

The Catalyst

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The students, staff, and faculty members who have contributed to *The Catalyst* throughout our inaugural year have labored to raise the overall level of social awareness on the University of Idaho campus. Now we need more. We are living in an age of crisis. Not only have economic and social inequalities bred hunger, homelessness, and disease, but also distrust and insecurity. Mainstream media and government propaganda have added fuel to this fire of injustice and hatred, simplifying complex issues and capitalizing on society's tendency to create "the other." We must deconstruct this dangerous dichotomy. This does not mean merely being aware of the countless problems that plague our society. You must do something about it before open discussion and

critical thought disappear completely from our world.

In this issue, we have provided examples of individuals and organizations that have worked to promote understanding of marginalized groups by invalidating stereotypes and fostering environments that value complexity, honesty, and trust. From creating a new student organization to holding discussion groups to coordinating a film series, members of the University of Idaho community are confronting the misunderstanding and distrust that has fragmented our campus, our nation, and our world. Now it is your turn. Turn off the television and get involved, so one day we can wake up to a world that is not engaged in combat but in discussion and the pursuit of understanding.

~The Editors



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SPOTLIGHT!

ASUI Productions Board
brings diverse events
to UI campus

University of Idaho Multicultural Student Organizations

- Asian American/Pacific Islander Association, <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~aapia>
- Campos Student Association, <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~campos/>
- Chinese Student and Scholar Association, <http://www.uidaho.edu/cssfa/>
- French Club, <http://www.uidaho.edu/~uifrenclub>
- Indian Students Association, http://www.uidaho.edu/student_orgs/isa
- Japanese Student Association, http://www.uidaho.edu/student_orgs/jsa
- Multicultural Students' Organization, <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~mso/>
- Native American Student Association, <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/org.php?id=125543>
- Turkish Students' Association, <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~tsa/>

UI HOSTS FIRST AMERICAN INDIAN FILM SERIES

The UI's American Indian Studies Program organized the first of what it hopes will become an annual American Indian Film Series. The series ran from March 11-14th at the Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre, screening "Grand Avenue" (1996), "Skins" (2002), "The Business of Fancy-dancing" (2002), and "Naturally Native" (1997). These films are largely written, acted, and directed by American Indians. "Naturally Native" is the first feature film entirely funded and produced by a tribal nation. Local American Indian students and educators discussed the film with the audience following the screenings. This year's series was dedicated to the memory of Wil Hendrick, a Nez Perce UI Theatre Arts student and victim of a violent crime in 1999.

Indian-made films are particularly important because more people learn what they think they know about Indians from film than from any other source. At the same time, Indians have been misrepresented in American films to a degree that no other group has. Nearly a century of American filmmaking has denied Indians humanity and complexity, forcing them into the role of the defeated. Indians are using film and video to overcome this "visual genocide."

Film is a powerful medium for tribal

storytelling, giving audiences an opportunity to see and hear how Indians revisualize and reimagine what it has meant and what it means to be Indian in America. Some of these films talk back to earlier American films, critiquing their depiction of Indians and these films' underlying ideologies, such as Manifest Destiny, that were used to rationalize the dispossession of Indians.

Indian-made films resist continuing stereotypes about Indians as well as the injustice and discrimination that Indian peoples still experience. These films also celebrate Indian life, revealing its complexity and traditional values.

The UI sits between three tribal nations and has many Indian students. Part of our education here should

be learning about and from the people who have lived in this place for thousands of years. The film series gives us an opportunity to listen to Indians telling their own stories in their own ways. The American Indian Film Series is intended to enlighten, educate and foster intercultural understanding, justice and human rights, as well as to celebrate American Indian life and artistic achievement. The film series' website is www.uidaho.edu/~rfrey/FilmSeries.htm. Next year the English Department and American Indian Series Program will offer courses on Indians in film. For more information contact Professor Jan Johnson at janjohn@uidaho.edu.

-Professor Jan Johnson
English Department



THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL TRADITION

United we stand, divided we fall. Pardon my use of the cliché but at times it does seem to be the most appropriate form of revolutionary expression. One main objective of the Multicultural Students' Organization is to try to bring together all cultural groups so as to facilitate diverse cooperation and representation within a new student body that aims to resurrect and elevate interaction between numerous organizations within and outside of the University of Idaho.

Events such as Black History Month, Mexican Independence Day

celebration, Asian American Pacific Islanders Heritage month and others have at times gone unnoticed on this campus, and it is one major goal of our organization to increase awareness of such programs and activities.

This organization is meant to emphasize cultural relations in all forms and to help increase and initiate positive social contributions of ethnic and cultural groups. Furthermore, our goal is to increase participation while ensuring that each group retains its own uniqueness. This organization is not meant to assimilate but, rather, to provide a platform for collective insight.

Culture stretches far and wide; moreover, it is broad with regards to meaning and definition. Thus, it should be understood that this organization is not at all bound or restricted to ethnic diversity but encompasses all differences and characteristics that are believed to be cultural. Our hope is to embrace a multicultural philosophy that will develop through the positive participation of many groups at the University of Idaho and in the surrounding community.

-Kwapi Vengesayi

Erasing the Color-Line: UI Students Discuss W.E.B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*

Originally published in 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* is a collection of thirteen eclectic essays as well as one short story that weaves together the social history of a race that has been systematically exploited for over five hundred years. On February 12th, the director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs Francisco Salinas facilitated a discussion with UI students about Du Bois's poetically fierce call for change. The group discussed Du Bois's examination of the bondage and subsequent emancipation of African Americans as well as his claim that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line."

Du Bois traces the origins of the color-line to a simple, yet often overlooked, social fact: "men know so little of men." This is the only possible explanation for the horrors that whites inflicted on their darker-skinned neighbors. By ignoring their history and culture while simultaneously developing mythical explanations to justify their supposed inferiority, many whites dehumanized African Americans. Du Bois makes it clear that this process of degradation was not only the cause of slavery but also the reason why Reconstruction failed and Jim Crow ruled the South.

The Souls of Black Folk undoubtedly contributed to erasing the color-line by challenging the dehumanizing Supreme Court decisions, political policies, and popular culture stereotypes of the turn of the twentieth century as well as the prevailing policy of submission and social separation advocated by Booker T. Washington. Du Bois also discusses ways African Americans can protect themselves from a second enslavement until the color-line eventually fades away, focusing primarily on the importance of political power, civil rights, and the higher education of their youth. Yet, as the last century has shown and current affairs continue to demonstrate, African Americans will continue to suffer oppression in many forms until understanding breaks down the divisions that continue to tower over society and the color-line disappears completely.

The problem of the twenty-first century is still the problem of the color-line as well as the problem of the class-line, the religion-line, the sexuality-line, and the gender-line; signs screaming "Whites Only" may be removed from our streets, but even more partitions separate society into isolated islands in which the souls of their inhabitants waver on the brink of extinction. Clearly, it is more pressing now than ever before that we return to Du Bois's study and remember that "none of us are clean if we bend not our energies to righting these great wrongs."

~Jessica Lipschultz

SPOTLIGHT ON AWARENESS



Over the past few months the ASUI Productions Board, the main facilitator of educational and entertainment programming at the University, has increased diversity programming on campus. These programs have been well received by students, faculty, and staff.

Just within the first two months of the semester, the University has seen a step dance group, a slam poet hailing from the hip-hop generation of New York, and a popular underground Hip-Hop group.

Starting the semester off, Step Afrika performed the traditional African American dance of stepping to over 400 students, staff, and community members in the Hartung Theater. The audience watched as the group traced this dance through its African origins and into the fraternity and sorority system of the '80s and '90s.

With the success of Step Afrika, the Productions Board expected a great response to slam poet Shihan who appeared as a follow-up to the slam poet Taylor Mali's fall performance. Unlike the performance by Mali, Shihan's poetry confronted issues facing minorities, and he spent a significant amount of time on stage taking questions and specifically discussing stereotypes.

In addition to a step group and a slam poet, the Productions Board rounded out the semester with the hip-hop group Blackalicious in the SUB Ballroom. "Through our programming we are trying to reach more students, and they are responding," commented Kelley Smith, Productions Board member. "We are all excited for more diverse events in the future."

~Casandra Byington



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Thursday, April 3, 2003
Commons Clearwater Room, 6:30 pm

Thursday, April 3, 2003
College of Law Courtroom, 7:00 pm

Monday, April 7, 2003
WSU Beasley Coliseum, 7:30 pm

Tuesday, April 8, 2003
Commons Whitewater Room, 12:30 pm

Friday, April 11, 2003
Commons Food Court, 11:30 am

Saturday, April 12, 2003
Location and time TBA

Sunday, April 13, 2003
SUB Ballroom, 7:00 pm

Friday, April 18 to April 20, 2003
Enterprise, Oregon

Saturday, April 19, 2003
Moscow Community Garden, 10:00 am

Saturday, April 26, 2003
Mountain View Park, 10:00 am

Wednesday, April 30, 2003
Commons Food Court, 11:30 am

“Race, Innocence, and Trends in Death Penalty Opinion”
Presentation given by Michael L. Radelet, professor of sociology at the University of Colorado

Martin Forum, “Humanitarian Crisis in Iraq”
Rand Lewis and Bill Smith of the Martin Institute will lead this forum

Manding Jata
Travel to French West Africa with the music, dance, and drums of the Mali Empire

“Why General Education and What Can (or Can’t) We Do About It”
Lecture presented by UI Professor Bill Voxman

Movie *Rabbit in the Moon*
A documentary about the lingering effects of the World War II internment of the Japanese American community.

RHA Paint the Palouse
Assist members of the Moscow community who lack the resources to pain their homes

Honor the Earth with the Indigo Girls & Winona LaDuke
An evening addressing issues of Native American environmental justice

Zumwalt Prairie Volunteer Work Party
This no-cost trip is open to all undergraduates. For more information email Kit Moffitt at moff6171@uidaho.edu.

Girl Scouts Green It & Clean It
Work with Girl Scouts to promote environmental awareness and clean up the Moscow Community Garden.

PCEI Paradise Creek Stream Cleanup
Help clean up Paradise Creek and plant trees.

Movie *Talking History*
A film that combines oral histories and historical footage of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, and Laotian women, featuring their unique immigration stories.

2002-2003 CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

Saturday, April 26th @ 4:30 pm in the SUB Ballroom

Celebrate community involvement with a reception and ceremony to honor students, staff, faculty, and community members.

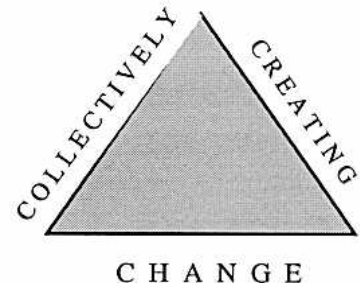
Lots of delicious food! All are welcome!!!

ASUI CIVIC ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Aaron Banner
Casandra Byington
Nick Caylor
Niraj Chitraker
Kamian Fox
Michael Gilge
Julie Hecker

Crystal Jones
Amy Leen
Jessica Lipschultz
Josh Miller
Marissa Peterson
Peter Stegner
Matt Strange

Leah Suddarth
Katie Swajkoski
Megan Thompson
Debbie Thoreson
Janell Vogel
Lisa White
Dimetri Wilker



ASUI Civic Engagement
Leadership Committee
Idaho Commons, Room 302
(208) 885-9442
JessicaL@sub.uidaho.edu