Seattle Journal for Social Justice

Volume 4 | Issue 2 Article 30

5-1-2006

An Introduction to Pedagogy and Social Justice

The Editors

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj

Recommended Citation

Editors, The (2005) "An Introduction to Pedagogy and Social Justice," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice*: Vol. 4: Iss. 2, Article 30.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj/vol4/iss2/30

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications and Programs at Seattle University School of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Seattle Journal for Social Justice by an authorized administrator of Seattle University School of Law Digital Commons.

An Introduction to Pedagogy and Social Justice

The Editors

The following section was developed over the course of the past year in order to cultivate a discussion around the issue of teaching and fostering a legal education that emphasizes social justice, both as an outcome and as a process.

The outcome aspect of a social justice education involves encouraging pre-law students, entering law students, and new attorneys to practice social justice, a concept exemplified in Justice Mary E. Fairhurst's appeal to new bar admittees to be stewards of justice. Mark Chinen's article, which begins the section, illuminates both the principles of social justice in practice, as well as some of the struggles he faces in trying to teach legal doctrines that can have seemingly contrary purposes to the pursuit of justice for all parties.

Ensuring that social justice is an outcome of legal education, also requires considering the attributes and motivations of the students who desire to join the legal profession. This is the process aspect of a social justice education. What are their life experiences? What drives them to pursue a career in the law? What have they encountered on their path to higher education? What about their undergraduate education has influenced them? How can the classroom become a place to cultivate and nourish those justice-oriented motivations?

Julie Helling's article about the Law and Diversity Program at Western Washington University discusses how college students from diverse backgrounds can be given the opportunity to obtain a legal education, despite the odds that predict otherwise. Therese Huston's article explores, among other things, how undergraduate students view faculty members and how these views may impact their perceptions of diversity. Jennifer Lindholdm, Richard Goldberg, and Shannon Calerone have documented the

spiritual motivations of entering law students, and how such ideals lead them to pursuing a career in the law. Finally, Paula Lustbader explores the experiences of entering law students, in particular those who are statistically predicted to be unsuccessful law students because they do not exemplify the traditional indicators of acheivement in law school. She demonstrates how, when given the necessary educational and social tools, such law students can not only meet the requirements to be successful law students, but can, and do, far exceed these standards.

It is our hope that the following articles will promote a social justice-oriented approach both to the process of obtaining a legal education, as well as to the practice of law.