

## **From the Issue Editor:**

Volume: 3 Issue: 3 (May 2019)

Welcome to my class. This is a special student issue of the *Race and Pedagogy Journal: Teaching and Learning for Justice*, co-edited by my Spring 2019 African American Studies Public Scholarship course. Public Scholarship is the production of scholarship and public programs that effects change and impacts lives especially for communities historically underserved by official state and national institutions. Each Public Scholarship course takes on a project collectively that engages with its purpose. This semester we worked on the R&P Journal to showcase what we have learned in order to also provide a resource for teaching.

This past fall semester, the 4<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Race & Pedagogy National Conference once again graced the University of Puget Sound's campus for three days. Yet this time around, the energy was different. The energy was one that incorporated folks from all over. The energy was from collaboration. The University President Isiaah Crawford announced to the campus community "I write to invite your participation in Puget Sound's 4th Quadrennial Race and Pedagogy National Conference, Sept. 27-29, 2018, sponsored by our Race and Pedagogy Institute (RPI). Please save the date for this major undertaking for our campus, which will be held during Homecoming and Family Weekend to allow the broadest participation by our entire Puget Sound community. On Friday, Sept. 28, the conference will serve as Puget Sound's plenary classroom; classes will not be held so that students and faculty members, as well as many staff members, are able to participate in conference activities and events." This was the first time that the campus community, particularly the students, would be able to fully engage with what would be a transformed space filled with curiosity, conversation, learning, teaching, and above all else true collaboration at its best.

As we watched who was on the stage at RPNC 2018, we must also watch and recognize whose hands hold the stage steady. The Race & Pedagogy Institute spearheads this major event every 4 years, but it also consistently collaborates between conference years with community members, faculty and staff across campus, and the budding new minds for our future, the students. It is this work that has occurred non-stop since prior to the first conference in 2006 that has enabled such growth of the conference. In 2006 the inaugural conference began with 606 total registrations, which included 42 faculty, 20 staff, and 13 students. It was an important step in RPNC history, one which laid the foundation for the continued success and growth at the 2010 conference, the 2014 conference, and most recently the 2018 conference. In 2018 there were a total of 1259 At-Large registrations, from Campus there were a total of 2123 (Faculty = 182, Staff = 155, Students = 1786) the Youth Summit registered a total of 607 (Students = 545, Chaperones = 62) and of the 1232 registered Homecoming and Family Weekend participants 334 also registered to participate in the conference. In total the 4<sup>th</sup> RPNC conference registered 4323+ people for three dedicated days of learning about race. It was remarkable.

As someone who is new to this university and new to the Race & Pedagogy Leadership team, I did not truly understand or even envision the magnitude of this undertaking. In my first RPI leadership

meetings I listened. In my first community partners meetings I listened and watched the engagement between my new colleagues and mentors, with the folks who made it all possible—the community. The community Partners forum is where it all began, and where it always continues. Every month on our campus RPI holds the community partners forum to abide by the tenets of RPI and African American Studies which require the ongoing, sustained, and active participation within the community.

Just as we must remain grounded in the community we must be grounded in our teaching and scholarship. Thus, we have Public Scholarship. It is the vision of this African American Studies course to engage with RPI in various capacities, including documenting the work. The goal this semester was to document from the eyes of the students what RPNC 2018 created. But we also “must know where we are from, in order to know where we are going,” as the Sankofa proverb states. This student issue of the *Race & Pedagogy Journal* reflects the work of students engaged with the tenets and goals of RPI and African American Studies. Beginning with reflections from alumni and current students about their engagement, understanding, and benefits gained from their RPNC experience, this issue places the reader into an often-unheard space. The issue continues with student written reviews of two spotlight sessions from RPNC 2018. Closing out the section dedicated to RPNC, there is a photo collage of images submitted by participants for a photo contest—*Images from the Inside*. Beginning the section showcasing student work is a selection of four Educational Narratives, a very informative and impactful AFAM assignment, revealing the ways in which U.S. education interacts with different identities. There are two articles closing out this issue: the first is the winner of the university’s Writing Excellence Award for the Race & Pedagogy category; and the second is by an alumnus who presented the article as a poster at RPNC 2018 and later submitted it to the journal for peer review. They are doing the work. This issue also launches the use of audio recordings of select pieces, and video interviews with the Director of RPI and African American Studies, Dexter Gordon.

We hope you find this student issue is one that reveals new angles of the Race & Pedagogy Institute, the Race & Pedagogy National Conference and the academic endeavors they produce in coordination with African American Studies at the University of Puget Sound. My class and I would also like to show our deep appreciation for the journal’s managing editor Lori Ricigliano, Associate Library Director of User Services, who has guided us in this endeavor and provided a source of knowledge that will never be matched.

Let us not forget that in order to truly move forward there must always be collaboration.

In Solidarity,

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