

Outdoor Historian Sheds Light on the History of the Outdoor Industry

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Rachel Gross

Rachel Gross is a historian of the outdoor industry, focusing on an area that is more influential than you might think. Gross, a Davidson Honors College Teaching, Research and Mentoring Fellow at the University of Montana, and author of the paper, "From Buckskin to Gore-Tex", traveled to USU to speak to students and the public about the heritage of the industry.

The history of the outdoor industry influences life even today as companies like Patagonia, The North Face, and REI continue to grow and permeate daily life. From the origins of Abercrombie & Fitch being the dominant outdoor player and model for sporting goods stores moving forward, to men like Eddie Bauer and LL Bean designing the cold-weather apparel for Allied forces fighting in World War II and solidifying military-inspired fashion as a recurring theme into the future, the outdoor industry has been a force throughout.

Professor Gross spent time with OPDD program students and faculty as well, gathering insights about their design processes while also sharing the importance of looking back at the heritage of the industry.