



Antasia Parker, Western student and Associated Students vice president for legislative affairs, does a spoken-word performance at the MLK Human Rights Conference.

MLK Human Rights Conference raises controversial issues in education and human rights

by Adam Anderson

MLK was about a lot of things. He was a freedom fighter in a world of people fighting for the subjection of others. He joined together with many other brave and passionate activists and allies to address some of the fundamental systems of inequity in our society. He was a solid community leader, deeply concerned about issues of race, justice, class, faith and so much more. For this reason, one day is not enough to recognize, celebrate, appreciate or continue his work. In addition, the fact that he was a passionate, multi-dimensional, solidarity-building individual means that, despite his hero status, he was an integral part of important social movements that none of us can *own*, movements of the people that are either fledging or flying today.

This is why it is so empowering to center a day-long conference around the many vital dreams and aspirations of MLK, the individual. The MLK conference, and the process leading up to it, engaged a plurality of community members and integrated numerous critical conversations.

My involvement in the conference consisted of planning a workshop for teachers to explore discussion methods that facilitate talking about controversial issues and also helping to organize the lineup of educator-track workshops. I collaborated with Doug Judge from the CEP and Victor Nolet, Ph.D., a Woodring professor and director of the Teaching for a Positive

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Racist graffiti opens door to dialogue

by Joe Wooding

If the racist graffiti found at Sehome High School in October was just an anomalous event, addressing the incident and holding individuals accountable would be a sufficient response. Yet for many students the graffiti is simply a blatant reminder that racism exists in our schools and community. The graffiti breaks the silence and allows us all to experience the discomfort many feel every day.

Many are struggling to understand how the graffiti represents something more profound about our culture. This dissonance shows how painful racism can be for us all. Our teachers and administrators strive to make school a safe space for all students, yet this act defies our good intentions. What can we do? Our youth are offering us an obvious and reasonable response: Let's talk.

Talk is essential to a democracy and developing the skills to discuss controversial issues is necessary if we are to work together to generate solutions to collective problems. The racist graffiti found at Sehome High School has inspired needed dialogue about problems affecting our schools. As a community, we need to recognize the problems that occur in our schools are, in essence, community issues.

Teachers and students, along with the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force and its community partners, are working together to transform an unfortunate act into an opportunity to discuss race. This is more difficult than it seems. Conversations about race are often avoided because they can arouse discomfort.

This is especially true for whites who may feel a sense of guilt or defensiveness when talking about racism. Ironically, the potential discomfort that accompanies such conversations indicates how important the topic is to all of us, not just people of color.

The discomfort many whites feel often

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CEP student staff



Leo Novikov

Leo is a sophomore majoring in philosophy, politics and economics. He is finishing his second year as a CEP staff member, and is our public relations/multimedia expert.



David Nordmark

David is pursuing his Master's in Teaching with endorsements in social studies and English. He has a background in print media and designed and copy edited this newsletter.



Ginnie Jo Blue & Doug Judge

Doug is pursuing his Master's in Teaching with endorsements in social studies/sociology and special education, and Ginnie Jo is pursuing hers with endorsements in social studies and TESOL.



Caitlin Ruud

Caitlin is a freshman from Wenatchee. She has learned a great deal in her first year in Bellingham and has made valuable contributions to the work of the Center.



Adam Anderson

Adam is a graduate assistant in the CEP and is pursuing his Master's in Teaching with endorsements in Spanish, Japanese and TESOL.



Joe Wooding

Joe is pursuing his Masters in Teaching with endorsements in social studies/sociology, and is currently completing his student teaching at Meridian High School.

Personal retrospective

The CEP director reflects on four years of working on issues of diversity in Woodring

by Lorraine Kasprisin

As I prepare to leave the CEP, I thought I would share a personal retrospective on what we have tried to accomplish over the last four years. After twenty-eight years at Western, I am very grateful for having been given the opportunity to give back something to you and the college and to advance the cause of social justice in education in some small way. I hope I have left you with a center that is vital, vibrant and progressive.

There were so many “firsts” during the last four years: the distinguished speaker series, the annual awards ceremony, the electronic journal, the critical conversation series, the film festival, workshop series like “What Teachers Need to Know”; all possible because of the wonderful student staff that we have had in the center, and the support and kind, encouraging words that all of you have shared with me over the years.

The Center was also able to network with the wider community in order to gain a broader perspective on the curricular decisions we make. Over the years, we reached out and coordinated activities with the OSPI Multiethnic Think Tank, the League of Small Democratic Schools, the Washington State Association for Multicultural Education, Fairhaven’s Center for Law, Diversity and Justice, the Ethnic Student Center, American Democracy Project and numerous one-time



CEP director Lorraine Kasprisin talks with author Gary Howard during a seminar. Howard, author of “We Can’t Teach What We Don’t Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools,” has visited Woodring on numerous occasions.

collaborations that enabled our students to talk with Arab Women Writers, a Russian delegation of educators, civil rights leaders, voices from our many communities of color and others. We once assisted Squalicum High School in their efforts to create one of the first high school courses in multiculturalism, by inviting experts from across the campus to a roundtable discussion with the school. I realized how much richness our university can offer and how seldom we have opportunities for these cross-campus discussions with the schools in our county.

There were certain events that have stood out in my mind and I would like to share some of these personal moments with you. We have had a number of events to help our students and ourselves understand the lives and culture of our neighbors from the Lummi Nation. We have been privileged to have

talks by the Native American community a number of times at the CEP. One of the most poignant for me was the panel of Native American students from both Western and the Northwest Indian College who came to share their life experiences with our students in order to help them become better, more knowledgeable and sensitive teachers.

I will never forget one student from the Northwest Indian College, Elroy Shavehead. He shared with us, openly and honestly, stories of his life and his time at an Indian Boarding School. Elroy said he chose to go to a boarding school out of state to find his past and a sense of his people’s identity. He talked about his goal of going to the University of Washington to become a counselor so he could counsel others in ways that he was not counseled. When I left the panel that afternoon, I sent Elroy a special thank you and

invited him to join us at the upcoming Native American Art Exhibit that we were planning. I was devastated to learn three months later that young Elroy had committed suicide. It brought home to me the utter devastation that the legacy of our past has brought to so many of our young people’s future, and the moral imperative of teachers to see beyond the immediate exigencies of their classroom routines to the larger mission to which they are called.

We had two Native American Art Exhibits over the last four years; one was planned in conjunction with the visit of Johnpaul Jones, the principal architect of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. I have long feared that our (very legitimate) concern with issues like the “achievement gap” may lead our students to see students of color

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emerges from the way whites understand racism. For example, many whites define racism as racially motivated acts perpetrated by one individual against another individual or group. The possibility that racism does not require conscious and deliberate behavior can be counter-intuitive if we focus on racist incidents and individuals. The key is to look beyond racist incidents and individuals to examine how racism shapes each of us.

Racism shapes how we understand the world around us and ourselves. Sometimes the influence is obvious; often it is subtle. For example, many whites assume they do not have a race or ethnicity, and have no need to talk about racism. If so, whites may regard racism as salient to people of color, but not to themselves. This places the onus of responsibility on people of color to confront racism and relieves white people from having to think about how racism affects our lives.

By ignoring racism we overlook the past and its legacy today. When we disregard how racism affects people of color we send the message that we do not fully accept who they are. If we do not acknowledge racism, we deny ourselves opportunities to develop identities that promote racial justice.

Racism is not a minority problem and will persist as long as we all remain silent. Fortunately, the silence has been broken. When students from Bellingham High School staged a demonstration they insisted we talk about our problems. When students from Sehome High School organized the peace march they illustrated the power of sharing responsibility. When students from Bellingham, Sehome and Squalicum meet to discuss issues affecting our schools they are modeling the solidarity necessary to create positive change.

Students and teachers are talking and their conversations with the community have made it clear that we all share a desire to create safe schools. This similarity brings us together to talk, and talking about our differences will help us grow.

This is what teaching as if democracy matters is all about: coming together to envision the kind of society we want to live in and working together to develop the critical skills necessary to make that vision a reality.

Our schools are showing us what democracy looks like and our students and teachers are taking the lead. Let's support them by joining the dialogue.

Joe Wooding is a cofounder of Project 2050 and a staff member at the Center for Educational Pluralism. The center is working this year with the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force on an annual human rights conference.

From Tokenism, to Acceptance, to Inclusion: The Journey through Difference in Academia

by Teri A. McMurtry-Chubb

Recently, I was asked to speak about diversity initiatives in higher education at the University of Idaho College of Law. I chose to focus my comments on the responsibilities involved in increasing diversity in academia. What follows are excerpts from my talk.

Tokenism:

A token is a symbol of something real. It is a representative of that thing and gains its value from how well it represents what is real. Yet, it can never become real.

The most common use of tokens is in the transportation industry. For example, tokens are used for bus and train fare. Bus and train tokens represent the value of the fare. Tokens are often placed on sale at a discount as compared to the amount of the actual transportation fare. In other words, tokens cost less — they are cheaper than the value of the thing they represent — actual money. Yet, like money, they are acceptable and help us to meet our end goal of getting from point A to point B. They help us get from here to there.

Universities also use tokens to get from point A to point B. They have and continue to use people of color as tokens to get from the point of having no diversity to increasing the number of people of color.

These people of color have a value in and of themselves. In universities, they are often first-generation college students who have survived tremendous obstacles (financial, emotional and physical obstacles) to gain entrance to college and excel there. To their families and communities, they are superstars. They are the actualization of the promises and dreams of their ancestors.

Many times these students, despite competing on an unequal playing field in the educational arena from K-12 and on into their undergraduate years, have distinguished themselves academically. They obtain high GPAs, receive merit-based awards, are leaders on their campuses and exceed the expectations of their teachers.

However, to the universities that would use them as tokens, these students are viewed

as counterfeits of the real thing, (which is) the idealized vision of who a college student should be. They are perceived as having been obtained at a discount, because the schools that accept them do not wish to make the necessary investment in their success at the school — yet wish to use them as symbols of diversity. Schools who utilize students of color as tokens do not take into account that their journey to college is quite different from students who are not of color, and that their success requires an investment of financial, educational and career services resources.

Acceptance:

Acceptance of people of color into colleges and universities requires relationships.

Acceptance requires that people, regardless of racial and ethnic differences, acknowledge differences when they look at each other across the table but first see each other as human beings. It is at this level of our humanity that we can be compassionate and empathetic to another person's experiences and endeavor to make their lives better — simply because they are human.

The professionalization of students at the university level (regardless of the academic discipline they undertake), with regard to interactions with students of color, serves as a barrier to them regarding their future colleagues as anything other than symbols. In classroom discussions, primarily where the majority of the participants are not of color, students of color are spoken about as if invisible, viewed as representatives of their racial or ethnic group, or viewed as parodies of those groups. These perceptions inform the manner in which these people interact in the workplace well after their college experience. If academic institutions do not pursue opportunities to create relationships among students, faculty and staff that extend beyond the superficial, then we cannot hope to relate to people of color beyond our perceptions of whom and what they represent.

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Doug and Ginnie Jo working hard in the CEP.

Big changes at the CEP

by CEP Staff

The Center for Educational Pluralism was remodeled during the summer of 2006. We had several interior walls removed to enlarge our communal space and create a large office for staff. The Center also received new carpeting, new paint, plants, several laptops and a multimedia station, allowing us to hold classes, meetings and presentations in the Center. Please come by and see us in Miller 250 anytime to use the space for studying, working on group projects and

checking out our events and resources. Contact the CEP staff if your student group or club is interested in using the Center for your meetings on a regular basis.

We have also nearly completed the cataloguing of our books, curriculum and movies. Those books that have been catalogued are shelved under the Library of Congress system in the Center, and are now searchable through the WWU library homepage.

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Inclusion:

Inclusion implies community. It requires that a person of color be accepted with acknowledgement of their differences but viewed as a person first. It also requires that their colleagues, whether student, faculty or staff member know their unique abilities and gifts (beyond what the color of their skin would suggest), and utilize them for the betterment of the community.

If there is no opportunity for inclusion, then the college or university misses its chance to be the best organization it can be.

Conclusion:

Universities should endeavor to move beyond tokenism to acceptance and inclusion. Continue to value your students, faculty and

administrators of color for who they are, not what they represent. Make the time to build relationships with them as people, empathize with their experiences, and find solutions for their challenges. Provide support for them so that their success is assured.

And for the students of color, know your value. Know that you have cleared many hurdles just to sit in this university as a student — you have a right to be here, don't let anyone tell you differently. It is your legacy — own it. Also, know that you have what it takes to complete this journey. The depth of your adversity is proportionate to the heights you will obtain in your successes.

Teri McMurtry-Chubb is coordinator of the Center for Law, Diversity & Justice and assistant professor of law and hegemony studies at the Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies.

'Holler if You Hear Me' an inspirational read for future teachers

by Nick Pizzalato

Holler if You Hear Me is an astounding look into Gregory Michie's experiences as a teacher in an inner-city school. Michie intertwines his personal experiences with stories from his students to make for a sensational and heartfelt read.

The book begins with Michie explaining his first experiences in the classroom. He sincerely points out that good days often occurred less than once a week, with the rest of the time spent fighting for survival. He also quickly became aware that the students wanted something that he was not: a tough, authoritarian teacher. He spent hours planning activities and lessons, but his students never showed any interest or appreciation and rapidly begin losing focus.

Then one day, as the students deviated from the classroom discussion as they often did, they came up with an idea of their own. Frustrated and tired of fighting his students, Michie cracked and allowed them to run with their idea. The room soon exploded with an energy that only a few seconds earlier (or during the entire school year for that matter) had not existed. In no time, the class had decided to hold a mock trial to debate the issue at hand.

This experience taught Michie two crucial lessons that he would never forget. The first was that the teacher did not always have to be the center of attention. The second, and maybe more important, lesson was that sometimes as a teacher you just have to crumple up your lesson plans and let your students' creativity and passion flow.

While Michie's classroom experiences are insightful and genuine, the stories from his students are the heart and soul of the book. The first of these stories comes from a student named Tavares, who points out that, "If a person was to sincerely look within these guys [gang members], they would find

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who are struggling in our schools only in that light. The CEP became a place for students to come and see the rich culture and lives of these students. We exhibited the work of students from Western and the Northwest Indian College, as well as art from local public high schools, middle schools and the Lummi schools. We wanted to recognize the work of these young people and to give our students an opportunity to hear their voices as expressed in their art. These are the type of events that cannot always be incorporated into our busy curriculum, and I am so pleased that we could use the CEP to enhance our students' experiences at Woodring.

For me, the greatest achievement of the CEP was to see the way our students started to ask new questions. Many sought out a place they could go to in order to continue the conversations begun in many of our forums. That was the beginning of the "Critical Conversations" series, events that were solely initiated by the students and continued on a regular basis. Sometimes students would invite faculty members to come and facilitate a session, other times they discussed issues among themselves as a community of learners. I had hoped that our events would be the impetus for discussions like these.

Moreover, students did not divorce their studies from the events swirling around them in the community. When a racial incident occurred in a local school, some of our students joined teachers and members of the community to support the high school students and to find ways to reconcile differences that were surfacing. It was an example of both an authentic learning experience and an act of allies standing together for social justice. Our students took us seriously and showed us that we must "walk" the "talk." Indeed, one of our students, Joe Wooding, published a powerful and lucid op-ed piece in the *Bellingham Herald*, titled, "Racist graffiti opens door to dialogue." (November 28, 2006) Joe also created the first "Youth Summit" at the Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Conference, where he created public spaces for high school students to discuss real issues they were facing. He continued that work throughout the year.

Often our events served a number of different purposes. We invited Justice Richard Sanders from the Washington State Supreme Court to come and discuss the meaning of the Constitution in a pluralistic society. Such a discussion on one of the documents uniting us as a people could only take place within a multicultural and intergenerational audience. We therefore invited students from the public high schools, the Northwest Indian College,



WWU staff member Rochelle Sandeen (left) talks with John-paul Jones, principal architect of the National Museum of the American Indian at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Sandeen's art (middle) was part of an exhibit at the CEP that featured art by members of local Native American communities.

the Academy of Lifelong Learning, the Ethnic Student Center and the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force to join our students and faculty at Woodring in order to explore together the diverse perspectives about the meaning and implications of the Constitution. Our evaluations at the end indicated that the meaning and significance of this document can be seen very differently.

Other events were a true collaboration with the community. We worked with the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force planning committee each year to help plan special sessions for educators at the conference and we encouraged our students to attend. Moreover, we extended the dialogue begun at the Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Conference to the Western campus with follow-up sessions. Whether it was a follow-up discussion on strategies for bringing the ideas in James Banks' keynote address into the classroom, special workshops on dual language and TESOL, or a book seminar with keynote speaker Gregory Michie, our goal was to provide continuity in these events for our students so they would not just be one-time events. We also wanted to connect them to the community's conversations.

There were so many special moments and we are fortunate to have captured many of them on videotape. We put the tapes up on our website so we can share them again and again with our future students. There is a lot of important curriculum work that our college engages in as we prepare young people for the challenging role of teacher, and my primary purpose as director of the Center for Educational Pluralism has always been to support that work by enriching the curriculum experiences of our students. I think we were able to provide experiences

that helped our students hear authentic voices from the community, and to become part of the ongoing professional dialogue. One of our last events was to bring together our MIT graduate students, faculty from across campus as well as from Woodring, and our colleagues from the Lummi Nation to discuss the intractable issues of poverty in this nation. In one of those rare kinds of discussions, we were able to create an environment to discuss the "undiscussibles." It is that kind of discussion I hope we will continue. Before we can talk about curriculum, we need to know what we are talking about. A university is one of the few institutions that can provide that kind of dialogue — indeed, I think it is the moral imperative of the university to do so. The conversation we started at that event will be continued in the Volume 3 Number 2 issue of the *Journal of Educational Controversy*.

While curriculum committees are important, a college should also have a vibrant center for the intellectual discussion of ideas. They should be parallel. We need public spaces to create a dialogue that provides energy for our souls and transformative ideas for our imagination. I have always seen the goal of the CEP similar to the goal we set for the journal — as a place to "clarify the public debate and deepen an understanding of its moral significance," to imagine ways to transform our educational institutions so our curriculum reflects our ideals of social justice and to provide our students and faculty with a vision of what is possible.

I would like to thank everyone again for your support over the last four years and extend a very special welcome to my colleague, Kristen French, who will carry on the new mission of the CEP with your help and assistance.

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a lot of scared young people. Scared of being broke. Scared of not having. Scared of not being able to do for their parents or their kids." The school that Michie was working at was predominately black and many of the students were in gangs or being recruited by gangs. Tavares was trying to point out that if more teachers reached out to some of these kids, it could change their lives. These kids were looking for a role model and when they could not find one, they turned to a gang for protection.

As the days went by, Michie became more and more comfortable in the classroom, but continued to learn new and valuable lessons everyday. For instance, he signed up for a voluntary after-school reading program to help underachieving students. However, no matter how creative or fun he tried to make the lessons, the students did not respond to him. Michie still gave everything he had to help these kids, and many of them would leave a lasting impression on him.

Armando was one of those students. Michie once told him, "I don't know everything, you know." To which Armando casually replied, "Well you're supposed to ... you're the teacher, aren't you?" Kids have high expectations of teachers and they often look up to them. After hearing this, I think Michie began to realize just how much of an influence he had on his students.

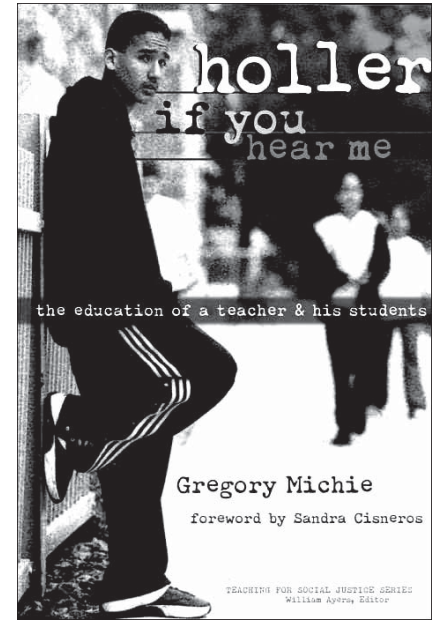
Dealing with inner-city school kids also led Michie to see how important listening to the students and bringing their lives into the classroom really was. He began looking for culturally relevant materials to teach his students. For example, he wanted to tape some stories to play to his pupils and found some older girls to read the books. Michie and these girls enjoyed the project so much that they were sad when it ended. But each one came away with an experience they will never forget. It is learning experiences like this, which can really change a student's life. For example, one of his students named Lourdes stated that, "When your culture is brought into a class at school, it makes you feel good because you know that your culture isn't just being recognized for, "Oh

today they caught five immigrants crossing the border (or something similar)."

Another important turning point in Michie's teaching career came after he began teaching a media class. The hardest part of the class was trying to find things for the students to do in the class that were relevant and that would interest them. One day he asked his students to bring in song lyrics from any song for an assignment they would begin the following day. One of his students, Frankie, brought in lyrics from a song called "Blow Job Betty," and another teacher had seen it. When Michie was told about this, he was extremely embarrassed. Michie quickly realized that you could not give kids complete freedom; they were after all kids, and some basic guidelines or rules had to be set up for the students to abide by. More importantly however, he decided he should talk to Frankie about why the song was inappropriate for school.

Unfortunately, Michie was very busy at the time and he kept putting this task off. The days past and before Michie got around to talking to him, Frankie had graduated. This left Michie with a twinge of guilt in his stomach; he had not had the courage or the commitment to follow up on the difficult task. While it would continue to bother him in the future, by vowing never to do it again, it allowed Michie to grow not only as a person, but as a teacher as well.

As he put more and more hours into school, Michie began to feel it was taking over his life. At the same time, he began to see how students viewed school and he began to try to connect to them on a more personal level. One of these students was Ruby, who has not gotten much out of school, because her teachers ignored her. Another student, Ahmed, did not want to get caught up in gangs, but confided to Michie how difficult it was, when they hound you everywhere you go. This latter example led to Michie building up a rapport with some of the gang members in his class, to gain a better understanding of their lifestyle. In fact he states, "My ignorance about gangs began to dissipate and as it did the whole thing seemed a bit less intimidating." Michie also details how Reggie, another of his students,



was a victim of racial assault. Yet, Reggie simply stated, "I just keep struggling, sometimes you may not win, but just going through the struggle can make you stronger." Powerful words that really put life into perspective, especially from a kid who is still a teenager with his whole life in front of him.

Michie did an unbelievable job of writing this book, which has so many wonderful and memorable quotes. The one that sticks out the most to me is the one he uses to wrap up his book. He writes, "The kids often know when the odds are against them, yet they still show up to class almost everyday. It is this realization that propels me out of bed in the morning and it is this thought that I hold onto as I turn off my light and try to get some sleep. We can make a difference. We can change the world." These are explosive words and I cannot help but get goose bumps from reading them. I want to teach and when I do, I want to feel that passion that Michie feels. I want to make a difference in each and every kid's life. Therefore, I will propel myself out of bed every morning, say to myself, "I can make a difference," and then I will march off to my classroom so that I can really make that difference come true.

A call for submissions!

The Journal of Educational Controversy addresses dilemmas and controversies that arise in teaching and learning in a pluralistic, democratic society. Readers are invited to submit carefully thought-out pieces to be considered for publication. For more information, please visit our website at www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal.

This year's faculty achievements

William Demmert was awarded by the Harvard Students at the Harvard Graduate School of Education for his research activity and his work with native communities in the United States and in the Circumpolar North. He currently works with seven schools that focus on using native languages as the language of instruction or that offer a culturally based education curriculum.

Lyubov Laroche gave a presentation at the Sorbonne aiming to add the voice of Russian philosophy as a contributor to process thought and to apply it to the field of education. She introduced organizational science conceptualized by A.A. Bogdanov and provided the overview of Bogdanov's metaphysics and universal organizational mechanisms and laws, including conjugation, chain connection, ingression, disingression and the Law of the Least. She

discussed why Bogdanov's organizational science could be perceived as belonging to the tradition of process philosophy and what could be its potential contribution to the evolving postmodern educational theory and practice.

Karen Hoelscher (Woodring) and **Joe Garcia** (College of Business and Economics) have co-authored a new book, *Managing Diversity Flashpoints in Higher Education*. Part of a series for the American Council on Education (ACE), this handbook provides a structured approach to recognizing and responding to difficult interpersonal situations between faculty, staff and students based on identity difference. Their work is based on a national study of flashpoints across 11 U.S. campuses and has been used for the professional development of faculty and staff at several colleges and universities,

including Woodring College.

Marsha Riddle Buly continues to be an advocate for historically marginalized students. She spent time during her sabbatical this year updating her knowledge, skills and understanding related to bilingual education and offering assistance to local bilingual schools. ASCD Express recently published an article of Marsha's titled "Bilingual Education Benefits All Learners." In addition, Marsha has arranged regional visits from the state Director of Bilingual and Migrant Education to talk with school district personnel and the public about possibilities related to bilingual education. This summer, Marsha will be teaching a class for educators and education students in Morelia Mexico. The focus of the course is effective literacy instruction and assessment with a focus on English language learners.

Housing, Race and Schooling in Seattle: Context for the Supreme Court Decision

by Doug Judge

Below is an excerpt from an article by Douglas Judge. The full text of this article is available online at www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v002n001/a014.shtml.

"Seattle schools were not segregated by law, and no public official encouraged *de facto* segregation as occurred in Chicago and other major Northern cities. The 'enemy' in Seattle was indifference in the white population born of its perception that 'there was no problem' in the city. Thus civil rights leaders who complained about 'ghetto schools' were often viewed as publicity-seekers intent on blaming the entire community for the educational deficiencies of black children."

As the United States Supreme Court currently considers the use of race in high school admittance policies in Seattle, WA (*Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District*) and Louisville, KY (*Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education*), the issues of racial segregation and unequal school achievement have received

renewed national attention. In an effort to understand the context surrounding this important decision, new eyes have turned to Seattle and Louisville to assess the state of school desegregation efforts more than fifty years after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision.

In Seattle, much of the controversy surrounding this case centers on who gets into Ballard High School, located in the predominantly white north end, and considered by many to be the marquee school in the district. Though Seattleites often pride themselves on their liberal values, and may tout the fact that Seattle was the largest city in the nation to implement a mandatory district-wide desegregation plan relying on busing *without a court order*, an analysis of historical and contemporary housing and schooling policies paints a more complicated picture of some of the racial dynamics at play in the city. In order to provide context for the issues at stake at Ballard High School and in the case before the Supreme Court, it

Though Seattleites often pride themselves on their liberal values, an analysis of historical and contemporary housing and schooling policies paints a more complicated picture of the racial dynamics at play in the city.

is the intent of this article to present some of these complexities. After an overview of racial and housing demographic trends in Seattle, I present a revealing pattern of events surrounding district desegregation efforts since the *Brown* ruling. I then discuss implications of these patterns for today's Seattle public school students.

Undoing institutional racism: A workshop by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond

by Adam Anderson

In early March, I attended a two-day, 15-hour workshop on the subject of institutional racism. It began like many other workshops, with an icebreaker relevant to the subject matter. We were asked how it feels to talk about race with friends and family.

Race and racism are difficult to talk about for many reasons. It seems discussions frequently end with blame, denial, anger, or apathy. Also, it is particularly hard for white people to speak accurately about people from different racial groups. However, despite Bellingham's overall racial makeup, this was less of an issue for our unique group of participants, because about half of our members were people of color. The diversity of our group allowed for many perspectives.

The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, the facilitating organization, is highly regarded. After going through the training, I must say I agree with the good reviews. According to their website, which describes their approach and history, the group is "a national and international collective of anti-racist, multicultural community organizers and educators dedicated to building an effective movement for social transformation."

The Seattle chapter of the People's Institute came up to work with us Bellingham-area people to address not only the symptoms of racism, which is frequently where discussions of racism freeze up, but also the ways to start undoing racism and hammer out a more just society.

It sure sounds nice, doesn't it? Well, the process of talking about the roots of poverty, race-based inequities, institutional discrimination and white privilege was quite new and challenging for some people, and far too common and familiar for others. But, we all struggled and grew together, keeping our commitments to each other that we made as we began the workshop: Stay the whole time; be real and honest; stick with uncomfortable feelings; participate; and listen with your heart (to name a few).

I was particularly struck by our talks on

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various forms of internalized racism — the idea that we internalize a sense of "less than" or "more than" over generations, because of the messages that we get from society regarding our worth as humans. This idea has profound implications for our ability to form strong relationships and communities together. However, it was only after some 10 hours of letting down our guard and building up common definitions of race and racism that we were able to approach this subject matter with respect and compassion.

In being part of this group process and speaking intimately with a few participants, I got the sense that we were all learning and growing substantially, despite our previous knowledge or experience, and despite any resistance that we may have brought into the room with us that first morning. Fifty people have such an amazing potential to learn from each other, but it is only possible when we challenge ourselves to be open and real.

I challenge you to consider joining us the next time the People's Institute comes to Bellingham — we need your perspective and your insight.

For more information about the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, please visit www.pisab.org

Former Woodring student returns to take over leadership of the CEP

Kristen B. French graduated from Western Washington University with bachelor's degrees in anthropology (with a minor in Native American studies) and elementary education. She taught in Marysville, Wash., for several years, where she received the Rainbow of Hands Award for collaboratively developing and implementing the first ESOL Family Literacy program.



Years after reading Sonia Nieto's *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* (1992) in a cross-cultural education course at Western, Kristen decided to pursue her master's degree in bilingual, ESL and multicultural education at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. While in Massachusetts, Kristen taught in an urban magnet Montessori school, coordinated the Elementary Teacher Education Program (ETEP), and taught the Introduction to Multicultural Education course for undergraduates at UMASS.

Under the tutelage of Dr. Nieto, Kristen is currently finishing her doctorate in language, literacy and culture. Her research interests include multicultural teacher education, decolonizing theory and critical performative pedagogy. Kristen is looking forward to returning to Western as a faculty member for the Center for Educational Pluralism. She sees this as an amazing opportunity to put the theory of social justice into practice and give back to the university and students, where her journey began 15 years ago.

Come and see what D.I.V.E. is all about!

(Diversity Inspired Volunteer Educators)

D.I.V.E. is made up of students interested in the field of education. Our group focuses on issues concerning teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, nurses and principals.

Currently we consist of prospective and current students in Woodring; Promise and Future Scholars; and undergraduate and graduate students. D.I.V.E. is a highly diverse club represented by students from various races, ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic statuses, family history, nationalities and disabilities.

D.I.V.E. provides students with a chance to connect with volunteer opportunities with Junior Achievement, SWEA, the Boys & Girls Club and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

At least once a month, D.I.V.E. has a social meeting where students go bowling, out to dinner, watch a movie or go on hikes. We are also planning a BIG end of the year BBQ on June 2.

D.I.V.E. meets every Thursday at 5 p.m. in the CEP (Miller 250).

For more information, please visit www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/DIVE.

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Future project. Many great conversations with Doug and Victor led us to center our workshop discussion on sustainability and environmental issues, since this is Victor's main area of interest and the focus of his project. As a team, we briefly presented information on a number of discussion methods suitable for secondary students.

Next, we provided an opportunity to practice one method, called a "futures wheel," useful for considering the implications and outcomes of policy decisions. After brainstorming major environmental issues that we may face in the future and proposing a potential policy solution, we spent the remaining time considering first, second and third generation outcomes of that policy. I was impressed by the depth of our discussion on one single (and hypothetical) policy and by how quickly time passed.

Ultimately, I would consider the workshop successful if any of the educators that attended have since considered using such methods of discussion to help their students gain experience talking about controversial issues in a meaningful and civil way. I look forward to contributing whatever I can to next January's conference in terms of logistical support or workshop planning. I invite you to participate in any way that interests you as well.

Please consider making yourself a part of this community-building process this



Dr. Gregory Michie, a dedicated multicultural educator, gives his keynote address titled "Teaching for Social Justice in Troubled Times" at the MLK Human Rights Conference.

coming fall, by either being part of the planning process or attending the conference (early January 2008).

The inertia for social change created for us by our modern heroes is a gift we must cherish. If we are not using it, we risk losing it. Contact the CEP or the Whatcom

Human Rights Task Force (www.whtrf.org) to get involved.

Adam Anderson is a graduate assistant to the CEP and a student in Woodring's Master's in Teaching program. He plans to teach Spanish, Japanese and ESL.

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be picked for an orchestra part. The other instruments say he is too different to be picked. Cesar tries to change himself to be like the other instruments, but does not succeed. When the master musician comes to pick instruments for his masterpiece, he picks Cesar for his star. The other instruments are surprised and apologize to Cesar. In the end, Cesar realizes he is perfect just the way he is.

Morgan Massey

Class: SPED 468

Project Title: Resource Board for Single Parents

Morgan developed a resource board for single parents and families who have diverse needs.

Derek Vinkes

Class: SPED 468

Project Title: Resource Board for Spanish-Speaking Families

Derek developed a resource board for

Spanish-speaking families in the Nooksack area.

Alyssa Willey, Hannah Kell & Erica Siekkinen

Class: ELED 425

Project Title: Immigration into Ellis Island c. 1900

The Gateway Project is a collaboration between fourth and fifth graders and WWU pre-service K-8 teachers, simulating immigration into Ellis Island in the early 1900s. Working together, they researched immigration topics and their characters' countries of origin, blogged back and forth in character and participated as immigrants and Ellis Island processors in a fully costumed culminating simulation experience.

Adam Anderson

Class: SEC 513

Project Title: Gatekeeping and Internalized Racial Oppression

Adam gave a presentation based on information from an anti-racist workshop

by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (www.pisab.org). The workshop's framework provided alternative ways of talking about race and was based on the idea that we can internalize the consistent messages that society's institutions give us.

Ginnie Jo Blue

Class: SEC 513

Project Title: Migrant Education Workshop
Ginnie Jo attended a four-day national conference on migrant education in April. That, combined with previous research and experience with migrant youth, provided the foundation for an informational presentation for pre-service teachers.

Doug Judge

Project Title: Housing, Race and Schooling in Seattle: Context for the Supreme Court Decision

Doug wrote an article for the January 2007 edition of the Journal of Educational Controversy. He presented his paper at the CEP's 9th Annual Educational Law and Social Justice Forum.

The CEP's annual awards ceremony

The CEP's annual awards ceremony honors students who have completed projects or given presentations in the field of multicultural education. This year's ceremony was held on Friday, June 1, in the CEP in Miller 250. Graduate student Doug Judge received a plaque for his exemplary scholarship and leadership to the CEP from 2005 to 2007.

Diana Marker & Ben Esser

Class: Educ 109

Project Title: Students for Educational Equality

Diana and Ben helped form an Associated Students club called "Students for Educational Equality" that collects and donates funds and school supplies to Ryan Bennett, a Teach for America teacher at East St. John's High School in the greater New Orleans area. During the past four months, they have collected and donated over \$500 in school supplies and 10 graphing calculators that are valued at \$100 each.

Jeanne Hawkins

Class: SAA 691 Research Seminar

Project Title: ¡Si, Se Puede! Yes We Can!: The Experiences of Latina Students at Western Washington University

Demographic data show that Latinas are part of the fastest growing minority population in the United States, yet they lag behind in educational achievements. By exploring the higher education experiences of Latinas at Western Washington University, Jeanne seeks to identify and understand the unique challenges that they face, as well as the factors that support their academic success and persistence. The goal of her project is to contribute to the understanding of student affairs and institutions of higher education, so that programs and services that support and encourage Latinas can be improved, and the enrollment and persistence of Latinas in higher education can be increased.

Becca Herman

Class: SAA 691 Research Seminar

Project Title: The Other Side of the Closet: The Decision-Making Strategies of Lesbian and Gay Students Coming Out in the Residence Halls

Through the analysis of personal narratives from lesbian and gay residents, Becca aims to reveal the experiences of lesbian and gay students coming out in their residence halls, and how the role of residence life staff members plays into their coming out. The results of her research may provide direction to residence life professionals at WWU and

other institutions who want to increase their support of lesbian and gay residents.

Deborah Weis

Class: SAA 691 Research Seminar

Project Title: The "Ultimate" Experience: Participation in Club Sports as a Source of Women's Development in College

In her qualitative research study, Deborah is unraveling a unique world where college women thrive. Six dedicated club sports athletes share their experiences playing on a college women's ultimate Frisbee team and the surprising benefits that emerged as a result of this type of student involvement. Her research is of interest to those who care about women's development in college.

Emily MacPherson

Class: SAA 691 Research Seminar

Project Title: Among Women: The Student Affairs Perspective of Mentoring Like-Gendered Undergraduates

Emily has collected the rich narratives of female student affairs administrators who detail their experiences being relationally mentored, acting as mentors and defining the term "mentor" for themselves and in their day-to-day practice. From these narratives, the purpose of this study is to describe how female student affairs administrators perceive the benefits and challenges of their mentoring relationship(s) with undergraduate women at Western Washington University. Emily's research will bring to the forefront the issue of setting aside time for mentoring relationships amidst the hectic student affairs administrator's schedule, as well as the potential for mentoring as a feminist practice on college campuses.

Tara Trott

Class: Sec 431

Project Title: Diego Rivera Murals

Tara developed a unit plan around the murals of Mexican muralist Diego Rivera.

Todd Webb

Class: Sec 431

Project Title: America's Role in WWII

Todd developed a unit plan around America's role in WWII, specifically researching Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians and African Americans.

Lisa Rice

Class: SEC 555

Project Title: The Harlem Renaissance (Literature and Music)

Lisa developed a unit plan around the

Harlem Renaissance, focusing on literature and music, which was created for an interdisciplinary middle school setting.

Mary Lindsey

Class: SEC 555

Project Title: The Harlem Renaissance (Social Studies)

Mary developed a unit plan around The Harlem Renaissance, focusing on social studies, which was created for an interdisciplinary middle school setting.

Sara Connell

Class: ELED 380

Project Title: El Tesoro

In order to support oral language development in the classroom, Sara studied storytelling as a form of communication. Although it is not Sara's first language, she chose to learn and tell a story in Spanish to her class.

Lindsey Azarpay, Avery Placencia, Jenn Wilson Kara Hope & Lindsey Denning

Class: ANTH 484

Project Title: Arab Americans

These students developed and researched a broad scope of information regarding Arab Americans. Their presentation consisted of an introduction to cultural, religious, linguistic, historical aspects, communication styles, the educational system and hands-on activities in order to increase engagement and propel learning. They provided materials for their cohort members to make a special art project, often done in Arabic classrooms, of holy beads.

Kathy Resler

Class: ANTH 484

Project Title: Diversity Unit on Cultural Heritage

Kathy created a language arts unit. Through literature and writing, students will form an understanding of what is meant by cultural heritage. Students will do this through teacher-led introduction of African American cultures and discovering their own culture.

Amy McCorkhill

Class: ANTH 484

Project Title: Cesar's Big Day (children's book to promote multicultural awareness)
Cesar's Big Day starts with Cesar, the cello, gathering dust in the music room. He asks Viola the violin if she thinks he will ever