
PLACE Historical Documents

PLACE (Program for Liberal Arts and Civic
Engagement)

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In PLACE: October 11, 2017

PLACE

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IN PLACE

October 11th, 2017

Welcome to the PLACE newsletter! We will send out semi-monthly emails during the 2017-18 academic year to keep you informed about everything PLACE-related. We'll try to keep these relatively short and focused, while also providing useful information about PLACE activities happening throughout the Linfield community and ways to bring the program into your classes.

Want a primer on PLACE? Check out the description [here](#).

A Message To Faculty

Teaching a course that relates to liberal arts and civic engagement and/or the digital citizen? PLACE would like to advertise! Please send course title and a brief description to pcottre@linfield.edu. Thanks!

Spotlight On: Jonathan Rauch & Cheryl Harris

As all of us try to think through complex questions about the relationship between speech and equality, we have the opportunity to listen to and engage two public intellectuals who have thought deeply about these issues. Cheryl Harris (UCLA Law School) is one of the world's leading scholars in the field of Critical Race Studies. She is the author of the seminal essay, "Whiteness as Property," and she is an award winning civil rights educator. Jonathan Rauch (Brooking Institution and The Atlantic) is the author of many books and articles on politics, culture, and public

policy. He has established himself as a leading defender of a strongly libertarian position on speech issues.

Tomorrow, at 4:30 in Ice Auditorium, these eminent scholars will share their views on equality and speech, and then discuss questions like if ‘minority rights’ and ‘speech rights’ are in conflict. This conversation will be followed by a question and answer session. To familiarize yourself with their stances on these issues, feel free to watch [this](#) short video and reach [this](#) short piece, from Rauch and Harris respectively.

Recalling what happened this past spring, the debate on free speech is one with no easy answers. We hope that this event may help each of us to think about these issues from a place of respect, the “high road,” if you will. Professor Nick Buccola, who is organizing this event, expanded on this thought in an opinion piece for the [**Linfield Review**](#):

“As we continue to grapple with how best to balance our commitments to free speech and equal dignity, there are a couple of roads we can take: one low and the other high. The ‘low road’ features a parade of charlatans, clowns, and merchants of hate marching through campus, generating controversy, provoking overreaction on all sides, and leaving a mess behind for us to clean up, while they return from whence they came with precisely what they sought in the first place: a few more YouTube views, a few more clicks on their Patreon account, and a national news story that will fit the dominant script in our troubled political culture. The low road is tempting. As we peek down it, we can see the bright lights of controversy, the allure of soap-box preachers, and the promise of thrills down every alley.

The ‘high road’ features conversations between intellectually serious people about ideas that matter. These conversations may lead to deep disagreement and they may even occasionally become heated, but they will be between people who respect the dignity of everyone participating

and, ideally, everyone present will be open to the possibility of having their minds changed. As you peer down the high road, it might look kind of boring. There aren't as many bright lights and in the place of the soap-box preachers you will see lots of benches where people are seated, speaking softly, and listening intently.

The high road is less sexy to be sure, but I encourage you take it. Why? For one thing, the low road is a dead end and there are no U-Turns allowed. Once you go down that road, you will find yourself mired in an atmosphere of anger, fear, and distrust. And as our PLACE theme reminds us: you are a 'digital citizen' now. Your reputation is a precious thing and what happens in college, no longer stays in college...

...We invited Rauch and Harris because we know they are thoughtful commentators on questions about the relationship between equality and speech and we know they take different positions on many of these issues. We are framing the event as a "conversation" instead of a "debate" so that they can engage in a back and forth with each other that will allow us to see not only the crystallization of differences, but perhaps the discovery of areas of agreement. At the conclusion of the back and forth between these two scholars, there will be time for questions and comments from the audience and Rauch and Harris will join us for a reception in Jonasson Hall where we can continue the conversation."

Upcoming Events

Thursday, October 12th: Constitution Day Programming

Cheryl Harris, award-winning civil rights educator and author, and Jonathan Rauch, a leading commentator on American politics from the Brookings Institute and The Atlantic, will discuss equality and speech on Thursday, Oct. 12, at 4:30 p.m. in the Richard and Lucille Ice Auditorium in Melrose Hall.

Wednesday, October 18th: Opening of Rain/Lluvia, a gallery of new works by visiting artist Antonio Martorell

The exhibition is on view from October 18 to November 18. An opening reception will be held October 18 from 5-7PM. Drinks and light refreshments will be served.

Wednesday, October 25th: Talk by artist Antonio Martorell

At 7 pm in Ice Auditorium, Antonio Martorell will give a talk on his gallery showing, Rain/Lluvia. Here is a brief description from the artist on his inspiration for his work: “When the opportunity came my way to bring an exhibition to Oregon, a place that I had never visited before, I candidly asked: ‘¿Qué pasa en Oregon?’ (What happens in Oregon?) I received an equally candid answer: ‘It rains every day.’”

Friday, October 27: Never Give Up, a Film Screening

Screening and discussion of Holly Yasui's documentary film, Never Give Up at Vivian A. Bull Music Center, Delkin 145 from 7:00-9:30 pm.

PLACE in the News

Our articles for this week are from Cheryl Harris and Jonathan Rauch, as their thoughts are especially relevant this week. The first is from Cheryl Harris, and is entitled Balancing Free Speech, in which she argues that free speech cannot be absolute, as the absolute umbrella protecting racist speech of those like Dylan Roof.

The second piece is a video from Jonathan Rauch entitled Knowledge Starts as Offendedness, which states that trigger warnings in higher education, as they exist today, are impractical and that colleges need to foster free speech absolutely, stating that free speech is the “only reliable friend” for minorities.

A bonus article this week offers a historical perspective on the current NFL protests and the controversy surrounding them. The eminent Te-Nehisi Coates argues that **Civil-Rights Protests Have Never Been Popular** and that “activists can’t persuade their contemporaries—they’re aiming at the next generation.” Do you agree? Let us know on **Twitter!**

Last Week in PLACE

September 27th: Pizza & Politics on the Politicization of Science

We did live tweet this event, and if you would prefer to read the recap on Twitter, you can see it [here](#). We plan to live tweet more of our events as well, including Rauch and Harris’ conversation. If you are interested, follow us on Twitter!

The Pizza & Politics began with the question “What is politicized science?” The range of answers reflected the range of majors present: “We believe science is inherently political, and has been for a long time,” one student said. Another student responded to the question differently: “Politicized science is the action of taking the facts out of the hands of those who understand them.”

The conversation shifted to a discussion of politicians using science. Professor Pat Cottrell, leveraging his experience on the Hill, rhetorically asked “Who do you call as witnesses to a political hearing? People who fit your narrative. If you want the statistics to go up, they go up.” This led to a discussion of politicians like Ted Cruz who used very small portions of graphs in order to mislead the public on general temperature trends. “You can lie with data, just go back to a outlier, and you can neatly eliminate trends,” Professor Chad Tillberg commented. These misleading facts can vary based on your media diet, he added: “It makes a big difference which political echo-chamber you are living in...Often, you have to follow the science back to the source.”

In closing, Professor Cottrell posed a question: "Do scientists have a moral obligation to engage the political process?" Professor Tillberg added the potential this generation holds: "The younger generation, you guys, are better—you can be the change."

Watch for future newsletters to learn more about PLACE events, teaching resources, and details on your PLACE Faculty/Student Fellows! Thanks for reading, and please feel free to send me questions and suggestions at pcottre@linfield.edu.