


 The logo for 'ia news' features the letters 'ia' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by 'news' in a larger, bold, red, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is set against a black, irregular, brush-stroke-like background that extends to the left and top.

ia news

STRENGTHENING THE DEMOCRATIC PURPOSES OF THE HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND DESIGN

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Imagining
America
Artists and Scholars in Public Life

Research, Policy, Action:

An Update on the Tenure Team Initiative on Public Scholarship

Timothy K. Eatman

The TTI is in full action mode! Witness the release of the report *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University* last May; the Tenure Team Initiative On Public Scholarship (TTI) national working conference held at Syracuse University's New York City venue, Lubin House, in early June; an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*; and a vigorous national response to Imagining America's work in this regard within the higher education engagement community. We are excitedly moving forward. In this action phase, we are disseminating perspectives and findings from the report throughout the IA consortium and among our national partners. We are struck both humbly and powerfully that our work is seen widely as advancing the "movement" to ameliorate promotion and tenure systems so that engaged scholarship can take its rightful place within the continuum of legitimate scholarship. The shift towards this order and the celebration of concomitant cultural values within academe will facilitate the manifestation of actual policy change so that faculty can in fact "do publicly engaged academic work and live to tell the tale," as stated in the first line of the report. It is abundantly clear that this phase of the project requires at least the same level of close listening that was necessary for the generation of the report. We need to hear the perspectives and trace the processes that are being undertaken in order to fully realize action.

In preparing this update on TTI, I revisited an article from Issue No. 5 of the IA Newsletter written by *Scholarship in Public* co-author and IA director emerita Julie Ellison. In the article entitled "Tenure: A Public Matter," Dr. Ellison

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Motivations for Civic Engagement



Jan Cohen-Cruz

I have been reflecting on different pathways that bring our constituents to civic engagement. Some students are

motivated pedagogically; a significant piece of learning their profession is through internships in the field. Research, and recognition of expertise beyond academia's walls, is a related drive. Others are compelled by very personal histories like students working in a senior center because they miss contact with a beloved grandparent. Still others are in search of a more culturally expansive atmosphere as a pleasurable way to live their democratic values. Contact with people in a range of circumstances breaks down stereotypes of the unknown other for students, faculty, and community members. Engaging with the diverse world increasingly means moving outside the boundaries of higher education. IA's new Board chair George Sanchez, in his essay "Crossing Figueroa," reminds us that civic engagement is both going out into the community and inviting the diverse constituents of the community into the academy, especially in terms of making higher education accessible to students of color. And then there are spiritual motivators. A colleague told me about a student of his who is going on to seminary. He sees his work at a soup kitchen as an expression of his Christianity. Another volunteer there is agnostic and is motivated by secular reasons: structural injustice concerning poverty in America. And in periods of economic crisis such as we've been experiencing this fall, engagement with imperiled local communities has a particular urgency.

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TTI Update

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provides reasons, each having to do with scholarly excellence, as to why IA should bring serious intellectual attention and energy to tenure policy issues as they relate to the work of engaged scholars. Chief among the resonant refrains that we are now hearing during this TTI action and dissemination phase is the myriad ways that engaged scholarship can promote excellence by presenting substantial, if eclectic, forms of knowledge. These include, but are not limited to, exhibitions or installations generated from community archives; the development of sustained programs and leadership; K-16 curricula; site designs and plans for cultural districts; and policy recommendations—all presented in diverse formats (e.g., digital media). This, of course, requires a paradigm shift; and we are delighted to be part of the ever-increasing community of leaders, organizers, and institutions that believe such a shift is possible.

The final report is freely available for download from the TTI web pages. We challenge you, the IA constituency, to take the report home, act on it, and let us know what happens. Those interested in securing printed copies of the publication should first contact a member of their IA Campus Representative Team and then the IA national office. I also wish to draw your attention to weblinks for IA regional meetings featuring the report that will take place in spring 2009.

The Working Conference Model

Sixty-two participants comprised of Tenure Team members, Consulting Scholars & Artists, IA Institutional Representatives, key national partners, and TTI co-chair Nancy Cantor convened at Syracuse University's mid-town Manhattan center, Lubin House, on June 9, 2008, for a working conference on the occasion of the report's release. We were delighted that Campus Compact co-sponsored this event.

The emergence of Campus Compact as a collaborator for this convening and subsequent regional meetings embodies a critical dimension of our dissemination effort. In the words

IA REGIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE

DATE	IA REGION	HOST INSTITUTION	FOCUS/FORMAT
1. February 19, 2009	Missouri/Oklahoma/Texas	Missouri State University	TTI
2. February 26, 2009	Downstate New York	New York University	TTI/CP
3. February 27, 2009	Virginia/N. Carolina Kentucky/Maryland	Virginia Tech	TTI
4. March 6, 2009	Minnesota/Wisconsin/Iowa	Macalester College	TTI/CP
5. April 3, 2009	Central New York	Colgate University	TTI
6. April 23, 2009	Chicago	Columbia College	TTI

TTI= Tenure Team initiative; CP=Curriculum Project

of David Scobey, immediate past chair of the IA National Advisory Board, "It's partly about intervening as citizens of our institutions and partly about intervening as citizens of higher education." We must not steer away from the necessary effort to "distill, clarify, and mobilize at the national level of higher education because national conversation will create that framing and validating context within different institutions." It is a special blessing that David (also a member of the Tenure Team) has agreed to join me as co-chair of the Imagining America TTI Working Group on Public Scholarship even as his term as board chair ends. David has already begun working with national partners like Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, Project Pericles, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network, and the International Association for Research on Service Learning and Community Engagement to stimulate national conversations about strategic approaches to change.

The June conference provides a model for IA regional meetings that will be held beginning in February 2009. Documentation of the Lubin House meeting is available on the IA web pages. We encourage you to down-

load Chancellor Cantor's framing remarks, panelists' comments, charges and outcomes of the working groups, and to hear an audio clip summary of the day. Four concurrent thematic working groups were facilitated by key higher education leaders to address specific charges related to the report's recommendations (see chart).

Building on the form of the TTI working conference, the regional meetings will address specific themes established by the coordinator and team leaders from the participating institutions. The meetings will include faculty and administrative leaders in the region who are working on issues related to the rewards system for public scholars. We also hope to have participation from local PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) representatives.

The principal departure from the Lubin House format will be the inclusion of time for teams to identify next steps for their campuses. Also, two of the scheduled meetings will include a half-TTI/half Curriculum Project option for those who attend. (See the article in this issue for information about The Curriculum Project. It will be the focus of a regional meeting at University of Pennsylvania on December 5, 2008.)

TTI JUNE WORKING CONFERENCE

FACILITATOR	THEME
Craig Calhoun	Scholarship in public: Broadening the definition, making the case
Devorah Lieberman	The arc of the career: Fostering innovation by early career faculty
Sarah Robbins	Deans, chairs, and directors: Supporting engagement by supporting mid-level academic leaders
Jack Tchen	The nontraditional academic: Mediating relationships among faculty members, campus units, and public engagement

A related two-day Tenure and Promotion Institute organized by Maine Campus Compact will take place on May 27 and 28, 2009, at the University of New Hampshire. Additional information about each of these convenings is available at the TTI web pages.

Imagining America welcomes these institutions that joined us this fall.

New members and representatives:

American University (Washington, DC)
Robert Griffith, Professor and Chair, Department of History, and **Gail Humphries Mardirosian**, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Performing Arts

Grand Rapids Community College (Grand Rapids, MI)
Gilda G. Gely, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic and Students Affairs, and **Mursalata Muhammad**, Associate Professor

Kennesaw State University (Kennesaw, GA)
LeeAnn Lands, Associate Professor, History and American Studies, and **Ivan Pulinkala**, Assistant Professor of Theater and Performance Studies and Director of the Dance Program

Massachusetts College of Art and Design (Boston, MA)
John Giordano, Associate Professor, Art Education, and **Leslie Wu Foley**, Director of Programs, Center for Art and Community Partnerships

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (Troy, NY)
John P. Harrington, Dean, School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN)
Erika Doss, Chair, American Studies, and **Robert Schmuhl**, Professor, American Studies

University of Wisconsin, Madison (Madison, WI)
Sara Guyer, Interim Director, Center for the Humanities, and **Lara Kain**, Assistant Director, Center for the Humanities

Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN)
Mona Frederick, Executive Director, Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities, and **Teresa Goddu**, Associate Professor, English

From the Director

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The occasion for my reflection was the response of several consortium members to a pre-conference opportunity noted in the last newsletter that foregrounded the element of social justice in our work. They prefer civic engagement as an open term everybody can get behind, in contrast to social justice, a term sometimes associated with sloganeering and militancy and thus not compatible with our emphasis on dialogue, high tolerance for difference, and the ability to hold contradictions without forcing a conclusion. I am committed to IA remaining a big tent, where any higher ed constituent or community partner that shares our broadly stated mission is welcome. The central terms for IA continue to be “democratic renewal”—with emphasis on pluralism, participation, and equity—and “co-knowledge making” in the context of public scholarship and practice through the humanities, arts, and design.

I asked my colleagues on the National Advisory Board how they understand the language of engagement. David Scobey expresses ambivalence about leading with social justice. Rather, we explore the contributions of arts, humanities, and design to IA’s dual mission: participation in a large democratic project and transformation of higher education. The phrase social justice sometimes has the emotional effect of saying, “I’m righteous,” i.e., he hears arrogance there rather than engagement in robust democratic work. These past two years, he has been working on a traveling exhibit about the history of the Lewiston Mill workers. At its core are what Scobey calls issues of democratic culture inclusion, not social justice. On the other hand, social justice is sometimes a desired consequence of Scobey’s various projects, and he is in favor of naming that when it is.

Juliet Feibel, Associate Director of IA, concurs that social justice is one of the outcomes of civic engagement. We train students to engage in the public good and out of that social justice may emerge. However, she recognizes that the term social justice sends some people the signal of an agenda,

whereas the term civic engagement does not. University of Illinois-Chicago board member Judith Kirsher agrees that the problem with the phrase social justice is its connotation, to some, of an agenda. IA emphasizes reciprocity between campus and community, each learning from the other. Social justice suggests to some that the university is assuming the role of distributing access and distributing justice. Lafayette College board member, economist Fluney Hutchinson, concurs that IA ought not advocate for social justice per se but rather support broadening the ways in which scholarship can be brought to study, look at, imagine, talk about, and participate in important issues rather than positioning ourselves as the conveyers of these outcomes. He remains committed to the language of inquiry and knowledge-making noting that’s what it takes for our constituents to be taken seriously in higher education.

As much in agreement as I am with these caveats, I would be equally sorry to lose social justice from our lexicon. Given that much civic engagement has social justice implications, I want us to name it when it does. The notion of justice, according to Hobbes, who I was reading as a Wye Fellow at the Aspen Institute last summer, emerges from a specific political system and is relative to that concept of the state. The notion of social justice, then, is relative to some specific notion of society. What concept of society do we embrace, and what obligations do we see to the others within it—especially to those living within it who are not represented in the power structure? What do we do about rights that are legally guaranteed but not enforced? What happens when in the process of public engagement we encounter such inequities? For social justice is also about the common good. A Wye colleague from the University of Dayton shared that school’s mission: to educate the whole person to live their vocation through the lens of social justice. That means, she continued, whether they become a leader in a nonprofit that serves, say, the homeless, or a city councilor who advocates for additional funds for such agencies, that

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From the Director

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they work for the common good rather than to reinforce the gap between have-a-lots and have-a-littles. They are motivated, the school hopes, through an understanding of the systemic conditions that regulate who moves forward and who does not.

My understanding of social justice doesn't involve bestowing the solution to injustice on a population. I believe the people with a problem have to be part of solving it. That's partly why students learn so much experientially: they see examples of the issues they read about and they engage with people on the ground in addressing various challenges. My understanding of social justice includes reciprocity. It includes democracy. Most of us who do civic engagement have had some experience that dovetails quite organically with social justice. For example, one day when I was co-facilitating a youth theatre workshop in New Orleans, I went to pick up some of the kids at home. It was a bright Saturday morning, but when one particular child opened her door the room was dark. I later found out that they didn't have electricity. When you're working with people in dire conditions, it's not surprising if you question how poverty can exist in such a prosperous nation. Certainly these are important conversations to have with our students when such experiences are part of our classes. What is the source of these conditions? What is social, what is individual? How do we respond in the face of it? Some frame what they go on to do as working toward social justice. Others see their goals as service, community building, democracy, or the making of knowledge. Still others stay focused on the discipline-based task that brought them there. While not all civic engagement is about social justice, doing civic engagement has made me want more social justice, though that is not the exclusive goal of my practice.

Bruce Burgett, director of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Wash-

ington, Bothell, notes the genealogies out of which various terms emerge. He sees IA as a space where those genealogies can be crafted and worked out. Looking at IA's core foci of public scholarship and democratic renewal, Burgett observes that public scholarship centers the university in a way that's congruent with our bylaws, whereas the latter de-centers the university because it's not obvious that higher education is a center of democratic renewal. Jamie Haft, IA's Program Coordinator, is a recent graduate of an engaged theatre program and a potential graduate student looking for a program to help her learn how to "change the world."

"While not all civic engagement is about social justice, doing civic engagement has made me want more social justice, though that is not the exclusive goal of my practice."

The language she hears in her network is social justice, whereas "democracy" does not resonate. Haft explains: "My generation hasn't known a time when there was a vibrant democracy, which from my perspective as a young artist, would include generous national support and federal leadership for the not-for-profit arts. Born during the Reagan administration, I've grown up hearing about small government and big business. The idea of renewing democracy seems abstract, and social justice more immediate." At the same time, as Feibel points out, the presidential campaigns brought public attention to campuses completely energized by Barack Obama and the potential of a new, more fully democratic government. As concerns the place of social justice in IA, Jamie referenced a rule from improvisational theatre, "Play it, don't say it," explaining that she's content if actions are about social justice even if they aren't spoken about as such.

What higher ed brings to public engagement is not a monolithic reason for doing it but rather the means to reflect as we do it. When at the age of 20 I co-facilitated a theatre workshop in a men's maximum security prison in Trenton, NJ, I was not in school and had nowhere to bring my despair about the conditions in which people were living...my confusion about the acts that had brought them there...my distress about the relationships the system imposed on guards and prisoners alike. We all need somewhere to reflect and become informed about the experiences we have beyond the classroom. The opportunity is immense: certainly I became a stronger facilitator, discovered in the crucible of real experience which exercises worked, and was motivated by emotion and reason to learn about different social responses to crime and punishment. How we shape the in-school and out-of-school components of such experiences is at the heart of what IA can do with its constituents. I am pleased to announce IA's next large project, which we are just beginning to imagine, around pedagogy for public engagement. We are thinking about how to shape workshops and discussions on pedagogy for public scholarship at regional meetings, and what sort of interactive exchange might be possible on the internet. Suggestions and desires as concern this new initiative are welcome!

IA's commitment to democratic renewal assumes the value of plurality—including acceptance of people's different reasons for doing civic engagement. Social justice is part of that discourse, just one piece of democratic renewal. I end this column with a question: can we as a consortium live comfortably with the plurality of motivations for civic engagement?

Jan Cohen-Cruz

Design-Build Campus Community Partnerships

With this article we welcome CITYbuild as a focus group within the IA consortium. CITYbuild was established in 2005 to link academic endeavors directly with rebuilding needs in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, in order to forge multi-scaled and long-term projects on the ground. We take this opportunity to also share the design-build endeavors of two other IA consortium members.

CITYbuild in New Orleans

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, departments of architecture and related fields from around the country called the one school of architecture in New Orleans, at Tulane University, offering to help rebuild. The calls were fielded by Doug Harmon, Dan Etheridge, and a few other colleagues at the Tulane City Center, which houses the Tulane School of Architecture's applied urban research and outreach programs. Harmon and Etheridge organized the volunteer faculty and student groups, placing them in partnerships with local organizations that could most benefit from their skills. As Etheridge explained in a recent interview for *Metropolis*, "We were this kind of informal dating service because we had a lot of relationships with community groups, both formal and informal, and we would just connect them. And then a couple of schools behaved in ways that made us very uncomfortable. They got expectations up very high and then didn't deliver." In order to coordinate projects and troubleshoot, they organized as a consortium of schools called CITYbuild, hosted by Tulane but jointly funded. Harmon became the director, and each member chipped in \$1,500 for expenses.

Over the three years since the storm, twenty design-build projects were completed in New Orleans by eighteen CITYbuild schools represented by departments of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, planning and policy, real estate development, historic preservation, and environ-

mental studies. Students and faculty from the Boston Architectural College School of Landscape Architecture rebuilt the median on Tupelo Street, where crawfish boils and barbecues often took place. A contingent from the University of Arkansas saw the rebuilding of a local restaurant, Miss Gloria's Kitchen, famous for its \$1 breakfasts, as an opportunity to ignite the neighborhood's rebirth by getting small businesses running again. Tulane's School of Architecture designed quality and affordable housing prototypes through a program called URBAN-build, and has gone on to construct a number of these houses. Students and faculty from the University of Kansas partnered with The Porch Cultural Center to create an outdoor stage as well as a public, shaded structure in a community garden where people could gather again.

In addition to physical structures, the students and faculty provided a sense of solidarity and the message that people around the country cared what happened in New Orleans. CITYbuild is now joining with Imagining America, and welcomes other IA members to connect with them around their mission in New Orleans and in their own home towns. As Etheridge reported in *Metropolis*, "We've got this institutional knowledge now, and we don't want to lose that. We learned a lot about how to work together. We've had three different schools working on larger projects, groups sharing parts of their curriculum, schools that have engaged at a distance. It's pretty phenomenal in contrast to the complete failure of government at any scale to get anything done."

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP) out of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, has been working with the community of East St. Louis for the past 20 years. This partnership began in 1988 when State Representative Wyvetter Young

challenged the University to do something about problems afflicting the neighboring community. In 1990 the program developed a broader perspective when a resident asked whether the professors were there to study the people or collaborate with them. "That conversation sort of opened the door to the participatory approach that we use today," said Vicki Eddings, Administrative Coordinator for ESLARP. "The residents felt they had been studied to death, and that's not what they wanted us to do."

ESLARP members began to attend community meetings, where they were able to hear directly from the people about the types of change they wanted to see. "We would do physical clean-ups, paint-ups, and fix-up sort of jobs to show them that we were real. They would decide what they needed to have done, and we would go and do it," Eddings said.

Abbilyn Harmon has worked with ESLARP since 2007, when she switched from studying communications to landscape architecture, at the University of Illinois. In her previous field, she worked within a discourse around homelessness and cities, but Harmon wanted to deal with these issues as a participant rather than a researcher. ESLARP's focus on community engagement made them a perfect match: "I quickly realized I could not deal with these issues without dealing with them from the activist side, because that's what really speaks to me," said Harmon. She now works with ESLARP's community partners providing much-needed assistance in the areas of capacity building and technical assistance.

It was while applying for a PAGE fellowship and writing what was required for the program that Harmon was afforded an opportunity to take a step back and really consider her involvement in ESLARP. "The way PAGE frames questions about being publicly active and what that means, offered me an opportunity to sit on those ideas." Questions concerning whether she was remaining true to the community or allowing the research to take over, helped her put everything into perspective. "Now I stop and think how the

people I work with would like to be represented and it's coming more fluidly to me, having worked with people in the community, of the different ways of representation.”

While working with community partners to design and create a farmer's market, ESLARP staff found participants from the School of Architecture and the Departments of Urban Planning and of Landscape Architecture. “The grad and undergrad students were there during the idea's inception and continued through the final build-out, supplying much of the physical labor on the improvement project. Residents and students worked together on all aspects of planning the farmer's market,” Eddings said.

The number of students who have gone through the program and continued working for nonprofits is a measure of ESLARP's success. Fifteen years ago two graduates of the School of Architecture decided to continue to work with the East St. Louis community after being involved with ESLARP. As Director of the Emerson Park Development Corporation (EPDC), Vickie Forby was the driving force behind the largest affordable housing development in the city. After leaving the University, Don Johnson began designing and building affordable single-family homes for area residents. Both continue to work alongside residents of East St. Louis today. Eddings said, “We have many graduates who go into the nonprofit sector and continue working on community development issues. ESLARP provides students with the hands-on kind of work that motivates young people to continue these efforts when they leave the University.”

Miami University of Ohio

Since the fall of 2006, Miami University has given students the opportunity to live and work for an entire semester in the Over-the-Rhine inner-city community of Cincinnati, OH. Called the Over-the-Rhine Residency Program, the experience is a blend of similar programs from other universities, said Thomas Dutton, a professor in the Department of Architecture and Interior Design at Miami University and director of the Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine.

“I learned about an immersion program like this... and thought it was just brilliant and that it would be a good thing to combine with our design-build projects. But it would not have been possible without the long years of relationship-building with the neighborhood and trust that had to come first,” Dutton said.

Each fall for the last two years, twelve students have lived, worked, and taken a full semester of courses in Over-the-Rhine. Students essentially become citizens of the neighborhood, through complete immersion that helps break down students' privilege and counter the negative stereotypes they often have inadvertently assimilated. “It takes my students about eight weeks of living there all day, everyday, to make that turn,” Dutton said. “It even gets to the point where they begin to feel more comfortable in Over-the-Rhine than on campus.” Last year, with a

“Every one of the students who has been through the program over the last two years has gone through a life-transforming set of experiences.”

semester still to go to finish her degree, one student decided to stay in the neighborhood and commute to the University (about a 50-minute trip one way). “They feel a greater worth in the community,” Dutton said.

The program features a six-hour practicum and three seminars. They include Dutton's course on the American city, a service learning course, and a course that changes each year. Last year the third course was on family poverty; this year it's on the geography of American cities from the point of view of differences like gender, race, or disability. Dutton believes the three seminars are pivotal in exposing students to theories about why urban America is the way it is—to challenge them intellectually in order to complement what they are experiencing viscerally.

Architecture majors in the program work on design-build projects such as rehabilitating

apartment buildings for a nonprofit development organization. Students design and make interior alterations and get the units back out on the market for low- and moderate-income people. Architecture students also have worked collaboratively with community residents on the redesign of a local park. Currently the park has a deep-water pool and basketball courts, but a final design from the city excised the pool and courts, much to the dismay of the residents. Community members, working with the students, have come up with their own plan to include the pool and courts. “The city's plan caters more to a gentrified class,” Dutton said. “The redesign of the park is a struggle over the future of the community, whether it's going to be a place full of families or a place for younger urban professional types without children.”

Students from majors other than architecture (philosophy, psychology, social work, geography, teacher education, etc.) work at least 15-20 hours in a variety of organizations normally including homeless shelters. The teacher education majors work full time as student teachers in a local school. “Sometimes the students want their service learning experiences to be directly related to their majors, but other times they just say ‘hey, put me where I'm needed,’” Dutton said.

Students also attend reflection and journaling sessions every week run by a longtime community resident and leader. At the end of the semester, Dutton has the students write essays chronicling the changes they have gone through. These are posted on the Center for Community Engagement's web site. The one that still sticks out in Dutton's mind was by a student who wrote, “Over-the-Rhine hit me like a bat hitting an apple. Everything that made sense crumbled.”

“Every one of the students who has been through the program over the last two years has gone through a life-transforming set of experiences,” Dutton says. “It's stunning, and has caught me off guard...I didn't really anticipate the degree to which the students would bond with the neighborhood.”

2008 Conference Report

Juliet Feibel

On October 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, Imagining America held its annual conference in Los Angeles, CA. It was our first—and long overdue—conference in the American West, and we welcomed many new faces, institutions, and community organizations into our conversations. The conference was hosted by the University of Southern California, and took place at USC’s Davidson Conference Center and in downtown Los Angeles.

In addition to being our largest so far, with three hundred in attendance, the conference was an experiment in collaboration, with rich results. In partnership with USC’s Visions and Voices Initiative, Cornerstone Theater held a mini-residency for USC students, faculty, and Imagining America as part of their work-in-progress, *For All Time: A Dramatic Investigation of Incarceration and Justice in American Society*. On the morning of October 2nd, Cornerstone leaders held a workshop for Imagining America that taught participants different activities and strategies for encouraging dialogue and exchange amongst diverse groups. That afternoon, the theater ensemble held an open rehearsal of *For All Time*, which was presented as a reading that evening.

We also overlapped with Voices from the Cultural Battlefield: Organizing for Equity. Voices is an international conversation,



Photo: Chris DeFay

Homeboys: During our sessions held at Homeboys Industries, an organization that provides job training to LA gang members, an art exhibit called “Faith and Hope: Beyond Prison Walls” was held by several community organizations. The displayed work was by incarcerated men and women.

ongoing for over twenty years, about the role of art and culture in the struggle for human rights and a healthy natural environment. The second day of their Los Angeles forum was held at the Davidson Conference Center on October 2nd as well. In part because of this intentional overlap, the Imagining America conference had significantly more participation from community members than in previous years. Their afternoon conversation was widely attended by Imagining America participants, and addressed hyper-capitalism, its effects on society, and how cultural equity can be advanced by the democratic purposes of the arts, humanities, and design.

That afternoon also included a workshop facilitated by members of the CITYbuild Consortium, a group of architecture, landscape architecture, and planning departments from around the country who partnered in the recovery of New Orleans after Hurricane

Katrina. Imagining America now offers a home to the continued work of CITYbuild and its associates. Their workshop reflected on nearly three years of field-based community partnerships in a post-disaster context, and, through a presentation on planning work ongoing in Syracuse, NY, extended their thinking about a post-disaster context to long-term housing, infrastructure, and environmental degradation. A workshop on Public Humanities Scholarship happened simultaneously, using two Imagining America documents as the point of departure for a discussion and—foreshadowing the theme of mobility that would emerge strongly in the conference later—sociometric exercises. Meanwhile, the PAGE Fellows met for their annual summit. You can read about the exciting things happening at PAGE elsewhere in this issue.

That evening, the conference reception, co-sponsored by the California Institute of the Arts, was held at Mercado La Paloma, a comprehensive community development project that houses a public market for emerging entrepreneurs. Many of those entrepreneurs are restaurateurs, and in their colorful and bustling marketplace, we dined on (to name just a few of the offerings) Yucatan tamales, Cuban-style pork sandwiches, sushi, Thai mango and sticky-rice, spring-rolls, Mexican horchata and hibiscus drinks: a culinary reflection of the richness of LA. Later that evening, many of us gathered back at the Davidson Conference Center to watch the Vice-Presidential debate together.

On Friday, we held the first of two days of

Walking tour of Chinatown: A social history. IA participants arrive at the Thien Hau Temple. The tour was led by Sharon Sekhon, founder and director of the Studio for Southern California History.



Photo: Chris DeFay

concurrent sessions. The conference theme, Public Engagement in a Diverse America: Layers of Place, Movements of People, inspired an astounding array of topics and discussions. On those two days, we learned (to name just some of the topics) about using story and narrative to illuminate social policy; Afrofuturism and civic engagement; Second Life and its potentials for community collaboration; environmental citizenship; a youth program in place-based theology; murals in Los Angeles and in Philadelphia; a mobile theater project on LA buses that campaigned for civil rights in public transportation; the Living Newspaper Project in Texas; how public scholars construct the idea of their knowledge when they are both needed and challenged by their partners; using visual art as a tool for dialogue; an array of Minneapolis place-based projects; the challenge of university structures to civic engagement; student-immersion programs in South Africa exploring public memory there; the idea of finding the “radically local” in one’s own backyard; and a play emerging from a four-year ethnographic study of a “girl power” program and its exploration of the politics of black girlhood.

Over dessert and coffee, Judy Baca, professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies and Art at the University of California, Los Angeles and artistic director of the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), delivered the keynote address: “La Memoria de Nuestra Tierra: Creating Sites of Public Memory.” Around a stream of stunning images and videos, Professor Baca wove together multiple stories—the environmental history of the Los Angeles River, the production of the Great Wall of Los Angeles mural, the founding of Chicana and Chicano studies at UCLA, and stories from her family’s past—into an astute analysis of the roles of history and memory in public art. Her frank discussion of the requirements that public art and public collaborations place on their practitioners and students alike was both sobering and electrifying.

Baca’s remarks about memory and place still lingered on Saturday, when we left the standard conference venue for a new format.

We began in the morning with breakfast at the historic Biltmore Hotel, where most of us had stayed, in a ballroom built for the Academy Awards in the 1920s. There, George Sanchez, professor of American Studies and Ethnicity and History at USC and chair of the Program Committee for this year’s conference, gave a brief talk introducing us to the neighborhoods and sites we were about to know better. Afterwards, we left by shuttle bus to five sites of community engagement: Homeboys Industries, the Cornerstone Theater, El Pueblo of Los Angeles, the Japanese American National Museum, and the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy. These sites housed our concurrent sessions, and we all moved between them over the course of the day. Learning that Southern California is not always sunny, we set out in a misty drizzle, but soon the day cleared fresh and cool, comfortable for walking and exploring by foot—particularly fortunate for those who had chosen yet another morning option, a walking social history tour of Chinatown held by the Studio

for Southern California History. With a few inevitable hitches, the day moved smoothly, with participants getting to know organizations, locations, and histories of this most challenging of American cities, along with the new knowledge and discussions generated at the sessions themselves. We are particularly grateful to those who organized and presented at sessions on Saturday, who proved to be outstandingly good sports about working in a decentralized and challenging format.

We thank the extraordinary efforts of the USC staff and students who made this dazzling array of events, collaborations, and transport possible: Adam Bush, Sonia Rodriguez, Sandra Hopwood, Laura Fugikawa, and Margaret Salazar. We also thank the Conference Program Committee: George Sanchez, Victor Becerra, Adam Bush, Matthew Countryman, Fluney Hutchinson, Tara McPherson, Carrie Noland, Janice Ross, and Jay Semel.

Voices from the Cultural Battlefield: Organizing for Equity

Voices from the Cultural Battlefield’s Los Angeles Forum took place on Wednesday, October 1st, at a local community-based organization, Farmlab, and on Thursday, October 2nd, through a two-and-a-half-hour session at the Imagining America national conference. More than 150 Los Angeles artists, activists, and conference participants came together with national leaders from Voices to share knowledge, build relationships, and develop a national framework to advance cultural equity in participants’ home communities and in higher education. The conversation centered on how the unregulated, global mobility of capital is affecting the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and material features and traditions of people and their societies. Participants felt it was a timely conversation to have after the previous Monday’s historic 777-point stock market crash. Longtime Voices member and New York University professor Jack Tchen kicked off Thursday’s session with a presentation of his paper, “30 Years and Counting: A Context for Building a

Shared Cross-Cultural Commons,” which analyzes the culture wars from 1980 to the present through the lens of “hyper-capitalism,” or what has also been called “neoliberalism.”

Randy Martin, of New York University, then stepped into the large circle to facilitate an open discussion, encouraging participants to develop a role for colleges and universities to play in achieving cultural equity. When asked about the outcomes of the Forum, Martin replied: “After a spirited conversation that displayed the richness of experience among the myriad community activists and engaged academics assembled, we proposed to pick up next year [at the IA conference in New Orleans] with the concept of a nationally networked university-without-walls. The idea would be to craft a consortium of knowledges grounded in the gemstones of community activism, one that could incorporate the variety of approaches to how the world is understood from the perspectives of cultural justice.” More information at culturalbattlefront.net.

The Curriculum Project

Jamie Haft

In September 2008, The Curriculum Project released its report, *Culture and Community Development in Higher Education*, now available on the Imagining America web site. Written by Arlene Goldbard, the report is framed in the history and terminology of the field of community cultural development (CCD)—defined in the report as “a range of initiatives undertaken by artists in collaboration with other community members to express identity, concerns, and aspirations through the arts and communications media, while building the capacity for social action and contributing to social change” (p. 7). Similar to the definition of public scholarship and practice used by IA members, community cultural development often involves partnerships between campus and community, and concerns itself with significant local issues. Other widely used terms to describe related practices include community arts, community-based arts, arts-based community development, and community engagement through the arts.

The Curriculum Project began in early 2007 when three colleagues—artistic director of Appalachia’s Roadside Theater Dudley Cocke, then-New York University professor and author Jan Cohen-Cruz, and writer and consultant Arlene Goldbard—agreed that it would be an opportune time to research current practice and potential for excellence in the education of community artists. The Nathan Cummings Foundation agreed to support the effort. When Cohen-Cruz became director of Imagining America in June 2007, IA became the project’s sponsor. In the fall of 2007, three advisors joined the research team, bringing their unique perspectives: national community organizer Ludovic Blain III; recent graduate of a university program for community artists Jamie Haft; and educator, practitioner, and university vice president for diversity Sonia BasSheva Mañjon.

To engage people in thinking about the best

approaches to community cultural development education, Cocke, Cohen-Cruz, and Goldbard conducted twenty-eight in-depth interviews with some of the field’s national leaders. Five online surveys tailored questions for five specific audiences: community artists and cultural organization leaders (124 of the aggregate 231 respondents); educators (46 respondents); friends of the field (such as consultants and funders, with 31 responses); students and recent graduates (22 respondents); and community-based organization partners of higher education (such as groups receiving placements from university programs, with 8 responses). Secondary source materials, compiled by Cohen-Cruz and drawing partially on the Community Arts Network, included a sampling of existing programs and courses at arts schools, higher education institutions, and community-based organizations.

The research tested the hypothesis that a model curriculum should have a balance between three key elements: training, in both artistic practice and community organizing; community engagement, based on inclusion and reciprocity; and scholarship, focusing on the field’s history and animating ideas—for example, the history of cultural policy. Respondents agreed with the supposition of these three key elements; however, when asked to rank them, almost all thought practical training more important than scholarly work, and community engagement most important of all. Arts training was most valued when it included both conventional craft and core CCD techniques (such as devising art collaboratively), and scholarship was most appreciated when it was in the service of action. Of the programs surveyed, the strongest need identified was to deepen the practice of community engagement: forty percent of educators surveyed ranked current community engagement activities as insufficient.

The report suggests that CCD education can lead to new job opportunities—for example, in public school classrooms, hospitals, pris-

ons, and businesses that prize entrepreneurship. And generally, there is a demand in many sectors for the CCD skills of effective relationship-building, improvisation, and problem solving. To realize the ambition of many IA members to transform their institutions into centers for democratic renewal, CCD education has a wealth of assets to offer.

To begin devising a strategy for using the report, we asked IA members and others to share what resonates for them in the research findings:

Amy Koritz at Drew University noted, “This is only the first step in a really exciting pathway of thinking through how civically-engaged pedagogy can help us connect the arts, humanities, and design to other ways of knowing and new forms of knowledge.” When asked how the pedagogy conversation could be continued virtually, she said there are lots of curricular tools online, and discouraged IA from replicating anything that is already out there. She continued, “What is less available are the material practices of the work, for example, ‘my student just got back [from a campus-community project] and this happened, what can I do?’ Syllabi don’t tell you anything about how we deal with the day to day challenges of teaching this work.”

Sonia BasSheva Mañjon at Wesleyan University thinks the report “is an important document in revealing programmatic nuances between institutional campus-community relationships and pedagogical structures. It should be used to elicit dialogue among faculty and students and their community partners. I hope the results from this survey encourage other consortium members to critique their programs and to engage in peer review processes. It is important that we continue to assess this very important work and document our collective and individual findings.”

Stephani Etheridge Woodson at Arizona State University believes the report “provides a starting place; the report maps the field and begins the conversations. Person-

ally, having the state of the field delineated in such a manner allows me to begin assessing my program's offerings at a whole other level." She plans to share the report with her administration to discuss issues of time and flexibility, and brainstorm new structures for equitable campus-community partnerships based on the report's Fresh Models section. She also plans to share the report with her community partners to "discuss deepening the practice, instituting useful change (rather than change for change's sake)."

An exchange about the report with two active participants of IA's PAGE program brought the graduate student perspective to light:

"As a doctoral student," Dana Edell of New York University said, "my experience is that of a young researcher delving into my dissertation study. But with a fierce commitment to public scholarship and mountains of data from my community-based performance research activities, I've been struggling to find ways to engage the teenage artists who were participants in my research study with my academic process of analysis, research, and writing. My university's IRB and the 'lone researcher' model of the doctoral student, has denied me the ability to actually fulfill my dissertation requirement as a collaborative action research project. I was interested in the respondent (in the report) who noted, 'A lot of students end up doing like a quasi-participatory community-based project where they bring folks together to analyze a topic.' I crave even more inclusive research methodologies where the community participants are co-creating the research design. I'd be interested in how an IA pedagogy project could address this challenge that doctoral students face when attempting to use the inspiring, educational, life-changing experiences we've shared in our community-engaged arts work, yet still fulfilling the doctoral requirement of writing a dissertation."

Lisa Jackson-Schebetta of the University of Washington said, "As a PhD student with a family life, I am already stretched (and scheduled) to the max fulfilling the requirements in my program." She appreciates a

curriculum with flexible scheduling, and credits that count for something beyond an added line on a CV. She cited her MFA program, which gave students credit "for community-based work and for designing and implementing our own courses. We had the option to fulfill our requirements with community-based projects." She stressed the need for engagement to be part of the curriculum, not an add-on: "When community-based arts work is an extra, it not only adds to the demands we already face, but also potentially extends our time in our programs, which can take a personal and economic toll, as well as impact our families."

After a session presenting the report's findings at IA's national conference in October, National Advisory Board members and conference attendees began culling the implications of the report for the consortium by identifying three follow-up initiatives the report could instigate: the expansion of IA resources for undergraduate education; more ways for community colleges to benefit from their IA membership; and more opportunities for online exchange about pedagogy. After a discussion about curricula for the engaged arts and humanities at the spring 2008 West by Northwest IA regional meeting, leaders at Southern Oregon University began to develop a wiki site on the topic. (Wiki is a collection of web pages generated and maintained by a community; the best-known wiki is the collaborative encyclopedia, *Wikipedia*.) Daniel Morris, professor of French and director of the Arts and Humanities Council at Southern Oregon University, is currently developing the site with the support of the director of the Center of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Kay Sagmiller, and Community Outreach Director Dee Perez. "The site," Morris said, "will provide examples of course curriculum and class projects involving community-based learning in the arts and humanities and will be a resource for faculty interested in creating similar courses or projects. The wiki site will also serve as a forum for discussion on community engagement in the arts and humanities, and will promote collaboration of arts and humanities related events and projects among faculty

on the west coast." (For more information, contact Daniel Morris at morris@sou.edu.)

A national IA project on pedagogy for the engaged arts, humanities, and design would give IA members more opportunities to discuss their philosophies of teaching and learning, to develop more equitable ways to structure campus-community partnerships, and to enhance their syllabi. Some ideas are already percolating:

Bruce Burgett of the University of Washington, Bothell, suggests, "We develop an area on the IA site dedicated to syllabus design and pedagogy, and begin by asking consortium reps and conference attendees this year to contribute to it with a syllabus; a brief framing commentary about the context of the course, what did and didn't work; what the person would change; and contact information. The idea is that it would be an archive, but one that would also and more importantly serve as a space to make connections with others who are doing or developing similar teaching projects. We might add a (partial) list of conferences, pedagogy labs, and other opportunities for collaboration, including IA regional meetings as appropriate."

Ira Harkavy of the University of Pennsylvania suggested, "Perhaps sharing, developing, and expanding problem-solving curricula in the arts and humanities could be a theme of the work. We would emphasize strong examples and develop a group within IA committed to working on the issue. The goal would be, in part, to stimulate the kind of conversation that emerged from IA's tenure project, as well as to engage faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community members in dialogue as to how to implement curricula with real impacts on the campus and in the community."

This first phase of The Curriculum Project focused on education involving engaged arts; IA is planning further reports focused on the pedagogy of community-based design and public humanities. To share your suggestions and aspirations about focusing on pedagogy for the public humanities, arts, and design, please e-mail jmhafi@sy.edu.

Turning the PAGE on PAGE

Kevin Bott

Transitions can be hectic affairs. This has been a year of transition for PAGE and as we made the mad summer dash toward the LA conference, I had the opportunity to gain experiential understanding of a phrase used by one of my committee members when speaking about participatory action research: “designing the plane while flying it.” The only way to guarantee a soft landing is to keep working—and quickly! And so it has been for myself and the other members of the new PAGE leadership team, Lisa Thornhill from the University of Washington and Adam Bush from USC. After five years at the helm, PAGE founder and inaugural director Sylvia Gale transitioned successfully into the doctorate this past summer, just as PAGE was about to celebrate its fifth consecutive convening at the annual *Imagining America* conference. Lisa, Adam, and I spent the months leading up to LA talking and e-mailing back and forth about what the future of PAGE might look like, while at the same time working hard to actively realize that future. I’d like to use this issue’s PAGE report to reflect on our history and accomplishments, and also to begin imagining what we might see in years to come.

When Sylvia Gale, then a graduate student at UT Austin, attended the 2003 *Imagining America* Conference at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, she was excited to hear scholars talking about the role of public scholarship in academia and about the transformation of higher education as a means to accommodate and encourage civic engagement at all levels. But as she looked around she noticed that she was one of only a handful of graduate students in attendance. Where was the graduate voice in the conversation? What were students actually doing in the field, and what might they have to say about their own professional preparation? How far would conversations about “transforming” higher education go without participation from the newest and soon-to-be faculty members? When Sylvia



Members of PAGE wrap up the 2008 conference with a meeting on the steps of the Japanese American History Museum in Los Angeles. Over seventy graduate students attended the conference this year. Celebrating its fifth consecutive convening at IA’s annual conference, PAGE was able to invite thirteen graduate students to LA as funded PAGE fellows.

raised these questions with IA’s founding director, Julie Ellison, Julie took the questions seriously. She was also smart enough not to let Sylvia get away. Instead she asked if Sylvia would be willing to undertake an initiative to support “publicly active graduate education” within *Imagining America* and to acknowledge graduate students’ centrality to the IA mission. Over the next year, with Dr. Ellison’s support, Sylvia laid the groundwork for the PAGE Fellows program, initially envisioned as a vehicle for getting more graduate students to the conference and for making them a visible and audible presence once there. Each year since 2004, PAGE has funded between 10 and 15 outstanding publicly active graduate students to attend the *Imagining America* National Conference. And due to the dynamic participation and critical feedback from each new cohort of Fellows, PAGE’s role at the conferences and between conferences has continued to grow. In addition to receiving financial support to attend, all PAGE Fellows get to participate in a number of workshops and panel discussions designed to engage them in the various dimensions of public scholarship in graduate school and at the junior faculty level. They also have many opportunities over the course of the conference to present and receive feedback on their own work.

Over the course of her five-year tenure,

Sylvia was able to build a solid foundation for the PAGE initiative, both organizationally and in regard to the enthusiastic graduate fellows that she included and inspired. I see my tenure as PAGE director as an opportunity to build the edifice of the organization. My first effort has been to broaden and strengthen the national network of graduate students and assistant professors committed to civically-engaged scholarship. Our primary mechanism for identifying potential network members is through our PAGE Fellowship program. Despite an ever-increasing pool of wildly talented applicants each year, our budget restricts us to awarding a relatively small number of fellowships. In the past, we’ve missed opportunities to recognize and embrace the scores of other worthy candidates who have applied to our program. But in fact, those other scholars are the national network, and we wanted to work much harder to communicate to them how important they are to PAGE and to this movement to reexamine public scholarship. This year, we reached out personally to all of the applicants who demonstrated praxes resonant with the PAGE/IA mission. Through this effort, we sought to acknowledge their work and to introduce them to the various ways they could participate in PAGE and *Imagining America*. While we can’t be sure what prompted the turnout, we were pleased that almost twice as many graduate students

attended this year's conference as had been in Syracuse in 2007. So many, in fact, that we instituted a second PAGE summit on the first day of the conference in order to include them in our critical conversation about civic engagement. While PAGE will remain committed to funding outstanding graduate scholars working in the public realm, the program is beginning to reach far beyond the small cohort of funded fellows. In the coming year, we'll continue to engage graduate leaders around the country to discover new ways to expand the reach of our national conversation.

Another part of strengthening our coalition will be enacted through our new web site, which we hope to launch before the new year. One hurdle PAGE has faced in the past is an inability to harness the momentum and enthusiasm coming out of the national conference. The PAGE initiative has come to be perceived, even by some of us who've been involved, as an event at the conference; it has yet to become a sustained and active network. I hope the web site will be a place where people can identify their own networks—whether by institution, by region, or by discipline—and keep abreast of what's going on. I also hope that the site will be a place for online dialogue and debate, where students and faculty can comment on essays, ideas, and topics put forth by other members of the community. Eventually, I envision a virtual commons where our network can continue to wrestle with what it means to be a public scholar.

The PAGE leadership team sees the need to expand our conversation to include not only the publicly active graduate students but also the early-career scholars who are balancing their passion for public scholarship with their first years on a tenure track. The selection of participants for this year's PAGE panel session reflected this desire. Our panel session was called "Making the Professional Leap: Preparing Future Faculty for Engaged Academic Life" and included Sean Burns, an ABD PAGE Fellow from UCSC about to enter the job market; Lisa Thornhill, doctoral candidate from the University of Washington and associate PAGE director; Annalisa Raymer, faculty advisor for the Civic Engage-

ment program at the University of Alaska; and Dr. Kelly Quinn, assistant professor of American Studies at Miami University. The panel was well attended by students and faculty, and the post-panel discussion provided a number of provocative perspectives on shaping a career as a public scholar.

Looking forward, I would like to see the creation of a PAGE pre- or post-doctoral fellowship to support public scholars attending one of IA's member institutions. I can't honestly say I know how this is going to happen, but the PAGE leadership team is beginning to imagine how to make it a reality. The name "Imagining America" speaks to the kind of optimism and idealism that so many of us share. We truly believe that imagining it—whatever the "it" might be—is the first step.

Transitions are hectic, yes, but they are also exciting. Designing the plane while flying it is an exhilarating experience...or maybe that's just the caffeine talking. Either way, I think that with its growing reputation at the forefront of challenging and expanding the traditional contours of knowledge creation, PAGE is taking a place among the most dynamic national networks of publicly engaged graduate students and early career scholars in the United States. I'm excited to see what's next.

Imagining America Convening at MLA

For those attending the 2008 Modern Language Association Conference in San Francisco, December 27-30, please join a group of Imagining America members for a Special Session Roundtable:

Only Connect? The Promises and Problems of Public Scholarship.

December 30, 2008, 8:30-9:45 a.m.
Hilton San Francisco, 333 O'Farrell St.
Room "Union Square 11"

A description of the panel, including abstracts from each panelist, is available at <http://english.uiowa.edu/faculty/mangum/mla08onlyconnect.html>.

2008 PAGE Summit Reading List

Cantor, Nancy. "Imagining America; Imagining Universities: Who and What?" Welcome Address: Imagining America Annual Conference, Syracuse University. 7 September 2007. www.syr.edu/chancellor/speeches/ImaginingAmericaAnnualConferenceRemarks090707.pdf

Cohen-Cruz, Jan. "When the Gown Goes to Town: The Reciprocal Rewards of Fieldwork for Artists." *Theatre Topics*. 11. 1 (March 2001): 55-62.

Dixon, Chris and Shotwell, Alexis. "Leveraging the Academy: Suggestions for Radical Grad Students and Radicals Considering Grad School." Online at *Monthly Review*: <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/ds120107.html>

Halttunen, Karen. "Groundwork: American Studies in Place - Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, November 4, 2005." *American Quarterly* - Volume 58.1 (March 2006): 1-15.

Jeffries, Lynn, Rauch, Bill, Valdez, Mark, & Atlas, Caron. "The Faith-Based Theatre Cycle Case Study: Cornerstone Theater Company." *Animating Democracy: Reading Room Case Studies*. www.artsusa.org/animatingdemocracy/pdf/labs/cornerstone_case_study.pdf

Prince-Ramus, Joshua. "Talks Joshua Prince-Ramus: Designing the Seattle Central Library." www.ted.com/index.php/talks/joshua_prince_ramus_on_seattle_s_library.html

Sanchez, George J. "Crossing Figueroa: The Tangled Web of Diversity and Democracy." *Foreseeable Futures #4, Working Papers from Imagining America*. (Fall 2005).

Smith, Andrea. "Social-Justice Activism in the Academic Industrial Complex." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. 23. 2 (2007): 140-144.

Stern, Lynn E. "Public Faces, Private Lives: Making Visible Silicon Valley's Hybrid Heritage." *Animating Democracy: Reading Room Case Studies*. www.artsusa.org/animatingdemocracy/pdf/labs/macla_case_study.pdf

PAGE FOCUSES ON:

University of Wisconsin-Madison's HEX Program

Humanities Exposed, or HEX, awards University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate students a chance to design and implement projects closely aligned with their own research, that address community concerns. Claire Allen, HEX Program Coordinator, said at UW-Madison there is an emphasis placed on service learning programs at the undergraduate level, but found a gap beyond that: "There appears to be little emphasis on civic engagement for graduate students in the humanities, so the HEX program hopes to compensate for that and to create a cadre of trained public scholars within the UW Graduate School."

HEX projects are as diverse as the students' research foci. For example the "Young Playwright's Collaborative" by Shannon Blake Skelton assisted students in developing original short plays. The "Toki Middle School After-school Journalism Program" by Cathy L. DeShano helped students learn what a fact-based story is and how to create one. "Because there are students from so many humanities disciplines starting HEX projects, we do have a large variety in how projects go about addressing what they see as community needs," Allen said. While the projects may seem entirely unique, they do have a central theme. "We like to see humanities research brought to the community in successful ways, but we do have an underlying anti-poverty mission," Allen said.

A 2007 PAGE Fellow, Ray Hsu, created one of HEX's most successful projects called "The Prison Writing Project." Hsu started a writer's workshop and GED tutorial service at the Oakhill Correctional Institution. Also, with the help of a local literary radio show, Hsu was able to broadcast the work of the "inside writers." Hsu says being a PAGE Fellow and seeing his project away from UW-Madison and the Center for the Humanities was important to him: "Being able to understand it as more of a national movement, as some sort of larger collectivity, is

what I gained from the Imagining America conference."

Hsu's program has now become a service-learning course in UW-Madison's English Department. "It's really interesting because now it's enmeshed in the university infrastructure, it has university support, it has a whole series of undergraduate volunteers to help run the writer's workshop," Allen said.

Assuring a project's long-term sustainability is another HEX goal. While the students who

begin a program may relocate away from Madison, program leadership is often transferred to other students. The students who were in Hsu's service learning class while he was in charge of "The Prison Writing Project," for example, had the idea of carrying on the program after the last day of class, saying, "We can't

just let this fall apart, we can't just let it end with us." Another instructor stepped in to pick up the program. "That was one of the ways it ended up being sustainable," Hsu said. "Because a whole bunch of people were willing to join efforts, and it no longer had to do with me, I could step out, and it would still have a life of its own."

Begun by English Professor Susanne Wofford, former director of the UW-Madison's Center for the Humanities, the program is in its fifth year and has been growing exponentially. This year alone, HEX had more than double the number of applicants as they had last year. Allen explains, "We have more first-year graduate students applying to the program than ever before, coming with the intent of continuing the community work they had been doing before." Allen hopes that through word of mouth among the faculty, and by students talking about what they're doing to publicize their projects, HEX will eventually change the culture of graduate education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with, hopes Allen, "a higher emphasis on civic engagement."



Jeanette Tran, PhD student in the UW-Madison English Department, analyzes popular media in her HEX project with students at Wright Middle School in Madison, Wisconsin.

Photo: Sophia Estante

2008 Imagining America PAGE Fellows

- Sean Burns
University of California, Santa Cruz
History of Consciousness
- Brian Campbell
Emory University
American Religious Culture
- Genevieve Carpio
University of Southern California
American Studies & Ethnicity
- Chelsea Cramer
Syracuse University
Art Education
- Medera Edwards
Drew University
Modern History & Literature
- Jessica Evette-Miller
Cornell University
Fine Arts
- Abbilyn Harmon
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Landscape Architecture
- Lisa Jackson-Schebetta
University of Washington, Seattle
Theater History & Theory
- Jaclyn Pryor
University of Texas at Austin
Performance as Public Practice
- Kristen Renzi
Indiana University Bloomington
English Literature
- Barb Shubinski
University of Iowa
American Studies
- Amanda Soto
University of Washington, Seattle
Music Education
- Shaneshia Brooks Tatum
University of Michigan
American Culture

2008 Imagining America Returning PAGE Fellows

- Dana Edell
viBe Theater Experience
and New York University
Educational Theater
- Jess Perlitz
Temple University
Sculpture
- Georgia Roberts
University of Washington, Seattle
English

Keyword Conversation:

Democracy

In IA Newsletter Issue No. 10, we initiated the IA Keywords feature as a place to examine the pasts, presents, and futures of terms central to conversations taking place among public scholars in the arts, humanities, and design. Each issue we'll try to continue this feature, interviewing a scholar to discuss a word or term in the context of their discipline and their work. We'll also be trying something new, which we hope you'll find as interesting as we do. The interview will appear on the *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* web site, where a blog will invite the feedback of the IA membership, among others. To participate, go to <http://keywords.nyupress.org> and follow the links.



Jill Dolan

Just two weeks before election day, I sat down with Jill Dolan, professor in the Department of English and the Program in Theatre and Dance at Princeton University and IA Board member. Dr. Dolan's most recent book is

Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theatre. We discussed the word "democracy."

Kevin Bott: I've always been intrigued by the fact that in Western society we point to the same wellspring to find the source of both theater and democracy. Is thinking about the genealogy of democracy in the context of theater a good place to start?

Jill Dolan: It is a good place to start but I guess my approach is less about looking at it in a theater historical perspective as thinking about the relative paucity of places in contemporary American culture where we have the ability to exercise our prerogative toward democracy. I think about this every election season because these so-called "town halls" presented to us on television seem to be the antithesis of what I think about as true democracy. And it just seems that theater is a place where—because it retains a sense of the live, because it requires a physical co-presence and an investment of people trying to be together and to work through differences, in dialogue, at least idealistically speaking—it's a place where

the practice of democracy can really be exercised. There are just fewer and fewer places to do that in American culture.

Of course, how that actually gets done—that co-presence—is sometimes more metaphorical than it is practical. But I believe that there's a lot of room to grow in terms of using theater as a practice of democracy. I think that for me the impetus comes from, as I described in the utopia book, feeling that sense of people being in a room together, of getting glimpses of what...you know, I love reading Obama's rhetoric because it's very similar to the rhetoric I use in the utopia book in terms of seeing the world as it is and then thinking about the world as it could be. I do think we get a glimmer of that in certain theater productions. I think about what it means to use theater as a place to argue and to really engage each other across our differences in ways that are much more profound than we currently have the opportunity to do in other venues.

KB: We started this conversation via email when I sent you the prompts that Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler used to create the essays in their book, *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. I asked you to think about the significant genealogies of the term, democracy, in relation to your work. I also asked you to think about how those genealogies shape the word today, again in relation to your work, and how you imagine the word could (or should) shape our thinking about engaged scholarship in the future. But in your work, especially in writing about utopia in performance, it's hard to separate from the present.

JD: I believe it's true...Theater offers opportunities to imagine together in ways that I think we are so rarely offered. And I guess, too, the way this is changing for me in my own work over the past 20 years of writing is that I used to be more interested in these processes on a more abstract level, exemplified by the language of post-structuralism and the ways it let us think about subjectivity and agency. But more recently I've become really interested in these practices as material engagements. I'm hopeful that in future work I'll be able to look more at practices, certain community-based theater works, to explore the question of how this is happening in practice. I'd also like to look at it in more conventional theater practices where—unlike the language of

community-based theater where obviously those exchanges are very much linked to the language of democracy and agency—we can see where, even in more quotidian audiences or audiences who don't see themselves as engaged in a community-based project, people can be led to participate in the kinds of conversations that are happening elsewhere around impulses toward democracy. I'm not exactly sure how all this will work out, but I am very interested in using the present of theater to think about the future of democracy.

KB: You write about Holly Hughes' response to students who question the value of radical and transgressive work on the grounds that the artist is, in effect, "preaching to the choir." I've been thinking about this in terms of our democracy in the sense that it seems that those who would lead us maintain a rhetoric that speaks only to those on the inside of their particular ideology.

JD: It's—I don't want to say "accusation." That's a little bit of a strong word but I do think that political theater is often accused of preaching to the choir, of preaching to the converted. But I completely agree with Holly when she says, "You know, the converted need to be preached to as well." There's this assumption that everyone can maintain their faith in progressive movements on their own when in fact those of us who are more liberal or radical in our political or ideological beliefs need to have that shored up, too. It's this idea that once you're "converted" you'll always hold the same belief, and that you no longer need a space to continue to reaffirm what you believe or to let what you believe grow. I'm very interested in questions of faith, not from a religious perspective but from a kind of secular perspective. How do we continue to believe in the possibility of a different kind of future without being able to engage with each other about these ideas, even with people who think very differently from us? How do we learn if the more or less converted aren't continuing a conversation with each other and how do those conversations, by accretion, start to bring more people in? I think there's a fallacy in this idea of preaching to the choir, that the choir is a static entity. There's a fallacy in thinking that the choir itself doesn't need a place to talk about its vision and to grow its vision, and to start expanding the tent of people who stand with us.

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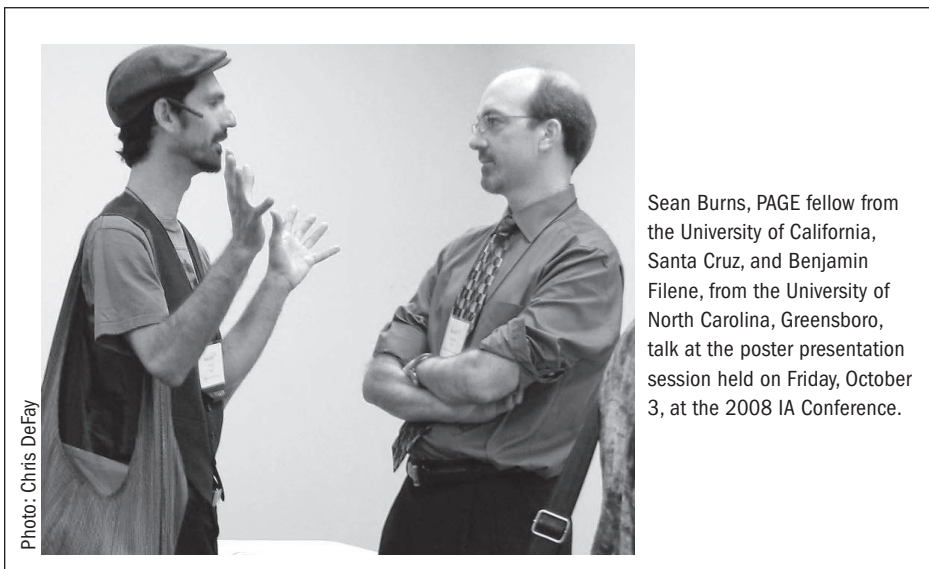
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Sean Burns, PAGE fellow from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and Benjamin Filene, from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, talk at the poster presentation session held on Friday, October 3, at the 2008 IA Conference.

Photo: Chris Defay



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