My Story, Your Story, WISR's 39-Year Story of Personalized Education and Social Change Continues

WISR’s 6th Annual Conference, 2014

Western Institute for Social Research
2930 Shattuck, #300, Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 655-2830 mail@wisr.edu

Thursday, October 30, 3:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Friday, October 31, 9:00 am to 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 1, 9:00 am to 7:30 pm

~Please register early by Friday, October 24th if possible, Late registration will also be accepted at the door—see last page for registration form~

We will feature the work of some of WISR’s Students and Faculty; a panel on Education for Social Change (including WISR’s Learning for a Change Think Tank, and leaders of the Monthly Series of Course Sessions Discussing Films on Issues for Social Change) a panel on Narrative Approaches to Transformation, Healing and Social Change (how storytelling is used in counseling, medicine, action-inquiry, and other disciplines); and a presentation by WISR’s President with discussion about WISR’s exciting move toward accreditation.

~~~ Schedule ~~~

Thursday, October 30th:

3:00 pm: Gather and Registration

3:30 – 5:00 pm: Film Clips—Stimulating Dialogue on Matters of Social Change
WISR’s President, John Bilorusky, PhD will show some film shorts, and lead a discussion.

5:00 – 6:00 pm: Light supper will be provided.

If local participants would like to contribute food, beverages, and snacks for the conference, please RSVP Marilyn@wisr.edu re what you plan to bring. People can also go to the nearby Berkeley Bowl or restaurants to eat or bring food back “to go.”

6:00 - 8:30 pm: Richard Horrell-Schmitz, WISR EdD Student, “Defying Deficit thinking: an examination of overt and covert ableism in education with a look at the negative ramifications of deficit focus in the classroom and adulthood.” Presentation, audience participation and discussion, as well as a short video to share his experiences on these issues in Ghana over the summer.

Friday, October 31st:

9:00 am: Gather and Registration
9:30 am - 10:45 am: Cindy Perkiss, WISR PhD Student, “Using Somatic Experiencing and Art Therapy to Facilitate Post-Traumatic Growth.” Through case material and didactic presentation, discussion will focus on the exploration of Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) and the ways that Somatic Experiencing (SE) and Trauma Art Therapy can help to facilitate PTG. She will use the projects she has focused on during her studies at WISR, which have included becoming a Certified Trauma Art Therapist, work as a Somatic Experiencing Training Assistant, exploration of the intersection of trauma and chronic pain, and her own story of living with chronic illness, to discuss these concepts along with questions that have arisen along the way.

10:45 - 11 am: Break

11:00 am - 12:15 pm: Roger Mason, WISR PhD Candidate, “Shaker Gifts to the 21st Century, is a contemporary assessment of what is to be learned from the alternative communitarian experiment of the 19th Century.” Roger will present on, and lead a discussion of his dissertation on the Shakers’ innovative social practices instituted by 24 communities among these first generation American citizens. The Shakers established an alternative social model to confront the issues of gender/racial/religious/family relationships, combined with a unique style of collaboration to produce many innovations improving everyday life. This unique social network thrived in a divided nation, effectively reacting to the consequences of social change and social conflicts. These issues continue to be active and alive the world today.

12:15 - 1:30 pm: Lunch and Socializing. Participants are encouraged to form small groups to go to nearby restaurants for lunch, or bring back food “to go.” (WISR will provide beverages and some snacks.) For example, groups of Alumni could get together, MFT/Psychology students, Students of Education and Social change, Community Leadership, Prospective Students and Visitors. Please join in with a group of your choice, or we’ll introduce you to others and help you pick a group. Groups are welcome to bring food back to meet at WISR as well.

1:30 – 3:00 pm: Education for Social Change Panel of WISR Faculty, Students and Community Learners. WISR faculty member, Marilyn Jackson, PhD, will facilitate. Participants in WISR’s Learning for a Change Think Tank will discuss models of education designed to improve society. Leaders of the Monthly Film Series on Issues for Social Change will discuss the themes of films shown this year on such topics as inequality, Ecowarriors and the Indonesian Rain Forest, community-building, the Koch Brothers and social democracy. Panelists will make brief comments to stimulate open discussion. Participants will include Nasira Abdul-Aleem, WISR MA Student; Faye Antaky, Community Learner; and WISR Faculty members: John Bilorusky, PhD; Torry Dickinson, PhD; Marilyn Jackson, PhD; Vera Labat, MPH; and Michael McAvoy, MA.

3:00 - 3:15 pm: Break

3:15 - 4:30 pm: Eric Mauer, WISR PhD Candidate, ”Teaching Young Children as an Act of Love: The critical roles of play and of the teacher-child relationship in early childhood education.” Eric will present on, and lead a discussion of, his dissertation inquiry. He is investigating ways in which we can make early childhood education more compassionate, more loving and kind, more just, and more helpful in encouraging the potential of young children. He interviewed fifty five persons, including thirty one early childhood teachers. He has found himself looking at political issues by the dissertation’s end -- looking at schooling as a political activity and looking at and asking questions about the politics of schooling. He has developed several important questions that he hopes other researchers may tackle.
5:00 pm to 8:30 pm: **Halloween Party:** Potluck, order pizza or Chinese food, or get take out food from the Berkeley Bowl, or the Mexican or Greek restaurants across the street. Socializing, snacks and film clips on social issues.

**Saturday, November 1st:**

9:30 - 10:45 am: **Collaboration and WISR Seminars and Forums.** We will break into groups to discuss individual and group learning projects and activities that are in progress and give feedback to one another within the groups. This will be a way to try out the new, added learning format at WISR of open forum sessions that will be ongoing 1 to 2 times per month.

10:45 – 11:00 am: **Break**

11:00 am – 12:00 pm: **John Bilorusky, PhD, President of WISR** will discuss details and updates of WISR’s steps in pursuing national accreditation, will answer questions, and lead a discussion.

12:00 - 1:15 pm: **Lunch and Socializing.** Participants are encouraged to form small groups to go to nearby restaurants for lunch, or bring back food “to go.” (see Friday lunch suggestion).

1:15 - 2:30 pm: **Open Space Discussion of Tasks and Steps Needed for WISR’s Accreditation.** We will break into groups based on interest regarding plans and tasks to be accomplished as necessary to accomplishing this important and exciting goal.

2:30 - 2:45 pm: **Break**

2:45 - 4:30 pm: **Narrative Approaches to Transformation, Healing, and Social Change:** WISR faculty member, Michael McAvoy, will facilitate this panel on the role of narrative or storytelling in their work, in such areas as medicine and healing, counseling, action-inquiry, violence prevention, and education. Participants will include John Bilorusky, PhD, Crystallee Crain, PhD, Ronald Mah, LFMT, PhD, Michael McAvoy, MA. We will break into groups for discussion and storytelling.

4:30 - 7:30 pm: **Dinner and Socializing.** We’ll order out or bring back food from nearby Berkeley Bowl and other restaurants across the street. We will wind down by enjoying an informal couple of hours of socializing and making plans for staying in touch often with one another.

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**Location:** All events will be held at WISR’s new location in Berkeley at 2930 Shattuck, Suite 300, near Ashby, only three short blocks from the South Berkeley BART Station.

**Parking in the neighborhood:** some of it is two-hour only but much of it has no time limit. There is metered parking on Shattuck. WISR has only two spaces in the adjacent parking lot.

Everyone planning to attend is encouraged to e-mail John Bilorusky ([johnb@wisr.edu](mailto:johnb@wisr.edu)) and let him know your plans for attending (approximately what days and times of those days you think you will participate). This will help in planning food, # of chairs, etc. Everyone is requested to make a minimum donation of $10/day-$25/3 days, to help pay for expenses associated with the conference. We plan to video tape some of the conference and take photos, and all participants are asked to fill out and sign the registration form (next page) giving us permission to do this.
Registration / RSVP Form

Please fill out this information and return it by email, mail or bring it with you to the conference. To help us plan, please RSVP very soon or by Friday, October 24th at the latest to help us arrange for food and seating (late registration will be allowed at the conference). *You can mail in donations or bring them to the conference apart from the form. Contributions may be made by check, credit card or through Paypal (by entering our e-mail address: mail@wisr.edu).

Which days and/or times/sessions to you expect to attend?

Thursday, October 30 ________________________________________________________________
Friday, October 31 _________________________________________________________________
Saturday, November 1 _____________________________________________________________

****Donation (Suggested minimum: $10/day-$25/3 days to help with food and other expenses):
______________________________________________________________

***Additional Donation:__________________________

Name ________________________________________________________________
Address (if we don't have it already) _____________________________________________
Phone (if we don't have it already) ________________________________________________
Email ________________________________________________________________

Conference Participants, Please read the following: This conference will be videotaped for possible use on WISR's website and other educational uses. In order to participate in the conference, each person will need to agree to and sign the following statement: As a participant in WISR's Conference, October 30-November 1, 2014, I understand that my participation in the conference represents my implied consent for WISR to videotape and/or audiotape all sessions for educational use by the WISR community and to promote WISR’s work among the general public.

Your Signature______________________________________________________________

Date__________________________________________

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**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Nasira Sabria Abdul-Aleem** is a WISR MA student who is studying counseling psychology/marriage and family therapy at WISR. Nasira had a Quaker, folk-school education in junior high and high school and received her BA in English from UC Berkeley. After working in several roles with Muslim organizations, Nasira did substitute teaching for four years in Oakland public schools. Her Masters’ thesis is on prison recidivism, with an eye to change the prison system by means of the prisoner’s, i.e., by “teaching” them self-discovery, self-determination, and self-efficacy – the opposites of addiction and imprisonment. Her greatest goal and joy in life is family.

**John Bilorusky** is WISR’s President and a Member of the Core Faculty. His academic degrees include: BA cum laude, General Studies and Physics, University of Colorado, 1967. MA, Sociology of Education, University of California at Berkeley, 1968. PhD, Higher Education, UC Berkeley, 1972. John was a co-founder of WISR in 1975, and has served full-time on WISR’s faculty ever since. Before that, he taught social sciences at the University of California, Berkeley and community services at the University of Cincinnati. He is the author of many published articles and papers on higher education and social change, adult learning, and practical, community-based and participatory research methods. He has served as a consultant for community agencies in the area of participatory action-research. He has conducted evaluations of liberal arts colleges and educational innovations, performed public policy research, and helped others to create community-involved colleges. John is Chair of the Board of the Association of Private Postsecondary Education in California.

**Crystallee Crain**, WISR Faculty, PhD, has a BA in Political Science from Northern Michigan University; an, MA in Social Sciences from Eastern Michigan University; Advanced Training in Health and Human Rights from Harvard University’s School of Public Health and a PhD in Transformative Studies from California Institute for Integral Studies. Crystallee is new to the WISR faculty team. Since 2006, Dr. Crain has worked in higher education promoting interdisciplinary applied research. She has taught sociology and politics at community colleges and universities in Michigan and California. In 2011, Crystallee was featured as one of the Protestors of the Year in TIME Magazine for her work in Oakland. She has been responsible for the development of Heal the Streets fellowship program at the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and the Violence Prevention Initiative at the College of Alameda.

**Torry Dickinson**, PhD, WISR Core Faculty, is a professor with Women’s Studies, Nonviolence Studies and the Sociology Graduate Program at Kansas State University. She has been on WISR’s faculty since the 1980s. She has written books on women, paid and unpaid work, and democratic social change, including *Fast Forward* (2001) and *Transformations* (2008), which were co-written with Robert Schaeffer. Torry Dickinson earned her Ph.D. and M.A. in sociology at State University of New York at Binghamton, and her B.A. in sociology at Rutgers University. She is the mother of two adults, a daughter and a son. She currently lives in San Luis Obispo, California most of the year and in Kansas one semester during the year.

**M. Richard Horrellschmitz** is an EdD student at WISR and currently a preschool teacher at California School for the Deaf. He has taught at CSUS and Sierra College Deaf Studies Departments and spends as much time as possible teaching Social Justice, Disabled Rights, and Advocacy internationally. Richard is the very proud father of three daughters and a son.
Marilyn Jackson, PhD, is the Executive Assistant to WISR’s President and also a Core Faculty member at WISR. She has a BA from Augustana College in Rock Island, IL (Religion w/psychology concentration); an MA from Holy Names College in Creation Spirituality and Culture; and a PhD from WISR in Higher Education and Social Change. Marilyn has published two articles on the folk school movement of Scandinavia. She is on the Board and staff of the Ecumenical Peace Institute and on the board of the Folk Education Association of America. Marilyn has various blogs on wisrville including: “Lifelong Learning.”

Vera Labat, MPH, WISR Core Faculty, and Chair of WISR’s Board of Trustees, has a BS in Nursing, San Francisco State University, 1964. Masters in Public Health, University of California at Berkeley, 1974. Vera has recently retired after a long career in the field of public health. For many years, she was in charge of immunization for the City of Berkeley, and prior to that, she was school health consultant for the Berkeley Unified School District. She taught community health at the University of California, San Francisco, and taught in the School of Medicine at the University of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania. She was the founding Executive Director of the Over 60 Health Clinic in Berkeley. Vera has served on WISR’s faculty for thirty years.

Ronald Mah, MA, LMFT, PhD, WISR Core Faculty, has a BA in Psychology and Social Sciences, University of California at Berkeley, 1975; has an MA in Psychology from the Western Institute for Social Research, 1991; Teacher’s Credential Program, University of California at Berkeley, 1976; and a PhD in Higher Education and Social Change, Western Institute for Social Research, 2013. Ronald has had a private practice since 1994 as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. He is a credentialed elementary and secondary teacher, and former owner-director of a preschool and daycare center. He does consulting and training for human service organizations, teaching courses and workshops for many community agencies and educational institutions around the California and the United States. He is a visible and active writer of books and articles in the field. His areas of special concern include child development, parenting and child-rearing, multicultural education, and teacher education. He has served two terms on the Board of Directors of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, and has served on the Board of the California Kindergarten Association. In 2013, Ronald completed his PhD at WISR, writing on multiple topics on couple therapy, and self-published a series of twenty e-books on therapy and couple therapy. He is also consulting for an encrypted online messaging program business targeting therapists and other professionals with needs for confidential internet communication. Ronald has served on WISR’s faculty for 20 years.

Roger Mason, WISR PhD Candidate, has maintained a proactive career in health care services, with positions as an administrator, consultant, director, educator, and manager in acute care hospitals, public health and non-profit health service agencies. He has a special career interest in issues relating to holistic health care and health education. He received his B.A. degree from Valparaiso University, a graduate degree B.D (M.A. equiv.) from the University of Chicago, and pursued further postgraduate studies at Loyola University, Chicago, Ill.

Eric Mauer, WISR PhD Candidate, was a PhD student in Child Development at Cornell, NY from 1968-73. In 2003 he graduated from USF with an MA in Teaching. He has worked closely with young children throughout his life in several capacities: community organizer/educator, school teacher and substitute, mentor, clinician, advocate and researcher. He is fascinated by the ways children mature and develop and always tries to encourage the potential of young children. He is greatly influenced by the work of John Holt and by the work of Professor Lisa Golstdstein, as well as by Paulo Freire's and Peter Mc Laren’s ideas and writing.
Michael McAvoy, MA Medical Anthropology, WISR Core Faculty. After receiving his Bachelor’s degree and attending medical school in France, Michael created and directed the San Francisco People’s Health Resource Center and People’s Medical School (1974-79). Then while completing a Master’s Degree in Medical Anthropology (Case Western Reserve University 1983) and after, he worked at the Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland developing innovative community health programs for medically disenfranchised communities. In 1985, he returned to San Francisco where he was a Core Faculty and academic administrator at the New College of California until 2008. After recent professional study in the Department of Narrative Medicine at Columbia University, he joined WISR’s Core Faculty, and is developing a theory and practice of ‘Liberation Narrative Medicine’ to help create a better approach to health care as well as social change towards a more just, sacred and sustainable world. Michael is also developing a Career Center for WISR students and alumni.

Cindy Perkiss, LCSW, WISR PhD Student is a mind-body focused psychotherapist, a licensed clinical social worker, and a Somatic Experiencing Practitioner with a special interest in chronic and serious illness, medical trauma, and grief and loss. She also has a general psychotherapy practice working with adults dealing with relationship issues, anxiety, depression, mood disorders, and life transitions. Her work at WISR has focused on exploring trauma art therapy and Somatic Experiencing to facilitate post-traumatic growth. Her practice is located near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a graduate of the Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research with a Master of Social Service degree.