



Dream. Discover. Do!



Voices

A publication of IEL Student Achievement, Student Activities and Diversity Programs

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Spring 2009

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Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Like most commemorative months, Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month originated in a congressional bill. In June 1977, Reps. Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution that called upon the president to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian/Pacific Heritage Week. The following month, Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga

introduced a similar bill in the Senate. Both were passed. On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution designating the annual celebration. Twelve years later, President George H.W. Bush signed an extension, making the week-long celebration into a month-long celebration.

The month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on

May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

Below are a few suggestions for how you can celebrate this month.

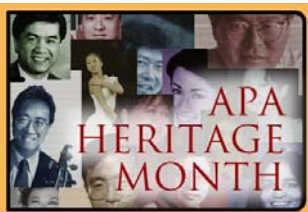
1. Visit a local bookstore and select a book about Asian Pacific Americans and learn about their histories.
2. Do a web search for prominent Asian Pacific Americans.
3. Attend an Asian Pacific American temple, mosque, or church, even if it's not

(Continued on page 4)

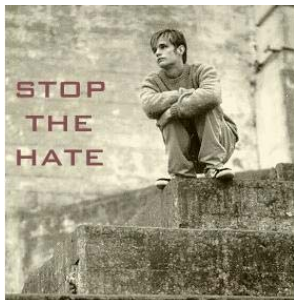
Students as the "Other"

Before examining how students can become seen as the "Other," it is necessary to understand what we mean by the process of Othering and how this process works. In essence, the Othering process "serves to mark and name those thought to be different from oneself" (Weis, 1995, p. 17) and banishes them to society's margins, representing them as "unworthy, dangerous, immoral, or as pitiable, victimized, and damaged" (Fine, 1998, p. 139). Power relations are deeply embedded within this defining process (Carabine, 1996) and as the perception of a group as the Other grows, there is a corresponding impact on public policy towards this group (Stabile, 2008). For example, when the AIDS crisis first happened in the 1980s it was considered a "gay disease." Since it was assumed to be a disease that mostly struck the gay community and this community had come to be represented as the Other, few resources were initially mobilized to respond to this tragedy.

(Continued on page 7)



**The Who Have
You Missed in
History article
is being
replaced for
this year with
a new feature
on recognizing
hate symbols.**



Recognizing Hate Symbols

This is the third installment of the *Recognizing Hate Symbols* series. This installment examines numbers used in white supremacist discourse to mask certain beliefs.

14 Words

This phrase represents the number of words in an expression that has become the battle cry and rallying slogan for the white supremacist movement: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”

33/6

Since the eleventh letter of the alphabet is K and three Ks signify the KKK or Ku Klux Klan, the number 33 is derived by multiplying 3 by 11. The 6 signifies the sixth or current era of the Klan. 33/6 is sometimes used as a greeting by Klan members.

311

Another way of representing the KKK based on the same numbers mentioned under 33/6. For gangs not associated with the white supremacist groups, the 3 represents the letter C and the 11 represents the letter K and it stands for Crip Killer

100%

This is an expression of an individual’s pure Aryan or white roots. It is common among white supremacists. It is also a statement by white supremacists on the need for a pure, white race that is uncorrupted by interracial relationships.

83

The eighth letter of the alphabet is H and the third letter is C, thus 83 stands for “Heil Christ,” a greeting used by racist organizations that consider themselves to be Christian.

88

The eighth letter of the alphabet is H, thus 88 stands for “Heil Hitler,” a greeting used by neo-Nazi organizations.

23

The 23rd letter of the alphabet is W, therefore white supremacists and racist skinheads use 23 in tattoos to represent the word white.

4/19

This symbol is sometimes used by anti-government white supremacists. It represents the anniversary of two significant events: the Branch Davidian siege in Waco, Texas in 1993 and the Oklahoma City Federal Building bombing in 1995.

4/20

This date represents the anniversary of Hitler’s birthday as well as the tragedy at Columbine High School. The date is also used as slang for smoking marijuana.

Source: Anti-Defamation League

Diversity Activity: The Miracle Question

Purpose: To provide the opportunity for participants to imagine the type of community they want to create.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Nothing

Procedure: Explain to the participants that they are going to be given an opportunity to imagine the type of community and world in which they would like to live. They will think about their hopes and desires for a just, harmonious and peaceful society.

Invite the participants to close their eyes or lower their gaze, bringing their focus inward. Read the following:

Imagine that you went to sleep one night and a miracle occurred. In the morning, you wake up into a world in which your hopes for the world are realized. Take a few minutes to reflect on these questions:

How do you feel?

You go outside and what do you see?

What is going on in your neighborhood, in the world?

How are people acting towards you and each other?

What is on the news?

What else is happening?

Now share your vision with another person sitting near you. After each person has had time to share, ask them to consider one step they can take in the direction of their vision.

Conclusion: At the end of the exercise, process with the large group by asking the following questions:

What did you learn about yourself?

Who would like to share their vision of the world?

Who would like to share some steps they might take to make their vision a reality?

What are some potential barriers that may keep you from taking the necessary steps to achieve your vision?





Peter M. as a 7-year-old boy

My mother and I slept together in a bed that was inside a closet. I remember lying in that bed trembling in fear at times.



Magda S., holocaust survivor



Leo H., holocaust survivor

Surviving the Holocaust

In recognition of Holocaust Remembrance Day on April 20, we are printing a part of Peter M.'s story of survival. He was born in Amsterdam in 1935. In 1942, when Peter was 7 years old, the Nazis seized his entire family, except for Peter and his mother. Peter's mother contacted the Dutch Underground for help. (The "Underground" refers to an organized group acting in secrecy to oppose the government, or during war, to resist occupying enemy forces.) The Underground found Klaas and Roefina Post who agreed to shelter Peter and his mother on their small farm in northern

Holland, putting their own lives at risk.

From June of 1942 until March of 1945, Peter and his mother were in hiding. They lived for two years with Klaas and Roefina Post on their farm in Makkinga, Holland, then lived with two women for six to eight months in an apartment in The Hague. Peter and his mother were the only survivors of his family. The following is Peter's account of living with the Posts and the two women, and his feelings regarding his rescuers.

The Posts treated us like family. My mother and I ate all of our meals with Klaas and

(Continued on page 5)

Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, continued

your own religion. There are thousands of religious establishments that were created by and for Asian Pacific Americans.

4. Have a family get-together. Talk about your family's history, whether Asian or not. If your family came to the United States, when did they arrive? What kinds of hardships did they face?

5. Look through popular magazines and examine how they portray Asian Pacific Americans. Are the portrayals negative? Positive? Are the women portrayed as "exotic, sex symbols"? What other kinds of stereotypes are depicted? What kind of messages do you think this sends to other readers?

6. Talk to a young person about serious topics. Ask

them tough, thought-provoking questions. Are you afraid of violence in your own school? Do you get picked on because you're Asian Pacific American?

7. Visit the Census Bureau's web site, type in your city and state, and look up the most recent demographics of your area. This search will tell you how the population is changing and who is in your community.

8. Engage in personal reflection. Ask yourself some basic questions. If you are Asian Pacific American, ask, "Do I identify as an Asian Pacific American?" Whether you are Asian Pacific American or not, ask, "How much does my nationality or ethnic heritage affect my daily life?" Do I think that members of my

nationality or ethnic group are superior to others? If you are not Asian Pacific American, reflect on your beliefs about these Americans.

9. Tell someone that May is Asian Pacific American month! Tell him or her what it means to you, invite them to a local event, or share a historical fact with them. This is a simple way of increasing awareness about the month.

Information from
www.asian-nation.org and
www.loc.gov/topics/asianpacific/about/



Surviving the Holocaust, continued

Roefina and were also given chores to do around the farm. I remember helping him milk the cows and feed the chickens. Klaas was like a father to me, as I was without my father by then. He bounced me on his knee and I loved very much being his helper. I knew, even as a child, something was going on around me and it was not good. Besides doing some chores, we spent most of our days inside a barn, trying not to be seen. I could only play outside at night for a little bit, and only in an area where no one would be able to see me.

My mother and I slept together in a bed that was inside a closet. I remember lying in that bed trembling in fear at times. In the same room, Klaas had created a hiding place in the floor that we could hide in when Germans came to search the house. There was a handle on the inside of the floor boards so Mom could hold on to the handle making it difficult to be opened from the top.

After a while, the searches became so frequent that we could no longer stay in the house. Klaas went out and dug a little cave in the side of a hill in the forest next to the farm for us to hide in. It was about ten feet deep and just wide enough for my mother and I to lie in snugly. There was an overhang of branches we could pull in front of us to keep us hidden.

When there was word of a search, my mother and I would run out into the forest and hide in the cave. Sometimes, it seemed like we were in there forever.

After a while, it was unsafe for us to be there because we were putting Klaas and Roefina at risk. I was very sad that I had to leave the farm, as it had given me a sense of being a family again.

We were directed to an apartment in The Hague (by the Dutch Underground) where we lived with two women. By this time, it was 1944 and I was nine years old. The women made my mother do chores. I remember thinking we were being treated like dogs. My mother had to clean and scrub the apartment, but at least we were given shelter. I never felt attached to these women and remember a lot less about my time living with them than with the Posts. It was a very cold experience for me. After living with them for about six to eight months, we found out that the women were going to turn us in, so we left. We had come so far already...

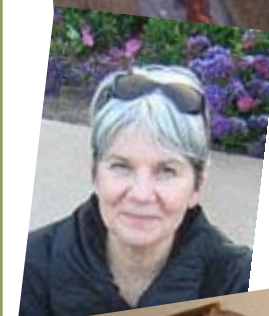
In 1992, I went back to Amsterdam. I wanted to try to find the Posts and the little farm we stayed on. I couldn't even remember the name of the little town where the farm was but I was determined. I went to the library, looked at a map of Holland and found the name of a town called Makkinga that sounded familiar. With only this name, we set out and found the farm, which no longer belonged to the Posts. We even found the cave that my mother and I hid in. I couldn't believe it was still intact. It was an unbelievably emotional experience for me to see the farm and cave, and relive those times.

Since that visit, I could not put the Posts out of my mind. I finally managed to trace down the Post's two daughters. They remembered my mother and me, and sent photos of their parents as I requested. Both Klaas and Roefina had died at least 10 years ago. I have a very difficult time dealing with not having gone back sooner to hug and thank them for saving our lives. I will always have to live with this regret.

This story is reprinted by permission from the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center. Their web site is www.wsherc.org.

Stories Among Us:

Holocaust Survivors in
Washington State



Diversity Calendar

April 2009

5th Palm Sunday—Christian. This day occurs on the Sunday before Easter and signals the upcoming end of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week. The day commemorates the spreading of palms and clothing in Jesus' path as he entered Jerusalem.

6th National Tartan Day—Scottish American. This date commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath in which Scotland asserted its sovereignty over English territorial claims. The day also honors the contributions of Scottish Americans to American society.

6th Founding of the LDS Church—Mormon. Celebrates the founding of the LDS Church in New York in 1830.

9th Passover—Jewish. Begins at sundown and marks the beginning of an eight-day celebration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. Ends on April 26.

10th Good Friday—Christian. This day commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus.

12th Easter—Christian. The most important religious feast of the Christian year. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus after his death by crucifixion.

21st Yom Hashanah/Holocaust Memorial Day—Jewish. This national memorial day in Israel is held in remembrance of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

May 2009

Asian Pacific American History Month Jewish American Heritage Month

1st Beltane—Celtic. Also known as May Eve, this festival is a celebration of the height of spring and the flowering of life. It is a festival of flowers, fertility, sensuality and delight.

1st National Day of Prayer—United States. A day for the people of the nation to pray together no matter what their faith.

2nd Vesak—Buddhist. Celebration of three major events in the life of the Buddha: his birth, enlightenment and passing away. Depending on the country, this holiday may be celebrated on May 31.

5th Cinco de Mayo—Mexican. This day celebrates the battle of Puebla, which resulted in the armies of the elected government of Mexico defeating the European armies attempting to establish an empire governed by Maximilian, a European emperor.

5th Children's Day—Japanese. This is a day for families to celebrate the healthy growth and happiness of children.

9th Victory Day—Russian. Celebration of the Russian victory over Nazi Germany.

9th Shavuot—Jewish. Also known as the Feast of Weeks, it is the anniversary of the day the Torah was given by God to the Jewish people.

16th Armed Forces Day—American. Honors Americans serving in the five services: Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard.

19th Malcolm X Birthday—United States. Commemorates the life and teachings of Malcolm X.

22nd Corpus Christi—Christian. A feast in honor of the Holy Eucharist.

25th Memorial Day—United States. This day honors and remembers U.S. men and women who have died in military service to the country.

29th Ascension of Baha'u'llah—Baha'i. A recollection of the death of Baha'u'llah, the founder of Baha'i.

June 2009

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month

12th Russia Day—Russian. Celebrates Russia's declaration of sovereignty from the Soviet Union.

14th Flag Day—United States. Celebrates the anniversary of the official adoption of the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States by resolution of the Second Continental Congress in 1777.

16th Martyrdom of Guru Arjan—Sikh. Arjan is recognized as the first martyr of the Sikhs who was killed for his religious beliefs.

18th Midsummer's Eve—Sweden. This is the most popular festival in Sweden and is a celebration of the summer solstice.

19th Juneteenth—United States. Celebrates the freedom of the slaves at the close of the Civil War. Originally celebrated in Texas, it has now become a nationwide celebration.

21st National Aboriginal Day—Canadian. Celebrate the cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuits and Metis to Canada.

28th Stonewall Rebellion Day—United States. Commemorates a significant moment in history for the modern LGBT movement.



Stand
out
from
the
crowd.

Students as the “Other,” continued

By being Othered, people are homogenized into a collective “they” (Pratt, 1985, p. 120) in which they are always peripheral to the mainstream (Gandhi, 1998, p. 126) and stereotypes about the groups can flourish (Perks, 2008). It is assumed that “they” can be identified through their differences from mainstream cultures (Pratt, 1985). This Othering process can lead to demonizing other cultural groups (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000, p. 30), stereotyping groups as magical, violent, and comical (Perks, Winslow, & Avital, 2008, p. 33), representing others as ignorant, poor, and uneducated (Gandhi, 1998, p. 86), failing to recognize individuals in the group and perceiving them as prey (Olson, 2008), and excluding group members from social power and status (Thomson, 1997). Once these myths about the Other become established as a “fact,” they can be circulated repeatedly until their origins are lost and their truth becomes unquestioned (Caramagno, 2002, p. 171).

The Othering process is not just about defining the Other, but serves to provide the dominant group with benefits in which they gain privileges (Gandhi, 1998, p. 85), are placed at the top of moral and racial hierarchies (Perks, 2008, p. 74), and have a mechanism to manage their fear of difference and guilt over their oppressive actions (Perks, p. 78). This process is central to identity formation as we come to understand ourselves in relation to others, often based on long-standing narratives regarding specific groups (Weis, 1995). For example, in post-colonial studies, Othering explains how an empire defines itself against those it colonizes (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 173; Said, 1978). When colonizers define the people they colonize, they simultaneously construct themselves as morally and intellectually superior as opposed to those they have conquered.

What does this process of Othering have to do with our students and who we are as faculty and staff? It depends on how we relate to our students who come to us for help. When we make broad statements about how lazy our students are or that they just will never understand some concepts, we are Othering them while defining ourselves as hard working and capable of a deeper understanding. If we smile at staff or faculty when helping them but grimace when a student asks a question, our behavior, though it may be unconscious, is reflecting an attitude that the student is part of an out-group while other staff and faculty are part of our in-group.

This separation of people into in- and out-groups may not be conscious but students do recognize it and respond to it when it happens. When students feel othered or marginalized, they may decide that CCS is not the place for them. Here are some ideas on exploring how we may be engaging in the Othering process.

- First, recognize that on some level we all engage in this process whether we are talking about people of different races, political parties, sexual orientations, genders, employment choices, educational levels, or other characteristic.
- Critically reflect on how you interact with others. Examine your feelings about the people you interact with. If you feel exasperated with them, it may come out in your behavior even if you think it does not.
- Once you know how you feel, think about your behavior, tone of voice, facial expressions, and attitudes when speaking with others. Can any of these be interpreted as demonstrating exasperation or annoyance?
- Make a concerted effort to change how you think about other groups. Notice when you might label all of our students in a derogatory manner. Once you notice it, actively challenge the negative thought and replace it with a more accepting and less judgmental one.
- Talk with your colleagues about this process and reflect together on how it may manifest itself in your office.

When we Other our students, it may not be as extreme as some of the examples provided above but it can lead to them feeling marginalized and unwelcome. This sense of isolation may cause them to leave our programs. By acting on our knowledge of the Othering process, we may more effectively retain our students and help them achieve their goals.

If you are interested in the reference list for this article, contact Jim Mohr for a copy at jmohr@iel.spokane.edu.

Diversity Recipe: Russian Pirozhki

To celebrate Victory Day, which happens on May 9, the president of Russia sends congratulatory letters to all the veterans. There are parades, feasts, presents and flowers to give thanks to the people who fought for the defense of Russia during World War II. In all the cities, there are meetings in which a leader or the mayor of the city gives speeches about the achievement of people in the war and the veterans tell about their adventures in the war.

The food consists of traditional Russian food like *pirozhki* (buns filled with meat or mashed potato), *pelmeni* (filled dumplings), and cakes and pies for dessert.

Hands on time: 30 minutes **Total time:** 1 hour and 40 minutes **Serves:** 36

Ingredients:

For the filling

- 1 pound ground beef
- 4 medium onions, finely diced
- 2 small heads green cabbage, about 1 pound each, shredded
- Salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste

For the dough

- 1 1/2 cups milk or evaporated milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine
- 2 packages dry yeast
- 4 eggs plus 2 egg yolks
- 7 cups all-purpose flour, sifted

Instructions:

To make filling: Brown meat in a large pot or Dutch oven. Add onions. Cook until translucent. Gradually add cabbage and cook until tender, mixing frequently. Add water as necessary to maintain simmering. Season with salt and pepper. Drain. Set aside.

To make dough: Grease a large bowl and a baking sheet and set aside. Scald milk. Cool about 10 minutes. Add salt, sugar and butter. When mixture cools to between 105 and 115 degrees, add yeast and let stand 5 minutes. Beat in eggs. Add flour one cup at a time. When dough begins to pull away from sides of bowl and can be gently kneaded, shape into a ball and place in greased bowl. Cover with waxed paper and allow to rise until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Punch down dough and roll to about 1/8 inch thick. Using a pizza cutter, cut into 4-inch squares. Place a heaping tablespoon of meat filling in center of each square. Fold up edges of dough and pinch to seal filling inside. Place pinched-side down on baking sheet. Bake 10 minutes or until browned. Serve warm or cold.

Student Achievement, Student Activities and Diversity Programs

Mission:

Student Achievement, Student Activities and Diversity Programs complement the educational programs offered by the Institute for Extended Learning (IEL) and provide for the holistic development of the student. The office promotes the recruitment, retention, and successful completion of educational programs for all students. It fosters a climate that embraces diversity and provides co-curricular opportunities to enhance the student experience at the IEL.

Mission Accomplished:

The mission is accomplished through five core tasks:

1. Providing resources.
2. Providing services.
3. Sponsoring co-curricular programming.
4. Building community connections.
5. Maintaining academic partnerships.

Contact Information and Editorial Policies

The Student Activities and Diversity Programs at the IEL publish this newsletter for members of our school and surrounding communities. Articles are based on the best available information at the time of publication. Items in the newsletter are provided for informational purposes only and do not necessarily represent the views of Student Activities and Diversity Programs, nor do they necessarily represent the views of the students, staff, faculty or administration of the Institute for Extended Learning or any part of the Community Colleges of Spokane.

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If you have any questions about items appearing in this newsletter, contact Jim Mohr at 509-279-6081 or jmohr@iel.spokane.edu.