

P&J News

Spring 2013



The Newsletter of Wellesley College's
Peace and Justice Studies Program



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Welcome

Dear all,

Welcome to the Peace & Justice Studies newsletter! It should give you some sense of how vibrant the program is these days, and of the variety of things we and our alumnae are up to. It also offers memorial tributes to Alba Jameson, an important donor and galvanizer of the program. If you have questions or comments about particular stories, or suggestions for future issues, do get in touch with us.

I'll be on leave next year, working on some projects on the relations between nonviolence and literature. Susan Skeath will be doing the faculty director's job, and will be doing it wonderfully well.

Larry Rosenwald
Co-Director, Peace & Justice Studies Program
and Anne Pierce Rogers Professor of English



*2013 Emily
Greene Balch
Recipient:*

Ace Wang

By Tinsa Harding, '16

Each year, the Peace and Justice Studies Program offers students the Emily Greene Balch Class of 1950 Summer Stipend, a \$3,500 stipend which allows recipients to carry out a summer project relating to peace, justice, and social change. The Stipend is funded in perpetuity by a generous gift of the Wellesley Class of 1950. As part of the program, students are encouraged to explore themes of peace and conflict within another community and then share their experiences with the college community, including giving a presentation at the annual Ruhlman Conference. This year's recipient, Peace and Justice Studies and Psychology double major Ace Wang, will use the stipend to participate in Summer of Solutions Ithaca, a non-profit that focuses on environmental justice in the Ithaca community.

At Wellesley, Ace has been active in environmental justice efforts on campus,

including leading “Fossil-Free Wellesley,” one of many nation-wide campaigns calling for colleges and universities to divest from fossil fuel. The group has called for increased transparency regarding Wellesley’s investments and aims to have Wellesley divest from direct ownership of fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds. The student group is currently focusing their efforts on collecting 1000 signatures from the college’s population in support of this movement. Wang has also been involved with Wellesley College’s Sustainability Co-op, or “Scoop”, a cooperative community of Wellesley students who are dedicated to living in a more environmentally and socially sustainable way here on campus.

This summer, Ace will draw on this passion for environmental activism by participating in the Summer of Solutions program in Wang’s hometown of Ithaca, New York. Although born in Shanghai, Ace

moved to the heart of Ithaca at the age of seven. The city has become home for Wang, who hopes that this program will allow this student to give back to the community.

In the program Ace will work with five other high school and college student leaders on a project that seeks to unite young people against hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” by looking for just and sustainable solutions. The 8-week program aims to develop leadership in young people by empowering them to create long-term community projects. In addition, the group also hopes to bring together youth organizations and young community leaders in an effort to lead the state of New York towards a more sustainable future.

“We want to form a strong community around Ithaca,” says Ace earnestly. “We want to have youths plug into organizations that are already doing environmental work and not only help young people learn about these issues, but support these organizations as well. It’s a win-win situation for everyone.”

As part of Summer of Solutions Ithaca, Wang will help to lead thirty or more young activists in justice-focused, solution-based work. Those who participate will learn how to organize anti-oppression movements; more efficiently mobilize the public, and participate in active listening, which can produce long-lasting conversations within a community. They will also put their knowledge to use by building community gardens, creating bike-share programs, and partnering with local non-profits in the Ithaca area.

Summer of Solutions works to inspire environmental activism from a justice-based perspective. Ace notes that this approach is often overlooked when undertaking environmental actions: “We need to bring in the narrative... the idea of sustainability that’s something that isn’t racist, and that isn’t oppressive. The future that we want to create is anti-oppressive and inclusive. In order to do this,

we must also think of how we want to build it, and that process needs to be inclusive.”

Currently, Ace and those who are involved in Summer of Solutions Ithaca are seeking support from national nonprofits for their project. So far, they are applying for several grants in order to make the program accessible for any young people who wish to get involved: “We’re paying for the participants, so that anyone who wants to participate can participate, regardless of economic background.”

The theme of community has remained a vital part of Wang’s environmental activism. For Ace, building human connections is an integral part of seeking community solutions: “We want this space to be where they can build networks, friendships, community, and much more. Here, they can share their lives together.”



DSNI Trip: *Community Activism in Action*

By Claire Yi, '16

On April 27th, a group of students from the Peace and Justice 104: Introduction to the Study of Conflict, Justice and Peace class visited community organizing non-profit Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) located in the Roxbury district of Boston. The Dudley Street neighborhood is a multiracial and multiethnic community that has faced severe economic and environmental injustice, including redlining, trash dumping and arson. Since its inception twenty years ago, community-created and led DSNI has worked successfully to address these issues, while acting to support sustainable economic development, community empowerment, and youth opportunities in the community.

Each year, DSNI provides a powerful case study of conflict transformation and community organizing for students in the introductory Peace and Justice Studies class. The class introduces students to the work of DSNI through readings from the book *Streets of Hope* (Medoff & Sklar, 1994) and the movie "Holding Ground" (1996) and culminates with a trip to the

Dudley Street neighborhood to see this work firsthand. Although the visit is not required of students, the entire introductory class attended this semester's trip.

In the morning, the students met May Louie, the Director of Leadership and Capacity Building, for a tour around the Dudley Street neighborhood. The students viewed community gardens, public parks, and playgrounds that the organization helped to build on once vacant lots. They also meet with many of the friendly and engaging residents of the neighborhood who helped to make the organization run.

Despite DSNI's success, residents admitted that the neighborhood was not without its problems; the newly built Kroc Community Center, intended to be used by members of the Roxbury community, was simply too expensive for many residents to join. Standing in front of the Kroc Center, students discussed the challenge of ensuring equal access and the importance of community ownership in local projects.

After a short break over some delicious



Cape Verdean food, the students proceeded to an afternoon of lecture and discussion. They learned about the different sectors of community planning and shared their own ideas about the process of bringing people together and acting collectively. Finally, they learned how power could be used in collaborative and dynamic ways.

Many students were especially impressed with DSNI's active youth involvement. Even on a Saturday morning, youth volunteers were hard at work, cleaning the streets and working at the local greenhouse. DSNI has actively engaged young residents through its Youth Council, which elects representatives annually. This program has been extremely successful in giving young

community members a platform for their own passions and motivating them to "be the change they wish to see in the world" (to quote Mohandas Gandhi). A past youth representative himself, current Executive Director John Barros has recently announced his candidacy for Mayor of Boston.

The trip was truly an embodiment of our Program's focus on experiential education, as students were able to learn from the experiences and challenges of active community builders. Through their interactions with DSNI, many students felt that the trip strengthened their confidence in their own ability to effect peaceful change and provided them with a greater sense for the importance of community organizing in the fight against injustice.

Alumna Profile

Diamond Sharp

On Peace, Art, and Following her Passions

By Claire Yi, '16

In her work as an artist, Peace and Justice Studies alumna Diamond Sharp strives to combine her love for art with her passion for peace activism. Based in Washington, DC and Chicago, IL, Sharp is a Cultural Production Fellow for Art in Praxis. She is a poet, a writer, and editor for ZORA Magazine, a web-based magazine geared towards women of the African Diaspora.

When she entered Wellesley, Diamond initially intended to major in International Relations and minor in English. However, she found herself drawn to Peace and Justice Studies, where she found that she could combine her many interests under one interdisciplinary major. However, she recalls that her choice of major was often met with skepticism from fellow students: “When I was at Wellesley, at least the first two years, people looked at me like I was crazy when I said I was a Peace and Justice Studies major. I heard a lot of sly jokes from Economics and Political Science majors about being unemployed after graduation. That changed a bit as the department grew my junior and senior year. But I think that the idea that the liberal arts or the social sciences are “weak” still persists, even at Wellesley - a liberal arts school.”

Despite the doubts of her classmates, Sharp found in the Peace and Justice program new and exciting opportunities for pursuing her passions. Through the program, she was offered the Emily Greene Balch Class of 1950 Summer Stipend to study poetry and activism through art in Washington, DC, something she would never

have had the opportunity had she not majored in Peace and Justice Studies.

“I found the field of Peace Studies to be more aligned with my sense of self and my beliefs about international relations,” she recalls. “I also found the Peace and Justice Studies Program to be welcoming and accepting of students like myself that had multiple academic and personal interests.”

Diamond continues to follow her passions and to explore future options for her many diverse pursuits. She hopes not only to work as an artist, but as a literary and cultural critic, an academic, and a professor. She also hopes to one day publish and contribute to *American Letters*. As of this year, she has been accepted into an MFA of Poetry program, with which she could be eligible to teach at the collegiate level in the next three years – perhaps back at Wellesley.

When asked if she has any advice for current Peace and Justice majors, Sharp advises current and perspective majors alike to follow their true passions – not only what others tell them to do. After all, what has motivated her through challenging times has been her genuine love of what she was doing. Diamond believes that the recent economic downturn has actually motivated many alumnae to follow a path more in line with their values and true interests: “It's no longer a guarantee that you'll get that law job, or bank job, or any job for that matter. I find that a lot my classmates are following their passions instead of lock-step paths now - whether that means being artists, writers, singers, artisans, etc. We've learned how to piece together careers in these uncertain times. And for what it's worth, contrary to those sly remarks, I found a job in a peace non-profit, my field of study - which is more than many others can say.”

Post-Scriptum: Sharp was recently elected to serve in the Board of Trustees of Wellesley College as a Young Alumnae Trustee.

Lecture Series: Human Rights Across Disciplines

By Catia Confortini, Assistant Professor, Peace and Justice Studies Program

This Spring semester, the Peace and Justice Studies Program, the Spanish Department, and the Wellesley Centers for Women co-sponsored a series of lectures aimed at fostering conversations on human rights from different disciplines' vantage points. The series was generously supported by the Wilson Fund of the Committee on Lectures and Cultural Events, and it was appropriately entitled *Conversations on Human Rights Across the Disciplines*. Speakers presented their recent research and reflections on experiences on national, regional and/or international human rights concerns specifically addressing notions of human dignity, gender non-discrimination, tolerance, and democracy.

Elizabeth Goldberg (Associate Professor of International Literatures and Human Rights at Babson College) talked about her recent project of transposing narratives of torture by torture survivors and asylees into poetry; Dr. Julie Levison of Harvard Medical School discussed the need to incorporate human rights lenses and sensibilities to the practice and teaching of medicine; Christopher Merrill, Director of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa described the challenges of teaching non-fiction writing to people living under dictatorial regimes where human rights violations are widespread.

The series concluded with a political theorist and an international practitioner, whose work and research overlapped in surprising ways: Julie Mostov (Vice Provost for Global



Initiatives and Professor of Political Science at Drexel University) offered a political theory perspective on human rights, specifically looking at violence, gender and security across and through national borders; Mostov's talk was complemented by Nadine Puechguirbal (Senior Gender Advisor for the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations), whose experiences in conflict and post-conflict settings led her to 'deconstruct' notions of security and human rights from a gender perspective.

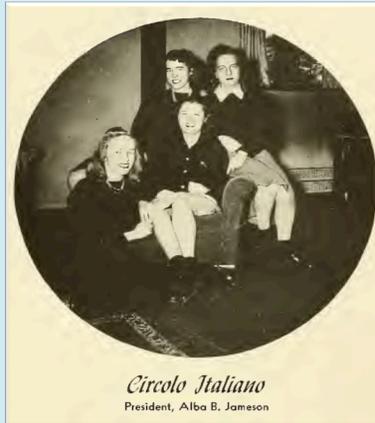
All the talks in the series were attended by an enthusiastic and curious audience of Wellesley students and faculty, who asked interesting and challenging questions. A faculty member observed that our "students have not only learned a great deal but have been inspired to think about Human Rights in a different way". The lectures have been recorded and will be available on the Wellesley College website shortly. Please check our Program's webpage for updates.

In Memory of Alba Jameson

By Tinsa Harding, '16



ALBA BERNARDI JAMESON
6 Sessions Street
Wellesley, Mass.
Italian



Class of 1945



Alba (Bernardi) Jameson, 89, passed away on December 29, 2012 after a long illness. She was born at her family home in Wellesley, MA, to Domenic and Nancy Bernardi, who immigrated to America from Bocassuolo, Italy. She graduated from Wellesley High School in 1941 and received a BA in Italian literature with honors from Wellesley College in 1945.

As an alumna, Jameson remained loyal to the college and actively involved in the campus community. Among many other commitments, she co-founded the Peace and Justice Studies program at Wellesley College with her husband, the late Paul Jameson, and fellow Wellesley Alumna Kitty Gladstone. Later in her life, she audited Italian classes at the college in Founders Hall, where she would bake cookies for her classmates on a weekly basis.

Jameson was also very active in the town of Wellesley. She worked as a substitute teacher in the Wellesley Public High Schools for 26 years, served as a Girl Scout leader to both her

daughters' troops, and was a member of the League of Women Voters.

Jameson spent many childhood summers in the Berkshires, a tradition she continued with her husband, Paul, to whom she was happily married for 53 years. Jameson was the loving mother of Nancy Russell and Edward J. Russell, of Wallingford, CT; and Christina Jameson and Robert M. Bloom, of West Newton, MA. She is survived by five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A private burial took place at Woodlawn Cemetery in Wellesley. Donations may be made in Jameson's memory to the Wellesley College Peace and Justice Studies Program, the Hospice of Good Shepherd, or a charity of the individual's choice.

A Personal Tribute to Alba Jameson '45



I have such vivid memories of Alba over the years, particularly at our annual end of the year Peace & Justice Studies majors' gathering. Alba would appear carrying a small bag from which she would take pins in the shape of a dove and give them to each senior. With an olive branch in their mouths and "Peace and Justice" across their bodies, these doves (each handmade by Alba) have been proudly worn by Peace and Justice Studies majors over the past two decades.

Since its inception in 1986, Peace & Justice Studies at Wellesley College has been part of Alba's life, and she a part of ours. Together with Kitty Gladstone, Wellesley Class of 1950, Alba provided vision, inspiration, and support for Wellesley's program from its infancy to its current full flowering. Shortly after I arrived at Wellesley in 1993, I was invited by the Director of Wellesley's Peace & Justice Studies Program, Professor Annemarie Shimony, to an "informal gathering to meet several alumnae friends of the program." What I did not know at the time was that this was an interview of sorts, a vetting as to the appropriateness of my participation in the program. I learned then that Alba and Kitty held a special place in the life of Peace and Justice Studies at Wellesley, a place of honor reserved for the co-founders and elders of the program. Throughout my 20 years of participation as lecturer and co-director of Peace & Justice Studies at Wellesley, Alba and Kitty (the two are inseparable in my mind) provided wise council and passionate support for the program. The present program with its enhanced curriculum and abundant internship and study abroad opportunities is the direct result of the stewardship of which Alba was so much a part.

I will miss Alba terribly. She and Paul welcomed so many of us into their home, inspiring us by their tireless work of behalf of others. Alba was for many of us our "Italian mother," offering words of affirmation for work well done, and gentle but firm words of advice and critique in areas she felt needed improvement. There is a new face in the pantheon of Wellesley women dedicated to the work of peace and justice at Wellesley and in the world, a group that includes such luminaries as Emily Green Balch and Vida Scudder. Alba Assunta Bernardi Jameson, Wellesley College Class of 1945, we thank you for your courage and creativity in founding and nurturing the Peace & Justice Studies program at Wellesley.

Victor Kazanjian, Dean of Intercultural Education & Religious and Spiritual Life and Co-director of the Peace & Justice Studies Program



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