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Vol. 7, No. 1  
January/February 2015

## The legacy workshop was a hit!

As advertised, **Jeannine Florance's** October 21 workshop on "How To Save, Show and Share Your Personal Legacy" was terrific. Her "love of photography, her fascination with personal stories, and her



Photo by Carot Munger

interest in organizing collections," as stated in the flyer about the workshop, were clear to all. She simply knows her stuff and gave workshop participants a lot of useful tips and resources, whether "legacy projects" be "leafing out" a family tree; compiling photos on a compact disc, with or without labels, narratives, music, or whatever; or simply organizing photos in boxes for future reference.

An entertaining and productive strategy she suggested for getting information from relatives about family members who appear in old photo-album photos is to compile the photos in a slide show that can be shown on your television set or a computer screen at family gatherings. As family

members view the show, you can take notes on what they say about each given photo. For preservation purposes alone, just converting old photos to digital form is a big plus.

When it comes to sorting photos, other "visual keepsakes," and memorabilia, and to figuring out how to archive them, ask yourself who might care about the materials you're working with. What do you want to do with this material? What would others who might have an interest in the material want to see done with it? Once you've figured out what you want to do, make a schedule for yourself to get the project done and then *stay on task* – and don't have food or drink around your work!

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Jeannine emphasized the importance of acid-free storage of materials subject to deterioration. It's best to place such materials in acid-free archival boxes, and the materials should be kept loose in the boxes to prevent scratching. Handle photos with soft white gloves, and hold them by the edges. If you want to write on photos and the like, use an acid-free pencil or pen, which you can find at an art-supply store.



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Store your materials in these boxes at room temperature and *never* in your attic or cellar.

It's impossible to capture all that she had to say in this small space. You had to be there, as they say!

She did provide an extensive handout that outlines "Photo and Memorabilia Archiving Resources," and gives examples of costs for personal-legacy projects. To see the handout, go to the chapter's webpage, <http://wa.aft.org/retirees>.

### A note from Mary Hale about the workshop



When **Don** and I and daughter **Liz** left the Legacy workshop, we were on our way to Astoria to visit my almost 95-year-old aunt. I had with me many, many pictures from the early 1900's that I was not able to identify. My aunt was able to identify most and also provide history and background. Thanks to the workshop, I plan to include a narrative where possible as a part of the photo album.

Great timing for me!

### Help bring fair pay for women!

The Economic Opportunity Institute (EOI) on November 7, 2014, published a Fact Sheet entitled "Fair Pay for Washington Women" asserting that while "Women make up half of the workforce and earn more college degrees than men," in Washington State for every dollar a man makes, a woman only makes 80 cents. For each dollar a man makes in the state, women in software publishing make 77 cents; women in aerospace

manufacturing and food service make 86 cents; and women in clothing retail make 71 cents.

The Institute calls for an update to the 1943 Equal Pay Act through the Washington Paycheck Fairness Act, which would, according to the Fact Sheet,

- Prohibit retaliation against any employee who discloses or inquires about compensation.
- Clarify that all employees can ask the employer why they are being paid less or don't have the same access to career opportunities as others.
- Strengthen enforcement, requiring bona fide factors other than gender – such as education, training, or experience – for differences in pay, hiring, work assignments, or career tracks. Women would also gain the ability to file complaints with the state rather than having to go to court.

According to **Susan Levy**, chapter vice president and AFT Washington's representative to the Puget Sound Advocates

for Retirement Action (PSARA), that organization, EOI, and several women's groups are seeking help in lobbying for this proposed legislation.

Thus, if you know of any specific examples of

where women were doing the same job as men and received a lower salary for it, please contact her via email to let her know the details ([sjlevy.01@gmail.com](mailto:sjlevy.01@gmail.com)).





## Three poems Sandra Schroeder

### Autumn, in One Sense

As days fall back,  
the soundtrack of living alone  
sometimes is loud as  
teams losing in stadiums, or  
cars shouting down freeways,  
lost lawn mowers,  
doors slammed against winter,  
dogs barking like idiots who've finally  
bitten the moon.

Sometimes you welcome  
the sounds of little living.  
A butter knife scraping toast.  
The squeak the chair makes when you sit.  
A chickadee strangely  
tapping the edge of the window.  
And today the leaves falling,  
actually the tiniest soft sigh  
of red leaves drifting from the maple.

In the quiet, contemplations  
creep out of their cool corners,  
mumbling their bartered  
lies. You collect them,  
your fingers sprouting  
October berries.

### Suspended

In the plane a wealthy man  
whines about heated towelettes.  
Five wars loom.  
His distracted wife left him yesterday;  
he still has business in Chicago.

His annoying voice creeps  
into second class, where a girl  
plans her suicide.  
Icecaps melt; the ocean rises.  
The towelettes were not hot enough.

One happy, one unhappy steward  
push food. Elbows knock  
as we pull snacks from our bags.  
A mine explosion kills all.  
The whining man settles down.

Storms surge. Elephants die.  
Fear hatches. Guns heat the climate.  
One hundred fifty strangers,  
seventeen hundred miles.  
The plane drones on. The wealthy man sleeps.  
The girl reconsiders.

### Daughters in Dimensions

Ingenious methods  
to decipher our mothers  
avail us nothing. They dance  
past our memory, stalk  
our failures, inhabit  
our lost dreams.

This man, our father,  
marches as though a soldier.  
The war of our hearts  
costs beyond our capacity.  
Every day we fear the men  
who wear the outfit  
that shines like armor.

Now our girl  
is abandoned at the prom.  
He jumps from the limousine,  
runs into the night, becomes  
our nightmare as much as hers.

Yet love can befriend us,  
pretty as a hyacinth.  
We will breathe  
the warm good air.  
We will close our eyes,  
even if childless,  
mothers and daughters,  
entertaining the hapless  
fathers and sons  
at the picnic at the end of the earth.



Poems ©Sandra Schroeder, November 2014

*Sandra Schroeder was a member of the English faculty at Seattle Central Community College from 1979 until 2001, when she was elected as president of the Washington Federation of Teachers, which became AFT Washington. At SCCC, she served as local union president and held other offices. She retired as president of AFT Washington in 2013. She now serves as secretary of the retiree chapter, having replaced Roger Carlstrom, who stepped down from that post in May of 2014.*

## **Retirement reflections a decade after** By Gary London



Like many of you, I am sometimes asked if I miss teaching. No matter how often the question has been put to me over the past ten years of retirement, I always hesitate before answering,

and then come up with some awkward response that reflects some ambivalence about no longer being in the classroom.

Retiring was not an easy decision for me. In fact, I vacillated for several years before finally biting the bullet. (The fact that this expression first occurred to me as a way of describing my decision may be significant.) I had signaled my intention to retire for such a long time that I began to feel like the boy who cried wolf. Perhaps I was ashamed not to retire when I did because I had been so public in going back and forth on the subject.

My decision to retire was a highly personal one, and, though family and other factors may certainly play a part for some, I suspect that most of us leave teaching because the time simply feels right. As I increasingly hear of higher education

faculty teaching into their seventies and, occasionally, beyond, I am cheered to see that an arbitrary retirement indicator, like reaching age 65, is not observed for the sake of form.

I confess that when I hear some of these contented septuagenarian educators interviewed, I do wonder what it would have been like to continue teaching beyond my forty years. I never wearied of teaching, of students, of colleagues, of the values of community college. What I usually say by way of explanation for leaving is that I simply grew tired of reading and grading essays – evenings, weekends, holidays. Whenever my wife heard my complaints, she would remind me that I had constructed the machinery for my own misery: Why not require less writing by students? Call it conviction or stubbornness, but I could not bring myself to do that.

That time I once gave to plowing through those essays now goes largely into highly rewarding volunteer work, travel, and family. I no longer have teaching-related anxiety dreams, like not being able to find my classroom or having the wrong set of lecture notes.\* Still, when a former student I meet by chance recalls a positive experience in a political science class years ago, I do wonder what it would be like to be in the classroom once more.

*\*Ed. note: I wish I knew Gary's secret for not having dreams like that in his retirement. I have had them throughout my retirement of more than sixteen years. Though, as did Gary, I loved teaching, I rarely have a dream about it that isn't terrifying! R.C.*

*Gary London began teaching political science at Everett Community College in 1964 and retired in 2004. In the fall of 2011, he wrote an article for the Retiree Newsletter, "Retiring with children can be rewarding," about his volunteer work as a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).*





## Here's more on "trigger warnings"

*Ed. note: In the October/November 2014 issue of the Retiree Newsletter, we ran a "Voices from Yakima" feature about "Trigger Warnings" and whether they should be present in the classroom. Frequent contributor to this newsletter, **Michael Kischner**, responded in an email, and his response follows. After receiving Michael's email, I forwarded it to the Yakima Voices, and one of them, **Sid Smith**, replied. His reply follows Michael's note.*

*An additional note: AFT Washington publishing policy requires that a word Michael used in his email to me be changed to "the N-word," which I have done below in brackets. The policy also requires that reference to "black" in "black Americans" be capitalized so that it reads, "Black Americans." I have met the policy requirement, as you can see below, though it would never have occurred to me to capitalize the "b" in black, anymore than to capitalize the "w" in "white Americans."*

*If you'd like to weigh in on this conflict between the political correctness of AFT Washington on the one hand and what Michael actually said in his email, please contact the Newsletter with your thoughts: [retireenews@aftwa.org](mailto:retireenews@aftwa.org).*

### Michael Kischner



When my son was small, he had no problem with reading scary books or having them read to him. But when we went to show him the TV version of one of those books, he couldn't handle it. From that I speculated, and still believe, that when we read, our own imagination must come into play so that we can visualize what the text calls up, and this is a kind of protection from our visualizing

more than we can tolerate. We have a measure of control. But with movies or TV, we do not have that control: we must confront the images thrust before us. That is why in most cases I do not think trigger warnings are needed for books.

But I cannot call the whole idea of warnings "bullshit." I could, and did, when I was young. I loved *Huckleberry Finn* and was determined that every freshman I taught was going to encounter it. If the freshmen were black, they would have me to instruct them in how to keep the constant recurrence of [the "N-word"] and the portrayal of Jim in proper enlightened, historical, and liberal perspective. Then one day it struck me that this might just be a huge arrogance on my part. Maybe I just had no clue to what it might be like for some Black Americans to read *Huckleberry Finn* – even with trigger warnings, which I had come to use regularly. So I just stopped assigning the book. No matter how much good the book had done for many of my students, no matter how much would be lost by my dropping it, I realized that assigning it had been for me ultimately an indulgence in what I loved.

Anyway, I guess I would say that to the extent that trigger warnings are a way of being sensitive to some students and helping ease them into literary experiences they may come to value, the warnings have a place.

### Sid Smith



Warning labels on films (and ads for them) began in 1968 with the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) film rating system. The Yakima Herald Republic uses the

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MPAA letter rating with explanatory terms. For example, we find the following warning for the film "Birdman" (certain to garner many Oscar nominations, I think): "R for language throughout, some sexual situations and brief violence."

Would a similar system work with college texts, such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (original edition, not a bowdlerized one)?

You may recall Huck's father, Pap, is a stumbling drunk and beats Huck. Yes, there is "brief violence." How about "sexual situations"? In his 1948 essay "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in Huck, Honey!" Leslie Fiedler famously proposed Huck and Jim's relationship was implicitly homoerotic. Not enough there to tag it with the warning "sexual situations," but enough to send a curious reader back to check that out.

Finally, "Birdman" has "language throughout." I have noticed this is common to many R-rated movies. And as I think about it, most of the literature I taught (from Chaucer, to Shakespeare, to Faulkner) had "brief violence," and all of it had "language throughout." My verdict is *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* could carry those warnings.

## The American labor movement has much to offer!

By Ross Rieder, President



As some of you know, besides being president of this chapter, I have another title: president of an organization called Pacific NW Labor History Association.

One of my functions is editor and publisher for the last 35 years of the PNLHA Labor History Calendar.

While working on our 2015 edition, I had an interesting observation and realization. In spite all the anxiety we hear about the condition and weaknesses of our American labor movement, there is a lot going on out there. There are new groups organizing (e.g., immigrant taxi drivers in Portland) and depicted in the calendar. There are postal workers and friends confronting bad-citizen businesses that contribute to undermining the institution of our postal service. The cover of our calendar recognizes the major successes of long-tread-upon agricultural workers (and the artwork is shared to PNLHA by Mike Alewitz, one of the best known muralists in North America.) There are images of the huge Labor Day Picnic held in Portland each year – children playing, everybody having a good time together.

Yes, there are lots of good things going on for American workers. And their unions are a strong part of their voice – the strongest. In what a couple of my Yakima friends referred to as the "Ed Biz," our union has been a key group in bringing educators into the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Good on us!

## So that's why! Alan Dershowitz and the Declaration of Independence

By Roger Carlstrom, Editor



I'd like to return to a book I cited in an article for the July/August *Newsletter* last summer about **Donald Sterling**, the deposed owner of the Los Angeles Clippers basketball team and his "right to privacy" –

or lack thereof. The book is **Alan Dershowitz's**

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*Rights from Wrongs: A Secular Theory of the Origins of Rights* (2004).

Dershowitz insists that rights do not come from God, nature, logic, or “the law alone.” “God,” he says, “does not speak to human beings in a single voice, and rights should exist even if there is no God.” Rights speak to “values,” but nature is “value neutral.” Rights don’t come through logic because “there is little consensus about the a priori premises from which rights may be deduced.” If rights came from “the law alone,” there “would be no basis on which to judge a given legal system.”

Rights, he contends, “come from human experience, particularly experience with injustice” (emphasis in the original).

Given this perspective, consider the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. . . .

Dershowitz sees problems in moving from “God-given natural law to manmade positive law based on social contract”:

If the truths contained in these laws are so “self evident,” why did the British authorities and American Tories not recognize them? How are conflicts among self-evident truths to be resolved? What if there is a conflict between the law of “Nature’s God,” as understood by some elites, and “the consent of the governed”? From whom among the governed is consent required?

He finds much more appealing than this “quotable rhetoric” the enumeration of King George’s abuses in the Declaration, which, he contends, spoke to actual (bad) experience – to injustices. He notes that no such rhetoric appears in the Constitution: “Now that we were a nation of laws, the last thing the framers – now the lawmakers and enforcers – wanted was to encourage extra-legal actions based on vague notions of natural law.”

I’ve always wondered about the seeming disconnect between the Declaration and the Constitution – where is the former in the latter? Dershowitz has helped me see why the disconnect is there.



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