COMMUNITY COLLEGE MOMENT

INSIDE:

NORMAN SOLOMON ...on Oregon, activism, and the FBI. **BILL MCKIBBEN** ...on heat, hope, and the human spirit. **JI XIANLIN** ...on life, death, and the Cultural Revolution. **SPILDE, SALT & BALDWIN** ...a conversation on democracy. **OREGON POLITICIANS** ...on the community college.

DEMOCRACY

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LCC President Dale Parnell and Eugene Mayor Leslie Cone ride in a 1968 parade to support a bond measure for higher education. Photo courtesy of Lane Community College Archives.

Community College Moment
Spring 2008

The *Community College Moment* is a faculty-led journal offering a forum for high quality progressive works that reflect a new vision of scholarship at the intersection of academic, activist, and community interests. The *Moment* seeks to encourage and enhance the vital, inclusive scholarly culture uniquely possible at a comprehensive community college.

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Community College Moment

Volume Eight
Spring 2008

Art

Art

Readings and Reviews

Use It or Lose It

Here's something Thomas Jefferson probably *didn't* say: "An informed citizenry is the bulwark of democracy." But that makes it no less true. And whoever said it was thinking, no doubt, of the American information media and the educational systems of the late 18th century. Back then, you learned about local news through word of mouth; national news, through the press. And public education? Well, that was still in development.

Things are different now. We have more access to more information than at any time in human history. Universal education is the law. But all is not well. Today — when mass-produced news, entertainment, fact, and fiction blur — critical thinking skills have become more necessary than ever. Developing them is our challenge.

We all know the facts. Media ownership consolidation. Cuts in tax support for public education. Technology exploited by the few at the expense of the many. Multinational corporations, "K Street" lobbyists, government bailouts, golden parachutes, backroom trade agreements. . . . Plug in your own example and follow the money. You'll likely find that it isn't going to the public interest.

So, what do we do? In the late 1800s, at the height of the Gilded Age, groups of farmers gathered at their local grange halls and began discussions on how to address the corruption and inequities in business and politics in America. Their unity and collective actions led to the Populist Party, "trust-busting," and eventually the Progressive Era of the early 20th century.

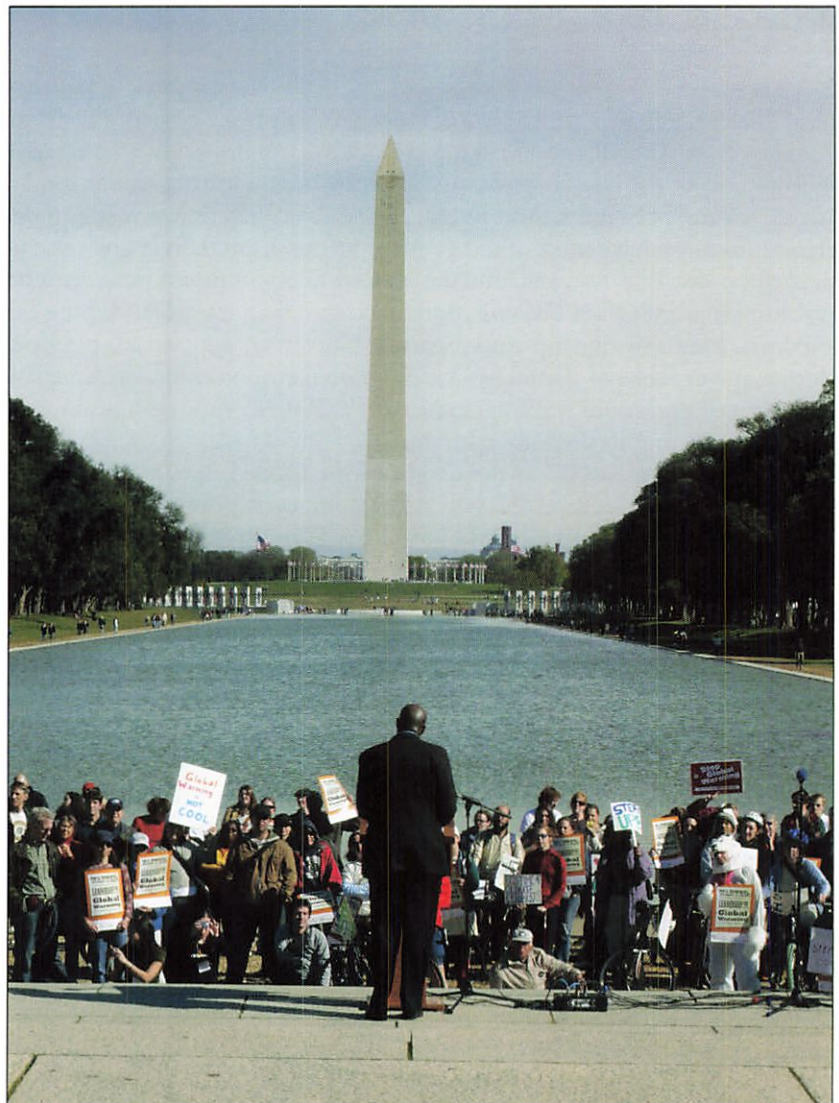
Today, in what has been referred to as the second Gilded Age, our answer might be found in the 21st century version of the grange hall, the Internet. For now at least, the World Wide Web remains the only information medium that has not been tamed, trimmed, and tied down to wring the highest return from the lowest investment. The sources of information, connection, and community we need to reclaim our democracy exist there. But how to sort through the endless listings; how, in an information environment largely bereft of vetting and review, do we determine the value and legitimacy of a source?

Everyone has their favorite websites; we're not going to overload you with a list of ours. Rather, we invite you to browse this issue of the *Moment*, take your time over this or that article, and return to not only the stories but the ideas you encounter. Jot down names, themes, phrases, and enter them into your favorite search engine in your own information environment. Find the connections; inform yourself. That's what democracy can provide, and at present, it's available.

A newspaper editor once said the reporter's job is to "cut through the bullshit." As educators, our job is to help students develop their ability to recognize the difference between news and opinion, reality and spin, to navigate their way through this shifting information landscape.

How well we do, history will show. For an uninformed citizenry is the single most grave threat to the most important things we identify with America: freedom and democracy.

The Editors



Van Jones, national environmental leader, addresses a crowd in Washington, D.C. on the Step It Up National Day of Climate Action, November 3, 2007. (Courtesy of StepItUp.org. Photo by Jamie Henn.)

Building the Climate Movement

Bill McKibben

Editors' Note: *In October 2007, writer and educator Bill McKibben, author of the first major book on global warming,* The End of Nature, *spoke at the University of Oregon about his experiences building a grassroots political movement. This is the opening segment of that lecture. To view the entire lecture via streaming video, visit the UO Humanities Center website at www.uoregon.edu/-humanctr/cressman.htm*

Well, thank you enormously for that over-kind introduction, and thank you all for being here. You know, for me the last year has been kind of odd, because I'm used to doing a fair amount of speaking, and I'm used to doing it as a kind of expert. One goes and writes books and goes around and talks about what's in them and all of that. For the last year most of what I've been talking about is a kind of celebration of cluelessness: my own. And the subtext and really the text of tonight's remarks is basically, "If I can do this, anyone can do this, and so you all should."

I wrote the first book about global warming a very long time ago — and it's further ago all the time — and it's quite humbling now to go to colleges and realize all the undergraduates weren't yet born when I wrote the book. I spent twenty years writing and speaking and all of this, and at some point about a year and a half ago just was overcome with a kind of despair about how little had actually happened, how little we had done, how nothing had taken place in Washington, how we were no closer to solving this greatest of all problems. Some part of me knew that the time had come to stop talking and writing exclusively, and start trying to act a little bit. But I had no particular idea how to go about this.

I was living in Vermont, and so I called a couple of my writer friends and said, "Look, we've got to do something. Let's walk up to the Federal building in Burlington," — Burlington's our major city — "and we'll sit-in on the steps and we'll get arrested and there'll be a little story in the paper and at least we will have done something."

My friends, they're all writers too, said, "Oh yeah, we'll go along, whatever." But one of them was smart enough to call up Burlington and ask the police what would happen if we carried out this intrepid plan. And the police said nothing will happen; you're welcome to sit on the steps of the Federal building as long as you want. The implication was we would need to burn down the Federal building. So we calculated the carbon emission from that, and instead just called up everyone we knew, and about three weeks later we set off on this pilgrimage. It was the Thursday before Labor Day. We left from Robert Frost's old

summer writing cabin up in the Green Mountains because we liked that most clichéd of all high-school English class poems about "the road not taken." It seemed *apropos*. And off we set, and for five days we walked, and we would sleep in fields at night and do programs in churches in the evening.

By the time we got to Burlington there were a thousand people marching, which in Vermont is an enormous number of people. It's a very scary sight for Vermonters to see this many people. And it was really interesting because it was more than enough to get all our candidates for federal office last fall, everybody running for Senate and Congress, to come down and meet with us on the shore of Lake Champlain at our final rally. And not just to meet with us but to come up on stage and sign on to this big pledge we had that they would work to cut carbon emissions 80 percent by mid-century. Which at the time — a year ago — was quite a radical and ambitious plan that went far beyond what anyone had really thought about proposing in Washington. But it was what the scientists said we needed to do, and so that's what we held up.

And it wasn't just the liberal Democrats, of whom we have a fair number in Vermont, who signed on to this. It was the conservative Republicans, too. The woman who was running for Congress on the GOP ticket, who almost won, the adjutant general of our state National Guard, said two months before, when she launched her campaign, that she wasn't sure that global warming was real, and that more research needed to be done. Well, it was eye-opening for me in a profound way to understand that the "more research that needed to be done" was how many people were going to walk across Vermont and ask her to move [on the issue]. I had allowed myself to become more cynical than I should have about our political system, and it was important and powerful for me and the kids I was working with to see this happen.

The only downer, really, was to open the paper the next morning and see the story that said that perhaps this was the largest demonstration that had yet taken place in the United States about global warming. I thought about it for a little while. At first it seemed outlandish, but the more I thought about it the more it seemed that it was probably accurate. Because we'd built the superstructure of a movement — we had the economists, the engineers, the policy people. The only part we hadn't bothered with was the actual movement part — you know, the people to make it real.

So we decided to see if this was just a Vermont thing or if we could do it on a larger scale. And when I say "we" I mean me and six twenty-two year olds. That's the key part of this story, the level of cluelessness and unsophistication and everything else this represented. On January 10 of this year we launched this website (http://stepitup07.org). We said to people, "Have a rally, twelve weeks hence, on April 14 around this same goal." We had no money, we didn't have any organization, we didn't have any mailing list. We didn't

really know what to expect. We just started writing. I started writing e-mails to everybody and telling them to forward them, and writing blog postings, and writing little things for newspapers and just on and on and on. And they started e-mailing and calling.

In the course of that twelve weeks, people in 1400 communities signed up to host demonstrations on April 14. It was incredibly moving to see it happen. And it was almost entirely or largely people who weren't full-time activists or professional protesters or any such thing. They were just people like us, who had been scared, worried, kind of haunted by the idea of what was happening, but hadn't really known how to take effective action any more than I had, against this largest of all problems. Where do you begin? And it was almost as if by setting a date we gave people permission to just start to work, and they did, and it was incredibly beautiful.

I'm going to show, at the end of this talk, a few pictures from that and talk a little more about it. But I want to back up now and set the context and talk about why it's so important that we get this movement going and what it's got to look like and how it's got to build. Because my goal is that by the end of the evening, if there's anybody in here who isn't already part of that movement, I hope very much that you will be or will at least think about it. Because I think it's the most important thing that there is right now.

Bill McKibben *is an American environmentalist and writer who frequently writes about global warming, alternative energy, and the risks associated with human genetic engineering. Beginning in the summer of 2006, he led the organization of the largest demonstrations against global warming in American history. McKibben is active in the Methodist Church, and his writing sometimes has a spiritual bent. His many books include* End of Nature *(1989) and, most recently,* Fight Global Warming Now: The Handbook for Taking Action in Your Community *(2007). For more information, visit www.billmckibben.com*

The Community College in a Democracy

Bruce Hanna, Oregon State Representative, District 7 (R-Roseburg)

Community colleges, as part of Oregon's educational system, play a vital role in our democracy. An educated citizenry is more likely to participate in the democratic process, and is more likely to make better-informed decisions on issues.

For many Oregonians, community colleges offer unique opportunities to pursue new workforce skills and advanced degrees. Because they are governed by locally-elected boards, community colleges have a remarkable ability to meet the needs of local citizens and businesses.

By providing an educated citizenry and higher skilled workforce, community colleges strengthen our democracy and help keep our state competitive in the global economy.

Editors' Note: *The* Moment *sent out this question to Oregon politicians across the state: "What is, or should be, the role of the community college in a democracy?" We heard from six elected officials; their answers are presented in pairs throughout the issue.*

The Community College in a Democracy

Bill Morrisette, Oregon State Senator, District 6 (D-Springfield)

Of the three levels of education in our society — K-12, community college and the university system — the community college should most reflect the needs and values of the community in which it is located.

I would say a core role of the community college is work-force development in the broadest possible way. It is the grass-roots educational institution in a democratic society.

The community college is also an open door to the university system, in regards to both economic and credit access. It allows even the most financially disadvantaged student to complete a degree program at a reasonable cost.

Above all, the community college should establish close community ties with local, county and state governmental jurisdictions and their programs by encouraging students to become actively involved in the life of the community.

I feel the community college suffers from a gap that widens as its students become productive community members. That gap becomes most apparent at tax levy time when the number of supporters of the community college budget nowhere matches the number of those who successfully attended and benefited from the education they received.

My conclusion is that community colleges are paying the price of not having sufficiently instilled, not only loyalty, but "active" democratic practices in their students.

Civic Development
Active Learning: Preparing the Voter

Ruth Santee

Thomas Jefferson wrote; "Only popular government can safeguard democracy. . . Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositories. And to render them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree. . . ." (Koch and Peden 1972)

My role as a fine arts educator at a California community college is not limited to instructing students in the applied techniques of my discipline. My role extends to guiding students towards the life long pursuit of being informed critical thinkers and empowered citizens. We as educators play a vital role in a student's civic development. Maximizing the opportunity to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills in students through active learning practices may be more than a teaching strategy; it may aid in advancing our nation's suffrage.

I think we all would agree with the Jeffersonian ideal that a healthy democracy requires an educated electorate, committed to civic engagement and voting. "The qualifications for self-government are not innate. They are the result of habit and long training" (Jefferson 1824) Whose responsibility is civic development: family, community, school, individual? With the upcoming presidential election, I am reminded of my own first voting experience during a presidential election year. I remember heated debates with fellow students and a budding sense of civic responsibility. Who fostered this civic development in me? My parents certainly did by discussing politics at home, but also my school played an important role, providing me with a skill set to make informed decisions. I continue to vote, a result of parental involvement, education and a sense of community. David E. Campbell's 2005 essay, "Vote Early, Vote Often: The Role of Schools in Creating Civic Norms", centers research on social capital in schools, calling the school "[an] important incubator of norms of civic participation....we should find a link between strong civic norms at school and engagement in the political process, in both the present and the future." (Campbell 2005) Civic development has historically been a mission of the public education system, however in recent years it has received increasingly less attention. Civic education is on the decline in elementary and secondary schools, yet the need for it is greater than ever. The direct result is that young people don't vote. According the U.S. Census Bureau, voter turnout of people 18-24 years of age in 2004 was 47 percent. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005) The lack of voter turnout may be putting the health of our democracy at risk.

Perhaps the open access education provided by the Community College system could provide a valuable venue for renewing civic preparation in students. The American Association of Community College's renewed mission statement asserts that it will "forg[e] community development and renewal by working to ensure access to lifelong learning to benefit individuals, communities and society in general." (American Association of Community Colleges 2006)

How, as educators from different disciplines, do we foster civic growth in our students across the curriculum? I believe the answer is active learning. Active learning, according to Hollingsworth and Lewis, is "involved learning; it takes place when the learners are excited, mentally alert and caught up in the experience." (Hollingsworth and Lewis 2006) If we, through active learning practices, can strengthen our student's critical thinking and problem solving skills, engage them with real life examples and encourage them to exercise their voices in school, local and national elections, then our roles as educators in the community college system may be more vital to the health of our country than we imagined. Philosopher Paulo Freire suggests how students in a cooperative learning environment over time begin to evolve into the critical thinkers that make up an educated electorate. "Students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge. Because they apprehend the challenge as interrelated to other problems within a total context not as a theoretical question, the resulting comprehension tends to be increasingly critical and thus constantly less alienated. Their response to the challenge evokes new challenges, followed by new understandings; and gradually the students come to regard themselves as committed." (Freire 1993)

More intensively than our colleagues at four-year institutions, educators at community colleges are often challenged to engage the variety of students that enter our doors. Open door polices provide us with a broad-spectrum profile of the student attending a community college. From recent high school graduates, to students who are recently released from jail, and others trying to reenter the job market, these students come from an extensive variety of cultures, backgrounds, educational experiences, skill levels and learning styles. Models of banking education, filling a student's head with facts and figures, are not as effective with the diverse student body attending community colleges. Unlike four-year institutions that often rely on banking education modalities, we have options. As community college educators, we must keep reminding ourselves that students are not mere receptacles for our narrative pedagogy, but rather active participants in a mutually enriching dialogue.

Years ago, as an administrator for a student support services program at a California college, I frequently recruited new student tutors from the final grade lists of all students

provided by the registrar. Of interest to me were the A and B students in the science courses. This particular school scheduled lecture and lab courses independent of each other, and therefore professors had awarded students separate grades for each. I immediately noticed that there was not always a correlation between the student's lecture and lab final grades. Often students who had less than satisfactory grades in a science lecture course had very successfully completed a science lab course. Could it be that the students in the lecture courses were experiencing a primarily "banking" approach to education, while in the lab courses the same students were experiencing an active learning approach? Or maybe all of these students happened to be kinesthetic learners? My guess is that the lectures were not stimulating them and the labs were. During labs students were learning the material in a variety of modalities. It is a well-used adage in higher education development that "we teach as we were taught." The truth is that traditional lectures have been dull for generations. Most educators are not trained and supported in practicing active learning in the classroom. Many faculty disclose they would like to be able to, but the pressures of tenure, class size, or research means that educators continue to deliver lectures that are much like those we sat through in college, often boring.

Active learning approaches include small group projects, journal writing, involving contextual/real life scenarios, exposure to case studies, service learning opportunities, role-playing, student presentations, and open dialogue between instructor and students. One of the most valuable, and often overlooked benefits of active learning practices is the development of critical thinking skills. Courses based on intensive practice appear to be more effective in increasing critical thinking than traditional lecture courses. (van Gelder 2000) The origin of critical thinking dates back to early philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, whose basic teaching premises were to encourage students to question convention and to realize that things are not always as they appear to be on the surface. Modern academics have proposed that critical thinking involves the suspension of judgment and healthy skepticism. (Dewey 1909, 1997) Critical thinking is often acknowledged as a major teaching goal, but receives less attention than needed. College students who develop and practice critical thinking skills are more likely to engage in civic responsibility.

A final project for my Basic 2D Design class is to give students the assignment of designing a propaganda poster based on a current social issue. The assignment begins with an historical investigation of propaganda posters. We define what they are, research how they were and still are used, investigate how they looked in the past and discuss what constitutes a successful poster. The only requirement I place on these projects is that students must incorporate the design elements and principles they had learned during the semester into their poster design. Students begin the process of choosing topics for their projects. They research supporting information and share it during discussions with the group at

large. The topics chosen are always diverse politically, socially and culturally. Using both text and visual images, students learn how to best persuade their audience in support of their cause or issue. The project concludes with final presentations and a class critique of each student's project. Students exercise and strengthen their critical thinking skills in discussing their fellow students' work. They are able to acknowledge when a poster, although executed well, may or may not sway opinions. The project always yields an interesting body of current propaganda posters, but also exposes students to active learning strategies aiding in the further development of their critical thinking skills. It brings current issues into the arena of our classroom, so that everyone gains something from every other student's final project. My curricula objectives as an instructor are fulfilled. Students learn the basic elements and principles of 2D design; they learn how to clearly voice opinions; they learn how to fully research and understand a social topic and how to suspend uninformed judgment. They also learn to analyze the opinions and beliefs of their peers based on further in-depth understanding and knowledge. All of these benefits would not have been accomplished if I had assigned a final project that was based on isolated independent work of a non-relevant nature.

Jeffersonian ideals of educating the masses to produce an informed electorate go back to the American Revolution. Since the inception of the American community college at the beginning of the 20th century, educators have worked hard to inform and prepare students. The majority of our students continue to look towards us for guidance and enlightenment. In order for community colleges to engage students and help them successfully build an educational foundation on which to grow as informed citizens, we as faculty and staff must continue to foster an environment of connection, respect and relevance. Voting has roots in community life. The act of voting is an individual's action, made for reasons that go beyond the immediate interests of the individual but that affect the community at large. Voting and voter turn out are indications of our community and federal government's health and well-being.

James McHenry, one of the delegates to the Federal Convention of 1787 and a signer of the draft of the U.S. Constitution wrote that as the delegates to the Constitutional Convention trudged out of Independence Hall in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787, an anxious lady in the crowd inquired of Benjamin Franklin, "Well Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?"

"A republic," Franklin replied, "if you can keep it." (McHenry 1787)

Ruth Santee *is an assistant art professor at Bakersfield College, where she teaches drawing and sculpture. She holds an M.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Recently the University of Oregon acquired her sculpture, "Padded Arm Chair and Ottoman," for their permanent collection.*

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Abe Lincoln's Traveling Medicine Show

Brian Kelly

They are not drinking the Gettysburg tonic

Or sampling the freedom tincture

Or slurping the emancipated elixirs

Or proclaiming potions of prose

Because they know the score

Brian Kelly *lives in Dexter, Oregon with his wife Erika and two dogs and two cats, where they take walks, grow vegetables, look through telescopes, read books, cook food, and laugh at lots of stuff.*

Speaking Truth to Power

Norman Solomon

Editors' note: *When renowned media critic Norman Solomon spoke to a standing-room-only crowd at Lane Community College in October 2007, he followed his talk on the decades-long construction of what he calls America's "warfare state" with a lively question and answer session. In response to a question about how the corporate-owned media companies reacted to his remarks as a guest commentator presenting the "opposing view" on radio and TV shows, he said, "The question you might ask is how many times I was invited to return."*

The consequences of speaking truth to power are not limited to media marginalization, as the following excerpt shows. This passage, taken from Solomon's latest book, the autobiographical Made Love, Got War *(Polipoint Press, 2007), begins when the author is a young student making his way from Berkeley, California to Reed College in Portland, Oregon.*

1970:

Telegraph Avenue smells of CS tear gas, acrid smoke wafting across the streets, empty except for people holding vinegared rags and handkerchiefs to their faces, regrouping on the sidewalks. Boards cover store windows; white Berkeley unmarked police cars zipping around corners are the only autos moving through the streets, with gas-masked police crammed inside. Across Bancroft, a dozen cops are wearing riot helmets and clutching fat two-foot clubs, standing like alert journeymen batters on deck at the edge of the campus. Suddenly several canisters arch across the street, exploding thick gray gas as they land with loud coughs on the pavement, on both sides; got to decide which way to run, quick; resolving not to breathe, turning to the right, I'm running past the nearest steaming canister, back to Telegraph, and the CS gas violently insists it has entered my system; eyes are burning, all at once it seems impossible to breathe; the chemicals are doing as the manufacturers must have guaranteed, I'm choking, the gas inside grudges every thin gasp of oxygen it can't block; stomach is trying to vomit nothing. Gasping for breath, breathe please . . . slowly yes . . . Eyes start to open, stand ing in a store doorway; gradually air is coming back, wheezing down Telegraph; a medic is squirting a white liquid into my eyes and handing me a vinegar-soaked cloth, and then he's gone; the trash cans are on fire.

I had arrived back in Berkeley just in time for the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Cambodia. I'd buy gas for my '63 Fury in one-dollar increments, and when not camping up in the hills off Derby Street behind a school for the deaf, I was renting a room at a fraying place called the Cal Hotel that must have been among the seediest of the city. Some very sweet people were living there, trying to eke out a sort of subsistence; one was a middle-aged man who used to wrap his head with a black scarf and liked to joke about people mistaking him for Muddy Waters; he'd go down to the Marina and catch fish. I had a little pack-up portable stereo with me, and some records, and a guy named Bob and I used to hang out in my room and listen. We were about the same age, easily close in immediate interests yet worlds apart; he had come out of a ghetto, with bleak prospects. The beauty of blues offered rhythms of heart and breath, reconnecting pulse and voice. One of the albums we listened to was *Fathers and Sons* — with Muddy Waters, Otis Spann, Mike Bloomfield, Paul Butterfield — released the previous summer. Near the end of the first track, "All Aboard," Waters summed up:

I worked *hard* all my life
Now I'm gettin' *push*ed around

One time I knocked on the door of the guy who kept being mistaken for Muddy Waters and asked him for the few dollars I'd lent. He walked me across the small room to a dresser where some coins were spread out, then picked up a smattering of quarters, nickels, dimes, and put them in my hand, till only copper was left on the dresser. "Always leave yourself a few pennies," he said, almost cheerfully.

The poverty was grotesque, and so was the war far away. By then, a kind of rage had set in for me. Nearly forty years later I can't say it has dissipated in the slightest. The poverty is grotesque, and so is the war far away.

After several weeks in Berkeley, I drove up the coast to Portland, where my higher learning would start at Reed College in early fall. For the summer I moved into a room in a house that Reed students had been renting on busy Belmont Street. Downstairs was a jewelry shop owned by one of the students; he and his girlfriend made rings, bracelets, chokers, and broaches. Another woman living in the house specialized in macramé, or maybe batik; her boyfriend was away for the summer, working as a lumberjack. The main

collective activities in the house involved eating meals with plenty of brown rice, drinking wine, smoking pot, and listening to soft lyrical hippie music.

During that summer, when I was in the newly instituted draft lottery, the number drawn for my birth date was 365; that got me off the hook for conscription under any foreseeable circumstances short of World War III, in which case it would all be moot anyway. I noticed that if I'd been born just two days after my actual birthday, my draft number would have been 001.

Countless pundits, for years already, had taken to bemoaning the "quagmire" in Vietnam. Scratch the surface and the country's preoccupation was mostly about what the war was like for America; the despair was mainly about us; the tragic picture was mostly framed around our own kind — suffering wounds and sometimes dying in a place where the U.S. military was bogged down.

We called it the Vietnam War, while Vietnamese people would naturally enough call it the American War. Decades later, as a figure of American speech, people would use phrases like "during Vietnam," almost as though Vietnam ceased to exist after the U.S. military finally left the "quagmire."

During 1970 the tone of the country shifted. That spring, hundreds of college campuses had shut down in an antiwar frenzy spurred by the Cambodia invasion and the shootings of students at Kent State and Jackson State. Yet, in the fall the campuses reopened in a largely quiescent mood. Despite the best efforts of many, the peace movement — and all it seemed to imply about who we were or might become — finished the year visibly depleted. American troop levels were dropping in Vietnam, and the draft's impact began to ease; over the next few years, much more of the USA's warfare would be high tech from the air.

Psychedelia started to decorate mass-media products. In the early 1970s, I saw bright-colored billboards done up in unmistakable Peter Max style, advertising "Super Jobs in the Air Force," while B-52s were still dropping enormous loads of explosives on Vietnam. It was a mistake to underestimate the flexibility of institutions we reviled.

We took our own symbols (long hair, rock music, roach clips, radical rhetoric) too seriously; and when they proved insubstantial under pressure, so did the psychological fortresses constructed with them. We may have deeply felt our desires — to stop a war, shatter rigid body armor, reject oppressive gender roles, challenge injustices based on race

and class — but it was all too tempting, and easy, to gravitate toward icons of discontent, symbols that could then be imitated and co-opted by marketers and politicians. The finger pointing at the Moon was not the Moon.

Portland's favorite nickname was "the Rose City." Less floridly, it had been dubbed "the biggest small town in America." The city was laid back, and fairly traditional except for some dissenting enclaves. The annual Rose Festival was an occasion for U.S. Navy ships to dock ceremoniously in the Willamette River downtown — and for a few hearty activists to stand on drawbridges, slowing the arrival of the little armada before they were dragged off to paddy wagons. In the industrial section along the east side of the Willamette, I took note of a sign that said: "Anything Will Sell If You Box It Well."

Oregon's Wayne Morse was one of only two senators to vote against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that opened the floodgates for the war on Vietnam in August 1964. The state's dominant newspaper, the *Oregonian*, went after Morse with a vengeance because of his strong position for peace. He'd been a premature anti-militarist. In February 1968, while skipping classes as a high school junior, I'd seen Morse up close at a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I still remember the way afternoon light came through the Venetian blinds in the small room while Morse let loose with his sandpapery voice. A transcript of the hearing has preserved Morse's declaration that he did not "intend to put the blood of this war on my hands." And he spoke prophecy: "We're going to become guilty, in my judgment, of being the greatest threat to the peace of the world. It's an ugly reality, and we Americans don't like to face up to it." He went down to defeat in 1968 in a close election that mostly turned on his opposition to the war.

Slowly, I got to know activists around Portland. I couldn't persuade members of the local chapter of Business Executives Move For Vietnam Peace to protest at a speech in the city by super-banker David Rockefeller — a strong supporter of the Vietnam War and an advocate of "enlightened self-interest," whose Chase Manhattan loans had long shored up the apartheid regime in South Africa as well as many other dictatorships. I wrote a flyer that denounced "the Chase Manhattan Bank's financial support for the brutally cruel, totalitarian, barbaric and inhuman oppression of the people of South Africa, Greece, South Vietnam, Spain, Rhodesia and Latin America." It was a partial list.

In the Hilton Hotel downtown, at a banquet set to hear Rockefeller's speech, I went through the large room, handing out the leaflet during dessert. I got it into the hands

of quite a few diners before security guards hauled me out and took me to a little room, where I was told to go away and never come back.

The Vietnam War continued for years even after opinion polls showed that most Americans were opposed. In November 1971 the liberal magazine *Saturday Review* featured an article by Peter Schrag that pointed out: "The American majority is against the war. To oppose it involves no risk: the only risk lies in trying to stop it."

In 1972, *Voices From the Plain of Jars* came out — words and drawings from children and adults in a book subtitled "Life Under an Air War." Published by Harper & Row, it gained some circulation at the time, but three decades later was difficult to find even in library systems. Online, a bookseller offered an apt description: "This little-known book is the work of one American volunteer outraged by the secret bombing of Laos by his own country. The book is composed of the translated essays of the people who lived under the bombing. . . . This is the story of the first society to be totally destroyed by aircraft."

In 2006, I asked the outraged American volunteer Fred Branfman for an overview of his long-ago experiences in Laos — a country targeted by ideological cold warriors in Washington. "At the age of twenty-seven, a moral abyss suddenly opened before me," Branfman replied. "I was shocked to the core of my being as I found myself interviewing Laotian peasants, among the most decent, human and kind people on Earth, who described living underground for years on end, while they saw countless fellow villagers and family members burned alive by napalm, suffocated by five-hundred-pound bombs, and shredded by anti-personnel bombs dropped by my country, the United States. Even more shocking was the realization that the bombing was continuing apace, and that a few hundred miles away Laotians alive today would be dead by the morrow."

The "moral abyss" opened for Branfman in early September 1969 when he visited a Buddhist pagoda in the center of Vientiane, the Laotian capital:

> Every single villager that day, and every one of the more than two thousand refugees I was to interview in the next fifteen months, told essentially the same story. The bombing began in mid-1964, gradually escalated, until in late 1968 the planes were coming every day, raining down death and destruction, and destroying whole villages and, eventually, the whole society that had existed for the previous seven hundred

> years on the Plain of Jars. And, they made it clear, most of the bombing was from American jets. They knew the difference between the small, propeller-driven aircraft of the Royal Lao Air Force (many of which, I later discovered, were piloted by U.S.-trained Thais), which were relatively few in number, and the enormous numbers of jets which dropped huge bombs upon them day after day, month after month, year after year.

Branfman's discoveries led him to scrutinize U.S. policy: "I soon learned that a tiny handful of American leaders, a U.S. executive branch led by Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Henry Kissinger, had taken it upon themselves — without even informing let alone consulting the U.S. Congress or public — to massively bomb Laos and murder tens of thousands of subsistence-level, innocent Laotian civilians who did not even know where America was let alone commit an offense against it. The targets of U.S. bombing were almost entirely civilian villages inhabited by peasants, mainly old people and children who could not survive in the forest. The other side's soldiers moved through the heavily forested regions in Laos and were mostly untouched by the bombing."

From an Oval Office tape, April 25, 1972, during a conversation between President Nixon, White House press secretary Ron Ziegler, and Henry Kissinger:

PRESIDENT: "How many did we kill in Laos?"
ZIEGLER: "Maybe ten thousand — fifteen?"
KISSINGER: "In the Laotian thing, we killed about ten, fifteen . . ."

From an Oval Office tape, May 4, 1972: "I'll see that the United States does not lose," the President said while conferring with aides Al Haig, John Connally, and Kissinger. "I'm putting it quite bluntly. I'll be quite precise. South Vietnam may lose. But the United States *cannot* lose. Which means, basically, I have made the decision. Whatever happens to South Vietnam, we are going to *cream* North Vietnam. . . . For once, we've got to use the maximum power of this country . . . against this *shit-ass* little country: to win the war. We can't use the word, 'win.' But others can."

A few months later, in August 1972, several thousand people went to Miami Beach to protest and disrupt the Republican National Convention renominating President Nixon. We vowed to blockade the amphitheater and force Nixon to give his acceptance speech to an empty convention hall. It didn't work out that way, but we tried.

One of the first speakers I heard was longtime activist Dave Dellinger. "It is as bad as it seems," he said. "We must achieve a breakthrough in understanding reality."

The final night of the convention brought plenty of troops along with lots of tear gas and mace. The protests got little media attention; after all, to hear the mainstream press tell it, the Vietnam War had been winding down. About a thousand people were arrested for nonviolently blockading the streets near the convention hall; we went to jail, and Nixon made his acceptance speech.

Afterward, in a booklet titled *In the Belly of the Dinosaurs*, I wrote about what happened in Miami Beach during those few days. Some of the words now seem frozen in amber, from long ago yet still current: "There was a slide show through the dark. Pictures of warfare inflicted this second . . . humans burned by the phosphorous of our own lies . . . flesh burned and torn past death . . ." At the bottom of the page was an illustration of planes over a village and bombs falling on buildings, with the caption "Drawing by Laotian Refugee."

Two pages later was a paragraph pasted in from one of the many leaflets that circulated at the demonstrations that week. Next to a photo of a round object was the headline GUAVA BOMB and a few sentences: "If you were in Indochina, and this round bomb about the size of a baseball exploded near you, you'd be riddled with pellets. (American ingenuity has 'improved' the original bomb by substituting plastic pellets for steel balls. Medical X-rays can't detect the plastic ones.) Guava bombs are anti-personnel bombs designed to kill and maim people. They do little damage to structures. Millions have been dropped on Indochina, some with delayed action fuses that can make them explode anytime — even when a child is nearby."

By mid-1972, U.S. troop levels in Vietnam were way down — to around seventy thousand — almost half a million lower than three years earlier. Fewer Americans were dying, and the carnage in Vietnam was fading as a front-burner issue in U.S. politics. Nixon's withdrawal strategy had changed the focus of media coverage. In a 1969 memo, the executive producer of ABC's evening news, Av Westin, wrote: "I have asked our Vietnam staff to alter the focus of their coverage from combat pieces to interpretive ones, pegged to the eventual pull-out of the American forces. This point should be stressed for all hands." In a telex to the network's Saigon bureau, Westin gave the news of his decree to the correspon-

dents: "I think the time has come to shift some of our focus from the battlefield, or more specifically American military involvement with the enemy, to themes and stories under the general heading 'We Are on Our Way Out of Vietnam.'"

The killing had gone more technological; from 1969 to 1972 the U.S. government dropped 3.5 million tons of bombs on Vietnam, a total higher than all the bombing in the previous five years. The combination of withdrawing U.S. troops and stepping up the bombardment was anything but a coincidence; the latest in military science would make it possible to, in Nixon's private words, "use the maximum power of this country" against a "*shit-ass* little country."

Less than two months after Nixon's landslide reelection, he delivered on his confidential pledge to "*cream* North Vietnam," ordering eleven days and nights of almost round-the-clock sorties (Christmas was an off day) that dropped twenty thousand tons of bombs on North Vietnam. In the process, B-52s reached the city of Hanoi for the first time. During that week and a half, Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg later noted, the U.S. government dropped "the explosive equivalent of the Nagasaki A-bomb."

In the early 1970s, I started Out of the Ashes Press, a short-shoestring effort that published brief softcover books. The first authors were me and the taboo-defying Northwest poet Walt Curtis; we'd sell our books in the streets and bars for a dollar or two. Also I began to send out little collections of poems and bursts of prose to editors of underground papers and alternative magazines. As much as meager finances allowed, I'd bring stacks of stuffed envelopes to the post office counter, sending them the cheapest way possible.

Many years later, I learned that the FBI was monitoring my paltry mailouts of mimeographed poetry and polemics. The agency held back some of the surveillance records that mentioned me, but it released fourteen pages, heavily blacked out with magic marker. One of the FBI memos said:

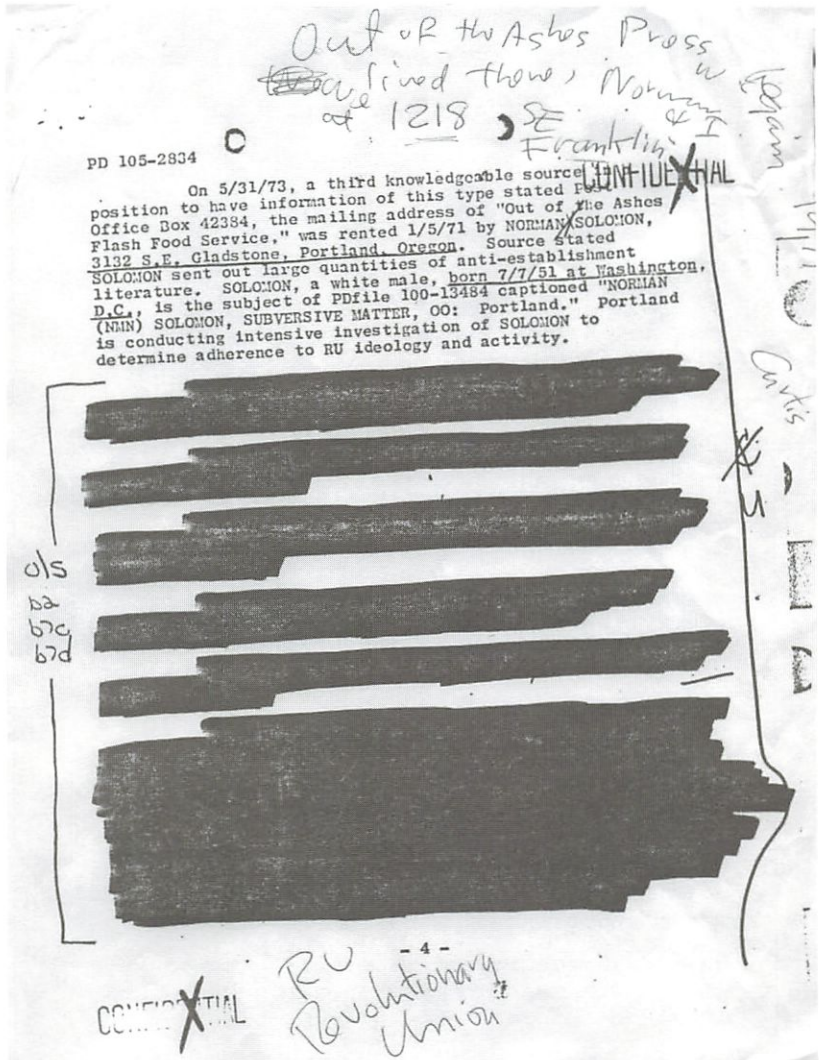
> On 5/31/73, a third knowledgeable source in a position to have information of this type stated Post Office Box 42384, the mailing address of "Out of the Ashes Flash Food Service," was rented 1/5/71 by NORMAN SOLOMON, 3132 S.E. Gladstone, Portland, Oregon. Source stated SOLOMON sent out large quantities of anti-establishment literature.

> SOLOMON, a white male, born 7/7/51 at Washington, D.C., is the subject of PDfile 100-13484 captioned "NORMAN (NMN) SOLOMON, SUBVERSIVE MATTER, 00: Portland." Portland is conducting intensive investigation of SOLOMON to determine adherence to RU [Revolutionary Union] ideology and activity.

The date of that memorandum, sent to "Director, FBI" from the Bureau's Portland office, was August 13, 1973. Five weeks later, another memo ("Subject: NORMAN SOLOMON, SUBVERSIVE MATTER") said that the Portland office "will determine subject's activities." On January 14, 1974, a follow-up memo concluded: "Subject is not known to be a member of any New Left organization and has been described as a pampheteer [sic]." The memo added: "No association has been established between subject and known leaders of the New Left movement at Portland, Oregon. In view of the above, it is recommended that this case be closed."

That sort of trivial and wasteful surveillance was a tiny facet of the FBI's COINTELPRO operations that violated the constitutional rights of huge numbers of politically active Americans — and sometimes damaged or destroyed their lives — at the behest of the warfare state.

Norman Solomon *is a nationally syndicated columnist on media and politics. He has been writing the weekly Media Beat column since 1992. His book,* War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death, *was published in 2005. A documentary based on the book was releaed in 2007. Solomon is the founder and executive director of the Institute for Public Accuracy, a national consortium of policy researchers and analysts. He is a longtime associate of the media watch group FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting). He is also senior advisor to the National Radio Project, which produces the weekly public-affairs program "Making Contact," heard on 160 noncommercial radio stations in North America. Learn more at www.normansolomon.com.*



Out of the Ashes Press
[redacted] lived there, Norman [illegible]
at 1218 SE Franklin
PD 105-2834
CONFIDENTIAL
On 5/31/73, a third knowledgeable source [illegible] position to have information of this type stated P[illegible] Office Box 42384, the mailing address of "Out of the Ashes Flash Food Service," was rented 1/5/71 by NORMAN SOLOMON, 3132 S.E. Gladstone, Portland, Oregon. Source stated SOLOMON sent out large quantities of anti-establishment literature. SOLOMON, a white male, born 7/7/51 at Washington, D.C., is the subject of PDfile 100-13484 captioned "NORMAN (NMN) SOLOMON, SUBVERSIVE MATTER, OO: Portland." Portland is conducting intensive investigation of SOLOMON to determine adherence to RU ideology and activity.
[redacted]
- 4 -
CONFIDENTIAL
RU Revolutionary Union
Curtis
b/s
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A page from the FBI file on Norman Solomon.

The Lane Peace Center

Is Proud to Present the

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PEACE & DEMOCRACY CONFERENCE

February 29 - March 1, 2008

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Medea Benjamin
Cofounder of Global Exchange & CODE**PINK**

Bob Wing
Cofounder of **united** for **peace** & **justice**

The Lane Peace Center is committed to fostering peace in ourselves, our community, nation and world. We recognize that peace is rooted in social, economic, political, racial and environmental justice.

The annual conference will bring together educators, students, spiritual leaders, activists, community members, and political leaders dedicated to building a peaceful society and nation.

Peace Center
Lane Community College

For more information and registration please contact:

PeaceCenter@lanecc.edu **www.lanecc.edu/peacecenter**

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Democracy at Lane

The Lane Peace Center: Fostering Peace through Education

The following is adapted from opening remarks by Stan Taylor, Lane Peace Center Co-chair, at the inaugural Lane Peace Conference, held at Lane Community College, Feb. 29–March 1, 2008. For more on the Lane Peace Center, visit www.lanecc.edu/peacecenter.

The Lane Peace Center was established in Spring 2007 to meet the clear need for teaching peace in a world beset by war, racism, poverty, and environmental destruction. Its purpose is to "foster peace through education." Education, like peace and democracy, must be rooted in the everyday lives and experiences of people. It rests on the opportunity to participate directly in our own education, and gains meaning when it is rooted in principles of social, economic, political, racial, spiritual and environmental justice.

Key components of the emerging Peace Center include educational programs fostering peace, an events series on topics related to peace and justice, building connections with community peace workers to create support structures that promote peace and justice, and an annual conference with renowned speakers and educational workshops that focus on creating a peaceful and just society.

The Peace Center's inaugural conference, "Peace & Democracy," is organized around the premise that both peace and democracy are rooted in economic, social, political, spiritual, racial and environmental justice. A key question is how to embrace the diversity in democracy to build peace, that is, to turn our differences into strengths rather than a source of fragmentation and animosity. The Peace & Democracy Conference recognizes the key role of diversity in building a local peace movement, by bringing together presenters and activists from different communities working toward peace. These include indigenous peoples; activists for anti-war efforts, the environment, civil rights and immigrant rights; labor and religious leaders; and teachers of mediation and non-violent communication. We recognize that issues of peace are both personal and political, and take many forms: from peace within, to peace with one's God, to ending wars and militarism, to civil rights for all peoples, to recognizing the intrinsic value of all life and the environment.

We must find ways to come together despite our differences; figures from our past point the way. Henry David Thoreau based his actions on conscience rooted in a Protestant religious tradition. His 1849 essay, "On Civil Disobedience," introduced us to

non-violent resistance as a means of change that became central to both the civil rights and anti-war movements. He was a transcendentalist recognizing the intimate connection between humans and nature; he refused to pay his taxes not only because they would be used to support slavery but also because they would support an imperialist war with Mexico. In today's language he would be an anti-war leader, a civil rights leader, and an environmental activist — all rooted in spiritual traditions of conscience.

Martin Luther King, in his 1967 speech, "Beyond Vietnam," starts from his roots as a Baptist minister and suggests how America might save its soul from racism, materialism and militarism through non-violent action based on conscience. Like Thoreau, King recognized that the works we do in different walks of life are connected to and dependent upon one another.

The keynote speakers for this conference also embrace the interconnectedness of the peace movement. Medea Benjamin is the co-founder of CODEPINK: Women for Peace, a group that organizes creative actions against the war in Iraq. She is the founding director of Global Exchange, and a leader in United for Peace and Justice. She has traveled several times to Iraq, and she helped establish the Occupation Watch International Center in Baghdad.

Bob Wing has been an activist, writer and editor in national and international struggles (especially racial) since 1968. He currently works with the Community Coalition, a Black-Latino grassroots organization in South Central Los Angeles, and is a leader in United for Peace and Justice. He was founding editor of *War Times/Tiempo de Guerras,* an antiwar newspaper, and *ColorLines,* a national magazine of race, culture and organizing.

The Lane Peace & Democracy Conference is designed to build bridges between communities working for peace. The workshops provide us the opportunity to hear about the work of different groups. The panel on "Organizing for Peace" brings experienced organizers speaking on the pitfalls and successes of that work. The all-participants session on "Fostering the Local Peace Movement," facilitated by Medea Benjamin and Bob Wing, provides the meeting space and opportunity to identify tangible ways peace workers can join together to work for and create peace and justice.

Stan Taylor, Co-chair
Lane Peace Center

Democracy at Lane

Ballot Counting in the Basement

In 1964, Lane County citizens were voting on whether or not to approve the Lane Community College District, which would cover the entirety of Lane County, from the Pacific Ocean to the Cascade peaks, from north of Junction City to south of Cottage Grove. Larry Romine, education reporter for the Eugene Register-Guard, *recalls meeting with Bert Dotson, executive secretary of the Lane County Community College Study Committee, in a basement office in downtown Eugene. The following is adapted from a 2004 oral history project, and reprinted with permission of Lane Community College Archives.*

The election, which the *Register-Guard* covered extensively, was October 19, 1964. I was hanging on Bert's coattails so thoroughly that the night of the election I stayed up all night with him counting the ballots. They used paper ballots put in wooden boxes held by a padlock. The person calling the election conducted it, and sent these boxes out to the polling places.

It was a cold, icy night, a terrible night, people spinning off the road. The turnout at one precinct at South Eugene High School was very heavy, a lot of university people, lots of education people, living out there. When the polls closed at 8:00 they still had a line maybe a block long, so they invited them all in and tried to help them warm up and check off the paper ballots.

We were in the offices of the IED [Intermediate Education District] in downtown Eugene, which was a basement area. We had to wait until each box came in, and then Bert would unpadlock it and count the ballots. He didn't let me see them. He didn't think that was cricket, according to the rules, and so, of course, I cooperated. I didn't need to stay all night.

The people in the outlying areas didn't get their boxes in because of the ice. Deputy sheriffs went and got those boxes from Florence and Mapleton and way up the McKenzie. And I think it was about 7:00 in the morning before we got the last one in.

During the night we got hungry and flipped to see who would go to Skippy's for a couple of hamburgers. He said one flip, and I flipped and I won, and he was very disappointed and he didn't want to go outside, so I said, "OK, flip again," and he lost again. And the guy who went didn't have to pay and he was gone for a long time. It must have been 4:00 in the morning. And what he brought me was a hamburger wrapped in paper, as if it was taken out of a freezer. And I accuse him to this day of holding the thing out of the window as he drove back from Skippy's.

Anyway, by 7:00 we knew we had a college, and I went over to the *Register-Guard* and wrote the story . . . something about "It doesn't have a name, doesn't have a budget, but today there is a community college in Lane County."

An audio version of this oral history can be heard at www.lanecc.edu/archives.

Voters Okay College 5 to 1

New Board Already Faces Organizational Fund Lack

By LARRY ROMINE
Of the Register-Guard

It has neither operating expense money, a name nor a president, and only the promise of a campus and student body.

But a community college exists today in Lane County.

Voters overwhelmingly approved establishment of the college Monday by nearly a 5-to-1 margin. Preliminary tallies showed 5,944 votes for and 1,202 against the college.

Named to the initial board of directors were Dr. Albert Risser of Florence from Zone 1, Dr. Clifford Matson of Junction City from Zone 2, Kenneth Schmidt of Springfield from Zone 3, Dr. Dean Webb of Cottage Grove from Zone 4, William Brinker Jr. of Eugene from Zone 5, and Olga Freeman and Lois Swetland, both of Eugene, as at-large representatives.

The board has weighty problems awaiting it. Its immediate one money. What will the college use to finance its organizational throes between now and a budget election, perhaps next spring?

"It's a problem the board members will have to solve," said Bert Dotson, community college study committee executive secretary. "We have no ready solution, believe me.

"They will have to get it somewhere," he said, "because we would hope to have a fairly good program operable next fall." The initial curriculum will be mostly technical-vocational courses, he said.

"The Eugene School District has agreed to make Eugene Technical-Vocational School facilities available for a temporary campus," said Lloyd Millhollen, a School District 4 official and also a member of the study committee. "A rental agreement, probably will be drawn up."

"We expect an opening enrollment of a thousand if not more," Dotson said.

No immediate meeting has been scheduled by the board. It cannot, in fact, meet officially until Monday's vote is canvassed by the State Board of Education.

The state board next meets formally in December, although it might be persuaded to call a special meeting in November. And an even earlier telephone canvass has been mentioned.

The college board in the meantime will have to meet unofficially Millhollen said. They must talk about choosing a president to direct organizational efforts and assist in such duties as picking a name for the new school. The directors can pick a name out of the air or hold a contest.

"It's up to the board," Dotson said.

A first consideration of the board when it meets will be to draw lots to determine the length of term each director will serve. There will be two four-year terms, two three-year terms, two four-year terms and a single one-year term.

Subsequent terms will be for four years. The directors will serve without compensation.

The board, whatever tribulations it encounters in the future, will begin its duties knowing the college has a solid backing among voters. Every one of the 72 polling places voted for es-

Freeman

Brinker

Swetland

Webb

Matson

Risser

Schmidt

Satoko Motouji *is a practicing artist in addition to being an instructor in Art & Applied Design at Lane Community College. She has a B.A. in English Literature from Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan, a second B.A. in Art History from the University of Oregon and an M.F.A. in painting from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She has taught in study abroad programs in Italy and Japan.*

War and Peace: Analysis of the Japanese Kanji Characters

Satoko Motouji

War

Sensou can be divided into two Chinese characters: 戦 (*sen*) and 争 (*sou*).

戦 (*sen*) means "Fighting" and "Shiver from fear." It originated from pictographs in the shapes of weapons such as swords.

争 (*sou*) means "Two parties fight to get something by force from each other" and "Urge to correct mistakes." It symbolizes two hands pulling away from each other.

Visually, *sensou* is comprised of sweeping diagonals, symbolizing weapons as well as instability of the condition. In my work, I made the lines extremely quickly without allowing me to ponder the forms.

Peace

平 (*hei*) has several different meanings: "Being flat without being tipped", "Smooth without any roughness", "To be equal", "To appease", and "Being gentle and kind." It comes from a pictograph that is an image of floating weeds on quiet water.

和 (*wa*) also has different meanings: "To come to a settlement", "Balanced state of different ingredients mixed", "Become friendly and calm down", "Be softened", "Harmonize voice and rhythm", and "To add something." *Wa* comes from a combination of two parts. The left part of this ideogram symbolizes a pictograph that shows ears of millet elastically draping their heads. This is combined with 口 (*kou*) a visualization of the human mouth.

Heiwa is formed with horizontal and vertical lines, which symbolizes stability, with the balancing lines coming from different directions.

Analysis

Even without knowing the meanings of these words, one would get very different feelings about them. The panels on the left give a sense of balance, while the images on the right aggressively shout at the audience and give a constant sense of instability.

When peace is achieved, there is equilibrium of different opinions with a sense of compassion in the society. Maintaining balance requires more intellectual and humanistic effort than violent and radical solutions that ignore other parties' views.

Left panels represent peace (*heiwa*). Right panels represent war (*sensou*). The most prominent strokes in the Japanese words were used to create these abstract images.

Artist's Statement by Frank Rossini: I have been writing poetry for the past forty years and have been working with b/w photography for about fifteen years. This photo and companion poem are part of a series I am presently working on. The series has raised a question for me as to how to balance the companion elements so they are not redundant but complementary. The poem should not be an explication of the photo, and the photo should not be a map of the poem. I want each to extend the content of the other yet maintain a degree of aesthetic independence. I welcome comments.

Iraq memorial

Frank Rossini

we are the dead a field
of white
flags we
surrender flesh
to earth bones
to memory's clacking
river we are
a torrent buried
beneath boots who've lost
the light
step the way
to dance we are
death's hair
surprised
by freedom

Frank Rossini *grew up in New York City. After teaching middle school and high school in Roxbury, Massachusetts and in the South Bronx, he moved to Oregon where he taught for seven years at the HEP Program at the University of Oregon. He has been an instructor in the Academic Learning Skills department at Lane Community College for the past twenty-eight years.*

The Community College in a Democracy

Bill Dwyer, Lane County Commissioner, District 2 - Springfield

The role of a community college is to promote secondary education in a less formal and less expensive setting. To provide educational opportunities not traditionally available at four year institutions. To provide career development opportunities that fit the community's needs. To be flexible and ensure that classes for those who wish to transfer to a four-year institution have the ability to utilize the learning credits earned towards a higher degree.

Editors' Note: *The* Moment *sent out this question to Oregon politicians across the state: "What is, or should be, the role of the community college in a democracy?" We heard from six elected officials; their answers are presented in pairs throughout the issue.*

The Community College in a Democracy

Peter DeFazio, United States Representative, 4th Congressional District of Oregon

Thomas Jefferson wrote that critical to the strength and vitality of a democracy is an informed and educated citizenry. Without this, a political system is doomed to corruption, tyranny, and despotism. A democracy depends on its people to keep elected leaders in check, to protect our rights against government overreach, and to ensure equality and justice for all.

Community colleges play a fundamental role in this regard by educating millions of Americans. In fact, half of all undergraduate students in this country, some 12 million individuals (350,000 Oregonians), are enrolled in a community college. Without the more convenient, inexpensive alternative to four-year universities that community colleges offer, millions of Americans would never have the opportunity to earn a higher education. Importantly, 60 percent of community college students are women, one third are self-identified minorities, and another third are first-generational students. Community colleges give many traditionally underrepresented individuals important opportunities to empower themselves with valuable skills, knowledge and self-confidence. Empowered citizens (citizens who know their rights and possess the necessary tools to protect those rights) are an asset to any democracy.

Community colleges also encourage economic and social mobility. On average, individuals with an associate's degree or training certificate earn a half million dollars more in their lifetime than those with a high school diploma. That's a huge return for a modest investment. And, the financial security a degree provides can lead to a more engaged citizen. One need only look at failed states around the world to learn that chronic poverty and hunger can destabilize governments, even democracies.

Put simply, community colleges help make the "American Dream" possible. Pulitzer prize-winning authors, a Supreme Court justice, a governor, Oscar-winning actors and actresses, corporate executives, and professional athletes have all attended community colleges — not to mention that community colleges educate many of this country's heroes, including a majority of our firefighters, law enforcement officers, EMTs and registered nurses. Without the social and economic mobility community colleges provide, a democracy will not flourish.

Community colleges promote diversity, including diversity of thought, which is important in a democracy. More than 100,000 foreign students attend community colleges

every year. The interaction between Americans and exchange students exposes each to diverse cultures, values, and histories, which can generate a better understanding of our differences and a greater appreciation of our similarities.

Finally, community colleges provide a platform for honest and open dialogue between individuals and groups with differing opinions. Learning and debating with others, working and sharing with students, and listening are at the very core of America's democratic values: tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation, and compromise. Only within this context can citizens begin to explore the possibilities of freedom and the responsibilities of self-government.

Leadership Through Food Choices

Alise Lamoreaux

Writing anything on the topic of democracy seems like an overwhelming task for which I am under-qualified. I am not a sociologist or economist or political enthusiast. My passion in life focuses on my horses; because of them, I have come to be aware of the environment I live in on a whole new level. To be with my horses, I left the city and moved to a more rural lifestyle. It is through the property that we live on, and the history that came with it, that I have come to care about the cycle of agriculture and how it relates to democracy.

When I was a city dweller, I was disconnected from agriculture and land use issues. I bought food at the local stores and knew it came from farms, maybe even local ones, but didn't really know what that meant. It was easy to stay disconnected because I didn't have to see what went into the production of my food or make any decisions regarding it. I was culturally asleep. The same was true for the hay I bought for my horses. Some guy just delivered and stacked it and I gave him some money. If I was really concerned, I could send hay samples to the local Extension office and find out if there was really any nutritional value to it. My horses looked good, so I assumed the hay was good. My food was good, their food was good, no worries. I was merely a consumer of agriculture.

But when we moved onto our seventy-seven acres and inherited a farmer, (who was leasing part of the land for grass seed production) my education began. The land came with a history. It had been in the business of agricultural production since its first owner began farming in 1882. As its newest stewards, we gained the responsibility for its future. Suddenly, farm equipment was more than just an inconvenience on the road, and agricultural production was infused into my life. I began to understand, on a new level, why it matters where your food or lawn comes from. I realized that grass seed from my property ended up in foreign countries and in the football stadiums of opposing teams. It wasn't that my income was affected, but I was face to face with what it means to produce agricultural products and by-products. The dirt was all around me.

We still don't grow our own hay. Like much of this valley, our land produces grass seed. Over the last couple years, I have felt the crunch of hay prices, which have doubled, and not proportionally to the price of fuel. Factors other than fuel influence hay prices. There is much talk now of the land across the mountains, which used to provide a good deal of hay to this valley, turning to the production of corn instead of grass-related crops; those same farmers are being paid to stop producing one product and start producing another. It seems the goal of agriculture to produce food products has turned into the drama of fuel

production, or "green patriotism," as it has been called by those concerned with farming practices. Housing developments grow by the acre as well. Farm land goes out of production. Foreign countries are developing and demanding fuel for growth, and are willing to pay a higher price for it. So who should our farmers sell to? And what should they sell?

This summer we gained new corporate farming neighbors. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were poured into improving the land for farming. The land was plowed and tiled for drainage. Mounds of fertilizer arrived to revitalize and replenish the land. A large building was constructed to store the products taken off the land. A different level of sophistication enabling a longer, more thorough harvest could be observed. I wondered why "hay" was still being baled well into the fall. The answer was that the late harvest would ultimately be compacted, some alfalfa added to increase the nutritional value of a product harvested so late in the season, and then the bales would be shipped overseas and fed to animals across the ocean. Not a crop I would feed to my animals.

Yesterday, my friend stood in my barn telling me of a great hamburger he had for lunch that had a special kind of meat from another country. My friend paid extra for that hamburger because of its supposed quality. I thought of those bales from the late harvest, the ones not good enough for the animals around here. I wondered how special the meat really was. Why it was of greater value than a local cow. And where the food the animal ate had come from. There is something to be said for local products; at least you have a chance of knowing how they were grown or what they were fed. Seeing the production of agricultural products, and their cycle of life, has opened my eyes and my feelings of connection to food, lawns, football fields, and democracy. The availability of safe, quality agricultural products should be a basic human right. I realize just how direct a connection I have to the crop grown outside my windows. I look at products in stores with a new focus in my eyes.

As a faculty member at Lane, my role is to facilitate learning for students in the ABSE programs. My goal is to develop better readers, writers, and thinkers. And in the process, not only improve skills, but broaden knowledge as well. This fall term we have been reading a research paper entitled "Why the U.S. Can't Have Its (Layered) Cake, and Eat It Too: Global Cycles, Cake Forms and the Decline of American Hegemony." Through reading this paper, my students have begun to learn how art has historically been affected by political structure on a global level and how that relates to the artistic appearance of the cakes we have eaten in the United States over the past fifty years. My students are starting to realize that even our smallest decisions may actually come from predictable patterns. It is hard to imagine that the "Bundt Cake" represents a global leadership change, or that marbled cakes and cakes with fillings imply multicultural shifts, yet it seems to be true.

Over a century ago, naturalist John Muir noted, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find that it is bound fast by a thousand invisible cords that cannot be broken, to everything in the universe."

Thinking about food and other agricultural decisions in terms of products and by-products has taken on new meaning for me. Democracy has to do with policies. Opening our eyes to the greater picture of the policies surrounding the agricultural cycle, and how the consumer fits into this cycle, in this country and beyond is important. Every time we purchase a product, we are casting another kind of vote, one with inescapable ramifications in terms of leadership, policies, and democracy. Remaining culturally asleep, regarding issues that impact us individually and collectively, on a level as basic as our food production and consumption, reaches beyond the level of personal choice. Safe, quality agricultural products need to be available to all consumers. Not everyone will have the opportunity to live on seventy-seven acres and experience agriculture first hand, but everyone can become more connected to their grass seed and food choices.

As an institution, Lane could infuse agricultural topics into many aspects of the courses we teach. On one hand, I am not suggesting we become an agricultural college, yet on the other hand I am. As an institution, we own land and make decisions about how to use it. Perhaps developing ways to connect students to land use and production should become a goal of the institution. For example, Lane owns land and buildings in the local communities of Eugene, Florence, and Cottage Grove. Students could become more involved in determining the future use of these properties. Classes could be developed for students to study urban planning, using our own properties as examples. Lane also owns undeveloped land, places where student ideas could be infused into our land use future. Students at the University of Minnesota have the opportunity to take organic farming classes and produce marketable products. A landscape of locally grown products can have an aesthetic component that conveys a beauty all its own. Lane has embraced the notion of sustainability, making it one of the college's core values. Creating classes and curricula that would allow students to connect our resources to our future seems appropriate. As a learning institution, Lane has a unique opportunity to create awareness and awaken the disconnected consumer. Providing more classes, conversations and activities related to food, culture and democratic policies surrounding these topics needs to become a greater part of our daily institutional lifestyle.

As frequently happens for me, my horses have led me to a new horizon of thinking. I now feel a personal connection to agriculture, a relationship I had never thought to explore. As connected consumers, decisions can be made to purchase food directly from local producers and processors instead of large, multinational companies. Democracy not

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only includes government policies, but also personal decisions. Rethinking personal actions and how they fit into a bigger picture casts votes in ways hard to imagine. I have begun to realize that democracy has a spirit; food has a flavor. Blending the two together can create a connected and awakened participant in the cycle of agriculture, leadership, and food choices.

Reference

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A Conversation on Democracy

Mary Spilde, Jim Salt, Bob Baldwin

Editors' Note: *In December 2007, the* Moment *co-editors sat down with Lane Community College President Mary Spilde, LCC Education Association President Jim Salt (faculty), and LCC Employees Federation President Bob Baldwin (classified) for a "conversation on democracy." The following is presented as excerpts from the ninety-minute conversation.*

Community College Moment: This morning, I typed "community college" and "democracy" into Google and got 316,000 results. What is it about democracy and the community college? Are they made for each other?

Bob Baldwin: I think there are probably two different questions. One: What is the role of the community college in a democracy? The other is a question of whether there is democracy in the community college. If we're discussing the former, that's a very different debate. If we're discussing the latter, whether there's democracy in the community college, I would have to say I don't see a lot of evidence of it.

Moment: Is there a particular example that illustrates this?

Baldwin: It comes down to the basic question of political power and how that defines the character of democracy. Political power is the ability to set the agenda. If you can control what the debate is and how it is framed, you control pretty much everything that stems from that. And I don't see, certainly in my experience at Lane, a democracy in the context of being able to impact the system. Primarily, it's an administratively driven process, closer to a benevolent dictatorship than a democracy.

Jim Salt: I want to frame it first as the role of democracy in higher education in general, and then talk about it in a community college, or this community college. Clearly, in the history of higher education, there is expected to be a high level of participation by the members of an institution. If you look at the core documents of the AAUP (American Association of University Professors), they recognize the concept of shared governance — a principle in which you have multiple authorities — as the legitimate power. There are multiple authorities in a college and in higher education: the authority of the President, the authority of the Board, the authority of the faculty. I think we could broaden these authorities in a true democracy.

In the concept of shared governance, you recognize that you must have structures for those authorities to be mutually recognized and integrated into the institution. I think the chief threat to shared governance today — not just in community colleges — has been the various attacks, some of them intentional, some of them structural, on the principles of shared governance, and challenging the role of the faculty, and to some extent the classified staff and students. Some of that is coming from budget pressures, and some of it is coming from outside political forces. Some of it is coming from the ideology of managerialism — which I've seen present at this school, but was present in other institutions I've worked at, as well.

Mary Spilde: Certainly the community college is democracy's college. The movement started to provide opportunity for those who otherwise did not have opportunities. It's built on principles of social justice and equal opportunity. I'm not sure how that quite translates into the operating of a community college; I don't know if the paradigm of democracy really fits an organization. We who work here are all citizens of the community. But, perhaps, we need to think about citizenship and employment differently; it's a different relationship. Citizenship, such as in a cornerstone of a democracy, is voluntary to a certain extent. There are laws that guide what citizens do, but whether you want to vote or not is up to you. There is a lot of flexibility in a democracy. I don't know that you can just say, "Let's have a democracy" in an organization where we're governed by certain statutes that give people authority — such as the Board having a certain level of authority.

I think the question is: What steps can you take to balance this issue of power, authority and responsibility? My sense of it is that you can share power, you can share authority, but you can't share responsibility — in the sense that somebody is going to be held accountable. And it's difficult to hold groups of people — committees — accountable. What I see is that when things go wrong, the same people who are saying, "We can have broader accountability," are the very same people who point at somebody and say, "That person made a mistake; they should be gone." Even within people's articulation of these ideas, there are very mixed messages.

One last point I would like to make is that I think the presence of unions do help with having a more democratic place, because they are a legitimate authority in their own right. I don't have a desire to work in a non-union state; I have colleagues that do, and they tell me what that's like. I think that as much as we might struggle over issues with unions at Lane, there is a very legitimate role for unions, and that is a democratizing force in some sense. I would also say that in the thirteen years I've been here, I have seen a lot of hierarchy within the unions, as well. I think there are a lot of power issues

within the groups. And, while there are elections where everyone gets a chance every so many years to decide if that's the leadership they want, I don't think it's just within the purview of the management or administration to be seen as hierarchical.

Baldwin: I think that part of the problem we have in trying to have any kind of democratic organization in the college is the aversion to being accountable for decisions that are made, or abuse of authority, because if you are deemed to have made a mistake then the decision is that "you are gone." In my tenure here at the college [since 1996], I have never once suggested that a manager should be terminated. We have suggested that a manager may have made an error and that there may need to be some course of action taken to correct that. I have suggested also that we have a significant problem in terms of how authority is structured: Board, to administration, to employees. And the Board is far too passive in its role. I think it sees its role too much as supportive of the administration as opposed to a check on the administration. That leaves the union as the only check on the administration, and that accentuates the degree of conflict between the union and administration, rather than having the Board sometimes be in that role and say, "No, things need to be done differently."

Salt: I was going to also address the issue of responsibility. Mary raises an important question: What is the role of responsibility in a general organization, and what's the relationship of it to a democracy? While I agree with Mary that at times people will focus on individuals who are perceived to have made some error, or are not up to the task, I think that we as members of the organization have to make a distinction between responding to problems that are essentially at the personnel level and those that are at the organizational or institutional level.

Let's take an example. Right now there's a management restructuring process that has begun. In that process we're going to need to focus not on the perceived quality of the individual; we need to look at the managerial structure. I've often thought that the institutional structure of the college, which was implemented soon after I got here [1998], was not the appropriate institutional structure for our college. I think individuals have struggled in some of the positions as a result of the institutional structure, and in a different institutional structure I think they would have succeeded better. I think we really need to delineate those two things and respond to those in kind. But I don't think — and Mary, you can elaborate on this, if this is your point — but in the past I have heard the argument made that you can only hold individuals responsible, and therefore that sets some kind of limit on how much democracy you can have in an

institution. I think you can develop ways of holding not just individuals accountable, but also institutions and elements of an organization accountable.

Spilde: I wouldn't disagree with you, but I think that we have not reached a level of sophistication to understand what the responsibilities are for people other than an individual. They might be there, and I'd like to hear them. But I don't think we've reached a level where we know what they are and how to work with them. We started that conversation when we were on the Governance Task Force and thinking about what the governance system would look like, but we never got beyond saying, "Is it the individual, or can groups be responsible?" We never got to any solutions, or what this would look like. And I don't know anybody who has, by the way, in the community college. I talk a lot about governance in the community college and what other colleges are doing — how do you get people involved, and how do decisions get made in an institution. I would say, in spite of the "benevolent dictatorship" you mentioned, that our governance system, while it is not perfect by any means — and I'm not holding it up as something that is sacred and can't be changed — but I think that was an effort to have some kind of level of recognizable democracy, to bring people into major policy and planning decisions at the college, and to make sure all the stakeholders were represented in that.

Moment: The building of the governance system here at Lane suggests that the administration, and the faculty and classified unions, perceive a value in some sort of democratization of our governance process. Do you see different needs for democratic processes within the community college than there would be in a private institution or business?

Spilde: I think there are different needs. For the most part, in private business their motive is shareholder value, or profit. There's a lot of discussion in the country right now about managing higher education like a business. In some ways we are a business: We charge money, we provide education, we pay salaries, we construct buildings. In some respects we are like a commercial enterprise. But just because it looks like a duck and walks like a duck doesn't mean it *is* a duck. Because we're not a business. And I think we need to remember that. This doesn't mean to say that we shouldn't use good business practices in the running of our operations, but I don't think we can get into looking at ourselves as a business. Some public higher education institutions have, and

I don't think it serves them well in the way they treat students like consumers, commodifying what it is that we do. I don't think that's the right approach.

This is slightly out of the context, but regarding the difference between public institutions and business, I think that this is a place where — even though we haven't got it figured out yet — we can be a model for the private sector, in bringing different perspectives and points of view into the thinking about the direction of the college and how it should operate.

Salt: If you define a business as a profit-oriented organization, then we're not a business. And some of the problems we've been struggling with, I think, are precisely because the cost of public education in community colleges has increasingly been pushed onto the students. In the original model, community colleges were providing not just open access to all who want to be students, but also free tuition. Those two things go together in an important way. As we push our costs more onto students, and as we are pushed by the ideology of neo-liberal, managerial, or some other pro-business ideology, as we're pushed more to act more like a business, I think that's where we start making mistakes and start engaging in practices that we don't want to engage in.

Moment: Such as?

Salt: A lot of examples come to mind. One is the impact of differential tuition [charging higher tuition rates for some programs than others] on open access to the programs. Unless you're offsetting that with a robust model of scholarships, financial aid and other resources, then you are clearly denying open access to students.

Spilde: It's part of the whole movement of education from being a public good to being a private good. Unfortunately, in the use of differential tuition we are subscribing to that because of the financial constraints we have been living under. It's not a philosophical shift, it's a pragmatic shift, because we don't have good choices: charge more or risk not having the program.

Moment: Here's another item that I turned up from the Web. In 1994 a book came out called *Democracy's Open Door.* It sought to demonstrate the value of open-door institutions in an environment of budget cuts and "professional misunderstanding and misperception." We're all familiar with the misunderstandings and misperceptions

from an external citizenry. What about some of the misunderstandings and misperceptions we might find internally about your respective groups?

Baldwin: I think there are some individuals on the management side who perceive unions simply as a threat to their authority, and therefore any issue that comes up is first framed in that dynamic: who's got the authority and who's going to win. The goal of our union is to make the college a better place. You can't have a strong union if you don't have a strong college; the two are inextricably linked. We don't pursue agendas that aren't based on ultimately having a better college, a stronger college. But that means we also have to have strong internal processes for (and I use this in the lower case, not the contractual sense) redress and grievance that allows financial stability at the personal level — meaning some understanding that our ability to pay our own bills is sufficiently secure so that when we come to work we can be dedicated to the job, not constantly in fear of our ability to provide for our family. That, in turn, allows us to more fully perform the tasks we do. Unfortunately, too many times, I think, we will raise an issue and say, "Look, we have a problem here," and the person we raise it to will perceive it as a question of having to defend management authority.

That gets right back to our original question, which was about the authority. As long as the debates are framed in terms of whose authority is being challenged, or if somebody is trying to expand their authority at the expense of the other party, that distorts the picture. Then, you're debating procedural democracy as opposed to substantive democracy.

Salt: There are patterns of misperceptions, but they vary depending on who is doing the perceiving. One example I can give, not a general one but more of a specific one, I think is a real concern. I think there is a lack of recognition that the unions really struggle with — and I think largely do a good job with — balancing working collaboratively when we can and engaging in conflict when we need to. I've never seen the [classified] Federation or the [faculty] Association, since I've been in this position [2002], pursue conflict for conflict's sake, that is, engage in excess conflict. Trying to determine the appropriate response is sometimes a challenge, but I think we all do a good job of struggling with that. Part of the problem, I think, is that the union movement ended up with some fairly conservative institutional practices, such as bargaining, for trying to resolve issues. Those were historically replacements for much more contentious processes. So, instead of workers going on strike and saying, "Damn it, I'm not going to be treated this way," walking off the job or engaging in some sabotage, they institutionalized the grievance procedure.

In fact, I think the grievance procedure favors the employer in general, because it prevents that kind of disruption. It forces processes that are fairly lengthy, that tend to reduce, or repress, the emotional reaction to the grievance. Yet now, faculty and classified are discouraged from pursuing grievances by the administration because that grievance is seen as a threat rather than a problem-solving mechanism, which is exactly how it was designed to be: a rationalized, professionalized, if you will, grievance resolution process.

Baldwin: And discouraged at both levels, I think. By that, I mean the administration to the union as an entity, and also that individual members who may have a basis for a grievance are frequently in the position of feeling intimidated by their direct-report manager if they are to go to the union and say, "I've got this issue." Even over simple things like working hours, let alone larger things like ongoing conflict with a manager, or feeling harassed or intimidated. Even on college Core Value issues such as race or gender discrimination, I have a number of people who have told me what's going on, and it's clearly a problem, but they will not go forward because they believe it isn't really going to get fixed, and then they are subject to the mercy of their manager. I think this is true with both classified and faculty: Because we are so subject to issues of schedules and work assignment, a manager who chooses to do so has substantial ability to make the working life of a classified person miserable.

That is certainly not a broad issue here. We have many, many, many wonderful, wonderful people as managers who would never do such a thing. They are also not the people who have a grievance underlying to begin with, because they didn't allow the circumstance to get there. But we do have a number of people who work for managers who feel, rightly or wrongly, that if they bring their concern forward into any kind of process, they will, in fact, face retaliation.

Spilde: In my view of grievance, it is a problem-solving process. You don't need to be afraid of grievances. Of course, solve it at the lowest possible level; be proactive so that you can avoid grievances. But if that's where it is, when there is a legitimate disagreement, we use the processes that we mutually bargained to resolve the differences. In my view, it's not the faculty contract or the classified contract; it's the collectively bargained agreement.

Salt: Absolutely.

Spilde: I want to go back to your original question about our respective groups. I see my role as a little different from the way you characterized it; I don't see myself representing *a* group, or leading *a* group. I'm the president of the college, and when I think about that role I'm not just representing one group. I try to take into account what's good for the faculty, what's good for the classified, what's good for the students, what's good for the community. Sometimes, what's good for one isn't good for the other. You hope that, in the broader scheme, if the college is healthy then that's good for everyone. But sometimes there are different interests between the different constituent groups. I feel I have the responsibility to listen, to represent, and to develop decisions that will hopefully be optimal for everyone. I don't see myself as just representing management. I worry about decisions that affect the faculty, and decisions that affect classified, because those decisions affect the whole college.

Moment: Could you give our readers some insight into how you balance those challenges?

Spilde: I think that through having the governance system and a few other informal mechanisms, having voices at the table, I can at least hear what people are thinking and their perspective on things. And in policy, planning and governance, if we can reach consensus, that is naturally helpful, because then it doesn't default to the administration; we can jointly define how we're going to move forward. My sense of the default to the administration is that I just want a way back into the conversation. In terms of delegating authority, I don't have a problem with that. But I need a way back to the discussion. I think that's what we've tried to create with the governance system.

But you also asked about the responsibilities of participation. For me, it is a willingness to engage — and I know there's a responsibility on our part to provide information. But I think there is also a responsibility on the stakeholder's part to engage with that information. I think too often all of us are busy and we don't engage with things until we have a deep understanding of how it's going to affect us — as an individual, or a department, or as a unit. So we filter out all this stuff that's coming at us, and in the meantime things are moving along. Then it gets to a place where it's close to a decision or something happens, and then — bang! Even though there were opportunities for engagement, what we end up with is a challenge to a decision that really should have been dealt with a lot earlier by people engaging. So, I think that is a responsibility for constituents, to engage at the right time and more in the front end.

The other thing I would say is that the level of involvement in decision-making has to do with the complexity of the problem, the maturity level of the work group, the

knowledge and expertise brought to bear by all of the stakeholders, and timeliness. I think too often we have people who think they are knowledgeable about a certain thing and they're not. And it works both ways. I would never go into Jim's class as a non-sociologist. By the way, if you look at the classroom as a microcosm of the college, let's examine democracy in the classroom.

Salt: If you want to talk about democracy in the classroom, that's a completely different discussion.

Spilde: I don't think you can generalize in the classroom any more than you can generalize in community colleges, particularly decisions within a community college. I think less so for classified, but to me, faculty have a tremendous amount of autonomy and authority in terms of their subject matter and how they organize their classes. When that classroom door closes, I don't really have a lot of say as the president of the college about what happens in that classroom. Even if I were to go on a rant about something that happened, you could say, "Thank you for sharing," and close the door and move on.

I think that sometimes there is a lack of respect for management expertise. Let's take the budget, for example. There's lots of information out there — spreadsheets and all the stuff that undergirds the budget. And there are some faculty who really understand that well, and that's good. But a lot of people don't, and some are not very respectful of people who have gone to school, who have deep knowledge about these things. So I think part of responsibility for participation is respect for the varying expertise.

Salt: I referred earlier to the AAUP guidelines on shared governance; it delineates the different areas of the college and where shared governance comes into play. One of the areas it specifically addresses is the issue of a budget. It calls — rightly, I think — for the budget being brought to the faculty (and we should expand that to all the staff and students as well). I argue that the chief budget decisions — and the budget as a whole — need to be brought out to the college for their full understanding and engagement and response, ideally for the development of a consensus on the budget. I certainly don't think an attack on an individual's reputation, or on them personally, is the appropriate way to address the issues. But if there isn't confidence in the way the budget work is being handled, that needs to be addressed.

Secondly, part of the difference in how faculty and management view the appropriate levels of involvement is ideological, I think. We [faculty] expect to be involved in that work. We believe it's not only our right, but our responsibility as members of the

community to be involved, that it isn't just expertise and educational credentials that lead to that right and responsibility.

Spilde: And I tried to be clear; I wasn't saying you didn't have a right to be engaged with it. But there's not a huge percentage of people at Lane who actually live out that right and responsibility. There are people who will step up if they think their discipline or department is under threat, but due to the press of work the majority of the staff come here and do their work, or their teaching. It's a much smaller percentage that actually engage with institutional matters; they might engage more on the department level.

Salt: I agree with you largely, though probably not to the extent that you're describing the lack of involvement. But to the extent that it is true, I think that rather than being a personal fault it's an institutional fault. I think it's *our* fault for not having institutional structures that promote that. Not that you expect everybody to be fully engaged; we all have our jobs and we can't spend all of our time doing everything, knowing everything about the college. But in those areas that you do want that involvement, you have to build it.

Baldwin: I think there is a need to have recognition of an area of expertise, topical expertise. But within the confines of a budget, there are a broad number of decisions which — once you accept certain facts that are based on that expertise — the decisions themselves can be largely philosophical: We should or should not do certain things. We should or should not be more engaged in partnerships with corporate entities around how we develop curriculum. Good or bad, those are decisions that are almost more philosophical than decisions that rely on extensive understanding of the accounting of how you built the projections for "what if we do these various things."

I have to say that I have experienced, personally in meetings, people who lacked understanding of the subject matter presenting in rather strenuous voice their positions. But I have also experienced individuals in management presuming that only because they were in a management role, their decision had moral or ethical value beyond the pure authority of their position.

Moment: We're running out time. Is there anything we missed?

Spilde: I would be the first to say that if democracy is the right model — and I still wonder whether it is in this kind of college — there's a long way to go. I get to meet with, nationally, other presidents, chancellors of institutions, faculty, managers. And I think

that within the constraints that we're working in, Lane has tried to create mechanisms for people to be engaged. Whether they're working optimally or not is another question. But I hear from colleges who say they're doing shared governance, but when you dig to the next level, they have much less than we have in terms of engagement. You can look on their web sites and you can see: They've got this council or that council — and they're all "recommending" councils, they're all advisory, they're not empowered to make any decisions, they don't have consensus decision-making models. There's a lot that isn't there. When you talk to managers from other institutions — and our managers, too — you will hear from our managers that there are many more constraints on their authority at Lane than their colleagues have.

Salt: You mean departmental-level managers?

Spilde: All levels.

Baldwin: I'm not saying I don't believe that, but in the context of other unionized community colleges, I'd be surprised if there is really that much actual difference, at least within Oregon — and you'd have to allow for different state laws and such if you go outside of Oregon. But from talking with other colleagues about their contracts, I think ours doesn't really place that much more restriction on management conduct than theirs do.

Spilde: I suppose it's a matter of perception, but some of our managers report that there is a lot more autocratic decision-making that doesn't include other groups that goes on in other institutions than goes on at Lane.

My point is this: Lane tends to be a very self-critical institution. We saw it in our self-study [in 2004]. We tend to be very self-critical, and I think people need to get out a little bit and see what it's like in other places. Maybe they'll see that there is a certain level of — and I'm not using the word "democracy" — but of involvement, engagement, and opportunity which is not available to many of their colleagues across the country, and they'll also bring back new ways of thinking about these issues.

Baldwin: Even before we created the governance system, the accreditation report dinged us a little bit for the number of committees and groups that we had of that type. I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing that we've got all these committees and decision-making processes, but I don't think they're necessarily an indication that we

are more or less democratic. We are more like bureaucrats, which is a completely different discussion.

Salt: In my experience, the department managers' lack of power has more to do with the administration structure than it has to do with contracts, unions, etc. The department chairs have little authority; they have to consult with the AVP [Associate Vice President] on a lot of things. The AVPs seem to have even less authority. I think the fact that they are "associate vice presidents" rather than something else — a dean or a traditional academic title, where there's authority nominally identified in that position — means that more power is directed to the VPs. And my understanding of the Executive Team is that it's run as a team. So the VPs, whom you would think would have the final authority over decisions in their areas, have to bring many decisions to the "team," so decisions are being made by people who have little or no connection with, or background in, the area. So, you've moved on up from the department-level manager who doesn't have much authority, to an AVP who seems in some ways to have even less, to a VP who is part of the team and doesn't have control over his or her own area. To me, the primary issue is not the union contracts, it's this administrative structure. I hope that's something we can address in the managerial restructuring task force, and that we're going to build a system where the administrators have the level of authority that they should within the administration — without taking away any of the authority that the faculty or the classified should have.

Moment: Well, our time is up. Thank you all for taking part in this conversation.

Democracy at Lane

Lane Community College Governance System

Lane's Governance System is charged with planning and policy development for the college and is made up of seven councils: College Council, Diversity Council, Facilities Council, Finance Council, Learning Council, Student Affairs Council, Technology Council. Faculty Council has a separate role, outside this structure. The College Council is charged with overall responsibility for the operation and effectiveness of the system, and with specific budget development activities.

The governance system recognizes specific stakeholder groups and administration members by giving them representational roles and basing their participation on appointment by a stakeholder group or the college president. The Lane Community College Employees Federation, Lane Community College Education Association, Associated Students of Lane Community College, Management Senate, and Faculty Council all have rights to appoint their representatives to councils. The president appoints Executive Team members to councils.

Each council works within a charter and scope of work statement, and each acts in accordance with a decision matrix. Within the governance system, the role of the executive committee is defined as implementation decision-makers. The entire governance system is responsible to the college Board through the college president.

Making Space for Community at Two-Year Colleges

Margaret Robertson

Introduction

"Community" is a broad topic that encompasses diverse fields including sociology, anthropology, geography, community psychology, and urban design. A large body of research has explored the meaning of community and factors which play important roles. A smaller but still substantial body of research has verified the significance of community in higher education and explored strategies that promote and support it through pedagogy, curriculum, and policy. This paper takes a more concrete view and investigates the role of physical spaces and place-making in sustaining community at institutions of higher education, with a focus on two-year colleges.

The project of making "community" has a foundation in place. A college campus is a microcosm of a city. Like urban places, a campus consists of buildings, open spaces, circulation, and infrastructure, and urban planning principles can be applied equally to both types of place. It is interesting to note that the environmental principles that support learning are also those that support the development and sustaining of community. "The concept of community contains all the essential features associated with effective educational environments" (Strange and Banning 2001).

Defining "Community"

The concept of "community" consists of overlapping, intersecting themes. It concerns things in common: common location, common purpose, common norms, and an interconnectedness and interrelatedness among members, including a sense of responsibility to others and a sense that one matters to others.

An institution does not provide a single campus environment. Rather, institutions tend to consist of multiple sub-environments or subcultures. These have more proximal, and often more powerful, consequences for student change and development (Schroeder, 1994). Sub-communities on an accessible small scale provide ways for people to connect to the whole. This was the process envisioned by the authors of the United States Constitution, in which sub-communities would mediate between the individual and larger society. Buchanan describes social capital as "the ability of a team to work as a team on its own, willingly, without participation being managed by legally-binding rules," and says

that "if social capital can be intelligently fostered, sometimes just by linking several people together into an artificial social cluster, improvement can be striking."

One of the marks of a healthy community identified by Boyer (1990), Spitzberg and Thorndike (1992), and others, is that it is celebrative, that it has a sense of history, of ritual, of ceremonial life. People perceive a status of full membership in the environment, with opportunities to engage over time in a distinct history, tradition, and culture (Kenney 2005). This ceremonial and symbolic marking of community is underscored by civic structures in important or central locations. In cities, these include parks, plazas, schools, libraries, town halls, and courthouses. On higher education campuses, these include student centers, libraries, and quadrangles or other significant open spaces. In those places members of a campus community come together and share experiences in common.

Environments that Support Learning

According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, more than 50 percent of student learning in college occurs outside the classroom (Boyer, 1987). A large-scale study of research literature by Schroeder (1994) concluded that "the greatest impact [on student learning] may stem from the students' total level of campus engagement, particularly when academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular involvements are mutually supporting and relevant to a particular educational outcome." Students learn from becoming involved. Spaces for public interaction, for personal quiet, and for hanging out are all important, and learning environments need a mix. Every part of a campus must be thought of as part of the student learning experience (Kenney, 2005).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The set of basic human needs was described by Maslow as a hierarchy. It can be represented as a pyramid, with biological and physiological needs at the base and more complex psychological needs at the apex. The basic starting point is physiological: basic survival needs; closely related to that is the need for safety. When physical needs have been satisfied, a set of social needs emerge and motivate: Humans, as social animals, have a need for inclusion and a sense of belonging, that is, community. Following the satisfaction of social needs, psychological needs emerge, including self-esteem and the desire for reputation or status in a community. The final emerging need is self-actualization; this is where learning takes place. A self-actualizing person is able to center on things outside oneself and focus interests in any direction one feels is important (Maslow 1970, Motloch 1990). Thus, an environment that supports learning provides feelings of safety and security, opportunities for social engagement, a sense of full membership within a community, and potential for exploration.

Safety

Safety and inclusion are distinct but related concepts. Both reflect campus conditions thought to be important requisites for development and learning to occur. Contributing to one will enhance the other. Failure to address one can jeopardize the other. Psychological safety is not only the absence of threat, but also involves a positive sense of mattering: feeling noticed, cared about, needed, and appreciated for one's efforts (Strange and Banning, 2001). That is, the characteristics of community provide a feeling of safety.

Places that support learning are perceived to be safe. Three factors are associated with perceptions of safety: victim prospect, offender refuge, and victim escape (Banning, 1995). Some traits that contribute to "defensible space" also contribute to a sense of community. Among these is the concept of territoriality, which involves perceived ownership of physical space, often manifested by architectural boundaries and markers. Defensible campus spaces may encourage inhabitants to develop closer relationships and therefore greater awareness of potential offenders from outside, as well as greater sense of community.

Students need "places to call their own, where sense of ownership, personalization, security, and identity offer a base from which to venture out and seek engagement and involvement with others." Where it is possible, allowing students to make their mark on a space enhances their sense of ownership and belonging, and therefore their willingness to defend (Strange and Banning, 2001).

Legibility and Coherence

Places perceived to be safe have legibility and coherence. The less coherent a place, the more uncomfortable we feel. Coherence provides information that can help with making sense of the environment. Providing a few distinct regions or districts, landmarks, and clear edges give legibility to space (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1998).

Territory

Common territory is one of the hallmarks of community.

> Communities seem to thrive when space is available for, or dedicated to, a group of individuals who share characteristics and interests, and when artifacts of culture express and support a common vision and purpose. This synergy of environmental components creates a life of its own, recognized by those within its boundaries, as well as by those beyond, to be whole and distinctive (Strange and Banning, 2001).

Programs, departments, or groups can signal territory by providing a home base from which to venture forth. This can be both a building or room, and spaces adjacent to it. The

main entry to the building or space is analogous to the front porch of a house; it provides an important transition from the public life of the larger community to the private life of the smaller group (Marcus, 1998).

At an individual scale, the need for territory or a place to call one's own is as important as the need for social connection. Students frequently select favorite niches on campus: a private place in the library, a favorite chair in a classroom, a bench in the corner of a small courtyard.

Larger common territory connects students to the life of the college community as a whole. Spaces used by everyone are part of the commons, including circulation routes, plazas, greens, and the student center.

Places for Social Interaction

The most effective way to enhance a group's potential for creativity and learning, to keep it vibrant and alive, is to support and strengthen its communities of practice. The first step is to provide social space where informal communications can flourish (Capra, 2002). Places that promote social interaction support learning, maximizing the probability of chance encounters and encouraging lingering once encounters take place. Places marked by an appropriate closeness of buildings (density) and by juxtaposition of activities that complement one another (mixed use) maximize the probability of chance encounters (Kenney, 2005). The more people's paths cross and intersect the more a campus or town will feel like a community, a place to be cherished. Creating the right kind of density is all about creating human intersections; intersections and the collegiality they generate are at the heart of community on campus.

Spaces in a variety of sizes and forms allow varieties of interactions where people can come together spontaneously, informally, and without much effort. Sitting should be physically comfortable, and more importantly, socially comfortable; this means providing choice (Banning, 1986). To ensure that social interaction has a central role in the learning environment, indoor and outdoor social spaces should be scattered throughout the overall framework of the campus, with "commons" at a variety of scales. Outdoor gathering places can include greens, public plazas, and courtyards, and should include smaller subspaces. Seating should provide a choice in seating arrangements, with both primary seating (benches and chairs) and secondary seating (stairways, pedestals, steps, low walls, planters, and so forth).

Indoors, spaces that encourage social interaction include inviting entrance foyers, alcoves, lounges, benches, chairs in wide hallways, or a sofa in a secluded space (Banning 1995, Marcus 1998, Strange and Banning 2001). "We must use every part of the public realm on campus as an opportunity for encouraging communication and engagement:

every place two paths intersect, every stairway, every lobby, every lawn and garden" (Kenney, 2005). If spaces are designed for flexibility, the same setting can host a variety of activities.

Community-centric ambience in classrooms should be readily perceived by faculty and students. Students should experience a community-friendly learning environment from the beginning of the first class. The classroom "front" can be de-emphasized to create an open, discussion-friendly space, with furniture choice and placement that allows students to see and hear each other. Room technology and lighting controls should be immediately intuitive to student presenters (Bickford, 2006).

Another kind of place is important in students' lives: a place where a person neither lives nor works, but a "third place" where one goes to relax, much like a familiar hangout. Here, typical roles and responsibilities are lifted temporarily while new relationships and connections are explored in a comfortable culture. (Banning, 1986) This need is often met in a student center or café, and providing food in multiple locations is clearly a draw both for faculty and students. Much of the informal learning that occurs on campus occurs around food tables, in indoor and outdoor space. To seed a place with activity, put out food: Food attracts people, who attract more people.

Size and Scale

Settings characterized as human in scale tend to encourage greater participation and involvement. Human-scale properties permit students to become familiar with and feel competent in their environment. They engender a sense of efficacy and confidence. Human-scale environments are not overcrowded, blend with their natural surroundings, and accommodate small numbers of people in structures usually no more than three stories above ground (Strange and Banning 2001).

Personal Space

Two other features within the learning environment are worth noting: First, students need the ability to relax and disengage. Public areas foster a sense of community, a feeling of belonging with one's fellows; quiet areas provide a setting in which to pause and refresh (Kenney, 2005). Learning is supported when students have opportunities to relax, to hang out, or to stake out private personal space. The availability of personal space allows students to relax, to think, and to process information. Preferred outdoor study spaces include major building entries, areas close to inexpensive food, open lawn areas, the ground under a large tree, secluded small spaces, and semi-enclosed terraces to offer a change from indoor reading (Marcus, 1998). Indoor study areas feel supportive if they allow a person to stake out personal territory. Examples of sub-spaces that can be claimed by either one

person or a group include alcoves and separate comfortable seating, especially seating that is moveable.

Natural Settings

Second, connection with the "natural" non-human world is critical. It has been shown that college students in rooms looking out onto natural settings perform better on attention-demanding tasks; concentration is enhanced in spaces with visual connection to outside (Marcus, 1999). Multiple studies have demonstrated that views of nature improve performance within the classroom (Kaplan and Kaplan 1998, Marcus 1999, Kenney 2005).

Buildings and open spaces designed with these needs in mind can result in more effective learning and more vibrant community. While there is not a simplistic cause-and-effect determinism, physical spaces can be powerful tools in facilitating individual, social, and institutional development.

Strategies for Building Community at Two-Year Colleges

In a well-reasoned new book *Mission and Place: Strengthening Learning and Community through Campus Design* (2005), authors Kenney, Dumont, and Kenney observe: "If we design buildings and spaces in certain ways, we can cause certain things to happen there: more effective learning, more vibrant community. Physical changes can be powerful tools in facilitating social and organizational change in an institution's culture." They go on to point out that "every part of a campus must be considered a learning environment. Anything less is a missed opportunity." By paying attention not only to organizational and curricular structure but also to the arrangement of physical space, a college can use the campus' entire physical environment to promote the goal of building community.

A community college is a democratic institution, designed to be accessible to every person regardless of background or ability. Some students come for training in job-related skills or even life skills; they may be dealing with cognitive impairment, physical impairment, or mental health issues. While some students are traditional young high-school graduates completing their first two years of university study at lower cost, a large number of students are from quite different backgrounds. They are in the midst of seismic life changes and include people from abusive relationships taking their first tentative steps toward independence; people whose identities were built around a skilled trade, now forced by physical injury to start over; and people whose livelihoods were swept away by plant closings and who must now learn new skills and rebuild their lives. Some have never been to college before, and now find everything around them foreign;

some are secretly haunted by fear and self-doubt; many live with constant physical pain; almost all have families to support and mortgages to pay.

All of the principles previously discussed for building community and promoting environments that support learning must be attended to with special care at a two-year college because of the challenges it faces. Some strategies may provide extra help.

Psychological Comfort

Coherence and a human scale are important in any urban setting and in any educational setting. However, they are particularly important at a community college because of its broad demographic spectrum. Spatial organization and coherence and other wayfinding strategies warrant particular attention. The less coherent a place, the more uncomfortable we feel. When a space fails to establish meaningful relationships (among elements, context, users, condition, material), we may attempt to integrate data but fail, and the space becomes a source of anxiety and frustration. Physical or mental discomfort, excessive complexity, excessive confinement, or excessive expansiveness can convey a sense of danger and instill feelings of fright. Psychological comfort is a critical factor in student persistence and retention, and is the first step on the path to community. This is all the more true given the varied demographics of the community college. Planners at community colleges need to pay special attention to physical factors in psychological comfort.

Providing spaces and elements at a human scale is a related design tactic. Institutional-scale building façades enclose space forcefully; they can have a tendency to overpower a space. When buildings are viewed from a distance-to-height ratio of less than 1:1, they feel comfortable only if the viewer can relate to architectural detail on the surface of the façade. When surface detail is missing, or the façade is perceived as a mass, the viewer is uncomfortable unless the distance-to-height ratio is greater than 2:1 (Motloch, 1990). The apparent scale of large walls can be reduced to human scale by the use of textures, shadow lines, and articulation of details.

Territory and Sense of Belonging

All the strategies listed earlier for creating a sense of place and belonging apply to community colleges, but are particularly important in this setting where the hold on community is already so tenuous. One could argue that the elements of territory and sense of belonging need to be multiplied to a higher degree of intensity at a two-year, non-residential school. These include regional distinctiveness; clearly-marked districts, buildings designed to offer "front porches" and "back yards" for their "families;" a variety of social spaces with the opportunity for "staking out territory;" attention to semiotics — the way built and open spaces translate and express mission and philosophy; the use of symbols,

cultural markers, and places for ritual and celebration; and coherent, imageable structure and spaces.

Every opportunity should be taken to make personal space available to students, even if on a small scale. Examples could include personal lockers, moveable and flexible furnishings, vendor and club space at tables in a student center or cafeteria, and public bulletin board space. Every opportunity should be taken to allow students to personalize spaces or to otherwise have a voice; examples could include murals, discussion boards, other public spaces for personal expression, and regular participatory processes that include student voices in campus planning decision-making. The public face of every building should feature displays of the activities within, emphasizing and celebrating the activities and products of students.

A social hearth for every department gives the chance for a sense of community to develop and the possibility of an open exchange of ideas. Community college planners should locate each hearth near a high-use circulation route and near department offices. Amenities including a lounge, food and beverages, supplies, a small resource library, and student information will make students feel valued and part of the departmental community (Alexander, 1975).

Additionally, because the population of learners at a community college is proportionally more diverse than at a university or in the population at large, the need for openness, universal accessibility, and the accommodation of diversity need to be multiplied in intensity in this setting as well. Within buildings, non-hierarchical classroom spaces give students the experience of being respected and belonging; flexible spaces with movable furniture in classrooms, hallways, and study areas give them control over spaces they occupy and psychological ownership of the space.

Social Space and Recreation

Because all students are commuters, most with outside demands on their lives, for any sense of belonging to develop it is essential to offer them reasons to stay on campus. Some schools accommodate commuter students through providing lockers and "hang-out" spaces in student centers, where they are encouraged to linger. (Kenney, 2005) If gathering places are truly inviting, especially places with food, students may choose to stay on campus a little while longer rather the drive elsewhere, increasing the likelihood of social interaction.

One of the reasons students leave campus is to take care of daily needs. A campus that can offer child care, a health clinic, laundry facilities, a choice of food, perhaps a small market, and exercise options will give students a reason to stay on campus, to make it their other home territory. Planners may want to conduct traffic studies to identify high-use

areas, then try to recreate the feel of a small town with a village commons placed at those locations, where members of the community can regularly convene to eat, conduct business, socialize, and have fun.

Contemporary students, including commuters, look upon a school's recreation center as an essential part of the college experience, both as social amenity and as wellness facility. Student recreation facilities can have a major influence in promoting community on campus as well as a healthy lifestyle (Kenney, 2005). Because they are often included in student fees, and do not require driving elsewhere, they can be powerful activity magnets. Athletic fields tend to be located on the periphery because of size; other facilities can be located more centrally, perhaps in a student center, or in a number of smaller central buildings. Developing the sense of a lively campus core is important to a thriving community.

Learning Centers

Contemporary colleges focus increasingly on group projects; this implies the need to provide more group study facilities in libraries and computer areas. A number of colleges are turning to the "information commons" or "learning resource center" model. Libraries have always been study centers, places where student-centered learning takes priority, but are rapidly evolving into computer-based learning resource centers. Libraries and learning centers often serve as training centers for computer skills (Edwards, 2000). Public access computers provide broad opportunities for social interaction. Some institutions are exploring hybrid building types, for example, combining the social aspects of a campus center with the learning and study environment and resources of a library, to support learning and engagement for nontraditional students (Kenney, 2005). The boundaries between social spaces and learning spaces become blurred; group projects and peer-to-peer interactions take place in cafés and student lounges, and social connections occur in group study spaces or computer labs in learning centers.

A campus that can offer skills for living and personal enrichment, in addition to pure credit offerings, gives students a reason to stay or return, and acts as a draw for non-matriculating community members who can add richness to a social experience. For example, a college could offer courses in food production and could provide community garden space. A community garden is a well-documented source of community coherence while also providing feelings of competence, connection with nature, and a sense of ownership for gardeners who work individual plots.

It is worth noting that while university communities have the advantage that students stay for four years, most of them then move on. On the other hand, community college students only stay on campus for two years, but they are typically local residents with community and regional roots who are more able to maintain long-lasting connections

to their college, and so may become part of a looser, longer-lasting community with roles that change over time.

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One Day Soon We Will Have Democracy

Harriet Behm Childress

Thomas Jefferson left his home — managed by his wife, who had fewer legal and social rights than her husband — to go to the Second Continental Congress and write the Declaration of Independence which declared, "All men are created equal," and that "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" were unalienable rights. He took his horse — cared for by his slaves — and rode across land that had been forcefully taken from indigenous people.

Jefferson and his compatriots in Philadelphia said they were creating a democracy in a United States established with a declaration of equality and fairness for everyone. The founders stated that they were forming a system of democratic government, and declared that the power was to be invested in all the people.

Despite that declaration of fairness, equality, and inclusiveness, when the United States became a country a short time later, these same people legislated that less than 10 percent of adults could vote. What were they thinking?

Did we have a democracy in 1776?

What happened in 1776 looks little like a democracy:

- The government was formed not by the majority, but by wealthy white men who owned land.
- A government was formed in which the supreme power was vested in a small percentage of people and exercised by free elections where only people like themselves could vote or be elected to office.
- An elite small minority constituted the source of political authority.
- There was a presence of hereditary or arbitrary class distinctions or privileges; over 90 percent of the adults were not part of that privileged group.

Democracy? No, actually, a hierarchy

The people who led the Revolutionary War wanted independence from Britain. The British were making policies without consulting the colonists — laws that forced the colonists to give their allegiance and resources to England. The people who made these rules were not required to consider the needs and perspectives of the colonists. Their priority was to maintain and build the power and wealth of the British Empire.

When the revolutionaries rebelled, they were in the "lower" levels of the British hierarchy. Since the colonists were being controlled and exploited, this particular hierarchy was painfully visible to them. They declared their independence.

Hierarchies are easiest to see when viewed from "lower" levels. "Lower" people notice hierarchies because they have to adjust to decisions and policies that are not designed with their desires, perspectives, and needs in mind.

In the United States of 1776, the people who protested taxation without representation declared that they were creating a democratic nation. When they came into power, however, they legislated their own hierarchies based on the same practices that led to the Revolutionary War.

Jefferson and the other men who later created the Constitution of the United States didn't notice that their new nation was a replica of the society they had rejected. These revolutionaries thought that once they removed their villain, the one on top of the specific hierarchy that was causing them so much pain, life would automatically become equitable.

The founders of the United States replaced one hierarchy with others because they did not change the attitudes and behaviors that build hierarchies. The forefathers passed laws that ensured that the majority of people in the country had no voice in governmental decisions.

The hierarchical practice of taxation without representation repeated itself for the large majority of the people living in the United States. More than 90 percent of the adult population — poorer white males, males who weren't white, and all women — were ignored in the governmental process.

Hierarchies are difficult to see from the top. "Higher" people make rules that reflect their own desires, perspectives, and needs; they have little incentive to question the system they create.

Legacy of hierarchies

For centuries, we of the United States have been living with the dichotomy of two contradictory legacies. The founding fathers passed down to us a marvelous ideology — equality, life, liberty, and happiness for all. Their revolutionary vision still flourishes today.

Our ideology: We believe in "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" and "all men are created equal."

The forefathers also gave us a liability and a burden — denial of the hierarchical foundations upon which the country was built that still dominate the social, economic, po-

litical, and spiritual landscape. This enduring, pervasive barrier continues to block our realization of the founding dream.

Our obstacle: We deny the hierarchies that saturate the United States.

Limited perspectives of the top

In 1776, people in the top-of-the-hierarchy group were the only ones allowed to make decisions affecting everyone in the United States. Even with the best intentions, the founding fathers were not in the position to see or understand how their decisions affected the lives of everyone.

They would know if the policies they created provided equality and opportunities for life, liberty, and happiness for people like themselves. They would have no way of knowing whether or not their decisions and policies created equality and opportunities for life, liberty, and happiness for the people who remained isolated from them in the lower levels of the hierarchy.

Typically, from the top of hierarchies, people can see that they have more benefits and resources than others, but they don't recognize that it is their hierarchical position that brings them their advantages. They can rationalize their privileges with rhetoric, saying that anyone who acts as they act could obtain what they have. Or, they convince themselves that they earned their positions only because of their own hard work, or they deserve to be where they are because they are in some way superior to others.

Today, as in times past, people who have spent their lives perched atop many powerful hierarchies might have good intentions. Nonetheless, since they have been groomed to live in the dream world hierarchies create for people at the top, they will have trouble understanding the liabilities of hierarchies — if they can see those hierarchies at all. Their experiences provide them with isolated, narrow, and distorted perspectives. Hierarchies have served them well, so a system of hierarchies must be good.

Hierarchy conservators often convince themselves they are doing others a favor by building and maintaining hierarchies. They pride themselves in channeling resources to the top both domestically and all over the world. They tend to rationalize away the consequences of hierarchies to everyone else not in their upper echelons: lack of health care, job insecurity, violence, war, shortage of justice, poverty, mediocre human relationships, and low math scores. People in lower groups endure countless day-to-day hassles while living under the negative influences brought on by clueless people at the top.

We're still programmed to follow the top

Since our country was founded, we in the United States have continued to follow our programming to look to, encourage, and expect the people on top of our hierarchies to make decisions for us.

As one example: Historically, we have danced by our puppet strings to ensure that every viable candidate for president or vice president has every major top-of-the-hierarchy characteristic. We have limited our talent pool to the minute fraction of people in our country with each and every one of these traits: white, male, hair on top of his head, Christian, tall, heterosexual, married, no history of mental illness, affluent, speaks "standard" English, educated in elite private schools, slender.

As we follow our programming to be led by the top of the hierarchy, we hear comments like "Al Gore is too heavy," or "Dennis Kucinich is too short." Perhaps you have heard someone tell a person that she or he is wasting a vote to support an "African-American like Barack Obama" or a "woman like Hillary Clinton," because neither one of them is electable.

Looking at "presidential characteristics" from a hierarchical vantage point, examine the Republican slate running in the 2008 Presidential election, and past and some present Democratic contenders. They are no different from the majority of past and present members of Congress. No wonder they all look alike. The same criteria choose them all.

Our commitment to maintaining our hierarchies has been a high priority, no matter if we can claim all of the "presidential characteristics" or only a few. But all of us can understand hierarchies, no matter who we are or where we rank in this country of hierarchies, and choose healthy, fun, exciting, positive, and peaceful alternatives.

Is change on the way?

Hierarchies are the legacy of the United States, but they don't have to be the future. We can cut the puppet strings that attach us to our hierarchies.

If we wait around for people with top-of-the-hierarchy perspectives to lead us to change, we'll be waiting and waiting and waiting. People who live their lives isolated on top have the least incentive to recognize hierarchies and the detrimental effects of hierarchies on families, friends, jobs, communities, the country or planet. They are groomed for taking responsibility and accountability for whatever it takes to keep the power and control at the top, including keeping the United States on the top of the world hierarchy they envision.

So that leaves the rest of us. We are the ones who:

- In at least one hierarchy, do not live in the clueless dream world that hierarchies create for people at the top.

• Know how to get things done without the support, encouragement, handholding, resources, or recognition that people on the top receive.

• Already have alternative perspectives, ways of understanding, lifestyles, support systems, and problem-solving methods that are valuable and effective.

• Will be less likely, when given the chance, to recreate hierarchies with our friends, families, country, and beyond; we have experienced the pain, frustration, shame, and scarcity that hierarchies create.

• Are in the position to know whether or not decisions and policies of the United States create equality and opportunities for life, liberty, and happiness for all, and not just for those at the top.

We can create a democratic outcome if we define the situation clearly as a hierarchy and identify top-of-the-hierarchy perspectives as such. Compromising with the top only creates more hierarchy, sending more benefits to the top and creating more conflict — domestically and internationally.

For those of us not limited by top-of-the-hierarchy perspectives, we already know how to look elsewhere for solutions that are designed with other desires, perspectives, and needs in mind. Since we've been watching them for years, we can change our way of thinking to trust our instincts that people at the top don't have all the answers. We've observed that they pump themselves up, but we now understand why the cracks in the armor of posturing and puffery won't support a real democracy.

Like Dorothy and her friends facing the Wizard of Oz, when we see huge smoke and flames, and hear a loud, authoritarian, all-knowing, demanding voice of power and authority, we'll know what to do. Just like Toto, we'll pull back the curtain, and — *poof!* — reveal the simple truth behind the spectacles and shenanigans.

The dreams that we dare to dream really can come true. When we release our hierarchical puppet strings, we can turn elsewhere and "fly over the rainbow" to the land that we heard of once in a promise from our founders.

Harriet Behm Childress, *Ph.D. is the co-author of* Clueless at the Top, *published following twenty years of research uncovering how we in the United States can end our legacy of hierarchies and create a peaceful, productive, and happy country that is a good world neighbor. She is also a chemistry instructor at Lane Community College, and enjoys teaching as part of the BioBonds learning community. For more information on hierarchies and how you can change your life and this country for good, visit www.cluelessatthetop.com*

Letting a hundred flowers blossom and
a hundred schools of thought contend
is the policy for promoting progress
in the arts and sciences and a flourishing
socialist culture in our land.

Mao Zedong

On the Brink of "Taking My Own Life Against the People"[1]

Ji Xianlin

Translator's Introduction: Forty years ago the "cowshed" was a household word in China, where the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) raged. Anyone locked up in the "cowshed" — the guarded quarters for forced labor and physical torture — joined the herd of "cattle, ghost, snake and demon," labels imposed on countless intellectuals, government officials and "reactionaries." In *Random Recollections of the Cowshed*, a memoir from which this excerpt is taken, Ji Xianlin, one of the leading contemporary scholars in China, professor of Sanskrit, essayist and translator, recounts his suffering during that turmoil after his fall as professor and department head of the university. Born in 1911 into a farmer's family in Shandong, north China, Ji got his B.A. in German in 1934 from Tsing Hua University, Beijing. In 1935 he went on a Sino-German graduate exchange program to Goettingen University, Germany, majoring in Sanskrit, and obtained his Ph.D. in 1941. In 1946 he returned to China to teach at Peking (Beijing) University until he retired in 1992. Among his numerous essays and books in the study of Sanskrit and Chinese literature, *Ramayan*, a translation into Chinese of the long classical Sanskrit epic, published in 1984, is best known. Today, at age 96, he keeps writing even in the hospital. Though Ji survived the Cultural Revolution, which saw seventy-two of his faculty colleagues persecuted to death in the university, "On the Brink of Taking My Own Life Against the People" leads the reader into the chamber of his mind on December 4, 1967, as he mentally collapsed, contemplating suicide. But he recalls the agony in a casual air with a dash of sarcasm.

—Perry Ma

What should I do next? I must make a decision. Evidently two alternatives lay in front of me: bear the suffering, or take my own life. I would never opt for the former. Then I was left with the latter, biting the bullet. It is often said that "The ant knows its life is precious." What would a human do in such a circumstance? If the odds for survival were one per ten thousands, one would not give up on life. However, even if one was willing to die, he would have to die, for whatever reason, with his name carved in infamy, that is, with the verdict of "suiciding against the people" like the "Golden Hoop."[2] When one had no way

out, the only right left with him was taking his own life. If this action was called "suiciding against the people," I would still rather try it this time. Why should one have something to be afraid of if he feared no death? How could one mind anything after he died? I would just close my eyes, leaving the world behind for gossip.

My mind made up, I calmed down and felt relieved. Pulling myself together, I then started to ponder on how to suicide. The first thing that came into my mind was the professors and government officials of the university who had committed suicide since the onset of the Cultural Revolution. The first name was Wang, a professor of history, who was interrogated by the young revolutionaries at his home a few days into the Revolution. Did they torture him physically? I had no clue. But I doubted they did, because, at the beginning of the Revolution, it took those revolutionary "rebels" some time to "sum up" their experience and "improve" their ways of torturing victims. [3]

From my experience these "revolutionaries," suddenly swept up by the first wave of the Revolution in the middle of 1966, were not "open-minded," and their treatments of the victims were moderate. But Professor Wang, however, had a thin skin, sticking to the motto, "A scholar-official would be rather killed than disgraced." Driven beyond forbearance, he committed suicide by taking a heavy dose of sleeping medicine.

Right after his death, he was labeled "counter-revolutionary" and the big character posters carrying the slogan "Down with the Counter-revolutionary Wang" appeared on the east wall of the main student cafeteria, causing a surge of astonishment and panic across the campus. I knew Professor Wang pretty well. Before the founding of new China, he risked his life in joining the Communist Party in secret.[4] His teaching and behavior were commendable. Now he became "counter-revolutionary" overnight. I was perplexed and sympathetic.

Another person's name that pricked my conscience was Mr. Cheng, general Party secretary of the Department of Chinese, another old acquaintance of mine. In old China he was one of the leaders of the Beijing college student movements and later became president of the Student Association of Peking University. Though still in his prime, he was a revolutionary veteran. He took his own life, too. According to his "crime," he should have been labeled as a "capitalist government official," less heinous than as a "counter-revolutionary academic authority." He was denounced as a "devil" at the June 18 session of condemning. [5] Later he was sent to do physical labor on campus with a wooden board hanging on his neck. Probably he could not swallow these "treatments." It was said that one night he left home with a bottle of liquor and a bottle of DDT and teetered to the woods in the Western Hills.[6] He might have drunk the liquor first to numb himself before downing the toxicant. Imagining that, after the fatal gulp, a great fire flaming in his stomach, he was writhing in agony on the ground, I shuddered with fear, my hair standing on end.

Then my mind wandered to alternative ways of suicide, such as plunging from the top of a high-rise building to my death or lying on the rails to let the train run over my body. I picked up stories of this sort on streets but never ran into any of these happenings. Such stories I had heard a lot, countless cases of killing oneself, which I just did not have the time and mood to recall one after anther. But undoubtedly each innocent person went through a heart-rending mental crisis before taking his or her life, a blood-dripping process. My mind went blank as I was too frightened to reflect on this subject any longer.

Meanwhile, my thoughts strayed to the days of the 1950s, when two professors drowned themselves in Lake Unnamed on Beida's campus.[7] How could they manage to do that, since the water was shallow, only waist-deep? The only answer seemed to be their resolve to die. Did they stick their heads in the mud and smother themselves to death? Around the same period of time, a professor of philosophy, surnamed Fang, razored his arteries and blood gushed out. The first aid failed as he was watched, dying a slow, anguished death.

Then my mind wandered back in history to the death of Qu Yuan, who drowned himself in a river.[8] Years later Xiang Yu died by cutting his own throat when besieged on all sides by the enemy troops.[9] I was scared out of my wits at the thought of cutting my throat. What strength would it take to behead oneself? It was much more primitive and barbarous an action to take than using a pistol. Xiang Yu would, to my mind, have pulled out a pistol for his death instead of severing his head with a sword, if he had had access to one of the modern firearms.

My train of thought not only scanned vertically the Chinese history of thousands of years but also cruised horizontally across the borders of countries to tens of thousands of *li*.[10] I thought of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi fascist heads. It was said that they, aware of the atrocities they had committed, each got some potassium cyanide close at hand in case he or she needed to have a bite before going to heaven or hell. The German chemical industry was advanced, and its application of products of chemistry in suicide was remarkable in the world. The Japanese were well-known for committing *hara-kiri,* which was their patent. Rarely had it been heard that they were emulated in other parts of the world. But this suicide ritual took more than one person to accomplish because one did not die immediately after disemboweling oneself. An assistant was needed to behead him. I also heard some young Japanese, deeply in love, plunged together into the crater. This practice was not feasible where a volcano was not available.

Thus thoughts thronged my mind as my contemplation ran wild. Sometimes things appeared palpable and graphic, as if the dead body was under my nose, fresh blood streaming all over. The sight was at once terrifying and appealing. Though I knew this meditation did not bring me anything pleasant, I could do nothing but see myself lose the rein on my feeling.

I had never studied suicide. Now it was time to take it into account, something that used to be far away and have nothing to do with me. But now it was close up. I never thought of creating a new "marginal academic area," called suicide or comparative suicide. At this time, this new discipline must be established. A new subject of learning was always built up on a theoretical basis. My academic learning, in the past, was theoretically sketchy. Decidedly comparative suicide is brand new to me. But I have some ideas about it, which, trivial by my standards, I would like to share with my reader.

Obviously I do not need to gather all cases of suicide in history for a theoretical study. The above-mentioned examples are quite adequate for drawing conclusions. In light of historical materialism, I can classify forms of suicide according to their evolution.[11] The most primitive but also long-practiced types are hanging oneself from a beam and plunging into a well, which were rooted in slave society and practiced in feudal and capitalist society.[12] These modes of killing oneself have been handed down through thousands of years to this day. Potassium cyanide, an advanced product, was exclusively used by Nazi chiefs; *harakiri* and plunging into the crater have been seen only in Japan, two typical inventions of feudal and capitalist society. Cutting the artery, meanwhile, calls for the literacy of physiology, well suiting intellectuals instead of laymen.

Taking sleeping aids was indubitably created in Western countries but can be put in use everywhere in the world of today, no matter whether the country is surnamed "capitalist" or "socialist." But I think it is better fit for the condition of intellectuals who are plagued with insomnia due to mental overwork. Farmers, who hoe the fields from dawn to dusk, are hardly aware of the existence of sleeping medication. Why do I say taking sleeping pills is a Western creation? In traditional Chinese medicine tranquilizers are common drugs, but their strength of reducing tension is weak, effective only for lulling one to sleep and not strong enough for ending life. Most sleeping drugs are produced in Western countries, and therefore I say it is a capitalist style of suicide. Taking a dose of sleeping medicine is the most effective and least painful, a piece of evidence for the superiority of the West.[13]

That is the theoretical conclusion I have reached.

Theory must be put into application. What kind of suicide should I choose to end my life? It is self-evident: the capitalist. Since I was already a "counter-revolutionary" as labeled, I didn't care about the consequences of how I killed myself.

Making the decision to die is the key step before suicide. Now that I made up my mind to leave this world, the job was almost done. Next, I should decide on the time and place to carry it out. The time was not a problem: to act as quickly as possible. But it took me quite a while to figure out an appropriate location. To resolve this issue, allow me to use a popular saying during the Revolution, "One needs to consider the big direction."[14] The

"big direction" concerning my case now was dying either far or near, to wit, dying at home or somewhere away from home. Certainly it was a lot more convenient to die at home.

But I was worried. I had only two rooms in my apartment, a large one and a small one. If I took sleeping pills at night and was found lying cold and stiff in bed the next morning, the two elderly ladies would be horrified to death, or faint at least.[15] What a frightful spectacle it would be! In life I had been considerate, and so was I even more at this point. After my body was removed out of the house, could the two ladies have their nerve to stay inside my room where their closest family member had lived and died? What could they do then if they were frightened? Who would dare to come to their help at the time when snobbism became the way of life and human relationship was as thin as a sheet of paper? By that time I would become a double counter-revolutionary, with the first "hat" that the "New Beida Commune" placed on my head and the second one that I stacked on top of the first myself by "suiciding against the people."[16] Thus I ruled out dying at home.

To die away from home also raised the issue that "one needs to consider the big direction," a thornier problem to tackle. At first, I thought of the Western Hills, inspired by the death of that general Party secretary of the Chinese department, a scenic spot with dense woods and gurgles of streams. What a lyrical death I would die, if I finished my life journey there, facing up to the blue sky, head on pine needles! It would be the most beautiful poem I had ever composed in life. But the place was far out in the west. If I bumped into our Red Guards on my way there, I would add insult to injury.

Then the Summer Palace hit my mind.[17] Many renowned scholars committed suicide in the lake of the park, among whom Wang Guowei was the most famous.[18] I was not willing to plunge into the water and drown as the old man Wang. I would rather go to a secluded cave on the other side of the hill inside the park and gulp the sleeping tablets, leaving the hurly-burly of human life behind. However, that might terrify some young ladies and gentlemen sauntering zestfully in the park. So that was not a good idea either.

After I racked my brains, Yuanmingyuan popped up in mind, another imperial park across the street north of the campus.[19] Inside the park there was a large reed pond. It was early winter and exuberant reed catkins overgrew. If I waded deep into the reedy marsh, I would simply take the drug and lie down on the ground. Then my goal was achieved. What a neat coup! I was overjoyed and almost jumped to dance. This was, I must say, the last but most spectacular spark of intelligence in my life.

I was exceptionally composed, so utterly that I was a little scared. I didn't study the state of mind of those people, in history and modern times, who knew they were confronting the imminent death. Qu Yuan's thoughts, right before his death, can be read in his works, those that he had when roaming along the bank of the Miluo river and composing poems. Logically, taking one's own life was an extremely difficult step to take, since one had to

sustain a flood of swirling emotions. Nearly crazy, one might cry and be restless during the day and toss and turn in bed at night, before reaching the point of resolution. The poet Jiang Yan said, "Grappling with death is common both in history and at present, and along with it always goes the feeling of regret and humiliation."[20] I had nothing to regret and feel humiliated for. But the tremendous calm I had experienced shocked and baffled me.

In fact, I was not completely free of anxiety. At times, the thought hit me that, by this time the following day, I would be lying stiff on my back in the quiet deserted reedy marsh of Yuanmingyuan. No one knew how long had elapsed before someone discovered my body, which must have been deformed, most possibly one arm or one leg missing, bitten off by a vulture or a stray animal; maybe my belly was ripped open, my internal organs devoured and the body badly marred. A sickening sight! I was fine right now. But what would become of me by that time? Shivering all over with fear, I could not think any more. It seemed as if I heard, in my mind's eye, the blare of the loudspeakers of the "New Beida Commune" and the chants of "Counter-revolutionary Ji Xianlin opposed the people through to the end by committing suicide. He deserves a cruel death!" Vying with its factional foe in competition for displaying revolutionary zeal, "Jinggangshan" joined in the chorus and flung abuses against me in its own campus broadcast.

No matter how the savagery of these thoughts tormented me, I would not budge. I resolved to part this world forever and would never regret. Calmly I started thinking about what I should do in the last few hours of my life, that of more than fifty years. I felt regret to my elderly aunt, who had been with me all these days, her panic never alleviated, my wife who had stuck together with me through thick and thin for forty years, and my children, grandchildren, a few relatives and friends, who had remained dear to me.

Probably, I was indebted to many more. To all of them I would say, "See you in the next world." Casually, I handed the two old ladies a few bank certificates of deposit, trying to hold back tears from dropping onto them. The message I got across in silence was, "Poor old ladies! You're left with the meager sum of my savings to live on in the future! I'm not cruel, nor am I selfish. There are many ways in the world to cross a river, but I'm left with the only choice to go through this single-log bridge. What could I do?"[21] They must have understood me, showing no rush of emotion and shedding no tears. I didn't draw up a will because I thought it was useless. As the minutes were ticking away I had no chance to worry about those valuable books of mine. The last hour of my life! But I was just dazed at my mind's alarming state of tranquility.

I suffered insomnia about half of my life and took cases and buckets of both Chinese and western sleeping medication, having become quite a specialist myself. I had gathered tons of them, in the form of both bolus and tablet, a blend of Chinese and western medicine. Now I collected up all of them, thinking I would take boluses first and tablets

second. What a perfect combination of strings of pearls and girdles of jade![22] Slipping the medicine into a cloth bag, I would sneak out of my apartment building, climb over the wall and cross a brook and a street before entering Yuanmingyuan.

All done, I was about to step out of the door and. . . .

Translator's Epilogue: The night of December 4, 1967, as Ji narrates in Chapter Eight, was the longest in his life. Had he sneaked out of home a moment earlier to carry out the suicidal plan, he would have stretched the list of millions of persecuted deaths in the Revolution with his name. At that moment three Red Guards of the University stormed into his campus residence and took him to the main student cafeteria where, together with the University's deputy president and other faculty, he was denounced and tortured for the first time by hysteric crowds into the wee hours of the day. When dragging his mangled body back home, forehead, nose and corners of the mouth bloodstained, he nevertheless saw his suffering as a test of spine and baptism of rebirth. Four days before that night, his home was ransacked by the Red Guards and he was taken to the Foreign Languages Building, where he had worked as professor and department head for twenty years, for interrogation, all for nothing other than his academic and administrative "notoriety," particularly his ten years of graduate background in Germany. Ji survived the night of suicidal meditation but was yet to sustain fire and brimstone in the following year and a half as the rest of his twenty-chapter memoir recounts, the numerous sessions of denouncement and crushing life in the Cowshed under the lash of forced labor and brutality, along with hundreds of other faculty "demons." Set free in the spring of 1970, he was assigned the task of working as a doorman at a student dormitory building, in which he spent four years translating the Hindu epic, *Ramayana,* into Chinese. In the post-Revolution period when China was launched onto the economic interstate, Ji rose to higher positions such as deputy chancellor of the University and received more spotlight as he was visited by state leaders such as current premier Wen Jiabao in May 2005. However, he finds it hard, as he states in his memoir and said to the translator in conversation, to come to grips with the reasons why those college students of his, many his favorites, would pound him with fists and kicks, why the murderers are still at large to this day, some of them even wallowing in the glamour of power and wealth, and why the majority of the victims have been reluctant in recalling the history on paper and shedding light on the darkest hour of the modern Chinese day.

Notes

[1] The excerpt is taken from Chapter 8 of *Random Recollections of the Cowshed*, published in 1998 by the Press of the Central Academy of the Communist Party of China, Beijing, China. In this chapter, Ji Xianlin recalls his thoughts on December 4, 1967, four days after his home was ransacked and properties confiscated by the Red Guards from the faction, the "New Beida Commune" of the University, some of them his former students. He survived the initial wave of pounding in the Cultural Revolution in 1966–67. But now he became a counter-revolutionary element and capitalist academic authority overnight. During the four days, he was taken a few times to the department building of foreign languages where he taught and worked as head of the Department of Eastern Languages. There he was brutally abused and tortured. For the "New Beida Commune," see note 16.

[2] In the Chinese classical romance *Journey to the West*, written by Wu Chengen (1506-1582), the "Golden Hoop" is permanently placed on the head of the Monkey, Sun Wukong, who, a converted Buddhist disciple, follows his master, monk Tang Sanzang, together with Pigsy and Sand Monk, two other disciples, on their way to India to obtain the Buddhist scriptures in the Tang Dynasty (618–c.906) of Chinese history. Whenever the Monkey is disobedient, his master chants the incantation of the "Golden Hoop" to tighten the hoop so as to bring the Monkey under control. Here Ji uses the simile to mean an additional smear after one's death.

[3] Ji means the escalating of treatment and torture on victims on the university campus as the Cultural Revolution gradually came into full swing.

[4] The founding of new China, referred to the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, when the Communist Party came to power and the Nationalists were driven to Taiwan.

[5] The June 18 session of condemning "devils," the first round of university-wide condemning of counter-revolutionaries, held on June 18, 1966, east of Student Dormitory Building 29, where the denounced faculty and staff members were savagely tortured. In the following two years, such a session was held on that day each year.

[6] The Western Hills, a branch range of Mt. Yan, located northwest of Beijing, about ten miles from Beijing University, is a scenic spot in spring and autumn.

[7] In the early 1950s, political movements swept China in succession including "Sanfan"(1951–52), the movement against three evils, i.e., corruption, waste and bureaucracy within the Party, government and mass organizations, "Wufan"(1952), the movement against the five evils, i.e., bribery, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing of economic information, as practiced by owners of private industrial and commercial enterprises, and "Zhenfan"(1950–52), the movement to suppress counter-revolutionaries. "Lake Unnamed," a landmark of the University, located in the heart of the campus.

[8] Qu Yuan (340–278 B.C.), a ranking official of the State of Chu in the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476 B.C.), who committed suicide by drowning himself in Miluo River, central China, after he failed to carry out his plan for political reform.

[9] Xiang Yu, a warlord and a descendent of a noble family in the late Qin Dynasty (221–206 B.C.), who committed suicide after being defeated by Liu Bang, another warlord, later the founding ruler of the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.– A.D. 220).

[10] *Li*, a Chinese unit of distance, equal to about 0.5 km (0.4 mile).

[11] Historical materialism, or dialectic materialism, the Marxist theory that political and social changes result from class conflicts for material needs. The teaching of this theory had been rigorously enforced in all levels of education in the period of 1949–76 in China.

[12] Ji uses "capitalist" and Western" interchangeably here for Chinese readers who had been familiarized with the distinctive usage of East for communist influence and West for capitalist countries.

[13] Ji is rather sarcastic because the government had advocated socialist superiority over capitalism up to this point.

[14] "One needs to consider the big direction," meaning one should consider his/her political tendency as the first priority in action.

[15] Ji lived with his wife and aunt in faculty housing on the university campus, located in the northwestern suburbs of Beijing, while his children lived in the inner city.

[16] The "hat," a paper or cardboard high hat placed on the head of the victim who is forced to bend before crowds of people denouncing his "crime" and chanting slogans, or who is led in the street parade for a show to the public. This practice of torture and humiliation ran rampant in the first two years of the Cultural Revolution. The "New Beida Commune" is one of the two major factions of Beijing University, composed of students and faculty during the Cultural Revolution. "Beida" is the abbreviation for "Beijing University" in Chinese. "Jinggangshan" is the opponent to the "New Beida Commune" and a weaker faction. The two factions vied for leftist fundamentalism and control of the university, and periodically fought violently against each other. "Jianggangshan" is the name of Mt. Jinggangshan, Jiangxi, China, where the Red Army led by Mao Zedong rose in armed struggle against the Nationalists in the late 1920s. When Ji was later condemned as a counter-revolutionary authority, both factions persecuted him in demonstrating their respective revolutionary fervor.

[17] The Summer Palace, one of the imperial parks in Beijing, located three miles from Beijing University on the northwest outskirts of the city and well known for its scenic landscape.

[18] Wang Guowei (1877–1927), philosopher, writer and dramatist, who taught at Tsing Hua University in the 1920s. A fervent follower of the Chinese feudal and imperial system, he drowned himself in Lake Kunming of the Summer Palace.

[19] Yuanmingyuan, located north of Beijing University and west of Tsing Hua University.

[20] Jiang Yan, poet and literary writer in the Southern Dynasty (420–589) of Chinese history.

[21] Ji's wife and aunt were not employed.

[22] "Strings of pearls and girdles of jade," an old popular saying meaning a perfect pair.

Perry Ma *was forced at age 16 to farm in a remote mountain village in north China, eighteen hours by train from his home city, Tianjin, amid the grinding of the Cultural Revolution, when his grandfather, a professor of physics, committed suicide and the family disintegrated. He obtained his B.A. from Shanxi University, China, and his Ph.D. in English from the University of Oregon, specializing in Renaissance drama. Before coming to Lane in 2003 he taught at Clark Atlanta University, Voorhees College, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and Peking University, Beijing. His publications include literary criticism and translation.*

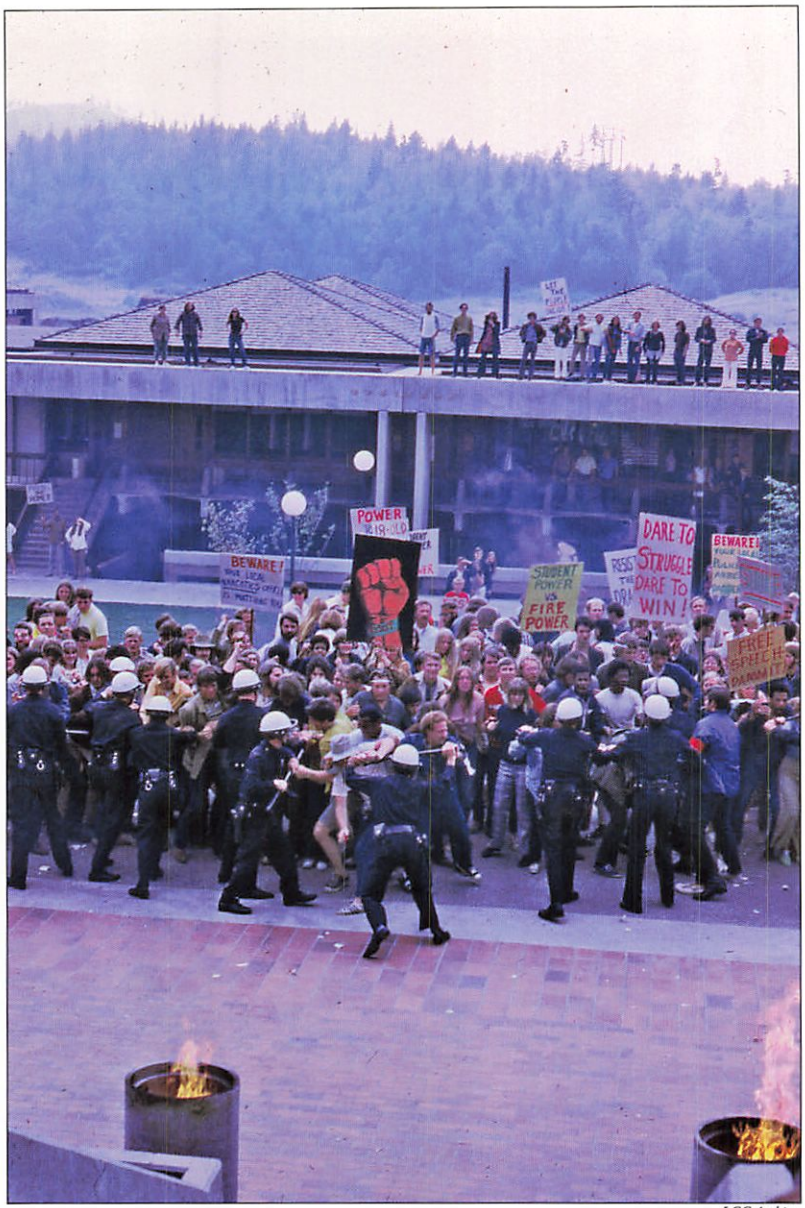
A popular government without popular
information or the means of acquiring it is but
a prologue to Farce or Tragedy or perhaps both.
Knowledge will forever govern ignorance,
and a people who mean to be their own Governors
must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives.

James Madison

"George"

Oil on canvas, 12" x 16"

Jerry Ross *studied at the Albright Art School and under Anthony Sisti. He has had multiple one-person shows, with a gold medal in a 2006 painting competition in Corsico (Milan), Italy.*



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Getting Straight at Lane (See facing page.)

Democracy at Lane

Getting Straight

Editors' Note: *The photo on the facing page is not a riot at Lane Community College. It's a scene from* Getting Straight, *filmed on location at Lane and released in 1970. Starring Elliot Gould, Candice Bergen, and a young Harrison Ford, the movie highlights student protests during the Vietnam War. In the spirit of our democracy theme, we include the following two memories of the movie's production, one from the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) and another from Amazon.com. We add the caveat that we cannot vouch for the accuracy of these descriptions, although the details do seem to contain the fundamental elements of veracity, based on our understanding of local history.*

Lane Community College in Eugene served as the location for the film. The new campus was in the final stages of construction at the time of production. This allowed the film crew to easily simulate the occupation of offices and buildings by protesters without interfering with actual campus life. Some pyrotechnic effects were used, including one that used black powder and petroleum that blackened an exterior wall and startled the cast and crew. A technician apologized for overdoing the effect (an understatement). Many local people were involved, including a few hand-picked for stunt work.

— Unsigned
http://us.imdb.com/title/tt0065775/trivia

During the riot scene, the white vans that the "cops" roll up in were actually old milk trucks from Echo Spring Dairy in Eugene. They painted over the dairy signage and put police dept. graphics on the sides. The "cops" were some students who didn't get to be part of the "riot." During the riot, you see office file cabinets and desks being thrown over a balcony. That wasn't scripted. The students got carried away. The office furniture was rented from Chapman Brothers Stationery in Eugene, and the movie company ended up having to buy most of the stuff because it was so banged up. The recruiter's office scene was filmed on Sixth Street where the Sixth Street Grill is located now. Some of the professors seen in the conference room scene were actual teachers at Lane Community College. I had several of them for instructors. The first term for students at the new Lane Community College campus was Fall 1968. Prior to then, we had to attend classes all over town (wherever they could rent rooms). This film was shot during the summer of 1968. I was in that first graduating class. This movie pretty much captured the atmosphere at the time. Every night on the evening news, they would show the running total of U.S. military killed in Vietnam. By 1971, we were marching in the streets and burning the University of Oregon's ROTC building.

— C. Gruber
www.amazon.com/review/product/6302824451?filterBy=addFourStar

Cooperative Education Students Demonstrate Lane's Core Abilities

Tamara Pinkas

PROGRESS REPORT FALL, 2007

Introduction

Lane Community College offers Cooperative Education (Co-op) in all career/technical programs and in most transfer areas. Over 2,000 students participate every year, representing work at more than 800 employers locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. In the Co-op program, students are evaluated at the end of their learning experience by their supervisors using the Supervisor Evaluation of Students (SES). In spring 2006 an assessment effort was initiated to determine to what extent cooperative education students have demonstrated, in their work settings, Lane's general education core ability outcomes.

Procedure and Results

At Lane, students who complete a general education are expected to have gained skills and knowledge in four broad categories of core abilities. Core Ability Outcomes Statements are published in the College's catalog as part of the description of the goals and purpose of a general education. The Core Ability Outcomes Statements are:

1. Communicate effectively
2. Think critically and solve problems effectively
3. Increase understanding of relationship between self and community, including self-awareness and personal responsibility
4. Explore academic disciplines of liberal arts, social science and physical sciences

To determine if Lane Co-op students were demonstrating these core abilities at their internship sites, items were identified on the SES, a standard document used in all programs, that pertained to these four core abilities. In the SES, supervisors rate their students on several criteria that fall under four categories (Professional qualities, Relations with others, Dependability and Quality of work) on a scale of 1-5 (1=unsatisfactory, 2=marginal, 3=average, 4=very good, 5=outstanding). These items are listed below. Table 1 shows the correspondence between the items on the SES and Lane's core abilities.

1. Communicates effectively (4 items)

- Is friendly and courteous
- Accepts and responds appropriately to feedback and suggestions
- Works well with co-workers. Contributes to team effort
- Demonstrates ability to communicate with a wide variety of people

2. Thinks critically to solve problems (3 items)
   - Looks for ways to improve, has initiative
   - Demonstrates progress in developing job specific skills
   - Readily identifies problems or errors related to their job performance
3. Understands relation between self and community (7 items)
   - Works well with co-workers. Contributes to team effort
   - Demonstrates ability to communicate with a wide variety of people
   - Attends regularly
   - Arrives at work on time
   - Arranges lateness and time off in advance
   - Dress and grooming appropriate for job
   - Understands how his/her job relates to the business as a whole
4. Explores academic disciplines of liberal arts, social science and physical sciences
   - None were identified to relate to this core ability

Since no items were identified that relate to the fourth core ability, no analysis was performed on it. (See Table 1.)

SES data for 597 students from spring terms 2003 and 2004 were analyzed with the assistance of Eric Kim, part-time Social Science faculty. The average rating for each item of the eighteen items on SES was calculated for each Lane program (ART, MDP, BA, etc). These averages can be found in Table 2.

Table 4: The average score for each core ability for the Profession, Transfer and Both Programs

	Communicates Effectively	**Think critically to solve problems**	**Understands Relation between self and community**
Professional	4.57	4.36	4.53
Transfer	4.60	4.30	4.48
Combined	4.57	4.35	4.52

Table 1: Items on the Supervisor Evaluation of Students (SES) and How Each Item Corresponds to the Core Abilities at Lane Community College

	Core Abilities			
	Communicates effectively	Think critically to solve problems	Understands relation between self and community	Explore academic disciplines of liberal arts, social science and physical sciences
Professional Qualities				
• Looks for ways to improve, has initiative		x		
• Deals with routine tasks efficiently				
• Meets commitments reliably				
• Performs effectively under pressure				
Relations with Others				
• Is friendly and courteou	x			
• Understands and follows directions				
• Accepts and responds appropriately to feedback and suggestions	x			
• Works well with co-workers. Contributes to team effort	x		x	
• Demonstrates ability to communicate with a wide variety of people	x		x	
Dependability				
• Attends regularly			x	
• Arrives at work on time			x	
• Arranges lateness and time off in advance			x	
• Dress and grooming appropriate for job			x	
Quality of Work				
• Demonstrates progress in developing job specific skills		x		
• Consistent follow through on tasks				
• Understands how his/her job relates to the business as a whole			x	
• Is accurate, thorough, and produces acceptable work				
• Readily identifies problems or errors related to their job performance		x		

The average rating was then calculated for the remaining three core abilities based on the relevant items from the SES as seen in Table 1. The average score of each of the three core abilities can be found in Table 3. Finally, an average score was calculated for each of the remaining core abilities for the Transfer Students, Professional Program, and all the programs combined together. These results can be seen in Figure 1 and Table 4.

Conclusion

For the three core abilities of communicating effectively, thinking critically to solve problems and understanding relation between self and community, the students in the Co-op program had an average score of 4.57, 4.35 and 4.52 respectively. Since these scores were derived from ratings on the SES, ratings above 4.00 (very good) indicate that students are effectively demonstrating three of the four core abilities at their co-op sites.

Improved Student Evaluation

It was evident from the beginning of this research project that the evaluation criteria on the Supervisor Evaluation of the Student could align more closely with the College's Core Abilities and, as a result, would better assess student performance of them at co-op sites. The SES was revised utilizing the College's Core Abilities statements, cooperative education learning outcome documents from the National Commission for Cooperative Education, "Skills Employers Want" data from the State of Oregon Employment Department, and other cooperative education evaluation tools from colleges around the United States. A new SES was developed and then implemented fall term, 2007.

Of note are three evaluation criteria, added to the new SES, that had not previously been included and which grew directly from Lane's Core Abilities. These new criteria address a co-op student's a) ability to use appropriate technology, b) their respect for diversity and c) reading, writing and information skills. In addition, the criteria groupings, headings and format of the evaluation were revised to facilitate ease of use by employers.

As part of this assessment project the author participated in a Program Assessment Seminar. One of the seminar topics was the use, benefit and development of rubrics. During an informal meeting between the author and the Culinary Assessment Project coordinator, the idea to create a rubric to assist employers with filling out the SES emerged especially if the rubric could be customized for each program. A program specific rubric would help collect the type of data needed for better student and program assessment.

Next Steps

Three activities will continue: 1) Additional work remains to complete the data analysis. The employer comments from the "fill in" portions of the SES still need to be analyzed. The completion of this work is dependent upon available funding. 2) Research will continue on viable ways to create an on-line version of the SES linked to a data base so that future data is available for analysis, while also protecting the security of private student information. 3) The author will begin development of program-specific rubrics for employer use in select programs and pilot them.

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Table 2: The Average Rating of Each SES Item by Program

	ENGR	ART	MDP	BT	LGL	CIS	COOP	OST	DA	DAA	ECE	HIT	MA	NUR	RT	PE	NRG	CG	CJA	HS	BA	CS	ED	PS	PSY	SOC
Professional Qualities																										
Looks for Ways to Improve, has initiative	4.23	4.85	4.43	4.59	4.5	4.2	4.4	4.11	4.33	4.38	4.33	4.5	4.57	4.82	4.17	4.47	4.25	4.25	4.5	4.36	4.41	4.33	4.67	4.06	4.1	4.5
Deals with Routine tasks efficiently	4	4.69	4.61	4.65	4.5	4.47	4.56	4.17	4.43	4.25	4.5	4.67	4.5	4.3	4.17	4.81	4.08	4.5	4.61	4.5	4.59	4.52	4.5	4.17	4.21	4.67
Meets commitments reliably	3.85	4.57	4.43	4.59	4.17	4.8	4.8	4.17	4.61	4	4.5	4.75	4.63	4.4	4.13	4.6	4.33	4.25	4.62	4.43	4.73	4.48	4.5	4.14	4.26	4.67
Performs effectively under pressure	3.62	4.23	4.33	4.33	4.33	4	4.67	3.71	4.2	4	4	4.5	4.38	4.2	4.17	4.28	3.92	4.13	4.38	4.23	4.29	4.16	4.33	4.08	4.21	4.33
Relations with Others																										
Is Friendly and Courteous	4.38	4.93	4.48	4.82	4.83	4.6	4.5	4.42	4.79	4.75	4.67	4.75	4.87	4.73	4.38	4.91	4.33	4.56	4.76	4.71	4.73	4.81	4.75	4.63	4.5	5
Understands and Follows Directions	4	4.71	4.43	4.55	4.5	4.8	4.6	4.17	4.51	4.5	4.33	5	4.65	4.64	4.08	4.91	4	4.5	4.76	4.5	4.54	4.57	4.67	4.37	4.42	4.83
Accepts and Responds appropriately to feedback and suggestions	4.23	4.86	4.48	4.52	4.67	4.53	4.89	4.09	4.62	4.63	4.33	4.75	4.72	4.73	4.17	4.79	4.17	4.63	4.72	4.64	4.59	4.57	4.5	4.43	4.47	4.83
Works well with co-workers. Contributes to team effort	4.5	5	4.35	4.67	4.67	4.6	4.78	4.29	4.68	4.25	4.5	5	4.7	4.82	4.13	4.88	4.42	4.56	4.62	4.57	4.7	4.86	4.58	4.36	4.37	4.83
Demonstrates ability to communicate with a wide variety of people	4.42	4.75	4.25	4.74	4.33	4.2	4.11	4.02	4.61	4.13	4.33	4.75	4.72	4.82	4.17	4.71	4.5	4.31	4.52	4.54	4.46	4.63	4.58	4.3	4.32	4.67
Dependability																										
Attends regularly	4.42	4.71	4.39	4.86	4.5	4.8	5	4.34	4.79	4.38	4.67	4.75	4.8	4.73	4.29	4.68	4.17	4.25	4.69	4.43	4.59	4.43	4.75	4.11	4.35	4.5
Arrives at Work on time	4.75	4.86	4.43	4.76	4.5	4.93	4.9	4.57	4.79	4.38	5	5	4.73	4.64	4.54	4.7	4.08	4.25	4.86	4.43	4.65	4.52	4.83	4.21	4.16	4.67
Arranges lateness and time off in advance	4.73	4.92	4.45	4.83	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.34	4.72	4.25	4.33	5	4.67	4.7	4.46	4.34	4.17	4.31	4.73	4.5	4.65	4.55	4.75	4.13	4.26	4.5
Dress and grooming appropriate for job	4.45	4.85	3.9	4.71	4.33	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.76	4.38	4.33	5	4.77	4.82	4.54	4.84	4.17	4.43	4.66	4.57	4.49	4.29	4.67	4.73	4.42	4.33
Quality of Work																										
Demonstrates Progress in developing job specific skills	4.08	4.64	4.43	4.64	4.5	4.53	4.4	4.03	4.41	4.38	4.17	5	4.57	4.45	4.29	4.32	4.42	4.38	4.52	4.14	4.56	4.14	4.42	4.25	4.15	4.33
Consistent follow through on tasks	3.92	4.71	4.52	4.5	4.17	4.47	4.7	4	4.53	4.5	4.17	4.75	4.57	4.55	4.13	4.78	4.25	4.19	4.62	4.36	4.65	4.52	4.42	4.16	4.26	4.5
Understands how his/her job relates to the business as a whole	3.67	4.5	4.43	4.33	4.4	4.33	4.38	3.98	4.43	4.38	4.5	4.5	4.52	4.36	4.26	4.65	4.08	4.25	4.62	3.93	4.46	4.21	4.33	4.14	4.05	4.75
Is accurate, thorough, and produces acceptable work	3.77	4.43	4.35	4.45	4.17	4.4	4.8	3.98	4.48	4.5	4.33	4.75	4.5	4.45	4.25	4.76	4.33	4.31	4.59	4.21	4.54	4.24	4.42	4.22	4.21	4.67
Readily identifies problems or errors related to their job performance	3.77	4.54	4.36	4.32	4.4	4.27	4.4	3.87	4.28	4	4.33	4.5	4.55	4.3	4.17	4.69	4	4	4.48	3.93	4.37	4.35	4.25	4.03	4	4.5
Overall performance																										
	4.167	4.77	4.52	4.59	4.33	4.6	4.88	4.13	4.5	4.43	4.5	5	4.62	4.64	4.21	4.74	4.58	4.53	4.75	4.29	4.73	4.5	4.55	4.22	4.33	4.67

Table 3: Average Score of Each Core Ability by Program

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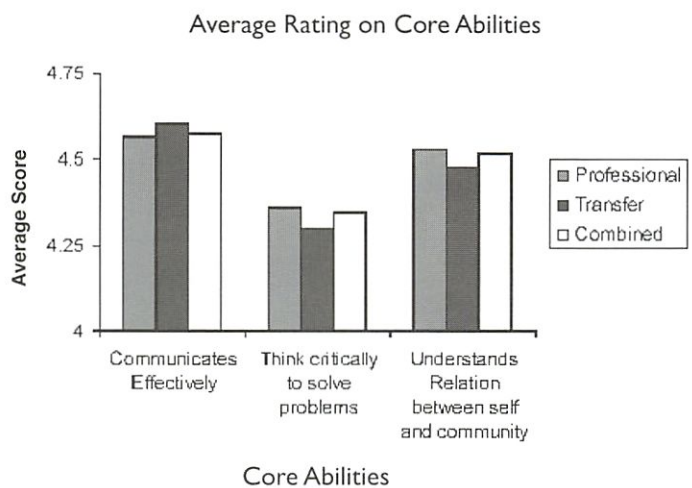
Communicates Effectively	4.38	4.88	4.39	4.69	4.63	4.48	4.57	4.2	4.67	4.44	4.46	4.81	4.75	4.77	4.21	4.82	4.35	4.52	4.66	4.62	4.62	4.72	4.6	4.43	4.41	4.83
Think critically to solve problems	4.03	4.68	4.41	4.51	4.47	4.33	4.4	4	4.34	4.25	4.28	4.67	4.56	4.52	4.21	4.49	4.22	4.21	4.5	4.14	4.44	4.28	4.44	4.11	4.08	4.44
Understands Relation between self and community	4.42	4.8	4.32	4.7	4.49	4.53	4.59	4.26	4.68	4.3	4.52	4.86	4.7	4.7	4.34	4.69	4.23	4.34	4.67	4.42	4.57	4.5	4.64	4.28	4.28	4.61
Explore academic disciplines of liberal arts, social science and physical sciences																										

Figure 1: Average Ratings for the Three Core Abilities



The Community College in a Democracy

Vicki Walker, Oregon State Senator, District 7 (D-Eugene)

Community colleges are one of the greatest advances in the higher education system. They opened the doors of learning to thousands of individuals who otherwise may not have attended college in their lifetime. There is no age restriction, no ethnic or social class qualification, no prerequisites or competitive admissions, and no requirement that one plans to pursue a degree at a four-year institution. Community colleges can be different things to many people: enrichment classes, career enhancement, vocational training, associate degrees, transfer degrees and much more. Their programs are designed to meet the needs of local communities, to quickly adapt to new demands of the workplace, and to provide opportunities for civic engagement and discourse.

Robert Franco said it best in his article, The Civic Role of Community Colleges: Preparing Students for the Work of Democracy: "By providing open-door access to higher education for all Americans, and developing the learning strategies that result in university and career success, community colleges fulfill the promise of American democracy, that is, equal opportunity for all for social and economic mobility."

Editors' Note: *The* Moment *sent out this question to Oregon politicians across the state: "What is, or should be, the role of the community college in a democracy?" We heard from six elected officials; their answers are presented in pairs throughout the issue.*

The Community College in a Democracy

Pete Sorenson, Lane County Commissioner, District 3 - South Eugene

Public community colleges emerged, in a major way, in the United States in the 1960s, a product of the Great Society and the national interest in improving the lives of millions of Americans. Initially, the role of the community college was to provide traditional services: primarily adult, vocational/technical, and lower-division college transfer education.

In the forty years since, the American population demography has changed. There's now a continued role for the community college's original three objectives, and also for senior enrichment, English as a Second Language (ESL), work site contract training, women's studies, counseling, and cooperative education.

It's time to consider the advanced role of the community college in contemporary America. While it is true that a person who can't read probably can't apply for a job, and that a person with a job stands a better chance of learning a skill at a community college — and it's certainly true that the most accessible and affordable public lower-division college experience can be found at the community college — it's also unfortunately true that community colleges are so focused on all of the other things they do that they're not playing the role in America's democracy that they could.

Community colleges are uniquely situated to play a role in "participatory democracy." I use this phrase because we need, as a society, to understand that democracy (the concept that the public should pick their own leaders) will not work if there is only passive involvement. I'm not alone as a commentator to say that trends in voter registration, intensity of voting, participation in political campaigns, and candidates running for elective office aren't very encouraging. Jefferson said that democracy was an experiment, and there's mounting evidence that it's been so perverted by lobbyists and massive special-interest campaign contributions that it may not work any longer.

Even so, I envision a time when a community college provides significant opportunities for listening to candidates, reformers, critics, activists and journalists — as well as voter registration and interactive programs. I envision a time when community colleges routinely have significant budgets for these kinds of events and programs, and the public supports the board, administrators and faculty who advance these efforts.

What's the alternative? Falling participation in electoral politics, and falling respect for the concept, utility and vitality of representive government loom as larger and more

probable outcomes. For their very survival, community colleges need to advance not just democracy but participatory democracy. Just as war is too important to be left to generals, politics is too important to be left to politicians.

If a Lord of the Confederacy should seek to establish any authority independent of the jurisdiction of the Confederacy of the Great Peace, which is the Five Nations, he shall be warned three times in open council, first by the women relatives, second by the men relatives and finally by the Lords of the Confederacy of the Nation to which he belongs. If the offending Lord is still obdurate he shall be dismissed by the War Chief of his nation for refusing to conform to the laws of the Great Peace. His nation shall then install the candidate nominated by the female name holders of his family.

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from The Great Binding Law,
Constitution of the Iroquois Nations

Prepared by Gerald Murphy. Reprinted by permission of the National Public Telecomputing Network.

Atlantean Democracy

Mark Harris

Go placidly amongst the bikes and the Priuses.
Try not to bite your tongue in your silence.
As far as possible without conceit or arrogance,
Give it over, and remember to be on good terms with all your relations.
State your "radical" peace in every action, listen to the Other,
Even the dull liberal, and staunch conservative.
They too have their story. . . Remember yours.

(with apologies to Max Ehrmann)

Here in Mayberry/Eugene, residing within what James Baldwin called "the sunlit prison cell of the American dream," I often find myself listening to myths and fables, as well as consuming science fiction. I get into a strange speculative atavism, a nostalgic longing for times which my public education leads me to believe never could have existed. Or if such times did exist, they existed only in some imaginary or mythic Erewhon.[1] I dream of intercontinental, perhaps even interstellar, skyboats that run on clean, non-polluting, universally accessible sources of energy. I think of colonies consisting of underwater cities where humans and cetaceans can have conversations on interspecies topics of the day. I imagine cities with non-polluting factories, with wild spaces in which the indigenous can either live or recreate their generative lifestyles, as well as live in a comfort enjoyed by any member of the fictional United Federation of Planets. A society without war, famine, or disease, in which artistic output is currency, as is any labor necessary to improve the common good. In my worldview the common good would be defined as that which is not only good for humans, but sentient non-humans, as well as the majority of species currently in existence, and life forms yet to emerge or arrive. Due to my education, I have to assume that Erewhon — an inclusive interspecies, even interstellar democracy, is in fact to be found Nowhere.

My public education leads me to believe that democracy and civilization could not have existed before 1492 in so-called America, and that Europe civilized the dark continent of Africa, improving the benighted lives of African savages by bringing them here to be nurtured in the American manger of world liberty. But from a maroon point of view,

civilization existed in so-called Africa and America before western civilization pulled itself up by its alleged Greco-Roman sandal straps.

In order to believe in a larger humanity than that which is conceived by western civilization, maroons, among others, gather evidence from civilizations and references older than western civilization. Taught at home, building our own libraries, knowing hidden history, supplementing the Columbus narrative — and the subsequent Greco-Roman-American "democracy civilizing the world narrative" — with a privately held larger story. As a result of my maroon private education, my extended home training as it were, I find myself longing for a not-so-mythical past in which the good ol' days were not lived by the good ol' boy founding fathers, but rather in which the *shemsu* (honored ancestors, Kamitean-Egyptian) filled with their *neteru* (divine natural forces, Kamitean) knew themselves to be *mitaku* (relatives, Lakota) and acted accordingly. If I look through a maroon set of eyes, as an African/Native cultural hybrid, then I imagine myself to be a citizen of Atlantis, longing for an Atlantean democracy, in which every sentient human being that attains their culturally appropriate age of majority has a voice in the government, without any restriction. The current South African Constitution,[2] with its prohibitions against multiple forms of discrimination, eleven official languages including state support of sign language, sixteen more languages for religious purposes, and support of indigenous languages, provides a model approaching my ideal for a contemporary Atlantean democracy.

Atlantis is thought to be a mythical island-continent, west of the pillars of Hercules, that sank into the ocean. In New Age variations of this theme, it was a spiritually advanced civilization that sank in what is depicted as an ecological disaster, with mytho-spiritual implications. Among some New Age believers, Americans are reincarnated Atlanteans who will be doomed to repeat the cataclysms of old if we don't get our eco-spiritual act together. Also in these mythologies, Atlantis is populated by blonde-haired, blue-eyed denizens, and perhaps a few red-skinned noble savages, who may have enslaved darker skinned people. For the purposes of this discussion, I am contextualizing and reifying the Kamitean term Atl-Anta,[3] which means "water and metal," as referring to what indigenous natives call Turtle Island/Tulapit Wapikisinep, that is north, central, and southern Atl-Anta. Or, as it is known by its European appellation honoring a European explorer, America.

Atlantis then, is not a mythical island-continent, but, as it was referred to in Africa, the Circuit of the World — the only land mass on the planet stretching unbroken from the North Pole to the South Pole. Those indigenous to Turtle Island would already know that, hence the name Tulapit Wapikisinep: the Long Reaching Land. The concept is: *One Land, Many Nations, No Borders.*

For a maroon, a pre-Columbian name for an African-Indigenous hybrid, the correlation between the place names "Long Reaching Land" and "Circuit of the World" speak of

a correspondence that existed before the narrative told by my formal education. If I heard of a mythology, a narrative strain, from Alkebulan (the indigenous term for Africa), that claimed a connection to the circuit of the world, that semantically matches the indigenous appellation Tulapit Wapikisinep, then I would begin to have a concept supporting the pre-Columbian indigenous concept of the Four Races / Four Directions.

At this point, if I may pause between transoceanic leaps, I suggest the possibility of ancient alliances longer-lived and stronger than our current enmities, around which an Atlantean democracy could recoalesce, as I believe it once did.

There is biologically one race, the human race. We are the same critter, with variations, if we can genetically intermingle and have viable offspring. Politically (where politics is the science of the distribution of power), there can be a number of constructs that allow for the equal or unequal distribution of power. If unequal distribution occurs, it is likely to do so along clearly visible lines such as gender, or whatever characteristics one could assign to what we arbitrarily call race. In western civilization, where race was constructed to privilege one group over others, the church, government, and universities, then economic and political policy, collaborated to reproduce those beliefs. In all fairness, any "racial" group can construct a narrative mythology to support its own supremacy. But what if some didn't?

I will discuss only the indigenous egalitarian conception of race espoused by the Lakota and the Tsalagi/Cherokee. In the beginning, Creator created four races, one for each of the four directions. In the East was the yellow race; in the South, the black race; in the West, the red race; and in the North, the white race. In this construct, no race is superior to any other — any more than south is better than north as a direction. They are different orientations and different ways of approaching the same problems of life, but no one race is superior nor destined to rule over all the others. This is the basic orientation of many Native nations, before the colonizing memes of western civilization. Africans, Asians, and a few Europeans had to have been known for this construct to arise. And clearly within the narrative, the different races are thought of as equal relatives.

However, the founding fathers of America were steeped in a mythology that espoused a Biblically based racial superiority schema in which the group named Caucasoid (of the Caucasus) were the people reborn after the Great Flood (where the Ark landed at Mt. Ararat in the Caucasus Mountains), and all other human populations devolved from them. By the logic of reinforcing racial inferiority, you divorce an inferior people from their land, thus opening the land itself for colonization by a superior civilizing culture. A memetic strain of this schema twisted a word in Sanskrit associated with spiritual purity, *arya*, to

refer to a pure white race, *Aryans,* who swept down through the Khyber Pass, conquered the inferior black Dravidians, civilized them, and disappeared without a trace.

These racial constructs, unexamined for objective or refuting truths, lead to the logic of statements like "We the People," in which they do not mean "all human beings present without exclusion" (as in the post-Apartheid South African Constitution), but only a version of Greco-Roman democracy: "wealthy, literate, white men." White women, Indian nations, free people of African descent, and mixed "races" of any description are not included in that polity. Indeed, they had to fight for inclusion over the two centuries the United States has been in existence, though their blood also watered the tree of liberty. But of course their view is absent from the curriculum of the traditional canon, taught by western schools: Columbus discovered America, and white people civilized America and Africa by bringing their forms of Christianity, democracy, capitalism, progress, trade, etc. The clock of American time doesn't begin ticking until 1492, and history itself doesn't begin until the birth of Christ. Any other time is *pre-historic,* unknowable before the Dark Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the age of discovery, exploration, colonization, and globalization.

I believe these labels are consequences of leaving out, ignoring, even eradicating a multiplex point of view that should include the viewpoints of all the witnesses to an historical event. Excluding those viewpoints from the narrative, which forms the collective memory and also could inform future possibilities, basically leaves critical ingredients out of the democratic cultural soup, making it a tepid, transparently thin bouillon rather than a rich gumbo. The real consequences of that act leaves us unable to imagine a mythical, inclusive Atlantean democratic world.

In drawing a parallel from colonization by nation states to their possible successors, corporate states, I begin to draw in my mind a clear consequence of giving corporate persons the same power as human beings, without the moral restrictions that humans place upon themselves. The most salient moral restriction is acting as if your individual actions have collective or even global consequences. Thus, you shouldn't profit as an individual at the expense of the collective. Case in point: Bechtel Corporation constructed a massive water system in Bolivia, intended to generate electrical power and also provide drinking water, which presumably is an improvement. But the consumers in rural areas of Bolivia weren't making enough money to pay for electricity and water, so they took to collecting rainwater. The Bolivian government then sent the military out to stop people from doing so, under the premise that collecting rainwater was stealing Bechtel's property. This had to be the first time a corporation owned rainwater. Only a people cut off from their ancestral homelands and traditional lifeways could even consider human/corporate ownership of rain to be a viable concept. It's a premise built upon a certain chain of logic,

justified by a European imported concept allowing "ownership" of real estate, mineral rights, permanent lifelong race-specific chattel slavery, and related ideas. These concepts were neither indigenous to Turtle Island or Alkebulan. Who can claim to own what you did not create, which no human created: the land, the sky, the ocean, the moon? What is next: The air? Sunlight? In the traditional Atlantean/African view, these things are there to use and share with your relatives, not to hoard as a personal resource. Needless to say, that Bechtel-friendly Bolivian regime was democratically replaced by the first indigenous president, Evo Morales.

Any inclusive human political system must include not only all the people present, but also immigrants. If a good thing is happening in a place, then other people are going to want to come, to be participants in some level. This is a basic quality of human freedom: the reality of interconnectedness and the pursuit of greater freedom. The so-called illegal immigrants, when used in reference only to "Mexican" immigrants, refers to people who had been welcome in northern Atl-Anta long before there was an alphabet in the English language. Traditional Atlantean freedom does not grant license to impinge upon established traditions. The European-American canon does not generally acknowledge the pre-existing democratic principles, some of which on this Atl-Antean continent include consideration of a current decision's impact on the environment of the yet unborn 140 years (seven generations) hence. I'm of course referring to the Iroquois White Roots of Peace, which in American terms would be the equivalent of a Constitution, a Bible, and municipal, national, and family law all rolled into one (without of course the justifications for genocide, slavery, racism, and sexism). Codified nearly three hundred years before the writing of the American Constitution, the White Roots defined an inclusive democratic citizenship that demanded a spiritual and ecological literacy and responsibility. White Roots refer not to race, but symbolically to the roots of their sacred white pine, symbolically uniting the people and that wood which is used to construct their traditional longhouses.

It was the Clan Mothers (ten Animal Clans) of the Five Nations (eventually Six Nations) of the Iroquois, who selected chiefs, who were relatives by blood or marriage of the Clan Mothers, that created the inclusive representative democracy known as the Iroquois Confederacy. This confederacy was of necessity inclusive — run as it was by women, who could unmake chiefs but could not themselves be deposed — instilling a system of education and practical spirituality that included an extensive ecology, not only of the physical world, but linked to the everyday by what we would call in English the *sacred*, that universal interconnection.

An Atlantean democracy requires a multiliterate, multilingual polity, one that is required to know on an individual level thousands of years of history of the peoples of the Four Directions: the yellow, the red, the black, and the white races, and all their permutations and combinations. This is required so that no one race can be elevated to an imbalanced position of supremacy over the others, and, if such a condition arises, so that steps can be taken to rectify such illusory supremacy. White men were known about on both sides of the Atl-Antic. Whether through the mechanisms of Hopi prophecy, or related pre-Columbian stories of the coming of white people to Turtle Island, a number of indigenous people were expecting the return of the "Good White Brother" in advance of the first contact of the Taino at Guanahani Island, Columbus' landfall at San Salvador Island in 1492. The Taino possessed gold spear points made of a material called *guanin*, which they indicated to Columbus had come from Black sailors across the water. This was later confirmed to Columbus by the King of Portugal, who correctly identified the material by name, and said that it came from Ghana. That particular alloy is called 14-carat gold today. The eventual addictive pursuit of gold and silver in the so-called New World led to the beginning of the genocide in Turtle Island, in no small part because some Europeans were unable to conceive of the indigenous as kin.

It is not generally understood that the Civil Rights struggle began in Tulapit Wapikisinep in 1492, not, as is generally supposed by the mythological historical narrative, in the American south in the mid-twentieth century. As a result, we've been struggling to regain, piecemeal, a freedom and sense of democracy that is native to this soil, not fabulously imported from the Greeks and Romans. In my atavistic Atlantean fantasy, Atlanteans did not act as if being monolingually ignorant of multiple, millennia-old, indigenous history was normal behavior. If Thomas Jefferson possessed a Koran, he was also aware of the existence of the White Roots of Peace, even as he and his fellow founding fathers ignored its most crucial tenets: A civilization that does not place women, the bearers of new life, empowered at the center of its concerns probably will doom itself. Once you do place women in the center, their presence there furthers the belief that every human being present is a citizen, and therefore a relative, in a greater world that includes the natural and invisible. Which of your children or your relatives would you not feed, nurture, or care for when they are weak, sick, or dying? Who among us should go hungry or homeless while others are fed and sheltered? To allow poverty is to bring shame upon the nation. At least that was the traditional value here in Turtle Island before western civilization. They constructed a world in which you do not have the freedom to exploit as a private individual, but the responsibility to maintain and pass on to the seventh generation hence from today. The world's bounty, when reaped in excess of your personal need, either must be given to those

less fortunate or conserved for future need, such as a time of famine. Therefore, there shouldn't be poor people among you. And if there are persons in bondage for some reason, then no person shall live a lifetime in bondage, but shall be given access to education and the resources of the community, to increase their ability to live in peace and to their highest potential, in freedom.

Human sexual diversity, a persistent reality personified by the four million intersexed human births annually, would be incorporated fully into society, whether by the Seven Genders conceptualized by the Osage, or the twelve kinds of marriage conceived by the Fon of Dahomey. Gays and women in the military, and a woman or ethnic minority in the White House become non-issues and real, unremarkable, possibilities.

Immigration becomes an accepted fact of human migration. If one can make the trip, and contribute in a productive way to the society, one is welcomed and can become a citizen while retaining ties to the lands of one's ancestors. Instead, because of our historical narrative, we have divergent policies favoring *de facto* amnesty of one kind of illegal immigrant (light-skinned blanco Cubans) while deporting (as if they were Haitian) dark-skinned moreno or zambo Cubans, who make up 60 percent of Cuba's population. Let us not forget the virtual amnesty accorded to 500,000 white Canadians and Europeans, within the twelve million illegal immigrant figure, often bandied about in public discourse.

If corporate persons arose from an Atlantean polity, those persons would not have the right to profit at the expense of the ecology, or the people, but be required to have plant emissions or products no more harmful than the emissions of living beings. We would not allow the conditions that lead to global warming, because the effects leading to such conditions would be obviously detrimental, despite the possibility of commerce and profit. We also would not have 21st century forms of slavery, where corporate persons create the conditions to exploit immigrant and indigenous populations all over the world through disproportionate economies.

As a maroon, my cultural and genetic roots recall historical realities in both Alkebulan and Atl-Anta. As they say in Indus Kush (Pakistan/India) with the term *Ritamparambagyam:* It is if it ever was. Traditional democracy as practiced in Africa and ancient America posed that all human beings had a voice in their government without restrictions. Leadership was granted based on one's ability to unite the people, a skill that required detailed literacy and a mellifluous politic that utilized many people's strengths, and strengthened their weaknesses, without exploiting those differences in ability, literacy, race, gender, or class.

I once asked a Eugene resident, a Japanese-American former World War II internee, why he would fight for a country that had thrown him in a concentration camp, yet al-

lowed European enemy combatant internees to come and go as they pleased, and work outside the camps? His reply was perhaps the only appropriate answer. "I wasn't fighting for a politician, my country, my family. . . I was fighting for an America that didn't exist yet, where such things could not ever happen. If I didn't fight for it now, when it didn't exist, then it would never exist."

It might not even come to exist in my lifetime, but I can dream about it. I too, can dream of an Atlantean Democracy.

Notes

1. *Erewhon, or Over the Range* is a novel by Samuel Butler, published anonymously in 1872. It is named for an imaginary country, supposedly discovered by the protagonist. Butler meant the title to be read as the word *Nowhere* backwards, even though the letters *h* and *w* are transposed. (Wikipedia)
2 South African Constitution
(http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN005172.pdf)
3. Walker, Gred. *Shades of Memnon*. Books I, II, III. Seker Nefer Press (2005)

Mark Harris, *an American maroon of west coast origin, was born in the Haight, raised in South Central on Grandma's gumbo and Grandpa's Black Liberation Theology and Mom and Dad's insistence on voracious early literacy and tendencies towards the melliflu-ous. The influences of Zuma, Hamoa, and Julia Pfeiffer beaches cannot be entirely discounted, nor any of several redwood forests, or dormant California volcanoes. "Atlantean Democracy" is an attempt towards intelligent inclusive sustainable governance.*

Remembering Bill

Dan Armstrong

My mother's younger brother, Bill, died in a nursing home last week after refusing the feeding tube that had earlier sustained him in the face of an exhausting death. His passing is a great loss to me, even though he lived 2,500 miles away in Indianapolis, and I saw him only every three or four years. The world for me is a smaller, colder place without Bill in it. Uncle Bill was a good man. There were no "edges," no ulterior motives, no ego trips, no petty resentments, no judgments, and no pretensions of any kind. Bill was just Bill, and he took you for what you were without reservation. And, always, he gave from the bottom of his heart whatever you needed if he could possibly give it.

I remember a lot of experiences with Bill over sixty years, all of them good. I remember summer visits lasting several weeks at a time, and shorter sleepovers for the weekends during the school year. And it was always the same. There was always the pure joy of just being with Bill, no matter what we were doing. I felt safe and happy just being in the same room with him — or out in the back yard playing pitch and catch, or looking for night crawlers, late at night with flashlights, for a fishing trip to the reservoir with Grandma and Grandpa the next day. I remember the special excitement when Bill would take me, sometimes with a friend, out to Victory Field, as it was still called after the war, to watch Indianapolis take on Louisville or Denver. Even then, I knew that the real excitement was not the game, but sitting next to Bill to watch the game. I sat there with my fielder's mitt, waiting for a foul ball and rooting our home team on, but always feeling the magnetic pull of Bill's presence next to me. That was the thing: being with Uncle Bill, sharing whatever there was to share — with Bill. All my childhood, it didn't get any better than being in Bill's company.

My memories of Bill hold me together as a man just as my experiences of him did when I was a boy. Many of the things that I like about myself as a man (and I certainly don't like everything) came from Bill, from spending so much time with him over so many years. I have, for example, much to my family's dismay, long cultivated the gift of punning. This love of puns came to me from Bill. More than anyone I've ever known, Bill loved to pun. What he lacked in skill as a punner, he made up in sheer obsessive practice, so that the adults, like my father, used a variety of techniques to deflect Bill's puns: groans, sarcasm, eye-rolling, pleadings to stop, anything to shame him out of it. But Bill was shameless. So the puns continued to come, even though it was only we kids who actually laughed at them.

I don't remember many of those puns from my childhood, but he dropped a memorable one on us during his visit to Oregon in 1994. We were enjoying some taped music on our way to the Cascades, when a song by Tony Bennett, one of his favorite singers, came on. Not missing a beat, Bill shot out, "Tony Bennett. He had a nose and bent it." Of course, we all groaned when Bill delivered this, just as the adults had over all those years with all those earlier puns, ever since I can remember, some puns lamer than others. But, however lame, there was always the pleasure watching how *pleased* he was with himself. He was pleased by the sheer pleasure in verbal play, and doubly pleased that he had produced the inevitable, collective groan. Now, Bill was a sweet and generally compliant man, especially when it came to any demands placed on his attention or time by us kids, so he surrendered much of the control and autonomy that the other adults retained. But when Bill was punning, *he* was in control. And we all, adults and kids alike, had to submit to the lame pun whether we wanted to or not. He was always inordinately tickled.

I remember so many things. They swirl in my mind and wrap around my heart. I remember trips with him in the old panel truck, before his succession of Ramblers, as he made his runs to Martinsville and other small towns to deliver cookies. There was no seat for me, the truck efficiently equipped only for a driver and all those cookies calling to me from the back of the truck, "Eat us. We are here only for you. Those stores mean nothing to us. It is only crass business that compels Bill to deliver us to those impersonal shelves in those anonymous stores." But, of course, deliver them Bill did. After the deliveries, though, I was always satisfied with the huge pile of fries and large root beer that bought off my small-boy claim to the cookies. And on the way home at the end of the day, lacking an actual seat, I stood in the truck's door-well next to Bill, my head only inches from the steering wheel, feeling the deep satisfaction and magnetic pull of his presence. Oh yes, life was good. I was with Bill.

Given the reality of my home life with a busy, often emotionally absent father, Bill was a kind of father to me. But he was much more to me than a second, ideal father. He was also my personal savior. Somehow, the sibling rivalry with my brother Jim had reached the simmering point. And I mean this literally! One hot summer day when I was four, Jim and Kenny Linville, Jim's partner in crime from down the street, locked me in the abandoned chicken coop several houses down and in the field behind the alley where the motel currently stands. I found myself standing in the locked coop, not a chicken to be found there but me, as smoke filled the room. They had set the coop on fire! My calls for help brought Bill to the rescue — and bad Karma to Jim and Kenny. The chocolate sundae I sat eating at Grandma's kitchen table afterwards was not nearly as satisfying as the scolding Jim and Kenny got for their impromptu, interrupted barbecue.

One winter morning ten years or so later, when I was struggling with the burdens of adolescence and the special burden of passing my first driver's exam, Bill let me drive to school as he took me there to be dropped off. Not that his letting me drive was anything especially memorable. His Rambler may have been more important to him than anything in the world, other than the Catholic Church and the Democratic Party, but he was unfailingly willing to entrust me to take over the helm. However, this was a particularly treacherous morning, ice covering the streets like glass on a mirror. I was proceeding down the street, heart in my mouth and with no confidence whatsoever that we'd survive, when it happened. Touching the brakes ever so slightly, or so it seemed to me, I suddenly found myself in a 180 degree spin, finally coming to rest facing oncoming traffic on the one-way street. Bill didn't miss a beat, simply instructed me to make a U-turn and be on our way. I searched his face for signs of disapproval or even stress, but could find none.

My most treasured memory of Bill is not confined to one event. It is the memory of countless summer nights over many years, sleeping on the bed pulled next to Bill's. If Jim were there with me, we'd have to bargain over who was to sleep in the crack between the two beds. We'd settle into bed after Bill had brushed his teeth, the humming of the exhaust fan in the kitchen reaching a place deep in my chest, and the tireless fan pulling the cooled air through the darkened house to aid my journey into sleep. Through the open bedroom window, we could hear the sounds of the summer night: the whine and roar of semis barreling down Highway 52, a short way behind the house, the ticking of Bill's Big Ben alarm clock, and the throb of crickets, banks of crickets nestled in the grass and shrubs, ringing in our ears and bringing us a profound peace with their insistent mating music. Bill and Jim and I would drift off to sleep after an hour or so of idle chatter, to sleep the sleep of complete happiness. Sleeping near Bill, even if it was on the crack between the beds, was all I could want. It was total bliss.

I have a photo of Bill when he we was seventeen or eighteen, I'd guess. It was taken at a lake somewhere on some vacation long before I came along. The photo is before color, in sepia, giving the feel of an earlier, better time, long lost, never was, perhaps. Anyway, he sits in a boat by himself, rowing. Rowing toward some unknown shore. He is simply beautiful. Growing up, I was always struck by how good looking Bill was. Well, he was even better looking at eighteen — as we all are, I suppose. In the photo he looks positively angelic, an angel of determination. He is rowing with all his will and effort toward some necessary shore. His back is into it, and his face is pulled into the face I saw so often over the years when he was concentrating or working with extra effort: squinting on one side of his face, a squint so intense that it pulled his mouth fully open on that side. I think back to that squint, remembering it when he untangled my fishing line in the boat after an unlucky cast, or when he worked a knot out of my sneaker after playing ball.

Looking at Bill in that rowboat, working to reach that distant shore, I see him now as he really was all his life, and as he is now, perhaps, in death. I see him, if I squint against the sun, having made his way to some ultimate shore to be reunited with all of those long since gone, whom he loved from early on. Though I have long ago lost my belief in the simple religious faith that sustained Bill his entire lifetime, I have the hope that, in some dimension, some string or membrane of the universe, he is standing with all of them, having finally reached the shore.

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Priscilla Orr's *first book,* Jugglers & Tides, *from Hannacroix Creek Books, was published in 1997. She is a recipient of fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and Yaddo, and twice a Pushcart Prize nominee. Her poems have appeared in* Southern Poetry Review, Nimrod, Worcester Review *and other journals. She received an M.F.A. from Warren Wilson's Program for Writers. She is an Associate Professor at Sussex County Community College, and lives with her new puppy, Crosby, in Hamburg, New Jersey.*

Dawn Trembles

Priscilla Orr

After her night vigil, she dresses quietly,
covers him except for his bare feet
which he hates to have restrained.
She remembers their son as a boy,
socks slipped out of the quilt
to mime this father. His sleep must mean
the drugs are at work. He won't wake until lunch.

She heads down to the boardwalk.
where men rake the sand,
their machines like tractors
leave clean lined patterns
that a drowsy air traveler
could take for markings
of a species extinct.

Yesterday the cloud cover
gave her refuge. Warm air
against cold tidal waves
fogged the town in for the night.
She nearly slept. But today
she can almost feel the tremors
as the sun ruptures the horizon.

How will she live without him?
How will she let him go?

Democracy and Civic Literacy

Steve Candee

For decades I have read, watched and listened to various political scholars, pundits, journalists, and others lament the lack of political participation by the American public, particularly among young adults. It is certainly true that compared to many, if not most, other industrialized democracies Americans vote in relatively small numbers. We are lucky to get a 50 percent turnout in presidential elections, 35-40 percent in congressional elections, and 20-25 percent in local elections (as a percentage of the eligible voting population). Of course, voting is not the only form of political participation in our culture, but the number of people who participate in other ways (volunteering on a political campaign, contributing financially to a campaign, contacting a representative, engaging in political discourse with friends or family, etc.) is even smaller.

What are the reasons for this disinclination to engage in our political culture? Some cite the perceived corruption of elected officials at all levels of government, from the local to the national. Others are dismayed at what they perceive as a lack of difference between the policy positions of the two major political parties, or the lack of attractive candidates. Some believe that the influence of money in our political system corrupts those who attain office, as well as preventing minor or third-party candidates from ever becoming viable. Many are convinced that the political system is irreparably broken. Whether it is the result of frustration, resentment or anger, there has been a declining sense of political efficacy, the notion that one's vote matters or that one's political voice can make a difference, or even be heard.

While many have characterized our political culture as reflecting deep voter apathy, I must challenge that assertion. From my experience, especially working with students, I believe that it is fundamentally wrong to suggest that their lack of political participation is attributable to a lack of concern for what is going on in the world. They may indeed be frustrated, resentful or even angry at what is going on politically. But when asked why they don't participate (especially in terms of voting) or what would increase their level of participation, their responses as a group are pretty clear: They don't feel confident enough about their level of political knowledge to be comfortable in casting informed votes, and believe that greater political/governmental education would certainly help to mitigate those feelings.

In 2006, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (I.S.I.) issued a report entitled "Failing Our Students, Failing America," which was based on the results of a sixty-question civics test constructed by the Public Policy Department of the University of Connecticut and

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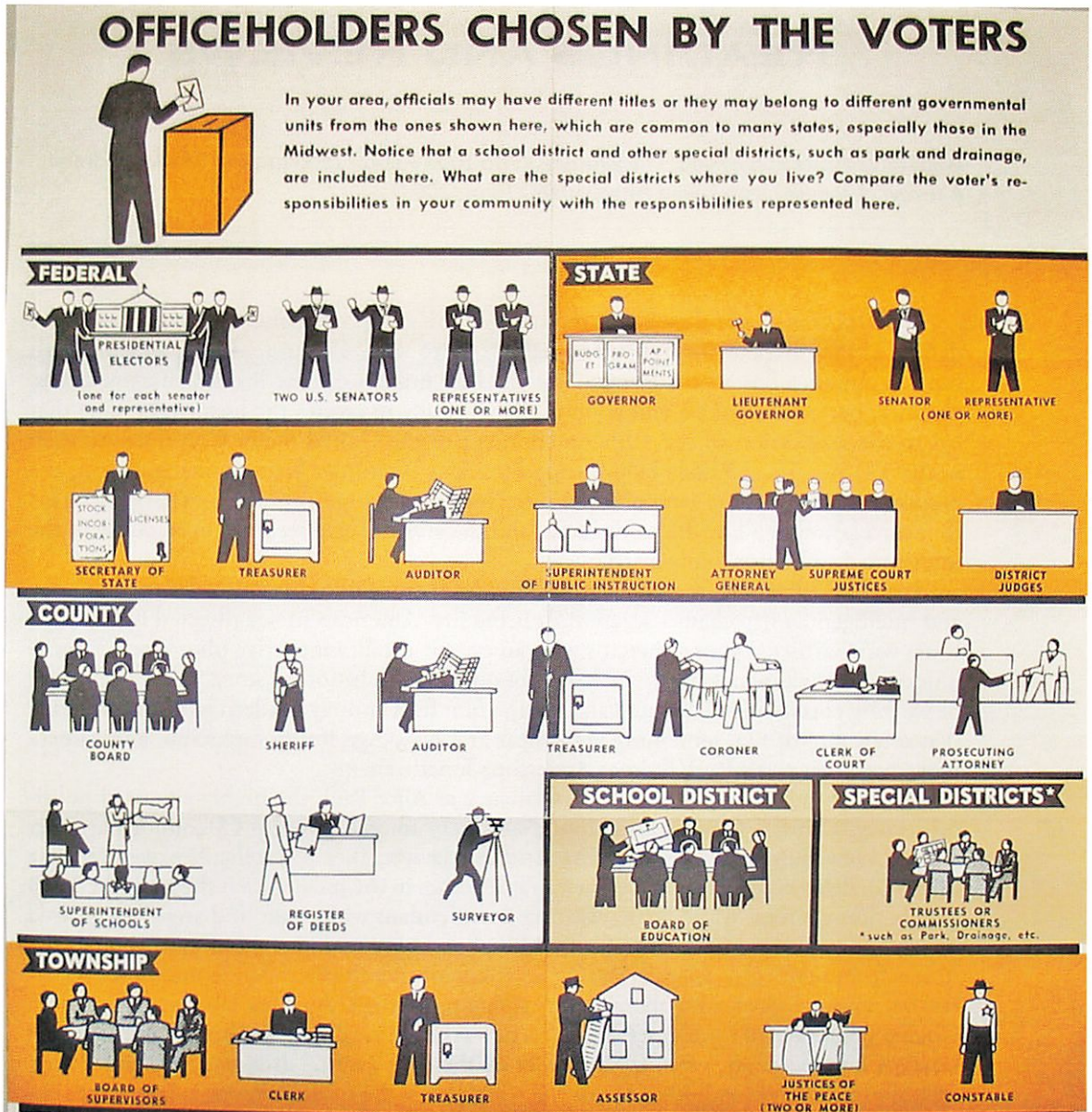
administered to 14,000 college freshmen and seniors at fifty colleges and universities, including Harvard, Yale and Princeton. The average score on that exam was 53.2 percent. Perhaps even more significant was that the difference between the scores of freshmen and seniors was less than 2 percent. One could, I believe, justifiably conclude from these scores that not only are students entering college lacking the requisite knowledge about American politics and government, but also that the college experience itself is not providing access to this knowledge.

Based upon anecdotal evidence from my students over the years, and studies conducted by I.S.I., the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) and other organizations devoted to promoting civic education and civic literacy, I believe that we need to address this failure in citizenship curriculum by mandating that civic literacy be included in the general education requirements for college graduation. While there are a variety of ways to define civic literacy, I suggest the following: *Demonstrated knowledge of the basic theoretical concepts and practical applications that form both the historical basis as well as the modern manifestations of the institutions and processes of the political, economic, and governmental systems of the United States.*

It will not be an easy task to accomplish. Those on the "right wing" of the political spectrum have already expressed suspicions regarding how the liberal college professors would both design the curriculum and deliver the material in an unbiased way, while those on the "left" express concerns about some recent attempts to introduce "American Studies" programs that are seen as little more than thinly veiled attacks on multiculturalism, revisionist history, and an attempt to foster re-attachment to a white, European focus. And both administrators and faculty unions may likely resist yet another "educational mandate."

Yet I believe we must prevail in this effort. No matter how well we prepare our students for their careers, how can we tout ourselves as "comprehensive" colleges and universities if we allow our students to graduate from our institutions without acquiring the basic knowledge and skills needed to become active and engaged citizens in a democratic society?

"I know of no safe depository for the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves. And if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control without wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion through education." — Thomas Jefferson



Detail of wall chart from Civics Texts for Young Citizens, *published in 1960.*

Readings and Reviews

Admirable American Angels: The Women Who Took Action to Win the 19th Amendment

A review of the film Iron Jawed Angels *(HBO Films, 2004)*

Vena Williams

The film *Iron Jawed Angels* tells the story of the group of young, radical women who dedicated their lives to securing women the right to vote. This untold story of early 20th century America has all the elements of the best human drama: loyalty, disagreements, violence, personal sacrifice, and triumph. It faithfully re-creates the historical events that led to the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, such as the 1913 Suffrage Parade held during President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration, the nonviolent protest at the gates of the White House, arrests on trumped-up charges that led to incarceration in a horrific work camp, and the violent force-feedings in response to the imprisoned suffragists' hunger strike.

The film delivers its message with well-written story lines, beautiful cinematography and intelligent, witty characterization. It is the first American movie directed by German Katja von Garnier, a young director with an eye for detail, innovative photographic techniques, and a willingness to try new ways of presenting a historical story. The women may be wearing corsets and elaborate hats, but the film feels entirely modern with a soundtrack that often sounds like something you'd hear at a New Age Ibizan nightclub, and camera movement that rivals Paul Thomas Anderson's kinetic energy.

Hilary Swank gives a powerful performance as Alice Paul, the highly educated political strategist with a Quaker background and fiery tongue. Frances O'Connor plays her cohort, Lucy Burns, equally well. The articulate lawyer, Inez Milholland, played by Julia Ormond, delivers one of the most memorable scenes in the movie when she leads the 1913 parade riding a regal white horse, wearing a resplendent white robe and angel wings used to symbolize justice and liberty. Sadly, Milholland over-extends herself even though she suffers from pernicious anemia; during an eloquent speech she collapses and never recovers, becoming a martyr for the women's rights movement. Anjelica Huston, who won a Golden Globe award for her performance, plays the politically conservative, high-powered Carrie Chapman Catt, who, as the leader of the "old guard," dislikes Paul's and Burns' radical notions and methods. One of the triumphs of the film, however, is how Catt rises

above her dislike for Paul, wields her political clout and influences the fate of the imprisoned suffragists. As allies, they defeat their opponents and win the right to vote.

Iron Jawed Angels is a splendid movie; however, there are a few glitches. In the scene where Paul pays homage to the desk of Susan B. Anthony, she absurdly and anachronistically uses the Nike phrase "Just Do It." The obligatory romantic interest between Paul and the fictional Ben Weissman, cartoonist for the *Washington Post*, seems frivolous and contrived. The portrayal of Paul as anti-family (BURNS: Don't you want to get married, Alice? PAUL: I'm busy that day.") grated against my sense of Paul, who, though never married, was highly supportive of motherhood. These flaws, however, stem from the desire to portray the characters as multi-dimensional people with opinions and vulnerabilities. In that light, these weaknesses are forgivable.

I didn't know the remarkable story behind the ratification of the 19th Amendment before I viewed this film. I easily identified with the complex, historical figures of the struggle behind women's fight to win the right to vote. I wanted to join their movement; I wanted to have a part in their crusade; I wanted to invite my sister and all of my women friends to share this story with me, so that they, too, could experience the message behind the movie: no matter how entrenched or static a situation is, things can be changed with persistence and will; we really can make a difference.

The voting privilege is distressingly taken for granted by many American citizens today. Unbelievably, it took women being jailed, in conditions that today would be a violation of our civil rights, to overcome the unjust laws of the time. Furthermore, it should not be overlooked that in many other parts of the world this right is still denied. It is therefore incumbent upon those of us who already enjoy this right to exercise it faithfully. That will be a tribute to the incredible women who fought for the right to vote in America.

Vena Williams *is the Program Coordinator for Lane Family Connections in the newly formed Child and Family Education Department; she has been with the program since its inception in 1991. Vena has considerable experience writing grants and business proposals that promote early childhood care and education development in our community. She is currently working towards a Bachelor's degree from Eastern Oregon University with a major in Business Administration: Leadership, Management and Organizational Development and a minor in English Discourse Studies (Film, Literature and Writing.)*

Book Review:
Day of No Return by Kressmann Taylor

The people who run effective political machines know that the line between church and state is rarely clear, and no one knew this better in 1930s Germany than the National Socialist Party — better known as the Nazis.

Every German citizen was automatically a member of the Lutheran church, and early in the decade the Nazis devised a plan to seize the church's authority. First they called for a unified national church with a single head bishop. Then they demanded a public vote between the church-appointed bishop and a candidate endorsed by the Nazis. But the party controlled the ballot printing, and without consulting the church, produced a ballot that did not give a choice of candidates but instead asked if the voter agreed with the Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, that his candidate must head the church — yes or no.

This kind of audacity and top-down power grab was a Nazi signature in the early days of the party, and had worked well in taking over business and industry throughout the country — not entirely unlike today's corporate takeovers, when the new executive team comes in and "cleans house."

Day of No Return (Xlibris, 2003) tells the story of why this didn't work with the church in Germany. Yes, the Nazis got their puppet religious leader. But they couldn't control the hearts and minds of all the people.

Originally published in 1942, under the title *Until That Day,* it's the true story of a young Lutheran minister who defied the Nazi party and had to flee to America. He was then put in touch with author Kressmann Taylor, whose 1938 best-selling short story, "Address Unknown," had alerted Americans to the deeper threats of Nazi ideology. Taylor fictionalized the protagonist's name and background in the book, to protect his family back home from retribution.

We follow "Karl Hoffmann" through his seminary student days, as the Nazi party rises to power in the 1930s. We learn of the Nazis' ruthless drive to replace the church's Protestant doctrine with their own symbols of fear, suspicion, and military rule. We meet individuals who refuse to submit, declaring that the human spirit cannot be subdued, even as they are taken away to be imprisoned or killed.

We also learn what people didn't do. We witness the denial of the intellectual and professional classes, the petty jealousies of the merchants, and the ignorance and impotence of the greater masses. We see the effects of the basest human impulses, even as those involved watch, incredulous. "It can't happen here," they insisted. And yet, it did.

This new edition, reissued by Kressmann Taylor's son, includes an updated Introduction and Afterward that give the real identity and background of the book's hero — a soft-spoken minister named Leopold Bernhard. He spent the rest of his life in America and never returned to his homeland. "It will take Germany 150 years to regain its soul," he said.

Don't let the print-on-demand stigma of the Xlibris imprint fool you. The original printing of this book was expected to be a bestseller, but the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, a short month before the volume's release, obviated any need to arouse the American public to the dangers abroad. Nearly seven decades later, the book has relevance for anyone concerned about the consolidation of power over the many into the hands of a few — and how those few might be tempted to manipulate existing institutions to serve their interests. The danger for us today lies not so much in forgetting what the Nazis did, as in forgetting that they took age-old prejudices to the extreme.

S.M.

The role of the teacher remains the highest calling of a free people. To the teacher, America entrusts her most precious resource, her children; and asks that they be prepared . . . to face the rigors of individual participation in a democratic society.

Shirley Hufstedler

Community College Moment: Call for Submissions

The *Community College Moment* invites articles, interviews, photographs, artwork, academic and creative writing, and other original work relevant to the community college mission and environment. Submissions should provoke meaningful, progressive inquiry that will appeal on a local and/or national level to an educated, but not specialized, audience. Each issue of the *Moment* may be thematically organized, all or in part, providing multiple perspectives on a given topic. Past themes include Technology & Society, Sustainability, and Diversity.

The *Moment* is open to a variety of submission formats, including: articles (under 5000 words; languages other than English welcome), sabbatical research summaries, plans and reflections on innovative pedagogies, artwork (paintings, photography, sculpture, choreographic projects featured through photographs, musical compositions, etc.), fiction and poetry (relevant to *Moment* audience), works-in-progress (provocative ideas not fully worked out), collaborative projects, web-based and multi-media projects. We also invite submissions of short reviews that offer insight on books and other materials relevant to our audience. Queries welcome.

2009 Theme: New Directions

In addition to submissions on any topic relevant to the *Moment's* audience, we invite works addressing our 2009 theme, New Directions. We all know our world is changing. But how do we respond to change? What directions do we take — in political, social, economic, environmental, and technological areas? What has changed in our disciplines? What has changed in our students and in the ways they learn? What new paths are open for them? What new ways might we view our educational and institutional practices? How do we maintain relevance and integrity in the mission of higher education? Where do we go from here?

Submissions are accepted year-round. Check our website for full submission guidelines and further information on special themes and deadlines. **https://teach.lanecc.edu/ccm**

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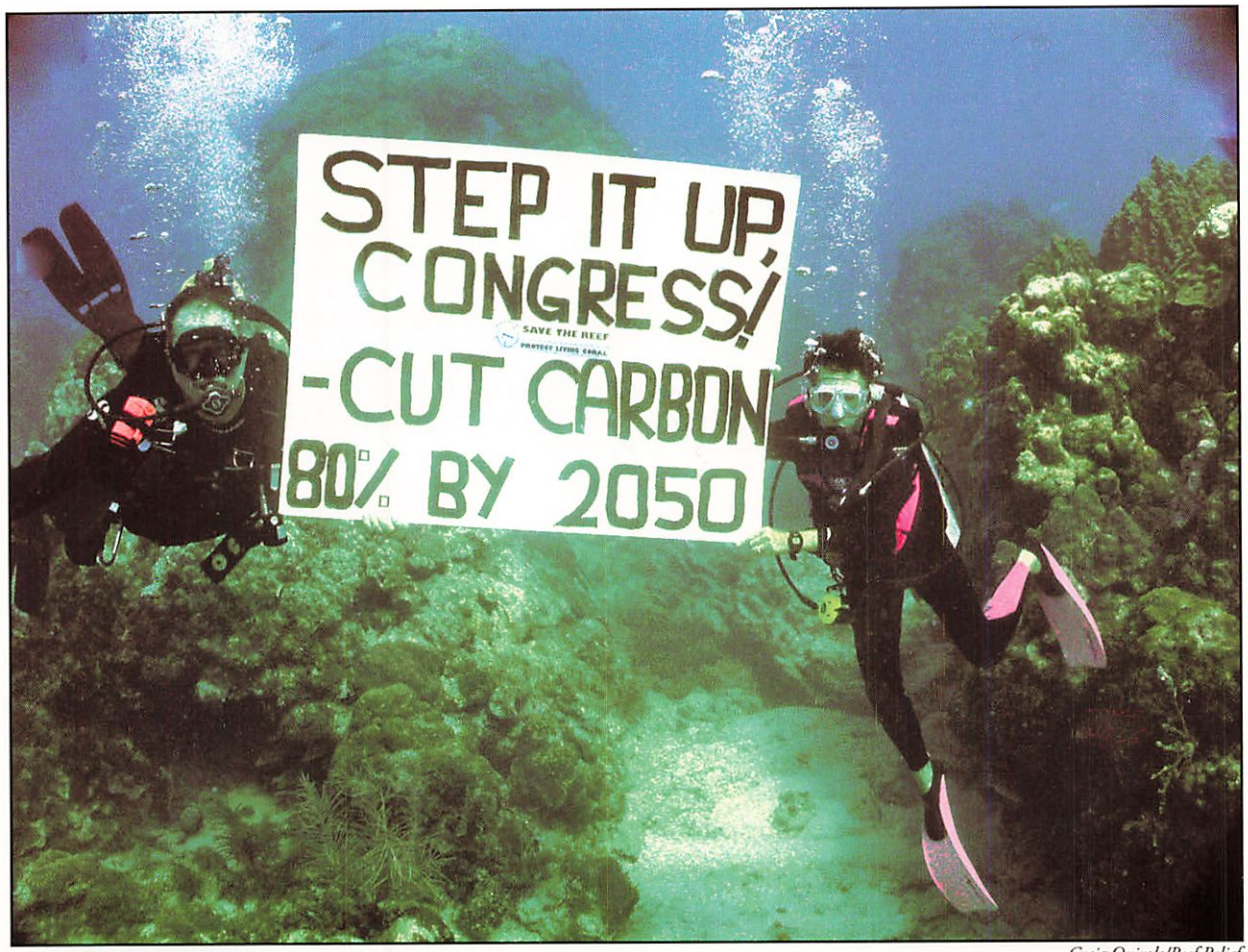

Craig Quirolo/Reef Relief

Scuba divers in Sand Key Reef, on the Florida Keys, send a message to Congress in 2007, as part of the Step It Up campaign, a nonpartisan organization focusing attention on issues related to global warming. "From melting ice caps to erratic weather, we already see the impact of global warming," says Bill McKibben, author and Step It Up founder. "But while global warming presents our most pressing challenge, it also presents our most inspiring opportunity." To learn more about McKibben's message and this nascent democratic movement, see "Building the Climate Movement" inside.