

# The Pitzer College 50th Anniversary Engaged Faculty Collection

**Community  
Engagement  
& Activist  
Scholarship**



# The Pitzer College 50th Anniversary Engaged Faculty Collection: Community Engagement and Activist Scholarship

Edited by: Tessa Hicks Peterson

Contributions by: Erich Steinman, Scott Scoggins, Gina Lamb, Alexandra Juhasz,  
Kathleen S. Yep, Susan A. Phillips, Paul Faulstich, Nigel Boyle, Mary Hatcher-  
Skeers, Brinda Sarathy, Jose Calderon, Alan Jones

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER

Community Engagement Center publishes works that further Pitzer College's objectives of social responsibility and social justice through community-based education and scholarship.

Published by  
Pitzer College  
Community Engagement Center  
1050 N. Mills Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711  
[www.pitzer.edu/offices/cec/](http://www.pitzer.edu/offices/cec/)  
[www.pitzer.edu](http://www.pitzer.edu)

Pitzer College is a registered trademark of Pitzer College, A Member of the Claremont Colleges

Copyright 2014 by Community Engagement Center

The texts in this book are **copyright** (except where indicated). The authors and publishers permit others to copy, distribute, display, quote and create derivative works based upon them in print and electronic format for any non-commercial, non-profit purposes, on the conditions that the original author is credited, *Pitzer College 50th Anniversary Engaged Faculty Collection: Community Engagement and Activist Scholarship* is cited as a source along with our website address, and the work is reproduced in the spirit of the original. The editor would like to be informed of any copies produced. All photographs in this book are copyright of the photographers, and may not be reproduced without permission. Reproductions of the texts for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication-Data  
Pitzer College 50th Anniversary Engaged Faculty Collection: Community Engagement and Activist Scholarship / edited by Tessa Hicks Peterson  
p. cm.

ISBN: 978-0-9829956-7-9 (paper)

1. Student Service – United States. 2. Social justice – Study and teaching – United States. I. (TESSA HICKS PETERSON, 1976)

Printed in the United States of America

First Edition, 2014

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	7
<b>Introduction</b>	
Framing Pitzer's Practices of Critical Engagement	8
Tessa Hicks Peterson	
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
Unsettling Engagements: Pitzer Collaborations	
With Indigenous Nations, Communities and Individuals	19
Erich Steinman and Scott Scoggins	
Reflective Review	26
Gina Lamb	
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
When Media Activism, Teaching and LGBT Youth Rights Intersect	27
Gina Lamb	
Reflective Review	34
Erich Steinman	
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
Feminist Digital Research/Pedagogy/Writing	
as Community-based Practice	35
Alexandra Juhasz	
Reflective Review	38
Kathleen S. Yep	
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
The Power of Collective Expression (2012):	
College Students and Immigrant Women Learning Together	39
Kathleen S. Yep	
Reflective Review	44
Alexandra Juhasz	
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
Huerta del Valle: A New Nonprofit in a Neglected Landscape	45
Susan A. Phillips	
Reflective Review	52
Paul Faulstich	

<b>Chapter 6</b>	
Pitzer College Outback Preserve Restoration Project	53
Paul Faulstich	
Reflective Review	67
Susan A. Phillips	
<b>Chapter 7</b>	
The Institute for Global/Local Action & Study	68
Nigel Boyle	
Reflective Review	71
Mary Hatcher-Skeers	
<b>Chapter 8</b>	
Providing Access to STEM	72
Mary Hatcher-Skeers	
Reflective Review	76
Nigel Boyle	
<b>Chapter 9</b>	
Engaging Students in Community-based Partnerships for Environmental Justice: Reflections on CCAEJ's Organizing Academy	77
Brinda Sarathy	
Reflective Review	83
Jose Calderon	
<b>Chapter 10</b>	
The Commonalities in Our Past Transform Pedagogy for the Future	84
Jose Calderon	
Reflective Review	93
Brinda Sarathy	
<b>Conclusion</b>	
Building an Effective Institutional Infrastructure in Support of Community-based Pedagogy	94
Alan Jones	
<b>Faculty Biographies</b>	100

# Acknowledgements

Without those who came before us—those whose land we are on; those whose radical visions of merging activism and academia founded our school; those who built the diverse and vibrant communities in which we now engage; those who first stepped off campus to build new relationships with these communities—no attempts at facilitating meaningful community engagement and activist scholarship would be possible. In addition to acknowledging the foundational work of these pioneers, I would also like to acknowledge the many students, faculty, staff and community partners who continue to work tirelessly together to foster new pathways for community-based education, research, organizing and advocacy to take place in and through Pitzer College today. In particular, I am deeply grateful for the staff of the Community Engagement Center, whose unwavering dedication to social justice, hard work and good humor sustain not only my sanity and joy on a daily basis, but also the day-to-day needs of the community partnerships we help facilitate. Great appreciation is also due to the many folks who encouraged and supported the creation of this anthology, from our institutional leaders (the Board of Trustees, President Laura Skandera Trombley and Dean Muriel Poston) to the on-the-ground staff who brought the vision to fruition (namely, Mark Bailey and Stephanie Estrada at Pitzer’s Communications department, our copyediting guru, Mary Bartlett, and my research assistant/ Pitzer’s community engagement poster child, Nicholas Romo). Of course, most importantly, I have immense gratitude for the incredibly thoughtful (and incredibly busy!) faculty members who lent their time, expertise and reflections for this anthology—as colleagues, mentors and friends, you endlessly inspire me by the ways in which you each walk the talk of social justice, community engagement and activist scholarship.

**Tessa Hicks Peterson**

**Pitzer College  
Claremont, California  
May, 2014**

# Framing Pitzer's Practices of Critical Engagement

**Tessa Hicks Peterson, Assistant Professor, Urban Studies  
Assistant Vice President of Community Engagement**

**A**ctivist scholars rarely have the chance to sit back and reflect on the impact, significance, challenges and opportunities that result from their work melding critical intellectual analysis and community-based efforts for social change. They are too busy doing the work! And, yet, as any practitioner of community-based teaching, learning, research, advocacy or service can attest, critical reflection is key to both individual learning and positive collective impact. And so, it is with this charge and opportunity that the dozen scholars represented in this anthology came together to reflect on their experiences with activist scholarship and community engagement.

Another impetus for the creation of this collection is the fact that while a great amount of meaningful social change work has been done by faculty and students in and with local and global communities since Pitzer College's inception 50 years ago, few people know about the depth of these efforts, much less the extent of their impacts. As discovered in the process of creating this anthology, even the most seasoned faculty members who have done this work for years had limited knowledge about the work of their colleagues (even though they work side by side on our small campus, and often in the same communities off campus!). After hearing a number of faculty remark over the years that we ought to publish our own anthology to share these stories, it seemed most appropriate to bring the idea to fruition as part of our celebration of Pitzer's 50th anniversary.

We hope this sharing of pedagogical methodologies and critical personal reflections on community-based teaching and scholarship will provide valuable insight, models and perhaps even inspiration to others in our



Never too young to start community engagement, my 22-month-old son, Isaiah Peterson, does some planting during our MLK Jr. Day of Service at the Chaffey Communities Center "Living Histories" garden, as part of Pitzer's partnership with local native elder Barbara Drake.

own Pitzer community and in our broader network of peer activist scholars and engaged faculty around the country. The pieces in this anthology are informed by a practitioner's lens and explore a range of topics, including: the diverse philosophical, pedagogical and political approaches utilized in community engagement work; the benefits and outcomes of community-based education (for teachers/scholars, disciplines, institutions, students, and community partners); how these efforts can aid in larger contexts of social change (within society, at large and the university, in particular); what tensions and challenges

arise in the lived experience of community engagement; and, of course, personal reflections on specific projects and partnerships the contributors have participated in.

Following a Freirian model of dialogic teaching and learning, this anthology attempts to create a conversation amongst the various participants by inviting contributors to read and reflect on each other's work in this volume. Thus, you will find a short review of each chapter by a fellow faculty contributor whose work shares some thematic similarities. The process of coming together to discuss what we might want to write about, what our aims were in engaging in this act of collective reflection and writing, and what we learned from each other's work exemplifies the rich and intimate relationship-building and shared learning that occurs in interdisciplinary, community collaborations. As such, this anthology not only initiates a conversation with you, our readers, about the importance, challenges and processes of community engagement and activist scholarship, but also has served as a space to do so within our own community of practice. This, of course, is very fitting for the kind of place that Pitzer is: a diverse community that embraces connection, reflection and radical sense-making of our roles in social justice activism in local and global communities.

## Setting

Pitzer College was founded in 1963 as an experimental liberal arts college influenced by national social reform movements with deep roots in American progressivism and a commitment to the founding idea of participation and community. Pitzer's mission is to "produce engaged, socially responsible citizens of the world through academically rigorous, interdisciplinary liberal arts education emphasizing social justice, intercultural understanding and environmental sensitivity." Students are encouraged to examine the ethical and political implications of knowledge and action, integrating interdisciplinary learning with effective student engagement. Utilizing critical pedagogy, experiential learning strategies and community-based research methodologies, faculty prioritize engaged scholarship and teaching. Combining theory and practice, Pitzer students explore the praxis of subject matters both within the communities they live in while studying abroad and the local communities in Southern California in which they participate in community-campus collaborations for social change. A leader nationwide in a movement that advances democratic education,

civic literacy, activist scholarship and community engagement, Pitzer College supports innovative, progressive and applied tactics for teaching, learning and research that will not only transform individuals, but also communities and institutions.

## The origins of community engagement in the academy

Pitzer's community engagement practice joins and advances a history of innovative pedagogy and research within academia. While the majority of academic research and teaching remain within the confines of the university setting, exceptions to the exclusive trend of academia have erupted at different points in our history, revealing the existence of some version of community-based education dating back to the land grant colleges instituted with the Homestead Act of the late 19th century. The practice was also evident in the early history of formal education during the cooperative education movement and the beginning of John Dewey's work on experiential education in the early 20th century. Other examples were seen through the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Experiment in International Living programs of the 1930s, as well as the student involvement in fighting Jim Crow and other socio-political issues during the civil rights era between 1954-74 (Stanton, Giles and Cruz, 1999; Calderon, 2007).

As I have noted elsewhere (Peterson, 2009), many scholars locate the beginning of an era wherein academia moved to truly value, seek and institutionalize community-based education in college curriculum, mission and culture with the charge offered in 1994 by renowned scholar Ernest Boyer. Boyer described how a shift towards a cross-disciplinary focus on social issues would return universities to their "historic commitment to service" and "would enrich the campus, renew the communities, and give new dignity and status to the scholarship of service.... Undergraduates at the college would participate in field projects, relating ideas to real life. Classrooms and laboratories would be extended to include health clinics, youth centers, schools, and government offices. Faculty members would build partners with practitioners who would, in turn, come to campus as lecturers and student advisors" (Zlotkowski 1998, 1).

Today, the majority of universities and colleges across the country promote community engagement and are institutionalizing ways in which they recognize and value community-based scholarship,

teaching and service. Many practices fall under this umbrella, from community-based, participatory research to citizen education, resulting in a range of academic, professional, civic and personal impacts. The kind of engagement that is most valued at Pitzer is one that goes beyond the sole aim of bringing the disciplinary theories to life through applied, experiential learning strategies. Pitzer's emphasis on social justice and a stated desire to move beyond charity models of service into organizing, advocacy, research and collaborations that create structural shifts to systemic inequalities marks it as a unique contributor in the field of civic and community engagement.

Community engagement activities are the result of mutually articulated interests and seek mutually beneficial outcomes for the College and our community partners. Therefore, because these activities address and respond to concerns and needs arising from communities beyond the Pitzer campus (as well as from our own research and teaching interests), community engagement simultaneously exemplifies and manifests the social responsibility mission of Pitzer College. Furthermore, community-engaged scholarship, education and service activities are critical to advancing and implementing the core learning objectives and core values: social responsibility and justice, intercultural understanding, interdisciplinary learning, breadth and depth of critical thinking, student engagement, and environmental sustainability (Community Engagement Center Steering Committee, 2009).

## Impacts of community engagement

These core learning objectives connect directly to powerfully impacting experiences and learning outcomes for students participating in any range of community engagement activities. While each course and distinct community collaboration/project will achieve different outcomes, the literature around student learning outcomes and student impact in community-engagement courses highlights the possibility of multiple levels of achievement. An active field of scholars and teachers have worked diligently to create meaningful learning and growth opportunities for students, measurable learning outcomes and effective strategies of assessment (Ash & Clayton, 2009; Driscoll, Gelmon, Holland, Kerrigan, Spring, Grisvold & Longley, 1998; Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997; Eyler, Giles, Stenson & Gray, 2001; Ferrari & Worrall, 2000; Galura, Pasque, Schoem & Howard, 2004; Gelmon, Holland, Seiffer, Shinnamon, & Conners, 1998; Glass,

Doberneck & Schweitzer, 2008; Gray, Ondaaje, Fricker, Geschwind, Goldman, Kaganoff & Robyn, 1999; Honnet & Poulsen, 1989; Marcus, Howard & King, 1993; Miron & Moely, 2006; Myers-Lipton, 1998; Polin & Keene, 2010; Sandy, 2007; Sax & Astin, 1997; Shapiro, 2012; Shavelson, 2007; Strage, 2007; Strand, Marcullo, Cutforth, Stoecker & Donahue, 2003; Vernon & Ward, 1999). Adding to this field, Pitzer has increased its own assessment efforts in recent years, finding that evaluating the holistic academic and personal development of this experience is best achieved by utilizing a multi-pronged approach to assessment, including student reflections (self-reporting), direct assessment (of written work), focus groups, interviews and third-party assessments (i.e., that of teachers or collaborating community partners). In order to understand these affects, we conduct regular assessments with our students, faculty and community partners to evaluate the impact of the experience on all parties, as well as to ascertain levels of satisfaction with Pitzer projects and areas in need of improvement. Along with providing access, administrative services and curricular support for faculty and students engaged in community partnerships, the staff of Pitzer's Community Engagement Center also act as principal liaisons to a number of long-standing community partners, enabling constant presence, communication, evaluation and critical reflection on the partnership's impact.

Through our own assessments (Hicks, 2009) and that of others in the field, we have learned a great deal about what some of the impacts are of this practice for each of the involved constituents. We have found that primary student learning outcomes can include:

- **Personal knowledge:** indicating an awareness of capacities, skills and values; identity and self-development, self-realization and purposefulness, positionality and power dynamics with others, moral and ethical reasoning, and improved relationships with peers, faculty and the local community (Astin & Sax, 1998; Bringing Theory to Practice, 2013; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Eyler, Giles and Braxton, 1997; Gray et al., 1998; Kendrick, 1996; Switzer & King, 2014);
- **Community knowledge:** recognizing the needs and strengths of a community, as defined through the lens and experience of that community, building critical and reflexive relationships with community partners; integrating community organizing skills in collaborative projects

(Calderon, 2007; Kivel, 2007; Lewis, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Marullo & Edwards, 2000; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000);

- **Civic knowledge:** articulating a heightened sense of personal responsibility to community issues; exposure or commitment to social responsibility, including relationships with school, city, partner organizations and neighbors; political involvement and policy reform actions; the ability to analyze systems in order to plan and engage in public action; and the moral and political courage to take risks to achieve a greater public good (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Eyler, Giles & Braxton, 1999; Strage, 2004; Markus, Howard & King, 1993; Mitchell, 2008; The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012);
- **Social justice knowledge:** understanding the structural, political, social, economic and/or environmental conditions that have resulted in injustice and the need for community engagement work, as well as a commitment to explore the benefits and potential pitfalls of community-campus partnerships (Calderon, 2007; Kivel, 2007; Hale, 2008; Lewis, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993);
- **Intercultural understanding:** ability to appreciate and cross cultural boundaries and engage diverse perspectives; skills, awareness and commitment to cultural immersion, reciprocity, local social issues, perception of others, potential bias, diverse perspectives and communication skills; and rigorous professional and ethical conduct in community relationships (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1996; Gray et al., 1998; Markus, Howard & King, 1993; Stanton, 1990);
- **Academic and career development:** indicating a reciprocal application of learning to/from field and class, development of tools and theories on service, research and evaluation; attaining leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills; enhancing analysis/critical thinking abilities (Boss, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gelmon et al., 1998; Gray et al., 1998; Jacoby, 2003; Kendrick, 1996; Marcus et al., 1993; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1998; Strand et al., 2003).

As this list reveals, the collective impacts on students engaged in community-based education, research and service touch on their academic, civic, personal, political, moral and professional development. Likewise, the impact of this work on faculty can be equally powerful. Findings indicate that, as a result of community engagement and

activist scholarship, faculty often:

- Alter their pedagogy towards a more liberatory and community-based model (Calderon, 2007; Hale, 2008; Shor, 1992; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998);
- Improve relationships with students, including deepening existing relationships, getting traditionally uninvolved students to become engaged, and appreciating the quality of demonstrated student learning (Astin and Sax, 1998; Eyler and Giles, 1999; Gelmon, et al., 1998; Gray et al., 1998; Moely, Furco and Reed, 2008);
- Establish or improve relationships with community partners—while also recognizing tensions of involvement due to differing norms and goals between the cultures of academia and that of many local communities (Bacon, 2002; Calderon, 2007; Hale, 2008; Jorge, 2003; Steinman, 2011; Stoecker 2005);
- Negotiate institutional support for the time, energy and skills necessary for successful community engagement and activist scholarship to develop—and seek ways these endeavors will be recognized and valued by academic peers and reviewers (Calderon, 2007; Hale, 2008; Ellison, & Eatman, 2008; Jacoby, 2003; Kezar and Rhoades, 2001; Stanton et al., 1999; Strand, 2003).

In general, community engagement poses generative ethical, political, disciplinary, interdisciplinary and conceptual questions to both students and faculty involved together in community-based education courses, thus eliciting new and creative pedagogical approaches and modalities. This can generate novel and productive lines and types of research for involved faculty, as well as spur useful self-reflexivity regarding issues of methodology, research questions and the social implications of knowledge production, authorship and distribution (Community Engagement Center Steering Committee, 2009). Contributions in this anthology bring each of these dimensions to life through the case studies and reflections presented by each practitioner.

While the impact on community members and community partner agencies and institutions varies greatly based on the type of collaborative research, education, or service, there are some general findings we can speak to that are often results of community-campus partnerships. Generally speaking, community engagement activities have the potential to lend disciplinary/inter-disciplinary expertise to help groups or organizations (re) conceptualize issues, solve problems, facilitate

change or develop and enhance community assets. Faculty may also serve in a more traditional professional capacity by consulting, offering clinical services, participating on boards or serving as an expert witness (Community Engagement Center Steering Committee, 2009).

In an action research and evaluation project conducted around the impacts of some of Pitzer's principal community-campus partnerships (Hicks, 2009), community members reported that these partnerships likewise had impact on their personal lives and capacities, their education and skill set, and their access to resources (findings that were reflective of other studies on community impact). In particular, community members reported that as a result of in such partnerships, they experienced:

- Increased esteem of education, inspiration, hope and sense of being valued from an academic perspective (which brought with it a sense of legitimacy); (Calderon, 2007; Jorge, 2003; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Sandy, 2007; Stoecker, 2005);
- Feelings of empowerment, self development and interpersonal relationship development in the community and academy; (Calderon, 2007; Jorge, 2003; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Sandy, 2007; Stoecker, 2005);
- An increased sense of personal value as result of being seen as knowledge producer and teacher in their community (Bacon, 2002; Calderon, 2007; Dorado and Giles, 2004; Jacoby, 2003; Jorge, 2003; Ferrari & Worrall, 2000; Marullo & Edwards, 2000; Sandy, 2007; Schmidt & Robby, 2002);
- The development of self-expression, an exercising of rights, increased participation in advocacy and civic engagement themselves (Bringing Theory to Practice, 2013; Calderon, 2007; Sandy, 2007; Stoecker, 2005; Strand et al., 2003)
- Exposure to other cultures, expanded world view and the achievement of skills in art, language, writing, research, public speaking, and critical thinking (Calderon, 2007; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Jacoby, 2003; Sandy, 2007);
- Increased levels of access to resources, such as the college libraries, meeting spaces, dining halls, art supplies, health care and greater exposure to and connection with the college in general and fellow activists and students in particular (Gelmon et al, 1998; Kretzman & McKnight, 1998; Miron & Moely, 2006).

Similarly, the staff of the partnering community organizations also reported impact from their

participation in these partnerships, including:

- Gaining new energy and ideas from interns that inspired change in programs and approach to “clients” (Hicks, 2009; Stoecker, 2005);
- The opportunity to meet new people and learn how to manage/supervise college students, organize interns/projects (which resulted in increased organizing and management skills) (Bacon, 2002; Dorado and Giles, 2004; Ferrari and Worrall, 2000; Jacoby, 2003; Partnership Forum, 2008; Sandy, 2007);
- Career or educational development as a result of these partnerships (Cruz and Giles, 2000; Gelmon et al., 1998; Vernon and Ward, 1999);
- Increased exposure to higher education (and for some, the opportunity to become college students themselves (Eyles et al, 2001; Ferrari and Worrall, 2000; Gelmon et al., 1998).

Obviously, impacts from community-campus partnerships vary depending on the length and depth of engagement, the capacity of all partners, the nature of collaborative projects and the approach of those in leadership positions; nonetheless, these findings demonstrate the most common impacts of community engagement that we and others have found to be most significant.

## Community Engagement for Social Justice

One of the principal areas of concern for most of Pitzer's community engagement practitioners is how to recognize our interconnectedness with local communities and the importance of reciprocal community-campus collaborations, while underscoring the limits and potential hazards of charity and service partnerships—this, too, has been a primary point of discussion in the field of engagement. (Bacon, 2002; Calderon, 2007; Kivel, 2007; Lewis, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Oden & Casey, 2007; Moely, Furco & Reed, 2008; Morton, 1995; Mitchell, 2008; Miron & Moley, 2006; Marullo & Edwards, 2000; Peterson, 2010; Steinman, 2011; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). Research in the field advances critical questions about the nature of our community engagement programs and partnerships, ones that many in Pitzer are interested in and already addressing. Activist scholar Paul Kivel (2007) summarizes well some key tensions:

Taking care of those in need is valuable and honorable work, and most people do it with generosity and good intentions. But it also serves

to mask the inequitable distribution of jobs, food, housing, and other valuable resources. When temporary shelter becomes a substitute for permanent housing, emergency food a substitute for a decent job, tutoring a substitute for adequate public schools, and free clinics a substitute for universal health care, we have shifted our attention from the redistribution of wealth to the temporary provision of social services that keep people alive (p. 135) [...] The problem is not with providing social services. Many radical groups, such as the Black Panthers and the Zapatistas, have provided social services as a tool for organizing. The problem comes when all our time and energy is diverted toward social services to the detriment of long-term social change[...] Activists working within the NPIC [nonprofit industrial complex] should be mindful of thinking about whether we are empowering people to work for social change at the same time we are providing them with social services (p. 142).

To address such concerns, those involved in community-campus partnerships must ask: how involved are local community members in co-navigating community engagement courses, research, projects, funding, policies and governance? How do we and how do they access our accountability in this regard? Is the agenda for the partnership made in collaboration between college partners (students, faculty and/or staff) and the primary community partners within a framework that honors reciprocal, respectful and ethical collaboration? Is the community seen and treated as an equal partner, while also recognizing unequal power dynamics where they may exist? Does the partnership build on self-identified assets of the community, while also addressing what the community and past projects have identified as problems in order to negotiate shared responsibility for mobilizing relevant solutions? How can we ensure that it is not solely the service providers that garner greater capacity and success (or the student or university) instead of the community members themselves? Are service-providing programs (and our involvement in them) uprooting unjust social circumstances that have necessitated these services or simply making the unjust circumstances more tolerable?

Likewise, we must ask if we are educating students in our community engagement courses on foundational tenets of social justice—for instance, are students acquiring theoretical knowledge about social (in)justice issues pertinent to race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender identity,

immigration status, nationality, sovereignty, ability status, environmental justice and/or religion? Are they gaining knowledge and sensitivity to the ethical and political implications of injustice, such as notions of social stratification, the interdependence and intersection of systems of oppression, interpersonal and structural discrimination, and the unequal distribution and access to power and resources? Are students intimately exploring how they are (either wittingly or unwillingly) implicated in realities of injustice, and thus recognizing their responsibility in forwarding joint projects of social change? Do course readings and discussions challenge hegemonic structures and practices that further social injustice and oppression, as well as ignite student understanding of strategies to disrupt or remove systemic barriers to equality and inclusiveness? Finally, do community engagement actions address the structural, political, social, economic and/or environmental conditions (and any other root causes) that have resulted in the need for their community engagement and explore the benefits and potential pitfalls of community-campus service partnerships?

These are some of the queries, recognizable tensions and areas of scrutiny that any social justice-oriented practitioner contends with at some point, and are certainly ones that many authors in this anthology express as they describe their activist projects and community-based partnerships. Like all community-based education, the answers are neither tidy nor always self-evident in real time, much less readily achievable in a semester's timeframe. Yet, in some ways, we address these critical critiques of our practice in the very act of raising the questions, amongst ourselves at the College and with our partners in the community. In so doing, we often find that we move slowly together into the solutions (sometimes deliberately so and, sometimes, quite clumsily and by accident). As German poet Rainer Maria Rilke reminds us, sometimes the most important part of our journey is learning to “live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer” (1903). And so it is through our community engagement praxis (the iterative process of engaging in action, theoretical analysis and critical reflection) that we “live our way into the answers” that surround the complex practice of activist scholarship and community engagement.

## Contributions

As the contributions in this anthology will attest, there are myriad ways the questions, answers

and practices of engagement unfold in each collaboration. We start this journey with the contribution by Erich Steinman and Scott Scoggins, “Unsettling Engagements: Pitzer Collaborations With Indigenous Nations, Communities and Individuals,” which explores the on-going relationships they have advanced with local American Indian tribes and individuals. This Chapter reflects critically on the tensions that have emerged in this partnership, relating to issues ranging from the risk of cultural appropriation to colonialist assumptions about the US and American Indians that often exist for non-Native students interested in “serving” this community. Erich and Scott challenge the academic actors in this partnership (themselves, their students and the institution of higher education, in general) to consider how notions of time, environment, community, reciprocity, knowledge production, authorship and social responsibility are understood and situated differently per the cultural and epistemological lens of the collaborators. At once, informative and “unsettling,” this piece brings to the table the oft-ignored discussion of how community-campus partnerships must negotiate the impact of colonization when settlers attempt to forge relationships with the tribal nations on whose land they reside.

As are all the contributions in this anthology, Erich and Scott’s chapter is followed by a thoughtful review by their colleague Gina Lamb, who has also been a long-time partner of these same local American Indian communities and who reflects on the critical way these authors have explored the nuances and complexities of crossing post-colonial bridges in order to establish meaningful partnerships. Following her reflection on their work, Gina contributes her own chapter about another long-term community partnership she has been deeply invested in with another local community (Chapter 2, “When Media Activism, Teaching and LGBT Youth Rights Intersect”). This piece focuses on the trailblazing efforts of two initiatives Gina founded and connected, a video arts and technology lab at REACH LA (a youth-driven nonprofit for urban youth in LA) and her Media Arts for Social Justice course at Pitzer. In this partnership, the college students collaborate with REACH LA’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth participants to create video storytelling opportunities for queer youth. Negotiating the axis of oppression of being low-income, LGBT youth of color who are often also contending with HIV, homelessness, racism and poor healthcare services, these youth exercise their agency and creativity in designing and producing videos about their community—videos that also

serve as educational messages for their peers around preventative health strategies. As Erich later comments (in his reflective review of Gina’s chapter), the multiple media arts projects that have emerged from her work in this community not only result in a powerful teaching and learning experience for both Pitzer students and REACH LA youth, but also provide an opportunity for all those who see the resulting documentaries to “grapple with, and appreciate the challenging, complex and powerful lives lived at these intersections.”

In the next chapter, “Feminist Digital Research/ Pedagogy/Writing as Community-based Practice,” another media activist pioneer, Alexandra Juhasz, furthers our education of how media arts are being used as tools for social change, which in this case center around Alex’s creation of radical, feminist community spaces online. These spaces are created for the direct purpose of advancing digital experiments in social change and thus broaden both notions of typical community engagement and activist scholarship, as well as the role of technology in each. This essay is situated in a unique digital landscape of feminist pedagogy, media activism and re-envisioned forms of (accessible) academic writing. In the many educational, media activist spaces Alex has created (Media Praxis, Learning from YouTube and FemTechNet, to name a few), she asks of her students and community collaborators “to think and write in the new forms, formats and platforms that currently shape much of the ever-more linked world of ideas, culture and commerce in our era.” Alex’s story explores her rigorous and radical activist scholarship and teaching techniques and literally links us to those digital platforms where we can see the projects in their entirety, allowing us as readers a chance to become audience members and even actors in the unfolding of these collaborative instances of media praxis.

While operating in a very different cultural landscape (and one situated in a very specific local community), Kathleen S. Yep takes the concept that Alex has introduced of community-based, feminist pedagogy and provides unique insight as to how it unfolds in a collaboration between Pitzer students and immigrant elders, who together explore citizenship literacy as a tool for empowerment. Similar to the authors who precede her, in “The Power of Collective Expression (2012): College students and immigrant women learning together,” Kathy engages a critical reflection of the challenges and tensions that arise as the student and community collaborators negotiate their distinct positionalities, overlapping histories and potential spaces for shared teaching and learning.

As aptly noted in her reflection of Kathy's piece (and in recognition of their similar paths), Alex notes that "the co-production of knowledge linked to the pursuit of personal and collaborative empowerment [are] at once deeply political and intellectual activities."

This quote could very well describe what is at the foundation of every community-campus partnership described in this anthology, though, as the subsequent chapter attests, sometimes the seeds of change must germinate in the soil for quite a while before the first blooms of collaborative empowerment can emerge. Such was the case in the development of Pitzer's community garden in Ontario, which is the focus of Susan A. Phillips' chapter, "Huerta del Valle: A New Nonprofit in a Neglected Landscape." Susan begins by describing the powerful community/cultural immersion program she directs, Pitzer in Ontario, which initiated this community partnership. This full-time program enrolls Pitzer College students in an intensive and extensive engagement with the neighboring community of Ontario and situates the theoretical study of regional equity and social justice in the lived experience of an area riddled by unemployment, foreclosures and toxic pollution. Susan's aim to bring about a tangible, collaborative project to "promote economic development, to work for environmental justice, to strengthen local food justice strategies and to build critical and radical analysis of the region," inspired the development of what is now a new nonprofit educational garden cooperative, Huerta del Valle, supported by Pitzer College and the City of Ontario. Susan's piece explores how this longitudinal, community-based research effort began as a college-driven initiative four years ago and now, at the brink of establishing itself as a new nonprofit, is a thriving, community-driven organization, with 48 family-tended plots and infinite possibilities.

The theme of immersing ourselves in our local environment with the purpose of building sustainable human and non-human communities is continued in Chapter 6, "Pitzer College Outback Preserve Restoration Project," by Paul Faulstich. A longtime advocate of environmental awareness and engagement, Paul provides a roadmap for implementing a restoration of the ecological preserve on our campus, and, in so doing, invites the reader to interpret diverse definitions of "community" (human, animal, plant/on-campus partners-stakeholders/off-campus partners-stakeholders) and "engagement" (preserving and restoring rather than re-creating or further developing). Paul also demonstrates how this effort is both an example of

applied learning (putting the theories of sustainability and restoration into action through experiential learning), as well as community-engaged learning and activist research (which have overlapping but distinct aims). Finally, his informative, practical and reflective tone offers the reader both a manual and a meditation on the topic of ecological restoration.

We explore another on-campus initiative in Nigel Boyle's chapter, "The Institute for Global/Local Action & Study," which describes the formation and intention of Pitzer's new effort to link community engagement that occurs in our own backyard with that which takes place around the globe. Drawing on existing institutional assets (Pitzer's own Study Abroad office and Community Engagement Center), the Institute for Global/Local Action & Study (IGLAS) aims to integrate local and global community immersion, research, and engagement experiences to enhance student development in the key tenets of a Pitzer College education: intercultural understanding, social responsibility, interdisciplinarity, civic literacy and global citizenship. Furthermore, Nigel explains that his desire as the institute's founding director is to promote these integrated experiences for all students, early in their academic formation and repeatedly over their four years at Pitzer. He extends the notion of dialectal teaching and learning beyond the community-classroom nexus, into the bridge between the local and the global.

While different in scope and intention, the following chapter by Mary Hatcher-Skeers, "Providing Access to STEM," also reveals an institutional program designed to connect the campus with the community to enhance the experience of both. As an activist who lamented the dearth of in-depth community engagement opportunities she felt existed for her as a chemist, Mary describes how she shifted this paradigm to provide both access for science students and faculty, like herself, to meaningful involvement in social change efforts, as well as access to college (and specifically, the math and sciences) for young women from the local community. This shift came with her 11-year tenure as the director of the Scripps College Academy, "an academically intensive, year-round academic outreach program for highly motivated young women from racially diverse and low socio-economic backgrounds." Her detailed description of the impact, scope and development of this program, and her role in it, offer yet another framework and model for creating institutionally supported, community engagement opportunities.

We move from the Scripps College Academy to an entirely different sort of Academy in Brinda Sarathy's chapter, "Engaging Students in Community-based Partnerships for Environmental Justice: Reflections on CCAEJ's Organizing Academy." In her chapter, Brinda discusses the community-campus partnership she and two other Claremont College faculty advanced with the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCA EJ) for the purposes of training students to execute community-driven projects through the frameworks of community-based research and community organizing. As Brinda notes, "Our intent was to promote the work of social justice by leveraging students' skills—in writing, GIS and research, and their relatively privileged access to resources such as time, computers, data and scholarship—to facilitate community-identified agendas." In turn, CCA EJ provided extensive education, guidance and mentoring to students by leading them on "toxic tours" of the Inland Empire and facilitating skill-building community organizing workshops for them in their "Organizing Academy." Integrating the words of the students and images from the collaboration, Brinda brings to life the community-based projects students participated in, such as oral histories/narrative ethnographies, policy research, community outreach and community mapping. Not only does this piece provide a model for reciprocal engagement on shared projects of social change, but it also thinks through the challenges professors and students face in navigating the sometimes ambiguous or unstructured nature of projects driven not by academic agendas or timelines but by community need and organizational capacity.

It is fitting to follow a chapter about community organizing and community-based research with the essay "The Commonalities in Our Past Transform Pedagogy for the Future" by the renowned community organizer and scholar activist, Jose Calderon. Jose's life's work, and this essay in particular, focus on the historical lineage of community organizers that students in his community engagement courses learn about and then attempt to emulate in the many projects they have collaboratively fostered over the years. As evident in this chapter, Jose is interested in not only teaching students about the unsung heroes of community change, but also in teaching them how and why critical engagement is pinnacle to both a rigorous academic education and political/moral formation. Through his community-engaged teaching, research and organizing, Jose teaches about the five faces of oppression—exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism

and violence (Calderon, 2007)—often utilizing immigration reform as a point of intervention, challenging oppressive realities through empowerment, agency, and collaboration between students and community members. He reminds us that critical community engagement practices are ones that engage difference by connecting our historical commonalities and "building connections of knowledge and practice."

These diverse efforts in community engagement cannot be successful as "high-impact practices" if there does not exist the institutional support for the students and faculty who wish to collaborate in these shared partnerships for social change. The concluding essay in this anthology, "Building an Effective Institutional Infrastructure in Support of Community-based Pedagogy," looks specifically through the lens of an institution builder (and changemaker), former Pitzer dean Alan Jones, at the ingredients that are necessary in crafting a sustainable, supported and critical space for community-based teaching, learning and scholarship within an institution of higher education. As this closing chapter demonstrates, Pitzer College was founded with many of these necessary components already ingrained in its founding mission and structure, and over the last 50 years has actively sought the capacity, infrastructure, policy and skilled practitioners that continue to situate this work at the center and heart of the College. The result is a diverse mix of meaningful, rigorous and deeply impacting community-based initiatives forwarded by activist scholars, whose thoughtful and inspiring work is self-evident through these pages. While there are certainly many more examples of powerful community partnerships carried out by these and other new and veteran faculty at Pitzer College, hopefully this anthology provides an intriguing introduction for anyone interested in the topics of community-based teaching, learning and scholarship.

## References

- Ash, S.L. & Clayton, P.H. (2009). Generating, deepening, and documenting learning: The power of critical reflection in applied learning. *Journal of Applied Learning in Higher Education*, 1, 25-48.
- Astin, A. W. & Sax, L. J. (1998). How undergraduates are affected by service participation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 39(3), 251-263.
- Bacon, N. (2002). Differences in faculty and community partners' theories of learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 9(1), 34-44.

- Bringing Theory to Practice (2013). *The well-being and flourishing of students: Considering well-being, and its connection to learning and civic engagement, as central to the mission of higher education*. Washington DC.
- Boss, J. A. (1994). The effect of community service on the moral development of college ethics students. *Journal of Moral Development*, 23(2), 183-198.
- Calderon, J. (Ed.). (2007) *Race, poverty, and social justice: Multidisciplinary perspectives through service learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus
- Community Engagement Center Steering Committee. (2009). *Community Engagement in APT reviews*. Unpublished paper.
- Cruz, N. and Giles, D.E. (2000). Where's the community in service-learning? *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. [Special Issue] 7, 28-34.
- Dorado, S. and Giles, D.E. (2004) Service-Learning Partnerships: Paths of Engagement. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 9(1), 25-37
- Driscoll, A., Gelmon, S., Holland B., Kerrigan, S., Spring, A., Grisvold, KI, and Longley, M. (1998). *Assessing the impact of service-learning: A workbook of strategies and methods* (2nd edition). Portland, OR: Portland State University's Center for Academic Excellence.
- Ellison, J., & Eatman, T. (2008). *Scholarship in public: Knowledge creation and tenure policy in the engaged university*. Syracuse, NY: Imagining America.
- Eyler, J. & Giles, D. (1996). *A practitioners guide to reflection in service learning*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Eyler, J., Giles, D. & Braxton, J. (1997). The impact of service-learning on college students. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 4, 5-15.
- Eyler, J. & Giles, D. (1999). *Where's the learning in service-learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publications.
- Eyler, J. Giles, D., Stenson, C.M. & Gray, C. (Eds.). (2001). *At a glance: What we know about the effects of service-learning on students, faculty, institutions, and communities, 1993-2000: 3rd Edition*. Vanderbilt University: National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.
- Ferrari, J.R. & Worrall, L. (2000). Assessments by community agencies: How "the other side" sees service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 7, 35-40.
- Finley, A. (2011). *Civic learning and democratic engagements: A review of the literature on civic engagement in post-secondary education*. Unpublished Paper. Accessed March, 12, 2012.
- Galura, J.A., Pasque, P.A., Schoem, D. & Howard, J. (2004). *Engaging the whole of service-learning, diversity, and learning communities*. Michigan: OCSL Press of University of Michigan.
- Gelmon, S., Holland, B., Seiffer, S., Shinnamon, A. & Conners, K. (1998). Community-university partnerships for mutual learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 5, 97-107.
- Glass, C., Doberneck, D. & Schweitzer, J. (2008). *Outreach and engagement in promotion and tenure*. National Center for the Study of University Engagement, Michigan State University.
- Gray, M., Ondaaje, E., Fricker, R., S. Geschwind, C. Goldman, T. & Kaganoff, A. Robyn, et al. (1999). *Combining service and learning in higher education: Evaluation of the learn and serve America, higher education program*. Santa Monica, CA. RAND Corporation.
- Hale, C.R., Ed. (2008). *Engaging contradictions: Theory, politics, and methods of activist scholarship*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hicks, T. (2009). *Engaged scholarship and education: A case study on the pedagogy of social change*. Unpublished dissertation, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont.
- Honnet, E.P. & Poulsen. (1989). *Principles of good practice combining service and learning* (Wingspread Special Report) Racine Wisconsin: The Johnson Foundation.
- Jacoby, B. (2003). *Building partnerships for service-learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publications.
- Jorge, E. (2003). Outcomes for community partners in an unmediated service-learning program. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 10(1), 28-38.
- Kendrick, J. R. (1996). Outcomes of service-learning in an introduction to sociology course. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 2, 72-81.
- Kezar, A. and Rhoads, R. (2001). The dynamic tensions of service-learning in higher education: A philosophical perspective, *The Journal of Higher Education*. 72(2), 148-171.
- Kivel, Paul. "Social Service or Social Change? in INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence" (Eds.). (2007). *The Revolution will not be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*. South End Press: Cambridge, MA. (129-150).
- Kretzmann, J.P and McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building Communities From The Inside Out; A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA.
- Lewis, T. (2004). Service learning for social change? Lessons from a liberal arts college. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 32(1), 94-108.
- Marcus, G., Howard, J. & King, D. (1993). Integrating

- community service and classroom instruction enhances learning: Results from an experiment. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15, 410-419.
- Marullo, S. & Edwards, B. (2000). From charity to justice: The potential of university-community collaboration for social change. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43, 895-912.
- Miron, D. & Moely, B.E. (2006). Community agency voice and benefit in service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 12, 27-37.
- Mitchell, T. (2008). Traditional vs. critical service-learning: Engaging the literature to differentiate two models. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 14(2), 50-65.
- Moely, B., Furco, A. & Reed, J. (2008). Charity and social change: The impact of individual preferences on service-learning outcomes. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 15(1), 37-48.
- Morton, K. (1995). The irony of service: Charity, project and social change in service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 2, 19-32.
- Myers-Lipton, S.J. (1998). Effect of a Comprehensive Service-Learning Program on College Students' Civic Responsibility. *Teaching Sociology*, Vol. 26, pp. 243-258.
- Partnership Forum. (2008). *A guide to reciprocal community-campus partnerships*. Portland State University.
- Peterson, T. H. (2009). Engaged scholarship: reflections and research on the pedagogy of social change. *Teaching in Higher Education*. Special Edition. 14, 5, 541-552.
- Oden, R.S. and Casey, T.A. (2007). Advancing Service learning as a Transformative Method for Social Justice Work. In Calderon, J. (Ed.), *Race, Poverty, and Social Justice: Multidisciplinary Perspectives Through Service Learning* (pp. 3-23). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Polin, D.K. & Keene, A.S. (2010). Bringing an ethnographic sensibility to service-learning assessment. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 16(2), 22-37.
- Rilke, R.M., (1903). *Letters to a Young Poet*. London: Norton and Company.
- Sandy, M. (2007). *Community voices: A California Campus Compact study on partnerships*. San Francisco: California Campus Compact.
- Sax, L. and Astin, A. (1997). The benefits of service: Evidence from undergraduates. *Educational Record*, 78, 25-32.
- Schmidt, A. and Robby, M.A. (2002). What's the value of service-learning to the community? *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 9(1), 27-33.
- Shapiro, D. (2012). Collaborative faculty assessment of service-learning student work to improve student and faculty learning and course design. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 19(1), 44-57.
- Shavelson, R. J. (2007). *A brief history of student learning assessment: how we got where we are and a proposal for where to go next*. AAC&U Publication.
- Shor, I. *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*. University of Chicago: 1992.
- Stanton, T.K. (1990). Liberal Arts, Experiential Learning and Public Service: Necessary Ingredients for Socially Responsible Undergraduate Education. In Kendal, J.C, et al (Eds.), *Combining Service and Learning*. Raleigh, N.C.: National Society for Internships and Experiential Education.
- Stanton, T.K., Giles, D.E, Jr., Cruz, N. (1999). *Service-Learning: A Movement's Pioneers Reflect on Its Origins, Practice, and Future*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.
- Steinberg S.R. & Kincheloe, J.L. (1998). Students as researchers: *Creating classrooms that matter*. London: Falmer Press.
- Steinman, E. (2011). Alternatives to service, and 'making space': Lessons from collaborations with tribal nations. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, vol. 18.
- Stoecker, R. (2005). *Research Methods for Community Change: A Project-Based Approach*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Strage, A. (2004). Long-term academic benefits of service-learning: When and where do they manifest themselves? *College Student Journal*. 38, 257-262.
- Strand, K., Marullo, S., Cutforth, N., Stoecker, R. & Donahue, P. (2003). *Community-based research and higher education: Principles and practices*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sweitzer, H.F. & King, M.A. (2009). *The successful internship: Personal, professional and civic development*, Third Edition. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Vernon, A. and Ward, K. (1999). Campus and Community Partnerships: Assessing Impacts and Strengthening Connections. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 6, 30-37.
- Ward, K. & Wolf-Wendel, L. (2000). Community-centered service-learning: Moving from doing for to doing with. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43 (2), 756-767.
- Zlotkowski, E. (1998). A service learning approach to faculty development. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, Volume 1998, Issue 73, pp. 81-89.

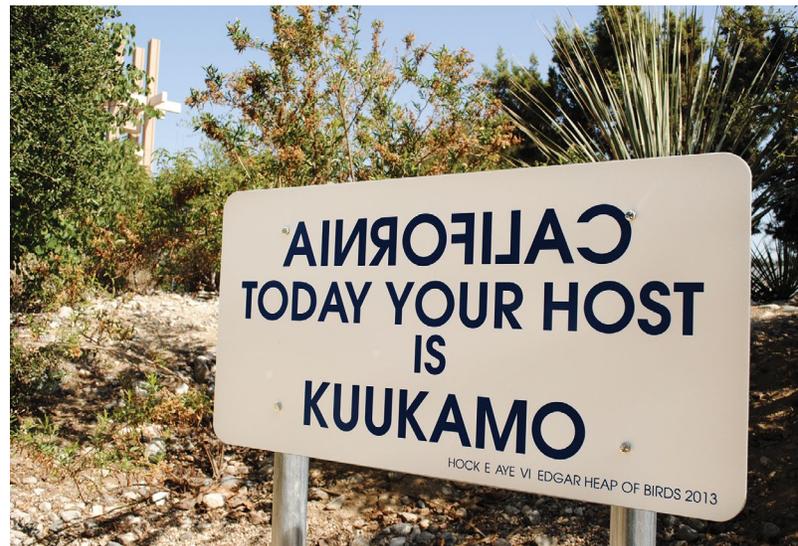
# Unsettling Engagements: Pitzer Collaborations with Indigenous Nations, Communities and Individuals

Erich Steinman, Associate Professor of Sociology

Scott Scoggins, Pitzer College Native American Pipeline director and outreach liaison

Unbeknownst to many at the Claremont Colleges, Claremont is in Indian Country. By that we don't just mean that all of the colleges are on land that was dispossessed from the long-time Indigenous inhabitants—here in the Los Angeles basin, the Tongva people—but rather that there are numerous American Indian tribal nations in the Southern California region, with many in close proximity to Claremont (or Torojoatgna, “below snowy mountain,” i.e., Mount Baldy). Some of these tribal nations are federally recognized, others are state-recognized and others are not recognized; in addition, there are robust intertribal communities throughout the Los Angeles area. All of these nations and communities are engaged in various types of cultural, political and economic resurgence as part of a dynamic wave of Indigenous decolonization unfolding over the last few decades.

The existence of these Indigenous nations and communities confronting and grappling with the many dimensions of colonialism creates incredible firsthand learning opportunities for Pitzer College students. More than this, however, it also creates opportunities for students to directly engage in disrupting both the legacies of past colonialism and elements of colonial domination that actively continue today. Towards those ends, since 2007 we and others at Pitzer have been working together to create various types of engagement between Pitzer students and Indigenous nations, communities and individuals. These efforts and engagements have included working on community projects with Tongva and Costanoan Rumsen Ohlone peoples, creating and running a summer Native Pipeline to



One of many signs on Pitzer's campus by the Cheyenne-Arapaho artist, Edgar Heap of Birds, which recognizes the local Tongva nation's presence, language and connection to the land.

College program, volunteering at the Sherman Indian School in Riverside, participating in the Intertribal Educational Consortium of area Tribes and colleges/universities, assisting the Tongva room and historical garden at the Cooper Regional History Museum in Upland, bringing Native high school students to the National Indian Educational Association annual conference, creating opportunities for students to assist and learn from with elders, providing special hosting for Native youth visiting campus, and other projects. A number of different classes that recognize Indigenous knowledge systems and infuse

this into our largely Western curriculum have been created and taught, such as Tessa Hicks Peterson’s “Healing Ourselves, Healing Our Communities” and Gina Lamb’s “Media Arts for Social Justice.” Perhaps most importantly, through these collaborations we have collectively been participating in and growing our individual and collective relationships with local Indigenous peoples. As asserted elsewhere (Steinman 2011), we believe this is a huge value in and of itself; building bridges across deep divides both manifests new ways of relating across difference as well as creates opportunities for further dialogue, understanding and community-directed collaboration.

A number of challenges and themes have continually reappeared in the course of these efforts. Many of the most complicated—but illuminating—challenges lead to, and indeed require, critical self-scrutiny and reflection by Pitzer students, faculty and staff. This is because education itself has long been an element of the colonial domination of Indigenous peoples. American higher education, the very institution that we are part of, is, as with every other level of American education, deeply imbued by notions and practices that are *settler colonial* in nature. Settler colonialism is a type of colonialism that is less oriented towards subjugation and exploitation of Indigenous labor in order to extract of minerals and wealth, but rather involves the reproduction of ongoing home societies in the “new” territory. In order to do this, the displacement and elimination of Indigenous peoples is necessary; these are the primary principles and modes of settler colonial societies. While it has long been occluded by national narratives emphasizing the American Revolution and the break from England, growing scholarship has helped clarify that the United States is in fact a settler colonial society, as “the whole *internal* history of United States imperialism was one vast process of territorial seizure and occupation” (Jones 1972:216-17; emphasis in original). While no longer a foreign colony, the whole existence of the United States is built upon the dispossession, killing and denial of Indigenous nations, hundreds whom have nonetheless survived and avoided their assigned fate of the “vanishing Indian” fading into the past. Settler colonial societies generate education that denies the existence of prior civilized occupants of the land, denigrates the Indigenous cultures as inferior and/or heathen, and asserts the universal applicability and supremacy of its educational goals and values. From abstract ideas to the nuts and bolts of institutional procedures, education has been an arena of tremendous cultural clash in the United States, a clash that historically has been resolved through the unquestioned, disruptive imposition of

Eurocentric criteria, knowledge, epistemologies and policies onto Indigenous peoples. Tensions involving culture, education, colonization and decolonization have repeatedly emerged, and sometimes erupted, in the course of our community engagement with local Indigenous peoples. Below we discuss three of these tensions.

## Tensions between the idea of “service” and unsettling settlers

As noted in scholarship in the interdisciplinary field of *community-based service learning* (CBSL), the notion of service as a relationship in which members of a (assumedly healthy) community help members of another (assumedly needy and implicitly dysfunctional) community is based on, and may recreate, power inequalities and dependency. This field has embraced the broader notion of *community engagement* as one that is less linked to notions of paternalism and the implicit affirmation of hegemonic norms and hierarchies. Our collaborations with Indigenous peoples consciously draw upon this broader conception; while we have engaged in what can be understood as service, we have attempted to continuously and critically interrogate the concept, our role and our evolving relationships. In addition to working in support of tribal communities’ projects, however, we have found it necessary to reverse the focus of our efforts to a significant degree. That is, while we have directed energy and attention to specific projects in response to community requests and input, we have also found it essential to challenge the ignorance and misperceptions about American Indians that exists among faculty, staff and students at Pitzer and the Claremont Colleges. Like the general population, members of the Claremont Colleges community know little about tribal sovereignty, the hundreds of distinct American Indian nations, the fact that tribal members are not simply racial-ethnic minorities, and other crucial information.

The existence of ignorance and misperceptions is not at all unique to Pitzer or Claremont, but it is nonetheless a huge obstacle to community partnerships and the learning and change that they can facilitate. Bluntly put, predominant beliefs about the United States are saturated with colonialist assumptions. Ideas of manifest destiny, the understanding that historical “progress” has (inevitably) and unidirectionally been led by Europeans, the idea that Indians are people of the past rather than the present or future, and the belief that Indians lacked (and still lack) their own science, technology and epistemology are just some of the

most prominent and inescapable ideas that inform students, staff and faculty by virtue of being part of a settler colonial society built upon the denial of Indigenous nationhood and civilization.

For these reasons, one of the first major steps we took was to generate opportunities for students not only to “serve” Indigenous peoples, but to learn from them in ways that would initiate and aid the process of students’ own cognitive and emotional decolonization. An essential element of our overall project, in tandem with the support for community projects, is thus the ongoing “unsettling” of Pitzer community members, starting with the basic—yet complex and symbolically loaded—question of “Do you know whose land we are on (and if not, why not)?” Towards this end, we have instituted an “Unsettling the Settler” first-year seminar and other courses engaging in decolonization, organized a guest elder speaking series allowing students to interact informally with elders, supported a mural representing Tongva history (organized by adjunct sociology professor Anthony Francoso), aided visiting artist Edgar Heap of Birds’ creation of “Native Host” signs on the Pitzer campus depicting Tongva place names (in a project organized by art professor Bill Anthes), and have exposed Pitzer students to numerous community events where they simply encounter the reality of vibrant Indigenous nations and communities.

While many American Indian peoples are nearby, numerous forces have created a great divide between the Claremont Colleges and the local Indigenous Nations and communities. To try to begin overcoming these divides, we organized conferences promoting Tribal Community-University collaborations in 2009 and 2010, inviting a mix of tribal officials, community members and academics. We organized American Indian film festivals in 2008 and 2009. To partially correct the settler colonial erasure of Indigenous knowledge and to keep trying to build bridges and relationships, we organized a conference on “Native Science” in the spring of 2013. While all of these efforts have had significant success, each has had to overcome countless barriers rooted in distrust, ignorance and Eurocentrism, which in turn can be traced to the hundreds of years of colonial domination that continues in various forms today. Throughout, we have been reminded that Pitzer is not simply the positive force for social change and justice that we often imagine it to be, but it is part of a field (education) that is the scene of impassioned, political and personal decolonizing struggle.

## Tensions between community-centered and academic values and frameworks

Many values and procedures that define academia are at odds with values and protocols that predominate among the Indigenous peoples that we work with. For example, in the academy knowledge is segmented and cultivated in distinct disciplines, knowledge and status are gained or demonstrated by formal certification (degrees), and rationalized (de-personalized) bureaucratic procedures are utilized to do everything from scheduling a van to requesting payment of an honorarium. These aspects of Western academia are routinely and deeply in tension with how things are valued and how things proceed among Indigenous communities, and especially among those most identified with “traditional” culture. In such contexts, knowledge is integrated rather than segmented, individuals become valued knowledge holders through a nonlinear process involving direct personal transmission of knowledge rather than through standardized or formal training, and participating in personal relationships is the appropriate way to respectfully and effectively take action. There are numerous such cultural tensions: strongly demarked academic time constructs (be it class time slots, semesters, or grant proposal cycles) differ from the continuity of community concerns and the important moments of time’s (not necessarily linear) unfolding; the profound Indigenous respect for elders is a stark contrast to the youth-centric values carried by our students; and so on.

At various moments, each and any one of these and additional incongruities can present significant challenges for us and other faculty, staff and students interacting with local Indigenous partners. Some challenges are more sensitive and complicated than others, however, in navigating these cross-cultural encounters. Perhaps more than any other issue, tensions regarding Western/academic individualism versus Indigenous community orientations and accountability create strains that are manifested in countless ways. While Western academia overwhelmingly values individual accomplishment for both professors and students, Indigenous frameworks include a foundational relationality in which individuals are always seen as part of varying circles of relationships, and to which they are accountable. Most simply put, the point of learning, teaching and creating knowledge is not personal achievement (even legitimated by the idea of advancing scientific knowledge), and nor is the process an individual one. Rather, as eloquently conveyed by Shawn Wilson in *Research is Ceremony*:

*Indigenous Research Methods*, these processes are about honoring relationships and being responsive to community needs (Wilson 2008).

Operating across this cultural divide is not simply a neutral encounter of “difference,” of course. The context is one in which Western/American individualism is continuously and coercively promoted, reflecting conscious and unconscious assimilationist beliefs and values. Part of how American individualism operates in the academy is that faculty, staff and students are often not aware of how individualistic their cognitive frameworks and motivating concerns are. Nor are they aware that there are alternative approaches. When students and faculty are working dynamically with tribal members on projects and tasks, this can lead to the former feeling inappropriately empowered. One result is that in the fragile and sometimes fluid balance of following community guidance and direction while also exercising one’s own agency in a collaborative context, members of academic communities frequently feel individually sanctioned to make decisions that are in fact upsetting to community partners expecting more continuous consultation and accountability. Put differently, the idea that students and faculty can’t simply do what they want in community contexts is a very foreign notion, and assumptions of individual agency are unconscious and unquestioned (even when directly and explicitly challenged).

In contrast to the taken-for-granted individualism of academia, tribal and Indigenous community leaders are frequently highly aware of, and critically concerned about, the gap between norms of community control and pervasive individualism. Every possible collaboration with academics, no matter what the stated intention and apparent good will, can turn out to be a vehicle for individual academic advancement with a corresponding diminishment of communal good or a loss of community input or control. As demonstrated in many shameful examples, the scientific advance of (Western) knowledge has been used to justify all kinds of deceitful, exploitive and damaging activities by scholars. The possibility of faculty (or students) “bending” or revising projects to facilitate personal advancement (even though the advancement of science) is further amplified by the institutional incentives and structures that reward some types of projects. The nature of institutional funding and support encourages academics to find ways to separate, simplify and “tidy up” complex and deeply interrelated dynamics into discrete projects and outcomes. Linear projects with identifiably discrete

results that can be accomplished on externally generated grant/project timelines, and which address a discrete dimension under the control of researchers or “service-learners,” are more likely to find support. It is quite rare to have support for projects that are truly accountable to communities, work on their timelines, are responsive as events unfold in unanticipated ways, and address the interconnected elements of communities healing from centuries of multidimensional colonial wounds.



Members of the Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe (Ohlone) in their traditional regalia, ready to start ceremony.

Tribal and community awareness of the individualism-community accountability gap, in the context of a long history of academic exploitation fueled by both individualistic self-interest and scientific ethnocentrism, creates significant obstacles to any collaboration. It makes building and deepening trust a challenging and long-term process. Trying to generate significant projects and demonstrate measureable results or “impacts” on one- or two-year time frames is a tall order against a backdrop of generations of distrust, domination and colonialist ethnocentrism in which schools, schooling and knowledge were a frontline means of “killing the Indian” in order to “save the man.” Many families still have memories of individuals who were sent off to boarding schools and who never came back or came back very confused about how to be a tribal member. Cumulatively, these cultural and historical challenges highlight how collaborations with Indigenous nations and communities appears to be a high-risk venture requiring at least a medium or long-term

commitment. Investment of much time and energy is required; meaningful “success” is uncertain.

## Romanticization of Indigenous people and cultures, and community voice

Bringing Pitzer’s overwhelmingly non-Indigenous—and counter-culturally minded—student population into contact with local Indigenous peoples creates very real possibilities for romanticization and a host of related complications, including cultural appropriation. As part of colonization, Europeans (and subsequent Euro-Americans) constructed striking and limiting ideas of American Indians as “noble savages.” While the noble savage discourse elevates some aspects of the imputed qualities of American Indians, it functions to conceal and deny the complexity of Indian cultures (even apart from the treatment of all American Indians as one undifferentiated category). The idea of the noble savage also serves to mystify the actual and specific Native cultures and practices that are most linked to the valorized (and generalized) traits. For example, many Americans are interested in American Indians’ spirituality and relationship to nature, topics also linked to the notion of the “ecological Indian,” constructed in the image of Western environmentalism. Such admirers are inclined to see these qualities as inherent, mystical and abstracted from material needs and less pristine dimensions of life. In contrast, our community partners (and many other sources) convey that spirituality and relationships to the environment are grounded in practical concerns, generations of empirical observations about natural processes, and communities’ site-specific participation in the natural world.

The elders and communities we work with have generously shared many cultural teachings and experiences with our students. Always in the background, however, are concerns about the countless types of cultural appropriation that American Indians frequently experience, and which are tremendously damaging. This is a difficult topic for us to monitor and address with our students. We support students’ cultural curiosity and the fact that many of them are “seekers” on a journey of growth that involves spiritual dimensions. At the same time, a singular interest in Indian spirituality is tremendously off-putting for many tribal peoples. For the community members we work with, spirituality is rooted in generations of belief and practices, is an obligation to their ancestors and future generations, and thus is a burden as well as a blessing. Its

practices, symbols and meanings cannot readily be understood in a short-term encounter (whether that is one semester or five years). Native spirituality and culture is embedded in and part of mundane facts of life, not just “mystical” moments, and cannot be extracted from communal context and the other dimensions of lived experience.

We attempt to prepare students for appropriate cultural engagement. We expose them to Native critiques and discussions of cultural appropriation. We provide them with specific guidelines and cultural protocols. We impress upon them that they are not simply acting as themselves, but that they are Pitzer ambassadors who have opportunities due to past culturally respectful efforts by Pitzer faculty, staff and students. We also tell them the whole relationship between Pitzer and community partners can be undermined, or even destroyed, by a single student acting in offensive and thoughtless ways. In our experience, we have found that some students are very resistant to any constraints or specific behavioral expectations, regardless of how culturally appropriate these are and how strongly we flag these concerns. We are always aware of the significant potential for encounters that will discredit us and diminish whatever degree of respect and trust we have built up with our community partners. Our reputation—and the doors that open based on it—is only as good as the most problematic student behavior.

Issues of romanticization and the representation of Indigenous people, culture and history are even more complex than simply exhorting students to be continuously self-reflective about the stereotypes and interests they bring and to act with immense respect. As numerous scholars have usefully discussed, Indigenous people sometimes represent themselves in ways that seem aligned with stereotypes reflecting the discourse of noble savages or, more frequently, the ecological Indian. Sometimes this only appears to be the case, as our non-Indigenous preconceptions are so strongly shaped by noble savage and ecological Indian ideas that we miss the more specific, nuanced and sophisticated cultural message, teaching or account. At other times, some community members do invoke positive aspects of popular stereotypes. These are very interesting moments that create self-reflection about the nature of our respective and multiple identities (for example being both a teacher of Pitzer students and a learner in relation to American Indians’ experiences and beliefs) and the multiple dimensions of learning (analytical, historical, emotionally integrative, etc.) that may be occurring for students at any one time. What is our role in such instances, and how

should we navigate and support student learning, community members' expression and authority, the relationship between Pitzer and community members that is being manifested at that moment, our own learning (and socio-emotional presence), as well as other processes?



Two students – Eugene Salgado (Pechanga) and Isabel Satala (Navajo) – work on their baskets during a Basket Weaving Workshop during the 2013 Native American Summer Pipeline to College Program.

Some of the beliefs and factors we contemplate in such moments are the deep need for our students to hear Indigenous voices and representations; the desire for Indigenous peoples to be able to be authorities and exercise their agency in relation to university groups; the tremendously lopsided and truth-denying nature of (Euro-American) representational power throughout the history of American settler society, and reflections on the number of times we allow misrepresentations and omissions regarding Indigenous people by faculty or other academic figures to go unchallenged. We also move back and forth across different registers of goals and agendas—from academic interest in critical thinking and vigorous debate to a more integrative desire for students to fully grasp how profoundly American Indians cultural perspectives do differ from predominant and taken-for-granted conceptions. In the end, we trust that any given student cannot grasp everything at every moment, and that promoting critical thinking and placing students in complex community encounters is what we can do to facilitate their growth, development and capacity to act. Rather than insisting on a singular truth in relation to

stereotypes, or regarding any community issue that is vigorously contested, we do our best to ensure respectful interactions in the present, while having faith that over time they will consider, reflect upon and integrate the varying information they encounter. Towards this end, we attempt to be present ourselves in ways that honor and meet the personal connection that our community partners bring, and expect in return. Without abandoning the responsibilities accompanying our positions, we try not to be limited to them; while we are professors and tribal liaisons, we simultaneously aspire to be readily perceptible as part of the circle of humanity and as such, learning beings who are open, connected to all our relations and present with those around us. While we are not always able to be equally present in all of these roles and dimensions, these are the qualities that we value and that our community partners have consistently taught us.

### Conclusion: Appreciation, Expanding Circles and Looking Ahead

Given all the tensions and challenges confronting attempts to work across the divides we identify above, we are incredibly grateful that so many individuals have given so much to these efforts. Many Native elders and leaders, starting with Robertjohn Knapp, have—after significant scrutiny—been remarkably open to dialogue, brainstorming and collaborations. Most generously, they welcomed us into many circles and networks that otherwise would have been not only unavailable, but also unknown to us. While we don't have room to thank all the individuals, Tony Cerda, Barbara Drake, Julia Bogany, Cindi Alvitre and Deron Marquez are just a few of the many other community members who have consistently worked with us closely over years.

While Environmental Analysis faculty Paul Faulstich and Melinda Herrold-Menzies and International and Intercultural Studies professor Joe Parker in particular had been bringing a number of local elders to campus before we began our efforts—establishing relationships which greatly aided our subsequent relationship-building—an even wider range and larger number of local Indigenous people have now attended campus events and have become familiar with the Pitzer community. It is also important for us to note that at crucial moments early in our work together, then Dean of Faculty Alan Jones made decisions to support these efforts, and this helped us build enough momentum and a track record to enter into subsequent collaborations and also to pursue other needed resources. Relationships are the

foundation of our collective efforts, but resources are also required; we appreciate those who have supported these efforts with aid of various kinds. We have been able to continue our efforts only because of ongoing material support from Pitzer that, while relatively modest in scale, is absolutely crucial. In general, we've found Pitzer to be a remarkably open and encouraging environment for the projects we have undertaken. Faculty, administrators, staff and, of course, students have been both encouraging and also willing to consider what are sometimes unfamiliar frameworks and projects. We are all the more delighted in this fact given that Pitzer and the Claremont Colleges in general have had a small number of American Indian students during this time period, and that there is no American Indian Studies program.

It is important to note here that during the last two years an active Indigenous Student Association has emerged, and has helped initiate an effort to advocate for an American Indian Studies program at the colleges. We are excited about this possibility, and have been supportive of this effort. We are also pleased that there is a widely shared understanding among the involved faculty, staff and students that any such program should embrace community engagement in its founding principles; this notion is also reflected in the overall field of American Indian and Indigenous studies. We are also eager to support the recruitment of American Indian students, given that we can provide some support for them and help connect them to elders and community resources and networks. But as we make clear above, working with and learning about American Indian issues is not only for Indian students; it holds tremendous insights and critical lessons for all, and especially those socialized in the American settler society.

The circle of faculty, staff and students involved in small and large ways in these relationships and collaborations continues to expand; we increasingly are interconnected with other circles here at the colleges, in Southern California and beyond. For us personally, our interests and relationships have led us to put increasing attention on learning from and being part of Indigenous efforts that reach across borders to engage in community renewal and revitalization. In particular, we are enthusiastic about efforts to acknowledge and incorporate Indigenous knowledge that are unfolding from Victoria, Canada, to Los Angeles to Mexico to Ecuador. We have well-established or emergent relationships with Indigenous community members and academic institutions in each of those places and are inspired

by the tremendous activity and cross-fertilization that we are fortunate enough to learn about firsthand. We hope to continue to be part of these and other circles and efforts.

We are deeply grateful simply that we have been able to sustain these evolving collaborations and relationships, and that collectively we have had some real impacts. Many significant challenges have been overcome. Many students have had deeply impactful learning experiences that have directed them towards new intellectual, vocational and personal directions. Some students have sustained interest in Indigenous issues and have sought additional opportunities to learn and to be respectfully supportive of and involved in Indigenous communities. Many projects have come into being, or have advanced closer to community wishes, through our collaborations. Literally and metaphorically, gardens have been dug, and flowers have grown. Importantly, local Indigenous people have become more visibly present at and comfortable on Pitzer's campus. Hopefully, the many barriers that have separated Pitzer and the Claremont Colleges from local Indian communities are now lower due to our collective and cumulative efforts. As versions of the challenges and tensions we have identified above are found throughout academic-community relations in general, rather than being unique to Pitzer, we do think that Pitzer is an uncommonly favorable context in which to productively and thoughtfully grapple with them. Pitzer is a wonderful platform for launching community engagements and collaborations that aspire to uncommonly rich learning and relational possibilities, in part because of the obstacles inhering in the respective projects. The tensions identified above have not undermined our desire to collaborate with American Indian community partners. Rather, they make the positive collaborations all the more poignant, and add greater depth to the transformations that do occur.

## References

- Jones, G. S. (1972). The history of US imperialism, in R. Blackburn, (Ed.), *Ideology in Social Science: Readings in Critical Social Theory*. New York: Pantheon.
- Steinman, E. (2011). Alternatives to service, and "Making Space": Lessons from collaborations with tribal nations. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 18 (Fall): 5-18.
- Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

## Gina Lamb's Reflective Review of Erich Steinman and Scott Scoggins' Essay

I really appreciate Erich Steinman and Scott Scoggins' article for clearly articulating many of the concerns I have encountered while working with local Native American groups in community engagement coursework for the past five years, and at the same time, it reminds me of the self-critical vigilance that must be in place when developing long-term relationships/exchanges with Indigenous peoples. I think this article should be required reading for any faculty member or student who is thinking of working with Indigenous communities, since they have thoughtfully and carefully considered so many layers of complexity that arise in attempting to develop relationships between Eurocentric teaching institutions, faculty and students, with tribal communities. Positioning his article from the perspective of "unsettling the settlers" is key, first for recognizing the institution of Western education being inextricably linked to colonialism and Eurocentric knowledge power structures and to realize that even within a liberal arts institution that prides itself in "progressive thinking," there is still an immense amount of work to do to "unsettle" our ideas about Indigenous cultures and to recognize the impact of our past on our present relationships with community. This article is an excellent start for raising awareness about both the difficulties and the need that exist to build relationships with the aim of starting the healing process from our colonialist past.

Erich and Scott rightfully remind us that one of the more difficult shifts we have to make in working with Indigenous cultures is the idea that individual research promoting linear and discreet projects meted out on institutional time frames do not mesh with working with horizontal community structures that value trust built over significant time and through interaction with the entire community. And besides our relationships to tribes themselves, Erich and Scott also bring a needed critical stance to the notion of "service learning" itself. I have always been uncomfortable with this term, since we all have a role to play as teachers *and* learners in the classroom and as we engage with community. I find working with Indigenous communities, we often come away learning and receiving more benefit than we are

able to offer. So critical reflection of co-intentional learning needs to be key in the planning process along with a commitment to long-term relationship building.

Erich and Scott also bring up an important point that much work on the front end needs to be done for students to understand current struggles of Indigenous cultures. Most students express knowing little to nothing about local tribes and current Native American struggles. I, too, knew little of the history of California tribes and the diversity of cultures that exist in this state until I began working with local tribal nations. I was inspired to do this work through the connections that Erich and Scott had already begun to build at Pitzer and often went to both of them with questions and seeking resources. Through the programming that Erich and Scott have brought to campus, we have had many opportunities to be enriched by interaction of local Indigenous elders (students, faculty and staff) enlightening us about contemporary struggles of discrimination and health service disparities, language and cultural reclamation, sovereignty issues, along with Native philosophy, science, film and ceremony. This work has led to the development the Pitzer College summer two-week college bridge program for Native American high school students and an on-campus Native American student alliance. I am excited to see this work laying a foundation for transforming Pitzer's relationship to Indigenous communities. The suggestion of beginning with acknowledging Indigenous peoples by asking students the question of "Do you know whose land we are on?" is a simple but a profoundly unsettling start to a conversation of human and land rights and our connection to identity and place. I believe that acknowledgement of the Tongva people and land should be printed in every syllabus at Pitzer College and appreciate Bill Anthes for bringing the installation work of Edgar Heap of Birds to campus to assist with unsettling us daily with his Tongva place signage. Finally, I want to thank Erich and Scott for offering us a critical and informed place from which to consider our work with Indigenous communities and for holding up a mirror that "unsettles" our gaze to the core of our identity.

# When Media Activism, Teaching and LGBT Youth Rights Intersect

Gina Lamb, Visiting Assistant Professor of Media Studies

The struggle of equal rights for the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community is one of the most important civil rights issues of our times. As more and more states and foreign countries are legalizing gay marriage and this topic continues to be a national political hot button discussion, most Americans are familiar with the issue regardless of where they stand politically. Bullying and teen suicide have also received considerable press in the past two years with Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth often the target of discrimination in schools. Thanks to media campaigns like “It Gets Better,” more attention is being paid to begin making LGBTQ inclusive and safe classrooms across the nation. Needless to say, LGBTQ rights are an essential topic for inclusion in any learning environment today. Still, there is a dearth of attention in mainstream media and most educational settings to the additional complexity of struggles that affect low income, gay and transgender youth of color. This fact has led me to make working with these populations a focus of my media arts praxis and teaching for the past 14 years. As an artist activist who teaches media in both institutional academic and community settings, I have always had a desire to fuse these two worlds (academy/community) in an attempt connect youth in both contexts with the purpose of initiating collaborative participatory media projects that raise consciousness for all participants involved and function as antidotes to mainstream media by making visible what is missing, stories that are systematically excluded, and to do this in the context of a learning environment. I have been fortunate to teach at an institution, Pitzer



Gina Lamb, MASJ students Chris McClaren and Steven Liang and REACH LA youth artists Genne Scott, Maria Cruz, Daniel Flores, Catey McSweeney, Enzo Ybarra, and Alfredo Garcia presenting videos at OUTFEST – Queer Youth Nation Program

College, that supports community engagement and encourages the design of innovative curriculum, while simultaneously directing media arts programming at a youth arts-in-action nonprofit in downtown Los Angeles, REACH LA (Realistic Education in Action Coalition to Foster Health).

In 2000, I began working full time at REACH LA (RLA), a youth-driven nonprofit organization, dedicated to educating, motivating and mobilizing urban youth to improve their own lives and their

communities. Areas of focus include holistic health strategies of HIV prevention and reproductive health. The artists who founded REACH LA in 1992 fully recognized at its inception that encouraging youth to participate in creative arts production, leadership and personal growth projects, is necessary for youth to care enough about themselves to practice strategies to stay healthy during their transition to young adulthood. Soon after starting at RLA, I opened a digital arts and technology lab for inner-city youth that did not have other access to multi-media creative publishing tools. Projects ranged from printed magazines, websites, videos, online public theater, local and international video/web exchanges and multi-media dance party HIV outreach events, all produced for youth by youth. A growing percentage of the youth artist participants were either LGBT or questioning, and it became apparent that there was a real desire and need specifically for LGBTQ youth to have a safe creative space to gather. A space that did not count them as an infection, or statistic, and a space that was arts driven, making it different from the more abundant social service driven nonprofits that provided counseling for LGBTQ youth built around mental health and HIV prevention, but didn't necessarily include outlets for creative expression. REACH LA was a place that "out" and questioning youth could go to simply explore and develop their creative impulses through media arts projects without having to first to identify as LGBTQ. RLA is different, precisely because it was founded by artists with a mission to collaborate with youth on every level of conception and design to produce innovative community peer health interventions. Subsequently, the majority of staff at RLA is made up of high school and college-age youth, who serve as peer educators, workshop facilitators, outreach coordinators and even board members.

LGBTQ youth dealing with coming out and the complexities surrounding developing identities and handling the politics of representation are difficult struggles to say the least. Then add to this list poverty, racial discrimination, education and healthcare disparities, homelessness, recent immigration, non-citizen status, drug abuse, HIV and Hepatitis C infection and suicide attempts, and you have broad demographic "risk" picture (albeit out of individual focus) of the LGBTQ youth population from central Los Angeles. Building trust and creating a known safe space to accomplish creative work with vulnerable youth communities is key and requires good listening skills during sustained long-term relationships that allow time to understand the complexities and depth of struggle within

groups that are misrepresented or simply invisible in mainstream consciousness. Utilizing new media tools in collaboration with marginalized populations for projects exploring identity and self representation is a challenge in sensitivity programming, but is worth the effort, as personal storytelling can be a powerful tool for building queer and ally communities and can serve as means for group catharsis and positive affirmation of identities that do not flourish under hegemonic societal norms. This type of work needs to be handled in a safe environment that respects individual voice and is prepared with linked resources to support youth in the event that deep emotions bubble up to the surface.

Working with LA's youth communities for the last 30 years as a social practice media artist in a variety of residencies and non-profit settings has made it possible for me to develop long-term trust relationships with specific youth cultural groups and in turn has sparked a series of meaningful collaborations with Pitzer College media studies students through my teaching community engagement courses there for the past 13 years.

## Reel Ghetto Queer – video storytelling with LGBTQ youth of color

In 2001, one of the RLA youth artists/staff Ana Lopez (17 years old) had an idea to start a video production workshop, called *Reel Ghetto Queer*, specifically meant to serve LGBTQ youth and allies. About the time of starting this production workshop at REACH LA, I was teaching as an adjunct professor at Pitzer College in media studies and just developing a new community engagement course called Media Arts for Social Justice (MASJ). This course was designed for students to take their media skills and resources of the College out into the community and collaborate with nonprofit organizations and community coalitions to create visibility pieces, social issue documentaries, project websites or whatever media was needed and decided on in conversations with the site participants. REACH LA became one of the first MASJ sites, and the *Reel Ghetto Queer* video workshop was a perfect fit for Pitzer media studies students and RLA youth to collaboratively develop new media projects. For eight years, we had two to four Pitzer students working with RLA every academic semester and during summer internships, "co-teaching" the *Reel Ghetto Queer* workshops. Each workshop began with creative writing exercises that everyone participated in, and these written works were developed into personal and experimental video projects. It was not so



Gina Lamb and Tyrone Carter presenting "I'm Still Here: Becoming Legendary" at Outfest's Fusion of LGBT People of Color Film Festival.

much Pitzer students "teaching" REACH LA youth, but more of a proximal two-way learning process with projects ideas initiated by RLA youth and different levels of learning taking place from both sides throughout the production, editing and public presentation process. The collaboration between Pitzer media students and REACH LA youth artists was a natural fit; both were using video as tool for experimentation and self-expression built around identity issues, this being a common theme for youth ages 15 to 24 and was true for both these groups.

Observing the working dynamic between groups, I found that the REACH LA youth were generally producing more individualistic and poignant levels of creative work, since they were not afraid to express deep personal revelations due to the intimate and more singularly focused nature of the RLA environment (many came to the lab daily and were in high school or recently graduated and not attending college).

On the other hand, Pitzer College students were coming from a more structured academic setting with time-consuming schedules, balancing multiple subject areas. They brought advanced technical knowledge and creative storytelling strategies along with newly learned cultural studies theory that they were often eager to put into practice. Pitzer students provided a bridge into college life, since many of the RLA youth were from first-generation immigrant households with no previous college experience. RLA youth modeled leadership through community action and learning outside of the formal academic

setting, which was new to many Pitzer students. Both groups benefitted from visiting artists at REACH LA, including Adriene Jenik and Lisa Brenneis, founders of Desktop Theater, and Sara Harris from Youth Radio, who were breaking ground in the use of online DIY media for storytelling. Finally, a two-way "pipeline" of sorts developed between RLA and Pitzer: so far one we have had one youth from the REACH LA workshops move on to graduate with a BA from Pitzer and is currently pursuing a graduate degree in film school at UCLA, and several Pitzer students ended up working at REACH LA after graduation, as their first job in the nonprofit sector.

The *Reel Ghetto Queer* Workshop was also partnered with Outfest (the longest running LGBT Film Festival) as a built-in screening outlet for the finished videos. We produced a 90-minute video shorts program, *Queer Youth Nation*, for Outfest annually, showcasing six to eight films from the RLA workshop, along with other LGBTQ youth shorts we solicited from across North America. So it was exciting for both RLA youth and Pitzer students to participate in a major film festival for the first time as both filmmakers and curators and to be provided full access passes as directors! Some of the REACH LA youth became participants on the OUTFEST curatorial committees, and two Pitzer students were hired on as staff by Outfest. The RLA youth directors and audiences for their work actually had a significant impact on the racial demographic of OUTFEST and impacted the age demographic of Fusion (Outfest's LGBT people of color festival) and, thereby, played a role in Outfest's shift to more inclusive and diverse programming.

The *Real Ghetto Queer* workshop and MASJ also partnered with Friends of Project 10 and the Los Angeles Unified School District to assist with implementing California State Assembly Bill AB 537 for school safety, which is the first school code in the nation to include protection from discrimination regardless of (real or perceived) sexual orientation and/or gender identity. REACH LA youth and Pitzer students collaborated with me on producing a documentary video that portrayed the stories of LGBTQ youth, their siblings and children of gay parents, who had experienced discrimination in K-12 public education. The video, titled *Hear Me Out*, was screened for teachers and staff members in all LAUSD middle and high schools as a component of the Project 10 AB 537 training. This collaboration moved *Reel Ghetto Queer* and MASJ from advocating through personal LGBTQ visibility videos to directly impacting change within Los Angeles City schools.

## Young Black Gay Men's Lives Matter

One of REACH LA's main funding streams comes through the LA County Public Health Division of HIV and STD Programs to provide HIV prevention for LA youth populations. One of the highest risk populations in LA County for new HIV infections is young gay and bisexual men of color and, in particular, young African American men. Due to REACH LA's past successes working with LA youth populations, the organization was asked by LA County to target this population with HIV education, counseling and services (and later HIV testing), serving at least 800 youth each year. Although RLA had proven experience working with LGBTQ youth of color, suddenly connecting with 800 young black gay and bisexual men, specifically, was a huge challenge. We knew that a large segment of this community was already socially organized around the West Coast House and Ball scene—a creative community built around fashion and voguing (dance) competition. Working with the creative energy and talent in this scene was an exciting prospect for REACH LA, but needed inside knowledge and organizational commitment. REACH LA was approached by legendary Sean Milan, of House and Ball, who had concerns about the organization's approach to bridging HIV as a topic with the West Coast scene. Sean originally worked with REACH LA as a volunteer consultant and brought in other H&B leaders such as Father Taz Ultra Omni to build trust and legitimacy within the scene. Sean advised on the development of REACH LA's young men's HIV Leadership program and organized REACH LA's first "Ovahness Ball" as an HIV prevention outreach event. Sean stayed on to become part of the REACH LA staff and Greg Wilson, of the House of Ultra Omni, was hired soon after.

The very next project we proposed was a collaborative documentary with the West Coast Ball scene. Up until that time, there had not been a significant documentary about the Ball scene in California, and we wanted produce a video that would go beyond the highlights of runway competition to address HIV/AIDS as a growing problem in this demographic. Three Pitzer students from the Media Arts for Social Justice course worked as co-producers and camera crew attending balls with RLA staff to conduct on site interviews. Additionally, each student was paired with a community poet to produce three short interstitial video pieces on being "still here" as a creative frame for the final documentary, *I'm Still Here Becoming Legendary*. It was an intensive and immersive

experience for myself, and the students involved, learning firsthand about ball culture with its unique visual aesthetic, powerful dance energy and the "house structure," a means to organize competitive teams, as well as serve as alternative families for H&B youth that may have been rejected by their biological families.

For gay youth, balls are an escape from the daily struggles of being a black gay male in a society that is hostile to their very bodily existence. The documentary project combined RLA's creative writing skills with Pitzer's advanced experimental editing techniques to produce work that was greater than the sum of its parts. The resulting documentary premiered at the Fusion LGBT Film Festival to a standing-room-only crowd drawn from the House and Ball scene and won the festival's Audience Favorite Award. Surprisingly, it was also the first exchange between Outfest/Fusion and LA's House and Ball scene and led to many future collaborations with these two groups and RLA. *I'm Still Here Becoming Legendary* went on to screen internationally at film festivals and led to RLA developing a strong relationship with the Ball scene, as everyone involved recognized the importance documenting the West Coast scene for both its historical value and as a means to reflect on state of the Ball community at that moment. Finally, and most important, it served as a tool to begin conversations with House parents about possible pathways for Ball "kids" to lead healthier lives. So it was an exciting moment when 14 people from very different backgrounds came to work together in an intimately collaborative and organic process on a project that had resonance beyond the informational or educational value inherent in the work. The video had a large local audience due to the number of youth and adults that participated in the film and demonstrated that REACH LA was serious and willing to get out and talk to people in the Ball scene and listen to what they have to say. It has also served a useful tool to introduce future MASJ students to the Ball scene before commencing on new engagement projects.

Beyond this very successful first project, MASJ has continued to create projects with REACH LA, which now focuses its outreach efforts in the House and Ball community. Since that time, REACH LA has slowly built a strong reputation with the scene and stepped up its advocacy role by organizing the very first national level House and Ball Leadership Convening to address issues of HIV prevention, healthcare disparities and other factors that directly affect the wellbeing of the community and to develop

strategies for sustainable action through state to state agency collaboration. Three MASJ students spent four days documenting many of the top public health leaders in House/Ball during all sessions of the convening process. Two video documentaries came out of the gathering, edited by MASJ students working closely with RLA staff, resulting in a supplemental media pieces to accompany the white paper findings and connect the faces and passionate voices to the strategies outlined in text. This video documentation becomes an important archive of history-in-the-making.

Most recently, MASJ students have been producing talk shows with House and Ball youth. These raw storytelling documents are a departure from the more visible, common and, at the same time, exotic footage captured on cell phones and uploaded to YouTube of runway voguing battles from balls across the country, highlighting the incredible talent, fashion, hair and make-up in the scene. We rarely get to actually hear the voices of these youth, so the talk shows provide a much-needed platform for H&B youth to address their day-to-day struggles beyond runway in a way that youth in the scene can learn from and support each other outside of the cattiness present in the highly competitive runway events. Our first series of shows were called the *Ovahness Talk Show* ([www.youtube.com/ovahnesstv](http://www.youtube.com/ovahnesstv)), raising awareness about healthy relationships, dating within the scene, homophobia and or trans-phobia inside and outside the scene, body image, HIV/AIDS and more.

This year we are creating a new talk show, with ball voguing star and commentator Enyce Smith called *"Beyond the Runway"* ([www.beyondtherunway.weebly.com](http://www.beyondtherunway.weebly.com)), addressing positive strategies for handling life beyond the ball scene, especially problems that plague youth in the scene, such as prostitution, drugs, abuse, homelessness, HIV infection and credit card fraud or "crafting." One reason this show is significant is that Enyce's reputation within the scene gives him potential to attract a large audience, making him an effective role model as he attempts to build stability and success in his own life (in part through the creation of the show itself). It is significant for students at Pitzer to be exposed to the life stories of Ball Culture in an intimate, live setting; while filming and editing the talk shows, they are getting access to a cultural demographic that is, for the most part, invisible. Enyce himself has intimated to me that by hosting the show, he is saving himself, growing mentally and emotionally, while listening to the stories of the guests that he interviews, making him realize that he

is not alone in his own struggle to stay fed, housed, healthy and alive. This may sound a little dramatic, but this is a young man that has lost seven close friends, also in their 20s, in the past six months, due to terminal health problems.

All the RLA/MASJ projects attempt to directly counter the mainstream media's characterization of this community as a demographic "On the Down Low" who are dishonest predators blamed for infecting women with HIV (Oprah Winfrey, "A Secret Sex World: Living on the Down Low," ABC - 2004 and update show ABC - 2010; Peter Jennings, "Out of Control: The AIDS Epidemic in Black America," ABC-2006). These portrayals do not take into account the complexity of pressures on the black gay male identity and the institutionalized violence that leads to the fact that close to 50% of this population is HIV positive. The lack of universal healthcare means these young men are dying of AIDS at alarming rates; in fact, AIDS is the leading cause of death in black men ages 25-50, even with AIDS drugs widely available in this country. Meanwhile, we as a society incarcerate black males at six times the rate of white males (for the same offenses) and do not allow condoms in the prison system, since sexual activity is "not allowed." The lack of compassion and understanding that leads society to see these young men as predators is distressing and needs all of our attention in order to change this perception. So, in response, MASJ provides a production platform for young black men to speak for themselves, address their own community and tell their stories to a general public in hopes of reversing the stigmatization and creating empowering media documents that can begin a much-needed healing process within the community itself. MASJ students gain firsthand exposure to the impacts of mainstream media distortions and to the vitality and resiliency this community musters in the face of multiple levels of discrimination.

## Unheard Voices of Transgender Youth

REACH LA's HIV prevention and testing work has led to a close relationship with Children's Hospital LA's adolescent medicine and HIV services department. Youth that test positive through the RLA HIV testing initiatives are immediately scheduled into follow-up care services at CHLA. Through this collaboration, a relationship with CHLA and *Media Arts for Social Justice* developed with Bamby Salcedo, who leads the Transgender Youth Services Program within the Adolescent Medicine Department at CHLA. In addition to this organizational connection, some

of the youth participants in the *Reel Ghetto Queer* workshop also received health services at CHLA. MASJ students implemented a similar youth video workshop at CHLA, resulting in a documentary short called *The Unheard Voices of Transgender Youth* that speaks of daily misunderstanding and discrimination that trans youth endure and what it means to be young, transgender and in the process of transitioning. This video was screened at the Fusion Festival in LA and toured college campuses with the TransGiving Film Festival. At that time, there were very few videos made by trans youth of color speaking for themselves. Pitzer students and youth and staff from CHLA presented the video publically on festival panels and, to this day, this video receives, by far, the majority of views and predominately positive comments on the MASJ YouTube channel.

This response is an indication that the timing is right for an issue that needs to be in public sphere. From the initial workshops with CHLA, we developed two media projects with the TransLatina Coalition (also headed up by Bamby Salcedo), a PSA campaign on “writing-in” gender identities (beyond male/female designations) to have transgender and gender queer individuals counted in the 2010 Census to advocate for federal funding to support services in these communities. The second project was a documentary about illegal silicone injection becoming a serious health concern particularly in the Latina transgender community. This video, titled *Dying to Be A Woman*, was screened at the 2012 International AIDS Conference in Washington, DC, and due to the pressing need for an educational video about this topic, the Pan American Health Organization has offered to pay for mass duplication of this video and to distribute it internationally.

By working on this project, we (MASJ) were able to gain the knowledge to advocate for health insurers and providers to offer and cover costs of transition services, for doctors to be trained in transgender healthcare, and for broad acceptance and understanding of trans issues in general so that youth experiencing gender dysphoria can have the option to delay puberty, making the physical transition process less difficult. Finally, we are motivated to advocate for transgender youth (especially those that are of low income communities and often homeless) to have access to free healthcare, safe educational environments and comprehensive support network of caring adults.

## Media Arts for Social Justice ([www.media4justice.org](http://www.media4justice.org))

*Media Arts for Social Justice* is one of the more advanced media production courses offered at Pitzer, given that it requires students to exercise simultaneously interpersonal skills of collaboration and strong communication with both community participants and fellow classmates. MASJ students must negotiate issues of representation in communities that they are just becoming familiar with, and critically reflect on positions of authority versus vulnerability, academy versus community, and investigate knowledge power dynamics. Particular to working with youth is learning to listen with respect, practice flexibility with scheduling and patience when working on projects, demonstrate commitment to follow through on a project, build trust and provide encouragement—these are all essential parts of learning that an ethical process is more important than a final product. Students also need to be responsive to projects by learning new advanced production techniques in order to have in place the necessary technical skills to realize creative community visions, which, more often than not, considerably ups the level of skills the students have coming into the course. They are learning specific ethics of participatory documentary practice in utilizing release forms and often re-negotiating levels of consent by letting consent remain open-ended until projects are complete and everyone involved is happy with their final representation. Working on large documentary projects is not usually done in other courses, since students generally work individually, and Pitzer Media Studies is not able to support large volumes of projects of this complex nature. So, this is a chance for students to learn to organize multi-layered video documents into advocacy pieces that can be useful discussion tools in communities. Presenting and speaking on behalf of the work in film festival settings is an added benefit that builds student confidence and forces students to articulate and reflect on their own motivation and relationship to the projects topics and community participants. The projects with REACH LA and CHLA have also attracted LGBTQ students at Pitzer who have an opportunity to share their own stories and solidarity with the struggles of participant youth.

The students, community participants and organizations have the benefit of co-ownership of public outreach and media portfolio pieces when

the projects are finalized. Projects often take more than a year to complete, and since the College semester system is an arbitrary and brief time span for community documentary production, students are permitted to take the course for credit more than once and often do repeat the course to continue working with a community site and project they have become invested in. Students have told me that MASJ is one of the more challenging and time-consuming courses they have taken in their college experience, but also the most rewarding in terms of putting theory into practice and gaining real-life practical skills for post graduation transition and, finally, that they feel a sense of pride and co-ownership in projects that have positive impact in community.

In conclusion, this type of teaching may not be for everyone since it is time consuming and the work never stops, because the struggles continue and human/community networks grow in the process. But, through struggle emerges the opportunity to put academy resources toward affecting direct change in the communities in which we reside. It does require long-term (many years) commitment to actually create authentic relationships with community partners that are built on mutual trust and willingness to take chances to address hard issues in a way that respects all involved. The benefit is a shared learning experience of pursuing direct action on topics that would not reveal themselves in the course of a college semester, but ideas that build over time and feed off foundations of past projects and collaborations. I do not see engagement work as “extra work” from my contracted teaching responsibilities; I see it as a means to fold pedagogy into my practice as an community activist/artist, and that it actually enhances and refreshes my teaching practice in the classroom. Each project is a distinct challenge with a different set of possibilities for learning more about local communities and cultures while experiencing a more meaningful working relationship with my students by putting theory into practice and producing media projects that we co-author with community partners. I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the community partners, Martha Chono-Helsley, Carla Gordon, Sean Milan and Greg Wilson of REACH LA, and Bamby Salcedo of CHLA and TransLatina Coalition, for without them, and their belief in the educative process, this work would not be possible—a big thank you to some of the most amazing community leaders of our time. I am also continually inspired

by the dedication of the youth and students who unleash their vulnerability and open their minds to create change in their own lives their community. I actually see the connection of classroom and community as the primary motivating force behind my current desire to teach, moving my practice beyond “teaching job” to creative life vocation or “art as life.” Looking toward the larger picture, there is an ethical desire in my role as educator to consciously contribute to a media ecosystem that supports sustained visibility and new possibilities for culturally diverse storytelling within our larger and rapidly growing media sphere.

#### VIDEO LINKS:

[Queer Mexicana](#)

Reel Ghetto Queer

[Black Widow](#)

Reel Ghetto Queer

[Reel Ghetto Queer Workshop](#)

Interviews with Youth participants

[Hear Me Out](#)

Reel Ghetto Queer/Friends of Project 10 collaboration

[Ovahness Ball short with DeVaughn](#)

[I'm Still Here Becoming Legendary](#)

REACH LA/House & Ball/MASJ collaboration

[National House and Ball Convening](#)

National House and Ball collaboration

[Ovahness TV](#)

Relationships – House and Ball Youth

[Beyond the Runway](#)

House and Ball Youth

[Unheard Voices of Transgender Youth](#)

CHLA Transgender Youth

[Trailer for “Dying to be a Woman”](#)

TransLatina Coalition

## Erich Steinman's Reflective Review of Gina Lamb's Essay

In addition to enjoying learning in more detail about Gina Lamb's valuable community engaged projects, I was struck by a number of very uncommon qualities and dimensions that both make them fascinating and ensure they make critically needed pedagogical and community contributions. I also found many parallels and similarities to the community engaged projects that Scott Scoggins and I have been involved with. Throughout Gina's projects, the linkages between different levels of social processes—from individual to specific group to larger social dynamics—are wonderfully incorporated in educational and community praxis. This community- engaged work, and Gina's reflection about it, helps others get a glimpse of the interrelated social, emotional, creative, transformational and other processes that are often lost or pushed out of the picture when social issues and groups are framed and understood in limited, single dimensions. The youth Gina works with and American Indian youth—certainly overlapping groups—both face pervasively circulated, sharply limited and heavily stigmatized representations of them throughout society. In this context, I am inspired by the community projects that allow such youth to speak about their day-to-day lives and to tell their own stories. The video shorts, such as “Unheard Voices of Transgender Youth,” and the “Beyond the Runway” talk show, provide such specifically needed opportunities for youth agency and expression that simultaneously challenge hegemonic representations. The lives of youth who are queer, people of color, low-income and/or transgender take center stage in this body of work in a way that forces the observer, reader or participant in the video production process to move beyond segmented frameworks and grapple with, and appreciate, the challenging, complex and powerful lives lived at these intersections.

The projects Gina describes create and embody mutual respect between people occupying different social positions—such as college students and at-risk queer youth—and, as such, contain huge

lessons in and of themselves for all participants. The “two way learning process” that Gina describes feeds into both the more formally recognized learning process that students are part of as well as the integrated empowerment, self-affirmation and community building through which at-risk youth are simultaneously learning and transforming their own lives. I particularly appreciate this element of her projects, as those are exactly the qualities that Scott and I have sought to cultivate in the interactions that we facilitate between American Indian community members and Pitzer College students. The deep lesson that we all are teachers as well as learners, and can teach and learn from one another in all kinds of combinations, appears very apparent in her work.

Finally, it is no coincidence that Gina is creating and participating in this type of process through the institution of Pitzer College. The values, innovation, creativity and generosity of spirit that animate Pitzer, and especially our faculty and students, mean that many deeply motivated people with missions that overlap with the educational goals of Pitzer can channel and unleash their passions to the benefit of our students, involved communities and many others. I also join Gina in absolutely asserting that community involvement enhances and refreshes my pedagogy, as well as my scholarly activity. I believe that part of the wonderful synergy at Pitzer results from the fact that many of us have similar passions and interests, and we are fed and inspired not only by our students and community partners, but by the creativity and commitment of our colleagues. After having read Gina's reflections, I am indeed inspired and renewed.

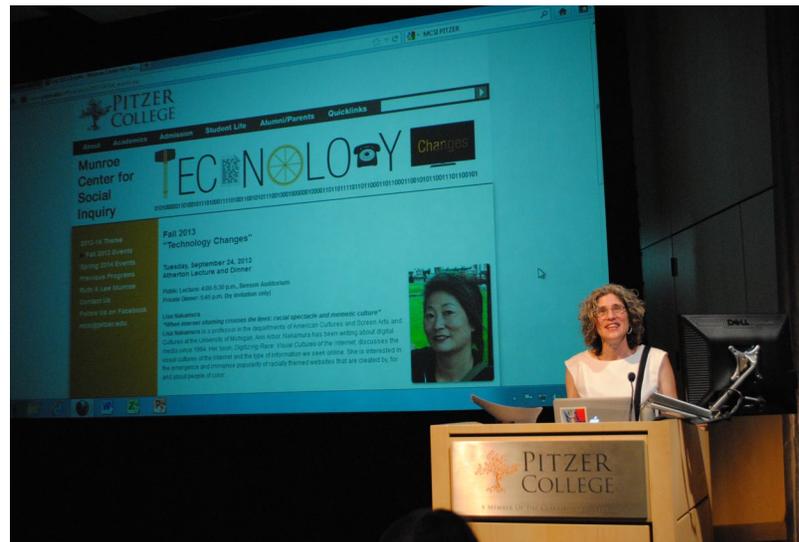
# Feminist Digital Research/ Pedagogy/Writing as Community-Based Practice

Alexandra Juhasz, Professor of Media Studies

This contribution to *The Engaged Faculty Collection* appeared first as a post on my [blog](#). There, it pointed to this larger collection of essays, spearheaded by [Tessa Hicks Peterson](#), that tracks Pitzer College’s forward thinking, active and ongoing engagement, across its history, to practices and methods known variously as community-based learning, civic engagement and action research. I am quite proud of my small part in this history, the large part that [Pitzer Media Studies](#) has played (with our core commitments to social justice and community-based media education), and the truly inspiring, and often unsung, work of my colleagues and college in this regard

In this short piece, I will frame, and then point/link to five of my most recent research/pedagogy/writing projects within my feminist media studies/practice, one that has always tried to at once understand, inhabit, teach in and about, and work for change within the communities and movements that matter to me. In the recent projects that follow, that “community” has become the Internet, a space both different from and indebted to the many other places with which I have engaged across my career.

1) When I arrived at Pitzer College in 1995, I was embraced as a [committed mediamaker/theorist](#) whose work was situated within the AIDS activist and feminist media communities, and the queer (of color) art and activist worlds. My work was, and continues to be about making and theorizing media production as part of social justice movements in which I am a member. When the digital emerged as a powerful place where all media can and often do converge,



Alexandra Juhasz introducing Munroe Center for Social Inquiry guest speaker on Technology, Dr. Lisa Nakamura, Fall 2014.

I moved parts of my practice there, developing a website connected to my Pitzer and sometimes CGU course, [Media Praxis](#) (in Ontario), that asked students to think about the 100 year history of activist media practice and theory while making a piece of such media themselves.

(To be clear: to read this article, you need to actually follow the links to things I’ve already made and already written, thus evidencing the new kinds of [“Internet, or Multi-Modal writing”](#) (and reading) I’ve been [exploring](#) and [theorizing](#) as part of my feminist

digital practice: shorter, recursive forms, with a different tone that are often for broader audiences and based on the reading logics of the Internet, one of which is our hope for fast and breezy theorizing. To be clear, this contribution is actually really long if you follow and read all the links!) It was first “published” on my blog because I’ve been experimenting with a more public, “academic” voice for many years now.

If you go the [“Media Praxis”](#) site, for example, you will see a great deal of activity, writing, and even more linking by my students, over several semesters. This evening-out of authority, this sharing of voice, has always been part of my media activism, and feminist pedagogy, but is much more easily realized in my “writing” when it occurs on the Internet where [norms of “publication” begin to change in line with those of “authoring.”](#)

You can also read more about my move to the digital [here](#), in an article called “You Get the Picture” for the *Frames Cinema Journal* #1, a special issue, [“Film and Moving Image Studies Re-Born Digital?”](#)

2) In 2007, I took my Media Praxis to YouTube, and taught a course on and about the site, *Learning from YouTube*, to much media fanfare. As I explained above, my feminist, community-based practice has always tried to reside in the spaces it hopes to know, change and better understand, all the while speaking in vernaculars best suited for that place and its community.



I taught the course several more times, and in each iteration, I asked students to think critically about their learning in the lived space of the elite liberal arts classroom as it is pressed into and against the “democratic” spaces of the Internet. How do we learn in these linked spaces? How might we write? What might we demand of corporate space to function more like the learning communities that we inhabit (at great cost)? What do we lose when we “learn” for free in the wilds of the Internet? For the class, my students did all their work as YouTube videos

or comments, thereby evidencing the same formal imperative I am demonstrating here: to think and write in the new forms, formats, and platforms that currently shape much of the ever-more linked world of ideas, culture, and commerce in our era.



My students’ brilliant “writing” —like the video above that comments on commenting culture using the vernacular of that very culture—prominently shapes my [“video-book”](#) about the course, also called *Learning from YouTube* (MIT Press, 2011). You can “experience” the video-book to learn more about what my students and I learned about/on YouTube (it’s fun and free! If you are intimidated by its unfamiliar form, take the “tour” called [“YouTube Is”](#), by clicking on the left bottom box: it’s a short introduction to the main ideas structuring the project). Or you can read about it [here](#), in an editorial I wrote for *Inside Higher Education*, “A Truly New Genre.”

And here’s a short interview I did about the class with “design guru” [Bill Moggridge](#), as part of his influential [Designing Media Project](#). There, you’ll find me [sandwiched](#) (the nasty cream filling...) between some truly powerful and sometimes great forces within the new media industry. My Pitzer-esque critique of capital and other powerful forces shaping this environment plays a critical role in this very public conversation.



3) While I believe that the critical (and sometime local) community that I produced in the class about YouTube, and our interventions into corporate media space were successful, the great amount of time I spent inside of this hostile, stupid, and unruly

environment led me to want to build my own Internet spaces better aligned with my values as educator, activist, and artist, rather than merely criticizing those that have been handed to us for free. This led to my next large teaching/research/building project, “[Feminist Online Spaces](#)”: a website, course, and set of lecture/performances that asked the question what the Internet might look like if it was more like the lived space of a feminist classroom: safe, principled, activist by definition, open, collaborative and committed to the co-production of knowledge and community. Built from my writing and research, that of my students over several years, and [little feminist objects](#) made by workshop participants from around the world, this site/class asks participants to think about the making and circulating of media fragments as part of/distinct from the larger aims of political communities (online and off). How do we bring the values, norms, methods and affect of lived and local (feminist) spaces to the Internet, and how do we bring the Internet to these spaces?

This line of work led me to three more places:

- a theoretical and [political](#) plea to leave, cede, or link to the Internet (from the lived world) as core to activist media production. I end my piece for [The Militant Research Handbook](#) by saying: “Finally, my ‘research’ and teaching on the Internet—in the feminist spaces I build and interact in—have led me to believe that the writing and object-making that happens there, in the name of understanding and enacting feminist expression online, begs us to think past the digital, beyond representation, and back to bodies and lived spaces. This means two things: we need to continue to be critical of the Internet inside of the Internet, and we also need to leave it by linking (or editing or organizing) out to the world and other activists and actions and thereby into realms of behavior, interaction, and feeling that are neither commodifiable nor stuck. Activist digital activities need to create linked projects of secession. It is in the leaving that our feminist digital activism truly begins.”
- 4) an art show, [PerpiTube](#), about YouTube and community-building, co-curated with [Pato Hebert](#), that lived for a summer in the Pitzer Art Galleries, and in perpetuity on [YouTube](#), and was produced in engagement with several of our local community-based partners, while also connecting these communities to like (virtual) partners around the world.
- [FemTechNet](#), my most recent, and even

more ambitious “x-reality” project (built within the connected fabrics of on and offline community spaces and experiences, the term is [Beth Coleman](#)’s). With co-facilitator, [Anne Balsamo](#), and a network of feminist educators and artists from around the world, we successfully took on the [MOOC](#) (Massive Open Online Course) with our feminist reevaluation, the [DOCC](#), Distributed Online Collaborative Course. I am proud to admit that I may be one of the few college professors around to have been lambasted twice, for two separate media projects, by Fox News!



5) You can read about FemTechNet’s inception [here](#), or [here](#), or look at its pretty impressive media coverage [here](#). I’ve lately found myself speaking to [university administrators](#), IT leaders, and fellow [humanities professors](#) about how digital technology can better on-the-ground learning. Perhaps it comes as no surprise that the successful challenge of FemTechNet’s DOCC to the more corporate, top-down, imperialist, unresponsive course offerings modeled by MOOCs is a collective application of many of the feminist principles of pedagogy and community-based learning I’ve been discussing throughout. It’s been invigorating and gratifying to see people who might be unconvinced about “feminism” become quite impressed by the platforms, structures, methods and outcomes it produces for teaching.

And so, I haven’t come full circle, really. I’ve stayed true to Pitzer, and at home in its communities and values, while entering the Internet to bring Pitzer there and the world (of the Internet) to Pitzer. This is an exciting expansion of community that also stays true to the small and local, that honors and thinks about difference without flattening it, that lives and teaches ethically, that co-creates knowledge while being self-aware of power both in outside the room, all the while staying invested in self- and world-making, and staying true to the community-based practices we’ve developed at the College even as it departs (at times) from lived community to do so.

## Kathleen S. Yep's Reflective Review of Alexandra Juhasz' Essay

As a cutting-edge feminist media scholar/activist/artist, Alex Juhasz offers a fascinating collection of her work with a framing commentary. In both, Alex explores, destabilizes and rearticulates “community” as fluid, stable, contested and varied. The collection (via web links) includes five research/pedagogy/writing projects that range from an art show, a class web site and a YouTube project to feminist online spaces and FemTechNet. Through the commentary and the web links, Alex highlights feminist pedagogical approaches to “technology.” Revealing the intertextual nature of her research/pedagogy/writing, her short commentary provides links to the various projects and provides a portfolio of an expansive media praxis (theory and action). In doing so, Alex demonstrates how to create community and connections with diverse learners through a variety of platforms. As a productive and contributing Pitzer College faculty member for close to 20 years, Alex helped (re)define community engagement and social responsibility at Pitzer. She was instrumental in building the Pitzer media studies field group and the department of Intercollegiate Media Studies. Both are well respected and boast a large number of majors. In a variety of Pitzer spaces, Alex has troubled and reimagined pedagogy, curriculum and community building at the College. As such, her commentary and collection should be read not only as an illustration of her media praxis and feminist pedagogies over time, but also a reflection of her skill (and pivotal role) in Pitzer’s achieving its educational objective of social responsibility.

## CHAPTER 4

# The Power of Collective Expression (2012): College Students and Immigrant Women Learning Together

Kathleen S. Yep, Associate Professor of Asian American Studies and Sociology

**O**n a warm April evening in Southern California, over 75 people crowded into a spacious room at a public library. Leaning against the wall, an older woman clutched her purse against her chest while raptly listening to the speaker. A young mother soothed her fussy baby as she craned her neck to hear the program in Mandarin and English. People clustered in front of tables, filling their plates with cookies and sesame bau. For the finale, a group of eight Asian and Asian American women of different ages filed out to form a row in front of the audience. One by one, each woman stepped forward and read one line of a poem. Their families and friends applauded, hooted and hollered. The poets smiled, blushed and clapped to this boisterous and joyful response.

The tone of this event reflected what had evolved over the course of the semester in a class that brought together college students and older immigrant women from a community-based literacy program: Literacy for all of Monterey Park (LAMP). Through our weekly sessions in the public library, Asian and Asian American women ranging in age from their early 20s to late 70s shared their knowledge and experiences and gradually formed a small community. The students wrote group poems, created a web site and produced an anthology that included biographies, photographs, graphics, individual written pieces and collaborative writing.

With the support of the Community Engagement Center at Pitzer College and the Weingart Foundation, I started a partnership between the Asian American Studies department and LAMP in the fall of 2009. With a commitment to using



Audience listening to original poetry from joint class comprised of immigrant adult learners and Claremont College students. Public event with Literacy for All of Monterey Park (LAMP) at Bruggemeyer Library, Monterey Park, CA. Photo by Brian Minami.

education for creating change, we wanted to combine the resources of a liberal arts college with a community project. We intended for college students to learn not only from books and lectures but also by being engaged in the world. As feminist educators, we wanted to nourish all the students' sense that they could create knowledge, empower themselves and enact change in the world. We were fortunate to have a variety of resources to make this combined class happen: flexible students, good communication, empathy, transportation, a college dean who supports community engagement,

community engagement staff, promotion and tenure procedures for faculty that value it, staff to facilitate it, an institutional climate of growth rather than budget cuts, and co-facilitators—Traci Kato-Kiriyama and me—who were challenged, humbled and inspired by the risk-taking by and movement of the students.

One in eight residents in this country is an immigrant. More than half of them are women who play a key role in navigating the myriad barriers facing their families in the United States (New American Media, 2009). Immigrants and refugees struggle with limited access to educational services, low wages, lack of secure jobs and safe affordable housing (Garrett, 2006). Asians are the fastest growing of the major ethnic groups with the largest number of people born outside the United States (Segal et al., 2010). Monterey Park is a small suburban community in the heart of San Gabriel Valley, just east of Los Angeles; people of color are 81 percent of its population; 54 percent are born outside the United States; and 76 percent speak a language other than English at home. The adult and family literacy program, LAMP, supports a growing immigrant population from Burma, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. Due to the economic downturn and severe budget cuts, the shortage of adult education classes has hindered immigrants' ability to learn English, find better jobs and secure adequate housing. This scarcity of resources amplified the need for LAMP's programs and its partnership with the College.

## Building a Community of Learners

The two different groups of students brought a range of skills and experiences to this class. The college students provided English-language practice and citizenship coaching for LAMP students, covering different aspects of the citizenship exam to prepare them for the naturalization interview. The college students also taught English as a second language (ESL) using movement, art, poetry and other participatory methods. In the combined class, the two groups delved into their life stories and worked on collaborative creative writing projects. We used storytelling, not just as a matter of individual identity, but also as a way for students to explore broader social processes, such as colonialism, diaspora, migration, racism, patriarchy and poverty. In one session, everyone, including the facilitators, brought a photograph or object that meant a great deal to her and discussed it in front the class. While we used these treasures to learn about each other, they were also points of departure to map out broader themes

of migrations, loss, transformation and courage. Then we wrote pieces based on those themes.

## Addressing Difference and Similarities

Initially, many of the college students operated from a “missionary” service-learning model, wanting to “give” to the immigrant learners as invisible “helpers.” There were hiccups along the way as students began to learn together across differences of class background, age and immigration status. One student wanted a “fun and easy” class where she “could help those less fortunate” than herself. In the beginning, she focused on the immigrant learners and did not offer much of herself. Rather than seeing the LAMP students as objects of college students' charity or pity, the focus of this class was on engaging with differences and relative privilege in order to co-create something new and possibly transformative.

The college students read academic journal articles about the differences between service learning and social justice service learning. They examined their social locations and explored ideas of empowerment. They undertook research on social issues facing immigrants. Moreover, they reflected on how their backgrounds were similar to and different from the LAMP students and how this might enhance or inhibit their work together. The course emphasized the creation of a healing, respectful and nourishing learning community as a central organizing principle. This recognizes the fact that education can reproduce social inequalities, both in course content and classroom dynamics. Rather than focusing on a text or debate as the central mode of learning, our students learned about patriarchy, immigration and racism through democratic and collaborative learning methods.

The students described the process this way:

(We) learned from each other's experiences and helped to maintain a supportive space in which each woman could express her voice through writing and dialogue....The flow of our voices allowed us to grow out of a classroom dynamic and into a family.” (Introduction to Anthology)

## Place and (Dis)placements

A premise of this collaboration was to co-create a sense of place by naming the various forms of (dis) placement that both the Asian immigrant learners and college students confronted. Many of the

immigrant women discussed feeling “useless” in the United States. Several described their frustrations with learning English and finding employment. One student, Yin, reflected on her downward mobility on leaving Asia:

“It is much harder for older immigrants. I was an accountant in China. I apply, apply, apply for jobs. No one hire me. I am too old. I am an in-care worker. It is hard.”

Others explained that daily life tasks were often daunting and exhausting due to racism and language barriers. Their stories reflected the difficulties of navigating new places while learning a new language. As they struggled to learn English and combated discrimination, they questioned their place in this country and also challenged the subordination of “knowing their place” as Asian immigrant women in the racialized and gendered logic of the United States. Many women described struggling with patriarchy. For example, Amy reflected on the unspoken double-shift for women: “I come home from work. I cook and clean for my husband and son. I have two jobs. No money for cooking and cleaning.” The class was a place where the immigrant women felt welcome. One student, Yin, reflected on why she liked the combined class: “I work. I come home. Eat fast. Come here fast. I like it here. Everyone smiles. I am not scared.”

The college students described feeling out of place and experiencing marginalization on the campus and in many of their classes. As Asian Americans in predominantly white colleges with a prevalent culture of class privilege, they often felt invisible and ostracized. They were inspired by the LAMP students and began to document and reflect on the struggles and coping strategies of their own grandmothers, mothers and aunties. The students wrote about various themes of displacement and finding a sense of place in their own personal and family histories. Most of the college students engaged intensely because they were heartened and challenged by the LAMP learners. The LAMP students felt encouraged by the college students, sought them out as resources and also pushed them to stretch farther. Together, the students described the common themes in their lives: “All through our lives, we experience moments of vulnerability, weakness and fragility. Inside each of us are fighters. Our courage fuels our determination to handle the curve balls that life throws at us.” (Introduction to Anthology)

## Giving and Receiving

Overall, the students experienced the power and strength that comes from being seen and seeing others through creative expression and participatory learning. However, it was quite a process to get to these positive outcomes. The college students struggled through some significant hurdles in this unconventional learning environment.

For example, Kelly worked closely with Amy, an immigrant woman in her 60s. Initially, Kelly was somewhat impatient with Amy—asking Amy to hurry up, and rushing her when she looked up English words in her Chinese dictionary. However, during the course of the semester, Kelly learned that Amy battled with back pain and wrist pain due to her work as an in-home health care worker and that she also struggled with her husband and son. Despite these challenges, Amy always came to class and powered through the assignments, even as she wrestled with the language and the instructors speaking too fast. Through collaborative writing and peer editing, each learned about the other’s stories, struggles and transformations. As they worked together, they became curious about each other and their shared experiences as women under patriarchy. By the end of the semester, Kelly had become more open to comments and insights from Amy. Moreover, Kelly’s poetry was deeper and more nuanced as she began to include life-changing events in her writing. At the same time, Amy developed a stronger and stronger voice in the classroom and in her writing. She started to question Kelly about her poems and statements. They ended the semester with appreciation for each other’s perspectives, experiences and skills. It became more reciprocal and dialogical, rather than being one way and hierarchical. Because of their investment in their developing partnership, Kelly and Amy were able to co-create the following poem together:

*It happened by chance, unknowing danger  
would strike—an uphill battle  
He came to the United States with wonderful  
dreams for the future  
Life was not as easy as they said it would be  
in stories*

In the collaborative writing process, each person wrote one line and passed the paper to her partner, rotating back and forth. Rather than waiting impatiently or rushing her partner, Kelly and Amy learned to work from a place of support, kindness and empathy. Together, they were able to draw from

their families' stories of immigration, highlighting themes of loss and hope.

## Wholeness: Heart, Mind and Soul

Because one of the main feminist principles of the class was to create a reciprocal and mutually beneficial learning community, we emphasized more democratic ways of learning than is typical in many college classrooms. Often, the college students compartmentalized their schoolwork from the rest of their lives in order to survive in an intensely competitive academic environment. One student, Carla, explained: "Usually in my classes, I just slip in. Get lectured at. Take notes. Pack up my things and go. Sometimes I don't talk to anyone, and no one talks to me. It's about learning the material and demonstrating that I learned it the way the professor wanted it."



Students reading original poetry from joint class comprised of immigrant adult learners and Claremont College students. Public event with Literacy for All of Monterey Park (LAMP) at Bruggemeyer Library, Monterey Park, CA. Photo by Brian Minami.

The joint class was much more than meeting together in the same room and writing individual stories in an atomized fashion. By shifting away from competitiveness and self-reliance, students learned about and nourished a sense of belonging and collectivity. This culture of mutual respect opened up the possibility for alternative viewpoints and constructive conflict. The feminist democratic pedagogies contributed to building a community that encouraged all the students to give voice to what is

often buried or marginalized in the classroom and in society.

One college student, Carla, was proficient in completing the assignments. She was efficient, thorough and precise. She never spoke in class unless called upon. At the beginning of the semester, her poems focused on light-hearted, happy topics. Even if they dealt with a challenging social issue such as immigration, they tended to wrap up neatly by the end. The class compelled students like Carla to participate on cognitive and affective levels. Rather than interacting only with students' minds through abstract ideas and theories, we engaged with them as whole human beings with feelings, emotions, histories, ideas and complex experiences. Initially, there was some push back from some college students who felt they were not learning much. Talking about their lives and their feelings made them feel vulnerable and as if they were not "serious" students. Moreover, they did not want other students to feel sorry for them. Some questioned the writing assignments as being too vague or wondered how they would be graded. Our task as facilitators was to invite the students to speak from the heart and soul as well as the head. Rather than being distant and alienated from the course content, students' lives and histories were at the center.

By learning alongside the immigrant women, the college students came to identify relevant analytical themes in their own lives and to see that their experiences mattered. They affirmed that the immigrant women's stories were personally and theoretically significant. Placing the students' stories at the center countered dominant norms about what is considered valid knowledge and scholarship. Typically, in a college classroom a book published by a university press on the topic of female immigrants is privileged over a poem written by a female immigrant. Immigrant women are seen as informants and subjects of study to be talked about by researchers rather than as co-producers of new knowledge. With a feminist approach to epistemology (i.e., how we know what we know), the course embodied the idea that everyone can produce knowledge, not just those within privileged, elite circles. Although feminist scholarship has discussed this democratizing of knowledge production extensively, creating contexts where this can happen is relatively rare.

One immigrant student, Emma, was confident in speaking English, but less so about writing in English. A force to be reckoned with, she gradually found a way to integrate her powerful speaking

voice with her writing voice. She wrote about her immigration experience, following a haiku format:

*Once a wanderer  
Suffering pain and sorrow  
Became a fighter.*

For the college students, the LAMP women were the same generation as their grandmothers, mothers and aunts. Inspired by the LAMP students, the college women began to explore and reflect on the struggles of their own family members. For example, the following was part of a poem written by Carla:

*Hearing the angry rumbles of a plane  
Her gut sank.  
Expecting bombs to fall  
And herself to die.  
Every day.*

Carla made her grandma's experience central as a means to look at her own history. By making these experiences visible, she was able to examine how broader processes such as war had impacted her grandmother, her mother and herself. Grounded in the multiple layers of her family's experiences, this poem differed dramatically from her earlier poems. Rather than glossing over such complexities, this work engaged with both suffering and determination.

## Feminist Learning Communities and Redefining the Political

By knowing and naming their own stories, students came to better understand themselves in relation to the wider society. Speaking out about their experiences and the social contradictions in their lives meant being visible and engaged with the world. This paved the way for a deepening sense of political empowerment, which we defined as feeling whole, connected and conscious in order to be active in a larger project of social change. Students learned that creating community, sharing resources—information, literacy skills, wisdom and encouragement—and listening can be political acts. This opened the door to reimagining what is considered political and what their role might be as politically engaged women. At the end of the semester, Jill explained her idea of “political” like this:

“...there are ways to intervene in the system of structural and individual silencing. Intervention takes various forms. One can take English

classes in order to learn to use the tool that is the language of oppression, essentially learning to work within the system. Sometimes individuals can learn to break away from using those tools and find their own ways of expressing themselves. For each individual, the best way to address silencing is different. But the possibilities really are infinite.”

The students grappled with creating a learning community as active participants rather than as passive consumers. They wrestled with content that felt relevant, meaningful and inspiring. Moreover, they created a deep sense of connection among the group by learning to give and take. This reciprocal relationship created a healing, restorative and sacred space to learn and build confidence. The college students increased their sense of internal efficacy. One reflected on how this would affect her future actions: “I am not going to be a turtle anymore—hiding when I want to feel safe.” By the end of the semester, all the students defined themselves as social change agents

This combined class highlights the importance of feminist, community-based learning. First, it creates a relevant education by centering students' lives and perspectives as the foundation to examine broader social processes like immigration, poverty, colonialism and patriarchy. When this is done, what is considered legitimate knowledge becomes democratized, and students become deeply invested in learning and in the learning community. Second, a feminist, community-based classroom engages with students' social locations and difference among them. Working with the LAMP students, the college students learned to relate to differences based on age, citizenship, primary language, socio-economic status and political viewpoints. More than recognizing differences in interpersonal interactions, they learned to work across and beside different positions of relative privilege as essential for building coalitions and creating change. This feminist approach to learning fosters skills, knowledge and motivation for students to think critically about themselves and their communities in order to transform society and, in the words of bell hooks, “to move forward, to change to grow” (1994: 202).

*Note: Much gratitude to LAMP (Norma Arvisu, Lilian Kawaratani, Jose Garcia and Denise Tang), Traci Kato-Kiriyama, the students in Asian American Voices, the Community Engagement Center at Pitzer College (Susan Phillips, Tessa Hicks, Martha Barcenas-Mooradian, Tricia Morgan), the Weingart*

Foundation, Gwyn Kirk, Margo Okazawa-Rey, Ray Young, Lee Sun Ngan, Michael James, Kaela Wan, Carolyn Wan, Sefa Aina and Karin Mak.

Aliases were used to preserve the confidentiality of the students.

### References:

Darder, A. (1991). *Culture and Power in the Classroom: A Critical Foundation for Bicultural Education*. Chicago: Greenwood Publishing.

K.E. Garrett (Ed.) (2006). *Living In America: Challenges facing new immigrants and refugees*. Princeton, NJ: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

hooks, b. (1994.) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge.

New American Media (2009). *Women Immigrants: Stewards of the 21st century family*. <http://media.namx.org/images/communications/immwomenexecsummary.pdf> Accessed April 17, 2012.

Segal, U. A., D. Elliott, and N. S. Mayadas, (Eds.) (2010). *Immigration Worldwide: Policies, Practices, and Trends*. New York: Oxford University Press. I've never taught with Kathy Yep, although I've spoken with her frequently about her teaching, and I've heard from students how inspiring she can be. What I most appreciate about her contribution to this anthology is that from her writing we at once learn about the details of her pedagogy, experience an expert analysis of its outcomes and strengths, all the while *feeling* its power, its purpose and Kathy's unique pedagogic passions and skills.

## Alexandra Juhasz' Reflective Review of Kathleen S. Yep's Essay

I think that Kathy's piece is a delightful companion to my own in two ways: 1) in it she lovingly draws out the details, smells, practices and complexities of community-based pedagogy, something that is best understood through practice (many of us have a hard time getting these rich, complex and distinct experiences to paper), and 2) she expertly evidences the real payoffs of the extremely hard work of community-based, feminist pedagogy.

Building a complex community of diverse learners outside a college campus is a precarious, fun and difficult project. It is much harder work than the daily grind: teaching a class of students who sign up, show up, get credit and graduate. This affective labor is at once intellectual, political and bodily; and all this is raised in Kathy's short article.

It is invigorating to me that our two pieces have so much in common, even though they are about different projects, in dissimilar communities and are written in a different register. The feminist pedagogic commitment to "addressing difference and similarities" proves a cornerstone to both our methods, as does a challenging and celebration of place. Most critically, the co-production of knowledge linked to the pursuit of personal and collaborative empowerment as at once deeply political and intellectual activities also rises above the differences of place, approach, community and process that separate our entries (and the classes they detail). Thus, Kathy reminds me that Pitzer College, and the community-based, feminist pedagogy that it supports, emboldens us to attempt the best, and most difficult, kind of work that our positions in academia allow.

# Huerta del Valle: A New Nonprofit in a Neglected Landscape

Susan A. Phillips, Associate Professor of Environmental Analysis and Academic Director of Pitzer in Ontario

The year of Pitzer College's 50th anniversary also brought a comparatively modest celebration. April 5, 2014, marked the one-year anniversary of stable access to land for a community garden project and new nonprofit in Ontario, California, called Huerta del Valle. A jumpy castle, free food and drinks, dancers ranging from Aztec to Zumba, lots of speeches and a garden-shaped cake were celebratory fare for hundreds of community members, Pitzer College students and faculty, city employees, and even a city council member. For me, it was a landmark event. I had begun recruiting students in 2010 to begin food justice projects in Ontario. It wasn't traditional community-based research. I was trying to recruit students for the Pitzer in Ontario program, which had been through more than its share of ups and downs. I knew food justice would attract students and might help to solidify the program's enrollment. But how would it resonate with Ontario communities?

Four years later we had our answer. Forty-eight family-tended plots were bursting with produce, Pitzer students were painting the faces of dozens of garden kids, and we were celebrating our first year of land tenure. Huerta del Valle had become a vibrant community-led project.

Huerta del Valle's success is inextricably tied to Pitzer's history and dedication to local community engagement. Engaging students in change-oriented work and teaching them to apply theory to practice are the signature goals of the Pitzer in Ontario program. Pitzer in Ontario is a semester-long, immersion-style program in which students take three courses and apply their academic learning to



Huerta del Valle's first community harvest of winter crops in March 2014 included fava beans, broccoli, beets, turnips, spinach, lettuce, and carrots.

a 150-hour internship over the course of a semester. It is designed to be a program of urban studies and community-based research. In attempting to enact this work, we realized early on that the Inland Empire has a relatively small number of nonprofits, and that most are not oriented toward social change but toward service.

At a certain point, I got tired of waiting around for more nonprofits to appear. It was fatiguing for students, fellow faculty and me to place students in service organizations, like proverbial square pegs. In 2010, I attempted to create projects from the ground up geared toward urban and environmental

sustainability. We wound up with a bike co-op, the Wheelhouse, which now hosts over 100 mostly low-income cyclists per month, and the Huerta del Valle community garden (HdV). For the remainder of this essay, I share information about Huerta del Valle's programs and goals and about the context of Inland Empire, as well as the significance of creating a new nonprofit in this neglected landscape.

## The Most Toxic Zip Code in California

Huerta del Valle is situated in a neglected landscape on the west end of San Bernardino County. The Inland Empire has been recovering more slowly from the recession than coastal counties. In January 2013, the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario metropolitan areas continued to lead the nation in both unemployment and foreclosures. On top of that, California's Enviroscan data found the 91761 zip code where the garden sits to be the most toxic in California.

Part of the reason for this is that the major economic engine of Ontario is devoted to the movement of goods that do not benefit the communities that they move through. The pollution of trucks, trains and airplanes for the goods movement industry creates environmental hazards and impedes conditions for healthful living. Streets in Ontario are scaled to semis and tractor-trailers rather than for walking, biking or playing. Vacant single parcels to 100-acre swaths of empty land abound, yet communities have little to no access to them. Huerta del Valle members are working to promote conditions of health in the Inland Empire by building a sustainable community-based agriculture center.

HdV has taken inspiration from the US food justice movement and from global food sovereignty movements in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. We handed out a document outlining these principles at the anniversary event: these movements view food as a right, value food providers, localize food production and control, and work for culturally appropriate, environmentally holistic knowledge sets and practices.

As a community-driven nonprofit, Huerta del Valle is focused on social change from the ground up. The past decade has brought numerous efforts toward urban sustainability, many of which involve food production through community gardens, community-supported agriculture programs, urban farms, farmers markets and various cooperative models.

Core participants at the garden are residents of Ontario. Ninety percent of adult garden participants are Latino. The remainder is composed of white, black, or Asian Pacific Islander-identified people. The neighborhood surrounding Bon View Park is 80 to 100% Latino, mostly families of three to six people and has a high poverty rate, with block groups ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000 per year.

Additional demographic information on garden population:

- 80% Latino of Mexican decent
- 80% monolingual Spanish speakers
- Most immigrants to the United States
- Time in United States 10 to 25+ years
- Possibly 50% undocumented
- Most participants between 30 and 60 years of age
- Mix of low- to middle-income families
- Mixed occupational experiences, including agriculture, trucking and manual labor
- Most do not have college degrees; many do not have high school diplomas
- Majority lives within one mile of garden
- Spanish, English and Tongan spoken at garden, with Spanish most common
- Most drive to garden; some walk or bike

One family, the Soakai's, are Asian Pacific Islanders of Tongan decent who make up the API population at the garden. They grow different crops, such as taro, yams, lemon grass and papaya. They speak Tongan and bring community members of all ages to the garden. So far, there seems to be minimal overlap of cultures, though there is strong potential for that work, if language barriers can be breached.

We argue that a different kind of non-profit is required to promote positive change in the Inland Empire. We have attempted to structure Huerta del Valle as a cutting-edge model of sustainability in a depressed area of urban/suburban sprawl, which in many ways presents more challenging problems than do denser urban cores because of how scattered populations become.

## Being the Change: Huerta del Valle

Before delving into nonprofit development issues, I wanted to describe in a bit more detail program directions for Huerta del Valle. These programs and updates can be found on the following website: <http://hdv-huertadelvalle.blogspot.com/>.

Huerta del Valle started in 2010 with gardens at two different sites. We had partnered with two different nonprofits, only to see relationships fall through and the loss of land in both cases. By working directly with the City of Ontario, HdV finally gained stable access to land in April 2013. Pitzer College became HdV’s fiscal sponsor, and we had plans to hand over the project to the community by developing a new non-profit. HdV incorporated with the State of California as a nonprofit organization in 2013 and is currently awaiting its federal 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. We still enjoy close relationships with Pitzer College, the Planning Department in the city of Ontario, and University of California, Irvine’s Community and Economic Development Legal Clinic (CED). With Pitzer acting as a fiscal sponsor, HdV was also named a subgrantee of a three-year Kaiser HEAL Zone initiative grant to promote healthy eating and active living in the city of Ontario.

Part of Huerta del Valle’s success has been the development of a community-university-municipal partnership. Interdependency and mutual support are woven through its history. The City of Ontario has granted the project a 10-year land-use agreement and will pay for water and trash pickup for the first three years. The land-use agreement is in Pitzer’s name. Until Huerta del Valle receives its federal tax-exempt designation, Pitzer will continue to act as fiscal sponsor. Significant community engagement has grown from these sources and benefits both the College and the city in turn—giving the City of Ontario a success to show to Kaiser and city officials, and giving shape to Pitzer’s ethos of social responsibility in local and global communities. HdV’s mission is to cultivate an organization of community members to grow both organic crops and a community in Ontario. By growing food, the organization works toward sustainable community empowerment and health: creating meaningful work, building lasting skills and developing strong relationships within the city of Ontario. HdV’s vision is more complex: the project is designed to be a small-scale alternative to many modes of contemporary life. We envision it as a place where people form community over shared interests and work toward healthy, just and sustainable societies.

Huerta del Valle asserts that economic development in Ontario and the surrounding region does not have to look like building more warehouses. By creating a space where people can learn together, work together and grow together, we are attempting to construct new visions of community health, development and sustainability in the Inland Empire.

HdV’s core goals are to:

- Facilitate the growth of a local, sustainable food system
- Create dignified, educative, community health and development centered employment/opportunities for Ontario youth and adults
- Develop related local cooperatives for economic and environmental justice

HdV operates with four branches of work to accomplish these aims. Each programming component is at a different stage of development:

- Community gardening—developed
- Intensive sustainable food production and sales—initial
- Community building/organizing—initial
- Community education—emerging

Our four program areas were decided in a collaborative, shared decision-making process with Pitzer faculty, students and community members led by HdV’s community leader and executive director, Maria Teresa Alonso. We designed the programming areas to address particular community needs and to address particular challenges posed to quality of life, access to healthy food, safe clean environment and economic opportunity for low-income people in Ontario. All program areas are represented in the map below.



Map shows community garden area (orange), hands-on education area (blue), intensive production area (purple), and compost area (beige).

HdV intends to build several structures, including an educational outdoor/indoor classroom, a workshop/ kitchen/rest area, a farm stand, improved storage sheds, a chicken coop, an area for other animals like goats and more hoop houses for sprouting, starting plants and worms. HdV would love to incorporate solar panels into the structure, as well as water catchment and aquaponic systems for fish production.

The community garden space contains three additional features of importance. First is a central community-gathering place where classes, parties, cookouts, meetings or general relaxation can take place. Second are two swales for natural water retention. Third is a 15-foot deep perimeter of permanent crops, such as fruit trees, herbs, berries, medicinal plants, sugar cane and other perennials like asparagus and artichokes. This is designed to be a drought-tolerant, self-managing agro-ecosystem and works as a contrast to the heavily managed community garden. It will provide useful crops, improve soil and garden quality over time and give privacy to neighbors. The community garden also contains the main entrance and will contain a mural and a small HdV farm stand.

Roughly two acres of garden space are devoted to an intensive-production urban farm that grows produce each season and sells it locally at affordable prices in farm stands, convenience stores and restaurants. The operation began with the goal that resulting sales would help to cover recurring garden expenses. The intensive production area aims to be a space for job creation, as well as sustainable agricultural production, education and training.

Along with the Redford Conservancy—Pitzer’s newest center dedicated to Southern California sustainability—we are attempting to develop a composting system where we transfer pre-consumer food scraps from the Pitzer dining hall. This will be a win-win, as the College will be able to boast that it composts all pre-consumer food waste, and HdV will have a stable source of waste from which to build soil to feed the garden. In addition, worm composting is set to start in July 2014.

HdV views itself as a resource for both the College and in the community and a space to build more resources. Through connection making and community building, a more tightly knit community can share resources that already exist in the neighborhood, such as tools, tutoring, food, skills and more. In addition, by partnering with Pitzer College and, in the future, other colleges, more

resources in the form of educated young people, engaged professors and other institutional resources could be leveraged for the garden. Through its nonprofit status, the garden will also be in a position to facilitate grant writing to bring more economic resources into the community, as well as create resources through growing soil, food, jobs and educational opportunities, and initiate cooperatives for economic development. HdV also may join coalitions, support the development of other organizations, or start other community projects like other farms, restaurants, markets or community kitchens as it broadens its reach and scope.

Another goal of the program is to develop educational programming, workshops and training for youth and adults of all ages in building critical analysis of the Inland Empire and food issues.

We have linked workshops and speakers to the last few community monthly meetings; for example:

- Pitzer student Ru Apt gave a workshop on non-violent communication.
- Pitzer Professor Jose Calderon gave a talk on building social movements and resources to sustain movements.
- Gardener Francisco Solorzano offered a planting workshop to all members of the garden.
- A youth event offered workshops in zine making, planting, and healthy snack making.

HdV garden community members have also:

- Made regular trips to LA to visit the community rights campaign monthly meeting
- Visited food justice organizations in Los Angeles
- Learned about campaign organizing, political analysis and how other communities are working to bring about justice
- Conducted walking tours of Ontario neighborhoods

These examples are far from a standardized curriculum at the garden, but they reflect how HdV hopes education will look in the future: workshops for the community by the community in the community garden, educating about neighborhood and regional assets and challenges.

The above are examples of some of the work that HdV hopes to do now and in the future.



Swiss chard and amaranth seedlings in the greenhouse for garden plantings.

## Building a new non-profit

Huerta del Valle’s recent incorporation represents a small step forward in what the Institute for Non-Profit Management has called a “unique set of challenges in the region.” The needs of the Inland Empire’s youthful and diverse population remain unmet by the nonprofit sector. San Bernardino hosts just 3.0 nonprofits per thousand residents, and local foundations have invested only \$3 per capita in San Bernardino County compared to \$119 per capita statewide. Huerta del Valle is an emerging nonprofit in a region where there are few change-oriented nonprofits of any kind—and a dearth of nonprofits as a whole.

Two false starts with local nonprofits hampered our progress early on. After these experiences, we decided that forming an independent nonprofit would grant us autonomy and structural stability.

Pitzer in Ontario Urban Fellow Lucy Block created a relationship with UC Irvine’s School of Law’s Community and Economic Development Clinic, which has since taken us on as a client and assisted us in the process of incorporation. After two years of preliminary meetings, Huerta del Valle held its first board meeting in November 2013. Members of the board were appointed as follows:

- Susan Phillips, chair (professor, Pitzer College/director, PIO Program)

- Arthur Levine, secretary and treasurer (urban fellow, Pitzer College)
- John Bridge, member (associate, Hogan Lovells Law Firm)
- Maria Teresa Alonso, member (executive director, Huerta del Valle)

The board also appointed then garden manager Maria Alonso as executive director of Huerta del Valle and adopted the by-laws of the organization. We also submitted IRS paperwork for our 501(c)3 status and are awaiting response.

Pitzer College continues to act as a fiscal sponsor for HdV as of this writing. To our knowledge this is only the second time in Pitzer’s history that the College has participated in the formation of a new non-profit. The first time was the founding of the Pomona Economic Opportunity Center—or “Day Labor” Center—spearheaded by Professor Jose Calderon. Calderon visited the garden for the first time in December 2013 as a special guest of student Marcela Jones and Executive Director Maria Teresa Alonso.

Board expansion is critical at this time. HdV hopes to expand its board to include more people from the community as well as national advisors, funders, organizers, youth, educators, chefs, political figures, city officials, youth and advocates in order to guide and protect Huerta del Valle into the future.

HdV has yet to formalize its organizational structure. The board decided after incorporation to allow the organization to develop organically and later define structures that work best. To date, decision-making bodies operate as follows:

- The *committee* meets weekly (5 to 15 persons). This committee makes decisions about ongoing issues at the garden, such as plot management, leadership, and collective production. This is the most consistent body that meets to handle decision making around garden planning and projects, including events, meetings, field trips, plot management, conflicts, and approval of select expenditures. The committee includes community members and Pitzer staff and students. It is also a space for leadership development where people learn to run meetings, create agendas, and develop public speaking skills. Most decisions are achieved through discussion and consensus. Some members of the committee have the responsibility of opening the garden once per

week, which has allowed the garden to have open hours every day of the week.

- The *membership* meets monthly (20 to 40 persons) and includes everyone who is involved in the garden—ranging from people who volunteer to people who have plots. The monthly meeting creates a space for the integration of new garden members, and for veteran gardeners to introduce new garden members to the project. At monthly meetings, the membership participates in special workshops, events, movie screenings and guest lectures. It is also a place for general updates and we hope a place where garden members can get to know the board.
- The *board* meets quarterly (currently 4 persons). Its primary job is to have big ears—to listen carefully to the people who are actually doing the work and to see what can be done to facilitate and develop their work. The board looks more broadly; its gaze is not in the soil but everywhere else in terms of creating connections for the organization—from people in Ontario to people in national and international arenas. The board is the most equipped for seeking out foundation and other funding and for legal advising and general connection building that supports the Huerta del Valle’s longevity and growth. Hopefully, our board will be made up of a more diverse membership of community members, youth, and food movement and community development advisors.

Students continue to be active in all aspects of Huerta del Valle, and they often have multi-semester and multi-year involvement.

## Conclusion

Critical next steps for HdV include further development of key programming areas. Excellence in our work will allow us to strengthen our organization, through grant-getting and through continuing the cooperative partnerships with Pitzer College and the City of Ontario.

The Pitzer in Ontario program began this project in fall 2010 as part of a new trajectory of longitudinal community-based research. We pulled more from student interest in food justice than we did from community interest—in essence getting

the community-based, participatory research equation backward. However, each conversation we had about food justice issues—with community members, with city or county officials, or with nonprofit leaders—seemed to open doors. What began as a student-heavy effort is now in the hands of the community, and a new, community-led nonprofit has emerged as a result.

HdV would not exist without the strength of community-university partnership between Pitzer College, the City of Ontario, and Ontario community members. Maria Teresa Alonso—first HdV’s garden manager and now executive director of Huerta del Valle—became involved because she was already a promotora through Pitzer’s community-based Spanish program run by Professor Ethel Jorge. Students engaged in both programs made the connection early on, and the garden benefited as a result.

Also, our relationship with the City of Ontario’s Planning Department has been critical. The Planning Department staffers—in particular Karen Thompson, Cathy Wahlstrom and Jerry Blum—have given personal and institutional support to the project. College and City supportive structures have helped to incubate Huerta del Valle; this project would not exist without them.

Huerta del Valle hopes to gain a level of independence that will allow us to promote



Executive Director Maria Teresa Alonso leads a community meeting in November 2013.

economic development, to work for environmental justice, to strengthen local food justice strategies and to build critical and radical analysis of the region.

Thinking back on the anniversary event of April 5, I consider the growth of our first year of work in the garden inspiring. In a way, our journey is just beginning. As a fledgling nonprofit, HdV's real work of fundraising and capacity building have been greater challenges with few guarantees of success. But we now have a strong base from which to grow our organization, to continue to immerse Pitzer students in community-based learning opportunities and research, and to engage multiple communities in grassroots organizing and local social change toward urban sustainability.

## References

Debord, M. (January 30, 2013). KPCC. "San Bernardino is not having a very good week." *The Breakdown: Explaining Southern California's Economy*. [www.scp.org/blogs/economy/2013/01/30/12289/san-bernardino-not-having-very-good-week/](http://www.scp.org/blogs/economy/2013/01/30/12289/san-bernardino-not-having-very-good-week/).

Silverman, C., Martinez, A. and Rogers, J. (2009). *The Inland Empire Nonprofit Sector: A Growing Region Faces Challenges of Capacity. A James Irvine Foundation Regional Nonprofit Sector Report*. University of San Francisco, Center for Nonprofit Management.

San Bernardino County 2011 community indicators Report. [www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/dph/publichealth/documents/2011-Community-Indicators-Report.pdf](http://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/dph/publichealth/documents/2011-Community-Indicators-Report.pdf)  
The Community Foundation for the benefit of San Bernardino County.

[www.city-data.com/city/Ontario-California.html](http://www.city-data.com/city/Ontario-California.html)

## Paul Faulstich's Reflective Review of Susan A. Phillips' Essay

"Social change from the ground up" is how Susan Phillips characterizes the nature of the community garden she discusses in her essay.

Community does not materialize out of thin air. It germinates from a form of mutualism that enables people to thrive. Community needs to be nurtured so that it develops deep roots and lofty ideals, and it must be harvested so that it nurtures its members. In short, community must be grown.

A vigorous community requires healthy inputs in order to generate sustaining outputs. A vigorous community provides sustenance through which people thrive, and from the growth of community comes regeneration. Sometimes, when a community is depleted, external inputs can help bolster it such that it is restored and invigorated. Herein lies the brilliance and value of the Huerta del Valle community garden in Ontario. Susan's essay discusses the garden as a resource that requires resources. And, I would suggest, it has developed through resourcefulness. Such is the nature of "resource," a word that brings to mind regeneration. Re-sourcing, like a spring fed by snowmelt, and, in turn, continually flowing forth.

Our ideas of community engagement should be bent, stretched, broken and remade. As the other essays in anthology likewise demonstrate, civic partnerships are deeply problematized pedagogical enterprises. They are complex and often messy. They deserve thoughtful reflection, open communication, continual adjustment. And, as Susan so joyfully insinuates, they also deserve bouncy houses and birthday cakes.

Like the cycles of the garden itself, the feedback loops of community engagement help all constituents—in this case the intersecting communities of the city of Ontario and Pitzer College—to prosper. Just as one might ask, "How does your garden grow?," Susan asks, "How does your *community* grow?" Her answer is at once simple and complex: Communities grow through

collaboration and amalgamation. They grow from engagement and communitarianism. They grow from struggle and joy. Susan is keen to affirm that, just as the community of Ontario grows from this collaboration, so too does the Pitzer community. Indeed, as I imagine Susan would eagerly affirm, "Pitzer" and "Ontario" are not entirely discrete communities. They exist as components of the greater whole to which we belong. They embody Susan's words, "for the community by the community in the community."

# Pitzer College Outback Preserve Restoration Project

Paul Faulstich, Professor of Environmental Analysis

A question we keep asking ourselves in environmental analysis at Pitzer College is whether it's possible to create modern socio-natural systems that are truly sustaining; that is, that avoid the features of contemporary systems in which the human factor dominates to the detriment of the environment. Any genuinely sustainable society must honor diversity— cultural and biological—and, at Pitzer, we're committed to forging innovative directions for a healthy future. Toward this end, students, along with faculty and staff, have initiated a program of ecological restoration in the Pitzer College Outback Preserve.

Ecological restoration is the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed. This document provides an introduction to the ecological restoration project being undertaken in the Outback. It also provides a rationale for the direction of the restoration efforts and an outline for ongoing care and maintenance.

Ecological restoration of the Pitzer Outback Preserve is academic and co-curricular activity that initiates the recovery of this fragment of the alluvial scrub ecosystem with respect to its health, integrity and sustainability. This ecosystem has been degraded, damaged and impacted as the direct and indirect result of human activities.

For the purpose of restoration, an ecosystem can be recognized in a spatial unit of any size, from a microsite containing only a few individuals to an area showing some degree of structural and taxonomic homogeneity, such as the “alluvial scrub



California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) flower clusters in their brown glory of summer and fall. The buds cluster in tight pinkish balls on long stalks that turn white when they open and as they dry they turn rust brown in the fall. Vast areas of California used to have Buckwheat covering the ground.

ecosystem.” The Pitzer Outback Preserve exists on this continuum and is biologically marginal due to its limited expanse, its urbanized context and its historical usage. It functions as an eco-cultural landscape wherein a respectful relationship with the natural ecosystem of this alluvial sage scrub habitat is fostered.

This guiding document serves as a framework for the Outback Preserve Restoration Project and includes the following components:

**Project Background:**

- Rationale as to why restoration is needed in the Outback Preserve
- Ecological description of the site
- Designation and description of the baseline, or reference site
- Explanation of how the restoration will integrate with the campus landscape and its flows of organisms and materials

**Goals and Objectives:**

- Statement of the goals and objectives of the restoration project

**Scope of Work (7 Stages):**

- Stage 1: Background Research and Precedents
- Stage 2: Inventory
- Stage 3: Program
- Stage 4: Analysis
- Stage 5: Synthesis and Design
- Stage 6: Production
- Stage 7: Implementation and Monitoring

**List of Tasks:**

- Specific tasks to be performed within each stage listed above
- Restoration techniques to be utilized

**Deliverables:**

- Project deliverables for physical publication
- Performance standards, with monitoring protocols by which the project can be evaluated
- Strategies to implement for long-term protection and maintenance of the Outback

**Schedule:**

- Project timeline

**Budget:**

- Project costs and budget
- Human capital needs

**PROJECT BACKGROUND****Rationale**

Pitzer's mission statement opens with this sentence: "Pitzer College produces engaged, socially responsible citizens of the world through an academically rigorous, interdisciplinary liberal arts education emphasizing social justice, intercultural understanding and environmental sensitivity." The statement highlights the intersection of social

and environmental justice, acknowledging that one cannot sufficiently occur without the other. Additionally, our core values of social responsibility, intercultural understanding, interdisciplinary learning, student engagement and environmental sustainability guide our teaching and research. When passed through college council, it was our hope that as agents of change, our students will utilize these core values to create solutions to our world's challenges.

Pitzer's Environmental Studies program began in 1970 in response to concerns about our environmental predicament. The program's founding faculty wanted to help students understand what had gone wrong with the human/nature relationship and how it could be corrected. Forty years later, the need for such a program is greater than ever, and the Outback restoration is one project within Environmental Analysis that works toward this correction.

The Outback restoration project seeks to preserve the type of plant and animal community that once covered most of the region directly below the foothill entrance to nearby San Antonio Canyon. Here, in the Pitzer Outback, the native mix of coastal sage scrub and chaparral still survives but has been heavily impacted by vegetative clearing, dumping, and the introduction of non-native plant species. Restoring Nature: The Pitzer Outback and its sister course, Practicum in Exhibiting Nature, are designed with the goal of educating the community about this area of the Arboretum and the importance of ecological restoration, making it more integrated with and accessible to the College community, and restoring and managing this rare and valuable campus resource.

A goal of the course Restoring Nature (EA 31) is to design and begin to implement a restoration strategy for the Pitzer Outback Preserve. This goal is to be met by learning about restoration theory, methods and case studies, as well as engaging in hands-on restoration work. The planning and implementation of restoration efforts will be determined on-site and through student input.

**How the Outback is Integrated with the Campus Landscape**

Pitzer College, since its founding in 1963, has a record of supporting environmental causes in the community and examining ecological issues through its academic programs. Along with the

College's mission to "produce engaged, socially responsible citizens of the world through an academically rigorous, interdisciplinary liberal arts education emphasizing social justice, intercultural understanding and environmental sensitivity," Pitzer has a Statement of Environmental Policy and Principles, which affirms that it "strives to incorporate socially and environmentally sound practices into the operations of the College and the education of our students....A Pitzer education should involve not just a mastery of ideas, but a life lived accordingly. We are thus committed to principles of sustainability, and dedicated to promoting awareness and knowledge of the impacts of our actions on humanity and the rest of nature." Additionally, Pitzer's core values include the tenant of environmental sustainability.

In fall 2007, the College completed the first phase of construction of new Gold LEED-certified residence halls. Stage two of the College's master plan, two new residence halls completed in fall 2010, achieved a Platinum LEED certification. This development severely impacted the Outback by reducing its size to approximately 3.4 acres. Also, it has brought the residence halls into closer proximity to the Outback. Construction of a proposed "outdoor classroom" in the Outback has been shelved because of the harshly reduced size of the preserve. As a condition of the LEED Platinum certification of the Phase II, Pitzer has committed to preserving the remaining Outback for at least the life of the buildings. In keeping with the Pitzer Master Plan, the Outback Preserve will be better integrated with the rest of the campus.

In keeping with the Pitzer Master Plan, the Outback restoration project aims to better integrate the preserve with the rest of the campus, while increasing its ecological integrity. The Outback is part of the John Rodman Arboretum. Since 1988, the Arboretum has been an official part of the College. The Arboretum has retained much of its original participatory character and continues to rely heavily on student and faculty volunteers. Since 2001, the Arboretum has been managed by Joe Clements.

The College's *Guidelines for the Pitzer College Landscape* address the desirability of ecologically appropriate landscaping. It includes a set of seven guidelines:

1. Campus landscaping should reflect our climate and geological setting.
2. The campus should be designed to

3. conserve water.
3. The campus landscape should be educational.
4. Campus plantings should be interesting and attractive, with attention to shape, texture and color.
5. The landscape should help unify the campus, which will increasingly contain buildings of different styles and periods.
6. Grounds management should emphasize ecological understanding of soil development and maintenance, biotechnical cycling, species and age diversity, and structural and physiological adaptation of the vegetation.
7. Landscaping should reflect the spirit of the College.

The Outback restoration project employs an ecosystematic design approach, wherein multiple scales and systems are considered and integrated in the planning and restoration process. Connections are made at local, watershed, and regional levels to establish existing patterns and processes, strengthen project relevance, and provide appropriate site design context. The level and depth of restoration is informed by the results of combining historic background research with current analysis and context of the site. This approach, which is continually evaluated, ensures an appropriate and adaptive level of restoration for the Outback Preserve so that it functions harmoniously with the existing Pitzer campus and community, fostering a cohesive socio-natural landscape.

## Ecological Description

The Pitzer College Outback is a 3.4-acre parcel. It is our intent to preserve and restore the remaining native alluvial scrub once prevalent on the footprint of our campus. Though heavily impacted and disturbed, in this area it represents a unique combination of recovering coastal sage scrub and chaparral plant communities.

## Restoration Needs

This section addresses the question of what is meant by "recovery" in the ecological restoration of the Pitzer Outback Preserve. An ecosystem has recovered—and is restored—when it contains sufficient biotic and abiotic resources to continue its development without further assistance or human intervention. It will sustain itself structurally



Students in “Restoring Nature: The Pitzer College Outback Preserve” have seeded and planted hundreds of native plants in our effort to restore ecological health to this small fragment of alluvial sage scrub.

and functionally and will demonstrate resilience to normal ranges of environmental stress and disturbance. It will interact as much as possible with regional ecosystems in terms of biotic and abiotic flows and cultural interactions. The small size and urban setting of the Pitzer Outback makes full ecological restoration impossible, so a standard must be set for achieving particular goals.

Alluvial scrub is the reference ecosystem for the Pitzer Outback; it serves as the model for planning our ecological restoration project and will later serve in the evaluation of the project. The proximity and health of the sage scrub habitat at the Bernard Biological Field Station makes the BFS the most appropriate ecological reference site of the Outback restoration effort.

## Designation and Description of the Ecological Reference

Certain floodplain systems in Southern California sustain unique scrub vegetation rather than riparian woodlands due to a lack of perennial water. Alluvial scrub occurs on outwash fans and riverine deposits along the coastal side of major mountains in Southern California. This vegetation type is adapted to severe floods and erosion, nutrient poor substrates and the presence of subsurface moisture. There has been huge historical loss of this unique floodplain vegetation type, due to mining, ranching, agriculture and development, sprawl and flood

control. Current threats to alluvial scrub vegetation include changes to the flooding regime caused by flood control, irrigation and upstream residential and commercial development projects, urban edge effects, pollution from residential and industrial runoff and off-highway vehicle use.

Alluvial scrub (also called interior sage scrub, Riversidian sage scrub, and California sage scrub) is a Mediterranean scrubland type that occurs in washes and on gently sloping alluvial fans. Alluvial scrub is made up predominantly of drought-deciduous soft-leaved shrubs, but with significant cover of larger perennial species typically found in chaparral. This vegetation type is distinctive because of the co-occurrence of evergreen shrubs, drought-deciduous shrubs, riparian species and upland annual species in close proximity to one another. Because alluvial scrub is intermediate between chaparral and coastal sage scrub, it shares many of the same species.

Alluvial scrub is found on recent or actively alluviating surfaces that experience infrequent but severe flood events. Alluvial scrub typically is found on coarse-particle river wash soils near the flood channels or in areas that are frequently inundated. Soils supporting alluvial scrub drain rapidly, have slow runoff and contain low amounts of organic matter. These drainages typically do not support extensive hydrophytic (i.e., wetland) vegetation because of the scarcity of surface water for much of the year.

The spatial distribution and species composition of alluvial scrub is largely determined by the dynamic geomorphic processes within floodplains and alluvial fans. Several different stages of alluvial scrub have been identified based on flooding frequency and distance from the floodplain channel.

The role of fire in the development and maintenance of alluvial scrub vegetation is significant. Because the species composition of alluvial scrub vegetation largely is made up of fire-adapted plants, fire may play a role in reducing older aged stands and promoting the growth of younger individuals and annual species similar to upland coastal sage scrub and chaparral systems. Fire is probably less important and less likely in younger-aged stands that are frequently flooded because of the lack of fuel load and open nature of the vegetation. It is important to recognize that while alluvial sage scrub is a fire-adapted ecosystem, it is not necessarily a fire-dependent ecosystem. (See the section below on fire for more information.)

Since the Pitzer Outback is situated in an area that historically received some surface water flow in winter, some elements of riparian ecosystems may have been present. These floral species may have included sycamore and poplar trees. Moreover, coast live oaks may have been found in this area in greater number but are now few because they were historically diminished for use as fuel wood and lumber.

Situated on the alluvial flow of the San Gabriel Mountains, the area that is now incorporated as Claremont would have naturally been subjected to periodic and seasonal flooding. This natural hydrological component is now absent from the ecology of the alluvial fan due to the massive effect of San Antonio Dam, the 210 Freeway, channeling of water runoff and suburban landscaping. It is largely unknown how the lack of flooding and mineral outwash affects the health and distribution of sage scrub species. In light of this drastic ecosystem alteration, we must identify the best strategies for either replicating the effect of water flows and flooding or determine how to best adjust the plant palette accordingly.

## Species Plans

For the purposes of this restoration project, floral species are categorized as native or non-native, with the intention of restoring ecological balance and diversity within the native plant community and reducing the impact of non-native species. Toward this end, the Outback is being mapped for floral distribution, key ecological relationships and areas of special concern. These species maps are being overlaid on topographic maps and input using GPS.

### Native Plant List

Native perennial flora of the Pitzer Outback includes but is not limited to: white sage (*Salvia apiana*), redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*), flat-top buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), yucca (*Hespero yucca whipplei*), California croton (*Croton californicus*), tarragon (*Artemisia dracuncululus*), yerba santa (*Eriodictyon spp.*), mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), wild cucumber (*Marah spp.*), laurel sumac (*Malosoma*), black sage (*Salvia melifera*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertifolium*), prickly-pear (*Opuntia littoralis*) and cholla (*Opuntia serpentiana*), scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), holly-

leafed cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*) and mountain-mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*), scale broom (*Lepidospartum squamatum*), whiteflower currant (*Ribes indecorum*), mesa horkelia or wedgeleaf horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata ssp. Puberula*).

Annual species composition has not been studied but is probably similar to that found in understories of neighboring scrubland vegetation.

### Exotics Plant List

Exotic species occurring within the Outback will generally be eliminated and discouraged from reoccurring. Exception may be made if a compelling cultural and ecological rationale is made.

Non-native flora of the Pitzer Outback includes but is not limited to: mustard (*Brassica spp.*), Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*), agave (*Agave americana*), star-thistle (*Centaurea spp.*) and San Pedro Cactus (*Trichocereus pachanoi*).

### Fauna

Restoring animal species to the Pitzer Outback is beyond the scope of this project. Hence, it is not the intention of this restoration plan to eradicate or introduce any faunal species, or to directly influence the balance of faunal species (but that is not to say that they are not critical to the alluvial sage scrub habitat). However, efforts can be made in order to attract native fauna species to the Outback. These efforts could include creating a denser barrier of native flora between the edge of the Outback and the streets creating a more livable space for animals, or including birdhouses in the Outback to attract nesting bird species. The more native animals that inhabit the Outback the closer we come to creating a more complete ecosystem.

While restoring animal species to the Outback is not an immediate concern of this project, here is a short list of faunal residents one might encounter:

Some Outback faunal residents include Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), California quail (*Callipepla californica*), Western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), wood rat (*Neotoma macrotis*), California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*) and black widow spider (*Latrodectus Hesperus*). Non-resident species include coyote (*Canis latrans*) and bobcat (*Lynx rufus*). A number of important faunal species are locally extinct within

the Outback, including mule deer, grizzly bear, rattlesnake, tarantula and mountain lion.

Since fire has not provided this site with its positive benefits, at least in the historical record, the Outback restoration plan strives to mimic some of the clearing effects of conflagrations. To achieve this, much of the debris wood and dead vegetation is being removed. In some cases, healthy native plants are being pruned in partial replication of the effects of fire. In other cases, the brush is simply stomped down (unless determined as a potential habitat or resource and/or aesthetically pleasing) or mulched and distributed onsite.

Native species occurring within the Outback are generally encouraged to thrive. The exception is when an assessment has been made that the floral species occurs in a disproportional abundance to what would exist naturally in the ecological reference.

## Restoration Goals

Generally, restoration attempts to return an ecosystem to its historic, ecological trajectory. Historic conditions are therefore the natural starting point for restoration design. However, given substantial changes to natural ecosystems and global conditions, it may be best to consider restoring to an ecological trajectory based on contemporary or future conditions.

Since ecological restoration of natural ecosystems attempts to recover as much ecological authenticity as can be reasonably accommodated, the reduction or elimination of exotic species at restoration project sites is highly desirable. An exotic species of plant or animal is one that was introduced into an area where it did not occur prior to recent human activities. Nonetheless, financial and logistical constraints exist within the Outback Preserve Restoration Project, and it is important to be realistic and pragmatic in approaching exotic species control, particularly on a college campus.

In cultural and historical restoration projects, exotic species are frequently an integral part of the landscape. Such exotic species are acceptable for cultural restoration.

In natural ecosystems, invasive exotic species commonly compete with and replace native species. However, not all exotic species are harmful. Indeed, some even fulfill ecological roles formerly played

by the native species that have become rare or extirpated. In such instances, the rationale for their removal may be tenuous. For example, some exotic species were introduced centuries ago by human or non-human agents and have become naturalized, so that their status as an exotic is debatable. Other species were managed by Indigenous Americans such that their distribution and representation have been altered from a natural state. Still others may have migrated in and out of the region in response to climatic fluctuations during the Holocene and can scarcely be regarded as exotics. Even if all exotic species are removed from the Outback restoration site, the opportunity for re-invasion remains extremely high. Therefore, it is essential for a policy to be developed for each exotic species present, based upon biological, economic and logistical realities. Highest priority is best reserved for the control or extirpation of those species that pose the greatest threats. These include invasive plant species that are particularly mobile and pose an ecological threat at landscape and regional levels and animals that consume or displace native species, in our case Mustard (*Brassica* spp.), Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*), and agave (*Agave americana*). Care should be taken to cause the least possible disturbance to indigenous species and soils as exotics are removed.

## Ecological Considerations in the Context of Regional Development

The primary development negatively affecting alluvial sage scrub ecosystems in general and the Outback Preserve specifically include:

- Encroachment
- Edge effect
- Soil alterations
- Invasive species
- Existing and expanding infrastructure
- Altered fire regimes, including both fire suppression and frequency (see below)

## Fire

Fire in interior sage scrub has led to the selection of fire survival strategies. Since fire has been a recurring, although infrequent event, for millions of years, only those species that have adaptations allowing them to recover persist. Consequently, many sage scrub plant species depend on some fire cue or post-fire environmental condition for maximal reproductive success. But over the past

century, fires have increased dramatically (due to human activity) in excess of what the ecosystem can tolerate. Old-growth sage scrub (50+ years old) remains a vigorous plant community, continues to add biomass over time and supports a dynamic population of animals.

There are three basic strategies plants use to respond to fire in the chaparral:

**Obligate resprouters** like toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) depend on resprouting from underground root systems or burls to survive after a fire. Geophytes (perennials with fleshy, underground structures like bulbs or tubers) are obligate resprouters, but the enhanced light from the lack of cover stimulates many geophytes to produce large numbers of flowers.

**Obligate seeders**, like many *Ceanothus* species, are destroyed in the flames and depend on seedlings to replace their populations. Their seeds require some fire cue (heat, charred wood, smoke) to germinate.

**Facultative seeders** like chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) resprout and germinate after a fire.

Since fire has not provided this site with its positive benefits, at least in the historical record, the Outback Preserve Restoration Project strives to mimic the clearing effects of conflagrations. To achieve this, some of the debris wood and dead vegetation will be removed. In some cases, healthy native plants will be vigorously pruned in partial replication of the effects of fire. In other cases, the brush will be stomped down (unless determined as a potential habitat or resource and/or aesthetically pleasing) or mulched and distributed onsite.

## Strategies

*Ecological restoration* is the practice of restoring ecosystems, as performed by practitioners at specific project sites, whereas *restoration ecology* is the science upon which the practice is based. Restoration ecology ideally provides clear concepts, models, methodologies and tools for practitioners in support of their practice. Restoration strategies incorporate perspectives from scientific ecology as well as social science perspectives.

Our strategies for the Outback restoration project incorporates the perspectives of interested parties, as well as an understanding of staffing needs, required materials and statements of use of pesticides.

## Reference Points

The Pitzer College Master Plan and the Housing Master Plan are points of reference for current and future campus plans. The natural history guide *Introduction to California Chaparral* provides some guidance on the ecological characteristics of alluvial scrub communities.

## Performance Standards

### Design criteria

The principle design criteria for the project is to achieve Outback floral restoration to a state replicating the historical benchmark or trajectory, while balancing this with the desirability of increasing access for the Pitzer College community and beyond.

Cultural resources, like the currently existing walking paths, have been assessed individually for their fit within the project goals. Some paths have been eliminated, new paths have been created, and some existing paths have been improved. The preserve will continue to be monitored for improvements in order to help natural ecosystems through the restoration process.

It must be understood that *restoration* of the Outback may be an idealized goal, but the reality is that achieving some degree of *rehabilitation* will be a benchmark of success. As one student in Restoring Nature indicated, "The Outback is not undergoing a restoration so much as it is being rehabilitated from a severely degraded state."

### Success criteria

Ongoing and post-project interviews and surveys with the interested parties will assess the social and ecological successes of the project.

The ecological stability of the Outback Preserve project area is being monitored with longitudinal assessments, making use of photographic documentation, GPS data and narrative summaries.

Throughout the duration of the restoration project, the Outback will continue to be utilized in appropriate ways by the campus and regional community. As explicated in the Pitzer Master Plan, the Outback can be employed as a mechanism of bringing the community together to appreciate, respect and gain knowledge about the native ecosystems of our region.

## Learning Criteria

Throughout the discrete stages of the project and its corresponding academic course, students are developing the knowledge and skills to be able to:

- Define options and plans for ecosystem restorations
- Recognize the social aspects of ecological restoration
- Understand local site ecology: topography, flora, fauna, soil and climate
- Engage in the effective science and practice of ecological restoration through a hands-on approach
- Measure impacts and assess solutions for conservation of species and ecosystems through formal, iterative processes for decision making
- Implement diverse strategies for effective management and planning in conservation

## Interested Parties/Stakeholders

The following interest groups have a stake in the restoration project, and are consulted as necessary. Additional local, regional, national and global stakeholders may be identified as the project progresses and added to the following list:

- Students enrolled in Restoring the Outback (EA 131)
- The John Rodman Arboretum
- Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California Sustainability
- The Pitzer College community (students, faculty and staff)
- Claremont and regional communities
- Joint Science Ecologists
- The Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
- California Native Plant Society
- Theodore Payne Foundation
- Audubon Society
- American Society of Landscape Architects
- National Resource Defense Council
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
- Council for Watershed Health

## Goals and Objectives

A properly planned restoration project attempts to fulfill clearly stated goals that reflect important attributes of the reference ecosystem. Pursuing

specific objectives is how the goals are achieved. The goals are ideals, and the objectives are strategies taken to attain these goals. Two fundamental questions are being asked with respect to the evaluation of the Outback as a restored ecosystem: Were the objectives accomplished? Were the goals fulfilled? Answers to these questions gain validity only if the goals and objectives have been clarified prior to implementation of restoration work.

Objectives for the Outback restoration project are based on performance standards, also known as design criteria or success criteria. In our case, these standards or criteria are conceived in large part from an understanding of the alluvial scrub reference ecosystem. For this reason, the Arboretum director, Joe Clements, along with Professor Paul Faulstich are providing the baseline and performance standards for the Outback restoration project. Objectives, performance standards and protocols for monitoring and for data assessment are outlined in this document, and are being incorporated into restoration plans throughout the duration of the project.

Periodic evaluations of the project will be employed to survey how well goals are being met. Evaluations include the assessment of stated goals and objectives that pertain to ecological, educational and institutional concerns. Hence, our evaluations have generally included the methods and techniques of the social sciences.

## Project Goal

The goal of the Pitzer College Outback Preserve Restoration Project is:

to rehabilitate, preserve and maintain the Pitzer Outback as a resilient landscape for the Pitzer campus community and beyond to experience, steward and enjoy.

This goal is to be achieved through implementing the following strategies, identified a project objectives:

## Project Objectives

Thirteen objectives provide a basis for determining when the restoration goals set for the Outback have been accomplished. The full expression of all of these attributes is not essential to demonstrate restoration. Instead, it is only necessary for these attributes to demonstrate an appropriate historical trajectory of ecosystem development towards the

intended goals or reference. Some attributes are readily measured, while others must be assessed indirectly (including most ecosystem functions, which cannot be ascertained without research efforts that exceed the capabilities and budgets of our restoration project).

1. The restored Outback ecosystem will contain a characteristic assemblage of the species that occur in the alluvial scrub reference ecosystem and that provide appropriate community structure.
2. The restored Outback ecosystem consists of indigenous species to the greatest practicable extent.
3. All functional groups necessary for the continued development and/or stability of the restored Outback ecosystem are represented or, if they are not, the missing groups have the potential to colonize by natural means, or the omission is purposeful (for example, the intentional omission of rattlesnakes, or the suppression of fire).
4. The physical environment of the restored Outback ecosystem is capable of sustaining reproducing populations of the species necessary for its continued stability or development along the desired trajectory.
5. The restored Outback ecosystem apparently functions normally for its ecological stage of development, and signs of dysfunction are minimized to the extent possible.
6. While there are severe limitations to connecting the Outback to the larger ecosystem, the restored Outback ecosystem is integrated to the largest possible extent into a larger ecological matrix with which it interacts through abiotic and biotic flows and exchanges.
7. Potential threats to the health and integrity of the restored Outback ecosystem from the surrounding landscape have been reduced as much as possible. This includes the elimination or reduction in smoking that occurs in the preserve.
8. The restored Outback ecosystem is sufficiently resilient to endure the normal periodic stress events in the local environment (e.g., drought, heat) that serve to maintain the integrity of the ecosystem.
9. The restored Outback ecosystem is self-sustaining to the maximum degree given its small size and its physical surroundings.
10. The restored landscape will integrate the Outback into the campus and local

community and will promote a sense of respect for and accessibility to our natural, local ecosystem.

11. The Outback Preserve Restoration Plan establishes site programs to promote education, foster environmental stewardship and support a sense of place within the local and regional community.
12. The restored Outback draws local and regional level connections to generate a far-reaching effect beyond the immediate campus community.
13. The Outback Restoration Plan serves as a model for ecological systems planning and holistic design on a campus level.

Other objectives may be added to this list if they are identified to be compatible with the goals of the restoration project.



The foreground in this photo shows the entrance to the Outback Preserve stripped of vegetation by campus building projects. This area has since been re-vegetated, and enhanced with this steel sign designed by Kathryn Miller, Emeritus Professor of Art.

## Scope of Work

### Stage 1: Background Research and Precedents

This initial stage involved the gathering of preliminary information pertinent to the project. This includes relevant materials related to the site such as photos, maps and data. Background, precedents, innovations, and research have been informed by literature review of relevant topics and consultation

with stakeholders, community members and professional and industry experts.

**Tasks Completed:**

- Gathered preliminary data pertaining to site context
- Reviewed relevant policy and planning information
- Identified and met with relevant stakeholders to assess issues and concerns
- Identified restoration methods and technologies
- Gathered and reviewed relevant case studies and referenced successful restoration projects

**Stage 2: Inventory**

In this stage, an inventory of relevant information was developed. This was conducted through the charting of environmental, spatial, atmospheric, demographic, economic and physical site contexts, as well as through site visits and community stakeholder meetings. Information gathered during these first two stages provides a basis of knowledge pertinent to the study and inform the project team as it moves toward analysis and design.

**Tasks Completed:**

- Gathered pertinent data related to geology, geomorphology and soils
- Collected pertinent data related to climate and microclimates
- Assembled pertinent data related to vegetation presence and patterns
- Established current and historic wildlife presence and patterns
- Determined current and historic land uses
- Ascertained pertinent data related to social and cultural patterns
- Established geographic setting and topography
- Gathered pertinent data related to current and historic hydrology and drainages
- Collected data related to soil variation, components and beneficial microorganisms specific to alluvial scrub ecosystem

**Stage 3: Program**

During this stage, the project team collected information regarding the needs, preferences and perceptions of project stakeholders, community members and other experts involved in decision-making about the Outback Preserve Restoration Project.

**Tasks Completed:**

- Met with stakeholders to assess issues and concerns
- Refined goals, objectives, and scope of work based upon initial findings and stakeholder feedback

**Stage 4: Analysis**

The goal of this stage was to fully understand the interrelated issues associated with the project and develop opportunities and constraints. The project team assessed data collected as well as information provided by stakeholders—locally and beyond—and established priorities and effective strategies towards design. Evaluations included site mapping and GIS analysis. Analysis provided synthesized opportunities and constraints that have and will continue to inform design changes. GPS is also a useful tool in studying the spatial aspects of the site. It could be that at some point GIS can be utilized to reveal preferential inclinations of the neighboring demographic to extend their resources, express interests and help or invest their time and energy into this project.

**Tasks Completed or Ongoing:**

- Assembled inventory information for analysis
- Build GIS or mapping system for project site with available data (ongoing)
- Reviewed inventory and assess for gaps in information
- Analyzed assembled information for project opportunities and constraints
- Assessed and categorized opportunities and constraints into common themes
- Presented initial analysis for review and feedback
- Compiled relevant findings and assessments of project issues, constraints and opportunities
- Established design criterion
- Identified indicator species that will help identify the ecological health of the site

**Stage 5: Synthesis and Design**

During the synthesis and design stage, the project team coalesced research, analysis and opportunities to formulate site designs that most effectively address stakeholder needs and issues established through stages of research and analysis.

**Tasks Completed:**

- Developed a restoration plan for the Pitzer

Outback that highlights preservation, education and community

- Presented initial design and restoration plan to project stakeholders and community
- Refined initial design based on stakeholder feedback

### Stage 6: Production

Through this phase, the project team produced materials that reflect physical restoration designs, guidelines, educational programming, and all aspects of the project leading up to them. This included presentations, physical documents outlining the restoration design and two books that graphically document the project in its entirety.

#### Tasks Completed and Ongoing:

- Finalized designs and restoration plan
- Compiled and refined all necessary supporting information, technical specifications, and graphics
- Wrote and edited all necessary document text
- Assembled all relevant materials into a cohesive, comprehensive and attractive format for visual presentation and physical publication. These publications, which are available in both hardcopy and online formats, are:  
*Restoring Nature: The Pitzer Outback* (2012) and  
*Restoring Nature: Part Two, The Pitzer Outback Preserve* (2013)
- Formally presented restoration plan to project stakeholders and community
- Assessed social and ecological successes of the project with post-project interviews and surveys with the interested parties
- Monitor ecological stability of the project area with longitudinal assessments, making use of photographic documentation (ongoing)

### Stage 7: Implementation and Monitoring

During this final phase, the Pitzer Outback Preserve Restoration Project has begun to be implemented and monitored to ensure success and effectiveness. The Outback will continue to need rehabilitation on an ongoing basis, and it could potentially become a more student-oriented and student-run process. Ideally, the future of the Outback should involve more integration of the Pitzer community and the Outback.

### Ongoing Tasks:

*Staffing:* The initial stages of the Outback restoration project are being implemented by students enrolled in Restoring Nature. Students are assisted in their labor by Arboretum staff and Professor Paul Faulstich.

### Tools Needed:

- Ecological descriptions, species lists and maps of the project site
- Historical and recent aerial and ground-level photographs
- Access to the different levels of book making or brochure making (printers, ink, bindings, etc.)
- Gardening tools and equipment
- Earth-moving equipment, on an as-needed basis
- Organic/locally created mulch
- Herbicides (if deemed appropriate, and only in very small and controlled situations)
- Monitoring equipment
- Microbial analyses regarding soil conditions, methods, laboratory equipment and resources necessary to conduct such studies

## Protocols for Monitoring

Monitoring the Outback Preserve is the responsibility of the Arboretum staff, under the direction of the Arboretum director. The staff will continually assess the Outback and conduct ongoing management that is aligned with this restoration plan. Arboretum staff will include students as appropriate in the ongoing monitoring.

## Strategies for Long-term Protection and Maintenance

Success of the project over time is dependent on the ability to maintain low levels of invasive plants and the elimination of unwanted anthropogenic use of the area (including campfires, excessive noise and other damaging activities). Maintenance of the area is under the purview of the Arboretum, which is charged with oversight of all grounds on the Pitzer campus.

A critical measure of project success is assessing the goal of increasing community appreciation of the Outback, which will then further encourage its long-term preservation.



Through hands-on engagement with restoring the Outback Preserve, students act on our responsibility to steward nature while learning about the endangered sage scrub ecosystem native to our area of southern California.

Introduction of new courses, including Exhibiting the Outback and Design Workshop: Fostering a Sense of Place, is intended to increase the visual aesthetics of the area, to design appropriate access and educational displays, and to increase understanding and appreciation of the campus resource. This is considered to be an important aspect for long-term protection and maintenance.

## Deliverables

All deliverables designed for physical publication will also be made available in digital format. Deliverables may include:

- Student learning: Though the course Restoring Nature, students engage with the Outback Preserve in a hands-on curriculum
- Comprehensive publication documenting all aspects of the restoration project from site analysis to final restoration plan. The final publication may include, but is not limited to: site and regional analysis, comprehensive restoration plan and site programming, plant selection, material selection, maintenance specifications, and organic nutrient and pest management guidelines. Additionally, the document may include general cost estimates and tiered plan alternatives designated to accommodate varying scales

of economic investment

- Educational systems, programs and materials enabling the Pitzer community to present and share information to the greater public that relates to the restoration and preservation of the Outback
- Website, booklet, condensed project report or other materials to present to potential granting agencies when pursuing future funding for the Outback Preserve Restoration Project
- Well-developed and explicitly stated performance standards, with monitoring protocols by which the project can be evaluated
- Implementation of strategies for long-term protection and maintenance of the restored ecosystem

## Schedule

The current phase of the ongoing Outback Restoration Project is slated to run through the spring 2015 semester. Thereafter, a reassessment of this plan will precede further restoration work. The Arboretum staff that oversees the Pitzer campus grounds will monitor the site.

## Budget

Funding for this project has been minimal. To date, funds have been acquired through a generous grant from the Dean Witter Foundation, the Community Engagement Center at Pitzer College, Pitzer's Faculty Research and Awards, the John Rodman Arboretum, and a pitzfunder project. As the project continues, we will need to seek additional funding.

**Funds will continue to be needed for the following:**

- Site Preparation
  - Fencing and other infrastructure materials and installations
- Purchase and installation of plants and irrigation
  - Purchase of plants
  - Soil, mulch, amendments
  - Post-installation activities
  - Ongoing monitoring and maintenance
- Signage; designs, materials and construction
- Landscaping tools and equipment
- Printing

- Benches and other landscaping materials
- Landscape crew
- Supplies for student projects

## Reflections

Humans are transforming Earth’s landscape from a natural matrix with pockets of civilization to just the opposite. Most of us realize that this pattern is not sustainable. I live and work in Pitzer’s home community of Claremont, California, a charming college town in the midst of suburban sprawl. The town has a central “village” of tasteful, exorbitantly priced bungalows nestled in the shade of tall, largely exotic trees. Indeed, most of the landscape of this “city of trees and PhDs” has been imported, only a few remnants of coastal sage scrub remains. The coastal sage scrub ecosystem, once the prevalent indigenous plant community in the Claremont region, is now endangered as result of sprawl and inappropriate development. It was partly our experience of this disjunction between environmental past and present that led me to develop the Outback restoration plan.

At Pitzer College, social responsibility is defined as awareness, knowledge and behavior based on a commitment to the values of equity, access and justice, civic involvement and environmental sustainability, and rooted in a respect for diversity, pluralism and freedom of expression. To improve implementation of this educational objective, Pitzer introduced a specific guideline during the 1995-96 academic year that requires students to participate in a semester-long community-based service project. Students may pursue one of several options to meet this guideline, but the preferred method is an experiential-learning placement in the context of a course (e.g., Restoring Nature). Following the introduction of this new guideline, Pitzer began to encourage its faculty to experiment with service-learning courses and to develop experiential learning projects.

While the vast majority of “Social Responsibility” courses are driven and sustained by the research interests of individual faculty members, the Outback Preserve restoration project emerged more out of passion than expertise. I am trained as a cultural anthropologist, and I direct the Outback restoration largely as an add-on to my other responsibilities. As an academic generalist with diverse interests, I am engaged in preparing students not only to learn, but also to act effectively on their values and to participate in their communities. I strive to

encourage proactive and intelligent responses to our social and ecological dilemmas. My academic strengths lay in a broad “human ecology,” which teaches that diversity, interdependence and whole systems are fundamental to us and to the health of the planet. This is the passion that was the impetus for ecological restoration of the Outback.

Community takes many forms. From an ecological perspective, a community can be as vast as an entire forest ecosystem or as tiny as a group of microbes inhabiting a rotting log. Similarly, from a social perspective, communities vary in size and composition, along with a variety of other cultural and economic factors. Revitalizing communities is key to ecological health and social harmony. Our current environmental crisis is symptomatic of our fractured relationship with the natural world and with each other. We are unlikely to succeed in appreciating and restoring the natural environment if we lack the knowledge and passion to restore human communities. It is my intent to address both of these critical concerns through the Outback restoration program.

In many ways, the Outback Preserve restoration effort is about extending: extending our learning outside of the classroom, extending our relationship with the world, extending our understanding of others, extending our sense of community. In keeping with Pitzer’s educational objectives, students learn to evaluate the effects of actions and social policies and to take responsibility for making the world in which we live a better place.

Through the Pitzer Outback Preserve Restoration Project, the benefits and limitations of the evolving science of restoration ecology are studied and implemented. Indeed, this engagement with the Outback Preserve is at the heart of this project. Students and others learn the process of restoration theory and implementation through an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach that stresses participatory and student-led projects and research. Ecological restoration is work to restore the health of the land. By engaging in restoration, we accept a forsaken responsibility, and we participate in a partnership ethic with the land. It is pertinent to note—and not just as parenthetically—that current human systems also need restoration. We must honor diversity, and ecological diversity may well be correlated with human diversity.

There is remarkable beauty and diversity within the Pitzer College Outback Preserve. But from an

ecological perspective, it is a damaged environment and could use our concerted stewardship. We have the opportunity to help nature heal by restoring this small, damaged ecosystem.

Along with protecting native plants and animals within the Outback boundaries, the College needs to carefully regulate adjacent activities. For example, because of the adverse impacts of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides on wildlife, these unnecessary toxins should be restricted. Poison baits injure and kill huge numbers of wild animals and pets. Because of the risk of harm to children, pets and wildlife, the US Environmental Protection Agency has starting the process of banning the most deadly rodenticides from the consumer market. Rodents consume these poisons and then slowly die of internal hemorrhaging, taking up to ten days to die after eating the rodenticide. During this time, the rodents can continue to consume bait, raising their toxin levels to doses that are lethal even for larger animals such as owls, foxes and bobcats, which eat rodents or carrion.

In Southern California, 92% of bobcats have anticoagulant poison in their systems, and bobcats that die of mange all have trace amounts of anticoagulant rat poison in their livers. Exposure to anticoagulant rat poison is linked to increased susceptibility to notoedric mange, caused by a microscopic mite, which leads to the death of the bobcats.

Rat poisons, especially those containing the active ingredient brodifacoum, are implicated in the poisonings and deaths of an increasing number of California wildlife species. The link between rat poison and terminal mange is deeply troubling, especially since bobcats unexposed to the poison do not die of mange. It is illogical to strive to protect the Outback Preserve if we are poisoning the animals that belong in this ecosystem. The bottom line is that using these poisons in our community is inhumane and irresponsible, and I'm proud to say that Pitzer College is phasing out all rodenticide use on campus and is switching to use of snap traps exclusively to control rats.

Understanding the history of our bioregion gives us valuable perspective. Let's dream big. With the Outback Preserve comes the responsibility of stewardship. From my perspective, this stewardship should be eco-centric in that the needs of the environment—its plants, animals and ecological relationships—are prioritized. But doing so will necessitate compromises by us, as benefactors and

beneficiaries. Prioritizing the health of the Outback will focus our campus management decisions accordingly. In the process, the Pitzer campus will become biologically richer and healthier, and safer for visitors. It will become an exemplary for how to best manage the urban-wildlands interface.

We have an opportunity to manage the Outback as a small refuge offering diverse and lightly impacted habitat for our fellow creatures. Let's recognize the richness and vulnerability of this environment, and steward it with humility.

## Susan Phillips' Reflective Review of Paul Faulstich's Essay

I've worked closely with Paul Faulstich for many years since joining the Environmental Analysis Field Group in 2008. In some ways we occupy two opposite ends on the spectrum of our interdisciplinary field. While his work is anchored in deserts and in non-human dominated ecologies, mine is rooted in the urban and overwhelmed by people problems of all kinds. But we are both trained anthropologists who value ethnographic voice. We are also both photographers who use visual methodologies to understand landscape. My studies of graffiti might not be so different from his studies of rock art—though perhaps neither of us would be comfortable with such a facile comparison.

At Pitzer College, Paul has also contributed a key, longstanding community project in the form of the Leadership in Environmental Education Project. LEEP, as its known, has taken generations of Pitzer students to teach generations of Claremont elementary school children about the ecological wonders of the Bernard Field Station. His classes have also had the most transformational impact on our 63-acre campus—all of which is designated as an arboretum. In one semester, for example, the front of Scott Hall went from conventional grass to a demonstration garden of diverse California native flora. This brings me to his work on the Outback, taught in a series of classes called Preserving Nature.

Paul Faulstich's essay on the Outback is part handbook and part meditation on a unique parcel of land at the northeastern edge of the Pitzer Campus. Paul presents an elegant guide not only to native plant systems and the ecological restoration of Pitzer's historic outback, but to what student learning means when anchored in a particular landscape. His essay provides a unique lesson on the stewardship of heritage parcels of coastal sage scrub—not an intrinsically sexy ecological niche. As evidenced in this essay, Paul teaches our students and broader community the value of this undervalued asset so that we all count ourselves as

part of it for the long haul. Paul has the long view on this space, as he does on many of our campus goings on—including this 50th anniversary and its meaning to the restoration of local ecologies.

# The Institute for Global/ Local Action & Study

**Nigel Boyle, Professor of Political Studies,  
Founding Director of the Pitzer Institute for Global/Local Action Study**

**T**he Institute for Global/Local Action & Study (IGLAS) at Pitzer College was founded in 2012 with my appointment as faculty director. Through an eight-year gestation period, it was a faculty-initiated vision that involved both programmatic and institutional innovation at Pitzer. Institutionally, the directorship of the IGLAS entailed both an endowed faculty chair and the position of associate dean for global and local programs. This represents a new model for faculty leadership within a major part of Pitzer's academic program. Programmatically, IGLAS involved an effort to build synergy between two areas in which the College had already established highly successful programming—community engagement (through the Community Engagement Center and the Ontario program) and study abroad.

There are **intellectual**, **pedagogic** and **institutional** linkages that are central to IGLAS's mission. Intellectually, there is the relationship between global and local, in all its dimensions: for international political economy, the flows of products, finance and labor between all locals, including 909-land, and the global; for cultural studies, the flows of ideas, culture, music and memes; or for chemistry, the atmospheric pollutants that affect the Inland Empire and the world. In terms of **action** and **study**, there is the relationship between engaged and experiential learning and reflective, analytic study. The coupling of action and study, engagement and reflection also allows us to think about both students' intellectual and what the literature calls psychosocial development—the cognitive and the affective or the visceral—the traits of tenacity, overcoming adversity and grit, which all the evidence indicates is a better



The Pitzer faculty, student and staff Global/Local Mentorship soccer team (which lost 5-1 to a local soccer team in Dominical, Costa Rica, March 20, 2014). All of these students will be undertaking study abroad on a Pitzer program during their sophomore year as part of the Global/Local Mentorship Project.

predictor of academic success than test scores or innate intelligence. Institutionally, IGLAS gets to get leverage from and build synergy between two of Pitzer's prime institutional assets—our study abroad programs and our community engagement programs. Leveraging assets that we as a college can shape—especially our own Pitzer-run study abroad sites and our community engagement sites, the Community Engagement Center (CEC) and the Pitzer in Ontario Program—is the institutional opportunity that Pitzer may be uniquely well placed to develop.

IGLAS is attempting to integrate spheres of knowledge and educational practice that are traditionally compartmentalized from one another, in separate academic silos. IGLAS has undertaken a variety of initiatives and projects in its first two years. Rather than detail those, I will devote the remainder of this piece to articulating some ideas about how these integrative initiatives can start to reshape the Pitzer educational experience. Working with a wide array of faculty, especially the large cohort of junior faculty, an initiative known as the Global Local Mentorship Project was launched in fall 2013 and focused on the entering first-year class. I will first situate this initiative in the context of wider developments in the academy. I will then lay out the rationale for accelerating Pitzer student involvement in community engagement and study abroad, and the possibilities this creates for integrating these academic experiences. I will argue that this can enable Pitzer to become the trailblazer in actively integrating local and global action and study.

Two reform movements are currently at work within US higher education—one centered on restoring the civic mission of colleges and universities, and another advocating for global education and the comprehensive internationalization of institutions. The perspective offered here is that restoring the civic and embracing the global are neither discrete nor merely complementary educational objectives. Their *combination* opens up exciting opportunities for transformative learning, and this combination is best effected *early* in the undergraduate experience. Early combination addresses three major pedagogical challenges to achieving these objectives: the “episodic” tyranny of the semester-long course or program; the need to be inclusive of all students; and the neglect of the non-cognitive, psychosocial aspect of student development.

Proliferating civic engagement centers at US colleges and universities are underpinned by a range of ethical/political missions that run along a spectrum of benevolence, from service to social justice. The more ambitious centers, such as Pitzer’s, identify the goal of ensuring that students understand the structural causes of the conditions they encounter experientially through projects, the need for reciprocity in college-community partnerships, and the importance of the academy working on community-defined priorities. Pedagogical goals vary considerably, with the more ambitious addressing Martha Nussbaum’s trifecta: critical thinking and self-examination; the capacity to see one’s fate as connected to that of others; the ability to empathize, to imagine oneself in

another’s place. (Nussbaum 1997).

Ongoing, long-term partnerships with community-based or civic organizations address one of the traditional shortcomings of service projects, namely, the episodic nature of quarter- or semester-long time frames. The ability to cycle students (and faculty) through an ongoing project does much to benefit community organizations and avoid burning out activist faculty. Pitzer’s Community Engagement Center was designed to address this issue. But two significant problems remain: (1) giving students ample opportunities to reflect on community or civic engagement and the (measurable) cognitive and non-cognitive development they undergo, and (2) involving *all* students and faculty in such engaged learning, rather than just the “usual suspects”—civic engagement for the physicists as well as the sociologists.

The ethical and political challenges posed by local community engagement exist in magnified form in global civic engagement and study abroad. Ivan Illich’s famous screed, “To Hell with Good Intentions,” pilloried US international student volunteerism as useless “mission vacations,” at best, and malignant proselytizing, at worst. (Illich, 1968). Study abroad programming runs the gamut from glorified tourism to programming that promotes active engagement with local cultures and communities. The most common forms follow either the “exchange” model, according to which students take classes and live in dorms in circumstances not unlike those at their home campus, or the cultural immersion model, according to which students “homestay,” live in, study in and become participants in communities abroad. The latter model, which has been developed to an extremely high level by Pitzer’s direct-run study abroad programs, yields opportunities for community-engaged research. But *all* study abroad programs run the risk that the experience will be, in essence, a student “sabbatical”—a delightful, in-and-out, hermetically sealed episode disconnected from the rest of college education. As with local civic engagement, study abroad programming struggles to give students the time to reflect on and process the cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of their experience. It also struggles to be inclusive of all students and faculty—global engagement for the math majors as well as French literature majors.

Students who go abroad typically do so during their junior year. Many students who become deeply civically engaged do so in the latter part of their undergraduate careers. Experience with

both of these exoteric practices often comes late, after the major has been declared and after the early part of students' careers has been focused on the esoteric culture of the college campus. This is doubly unfortunate, as it means that the engagement experiences cannot shape the rest of a student's academic program, including the planning of the major—engagement practices are add-ons, rather than formative events. Moreover, “belated” global and local engagement practices don't allow sufficient time and space for reflective understanding of these experiences, especially their non-cognitive aspects. It would be better for students to become engaged in local civic engagement and study abroad early in their academic careers, before they are “branded” by their disciplines. These practices should be a part of general education, rather than boutique experiences for a select few in certain disciplines.

Civic engagement and study abroad are exoteric “high-impact practices” that involve experiential, face-to-face interaction with people outside the college community. This is especially true of the deeper varieties of each; cultural immersion study abroad programs and social justice-oriented civic engagement programs—practices that “disrupt the established ecology of atomized courses, disciplinary courses of study, and the separation of curricular from co-curricular experiences.” (Scobey, 2012 p.4). For institutions committed to both civic engagement and global education, the ability to connect programming in the two fields opens up possibilities for sequential and dialectical programming.

The Institute for Global-Local Action and Study at Pitzer College is charged with proactively building linkages between civic engagement and global education, utilizing the infrastructure provided by the College's local community partnerships and cultural immersion programs in communities abroad. In 2013, with support from the Bringing Theory to Practice Project, Pitzer launched a pilot program designed to explore how global and local civic learning practices can be further cultivated in order to address the three pedagogical challenges noted above: practices being isolated episodes, failing to be inclusive of all students, and failing to address the psychosocial well-being of students. The program reflects a “Jesuitical” strategy of getting students civically engaged as *early* as possible in their academic careers. Focused on the 2013–14 freshman class, the project entails a two-year intensive mentorship program involving

faculty advisors and residential life staff. During this mentorship period, students are “fast tracked” into early—and repeated—participation in local civic engagement courses and projects; early—and repeated—participation in immersive study abroad programming focused on civic engagement, starting in the sophomore year; and early declaration of majors, with a focus on integrating local and global engagement activity into majors across all fields. Each student develops a two-year plan for global-local engagement that, during the freshman year, includes participation on an “action research team” and an alternative spring break study tour to a Pitzer program abroad. During the sophomore year, the students take other courses that meet the College's social responsibility requirement, and they are required to spend one semester abroad in a cultural immersion program.

“Fast-tracking” students into local civic engagement and study abroad creates the possibility for iterated and dialectical experiences, with ample opportunity to reflect, regret, reconsider and retry. For example, a freshman year internship at a local youth detention camp can be followed by a sophomore experience in the criminal justice system in Ecuador. Subsequent engagement experiences in the junior and senior years allow for cumulative intellectual and visceral student development. The pilot project is intended to connect over time what might otherwise be isolated “episodes” in a student's career, and it is inclusive of all students, not just a self-selected subset.

*Combining* the restoration of the civic mission of colleges with global education can lead to transformative global and local learning. If global and local initiatives can be infused *early* in a student's college career, then such learning can become central to the formative intellectual and personal experience of all students, rather than the marginal experience of a few.

## References

Illich, I. To Hell With Good Intentions. Address to the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects, Cuernavaca, Mexico, April 20, 1968.

Nussbaum, M. (1997). *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Scobey, D. Why now? Because this is a Copernican moment. *Civic Provocations*, Harvard, D.W. (Ed.), 4.

## Mary Hatcher-Skeers' Reflective Review of Nigel Boyle's essay

I am pleased to comment on Nigel Boyle's piece describing the Institute for Global/Local Action & Study. IGLAS is an innovative and important addition to the academic and co-curricular life of Pitzer College, and this piece helps to further introduce it to our community and beyond. I enjoyed the piece not only because it taught me more about the institute, but also because Nigel's enthusiasm is contagious, and I believe this contribution will increase participation in IGLAS initiatives, as well as in other engagement opportunities.

Nigel is correct when he says that Pitzer is uniquely well placed to build synergy between community engagement and study abroad programs. Pitzer is deeply committed to both of these practices and, importantly, in having them be more than "isolated episodes" in a student's career. Depth of experience is achieved because of the dedication of faculty, staff and students at Pitzer who have created an energized Community Engagement Center and Pitzer-run study abroad programs.

The work that Nigel is doing at IGLAS is bold but achievable. By leveraging current strengths, IGLAS is able to build a program that makes civic engagement and abroad programs truly transformative and sustainable, a goal to which all colleges aspire. The pilot project described will most certainly provide both intellectual and psychosocial development, enhancing our students' experience while also providing lasting benefit to community organizations.

I am excited to have my work paired with Nigel's because we both discuss the need to do more than provide "drop in" engagement. The Scripps College Academy began as a summer residential program, but we quickly learned that the success of our high school scholars was closely linked to providing year-round and sustained support. As Nigel describes for the IGLAS pilot program, these sustained efforts create "the possibility for iterated and dialectical experiences, with ample opportunity

to reflect, regret, reconsider and retry." In addition to enhancing the experiences for the high school scholars we serve, the SCA year-round program provides opportunities for our college students to engage deeply, often over a number of years, for their own cumulative intellectual and visceral development.

# Providing Access to STEM

Mary Hatcher-Skeers, Associate Professor of Chemistry

The science curriculum does not have many obvious places for community engagement and social activism. Sure, we can take our students to local schools to do demonstrations and judge sciences fairs, and our science faculty do many of these things. But critical engagement and scholarship in science can be quite removed from the community. My own research involves spectroscopic investigations of DNA structure and dynamics, a field that is both instrumentally and computationally driven. How, then, can I, a chemistry professor with a strong desire to be engaged in more than my teaching and research, find entry into community engagement?

My opportunity came in the form of a college access program at Scripps College. When faculty at Scripps invited me to help draft a residential summer program for young women, I was excited but unsure how chemistry fit the theme, “The Power of Ideas; Race, Class and Gender.” How was I to teach science within this rubric? I realized that I did not have to teach them science but, rather, how to gain access to the field. Socially constructed ideas about who does science limit access for women and people of color. I could use this program to show these young women real examples of minorities who do science and how they, too, can contribute to the field. This essay will describe my 11-year journey with the Scripps College Academy (SCA), how I have provided access to science for hundreds of young women and how they and the program have rewarded me in ways my science research never could.



Scripps College Academy students enjoying a break in the Rose Garden on a field trip to the Los Angeles Science Center in Exposition Park, (2009).

## A Brief Description of the Scripps College Academy

The Scripps College Academy began in the summer of 2003 as an Irvine Diversity Grant-funded program for increasing student diversity. The SCA was unique in that its goal was not to directly recruit students to Scripps College but, instead, help prepare more students for acceptance into top four-year colleges and universities. It is an academically intensive,

year-round academic outreach program for highly motivated young women from racially diverse and low socio-economic backgrounds who will have completed the ninth or tenth grade by the start of the program and who demonstrate the promise to succeed in a liberal arts college environment. The SCA focuses its recruitment on first-generation, college-bound students. The first-step in becoming a Scripps College scholar is admittance into the two-week summer residential component, which provides young women with the opportunity to experience what it is like to live and study at a private, liberal arts institution. Program participants work with Scripps College faculty, staff and students who support their efforts to graduate from high school and succeed in college by enhancing each student's academic skills and confidence. The Academy seeks students committed to the hard work required to make their college dreams a reality. Following the summer program, the scholars participate in a wide array of continuing outreach activities, including book clubs, science research programs, fine arts field trips, financial aid workshops, ACT prep courses and college application workshops. Each SCA scholar is paired with a current college student as a mentor to help her navigate the college application process. The Scripps College Academy has completed its 11 years and has been extremely successful with respect to its initial goal; SCA scholars have a 95% acceptance rate into four-year colleges and universities. However, the SCA has done much for more than just our high school scholars; it has greatly impacted the lives of the faculty and college students who work with the program.

## Teaching Science as Empowerment

In the fall of 2002, the inaugural faculty began discussing the curriculum for our two-week residential program. Through many meetings, a general theme of "The Power of Ideas; Race, Class and Gender" emerged. The hope was to provide the students a framework to understand some of the barriers they would encounter on their journey to college, while also providing support, encouragement and practical examples of ways to overcome these barriers. I loved this idea but was unsure how a chemistry professor fit into this theme. My lecture that first summer was informed by reading Ruby Payne's "A Framework for Understanding Poverty." While there is much in this text worthy of discussion, it was Dr. Payne's use of constructive and destructive interference as metaphors for whether a student's community

would encourage them or instead place obstacles in their way as they pursued college that caught my eye. As a physical chemist, I know quite a bit about constructive/destructive interference and was at once comfortable with this theme. I created an interactive lecture where students and I discussed people and/or experiences that empowered us and those that prevented us from achieving our goals. Within this lecture, I did a demonstration with strategically placed stereo speakers. Set up correctly, these opposing speakers created spaces in the room where the tone was very loud (constructive interference) and spaces where there was no tone (destructive interference). Students wandered around the room, experienced the different sounds and eventually all ended up where the tone was the loudest. We concluded by discussing how we need to gravitate, together, to the places and people who empower us. But, we also fit in a brief discussion of wave theory related to the example of constructive and destructive interference they had just experienced, and the students were excited to learn a practical application of physics. This lecture empowered the students to evaluate their surroundings and where they could get the support they needed, but it also empowered me. I no longer worried about how a chemistry professor could fit into the SCA. I realized that what the students need are people who provide constructive interference, and each and every one of us can do that. Subsequent years have resulted in lots of different topics and many lectures, some good and some not as good. But, even when the lectures do not work as well as that first one, simply being a faculty member in the SCA creates a successful experience. The students leave that summer program with eight college faculty who believe in them and will continue to support them as they finish high school, apply to college and beyond. They have found a space with constructive interference.

## Realizing Science

The SCA curriculum has evolved over the years, but the main focus remains empowerment of the high school students. As a woman scientist, I am eager to further support those who have an interest in science. Unfortunately, science continues to be seen as a "masculine" field, and each year I meet SCA scholars who had been told (sometimes even by teachers) that they will not succeed in science or math. To counteract this socialization, I have spearheaded additions to the SCA program that highlight science.

The Math and Science Scholars (MASS) program began in 2007 with generous support of the Kathryn Beynon Foundation. This program brings our SCA scholars back to campus for four Saturdays in the fall semester to design and implement a scientific research project with a Claremont College faculty member. We have had chemistry, biology, physics, mathematics, economics, computer science and psychology faculty from Claremont McKenna, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer, Pomona and Scripps Colleges lead teams of four to six high school students over the past seven years. This is often the only opportunity many of these students have to work in a laboratory. In addition, research shows that working on an actual research project rather than a packaged lab exercise leads to greater enthusiasm for science and identification for participants as someone capable of doing science, which are important indicators for future retention in the field. The MASS program culminates in presentations of their results to the broader community. These are attended not only by the participants and their families and friends but also by many faculty from the various Claremont Colleges and often college administrators, high school teachers, counselors and principals. These presentations are the highlight of the MASS program because it is then that the students realize just how capable they are and, often, how much they enjoy scientific inquiry.

## The Broader Impact

This essay is meant to do more than describe how the SCA benefits the high school girls who participate. It must also address how community engagement benefits everyone who participates. While the SCA program was developed to provide opportunities for high school girls, it has also provided unique experiences for participating faculty and college students.

As part of the program evaluation, we asked faculty to describe how participation in SCA impacts their interactions with college students. Some of the responses are listed below:

“Working with SCA students makes me appreciate everything about my own educational experiences and helps me to relay this to our current students. By discussing these issues, students more fully appreciate the advantages of their own experiences and the importance of working toward issues of equity for all.”

“It has made me reassess the academic background of some of my students—I hope it has made me more patient with students who struggle with the basics of college-level work.”

We also asked how participation in SCA influences their experience as a faculty member;

“Being a part of the SCA program has been one of the most fulfilling experiences I have encountered as a faculty member.”

“It’s both made me feel more a part of a community and has also motivated me to work harder to create a greater sense of community.”

In addition to faculty who staff the program, the Scripps College Academy hires a number of college students to help run and administer the program. Within the summer program, students serve as academic facilitators who teach closely with the faculty and resident advisors who orchestrate a comprehensive co-curricular program. Many others work with the SCA as part of the year-round program, including tutoring, peer mentoring, MASS coordinators, MASS teaching assistants and programming interns. These college students have gained unique experiences as teachers, mentors and program developers. Importantly, a large number of these college students go on to graduate programs, internships and careers in educational access, including teaching, educational policy, education administration and law. One student who now works in college admissions described her experience:

“I learned how to navigate a professional work place environment; I had the opportunity to work within the SCA office and learn how a program like SCA works. I found my passion for education, access to higher education and education equity through the summer program and, as an intern, honed my interests and future plans to fit my that passion.”

## Final Thoughts

This essay has described the Scripps College Academy as a successful community outreach that prepares young women of color and first-generation students for college admission. While that is true, and I am extremely proud of the program and its successes, this essay needs to do more. It needs to convince the reader that community engagement

is important, relevant and worth the time. And that anyone and everyone have something to offer the broader community. To make that case, I will end on a personal note. I am a chemistry professor. I love chemistry and love unfolding its mysteries for bright young college students. But I used to feel as if there was something lacking in my career. I teach at elite liberal arts colleges to the top students in the country. Being perfectly honest, these students would learn chemistry whether or not I was here. As the daughter of a single mom who knew nothing about chemistry, and a woman scientist with a desire to make a difference, teaching chemistry in Claremont was simply not enough. The SCA is just my example of how to do more. I recognize that my position as a college professor is a privileged one. College professors are paid to continue to learn and to share what we learn with bright young minds. While we are expected to become experts in our fields, we have agency to choose the fields we pursue and how we study them. On our campuses, we are provided numerous opportunities to attend important lectures and engage with powerful intellectuals. But, importantly, we are also provided opportunities to engage with those without power.

We have spaces like the Center for Community Engagement that facilitate outreach of all varieties. We can choose to participate in an ongoing project or develop new programs with their support and, often, the necessary funding. All we need is the desire to do more. The Scripps College Academy has added purpose to my career. In addition to teaching bright young college students the subject that I love, I can encourage more young people to study chemistry, or physics or computer science. Importantly, through this targeted outreach program, I support young women who have experienced destructive interference when they dare suggest that they would like to go to college or to be a scientist. The biggest successes of my career are not grants, papers or books but, instead, are the SCA alumnae that have found a passion for science and the courage to pursue it.

## References

- Bauer, K.W., and Bennett, J.S. (2003). Alumni perceptions used to assess the undergraduate research experience. *Journal of Higher Education* 74(2): 210-230.
- Bouffard-Bouchard, T. (1990). Influence of self-efficacy on performance in a cognitive task. *Journal of Social Psychology* 130(3): 353-363.
- Chemers, M.M., Hu, L. and Garcia, B.F. (2001). Academic self-efficacy and first-year college student performance and adjustment. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 93(1): 55-64.
- Chubin, D.E. and Ward, W.E. (2006). Building on the BEST principles and evidence: A framework for broadening participation. In M. Boyd and J. Wesermann (Eds.) *Broadening participation in undergraduate research: Fostering excellence and enhancing the impact*. Washington DC: Council of Undergraduate Research.

## Nigel Boyle's Reflective Review of Mary Hatcher-Skeers' Essay

That Mary Hatcher-Skeers is, in terms of service, permanently attached to Scripps College through her chair is Pitzer College's loss, but as a W.M. Keck Science Department chemist, she is nonetheless a Pitzer faculty member who fully embraces Pitzer's social justice mission. It is vitally important that both community engagement and intercultural understanding be as relevant for Pitzer chemistry and physics majors as they are for our sociology and anthropology majors, and Mary's piece shows how this can be done. The Scripps College Academy (SCA) which Mary has helped pilot, is an excellent example of an initiative that is sustainably long-term, radical in its understanding of the problem, and effective in harnessing faculty and student energies for a social justice goal. In its eleventh year, SCA has become a sustained educational program, avoiding the problem often encountered by externally funded "episodic" initiatives that wither when the grant funding expires. It is radical in addressing part of the root cause of underrepresentation of young women of color and first-generation students. And the SCA is exemplary in having involved large numbers of Keck Science faculty and students. I think Pitzer has tended to underestimate the hunger to become involved in community engagement among Keck Science faculty: a simple email to the faculty list I sent out resulted in seven Keck Science faculty volunteering to teach in CRC Norco prison this semester ("She opened my eyes to a career in bioscience," said Luis H. of Mary's talk at the prison).

The part of the SCA initiative that especially excites me is the involvement of students in face-to-face work with young prospective science students. It is this engagement that addresses Nussbaum's trifecta: empathy; an ability to see one's fate as connected to others; and critical thinking about social justice in academic science. My hope is that for future Pitzer science majors, IGLAS can work with study-abroad programming so that this sort of local student engagement can be carried into the study-abroad experience of science majors in either their junior or sophomore years (the latter requiring that students can combine study of organic

chemistry with study-abroad semesters). Directed independent study projects from Gaberone to Quito could certainly focus on working with socially disadvantaged schoolgirls who aspire to further study in science. Pitzer has an obligation to ensure that our students' involvement in SCA and other such initiatives is not an isolated opportunity but a stepping stone to further engagement locally and abroad.

I write this having just heard that Cesar Vargas, a pre-med Pitzer senior from a very disadvantaged background, has won a research Fulbright to Spain to study healthcare provision for undocumented immigrants in Spain, especially how medical professionals deal with newly restrictive legislation. Cesar's preparation for the rigors of a Keck Science education was far from ideal, but his faculty mentors have transformed him into a stellar scientist possessing a radical understanding of the role of academic and medical professionals in addressing inequality. In Mary's words, our proudest accomplishments can be "alumnae that have found a passion for science and the courage to pursue it."

# Engaging Students in Community-based Partnerships for Environmental Justice: Reflections on CCAEJ’s “Organizing Academy”

Brinda Sarathy, Associate Professor of Environmental Analysis

## Organizing Academy Building Blocks

In the spring of 2012, three Claremont College professors came together to partake in a novel experiment—to engage our students in a cross-course, cross-college community engagement project with the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCAIEJ), one of the oldest and most renowned environmental justice organizations in the Inland region of Southern California. Our community engagement effort, termed the “Organizing Academy,” represented a move to “scale up” our already existing relationships with CCAIEJ and to tie undergraduate community-based work with critical classroom pedagogy. This may sound like an invitation to “herd cats,” and, at certain points in the semester, each of surely felt like we were trying to steer an amorphous and ambiguous mass! Yet, while the project itself entailed far more effort (and stress) than most traditional classes, the outcomes for students, professors and CCAIEJ were worth it. In this essay, I briefly highlight the process and some lessons learned from the Organizing Academy and the importance of such efforts for institutions like Pitzer College, which value social responsibility and student engagement.

So, who constituted the band of intrepid instructors who ventured on this one-of-a-kind project? Rick Worthington, a professor of politics (Pomona College) who studies scientific expertise and participatory democracy, had a long-established relationship with CCAIEJ and had connected various students to the organization for internships in past years. Brinda Sarathy, professor of environmental



In-class workshop with students and Penny Newman, founder and executive director of Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCAIEJ).

analysis (Pitzer College), taught classes on environmental justice (EJ) and was developing a new research agenda on toxics in Southern California. Like Worthington, Sarathy also had a developed relationship with CCAIEJ. Finally, Gwen D’Arcangelis, professor of gender and women’s studies (at Scripps College during the time of this project), focuses her work on the politics of science, medicine and environment. Fortuitously, all three of us not only knew one another, but also just happened to be teaching courses on environmental justice in the same semester. At first, we informally shared our aspirations to broaden the consciousness of

our respective students about issues of power and inequality and the struggles that groups of people have enacted to address these inequalities and achieve social justice. As we continued our conversations, however, an intersecting paradigm of critical pedagogies emerged. It gradually became apparent that we could pursue a cross-course collaboration that might both benefit our students and a community partner, CCAEJ. Indeed, each of us was already planning to incorporate some type of community-engaged work in our classes, and this was a chance to try and coordinate our efforts and goals.

Our intent was to promote the work of social justice by leveraging students' skills—in writing, GIS and research, and their relatively privileged access to resources such as time, computers, data and scholarship—to facilitate community-identified agendas. To this end, student learning was dependent on a direct engagement with CCAEJ's needs and demanded both flexibility and adapting to a lack of traditional classroom structure and expectations. Prior to identifying project areas for student engagement, we felt it was paramount to orient all of our students to some EJ issues in the Inland region and to also familiarize them with CCAEJ's process of working with communities. To this end, students in our classes went on a CCAEJ-led "toxics tour" to visit with and learn directly from impacted communities in Mira Loma (Riverside County) and the city of San Bernardino. The student reflection below highlights how this full-day toxics tour not only connected students with individual community members and their lived experiences, but also linked to theoretical concepts covered in class readings and provoked questions about barriers to justice.

"I found our toxic tour field trip to provide a necessary context for this week's readings in the way that we could apply the theoretical parts of the articles to the reality of the Inland Empire. One aspect of the trip that particularly struck me is when one of the members of CCAEJ pointed out that they are not an environmental group, which is evidenced by their primary goal being to keep communities safe from exposure to toxic chemicals by ensuring various companies continue to build in the designated 'industrial sites zone,' as opposed to advocating for a rethinking of the need to continue building in general. While reading the United Church of Christ's Toxic Wastes and Race concerning how minorities are not part of the environmental movement, I immediately thought of CCAEJ as an exception to that. This also led me to wonder

how much of an obstacle the language barrier is for members of CCAEJ, given that they are a grass-roots organization and rely heavily on communicating with not only other community members, but also with the policy makers they are pushing for change."

In addition to the toxics tour, CCAEJ's executive director, Penny Newman, and staff member, Sylvia Betancourt, engaged our three classes in an "Organizing Academy" teaching module over the course of two separate weeks. Each of these sessions lasted three hours and represented a significant time commitment on the part of CCAEJ to impart to students a baseline understanding of their core values and organizing strategies. The in-class sessions with Newman also gave students the invaluable opportunity to directly engage with a veteran environmental justice organizer and be inspired by her stories of activism. In hindsight, these sessions quite brilliantly made students accountable for their upcoming projects, in ways that a simple grade at the end of class would never have. Community members and environmental justice activists had taken time out of their busy and burdened days to share experiences with undergraduate students, and almost everyone understood that their project work needed to "give back" in a meaningful and responsible way. Again, the student reflections on the in-class modules of the Organizing Academy, noted below, stress the lengths to which CCAEJ went to cultivate a relationship with students *before* assigning them to particular projects:

"Overall, I really admire the passion that both of the women from CCAEJ have, but most importantly, I admire how they refuse to step back and continue to pressure despite all the ridicule and disrespect they have encountered in efforts of providing a better environment for their community. I am looking forward to organizing and learning from them in hopes of implementing what I learn there in justice issues within my own community."

"Another aspect of the academy that stood out to me was the model we analyzed; specifically, I was interested in the way organizers help develop policies from the ground up. Although in the grander scale it may seem as if some groups or organizations are not in support of affected communities, organizers such as CCAEJ have found ways to influence policy making by working with individuals within these agencies. Because these agencies may not be

in tune with the actual needs of communities, it is important that members have a voice in the decision-making process. Thus, building these relationships can also be a useful tool for organizers and supporters alike in helping shape policy that directly affect community members. Overall, I was really excited to learn so much from these women and about organizing in general.”



Toxics tour: Outside Jurupa Valley High School and adjacent to rail transfer yard.

## Organizing Academy Projects

Subsequent to the toxics tour and in-class Organizing Academy modules, we developed three kinds of projects (oral histories, policy research and community engagement), in collaboration with CCAEJ, through which to channel team-based student engagement, and which are outlined below. In talking to our respective classes, we were all very clear that this effort was not a traditional model of “service-learning,” but rather one of community engagement and community-based research. CCAEJ also made it known that they were organizationally over-extended, with a limited amount of time and staff to devote to supervising students. We thus asked that each student team delegate one point person/leader, who was charged with communicating between their teams and course professors and CCAEJ.

**Oral histories** (in-depth interviews) were modeled after a CCAEJ authored report on health and human

rights in San Bernardino. The goal of gathering oral histories was to develop a similar report to highlight communities from throughout the Inland Valley. This set of projects included the following activities:

- **Students developed a community map of their assigned area, identifying sites with high impacts or potential impacts to the community. This was through an interview with one or two community members at one time.**
- **In teams of two, students interviewed two community members from their assigned area:**
  - Jurupa Valley
  - Moreno Valley
  - San Jacinto
  - Fontana
  - Perris
  - Norco
  - Bloomington
- **Students profiled their assigned community, highlighting:**
  - History
  - Demographic information (age, income, ethnicity, education)
  - Issues confronted by the community
  - Impacts to the community
  - Efforts to challenge those targeting the community
  - Community’s proposed solutions
  - Community’s vision for environmental justice

**Policy research** saw student teams analyze city general plans, air quality standards, and transportation policies and focus on one of the three following topics:

- **Southern California Association of Governments – Regional Transportation Plan (SCAG – RTP)**
  - East-West Corridor Route project
  - Routing truck traffic
- **California Air Resources Board – State Implementation Plan (CARB – SIP)**
  - Included rail locomotive idling rules
  - Truck-idling rules
  - Freight transport
- **Land use in the Inland Valley**
  - Map – included overlay of age, income, ethnicity, education

- Current zoning
- What areas are designated for warehousing/industrial use
- Environmental justice element in a city's general plan

**Community engagement** saw student teams assigned to individual organizers from CCAEJ and tasked with expanding community outreach about the growth of warehousing complexes and related traffic congestion. Students in this project worked on the following set of activities:

- **Students assisted in developing a Community Action Team (CAT) in Jurupa Valley**
  - Helped coordinate and outreach for a community workshop on land use decision-making
  - Mobilized residents to local planning commission/city council meeting
- **Community mapping: identified pollution sources near sensitive receptors (primarily warehouses)**
  - Demographic information (age, income, ethnicity, education)
  - Access to health care
  - Access to education
  - Access to green spaces/parks/libraries
- **Students kept weekly journals documenting:**
  - Reflections on community experiences
  - Observations
  - Activities undertaken to meet the project's objectives

In total, the Organizing Academy resulted in a total of 41 students completing 12 oral histories of community members, three group-researched policy briefs and a community organizing effort in Jurupa Valley. In addition, three students from the Claremont Colleges went on to present their work on a panel at the Inland Valley Clean Air Summit in Riverside, Calif., in May 2012.

## Feedback Themes and Lessons Learned

Highlighted below are two among several themes arising from student feedback on the Organizing Academy. Students' comments reveal tensions resulting from the more fluid and unstructured nature of the project and their desire to start field-based engagement even earlier in the semester. In addition to suggestions for improving similar efforts

in the future, students also note how community engagement transformed and deepened their understanding of environmental justice issues.

## Concerns about ambiguity, lack of structure

A consistent theme in students' evaluation was their grappling with what they perceived as the Organizing Academy's lack of structure and their related desire for greater predictability and clearer expectations. Student frustration about what they saw as "ambiguous" and "unstructured," however, was partly related to the nature of community-engaged work itself. Indeed, students were in a position where their projects were contingent on the availability of community members and other key informants (for interviews, engagement efforts, policy overviews), and this necessitated coordinating logistics well in advance (vs. "last minute" planning), juggling a number of moving parts and remaining flexible. At the same time, student feedback indicates the importance of making more explicit from the get-go how and why the Organizing Academy would be quite different from typical classroom assignments and would require flexibility and significant investments in time and planning. This recognition of the flexible and dynamic nature of the Organizing Academy—which was still moored within the context of a coordinated effort—might have allowed students to relax a bit more and get comfortable with what might be termed "productive and structured ambiguity." Indeed, the last quote in this section reveals how at least one student team actively acquired skills in narrowing the focus and organizing of its efforts, largely fueled in the context of ambiguity.

"When we first started working with CCAEJ, I was very confused about what my group was actually supposed to be doing for them. I would say that one of the most stressful aspects of this project was the uncertainty."

"Writing a report for an environmental justice organization is very different than a typical academic research paper, which is a good skill to have, but more guidance from them would have made my group more confident that our work was what they actually wanted and not just a waste of our time and their time."

"When we were assigned our tasks, I saw that the structure was already a bit chaotic and disorganized. CCAEJ had planned more tasks

for our community engagement team than we ended up being able to accomplish. Evaluating the timescale and narrowing our focus in order to make our tasks achievable was my first lesson in community organizing. We narrowed our project to include the coordination and community outreach for the land-use workshop. I learned that it is important to have ideas for the larger long-term goal, but when there is a short period of time, it is needed to prioritize, instead of spreading yourself thin across too many goals. I also learned that the first step to community organizing is to organize yourself and your group.”

## Direct engagement as transformational

The majority of students had never before had direct experiences with community organizing or conducting oral history interviews. The Organizing Academy thus generated numerous student reflections on how the very process of engaging with community members had profound impacts on their understanding of environmental justice. In the following quotes, students note how they developed new skills through doing fieldwork and how on-the-ground activities allowed them to use their “brains in less familiar and more challenging ways.” Others reflect on how their understanding of social positionality and privilege took on a new meaning in the context of their team projects. Even the challenge and discomfort embedded in the research process proved fruitful for individuals, as they saw value in the opportunity to get out of the “Claremont bubble”:

“This project was my first experience in community organizing. I hadn’t realized, prior to getting into the project, that community organizing draws on extremely important personal and group work skills. This experience gave me the opportunity to pull myself out of my heavily academic-focused life. It allowed me to use my brain in a way that was unfamiliar and challenging. These tasks applied to the world outside of the academic institution. Community organizing with CCAEJ was a meaningful experience for me because my actions had at least somewhat of an effect on the Jurupa Valley community. I also learned that while doing community organizing, your expectations are always shifting and changing, and you have to learn to be flexible and creative.”

“Forming relationships with the women at

CCAIEJ brought up personal issues and thoughts about class, race, privilege and positionality. It became clear that the dominant power structures’ means of oppression, which can seem very much intangible to me, were a significant part of the individual and social histories of the people in Jurupa Valley. My experience of showing up as an outsider to a community that has been marginalized by the same forces that have privileged me was at times awkward, unsettling and uncomfortable. Understanding and addressing positionality was something I confronted while doing research for my independent study project in Nepal. However, I felt a slightly different experience in Jurupa Valley. After giving this some thought, it may have been the fact that we both live in the United States and that we live so close to each other, only 30 minutes apart, but have had drastically different life experiences. It forced me to begin to confront those issues in a personal way. But the women we grew to know were more than welcoming. They showed us how each of us had different tools to offer to the group and how we could learn from one another.”

“This experience gave me the chance to interact and work along side people who have had first-hand experience with environmental injustice. I particularly got a lot out of working with the women on the Riverside Team. Being able to hear their stories, experiences and narratives, brought to life the theoretical environmental justice literature. Being a part of the community organizers’ determination and hard work was inspiring. Despite the challenges and difficulties we faced, my work with CCAEJ felt important because I was part of a larger effort to address issues of environmental justice. I think helping initiate the partnership between students and community activists is going to be an important aspect of Environmental Analysis majors’ education and will hopefully contribute to the efforts of CCAEJ.”

“I do not consider this discomfort a pitfall of the project. Quite to the contrary, I thought that this was an excellent way to contextualize the theoretical and often broad concepts of environmental justice. Additionally, being thrust into these situations granted me the opportunity to escape the “Claremont bubble,” which tends to divorce our collegiate, egalitarian ideals from reality. For instance, upon first coming to this class, I had been expecting

issues of environmental justice to focus mostly upon environmental toxins in marginalized communities. As I've learned through my fieldwork, however, environmental justice goes beyond toxins and siting controversies; rather, it provides another way of framing issues of disempowerment in a community. In real-world situations, what we as students might identify as being a hazard to surrounding environmental and human health might be seen by community activists as an opportunity to organize around a central threat to a community's ambient, economic and physical well-being."

## Closing Thoughts

It is clear that opportunities like the Organizing Academy allow Pitzer and other Claremont College students to engage in local environmental justice issues in ways that are deeply meaningful and enriching. Yet, in order to benefit student learning, such projects demand a great deal on the part of involved faculty and community organizations. As faculty members, we all spent late nights and long hours trouble-shooting, coordinating logistics and working to maintain open lines of communication and trust. All this, of course, was in *addition* to the "normal" preparation for our respective weekly seminars. Successful partnerships thus entail tremendous behind-the-scenes effort, which may go unacknowledged by the institution. Fortunately, at Pitzer, faculty members have access to resources such as the Community Engagement Center, which strive to support and recognize the value of community partnerships (Pomona College, similarly, has the Draper Center). At the end of the day, though, for faculty to pursue the balancing act of community-engaged work, these efforts need to be acknowledged beyond the realm of institutional public relations and carry weight in the arena of review and promotion.

Finally, while community-engagement projects tend to enhance student learning, they do not *necessarily* or automatically benefit community members and organizations. Indeed, all of us (three professors and CCAEJ staff) were keenly aware of this possibility and only committed to this partnership on the premise that student projects would be driven by and help address needs identified by CCAEJ and the communities with whom they worked. Fortunately, the final projects did enhance CCAEJ's work, as student research was selectively incorporated into CCAEJ organizational documents, and helped inform community-based campaigns and workshops. The price of this success, however, was major

investments in time and effort on the part of faculty and organizational staff.

In one of our final debriefs on the Organizing Academy, CCAEJ staff and D'Arcangelis, Sarathy and Worthington collaboratively concluded that the logistics and resources needed to sustain such a multi-course, cross-college effort were significant and likely not feasible in the long-run. Moreover, the playing field had shifted since the start of the Organizing Academy in January 2012. CCAEJ, for instance, had commenced on a longer process of internal reorganization and strategic planning and no longer had the capacity to sponsor another such effort in the near future. D'Arcangelis was leaving the Claremont Colleges altogether for another academic position, and Worthington and Sarathy had new work-related responsibilities on their plates. Our final debrief was thus a closing, but only of sorts. Largely as a result of engaging in the Organizing Academy, Sarathy was asked by Penny Newman to serve on the board of CCAEJ. D'Arcangelis also came to join the board the following year. Similarly, Worthington continues to support and engage with CCAEJ through his classes and extra-curricular commitments. Moreover, our respective classes still go on toxics tours and channel our student efforts towards community engagement partnerships when feasible. Most importantly, we all continue to pursue social justice agendas in our scholar-activism. At the end of the day, like the Organizing Academy itself, one of the greatest lessons of this project has been learning to be adaptable, to go with the flow and to change or let go as needed.

## Jose Calderon's Reflective Review of Brinda Sarathy's Essay

In this article, Brinda Sarathy, like in all her work, explores creative ways of exposing others to forms of exploitative power relations that manifest themselves in quality of life issues. In her book *Pineros*, she tackled a “frontier area” of research by exposing the social, political and economic marginalization of Latino forest workers, many of them undocumented, on federal lands.

In this article, she describes a “frontier area” of pedagogy to engage students with “one of the oldest and renowned environmental justice organizations in the Inland region of Southern California.” And because the “experiment” is to find new ways to connect the student’s learning of writing, GIS and research and knowledge of technology to community engagement, it has the aspects of creating a culture where the learning has to be both flexible and unstructured. There is no better way to make learning real than to take the students outside the classroom and to have them experience what they have been reading about. There is no better way to teach about the destructive aspects of industrialization than to take students on “toxic tours.” This is what I do when I take students to learn about the conditions of farm workers and the movements they developed in Delano, California. But, as Brinda describes in her article, a tour is only a beginning in moving to higher levels of engagement. It is much more meaningful when students can meet those who are not only knowledgeable about the causes for the degradation of the environment but who are also passionately doing something about it. It is often life-changing for students to meet someone like the environmental activist described in this article who shared her stories and her passion of activism. Certainly, passion is a key part of the life of an environmental organizer but so is “giving back” to the community. For a scholar activist, the question of how to “give back” to the community is always an ongoing question. How do I use my skills and my abilities, not to exploit my community, but to use pedagogy as a form of empowerment? This article provides an example of how one can go beyond traditional service learning to the use of community-engaged and community-based research projects that can

lay the foundations for social change through mapping and analyzing city general plans, air quality standards and transportation policies. This type of research and learning becomes contributory when it is coupled with principles and values that place the quality of life over the quantity of profit. Further, it is contributory and clears a path in a “frontier area” when community engagement moves to the level of action—as in the example where students worked alongside CCAEJ organizers and carried out concrete community outreach on issues of growth, congestion and land use. It is contributory when there are outcomes (such as journals, oral histories and policy briefs) that add to the community’s knowledge and to its potential for transformative change. It is contributory, as, in this case, where the research was “selectively incorporated into CCAEJ organizational documents, and helped inform community-based campaigns and workshops.” It is contributory, as the authors have done here by continuing as supporters and board members of CCAEJ, and when the commitment as scholar activists is made for the long run with social justice agendas. Indeed, as the article describes, this type of pedagogy tends to be fluid and unstructured. It has to be if it is scientific. After all, what is science all about? It is about diagnosing a problem, prescribing a solution to that problem, and ultimately implementing an action to the problem. It is in the implementation of the action where something new is created. It is here where we do not know what is going to happen. This is the beauty of what stands out in this article—where experimentation is taking place in a frontier area of combining the academic with applied research—and the outcome of this “community engagement” is described by the students as transforming and deepening “their understanding of environmental justice issues.”

Unfortunately, as the article mentions at the end, the significance of this type of creative and engaged pedagogy is often ignored or marginalized in academia. There is a step that we, as scholar activists all are still striving for: that of academia recognizing, validating, evaluating and rewarding community-based research and engagement as both an applied and scholarly enterprise.

# The Commonalities in Our Past Transform Pedagogy for the Future

Jose Calderon, Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Chicano Studies

**A**s I embark on a journey to retirement and work to create new models of alternative forms of teaching and learning, I write this article as a culmination of observations and reflections on the climate of how the “other” is being treated and how our classrooms can become prototypes of “the future as it is emerging.” The concept of “leading from the future as it emerges” appears in the book *Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges* by Sharmer (2009), and is based on the idea of breaking “the patterns of the past [as we] tune into our highest future possibility—and to begin to operate from that place” (p. 4).

In this context, then, it is important to begin with the trends that are affecting teaching and learning, which will eventually lead me to focus on specific examples of critical service-learning engagements with students and community partners. There are two trends developing nationally—one that is about the future as it is emerging and one that wants to take us back to a time before the Civil Rights Movement. On the one hand, the first trend has been seeking to establish unity among this society’s diverse groups by building the types of alliances and partnerships that are necessary to meet the challenges of a global economy. The second stated trend is one that is thriving on creating fear and divisions among working people by using their genuine concerns to blame immigrants, women, poor people and people of color for the economic problems in this country.

These two trends are manifested in the many debates taking place on college campuses today over the direction of the curriculum and the types of pedagogies that should be used as part of teaching



Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers, with mural painted by Pitzer students (based on the original by Barbara Carrasco).

and learning inside classrooms. The latter trend, based in stereotyping and scapegoating tactics, has reached our classrooms, where, for instance, in Arizona there have been open attacks against ethnic studies programs that seek to include the histories of underrepresented and oppressed communities in the curricula.

It is in this context that we, as public and activist intellectuals, need to analyze how our classes can advance a trend that is democratic, brings to center stage the histories of those who have been historically excluded, and connects what is being learned in classrooms to community-based

research, critical service-learning initiatives and action for social change.

## Bringing to Center Stage Those Who Have Been Excluded

In terms of bringing to center stage those who have been historically excluded, Anderson and Collins (1995) propose that this type of “reconstructing knowledge” requires moving from an exclusionary perspective to one that shifts “the center” to include “the experiences of groups who have formerly been excluded” (p. 2). Such an inclusive perspective, one that puts at the forefront the experiences of those who have been historically excluded, has been the foundation of ethnic studies. Having emerged out of the movements of the 1960s and having been the basis for the establishment of ethnic studies, this trend is one that promotes the particular histories of individuals as part of appreciating the cultures and histories of the many people who make up this country. The outlook is that, in understanding our historical differences, there is a foundation to genuinely understand what unites us. At the same time, to meet the challenges of an increasingly global society, there is a need for students to learn about the contributions of the diverse mosaic that comprises the various people of the world. There are many examples in our history of individuals who belong at the center stage of our teaching and learning. These are individuals who have used their knowledge to point out injustices and who used their skills and abilities to empower their communities.

One of these individuals is Cesar Chavez, whose birthday, March 31, is celebrated in California as a state holiday. Many of my students, particularly those who come to the United States as immigrants or who are farm workers in the fields, can identify with Cesar Chavez. In particular, many of my students identify with how Chavez’s views on nonviolence and morality were influenced by his mother and his grandmother. They identify with his struggles with racism in his school years, when Euro-American children called him “dirty Mexican” (Griswold del Castillo and Garcia, 1995, pp. 5-6). Others identify with the story of how the Chavez family was stopped by immigration officials when they came to California from Arizona in the 1930s on the suspicion that they were undocumented immigrants. They identify with Chavez’s life of fighting racism in all its forms and his consistent practice of building multi-racial coalitions to fight injustice. Additionally, many of my students identify with how Chavez resisted various forms of injustice

by boycotting, marching, fasting and engaging in community-based organizing strategies, which ultimately contributed to the building of the United Farm Worker’s Union.

We have many other examples of individuals in our history that our students are often not taught about—examples who made a choice to use their skills and abilities as a means of service to the community, as a means of advancing spaces of equality in our communities. Two examples of such individuals are Michi and Walter Weglyn, in whose name I held an endowed chair position at Cal Poly Pomona for two years. They were examples of individuals who used their lives to conduct research and to use that research in service to the community and to advance social change policies.

They were examples, not only in the academic sense (with Michi Weglyn producing a book, *Tears of Infamy: The Untold Story of America’s Concentration Camps*), but also in the participatory action sense. Michi Weglyn’s book and efforts helped advance a movement that eventually led to reparations for more than 80,000 Japanese Americans interned during World War II and exposed the kidnappings of thousands of Japanese Latin Americans who were forced to serve as prisoners of war during that time.

Similarly, in the last decade, we have had a number of leaders pass away who, like Michi and Walter Weglyn, unconditionally paved the way in frontier areas of service, research and action in our communities. We have the example of Kenneth Clarke, who, along with his wife, Mamie Clarke, studied the responses of more than 200 black children who were asked to choose between a white or a brown doll. Their findings, which showed a preference of the children for white dolls, led to a conclusion that segregation was psychologically damaging and played a pivotal role in the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision that outlawed segregated education. In recent years, we had the passing of Gloria Anzaldua, whose book *Borderland*, courageously critiqued both sexism and homophobia in the dominant culture, as well as in her own culture.

With these examples, we should also remember Fred Korematsu, who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom and other honors for his courageous spirit in arguing before the Supreme Court that incarcerating Americans without charge, evidence or trial was unconstitutional. Alongside these examples of bringing to center stage individuals who created a pedagogy for social change, is Martin Luther King,

Jr. Not many of our students are taught that King was more than a community organizer. He entered Morehouse College at the age of 15 years old and graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology. Then, he enrolled in Crozer Theological Seminary and eventually received a doctoral degree from Boston University in systematic theology in 1955. King was a writer, a philosopher, a poet, an author, an activist and the youngest individual to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Nevertheless, one of King's distinctions was that he put his studies, philosophies, principles and values into practice for social change. Too often, this society tends to diminish the contributions of such individuals who dare to challenge the status quo and who dare to use both their intellectual and activist skills (against all odds) to fight injustice.

While it is important to bring to center stage the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., it is equally important to commemorate the thousands of people involved in the Montgomery Bus Boycott between 1955 and 1956, the Greensboro sit-in of 1960, and the marches for civil rights (e.g., the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, marches of 1965, etc.). It is also important to recognize the tenacity of the Montgomery Improvement Association to desegregate buses (an event that made Martin Luther King, Jr. a nationally known figure). In recognizing the association, one must also acknowledge the courage of Rosa Parks, a seamstress by profession and a secretary for the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP, who refused to move to the back of the bus. It is also necessary to remember 15-year-old Claudette Colvin, who, before Rosa Parks, was the first African American woman arrested (1955) for refusing to give up her seat (see Branch, 1988).

The actions in Montgomery, Alabama, served as examples of a social movement involving a diversity of community-based organizers. For months, the African American community, with some support from other communities, responded to the arrest of Rosa Parks (as well as other discriminatory acts) by developing their own system of carpools—many used cycling and walking as alternatives to riding the bus. Their tenacity led to a November 13, 1956, Supreme Court ruling that Alabama's racial segregation laws for buses were unconstitutional (Branch, 1988).

Like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks, there are many other examples of everyday individuals who dreamed, who had a vision and who used their

skills and abilities to organize, to empower others and to turn injustice on its head. Recently, I have asked students in my classes if they know these individuals. Many of my students don't know them. This is similar to recent studies that show that many college students know about the existence of a Cesar Chavez holiday, or a Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, but know very little about the individuals themselves or the specific roles they played in the social movements that opened the doors to historically excluded groups in this country.

## Building Connections of Knowledge and Practice

We not only need to teach and learn about the history of these individuals whose contributions are often diminished by the larger society, but we also need to advance the connections between what we learn intellectually and what we practice in our teaching, research and organizing in the pursuit of building a more just and united society. This involves researching and identifying our commonalities. As a first-generation Mexican-origin immigrant, I know the many commonalities that we have had. Similar to African Americans, before the 1960s, we too faced segregation in schools, in colleges, in stores and in the workplace. The case of "Mendez v. Westminster" was important in putting a halt to the segregation that Chicano children were facing in public schools (Acuna, 2000). This case was part of the long road of struggle that led to the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954. The unity of our struggles at that time was exemplified by the role of Thurgood Marshall, a young attorney who helped write the brief for the Mendez case.

Encompassed in this reality is the growing number of immigrants in cities across the United States. The demographics of the largest 20 cities are now majority black, brown, and Asian. In New York City, three-fifths of those residing in the city are foreign born, with the majority not being able to vote. At the same time, they do pay taxes. This means that the places where immigrants live are highly overrepresented, yet immigrants are structurally excluded.

With their growing numbers and potential political power, immigrants become easy targets for both exploitation and scapegoating. This is an issue of race relations, and is one that is both critical and a challenge to those of us who are part of the social justice and immigrant rights movements. Although the social justice and immigrant rights

movements have distinct roots, they also share a common ground. The immigrant issue is not a new issue, but it is the newest version of a long existing use of laws to create an exploitable class of exploitable labor. Unfortunately and throughout history, every time ethnic and racial groups in this country have advanced social justice efforts to unite around common issues and struggles, there have been attempts by those in power to keep this from happening.

## Citizenship for Division or Unity

One of the issues that has been used to divide the various ethnic and racial groups in this country is citizenship. With the rise of the immigrant rights movement in recent years, the issue of citizenship has come to the forefront. There has been a tendency by conservatives to define citizenship primarily as a legal construct with distinct rights and privileges attached, often conferred by one's country of birth and/or one's parentage. Groups such as the Minute Men have used the Constitution to claim that all undocumented immigrants are "criminals" and need to be deported since they are not legal citizens. Like the conservative politicians, the right-wing groups use the legal definition of citizenship as a means of attacking immigrants.

While all working class people in the United States do not have full citizenship in terms of guaranteed employment, health care and education, the issue is how the right to citizenship has been constructed. As early as 1790, Congress passed a law that defined American citizenship as being only for "free" white immigrants, resulting in "non-white immigrants" not being allowed to be naturalized until the McCarren-Walter Act of 1952.

Both Latino and African American experiences are examples of where legal citizenship has not insulated a group from socioeconomic exploitation. In the case of many Latinos, although they were considered citizens of the US after 1848, this did not insulate them from the use of laws to take their land. In the case of many African Americans, although supposedly freed from slavery, the reality is that they continued to be used as cheap labor without full rights. Legal citizenship, in this context, is a hollow promise that creates citizens "in name only."

If legal citizenship is going to be more than an empty victory, then there must be a vision of full citizenship that is both legal and social in nature. True citizenship goes beyond narrow legal definitions

to include equality in all spheres. It is in this struggle to achieve full citizenship where there is a common ground.

Despite differences in legal citizenship, skin color, country of origin, religious affiliations, language and region, African Americans and Latinos, for example, share historical experiences where laws, social practices and race-based ideologies combined to create a caste-like society that benefited a few at the expense of the many. The systems of slavery and colonization served as tools to ensure the Western European elite's access to the raw materials and human labor found in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. These systems of slavery and colonization institutionalized a form of structural violence that used laws to ignore a group's basic human rights.



Day Laborer and portion of mural painted in collaboration with artist Paul Botello, Pitzer students, and day laborers at the Pomona Economic Opportunity Center.

One manifestation of this denial of human rights has existed in the perpetuation of a divisive relationship that African Americans and Latinos have to formal citizenship. In the case of African Americans and Latinos, race has been used to keep them in the lower levels of the economic ladder and to use them as a cheap labor force. Black people were brought from Africa to the United States as slaves to have their labor fully used. They were also brought to Mexico and Latin American countries for the same purpose. Very early on, race was used in Mexico to separate black people or those who married black

people. Hence, mulatos were placed at the very bottom, which was similar to what happened in the US. The separation of people based on race and skin tone was an attempt to maintain the power of the ruling, or dominant, Spanish people in Mexico and the European elites in United States.

This aspect of history included African Americans being defined as non-persons who could be bought, sold and traded like commodities; defined as partial persons by the Constitution, which counted slaves as three-fifths of a person; and denied true citizenship through Jim Crow laws that punished and killed those who dared to exercise their constitutional rights to vote.

Similarly, approximately 75,000 Mexicans woke up on February 2, 1848, to learn they now resided in the US rather than Mexico (McWilliams:1968). The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded almost half of Mexico's territory to the US. Although the treaty assured citizenship rights to the Mexican people and the protection of customs, languages, law and culture, the treaty was later broken. Instead, they were faced with discrimination in all spheres of life, including loss of land and democratic rights.

There was a commonality here in terms of migration. When the African slaves were freed, they became part of the working class and moved north. "Like most Mexicans, African Americans were following the jobs. By 1930, some two million African Americans had migrated to the cities of the North. Nevertheless, they were historically and structurally excluded from every vehicle that would allow them to have social mobility: homesteading, union jobs, disability, social security and unemployment insurance, suburban housing, jobs and schools, and access to higher education.

Similarly, as Mexican laborers lost their land, they too became workers in ranching and agriculture. At the same time, they also found themselves as conditional friends: welcomed when there was a labor shortage and deported when it was economically and politically advantageous. When the economy went downward during the depression of the 1930s, for example, the US government gave consular offices the charge of deporting anyone who might add to the "public charge" rolls (Bernard, 1998). During this period, at least half a million people of Mexican origin were put on trains and deported (Acuna, 2000; Gonzales, 1999). In the early years of the depression, any Mexican-origin person who applied for welfare, unemployment or any type of social service was forced to leave the country

under the US government category of "voluntary repatriation." Approximately half of those deported were US citizens, a clear violation of both their civil and human rights.

In the recent decades, thousands of Latino immigrants from Guatemala, El Salvador and other Central American countries have crossed into the US for economic survival and as part of a legacy of a cold war strategy that engaged in proxy wars throughout Latin America. Changes in immigration laws and regional economic restructuring are also credited for this migration and the ultimate stratifying of Latin Americans in the low-wage and low-skill service sector. The passage of the Hart-Cellar Act in 1965 increased the total number of immigrants to be admitted to the US and inadvertently gave opportunities to approximately five million immigrants in the service sector based on low-wage workers and an informal economy (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, 1996).

## The Significance of Knowing in Building Unity

In this context, in order to develop unity among different communities, it is important to understand why immigrants come here, why they risk life and limb for a meager existence in the shadows of our laws. In large part, US policies, with international support, have continued the dominance of global corporations in the so-called developing world. The new globalization operates via trade agreements, such as the North American Free Trade Act, and decision-making bodies such as the World Trade Organization. The "free trade agreement," as it is called, has removed existing trade barriers, eliminated tariffs left on American imports, allowed US corporations full ownership of companies in Mexico, and granted US financial services greater access to Mexican markets. The system of high subsidy payments paid to US farmers by the government has allowed for the exporting of poultry, beans and corn that serve to undercut the small farmers and farm workers in Mexico. Forced to move to the cities and finding no employment there, these sojourners travel to the US-Mexico border, where they either find employment in the maquiladora industry or join the thousands of undocumented immigrants who join low-wage economy in the US. Any talk of benefits to the Mexican people becomes questionable when one looks at the dismal results of the "maquiladora" industry all along the Mexican side of the border. These corporations, which have run away from the US in search of cheap labor

and less regulation, have not been able to hide the costs of their social and environmental destruction. Not only have they been caught polluting the air and water, but they have also had a profound effect on the cohesion of the Mexican family. It is commonplace for these plants to primarily hire women and children. No compensation is made for the hidden costs of profit: familial disintegration and inadequate housing, healthcare and child-care.

## Bringing to Center Stage: Our Historical Commonalities

In bringing to center stage this slighted history of commonalities, it is important to analyze what we can do in our classrooms today in implementing a type of teaching and learning that advances the creation of a democratic culture both on university campuses and in the surrounding communities. In this process, it is important to begin by questioning the content of the curriculum and questioning the dominant traditional style of teaching in the classroom that often has left out, or marginalized, diverse voices. If we are serious about creating a diverse and engaged democracy, we have to begin where we have the most influence. Our classrooms can be examples of top-down bureaucratic decision-making, or they can be spaces where we advance a critical pedagogy, where we can question the traditional literature, and use research methodologies that can be carried out alongside historically marginalized, underrepresented communities.

In many of our institutions, there is still a tendency to separate the content of the curricula from the connections that can be made within local communities. Yet the best type of learning is where the reading materials in the classroom help students to learn about the history of the communities in which they are working and/or living. The type of learning where there is a separation of curricula from community issues ignores the rich promise of multicultural classrooms and multicultural communities; it also reiterates the exclusion of the history of marginalized people from different nationalities, genders and sexualities.

As a way to not engage in the aforementioned type of learning, we should examine history and historical documents inside our teaching and have learning objectives that situate those documents in an analysis of the particular period in which they were written. This means connecting that analysis to an engaged pedagogy that is collectively developed alongside community partners, using

various methodologies (e.g., quantitative, qualitative and action research, the use of reflections, etc.), and using forms of implementation (e.g., role-playing, journals, teatro, essay writing) that lead to meaningful outcomes. This work begins with the premise that history provides a kind of situated knowledge that is necessary for understanding and participating in the civic realm. In using hands-on research to find creative solutions to compelling problems, these kinds of experiences have helped my students to develop as participant translators. By making connections between the university and the community, my students and I have been involved in translating silence into critical consciousness (see Lorde, 1980).

In applying connections between civic knowledge and civic engagement, students in my classes have been transformed as learners through studying history in combination with service learning and community-based participatory research. In one of my classes, Rural and Urban Social Movements, for example, students spend the first half of the semester learning about Cesar Chavez, the history of farm workers dating back to the early 1900s, and contemporary efforts to build unions. During their spring break, the students travel to the headquarters of the United Farm Workers to carry out service projects, to work alongside some of the historic figures they have read about in their books, and to listen to stories spoken in the workers' own language. Throughout the semester, students gather field notes and write final research papers based on these experiences. Some of these students have used their research as foundations for community grant proposals, as presentations at undergraduate conferences and national associations, and as thesis papers and projects.

As an example of connecting history to concrete lived experience, I have been taking students to Delano, California (the birthplace of the farm worker's movement), to learn about the history of the Filipino farm workers, individuals who prominently are left out of US history books. In the first years of our visits, students were able to hear firsthand accounts about the hardships of many Filipinos from those who were still alive. In our first year, a diverse group of students worked alongside Pete Velasco, the former president of the United Farm Worker's union, to plant a hundred roses at the gravesite of Cesar Chavez. In the process, Velasco shared many stories as to why some Filipinos became disconnected from their families. It is the story of many immigrants who come to this country looking for the American Dream, not finding it, and



Pitzer students meeting with day laborers, as part of Rural and Urban Social Movements class, to develop collaborative engagement projects.

creating stories to their loved ones abroad as to why the relatives should not visit them. Ultimately, as a result of being caught in the lowest levels of the stratification structure with no way to get out, they lose all contact with their homeland. This was the case of many Filipino farm workers who grew old and, when it came time for them to retire, had no place to go. It was out of this reality that the United Farm Worker's union, with the help of many college students, constructed a retirement home, Agbayani Village, for the elderly Filipinos.

When my students visited Agbayani Village, listened to these important stories and planted roses alongside Velasco, they decided that the stories needed to be told to other students and faculty. Realizing that they needed funds for this purpose, the students applied for an "academic scholars" grant. Although Velasco did not have an academic background, the students argued that his experiential knowledge offered an insight into the history of Filipino workers—an insight that is often excluded from academia. Subsequently, a "scholar's proposal" was funded that allowed both Pete and Dolores Velasco to spend a week sharing their stories in the classrooms at Pitzer College. In addition to "teaching" students about the history of the farm workers and the role that the Filipinos played in that movement, the Velascos moved the students into action. Noticing that the grapes that were being served in the College dining hall were non-union, Pete challenged the students to put their "learning into action." Subsequently, by the middle

of the week, the students called for a boycott of the cafeteria and passed out leaflets to students at all the entrances. After two days of this action, the Aramark Corporation called for a meeting with the students and, with Pete sitting in, agreed to sign an agreement that prohibited the serving of grapes until they were unionized.

This successful action by the students was exemplary in many ways. First, the students brought to "center stage" a farm worker leader who shared the history of Filipino farm workers, a history that is often left out of our history books. Second, the act of treating Pete Velasco as a scholar helped to preserve a history in the process of students actually learning about this history. Third, the academic knowledge that students were learning from their books was transformed into a direct form of engagement that resulted in outcomes that simultaneously informed the campus community about the farm worker social movement and advanced an outcome that directly aided striking farm workers in the fields.

It was also an example of building an empathy that would be the basis for building the strength of a future partnership. When Pete Velasco left campus, he wrote a 27-page letter to the students and thanked them for treating him, not just as a farm worker organizer, but as a scholar. Subsequently, in the following year, when he died from terminal cancer, the students were invited to help carry his casket and to participate in holding flags at an all-night vigil in La Paz (Keene, Calif.). To commemorate this beginning partnership, the farm workers donated a dozen union roses that the students took back and planted in a designated section of Pitzer College's community garden. In the following year, a farm worker carpenter, who learned about the garden, made a sign that is still there today and reads "farm worker garden." In addition to the roses and the sign, the garden includes a bench with wording on a plaque that commemorates "the La Paz Alternative Spring Break, Brother Pete, Cesar Chavez, Linda Chavez Rodriguez and all those who have inspired our lives."

The garden is still there today as a symbol of the historical partnership that has developed over the years between the farm workers and the students. Also, after 21 years of this annual spring break experience with the farm workers, Dolores Velasco still greets the students every year at the entrance to La Paz (Keene, Calif.) and she is always the last one to bid them farewell. Our spring break always ends with a circle ceremony and quotes from Pete Velasco at his gravesite. Over the years, the partnership with

this site has been strengthened and has allowed students to both carry out service learning projects, as well as carry out community-based research. The partnership has also been exemplary in redefining the meaning of “service learning” to include social change organizing, where students organize actions in support of farm workers issues. In recent years, the social change learning has included the making and distribution of leaflets, posters, banners, flags and press releases for various types of public actions. In Bakersfield, it has been a tradition to rally on the four corners of a mall and carry out advocacy education in support of unionization campaigns in the fields, a Cesar Chavez national holiday, AgJobs, card check legislation, stopping the use of harmful pesticides and ensuring water and shade for all farm workers in the fields.

Another action that can be considered “service” but takes on a social change character of presenting outcomes and raising consciousness is the use of the methodology of “teatro,” once used by the UFW and Teatro Campesino as a means of training new leadership. When students first arrive at La Paz, they are divided into various groups and informed that they should collectively document all their experiences because, on the last day of their visit, they will present a summary of what they have learned in the form of a “teatro.” The final outcomes, with at least five teatros presented to dozens of UFW workers and staff members in La Paz, have always resulted in “moving” and “emotional” presentations that invigorate all the participants.

This spirit of creating social change continues when students return to the Pitzer College campus and join in organizing various activities, including organizing a breakfast/luncheon to honor community leaders who represent the values of Cesar Chavez and arranging a pilgrimage march to promote civic engagement, non-violence and selfless acts of empowering others. The character of this learning is “social change” because the outcome is one that is consciously designed to go beyond charity projects that often disempower the participants. This is the same type of learning that has taken place in Rancho Cucamonga, where workers gather each morning looking for jobs. Initially through my Restructuring Communities class, students began teaching ESL classes right on the street and began holding meetings with the workers every week. The classes and meetings allowed the workers to collaborate with students and join together in defending their civil rights. One of these workers, Fernando Pedraza, a Mexican immigrant father of five daughters and a grandfather of seven, took the

city of Rancho Cucamonga to court in 2002 when they tried to get the workers off the street with a no-loitering ordinance. Pedraza won the case that allowed for workers to seek employment on the corner as long as they did not block traffic.

Again, like the example with Pete Velasco, Pedraza became a leader to the students. When students organized an art/pictorial display, Pedraza was invited to be the keynote speaker. This was the same time period when the Minute Men and the Ku Klux Klan had been protesting on the corner. On Cinco de Mayo, 2007, a spontaneous demonstration by the Minute Men against day laborers in Rancho Cucamonga ended with the death of day laborer leader Jose Fernando Pedraza when an SUV that hit a car in the intersection rolled onto the sidewalk where the day laborers were gathered. On any other day, the day laborers would have left by the noon hour. On this day, they stayed because the Minute Men showed up to protest the day-laborer corner.

During the months before his death, Pedraza had attended several meetings of the Rancho Cucamonga City Council to support his fellow day laborers so that they could have a job center where they could be safe from hate-based attacks and traffic accidents. Hence, it was no accident that the Minute Men chose Cinco de Mayo as a day to protest the day laborers. It is important to note that as part of the Civil Rights Movement in the late 1960s, Cinco de Mayo was celebrated in the Southwest as a day when the French colonizers in Mexico were defeated and as a day of consciousness raising about the violation of human rights of the Mexican-origin people in the United States.

In this example, the use of ESL classes and community meetings with the workers led to their empowerment. As students carried out service projects, social justice issues emerged that moved the character of organizing to a level of social change organizing. Today, that character has not changed, as students have continued to organize weekly meetings, a soccer team and a yearly day laborer mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a local community church. The inspiration of Pedraza’s life led the day-laborer workers, with the help of day-laborer organizer Eddie Cortez and graduate student Junko Ihrke, to organize a soccer team that, although having few resources, took first place in a soccer tournament at the Rose Bowl. The bishop from the San Bernardino diocese, so deeply moved by the achievements of the Rancho day laborers, held a mass in their honor at Mount

Carmel. At a packed church service, the Rancho day laborers carried their five-foot trophy to the front altar and had it blessed by the bishop. In his sermon, the bishop urged the parishioners to support the day laborers and all immigrants in their efforts to obtain full democratic rights. This tradition has now expanded to include a yearly memorial to commemorate the life of Pedraza and all day laborers who have given their lives in efforts to advance immigrant rights, locally and globally. The yearly memorial, led by the Fernando Pedraza Memorial coalition, has included participation from the bishop, the faith-based organization CLUE, the student organization Latino Student Union, the Dream network of AB-540 students, and the community-based organizations of the National Day Labor Organizing Network and the Latina/o Roundtable. Today, this ongoing organizing effort has become an example of bringing to center stage those community leaders who traditionally have been left out of history. At the same time, in continuing to create a space of “sanctuary” in Rancho Cucamonga, students and day laborers have created an example of building a type of multi-racial collaboration that is steeped in the future possibility of obtaining legalization for the 12 million undocumented immigrants in the US.

## Bringing Commonalities to the Center: Conclusions

This essay has addressed two emerging national trends: one that is focused on scapegoating immigrants, working people and people of color for the contradictions in the economic system, and another that is seeking to bring to center stage the social change histories and organizing examples of those who have been historically excluded. Without classrooms that bring to center stage the common histories of those who have been labeled as “other,” there is the danger of advancing a type of traditional education that separates students from the reality of problems that their communities are confronting. If this trend becomes dominant, a type of civic engagement can be advanced that serves merely to perpetuate the inequalities that are already prevalent. Without an education that looks at the systemic and structural foundations of social problems, students will be taught the symptoms of the problems instead of understanding the character of the structure that is placing individuals in those conditions.

The type of teaching, learning and engagement that is promoted in this essay is one where there is a passion for creating spaces of equity; where

students are exposed to a curriculum that looks at the systemic and structural aspects of inequity; that brings to center stage the contributions of communities who—because of poverty, racism, sexism, classism or homophobia—have historically been excluded from textbooks; and that involves students in working alongside historically marginalized communities on service-learning projects grounded in a pedagogy of engagement that includes transformative, democratic examples connecting the past to the present and the future.

## References

- Acuna, R. (2000). *Occupied America*. Wesley Longman, Incorporated. 279-280.
- Anderson, M. L. and Collins, P.H. (2006). *Race, Class, and Gender*. Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Anzaldúa, G.. (1987). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco, CA: Spinsters/Aunt Lute Book Company.
- Branch, T. (1988). *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years*. Simon & Schuster, Incorporated. 120-123.
- Del Castillo, R. G. and Garcia, R.A. (1995). *Cesar Chavez: A triumph of spirit*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Gonzales, M. G. (1999). *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the US*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Lorde, A. (1980). *The Cancer Journals*. San Francisco: Spinster, Ink.
- Sharmer, C.O. (2009). *Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Waldinger, R. and M. Bozorgmehr (1996). The making of a multicultural metropolis. *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Allen J. Scott and Edward W. Soja. 3-38. New York: The Russell Sage Foundation.
- Weglyn, M. (1976). *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*. New York: Morrow.

## Brinda Sarathy's Reflective Review of Jose Calderon's essay

Jose Calderon is one of those professors who have a “following,” and it is not hard to see why. Indeed, “Brother Calderon,” as he would call himself, embodies the spirit of transforming the classroom into a space for liberatory pedagogy, in which marginalized voices take center stage and the wisdom of lived experiences complement theories and cases written about in scholarship. In listening to students talk about Jose, moreover, it is clear that their inspiration is linked to their own process of becoming politicized actors for the social good. These students, for example, don't simply study social movement organizations from a distance, but instead become active participants in particular struggles.

I had the privilege of sitting in on one of Jose's classroom sessions, which he generously opened up to my own class on Environmental Justice. In this session, one of his students had brought in members of *Lideres Campesinas* (a farmworkers organization), who proceeded to share their gendered experiences of farm labor. As women revealed deeply personal stories about sexual harassment, fear of deportation and their daily sacrifices for families, there was a palpable sense of outrage among many students, as well as their desire to do something. More importantly, the students regarded members of *Lideres* for what they rightly were—the experts on these issues and the people who are best suited to lead on-the-ground mobilizing. Students thus learned that they could ally with and learn from *Lideres*, just as one of Jose's students already was doing.

In this essay, Jose brings to life the promise of other such collaborations, including his Rural and Urban Social Movement class's “Alternative Spring Break” trip to La Paz, in which students learn directly from farm workers about their history of labor organizing, and the Fernando Pedraza Memorial coalition, through which students honor and support day laborers in the Inland region. Such partnerships are a testament to the longer-term work of Jose and his students to build trust, to show up when it matters

and to continue sharing support and resources to build more just societies. We might all take inspiration from these efforts and energize our own pedagogy and praxis in the process.

# Building an Effective Institutional Infrastructure in Support of Community-based Pedagogy

Alan Jones, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience

While there are a variety of factors that motivate liberal arts colleges to become engaged in community-based programming, many of these motivations can be recognized as peripheral to the core educational mission of the institution. A desire to have students, and by extension the institution, provide much-needed services to communities-in-need is often viewed a requisite hallmark for a socially conscious educational institution. From such a perspective, it is reasonable that such activities are seen in the context of “institutional volunteerism,” and it rationally follows that they be organizationally supported as an important extracurricular activity. The weaknesses inherent in such an approach have been comprehensively critiqued both because of their rootedness in individual and institutional “benevolence” and because such programs often have little pedagogical value in educating students in the skills of engaged, effective citizenship.

As a general principal, the building of an effective institutional infrastructure for the support of community-based pedagogy in a liberal arts college must, of necessity, proceed from a deep understanding of the distinctive educational mission and organizational structure of the particular institution in which it is being developed. Because the educational value and vibrancy of engaged and effective community-based pedagogy is conspicuously and demonstrably evident in the work of students and faculty at institutions in which such pedagogical approaches are deeply embedded, it is tempting to believe that a “template” for such success can be identified in model colleges,



The Pitzer tree greets guests at the original entrance gates of the College.

extracted and transported to other liberal arts colleges. This belief may not be well founded. Colleges that are effective in supporting community-based pedagogy share a broad conviction that such work is fundamental to that portion of their respective liberal arts mission statements that call for the development of engaged, effective and critical-thinking citizens of local, national and international communities. They share a belief that the skills of such engaged and effective citizenship are educable and that community-based pedagogies are powerful devices for realizing this broad educational objective. In the words of Benjamin Barber, “We may be born free, but we are not born citizens – we have

to acquire the traits that enable us to participate effectively in the world.” Designing undergraduate curriculum and programs that identify, cultivate, test, apply and extend those traits in furtherance of the development of effective and engaged local and global citizenship is of critical importance to the liberal arts mission. Basing these programs in dynamic, albeit at times struggling, communities and doing so strategically with an informed awareness of both the challenges and assets existing in those communities provides colleges with an appropriate basis for establishing effective community partnerships.

Although liberal arts institutions that are proficient in this work frequently hold in common this enlightened educational vision, and they embed this aspiration deeply in their educational mission statement, and, indeed, are deeply motivated to realize such a vision, it should come as no surprise that they go about the business of realizing such aspirations in markedly different and institutionally distinct ways.

The unique ways in which colleges organize governance structures to implement their educational missions often reflect the particular historical roots of the institution. Even at the Claremont Colleges, an educational consortium built largely from within with strategic guidance and consultation from the other member colleges and organized in common under the umbrella of The Claremont University Consortium, we see a range of governance models. Such governance models frequently reflect the degree to which institutional identity is disciplinarily focused. Claremont McKenna College and, in particular, Harvey Mudd College have retained much of their founding academic focus on government and economics in the former case and engineering in the latter, whereas Scripps, Pitzer and Pomona have embraced a broader representation of the disciplines in their faculty and curricula. The colleges also differ significantly in the degree to which academic disciplines (departments) serve as de facto governance units within the organizational structure of the College. For example, in most of the Claremont Colleges, academic departments have considerable autonomy and an established governance hierarchy (overseen by a department chair) that feeds directly in the organizational structure of the college. In such a model, much of the college’s academic budget funnels through a departmental structure. Institutional academic priorities are initiated at the departmental level, and staff support for the academic program is often funded and organized in response to strategic priorities established at the departmental level. Similarly, departments play a significant role in establishing the specific

performance expectations for promotion and tenure by which junior faculty will be evaluated. In this model, then, educational priorities for the college reflect the sum of the educational aspirations of its constituent departments. Discussions as to the development of an educationally effective academic program strategically incorporating community-based pedagogy begin at the level of individual departments and are necessarily framed by the priorities, interests and expertise of the members of that of those departments.

In contrast, at Pitzer College, the faculty have historically been organized as a collective body in which academic disciplines, by design, have a very limited formal role to play in the governance of the College. The founding vision of the College was shaped by a desire to support and sustain interdisciplinary conversations. In such a model, educational priorities for the College often reflect creative and synergistic relationships between individual faculty across traditional disciplinary boundaries. In part, this is enabled by the fact that there is no internal governance hierarchy at the level of disciplines (represented by field groups) and little material incentive for field groups to defend traditional disciplinary boundaries. Budgets, including research and staff support, accrue to the faculty as a whole rather than being channeled through a departmental infrastructure. Similarly, disciplines have a relatively limited role to play in establishing the performance criteria for, or conducting the promotion and tenure evaluations of, junior faculty. In this model, institutional recognition of community-based work is instantiated in the promotion and tenure guidelines for the faculty body as a whole and is evaluated by an elected, often interdisciplinary committee of the whole. It is also a significant feature of the shared governance model at Pitzer that students have been invited by the faculty to participate at every level of the governance infrastructure, including service on the appointments, promotion and tenure committee. Within the context of this more interdisciplinary governance structure, conversations about the development and support for an institutional infrastructure to support community-based pedagogy are conducted at the level of the College’s Academic Planning Committee and are driven by the collective pedagogical aspirations of Pitzer faculty and students.

Institutional support for such programming has been developed in the form of a more centrally organized interdisciplinary infrastructure, whose mission can be very tightly linked to the Colleges’ core academic

objectives, including that of educating students to be engaged and effective citizens of the various communities (local, national and international) that they will be inheriting.

As sequelae to the College's very early decision to assume an institutional identity as an "interdisciplinary" college, and its establishment of largely discipline-independent governance and budgetary models, faculty, almost from the founding of the College, have felt empowered and indeed encouraged to develop curriculum outside of the confines normally imposed by disciplinary boundaries. Perhaps in this heady ether created by such porous disciplinary boundaries, at least some faculty came to realize that the structural boundaries imposed by classroom walls might prove equally porous. From very early in the College's history, we see evidence of Pitzer faculty and students venturing out into local, and at times not so local, communities to conduct a variety of applied projects in cooperation with community members in those locales. Although innovative and educationally rewarding, such courses have historically been extremely labor intensive, with faculty serving as instructor, itinerary planner/coordinator, guide, enforcer of appropriate ethical conduct in regards to work with vulnerable and "at risk" populations, as well as bus driver. These courses, launched primarily on the basis of personal initiative and gumption, were often conducted in an institutional vacuum with little recourse to staff support or to professional fora designed to foster critical reflection on "best practices" for mounting such classes.

In the late 1980s and early 90s, an institutional shift began to occur at Pitzer as evidenced by the adopting of social responsibility as a formal educational objective and establishing as inherent in that objective, the twin notions of action and critical reflection. *By undertaking social responsibility and by examining the ethical implications of the issues they explore, students learn to evaluate the effects of individual actions and social policies and to take responsibility for making the world a better place.* Passage of the Social Responsibility Objective imbedded the work being done in community-based pedagogy squarely in the academic domain and led directly to efforts to expand the number of these community-based courses being offered at Pitzer. As a means of implementing this objective, a specific curricular guideline was adopted in 1995, setting the expectation that Pitzer students would undertake a semester-long participation in a community-based project. A great deal of faculty discussion

in 1995 was devoted to ensuring that the College was positioned to provide sufficient course-based opportunities for students to realize this guideline. These same discussions also generated faculty-led initiatives to enhance the depth and scope of the pedagogical work being done in such areas and to encourage critical reflection on both student-learning outcomes, as well as on the essential reciprocity inherent in such community-based relationships. Through the process of engaging in these institutional discussions, the faculty's vision of the fundamental nature of such relationships and the College's positionality within them began to shift from **institution as a voluntary source of skilled benevolence** to **institution as embedded member of a community with ongoing responsibilities to that community** inherent in such membership. The programmatic changes that emerged out of these transformational discussions were quite remarkable.

The College launched the Pitzer in Ontario program, a semester-length immersion program during which a student's entire course load was an intensive, interdisciplinary investigation of the City of Ontario. The early vision for the program was to immerse Pitzer students at all levels in the operations of a dynamic urban municipality. How does a city define and meet the needs of its citizens? How does it organize itself to carry out its core mission? How is municipal policy shaped both through the formal channels of city government and through informal networks of community alliances? How could students be taught to work with various communities within the city to identify, mobilize and empower assets indigenous to those communities to the benefit of those communities? In addition to core coursework, students were required to attend all city council meetings, as well as serving a 20-hour/week internship either in a non-profit agency or in a department of Ontario municipal government. The Pitzer in Ontario program was founded by professors Lourdes Arguelles and Alan Jones in partnership with Carol Brandt, vice president for international programs and fellowships, who brought considerable insight and effort to the task of developing effective community-based pedagogy, and was joined shortly thereafter by Professor Ethel Jorge. Professor Jorge has conducted pioneering work with students and members of the community in using Spanish language instruction as a vehicle for community empowerment. The office of International Programs and Fellowships, which has historically been deeply embedded at the College, also provided much of the early administrative support for the fledgling program.



Demonstrating a decolonizing and Freireian pedagogical approach, it is not uncommon to see classes being held outdoors and in a circle.

It is interesting to note that this pattern of temporarily expanding the scope of responsibilities of existing administrative resources at the College to support new program development during their early start-up phase is quite typical of the process by which Pitzer has developed the support infrastructure for its community-based programming. There are several reasons why this is the case: First, when new programs are initiated at the College, their long-term viability is not always self-evident—temporary restructuring of the responsibilities of existing staff is an efficient way of quickly generating program support during the program’s initial “probationary” phase while its long-term viability is being assessed; second, financial support from foundations or private individuals is often dependent on “proof of concept” evidence that the program will be successful—restructuring of staff responsibilities ensures that fledgling programs will have sufficient support to demonstrate such programmatic efficacy and satisfy donor concerns; third, in the start-up phase of a new programmatic initiative, it is not always clear how staff support for the project should be structured—what skill sets are required and how those skills should be allocated to individual job descriptions. Finally, when the project has been operating successfully for a number of years and has been appropriately vetted for the strength of its contribution to the College’s academic mission, it is appropriate to move funding of essential elements of its support infrastructure to continuing line items in the College’s academic budget.

Continuing with the particular narrative of the development of the Pitzer in Ontario program, after a year or two of operating out of the basement of the Ontario Public Library (during which the program curriculum was refined, community partnerships were firmly established and student enrollments grew), the College, with generous assistance from the City of Ontario Housing Office, purchased a house on H street in Ontario that was appropriately sized and configured to support the growing demands for space to support the program’s instructional and community-partnership building activities. In the initial years of its operation, the program was supported entirely with generous funding from private foundations (initially from The James Irvine Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies) and subsequently the program was the recipient of a Housing and Urban Development Community Outreach and Partnership Center grant. This period of generous external support enabled us to deeply root the program in the College and to greatly expand and enrich the critical work being done through empowerment of our growing network of community partners. Much of this early work was conducted using the powerful “Assets Mapping” techniques developed by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight at Northwestern. Over the last decade, the Ontario program has been further strengthened under the inspired leadership of Susan Phillips, associate professor of environmental analysis, who serves as academic director of the program. During this period, budgetary support for the program has moved from its initial, tenuous “soft money” roots to regularized line items in the overall academic budget.

In the late 1990s, the College took a major strategic step forward in establishing institutionalized support for community-based pedagogy by founding the Center for California Cultural and Social Issues with generous support from the W. M. Keck Foundation and the James Irvine Foundation. The centralized organizational structure of CCCSI (now the Community Engagement Center, CEC), with an academic director who reports directly to the dean of faculty, is appropriately configured to support the community-based academic work of faculty at an institution noted for its interdisciplinary approach to knowledge and praxis, and to align with its organizational vision of faculty as citizens of the institution rather than a department. It might well be less appropriate at institutions where curriculum emerges from, and is supported at the level of, formal academic departments. From its beginning, the academic vision informing the work of CCCSI

(CEC) was to support the building of long-term relationships between the College and identified partnership organizations in the local community. The first step in the building of such a relationship was to recruit faculty liaisons who would agree to make a formal five-year commitment to a potential partner and to develop a five-year strategic plan with that organization that explicitly established concrete projects goals and precisely defined academically oriented project goals for students at each phase in the development of the partnership. In this way, it was imagined that, although individual students would rotate into and out of a given project on a semester or year-long basis, momentum for the project as a whole would be maintained, guided by the strategic plan and under the consistent leadership of the faculty and partner liaisons.

Initially, the organizational structure of the CCCSI (CEC) consisted of a faculty director (Jones) with one or two course releases. As the nature, scope and complexity of the work carried out by the faculty supported by CEC increased over time, a novel support infrastructure emerged in parallel with demands placed on the Center. Again, initially with soft money support, an appropriately trained and fulltime academic director and an administrative budget director were hired using soft money support. Eventually these positions also transitioned to full-time line items in the academic budget. As the number of these faculty-led projects again expanded and student participation skyrocketed, the question of how to provide appropriate, ongoing oversight of the now substantial student engagement with these sites became challenging. In response to this challenge, the Center pioneered the development of post-baccalaureate “urban fellows,” former students who had performed in exemplary fashion as interns at one of the community partner sites, were intimately familiar with the strategic goals of the partnership, and who could serve as on-site supervisors of student engagement at the site in the furtherance of specific project objectives. Urban fellows received a fellowship stipend and were assigned to specific project sites for a one- or two-year period. Again, those positions were initially funded through foundation and private sources, but funding has gradually transitioned to permanent line items in the CEC budget. It is interesting to note that this “urban fellows” model has now been adopted by two of the Claremont intercollegiate academic departments, Asian American Studies and Environmental Analysis, specifically to support the development of their own community-based pedagogy.

Currently, the CEC is under the very capable leadership of Dr. Tessa Hicks Peterson, who received her PhD in cultural studies from the Claremont Graduate University under the supervision of now Emerita Professor Lourdes Arguelles (CGU). At present, the CEC maintains active core community partnerships with a number of long-standing partnerships: The Pomona Equal Opportunity Employment Center in Pomona, which supports the equal rights and pay of day laborers, and was founded by Professor Jose Calderon, community members, and Pitzer students (including Kevin DeLeon and Fabian Nunez, both of whom subsequently became members of the California State Assembly, with DeLeon currently serving as a member of the California State Senate); Camps Afflerbaugh-Paige in La Verne, which hosts Pitzer’s extremely effective literacy, life skills and poetry project with incarcerated youth, (founded by Professors Barry Sanders and Laura Harris); Jumpstart (a literacy program targeting low-income preschoolers, in partnership with the national Americorps grant); Prototypes, an inspiring live-in program that enables both women in recovery and those serving prison sentences to be in residence with their children during their transitional, rehabilitative period, (founded by Professor Laura Harris). In addition, there are dozens of affiliate community partnerships, such as the one developed by Professor Gina Lamb in her highly effective Media Arts for Social Justice program, which partners very effectively with REACH LA, a media empowerment



Breaking out of the mold of the traditional classroom, the “Healing Ourselves, Healing Our Communities” course is held in the Grove house.

project for LGBT youth; and a growing partnership with local Native American tribes and communities (initiated by Pitzer alumnus, Scott Scoggins, and built into yearlong cultural and educational programming with Professors Erich Steinman, Gina Lamb and Tessa Hicks Peterson).

In the last decade, Pitzer has been actively engaged in a project to strategically connect the pedagogically advanced community-based work that it is doing with communities in the LA basin with the well-established and highly developed work being done at the College's Study Abroad sites around the world. For example, the College has established in Dominical, Costa Rica, with a generous gift from a private donor, the Firestone Center for Restoration Ecology. The 150-acre property, which was ecologically degraded by decades of cattle ranching, adjoins the 1,000-acre Hacienda Baru Ecological Preserve. By partnering with Hacienda Baru, the Firestone Center has become a site from which Pitzer courses in restoration and tropical ecology are now regularly offered; it is also an active research and restoration project in its own right, facilitating the reintroduction of native flora and fauna (including cutter ants tapirs and panthers). Another such partnership emerged in Gaborone, Botswana, where Pitzer has had a Study Abroad program for many years. Professor Larry Grill, who had previously developed a method for the development safe, effective and economical vaccines using tobacco mosaic virus to carry epitopes for the coding of potential subunit vaccines up into the cells of the tobacco plant *Nicotiana benthamiana*, is partnering with the University of Botswana and the Botswana Vaccine Institute to develop a fully functioning manufacturing facility for the production of vaccines for human and cattle diseases that are endemic to Southern Africa. Students from Pitzer and the University of Botswana are learning together not only the cutting edge technology behind the production of subunit vaccines, but also how to communicate with one another in ways that facilitate the growth and development of the project as a whole. Language instruction in Setswana is an integral part of the curriculum.

The relatively recent decision by the College to strategically align the substantial intellectual, cultural and administrative resources represented in the Pitzer Study Abroad office, as well as those in the CEC, to seamlessly extend the reach and impact of community-based pedagogy at the College and to create a platform from which faculty and student can critically examine questions of how global

phenomena differentially impact local communities, has led to the formation of the College's new Institute for Global/Local Action and Study (IGLAS). Founded in 2012 with energetic direction from Professor Nigel Boyle, IGLAS provides logistical, cultural and pedagogical support to Pitzer faculty who are increasingly engaged in the project of creating meaningful community-based projects with community partners from around the globe.

The growth and development of a thoughtfully designed and strategically integrated infrastructure for the support of community-based pedagogy in the service of one of the College's core academic objectives, social responsibility, has been a remarkable success. This is true in part because such work draws on and is fundamentally aligned with, the founding vision and ethos of the College. The dynamic and indeed inventive growth of this infrastructure over the past 20 years mirrors that of the College itself and continues to provide not only effective support to ongoing and developing partnership programs, but an inherently flexible organizational platform from which future programmatic initiatives can be launched.

# Faculty Biographies

## Nigel Boyle

Nigel Boyle is professor of political studies, founding director of the Pitzer Institute for Global/Local Action Study (IGLAS), associate dean for global and local programs, and IGLAS chair in political studies. He received his BA from Liverpool University and his PhD from Duke University. His research interests include: comparative politics, European social policy, labor market policy, Irish politics, soccer and politics. Professor Boyle has been a leader and mentor for students applying for the Fulbright Program. With his dedication to students and passion for global experiences, Pitzer has become the nation's leading institution for Fulbright awardees. He has also connected his love for soccer with community involvement and social justice by using the sport as a bridge between local communities and institutional resources. In a collaboration with IGLAS and Pitzer's Community Engagement Center, Boyle has organized a soccer tournament with the aim of providing scholarships to undocumented students.



---

## Jose Calderon

Jose Zapata Calderon is professor emeritus of sociology and Chicano studies at Pitzer College. He received his BA in communications from the University of Colorado and his MA and PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles. His research includes: urban and political sociology; race and ethnic relations; multi-ethnic coalitions; urban community development; critical ethnography and participant observation; language rights; experiential and service learning; Chicano and Latino communities. Professor Calderon has had a long history of connecting his academic work with community organizing, student-based service learning, participatory action research, critical pedagogy, multi-ethnic coalition building, and immigration reform and labor rights. In 1999, in collaboration with others, he spearheaded the founding of the Pomona Economic Opportunity Center and has been deeply involved in its development ever since. A recipient of many awards and an author of numerous articles and studies based on his community experiences and activism, Professor Calderon leads the field in discussions on "Activist-Intellectuals," a means of making the relationships and spaces between communities and the academy more fluid and symbiotic.



## Paul Faulstich

Paul Faulstich is professor of environmental analysis at Pitzer College, where he has been teaching since 1993. He is also a member of the Extended Graduate Faculty in Cultural Studies and Education at Claremont Graduate University. He holds a PhD in anthropology from the University of Hawaii, an MA from Stanford University, and a BA from Pitzer College. His research interests include: cultural ecology, ecological design, the ecology of expressive culture, and Aboriginal Australia, crossing boundaries from social and political ecology to environmental aesthetics. Professor Faulstich has been a leading voice and advocate for sustainable projects on campus and across Southern California and has initiated, empowered and led numerous student- involved projects to advance the knowledge of sustainability and the field of ecological studies.



---

## Mary Hatcher-Skeers

Mary Hatcher-Skeers is associate professor of chemistry in the Keck Joint Science Department at the Claremont Colleges. Professor Hatcher-Skeers is a biophysical chemist studying the role of local dynamics in protein-DNA recognition. She received her BA in biochemistry and cell biology at the University of California, San Diego, MS at San Francisco State University and PhD in physical chemistry at the University of Washington. Professor Hatcher-Skeers has led initiatives through the Scripps College Academy, an academically intensive, year-round academic outreach program for highly motivated young women from racially diverse and low socio-economic backgrounds to connect the world and lessons of science to community engagement and social activism. She is focused on helping students to be empowered by science and providing opportunities for students from underserved communities to gain access to STEM fields.



---

## Alan Jones

Alan Jones is professor of psychology and neuroscience at Pitzer College; he has been at Pitzer since 1986 and served as dean of faculty from 2001 to 2012. He received an MA in psychology and neuroscience from Princeton University and a PhD in neuroscience from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He was an NIH postdoctoral fellow in pediatric neurology at the University of Colorado Medical School. His research interests include: development of control of appetitive behavior; effects of early nutritional and metabolic factors in development; neural and metabolic factors in the ontogeny of obesity. Professor Jones is one of the founding faculty members of the College's Pitzer in Ontario program, an innovative immersion program in critical community studies, and a founding director of the College's Community Engagement Center (CEC). Professor Jones remains committed to scholarship and community engagement.



## Alexandra Juhasz

Alex Juhasz, professor of media studies, teaches video production and film and video theory. She has a PhD in cinema studies from NYU. Her research interests include: documentary video production, women's film and feminist film theory. More recently, she has explored the role of social media in our lives and as a space where questions of equality, freedom and mobility arise. Professor Juhasz has taught courses at NYU, Swarthmore College, Bryn Mawr College, Claremont Graduate University and Pitzer College on women and film, feminist film and women's documentary. Dr. Juhasz has written multiple articles on feminist and AIDS documentary. Her current work is on and about YouTube, and other more radical uses of digital media. Dr. Juhasz is the author of "Learning from YouTube," an exploration of the ways social media can be used and how we can learn from the opportunities it presents. She currently serves as the director of the Munroe Center for Social Inquiry, where the topic this year is "Technology."



---

## Gina Lamb

Gina Lamb is a visiting assistant professor at Pitzer College and long-time artist-activist with REACH LA, a nonprofit digital arts lab for teens that produces works in a variety of genres promoting dialogue and social activism within the Los Angeles youth community. She also teaches production and theory in the Media Studies program at Pitzer College. She received her BA from the San Francisco Art Institute and MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles. Lamb's deep engagement with community-based social justice work has made it possible for media arts students to incorporate community projects into documentary courses. Included in the list of diverse groups Lamb's students have worked with through the years are: REACH LA, Dome Village in Los Angeles, AIDS Project, Native American communities across California, the Pomona Day Labor Center, the Women's Multimedia Center, Prototypes, Hug House, Uncommon Good and the LA Freewaves Festival of New Media.



---

## Tessa Hicks Peterson

Tessa Hicks Peterson is assistant vice president for community engagement, director of the Community Engagement Center (CEC) and assistant professor of urban studies at Pitzer College, where she has been teaching since 2006. She is also a member of the Extended Graduate Faculty in the School of Education at Claremont Graduate University. Professor Peterson received both an MA and PhD at Claremont Graduate University in cultural studies and a BA in psychology and sociology from U.C. Santa Cruz. Her research interests include the study of social movements, intercultural relations, indigenous studies, and community-based pedagogy involving participatory-action research and community engagement. Additionally, Professor Peterson is a facilitator of workshops on a variety of issues related to human relations, anti-bias education and social justice. Community engagement is a core element of every course she teaches and at the heart of the social change work she aims to develop within the culture of academia.



## Susan Phillips

Susan Phillips is academic director of the Pitzer in Ontario program, a justice-oriented, interdisciplinary program in urban studies and community-based research, and associate professor in environmental studies. With Pitzer College since 2002, Phillips has previously served as Community Engagement Center (CEC) director and as a faculty associate in urban studies. Professor Phillips received her BA from California State University, Dominguez Hills and an MA and PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles. She is a recipient of the prestigious Soros Fellowship. As part of her Soros Justice Fellowship, Phillips completed *Operation Fly Trap: Gangs, Drugs and the Law*, a book examining how federal policies directed at combating drugs and gangs actually generate and sustain the conditions that perpetuate poverty, crime and violence in communities of color.



---

## Brinda Sarathy

Brinda Sarathy is associate professor of environmental analysis at Pitzer College, where she teaches courses on US environmental policy, California water politics and environmental justice. Sarathy received her PhD in environmental science, policy and management from the University of California, Berkeley, and held a post-doctoral position at the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UCMEXUS). In 2013, Professor Sarathy was chosen to be part of the William R. Gianelli Water Leaders Class, a selective one-year program sponsored by the Water Education Foundation and aimed at educating emerging community leaders about water issues. Her current research focuses on the social and scientific regulation of water pollution in post-World War II California and the processes leading to what would eventually become the state's first Superfund site, the Stringfellow Acid Pits in Riverside County. Through community-based, participatory research projects and teaching partnerships that center around community organizing, Professor Sarathy is continually engaged with environmental justice activism in local communities.



---

## Scott Edward Orellana Ingles Scoggins

Scott Scoggins is the Pitzer College Native American Pipeline director and outreach liaison. He received his BA from Pitzer College and his master's in collaborative education leadership from Fielding Graduate University. His research interests include: Native American and Indigenous education access, cross-cultural and international community engagement, youth education and leadership, and nonprofit education programs. Scoggins is passionate about providing educational- access pathways for Native youth. Since founding the program in 2009, Scoggins has been the director of Pitzer's Native American Summer Pipeline to College program, a college prep multicultural education program that challenges, inspires, supports and motivates young Native American students to pursue higher education while affirming their own cultural traditions.



## Erich Steinman

Erich Steinman is associate professor of sociology at Pitzer College. He teaches courses about American Indians and Indigenous movements; law and social change; sexuality, sexuality movements, and sexual politics; and the organizational challenges and innovations of social movements. He received his PhD from the University of Washington. As a graduate student, he created a teaching collaboration with the Makah Nation that exposed students to Makah perspectives on the conflict over the renewal of Makah whaling practices. He has published a number of articles on American Indian sovereignty, federal American Indian law and changes in federal policy towards American Indians. Currently, he is researching and writing about academic-tribal collaborations and working to promote such collaborations between Pitzer and Indian nations of Southern California. Professor Steinman has been a leader and advocate for campus programming and community engagement that recognizes the histories of Native communities and works to decolonize the institution.



---

## Kathleen Yep

Kathleen Yep is associate professor of Asian American studies at Pitzer College and chair of the Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies at the Claremont Colleges. Receiving her BA, MA and PhD in ethnic studies from the University of California, Berkeley, Yep was a University of California president's post-doctoral fellow at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her research and teaching interests include cultural politics, feminist/antiracist pedagogies, social documentation and social movements. She is the author of *Outside the Paint: When Basketball Ruled at the Chinese Playground* (Temple University Press, 2009), which examines how working-class Chinese American women and men utilized basketball as a source of collective empowerment in the 1930s. Professor Yep works extensively in the community and teaches a variety of service-learning courses. She is a recipient of Project Pericles, Bonner/Princeton and Carnegie grants for her civic engagement course Nonviolent Social Change.



**50**   
**FORWARD**  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

 **PITZER**  
**COLLEGE**  
A MEMBER OF THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

**Community Engagement Center**  
1050 North Mills Avenue  
Claremont, CA 91711-6101  
[www.pitzer.edu/cec](http://www.pitzer.edu/cec)