Imagining California

“Doing work in California,” as Professor Ruthie Gilmore of the University of Southern California explained, “is like organizing an entire country.” As Imagining America prepares for our annual conference taking place this year in downtown Los Angeles, we take a turn at “Imagining California.” How do we make sense of a place as enormous and diverse as California? In what ways do publicly engaged artists and scholars contribute to making the spaces surrounding their California universities into meaningful places?

If California were in fact a country, it would be the 7th largest economy in the world. From the gold rush to the rise of the wheat and citrus industries to the most recent reorganization of the state’s economy with globalization, capital transformation has long shaped California in profound and deeply unequal and contradictory ways. Yet, despite the many people excluded from the benefits of these economic shifts, there remains a surprisingly vibrant and exciting activism throughout the state.

In parts of the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada, for example, urban development pressures and an expanding low-paying service sector increasingly displace economies long built around logging and other extractive industries. Universities in these regions engage in collaborative work with community organizations to create new, sustainable economies that tap into the region’s growing diversity and help foster new ways of constructing and envisioning these places.

Likewise, statewide cutbacks in social services have led to the near disappearance of the arts from the Continued on page 2

From the Director
Jan Cohen-Cruz

I’m pleased to introduce this issue of our newsletter featuring member campuses in California, as we look to Los Angeles and the 2008 national conference, entitled “Public Engagement in a Diverse America: Layers of Place, Movements of People.” According to conference committee chair and USC director of the Center for Diversity and Democracy George Sanchez, “The theme of diversity and engagement will allow us to play with various movements which are critical: immigration obviously, and the resulting multiplicity of languages and cultures, but also wider demographic change, including gentrification mobilized by movements of people of different classes, central to the way the transformation of urban L.A. is happening right now. The theme also connects us back to the electoral process we are in the middle of, as well as the ongoing social movements that connect or divide people on the ground.”

An image that emerged in the committee’s deliberations about the conference theme was *pentimento*. Adam Bush, USC graduate student helping with conference planning, identifies *pentimento* as “a painting term referring to the physical trace of the moments in which the artist changes his/her mind about the direction of the work… it can also refer to a layering of L.A. history and activism, or a critique of the university as a simple overlay on the community in which it exists—layers build atop but, of course, they also hide what’s beneath. So what of seeing this conference as a peeling back of the layers? Of drawing attention to changes in direction of the artist, the city, and the university?”

Continued on page 3
Imagining California

Continued from page 1

California public education system. A startling 89 percent of the state’s K-12 schools do not offer a standard course of study in all four of the arts disciplines, according to Christopher Waterman, dean of UCLA’s School of the Arts and Architecture. These cutbacks disproportionately affect low-income, minority populations in urban areas, especially in the context of Proposition 209, that prohibits California public universities from considering race, ethnicity, or sex in admissions processes. Recognizing the arts as crucial to forming a critical citizenship, many consortium members work in partnership with community organizations and public schools to bring the arts back into the educational system in innovative ways. Through such campus-community partnerships these institutions challenge the traditional place of higher education and art in American society and politics, and forge relationships across lines of difference that inspire new ways of imagining and interacting in people’s everyday lives.

Much of California has experienced profound demographic transformation. Los Angeles, for example, is now home to the largest Persian-Iranian population outside of Tehran and the largest Korean population after Seoul. These newcomers, like those before them, infuse local cultural scenes with ideas and traditions from around the world. University towns are no exception, especially since many of the state’s institutions border diverse, densely-populated urban areas. These universities seek to actively participate in the political and cultural conversations about what such demographic shifts might mean.

While mobility has always been prized in California, access to higher education and social mobility are politically charged. Many immigrant communities live close to a university, yet the chances their children will matriculate at that neighboring campus remain slim. The recent expansion of the state’s prison system has led to an unprecedented rate of incarceration for young people of color. Many consortium members respond to these conditions with a purposeful activism that reflects a keen sensitivity to the increasingly differentiated populations around their institutions and a commitment to social justice.

The following thumbnail sketches represent some of the creative ways that IA members throughout the state engage these complex layers of place and populations.

University of Southern California

The Department of American Studies and Ethnicity is distinctive in that it came into being in the wake of the 1992 uprising. That is, while other ethnic studies programs were also born out of political struggle, USC’s department is a more recent manifestation of this struggle, giving it a new breath of life. “We in the department have long been committed to maintaining real, not just formal, relationships with different organizations we might call civil society,” stated Gilmore. These deep political and scholarly commitments make USC an ideal site for not only the upcoming Imagining America conference but also to begin exploring the work of our California affiliates.

Faculty in the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity have recently organized the Center for Diversity and Democracy. The first major project for this center focuses on black-brown relations in the United States. Rather than highlighting conflict, over the next five years this project
From the Director

Continued from page 1

For me, participating in the lively e-mail exchange with the planning committee coincided with reading the draft of a manuscript by James Thompson of the University of Manchester in the UK. His insights about global diversity are relevant to our thinking about the diversity we encounter at home. Thompson tells a story about a Sinhalese woman whose response to the offer to participate in a drama workshop rather than help rebuild her house in post-tsunami Sri Lanka was “Oh, sin [e.g., what a shame!] Theatre!” Thompson does not suggest we abandon the arts in disaster settings but offers a critique that outside experts too often “build on exported knowledge systems and expertise [rather] than on the needs of individuals and communities affected.” He emphasizes that different cultures have utterly different systems of healing and recovery, indeed a range of indigenous art forms that have great local meaning often unknown to outsiders. The genuine recognition that knowledge is created in multiple venues and out of multiple kinds of experience reverberates throughout both his book and the theme of our October conference.

The issue of diversity and engagement permeates every national IA initiative. We recently published IA Director Emerita Julie Ellison and Research Director Timothy Eatman’s final report on the Tenure Team Initiative on Public Scholarship (soon to be downloadable from our web site). Ellison and Eatman note the particular pressure on graduate students and junior faculty of color who wish to pursue public scholarship. They write:

What is the relationship between diversity and engagement? The sense of risk and the tones of worry are most pronounced in the interviews with African American academic leaders. While committed to public engagement and proud of a long history of “speaking for the community,” they voiced the strongest concern for the professional jeopardy risked by graduate students and junior faculty who choose this path.

Let me take this occasion to congratulate Ellison and Eatman on a terrific report, which beautifully integrates anecdote, analysis, and concrete recommendations to move higher education forward in appropriately rewarding public scholars and artists. IA will begin organizing implementation meetings exploring the report with constituents of both IA and Campus Compact at the October conference.

Finally, this issue marks the transition from PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) founding director Sylvia Gale to a new PAGE director as the soon-to-be Dr. Sylvia Gale prepares to enter the professoriate and move beyond graduate student status. We will duly celebrate Sylvia’s shift in status and welcome the new PAGE leadership team—Kevin Bott, Lisa Thornhill, and Adam Bush—at the October conference. We also welcome our new PAGE graduate assistant, Chelsea Cramer.

Jan Cohen-Cruz
Imagining California
Continued from page 3

To prevent these projects from vanishing, the umbrella organization of Isla Vista Arts institutionalized a number of “student-conceived, organized, and run projects” by turning them into academic courses. They include I.V. LIVE, a weekly variety show; Nuestra Voz, a program that brings together area high school students and undergraduates to produce a play; and a Department of Film and Media course through which films are presented in a newly renovated, affordable local movie house. These projects appeal to diverse audiences and include components specifically aimed at bridging the gap between students and the wider Isla Vista community.

Through Kim Yasuda’s Container Project course, art students develop creative ways to recycle the over-sized shipping containers left at ports globally. Long-term goals include alleviating the shortage of artist studio space on campus and developing affordable, sustainable solutions to housing, a critical issue on the West Coast and Santa Barbara in particular.

While instructors oversee these projects, the goal is to embrace student management. “Decisions,” Anderson explains, “are student-based. That is how we get our audience. That is how we build a habit of cultural attendance.” For Beth Wynstra, a Ph.D. candidate and teaching assistant for I.V. LIVE, these courses provide students with opportunities for “real hands-on experience in arts production they wouldn’t get in a lecture-based format” while also stimulating them to “develop a lifetime habit of community awareness, no matter where they are living.”

California Institute of the Arts

“CalArts is a very different kind of teaching institution,” Glennia Avila, director of the Community Arts Partnership (CAP) asserted. CalArts, continued Avila, does not teach “skill-building for the sake of skill-building;” rather mentorship, team, and project-oriented learning are central to the institution’s pedagogy. For Erik Ehn, the dean of the School of Theater, the high value placed on interdisciplinarity makes CalArts especially equipped to tackle issues of social justice. “It takes interdisciplinarity to address social justice issues,” he says. “Social problems,” he explains, “are always a matrix […] there is no one problem that stands in isolation from anything else.”

The Community Arts Partnership (CAP) has mirrored these approaches, helping to make CalArts a vibrant and exciting place for community arts and a hotbed for innovations in civic-minded education. CAP links the university to the wider publics of Los Angeles County through free out-of-school and in-school arts programs. It originated in 1990 to address the lack of quality arts education in Los Angeles in the aftermath of Proposition 13 that froze property taxes and limited the amount of funds available to the public education system. Recent cutbacks “put California last place or very close to last place in spending on the arts in the schools,” Avila explains. Given this context, CAP and like-minded programs have taken on an increasingly important role in arts education.

CAP’s first and longest community partnership, Plaza de la Raza, continues to take kids on a year-round journey of intensive theater training. Working with a well-known writer each year, the young participants create a play based on issues of relevance to their own lives. In collaboration with Herbert Siguenza of Culture Clash, this year’s participants will produce a play about the Iraq War and the experiences of one Latino soldier and his family.

In recent years, CAP has expanded the focus on “out-of-school” initiatives to include “in-school” programs, such as ArtsCOOL, a partnership with the L.A. Unified School District Arts Education Branch. They have also initiated a creative writing program at a drop-in center for homeless youth that, according to Avila, becomes “a cathartic experience for many participants where, through writing, they sit down and sort out their experiences;” created a cost-free summer arts program for sophomore and junior high school students to actively encourage higher education; and adopted a scholarship program to increase the number of CAP participants that pursue college.

Ehn explained how the prevailing view of the arts in public education as “extracurricular” is like the ways in which some universities define social justice and community work as “ornamental.” “That is not the way we are trying to see it in the Institute,” he said. Through making community engage-
ment part of the required coursework, the Department of Theater, for example, seeks to place CAP within their curriculum rather than as an annex. Graduate student Ingrid Sydow supports such changes: “I feel that teaching through a campus-community partnered organization ought to be made a mandatory part of attending graduate school.”

Other initiatives reflect CalArts’ wider commitment to the idea that the arts and social justice are mutually constitutive. The university hosts an annual conference that invites people from around the world to consider socially meaningful and impactful ways of perpetuating the arts entitled “Artists for Social Justice: Arts in the One World.” For the past three years, Ehn has taken a group of students, faculty, and professionals to Rwanda and Uganda to study genocide and look at the ways the arts participate in recovery.

University of California, Irvine

UC Irvine is sandwiched between wealthy coastal communities to the south and economically diverse communities in the central and north regions, with high concentrations of Latinos and Asians. Of the university’s 20,000 undergraduate students, over half of them are Asian American, and many are immigrants or the children of immigrants, according to Linda Vo, associate professor of Asian American Studies.

Many of UCI’s campus-community partnerships engage this diversity in innovative and experimental ways. “What will work with the Latino population may not necessarily work with the Asian community,” said Vo. “We need to constantly evaluate how our programs incorporate the ethnic histories and experiences of the diverse communities we work with in our projects.”

For example, UCI’s K-12 outreach programs, such as Creative Connections, Global Connect, and Humanities Out There, take seriously the ethnic histories and experiences of the diverse communities they work with as they plan their curricula, Vo explains. Humanities Out There (affectionately known by its acronym “HOT”) is an educational partnership founded in 1997 between the School of Humanities and the Santa Ana Unified School District, in cooperation with the Center for Educational Partnerships and the California History-Social Science Project. HOT brings talented undergraduates into classrooms that usually have about 40 students, says Carrie Noland, associate professor of French and Italian. Each student, undergraduates to deans. For Noland, this event provided a space for a diverse group of people to share ideas and strategies on how to further “cultivate and sustain civic engagement programs and scholarship venues” on the UCI campus and in other areas of the country also undergoing dramatic demographic change.

University of California, Los Angeles

“We are very aware of being in Los Angeles,” says Chris Waterman, dean of the School of the Arts and Architecture at UCLA. He enthusiastically lists departments and centers that demonstrate UCLA’s embrace of the city’s rich cultural and ethnic diversity and commitment to civically engaged scholarship, including the department of World Arts and Cultures, the country’s oldest department of Ethnomusicology, the Art/Global Health Center, and the Art/Science Center and Lab. Of the numerous and varied projects that have emerged from these interdisciplinary programs and centers, only a few are featured here.

In one of UCLA’s most recent engaged

Continued on page 6
Imagining California
Continued from page 5

projects, choreographer and Professor of Dance Victoria Marks brings war veterans from Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan coping with post-traumatic stress disorder into regular conversation with students of dance. According to Marks, veterans and dance students have something in common: the emphasis on training and discipline. But at that point, she explains, “they could not be more different.” Through “action conversations,” veterans engage in a very embodied form of therapy, and learn something valuable from the artists. Artists also have something valuable to learn: “What good are artists,” she asks, “that float around on a little cloud of privilege? They need to understand how others, that are their same age, are experiencing the world.” Through two performances in early February, Marks and her collaborators invited audiences to consider the perspectives of those bodies that have experienced the war firsthand. In doing so, they explored a role of art in times of war and violence.

Also using art as a catalyst to political consciousness, performance artist and faculty member Dan Froot’s interdisciplinary project “Who’s Hungry?” calls attention to the food-insecure population of West Hollywood. Froot conducted extensive interviews with four of Los Angeles County’s nearly one million food-insecure adults. In collaboration with Dan Hurlin, Froot is adapting these oral histories into four short toy theater plays to be performed on miniature tabletop stages. He hopes to “tell the stories of those who deal with food-insecurity on a daily basis; stories that would otherwise not be told.” For Froot, toy theater provides an ideal medium. “It is the theatrical equivalent of sitting on two sides of the same table [...] the human scale and low tech really encourage human contact,” he explains. The four narrators, along with activist Frank Tamborello of the Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness, will join Froot and Hurlin for a discussion with the audience following the performances about theater, food insecurity, and homelessness.

UCLA is also home to a number of long-term projects including ArtsBridge, a network of university campuses that provides arts education to inner city youth and teachers with little to no access to these disciplines in their public schools. Amy Shimshon-Santo directs one of UCLA’s two ArtsBridge programs. Under her leadership, participating undergraduates gain valuable teaching experience through the creation of an original arts curriculum as well as insights into the challenges of arts education policies. Student-created curricula vary widely. One student’s curriculum, for example, uses dance as a tool to combat childhood obesity. This particular project has grown to include an advocacy component to increase the availability of fresh produce to families on WIC through collaboration with local farmers’ markets. Central to the program’s philosophy, as the above example illustrates, is working closely with community organizations. Talking with Shimshon-Santo, it becomes clear that the program’s significance has evolved well-beyond the goal of reviving the place of the arts in public education. It also acts as a bridge between the university and surrounding communities; helps develop innovative solutions to complex socio-political issues; provides youth forums for self-expression; and inspires teachers to draw on the arts as a tool for learning more generally.

Stanford University
Located about 30 miles from San Francisco in an area of great privilege at the edge of the Silicon Valley, Stanford University faces a unique set of challenges in promoting civically engaged scholarship. Practical issues, such as geography and time, become more formidable barriers than in other California universities. The lack of a good public transportation system makes it difficult to get students easily off campus. “To do this work you either have to do it right across the freeway where you can bike or you have to build a 45-minute commute into your courses to get to the community site,” explained Janice Ross, professor of drama. Tight academic schedules also limit the flexibility of many students interested in engaging in such work.

Since 1989, Stanford’s Haas Center has worked to find creative ways around these constraints to promote public service in academic study and strengthen ties to local communities. The Center has many programs that promote and support engaged work among undergraduates, including unique fellowship programs, coursework with public service components, and funding for original community-oriented research. This quarter, undergraduate fellowship programs range from sending students...
to African nations to work on development issues to philanthropy fellowships that place students directly in a foundation. The Center also provides students with resources to undertake original year-long research projects with at-risk-youth in the nearby East Palo Alto Bayshore community. Through making available weeklong intense saturation programs, such as alternative spring breaks, the Center makes public service possible around tight academic schedules. This year, there are thirteen alternative spring break trips offered, including one that focuses on art and activism in San Francisco. Students are major instigators of these programs. Increasingly, Ross reported, there is so much public service scholarship around the university that departments are hiring their own staff people to act as liaisons between community groups and the students who want to work with them.

Over the years, the Center has grown from providing financial inducements to faculty interested in creating courses in public service to helping forge a community where faculty “can sit and talk with other faculty doing this work.” Most recently, there has been a major push to extend these efforts into graduate education. “Something happens here when you get to graduate school; public service is not encouraged,” observed Ross. Concrete efforts are underway to institute civic engagement into Stanford’s graduate programs.

**University of California, Davis**

UC Davis is one of Imagining America’s newest consortium members, jesikah maria ross, director of Davis’s Art of Regional Change (ARC), explained how the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada often fall off the radar when many people think of the state’s problems. In spite of the sweeping socio-economic and environmental change that now engulfs the region, many people, according to ross, continue to think only of the urban and suburban areas on California’s coast. Several exciting initiatives have emerged on the UC Davis campus to “encourage scholars to turn their attention to the place where they live,” explained Carolyn Thomas de la Peña, director of the Davis Humanities Institute.

Under Peña’s direction, the Humanities Institute has recently engaged in a partnership with the Center for the Study of Regional Change in the School of Agriculture to take a more active role in community regional development projects. From this partnership has emerged an exciting pilot project called *Up from the UnderStory* that works with four rural communities of Northeastern Calaveras County in the Blue Mountain region of the Sierra Nevada, about a two-hour commute from Davis.

In 1999 and 2000, these communities came together in a series of visioning sessions to develop concrete measures to recover their livelihoods and overcome the despair and loss resulting from the economic collapse of the timber industry. Since then, these communities have established an outstanding youth center and created projects to set up a new forest economy based on sustainable practices. *Up from the UnderStory* trains local youth in a variety of media, including photography and blogging, to help them document the efforts underway to revitalize their communities and record the oral histories of elders to get a sense of the region’s broader history, explains the director of the Center for the Study of Regional Change, Jonathan London. ross hopes this project will help sustain the momentum resulting from the visioning sessions and build a bridge between the university and surrounding communities.

ross modestly referred to this project as a “learning laboratory” of sorts. But it establishes the beginning of a partnership across schools, builds vital trust with local communities, and, according to Peña, forms part of a broader effort to encourage scholars in the humanities “to take what they know and work with real people and real places.”

These initiatives are not without their challenges. Interdisciplinary work, while crucial to solving today’s most vexed social problems, comes with its own set of difficulties. “Trying to get faculty not connected to the region to suddenly care,” especially in a context where public scholarship is less rewarded, is also not easy, stated Peña. Establishing rapport and trust with community members is made more difficult by the long commute to rural areas. ross spoke enthusiastically about the institution’s nascent affiliation with Imagining America: “We are really looking forward to learning about and seeing what other people are doing to bring different colleges and disciplines together in community engagement work.”

![Dan Froot (left) and Dan Hurlin of UCLA working on “Burt,” one of four toy theater plays that constitute “Who’s Hungry?-West Hollywood.”](image)
The 2008 Imagining America National Conference: Los Angeles, California

Imagining America invites faculty, students, administrators, and community partners to participate in the 2008 Annual Imagining America National Conference, October 2-4, in Los Angeles, hosted by the Center for Diversity and Democracy at the University of Southern California. The conference theme is “Public Engagement in a Diverse America: Layers of Place, Movements of People.” Our discussions will focus on the multiple and mobile intersections of peoples, places, and disciplines that shape the work of public engagement. We are delighted to announce that visual artist/muralist extraordinaire Judy Baca, who has a long history of working with art toward social justice goals, will be our keynote speaker.

Los Angeles is the ideal site for these conversations, as a world city that attracts and reconfigures people, culture, ideas, and capital from across the globe. It is an urban center, an overlapping convergence of local communities and landscapes - spatial and imagined, urban and suburban, cultural and commercial, racial, ethnic, and generational, religious and ideological, agricultural and preserved wilderness. These layers of place and populations create multi-textured, intersecting, and contested meaning. How do colleges and universities relate to these layers of local life? How do scholars and artists respond to the displacement of peoples and sites resulting from the “development” of the university, college, city, or town? What role do public scholars and artists play in political and cultural conversations about the meaning of demographic, racial, and ethnic change within rapidly changing communities of all sizes? How does scholarship in the arts and humanities serve as a bridge between colleges and universities and the local, national, and global communities in which they reside? How might collaborations between scholars in the humanities and the arts contribute to public discussion of demographic, social, and political change?

Each of the three days of the conference will be distinct. On the morning of Thursday, October 2, Cornerstone Theater will hold a special workshop for IA participants on their community-based theater methodology. In the afternoon, participants may choose from three sessions: one on Public Humanities, another on neighborhood design projects in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and the third, Voices from the Cultural Battlefront, offering an opportunity to meet with local artists and activists (see adjoining article). The two workshops will give participants practical strategies for developing public hu-

Voices from the Cultural Battlefront: Organizing for Equity

On Wednesday, October 1 and Thursday, October 2, a special convening of Voices from the Cultural Battlefront will be held in conjunction with Imagining America’s national conference. Voices from the Cultural Battlefront is an ongoing 20-year international conversation about the role of art and culture in the struggle for human rights, including social justice, cultural equity, and a healthy natural environment. Hundreds of activists, from all seven continents and representing a variety of fields (including education, art, health, and youth services), have participated in these conversations. This special convening was purposely planned to coincide with Imagining America’s conference to bring two interested parties together: those practicing engaged forms of cultural scholarship in institutions of higher education with practitioners in the arts and cultural fields. Conference attendees are invited to come a day early to participate in this special meeting, or join for any part of the two-day convening they can.

The topic of the two-day convening is the effects of unrestricted global mobility of capital on local, national, and international community life. On Wednesday, October 1, participants will use the lens of this economic analysis to explore the complexities of Los Angeles, with local artists and activists, at a neighborhood center committed to social justice. The two sessions on this day will provide an excellent opportunity to learn about the area not as a tourist, but from the ground up. On Thursday, October 2, in a session during the main conference, participants will analyze how they see hyper-capitalism in their own communities, including a discussion of the role that universities and colleges play.

The forums have been convened by a core group of U.S. artists and community organizers, including Marta Moreno Vega, Dudley Cocke, Olga Garay, Kalamu ya Salaam, Sonia BasSheva Mañjon, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Amalia Mesa-Bains, Tonya Fonellla Frichner, Peter Pennekamp, Claudine Brown, E’Vonne Coleman, Caron Atlas, and Jack (John Kuo Wei) Tchen. Younger conveners of the dialogue include Jamie Haft, Carlton Turner, Nick Szuberla, and Maurice Turner.

The book, Voices from the Battlefront: Achieving Cultural Equity (Africa World Press, 1993), documents the spirit and thinking of the early convenings, especially the two international conferences, “Cultural Diversity Based on Cultural Grounding,” hosted by the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute in New York City in 1989 and 1991. In 2007 and 2008, Voices from the Cultural Battlefront forums were held in New York City, NY; New Orleans, LA; Amherst, MA; and Asheville, NC.

For more information, e-mail jmhaft@syr.edu or visit www.culturalbattlefront.net.
Peer Reviewed Journals

While civically engaged scholarship flourishes in universities across the country, publication venues for it are relatively few compared to those for traditional arts and humanities scholarship. Tenure and promotion still largely depend on peer reviewed publication. Fortunately, a few peer reviewed journals in civic engagement and higher education now offer a venue for publication.

Such venues, however, confront a unique set of challenges worth exploring as we seek new ways to promote and support public scholarship. These include securing adequate funding, diversifying potential contributors and readers, and developing forms of publication accessible and useful to both academic and non-academic partners.

Peer reviewed journals in civic engagement and higher education have difficulties identifying a cohesive group of contributors and readers. Thus garnering the resources necessary for “start-up” and publicizing is harder than for conventional academic journals. Carving out a potential market, not trivial in an academic environment where subsidies are scarce, is especially challenging for these journals because potential readers and contributors cut across so many disciplinary and area study divisions. While traditional academic journals can count on departmental subscriptions, the audience for community-based scholarship is more diffuse and transdisciplinary. “Usually,” Stephen Parks, editor of the peer reviewed journal Reflections, explained, “only one or two people per department are interested in the field.” Some journals are compelled to develop innovative ways to reach out and appeal to unexpected contributors and audiences, including those academics who may not self-identify as “public scholars.”

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shared political and social commitments do not render invisible the differences in power, discourse, and values that often underlie such relationships. The editorial staff of these journals develops creative ways to bridge the gap between academically-trained faculty and community practitioners, and in ways that push the boundaries of academics as usual.

In the following sketches, we feature three journals grappling with these challenges. What unites them is their emphasis on “process” and a commitment to producing a finished form that seeks to be equally meaningful to all partners.

Journal of Higher Education, Outreach, and Engagement

We begin with the Journal of Higher Education, Outreach, and Engagement (JHEOE) because of its historic role in advancing outreach and engagement in higher education. Continued on page 10
Community Arts Convening and Research Project

The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) hosted a convening in March 2008 that brought together faculty, students, and community-based practitioners to discuss and document the current state of community arts; share insights from their experiences in campus-community projects; and establish an action plan to further develop the field within and beyond the academy. One of their goals was to bring together diverse participants to discuss issues critical to the future of community arts, such as the most appropriate way to present and disseminate research findings. The convening was organized into four major themes: critical pedagogy in the academy, campus-community partnerships, community practices, and community arts and artists. MICA, with support from the Nathan Cummings Foundation, will publish a series of texts that address these themes on the Community Arts Network (CAN) web site as well as on the project’s site, www.mica.edu/communityartsconvening.

The collection of articles that emerges may not take the final form of a “journal” per se. The format is a topic for discussion, according to Ken Krafchek, one of the conference’s organizers. “Academic journals usually gravitate to a certain language. This can be problematic because community arts is such a diverse field that stretches across communities and across the world,” Krafchek explained. “What should the way of communicating be for this diverse group? Maybe we need to rethink the construct of what a journal should be.”

Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Community Literacy, and Service Learning

Reflections, a peer reviewed journal that provides a forum for scholarship on writing, service learning, and community literacy, brings together an array of voices to reflect upon the theoretical, ethical, and political implications of community-based writing and civic engagement. According to Stephen Parks, the journal’s new editor, when Reflections was first created it focused primarily on the pragmatic issues involved in doing public-engaged scholarship, such as dealing with the Institutional Review Board (IRB). As the field has evolved, however, so has the breadth of topics the journal broaches and the range of written forms it includes. While the journal has historically taken the form of a series of field reports, today one will find a range of written and visual forms, including poetry, prose, and theoretical reflection, and more diverse voices than previously featured.

Upcoming editions of Reflections will focus on highly politicized national events: Katrina (Spring 2008), the Iraq War and the peace movement (Fall 2008), and immigration (Spring 2009). These themes point to incisive crises in community that have compelled otherwise non-political scholars to bring non-partisan views into their classrooms to educate, Parks explained. Parks hopes these foci broaden the range of community engagement that the journal features. In Summer 2008, the journal will feature an issue devoted to the perspectives and experiences of graduate students and untenured faculty committed to civically engaged scholarship. This issue will explore how the next generation of scholars imagine and practice “community literacy,” “engaged scholarship,” and “service learning.” The Summer 2009 issue will include a collection of theoretical reflections on what conceptually informs community-oriented scholarship and meditates on the work of scholars as neighbors, community members, and citizens. For additional information about submissions, visit http://reflections.syr.edu or contact Editor Stephen Parks at sparks@syr.edu.

Peer Reviewed Journals continued from page 9

tion and its remarkable ability to grow and evolve as the field changes. Since 1996, JHEOE has sought “to serve as a forum to promote continuing dialogue about the service and outreach mission of the University” (JHEOE, 2007). More recently, editor Melvin Hill, in collaboration with a group of scholars and associates, initiated discussions to evaluate and reassess the journal’s objectives, format, and strategies.

“A prolonged discussion about the past and future of the journal resulted in a number of recommendations, most of which were adopted,” explained Hiram Fitzgerald, one of JHEOE’s associate editors. Recommendations ranged from shifting the journal completely to a peer reviewed format to expanding its market visibility in order to increase subscriptions and diversify submissions. As a result, JHEOE has taken on new associate editors that represent a broad range of disciplines and begun implementing changes in the publication’s content, tone, and format.

This new approach, Fitzgerald explained, is an attempt to “appeal more broadly across disciplines to individuals whose work is community based and outcome focused.”

Past submissions, while of extremely high quality, have focused more heavily on program descriptions than program evaluations (qualitative or quantitative), according to Fitzgerald. The journal is now working to diversify its content to include more evaluative, reflective, and theoretical pieces. JHEOE is calling for submissions in four areas: research and conceptual/philosophical articles; practice stories from the field; reflective essays and reviews; and book reviews of literature that address community-higher education engagement in the practice of public scholarship. For more information, visit http://www.uga.edu/the/jheoe.html.
The Curriculum Project

The Curriculum Project began early in 2007, when three colleagues—artistic director of Appalachia’s Roadside Theater Dudley Cocke, then-NYU professor Jan Cohen-Cruz, and writer and consultant Arlene Goldbard—compared notes from their combined experience with higher education-based programs for community artists. (Download “A Call for Excellence” from the Curriculum Project pages of the IA web site for a full description of their observations.) They recognized a unique moment of opportunity: more people were writing and documenting practice; universities across the U.S. had created dozens of individual courses, certificates, and degree programs in some aspect of community cultural development; growing numbers of students were interested in this work; and increasingly, social justice activists were bringing cultural awareness into their efforts, understanding the relationship between culture, community development, and social change.

They proposed to research current practice and future potentials for excellence in community artists’ education. Jan became director of Imagining America and offered IA as a home for the project. In the fall of 2007, the Nathan Cummings Foundation agreed to underwrite this first phase of project work. At the end of 2007, three advisors joined the team: Ludovic Blain III, an experienced organizer who currently serves as national campaign coordinator for the Marguerite Casey Foundation’s Equal Voice for America’s Families Campaign; Jamie Haft, a recent graduate of New York University who also works as project administrator; and Sonia BasSheva Mañon, executive director of the Center for Art and Public Life at California College of the Arts, who recently accepted the newly created position of vice president of diversity and strategic partnerships at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut.

The Project’s first phase, now underway, focuses on research: compiling educational materials such as syllabi and course descriptions, gathering stakeholders’ assessment of the current situation, and engaging people in thinking about the best approaches to community cultural development education through thirty in-depth interviews with some of the field’s national leaders and an online survey. Taking stock at this important moment of growth, the investigators ask: how are we educating community arts practitioners? How could training in this field be deepened, strengthened, made more effective? What is needed to effectively embody the field’s commitments to scholarship, training, and community engagement? What is needed to support those doing good work and assist those who want to develop new, excellent educational programs in community cultural development?

Findings will be shared with the widest possible group of interested educators, artists, organizers, students, and recent alumni, funders, and other friends of the field. The final report on this phase of the Project, to be released in September and discussed at Imagining America’s October conference, will inaugurate an implementation phase, when those who care about community cultural development can take part in dialogues, exchange information, and together disseminate this work.

The Curriculum Project Glossary

In keeping with this issue’s feature on keywords, what follows are some of the terms central to The Curriculum Project. (For a more complete list see The Curriculum Project glossary on IA’s website.) Many of these definitions are drawn from Arlene Goldbard’s New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development (New Village Press, 2006).

Community describes a unit of social organization based on some distinguishing characteristic or affinity: proximity (“the Cambridge community”), belief (“the Jewish community”), ethnicity (“the Latino community”), profession (“the medical community”), or orientation (“the gay community”). The word’s meaning becomes more concrete closer to the ground: “the gay, Jewish, academic community of Cambridge” probably describes a group of people who have a passing chance of being acquainted, whereas many of the more general formulations are ideological assertions. Raymond Williams describes community in Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society (Oxford University Press, 1976) as:

...relationships or the warmly persuasive word to describe an alternative set of relationships. What is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organization (state, nation, society, etc.) it seems never to be used unfavorably and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term.

In the context of community cultural development, “community” describes a dynamic process or characteristic. There is general recognition that to be more than an ideological assertion, the bonds of community must be consciously, perpetually renewed. In contrast, a network is a much looser form of association.

Community Cultural Development (CCID) describes a range of initiatives undertaken by artists in collaboration with other community members to express identity, concerns, and aspirations through the arts and communications media, while building the capacity for social action and contributing to social change. The Curriculum Project uses this term because it encompasses key elements of the practice: community, culture, and development.

Community Engagement describes the internships, field placements, and campus-community projects that are part of many community cultural development education programs. We use the term to indicate reciprocal, mutually respective working relationships among students, faculty, and community partners.

Community Organizing is the process of bringing people together to act on their common interests. In The Curriculum Project,
this term describes activities that seek social justice and cultural democracy. The goal of such community organizing is to create social movements, helping to build a base of common concerns and aspirations, and to mobilize community members to act in concert.

Culture in its broadest anthropological sense includes all that is fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived, or directed by human beings, as opposed to what is given in nature. Culture includes both material elements (buildings, artifacts, etc.) and immaterial ones (ideology, value systems, languages). Culture encompasses the distinctive spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and material traditions and features of a people or society.

Development (with its many subsets such as “economic development,” “community development,” and “cultural development”) describes a process of analyzing the resources and needs of a particular community or social sector, then planning and implementing a program of interlocking initiatives to rectify deficiencies and build on strengths. The community cultural development field stresses participatory, self-directed development strategies, where members of a community define their own aims and determine their own paths to reach them, rather than imposed development, which tends to view communities as problems to be solved by bringing circumstances in line with predetermined norms.

Social Justice is a social goal: a society in which justice is achieved in every sphere, including economic, political, and cultural. Those who pursue social justice seek fair distribution of social goods, such as equal access to opportunity, equal standing before the law, equal voice in determining society’s direction, and equal standing in social and cultural institutions, regardless of cultural heritage, race, gender, disability, education, or class. The term is used in The Curriculum Project to describe the commitments to pluralism, participation, and equity that motivate much community cultural development work.

A New Page for PAGE
We wish to honor the outgoing director of the PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) Program, Sylvia Gale. At the IA conference held at the University of Pennsylvania in 2004, a group of like-minded graduate students gathered together for informal discussions, and determined to organize further. They unanimously elected Sylvia as their leader, who was then a doctoral student in English at the University of Texas at Austin. Sylvia took up the challenge, and identified key needs of graduate students at the beginning of their careers as public scholars: mentorship, publication opportunities, and the ability to assess and discuss their own work. Day-long PAGE Summits, conference workshops sponsored by PAGE, and mentorship opportunities are only a few of the innovations she brought to the program. Every year, Sylvia has presented her “wish list” for the PAGE program to IA leadership, and her eloquence, clarity of thought, and foresight have made her a most persuasive representative. In 2005, Sylvia joined the Imagining America National Advisory Board, where the same characteristics have ensured that the concerns and needs of graduate students were never forgotten during Board conversations and debate.

Our loss is the academy’s gain: Sylvia will soon lose her status as a graduate student and join the doctorate. She is currently on a University Continuing Fellowship from the University of Texas at Austin, and will defend her dissertation, entitled “Rhetoric at Work: Language Arts Education and American Vocationalism, 1820-1920,” this fall. On top of her service to IA and the research and teaching of her graduate program, Sylvia served as Community Programs Coordinator for the UT Humanities Institute from 2003-2007, where she launched and implemented public humanities programs that serve constiuencies within and beyond the University’s walls. These programs include the city-wide life-writing initiative and anthology Writing Austin’s Lives (the Mayor’s Book Club pick of 2004); the Community Sabbatical Program, which grants area non-profit employees sabbaticals during which they research a problem relevant to their organization and the people it serves, with the aid of UT faculty members; and the Free Minds Project, a free, two-semester college-level humanities seminar for adults in Austin who face financial barriers and have never been to college.

While the PAGE program will miss her sorely, Sylvia will continue as a National Advisory Board Member. We thank her for her dedication, her warmth, and, on behalf of her fellow graduate students, for her “wish lists” as well.
The “Life Cycle” of a Public Scholar:
Publicly Active Graduate Education in Context

In the four years that I have served as director of Imagining America’s Publicly Active Graduate Education initiative, I have had the privilege of meeting and working closely with the more than forty graduate students from around the country who have been selected for our annual PAGE Fellows program—and of reading applications from and interacting with literally hundreds more.

I have learned that graduate students tend to define themselves—and their professional trajectories—in ways that exceed and expand the pathways our departments most often lay before us. What does it mean, then, to think of ourselves as “publicly active” scholars? How does this identity fit, or not fit, within the parameters of our graduate education? What are the challenges and successes we face in integrating our public work with our academic scholarship? We’ve invited several former PAGE fellows to address those questions, and our answers, included below, indicate some of our common wishes and values.

—Sylvia Gale, Department of English, University of Texas at Austin
PAGE Director

As a graduate student, I have been less interested in establishing an identity as a “publicly active scholar” (still somewhat of an empty signifier) than in constituting and engaging various publics in my own scholarly practice. It has been productive for me to conceive of this practice through a rubric developed in the history of black British cultural studies, a collaborative scholarly formation engaged as much in theorizing as in intervening in the discrepant, contingent, and contested processes of representation that link practical politics to public culture.

At the University of Washington (an institution incredibly supportive of such work), I have found two fellow graduate students, Georgia Roberts and Anoop Mirpuri, who are extraordinary and inspiring collaborators. Together we have conceived and executed a multi-form public project, Public Rhetorics and Permanent War (PRPW), whose aim has been to diagnose and intervene in the current wartime conjuncture through various context-specific linkages of scholarly work with the work of activists and artists alike. Under this heading, we’ve partnered with organizations both on and off campus to stage numerous public lectures and small seminars with culture workers from Suheir Hammad to Angela Davis; we’ve convened two team-taught undergraduate courses and a graduate/faculty research cluster; we’re publishing interviews with Derek Gregory and Van Jones in scholarly journals, and are currently composing our own collaborative essay; and Georgia continues to conduct a reading group at a regional prison. While these efforts have informed our own individual research and teaching agendas (making PRPW institutionally legible through the conventional criteria of the syllabus, conference presentation, dissertation chapter, and journal article), I hope PRPW has, in some small way, participated in reshaping the imaginative geographies of collaborative cultural studies broadly conceived.

—Keith P. Feldman, Department of English, University of Washington, 2006 PAGE Fellow

Being a publicly active scholar means that I put theory into practice. It means that I have something in common—other than a body of knowledge or a degree—with other scholars. It helps me form relationships across race, class, and economic lines. It is a context for others to understand the nature of my work. I study and teach theatre arts. To me, theatre is innately political and must always be public, so the intersection of performance and public scholarship came very naturally to my work. However, as I quickly learned in my graduate program, this concept of theatre is not held by all. As a graduate student, my public scholarship was kept very separate from most of my coursework. I did not receive or ask for any course credit or financial reward for my work in the community.

When I first conceived of my dissertation topic, I was unaware of the breadth of scholarship regarding publicly active scholarship and the ways in which my research could apply to this emerging field of study! In retrospect, my greatest regret is that I did not structure my dissertation around public scholarship.

—Judy Bauerlein, Assistant Professor of Theatre, California State University, San Marcos, 2005 PAGE Fellow and 2007 Returning Fellow

I currently teach a service-learning course. My students learn about writing through the nonfiction of incarcerated writers, volunteers, and correctional officers. Then we step back and learn about the prison industrial complex. Finally, we go into a prison that is a twenty-minute drive from campus. There we work on essay-writing with incarcerated writers who are working towards their GEDs. With the help of a local radio station, we produce radio segments and discuss our work on public radio.

As a publicly active scholar, I spend my time teaching this course and writing my dissertation on funding for writing projects during the New Deal Era. These days, the state spends more on the prison system than it does on its public university system. State funding incarcerates people on one hand, while state funding educates people on the other, and research tells us that education drastically reduces repeated incarceration. In other words, through the state prison and the state university, state funding can be used against state funding. “Public scholarship” is one name for this contradiction; the use of state funding as the material basis for conflict among institutions.

—Ray Hsu, English, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2007 PAGE Fellow

Continued on page 14
Publicly Active Graduate Education in Context

Continued from page 13

Following in the footsteps of cultural studies practitioners like Stuart Hall and Angela McRobbie, I believe that theory needs practice and that practice must be made meaningful to communities. To me, this is publicly active scholarship. One’s work affects how this concept is interpreted and applied. In my case, my research and scholarship on women’s comic performances aims to bring visibility to and recognition of the myriad ways minoritarian (sexual, racial, or otherwise) communities utilize humor: to edify and instruct, to soothe a rankled spirit and offer temporary respite from otherwise difficult living conditions, to share and bond with others from the same community, to make connections and find similarities between communities, to advance social/political issues important to the performer(s), and to construct the local cultural history of communities.

In my experience, the academy encourages the important work of voluntarism, philanthropy and coalition-building that foments publicly active scholarship. But the demands placed on students, staff, and faculty are so time-consuming that we can accomplish only a fraction of what is needed or possible and typically with little campus support. Yet, the university as an institution (and a business) is quite self-congratulatory about the real action that takes place on and off campus vis-à-vis the organizing efforts of enterprising students, faculty, and staff. I have attended university events lauding the community service of students, using their service as means of commendation for the department, except those events, programs, and projects never saw a penny from administrative or departmental budgets nor attendance from

PAGE EVENTS

Call for Abstracts
The Graduate School Press at Syracuse University, in cooperation with Imagining America’s Publicly Active Graduate Education (PAGE) program, invites submissions for an edited volume on publicly engaged scholarship, to be published by the Graduate School Press and distributed by Syracuse University Press. We invite contributions from graduate students, faculty, and administrators.

This resource is intended, on one hand, to document the pathways to engaged graduate education taken by graduate students from institutions around the country, and, on the other hand, to provide theoretical and practical reflections on how graduate degree programs might be transformed in order to better foster engaged scholarship. The collection will help make the existing work of engaged graduate education more visible, and will be of value to students, to their faculty advisors, and to faculty and administrators constructing and adapting graduate programs that foster engaged scholarship.

Abstracts should be 500 words or less, and should be submitted by Monday, June 2, 2008. Invitations to write papers for the publication will be sent out on June 23, 2008. Invited authors will be asked to complete and submit their essays (between 3,000 and 4,000 words) no later than September 1, 2008.

Please direct submissions and inquiries to: Craig Martin, The Graduate School Press, cmartin01@syr.edu.

Call for Applications: 2008 PAGE Fellows and Returning PAGE Fellows
Imagining America invites graduate students in the arts, humanities, and design with a demonstrated interest in public engagement to apply to be PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) Fellows at Imagining America’s 2008 national conference. Fellows will attend a day long “PAGE Summit” on Thursday, October 2nd at the Davidson Executive Center at the University of Southern California devoted to building the theoretical and practical language with which to articulate their own public scholarship; will attend the general conference sessions; will have an opportunity for individual mentorship with leaders in the field of public cultural practice; and will be invited to participate in the conference’s poster session on Friday, October 5.

Graduate students at all stages of their M.A./M.F.A./Ph.D. programs are eligible to be PAGE Fellows. Eligibility extends to graduated students up to two years after they have received their degree. For more information about the Fellows program, and for application instructions, visit www.imaginingamerica.org/PAGE.html. The deadline for new fellow applications is July 1, 2008 and for returning fellows is July 14, 2008. Please contact Robin Goettel, Assistant Director, Imagining America at rgoette@syr.edu with any questions.

Graduate Student Forum on Public Scholarship
The Syracuse University Graduate School and Imagining America recently piloted a half-day workshop/forum for faculty, administrators, and graduate students who have significant experiences and/or interest in public scholarship. If you would like to offer a similar workshop, please contact Nisha Gupta, associate director, Office of Professional Development Programs at The Graduate School, ngupta@syr.edu, or Robin Goettel, Assistant Director, Imagining America, rgoette@syr.edu, for further information.

If you would like to be added to the PAGE listserve or have questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact Chelsea Cramer at cocramer@syr.edu.
faculty or staff.

I truly believe that the academy can become (and in some cases is already becoming) the bastion of service learning that it already claims to be. Initial progress can be made simply by earmarking funds for community-oriented projects generated by students, faculty, and staff. Students should be able to receive course credits for developing and launching said projects and this should be a required component for most majors, not a side-project that only a handful of students have the time or wherewithal to pursue; likewise, faculty supervision of these projects should count towards annual teaching requirements. This will foster a civic sensibility in students, provide enriching service learning experiences, and prepare them for the real job market. Faculties are routinely assured job stability if they can bring in large grants, placing the burden onto those already stretched dangerously thin. Instead, university budgets must include funds for the personnel needed to research, apply, and secure grants for individual faculty or departments. We also need to start integrating concepts and terms like "publicly active scholarship" and "public cultural work" into core curriculum, negotiating its meaning, purpose, and potential in each respective discipline. Ideally, this would take place in primary and secondary schools along with institutions of higher learning. I want these changes so students can begin to understand the importance of investing in their communities and the future of this nation, so faculty have more time to dedicate to the important work of education and research, so we can generate and—more importantly—bring to fruition the seeds of publicly active scholarship.

—Rebecca Krefting, American Studies, University of Maryland, 2007 PAGE Fellow

As my own professional trajectory takes me out of “graduate student” status (and out of the PAGE Director position) I’ll go ahead and risk a few blanket pronouncements. Publicly active graduate students are bold; we are unwilling to believe that an administrative no (as in, “no, there’s no funding for that position you just proposed”) means no. Publicly active graduate students are flexible; we explore and work within multiple forms, media, and genres beyond the traditional scholarly article (exhibits, radio dramas, syllabi, theatrical productions, zines, blogs, etc.). Publicly active graduate students are committed to interdisciplinarity (we ask: What is needed here? Where are my resources? Who are my partners?), to transparency, and to accountability. We are aware of the larger contexts in which our institutions are positioned, and we are determined to keep our ethical commitments to the individuals and communities with whom we work front and center.

—Sylvia Gale, University of Texas at Austin Department of English

New PAGE Leadership Team

Kevin Bott is the newly appointed PAGE Director. In 2006, Bott was a PAGE Fellow and in 2007, he served on the PAGE Fellowship Selection Committee. Kevin is a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Theatre at New York University and also an adjunct professor. His research focuses on how applied and improvisational theater can be used to generate important dialogue and significant relationships for those with a stake in breaking the cycle of despair created by incarceration and prisoner reentry in New York State. He uses drama as a medium towards eradicating the debilitating stigma of conviction and incarceration to build bridges and redefine the idea of community. In the summer of 2007, Bott was co-founder and co-director of the NYU pilot study abroad program in Gulu, Uganda and facilitated the Inmate Theatre Exchange at Gulu Regional Prison.

Lisa Thornhill is the new PAGE Associate Director. Lisa has been a PAGE Fellow for the past three years and co-organized the PAGE Institute at our 2007 national conference. Her participation with IA has helped her connect her scholarly and community interests and rethink her dissertation project, which places language/immigration policies in dialogue with everyday writ-ings of those they treat as policy objects, in particular Chicanos/as. Lisa received her B.A. in English at University of Texas and her M.A. in English Literature at Texas State University. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in English Literature and Languages at the University of Washington. Her dissertation is entitled “Nationhood and Contested Hegemonies: The Rhetoric of Benevolence in Americanization Movements and its Contestation in Chicano/a Texts.”

Adam Bush joins the PAGE Team as Assistant Director. Adam received a B.A. in Psychology from Columbia College and an M.A. in the History of Consciousness Department at the University of California Santa Cruz. Currently, Adam is pursuing his Ph.D. at University of Southern California in the American Studies and Ethnicity Department. His research stems from jazz studies and the role of cultural production in community movements and political change. His writing explores the history of education, travel narratives, social documentation, subversive art, oral history, and memory in African American culture. He is the director of Experiential Education for seven Rhode Island public high schools where he designs and coordinates oral history research travel programs that allow students to experience history through active research.

Chelsea O. Cramer is the new PAGE Project Coordinator of Publications and Communications, a position created this year. Chelsea received her undergraduate degree in art from California State University Northridge in 2005. She is a proactive artist and educator whose passions in art and working with children have led to pursue a teaching career. She is currently pursuing her masters degree in Art Education at Syracuse University. A native of upstate New York, Chelsea is an artist in residence through the Roots and Wings initiative at Syracuse University. She is painting portraits of Syracuseans honored by the Spirit of Lantern Awards and is coordinating and instructing an after school art program at Bellevue Elementary School.
2008 Critical Exchange Grant Winners

Imagining America is pleased to announce the winners of the 2008 Critical Exchange Grants. These $2000 grants support visits of faculty, staff, and students between IA member institutions to help develop programs, build regional collaborations, or jump-start engaged cultural work on campuses. In this second year of the awards, Imagining America is supporting a graduate student-led initiative for an urban design project, a symposium on public humanities leading to a publication of essays, a workshop to strategize fundraising for a pilot project, and enhancements of IA Regional Meetings.

The following six projects received Critical Exchange Grants:

- The University of Alabama’s Creative Campus Initiative, for its exchange with Ohio State University’s Humanities Institute. Leaders from the two campuses will visit each other to learn more about their large-scale projects on community engagement and curricular innovation. The University of Alabama plans to use the knowledge acquired to advance and modify an emerging cultural arts plan for downtown Tuscaloosa.

- The University at Albany-SUNY, for its continued work on the Institute on Critical Climate Change (IC3), a collaboration with the University at Buffalo-SUNY. The award will support a one-day joint workshop with teams from the two universities to map out a fundraising plan to endow a permanent Institute with public funds and private foundation money.

- The University at Buffalo’s Interdisciplinary Group for Social Engagement, a graduate student association, for its production of a video documenting the Connective Corridor project at Syracuse University. The group will show the video at a community symposium they will host in Buffalo, and will invite leaders from the Syracuse Connective Corridor project to give a joint presentation there.

- The University of Iowa, to bring University of Michigan faculty members Julie Ellison and Matthew Countryman to campus to participate in the 2008-09 Obermann Humanities Symposium, “Minding the Gap: ‘Private’ Scholars and Public Scholarship.” Ellison and Countryman will speak at the symposium and serve as consultants at an internal structural planning meeting for public scholarship with senior University leadership.

- The University of Pennsylvania, to support visits to local sites of public practice and public art by participants in an IA Regional Meeting. Their visits around Philadelphia will be part of their discussion of the academic integration and use of public space.

- The University of Washington, Bothell, and the University of Oregon, to support travel for a meeting of regional IA member institutions in Portland. Their participation is intended to establish a framework to explore the development of regional collaboration in the Northwest, to be launched during the 2008-2009 academic year.

“I am particularly excited to see how the ideas behind these grants have taken root,” says IA associate director Juliet Feibet.

“Seeds that were planted a year or two ago, at an IA conference or during a previous IA exchange, are beginning to bear fruit, and we’re proud to support that growth.”

The selection committee for the Critical Exchange Grant Program included Dave Barry, executive director, Community College Humanities Association (CCHA), and professor of history, Essex County College, Newark, NJ.; Ellen Kraly, director, Upstate Institute, Colgate University; and Jan Cohen-Cruz, director, Imagining America.

The Critical Exchange Grants will be offered again next year. Applicants must be from current member institutions to be eligible for these funds. Independent of this grant program, all member campuses continue to be eligible for site visits from Imagining America leadership and participation in regional meetings.

### Imagining America National Advisory Board

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>David Scobey</td>
<td>Board Chairman, Director, Haverford Center for Community Partnerships, and Professor, Bates College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sylvia Gale</td>
<td>Community Programs Coordinator, University of Texas at Austin, and Imagining America Project Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Mitchell</td>
<td>Adjunct Professor, University of Connecticut</td>
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<td>Cathryn Newton</td>
<td>Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Syracuse University</td>
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<tr>
<td>George Sanchez</td>
<td>Director, Center for Diversity and Democracy, University of Southern California</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jay Semel</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Research and Director, Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, University of Iowa</td>
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Carole Lester
Dean of Instruction, Academic Enrichment, Richland College

Ira Harkavy
Associate Vice President and Director, Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania

Glodstone “Flukey” Hutchinson
Professor, Economics, Lafayette College

Judith Russi Kirshner
Dean, College of Architecture and the Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago

Pam Korza
Co-Director, Animating Democracy Initiative, Americans for the Arts

16 **Imagining America:** Artists and Scholars in Public Life
IA Keywords: An Introduction

In Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society (1976), literary and social thinker Raymond Williams went beyond defining words seminal to his field—for example, art, democracy, and society—to examining their cultural context. Recently, a collaborative book and cyber forum, Keywords for American Cultural Studies, designed by Glenn Henders and Bruce Burgett and issued by New York University Press, offers new and dynamic formats in which scholars can explore the keywords commonly used in cultural studies (http://depts.washington.edu/keywords). Inspired by these projects, Imagining America is devoting space in upcoming newsletters to terms vital to conversations currently taking place among public scholars and artists. In upcoming newsletters, we will feature short interviews with scholars on a single phrase such as “public scholarship,” “participatory democracy,” and “community cultural development.”

We begin with “artistic citizenship.” The term citizenship exists in contested uses. Most commonly, it entails a relationship between the individual and the state, where the former exchanges loyalty to the latter for certain benefits regulated by a national government. Yet over the past thirty years, the rights implied in citizenship have dramatically shrunk; the basket of goods promised with citizenship is significantly smaller than in the past. Moreover, considering the restrictions on legal citizenship since 911, many believe the word has lost its resonance with democratic belonging and responsibility. Lively discussions have emerged inside and outside the academy to debate citizenship’s legal and political dimensions and engage its subjective and contradictory experiences. These discussions have been paramount for artists and scholars seeking new ways to intervene in the world on behalf of greater inclusiveness.

What do we as publicly engaged artists and scholars mean by “artistic citizenship”? What commitments are embedded in engaging with the world as both artists and citizens? As artists move away from self-identifying as free, autonomous agents and envision themselves as belonging to and accountable to particular communities, these questions become crucial.

To get at the relevance of “citizenship” for artists, we spoke with Randy Martin of New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, co-editor of the book Artist Citizenship: A Public Voice for the Arts (2006). Martin explains how the idea of the artist as belonging to a “public of one” is no longer a viable self-understanding. Instead, he explains how artists are uniquely positioned to become new kinds of citizens, not necessarily answering to a national government, but rather to the ever-widening publics—often global in reach—of which they are a part. While artists have produced works (such as national monuments) that contribute to national solidarity, they have also been continually subject to state suspicion, especially in association with subversive cultural or political acts. As such, artists have been afforded a “minority status” that has allowed them “to serve as a voice of marginal cultures” (Martin 2006: 11). Realizing and seizing this status, according to Martin, comes with opportunities to participate in civic life in new, critical ways—what he calls artistic citizenship. What does this citizenship entail and what role can it play in fostering a democratic, just society? Martin sees artists’ unique access to the public sphere as an important starting point. Public art in particular is full of possibility: a place where different voices can come together and create new visions of society.

Martin envisions the production of artist-citizenship beginning with shifts in at least three different arenas. First, he believes that cultivating civically minded artists must begin with their training and thus requires a re-evaluation of the ideas and values that underlie art school: “If artist-citizenship is to be part of the educational process, initial curriculum changes will need to happen.” In the Tisch School for the Arts at New York University, for example, Martin has helped develop an essay-based curriculum where young artists and scholars are encouraged to develop their “own public voice” and reflect on the place of art in the contemporary world. Second, professional artists must approach their work from a more holistic perspective. They must not only assess the political implications and social significance of their art, but also critically consider its audience, distribution, sources of funding, and other dimensions of artist work de-politicized in other contexts. Finally, artistic citizenship entails embracing what it means to be a part of and beholden to an artistic community. These affiliations can, according to Martin, provide forums through which we can not only redress exploitative relationships but also “share more meaningfully in public debate and conversation.” “Citizenship,” Martin affirms, “is no longer the property of progressive politics.” As it is “now safely used across the ideological spectrum,” he says, “we cannot claim a monopoly over the term. Its meaning needs to be realized in our practices and implied through the strategies we employ and the passions that motivate them.”
All Hail Chris DeFay, Outgoing IA Webmaster

Every organization has that person who works madly behind the scenes on almost every project, but whose face and reputation are unknown to everyone else. For Imagining America, that person has been Chris DeFay. Chris began working as webmaster for Imagining America in 2001 while pursuing his doctorate in art history at the University of Michigan. It was a perfect match of skills and interests: as the principal of his own computer consulting business, Chris had the technological skills IA needed, and brought to us the perspective and interests of a humanities scholar and designer. Amongst the many challenges he met during his years with Imagining America, Chris oversaw two web site designs—setting up the first web site and then completely overhauling it a few years later to reflect growth and changes—and through the technologically-fraught transition to Syracuse University last year.

After earning his doctorate in 2005, Chris relocated to Los Angeles to rejoin his wife, Alexandra Rasic, the public programs manager for the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum. Almost immediately upon his arrival there, he was snapped up for full-time work by Google, Inc. Nevertheless, he continued supporting IA’s web site, while also teaching art history part time and chairing a College Art Association panel on Los Angeles art of the 1960s. Now a linguist at Google, his work is primarily devoted to human language and machine learning issues. He continues to work with non-profits and is primarily interested in the area of helping non-profits use free and low-cost tools to communicate more effectively. This year, you may catch him giving presentations and facilitating workshops on this topic for the National Trust for Historical Preservation and for the America Association for State and Local History.

Imagining America owes Chris immense gratitude for his endless creativity, flexibility, and good humor in the face of ever-changing technological and communication needs, and at all hours of the day and night. We raise a hot cup of strong coffee to him in salute.

Imagining America welcomes the Member Institutions that joined the Imagining America Consortium this Spring.

The new members and their Consortium Representatives are:

**Bellarmine University** (Louisville, KY) Dr. Robert Kingsolver, dean, Bellarmine College

**Hamilton College** (Clinton, NY) Dr. Carl Rubino, Edward North professor of classics, and Dr. Joseph Urgo, dean of the faculty

**Portland State University** (Portland, OR) Dr. Marie Lo, Associate director, Portland Center for Public Humanities, and Dr. Leeron Medevoi, director, Portland Center for the Public Humanities

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