Jurgen Meyer-Arendt, Pacific University President James Miller. (Photograph Collection image no. 12657. Pacific University Archives, Forest Grove, Oregon).

Jurgen Meyer-Arendt was born in 1921 in Berlin, Germany. He was trained first as a physician and neurosurgeon, earning his MD at the University of Wurzburg in 1945 before turning to optics and completing a PhD in 1952 at the University of Hamburg.<sup>11,12</sup> Meyer-Arendt lived in Brazil before coming to the United States in 1955.<sup>13</sup>

Meyer-Arendt taught our physical optics class and gave a lecture or two on infection and inflammation in a pathology course. A late draft typescript of his book *Introduction to Classical and Modern Optics* was the textbook for our geometrical and physical optics courses. The first edition of that book was published in 1972 and a fourth edition appeared in 1994. Meyer-Arendt published frequently in optics journals and authored another book titled *Optical Scintillation: A Survey of the Literature*. Meyer-Arendt considered serving as a consultant for an edition of the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* in the late 1980s to be a significant achievement because he

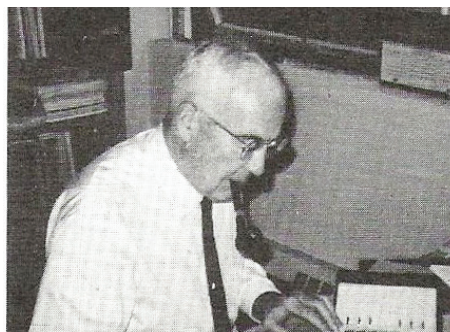
couldn't speak English when he came to the United States.<sup>13</sup>

## Theodore C. Oakberg, OD

Theodore Oakberg received a BS degree from California Institute of Technology (1958) and MS (1961) and PhD (1964) degrees from the University of Cincinnati.<sup>14</sup> Before becoming a physics professor at Pacific University in 1969, Oakberg was a physics instructor at Antioch College in Ohio and an employee of the Boeing Company in Seattle.<sup>15,16</sup> Oakberg taught our geometrical optics course. It was the first time he taught optometry students, and as I recall, he was a little uncertain of what he should expect us to learn. In 1976, Oakberg was appointed chairman of the physics department at Pacific.<sup>17</sup>

Oakberg had several papers published in the SPIE (an optics technology society) Conference Proceedings in 1995 to 2000. In 1999 to 2002, he applied for several patents for a system for measurement of birefringence for Hinds Instruments in Hillsboro, OR, where he is Senior Applications Scientist.<sup>18,19</sup>

## Oscar W. Richards, OD (1902-1988)



Oscar W. Richards (photo from 1971 Pacific University yearbook, page 14).

Oscar Richards was born in 1902 in Butte, Montana.<sup>20</sup> He received B.A. (1923) and MA (1925) degrees from the University of Oregon and a PhD in zoology from Yale University in 1931.

He was instructor in zoology and medicine at the University of Oregon in 1925-26, a biology professor at Clark University from 1928 to 1930, and an instructor at Yale from 1931 to 1937. He was a research scientist for Spencer Lens Company from 1937 to 1945 and for American Optical Corporation from 1945 to 1967. In addition to those regular appointments, he lectured at various universities and served on many national and international committees.<sup>21</sup>

Richards was an honorary fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society and a fellow of the American Academy of Optometry. He was president of the Biological Photographic Society in 1949-51, and president of the American Microscopical Society in 1953. In 1971, he received the Prentice Medal from the American Academy of Optometry.<sup>21,22</sup> In 1951, Richards and three of his colleagues at American Optical published a book summarizing their investigations on the theory, instrumentation, and applications of phase microscopy,<sup>23</sup> and in 1954, Richards published a monograph entitled *The Effective Use and Proper Care of the Microscope*. Richards published papers on many topics, including subjects relating to optometry practice such as visual acuity, lighting effects on test results, night myopia, and drivers' vision.

Richards taught environmental vision to optometry students at Pacific University for many years after his retirement from American Optical. I remember him as being a quiet, mild-mannered man who had an encyclopedic knowledge of environmental optics.

## Frank Thorn, OD

Frank Thorn completed a BS degree at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1961) and a PhD in neuroscience at the University of Rochester (1967).<sup>10</sup> At Pacific University in the early 1970s, he taught courses in physiological psychology and sensory physiology of vision. His lectures showed deep knowledge of those topics, and I enjoyed his classes.

After serving on the optometry faculty at Pacific, Thorn entered the New England College of Optometry accelerated optometric degree program for persons with doctorates in science. After completing his OD degree in 1979, Thorn joined the New England College of Optometry faculty, where he serves as Professor of Vision Science, Director of the Accelerated OD Program, and Director of International Research and Development.<sup>24</sup> Thorn's extensive research activity since completing his OD degree has included work on infant vision development, myopia, and reading behavior.

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