

Meet Dr. Poirier
Our new program director introduces herself. **Pg. 3**



Opportunities
Returning to school amidst a global pandemic. **Pg. 5**



Applied
Interdisciplinarity in action through the unlearning journey. **Pg. 8**



Convergence

A newsletter for students, graduates, and friends of DePaul's ISD Program

Spring 2021

Hello again! . . . and a leisurely farewell

Just the next evolution in a dynamic, ever-changing program

David Gitomer



It's good to be writing a letter for Convergence again! Due to my academic leave in 2019-20 and the continuing challenges of the pandemic last year, we haven't been able to produce a newsletter for two years. Last spring also brought my decision to begin the Phased Retirement process which meant the transfer of leadership to a new Director, Dr. Lisa Poirier.

Fortunately, our incredibly capable graduate assistant Jess Macy, whose design and editorial skills are seen everywhere in this newsletter, has been working continuously to gather and create the kind of content we like to showcase in Convergence. In this role Jess continues in part the work of Susan Jacobs, who as the Program's longtime Associate Director, was also the former editor of Convergence.

Evolutions

For many reading this letter, I have been the only program director you have ever known. I became director of the Master of Arts of Liberal Studies Program in 1998. After we absorbed the Interdisciplinary Studies Program

in 2004, my title became Director of the joint MALS & IDS Program. In 2015, the program officially changed its name to the Interdisciplinary Self-Designed Program.

As I look to the next chapter of my life, I am thrilled to be passing the reins of our unique student-centered graduate program to Dr. Poirier, who introduces herself in her own letter in this issue of Convergence.

In Context

Both for those who were MALS students in the past and for those of you who only know the program in its IDS format, I'd like to offer a brief history of graduate liberal studies and interdisciplinary studies at DePaul. Both programs started in the mid-1970's, and both were way ahead of their time.

MALS afforded adults in mid-career an opportunity to explore the liberal arts with other adults under the guidance of DePaul's distinguished faculty. Our MALS Program became nationally known as one of the most

rigorous and intellectually diverse in the country.

Former professor Charles Strain was instrumental in founding the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs; both Dr. Strain and myself have been involved in the national leadership of the Association as board members and presidents.

MALS incubated new fields of study in the university at a time when there were few graduate programs in the College. For example, what is now the Women's and Gender Studies Program began as a concentration in the MALS program—and that concentration is still available in IDS. IDS began as a venue to allow international students with non-standard backgrounds create programs that combined professional studies (chiefly business at the time) with work in the liberal arts.

By the time I became involved in IDS in the early 2000's there were also non-international students starting to do cross-disciplinary work. By 2010 our students were taking courses in all

continued

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WelcomeLetters

Hello again! and a leisurely farewell, cont.

A letter from (former) ISD Director Dr. David Gitomer

the colleges of the university with the exception of the College of Law.

In the mid-2000's, we started to notice that the audience for the broad enrichment offered by MALS was



receding while the interest in highly specific self-designed interdisciplinary and interprofessional programs was growing.

Happily, the IDS format allows those seeking enrichment in

the liberal arts to create individualized programs very similar to the classic graduate liberal studies format. This means that continuing MALS students are able to complete their programs with no difficulties.

All ISD students have discovered that no matter where their academic and professional curiosity take them--and whatever career goals they envision for themselves--the Interdisciplinary Self-Designed Program can find a way to help them get there.

The future

In my present role of advisor, I not only support Dr. Poirier as she becomes familiar with the administrative ropes of our unusual program, but—more enjoyably—she and I get to work together in advisement sessions with prospective, newly admitted and ongoing students.

As I think about leaving academic employment in the next few years (but not academic life, since I have an active research agenda ahead) what I

will miss most will be the conversations with students, from the initial brainstorming with prospective students where academic and career dreams start to take concrete form among DePaul's course offerings to lively discussions about capstone projects.

Starting this year, our program is even more strongly supported by a newly reinvigorated Advisory Board, representing many of the areas in which our students are expanding their academic and professional horizons. I'll be part of ISD through the coming academic year at least, and look forward to many more conversations with all of you. ❖

Convergence

A newsletter for students,
graduates and friends of
DePaul's ISD Program



Editors: Lisa Poirier

David Gitomer

Writer/Designer: Jess Macy



Our Blog: gradselfdesign.com

Hello, ISD folks!

Championing interdisciplinarity as a promising (and necessary) mode for the future

Lisa Poirier

I am truly honored to introduce myself to all of you as the new Director of the Interdisciplinary Self-Designed Program (ISD). I have met many current and hopeful ISD students already, and I hope to meet all of you soon, whether via Zoom or on our beautiful campus in Lincoln Park.

I've spent the last few months being shown the ropes by Dr. David Gitomer. I am learning so much about how ISD operates on the administrative and academic levels. It's been a whirlwind! And it is already clear that the best and most exciting aspect of ISD is our graduate students. You are all such creative thinkers, strong self-advocates, and collaborative contributors! I am looking forward to learning more about each of you and helping you to achieve your goals. I am very fortunate to have Dr. Gitomer at my side, mentoring me as I begin to lead this program. He remains an integral and official part of ISD, as Advisor to all ISD students. I am sure you are all quite relieved that you still have his expertise and guidance to rely upon – I know I am.

But I do want to assure you that this is not my first time at the rodeo!

I do have previous experience with directing a graduate program. For seven years, I served as the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Comparative Religion at Miami University in Ohio, helping students to navigate the program and achieve their academic and career goals. For the last decade, I have been a faculty member in the Department of Religious Studies at DePaul, and I am happy to report that I treasure the collegiality I have found among my colleagues there. I hope to draw on the relationships I've forged with faculty across the university to help every ISD student make connections in their areas of academic interest.

A little more about me: My academic expertise is in religion and colonialism in general, and indigenous religions of the Americas in particular. I teach undergraduate classes in the Honors Program and in Religious

of Religion." My scholarly publications range from a book about the role of gender in intercultural encounters between the Wendat people and French Catholic missionaries in 17th century Canada, to an article about Native American Church symbolism in the Kaw/Mvskoke saxophonist Jim Pepper's jazz compositions. I also have a couple of very short pieces forthcoming in a wonderful anthology entitled *Indigenous Religions in Five Minutes*.

And now, I'd like to take advantage of this bully pulpit to say something about ISD and the future. To my mind, interdisciplinarity is not just a fine addition to existing graduate curricula; it is the most promising mode of graduate study for the twenty-first century, and perhaps even the greatest hope for the future of the academy. Disciplinary divisions and boundaries have long shaped academic inquiry,

but strict disciplinarity can devolve into internal conversations and can limit collaborative possibilities. Interdisciplinary inquiry can empower us to address questions that traverse disciplinary borders, and it can open us to fundamental transformation as we face the problems and seize the opportunities of our time.

Next, I want to know more about all of you! Please email

me any time with questions or concerns, or even just to say hello. And do continue to include Dr. Gitomer in all of your ISD-related correspondence; we're working as a team! ❖



Studies, including "Native American Religions," "New Religious Movements in the United States," "Gender Identity and Sexuality in Religion," and "Theory and Method in the Study

It's nice to meet you!

My crash course in a program that resists categorization

Jess Macy

For the first few years of my undergraduate degree, I was a conflicted student. I found myself pulled in several different directions—from philosophy with its grand abstractions to political science and its contemporary implications. Completing reading homework for literature classes was an exercise in joy, while my classes in women and gender studies stoked the activist inside of me. For the better part of my thirty years, I've been in school. It isn't hyperbole to describe myself as a lifelong student. I have more interests than there is free time in the day.

DePaul's Interdisciplinary Self-Designed Program is my first introduction to a hybrid program. While my previous university offered "cross-disciplinary" courses, I hadn't been aware of programs you could design from nearly the ground up. During the process of applying for program assistant, Dr. Gitomer asked that I imagine myself as a current student in the ISD program. This was a thought experiment that required surprisingly little thought. I pinpointed, fairly easily, what would've drawn me to Dr. Gitomer and DePaul's ISD program.

Seeing complexity

The first time I became consciously aware that my academic interests resisted tidy categorization happened as an undergraduate during my sophomore year. An English professor assigned us a fascinating research project with a creative twist. We were to comb the university's newspaper archives for a historical event that sparked our curiosity. After researching the incident, we were to write a short story or a collection of scenes from the imagined perspective of a participant or bystander.

After hours of clicking through the

(thankfully) digitized newspaper collection, I discovered an incident that had been more or less sanitized from the university's public history. A few months before the Kent State shootings in 1970, two male students—a senior and a sophomore—in response to the Vietnam War, broke into the campus' ROTC building and set it ablaze. The arson was not without consequences. Both boys were severely burned from the blast, the senior, in particular, burnt on over 80% of his body. They attempted to hide themselves away in the university's adjacent nature park, but their combined injuries forced them to the hospital.

The incident marks one of the first college-based anti-war demonstrations.

Reverberations

It was a spectacular drop-off. The university had once writhed with political and social opinions—sometimes conveyed in a refined manner (via mostly respectful and thoughtful letters-to-the-editor) and sometimes in a style that flamed up with such passion that everyone felt the blowback. The shockwaves of this particular incident seemed to do the opposite of what one would've assumed—the student population became more docile, more engrossed in the everyday ebb and flow of classwork and social drama.

The assignment transformed the way I approached my creative work. I transitioned out of my search for stories from purely autobiographical or imaginative sources to a research-based approach with interests in feminist, sociological, and historical perspectives. I was utterly ill-prepared for this research journey, however. This was a story I would have intended to return to with a more developed research arsenal following (or during) my tenure in the ISD program.

Revising the road map

DePaul's ISD program offers a twofold preparation for students. Often, students enter the program with specific vocational goals and are able to splice together a

personalized program that addresses both their passions and the ultimate destination in their profession. A perfectly imagined road map is not a requirement, however. (This is likely to be the position I would have found myself.) Graduate students are also drawn to the program because of its emphasis on intellectual competencies, which boil down to the art of becoming an inventive, resolute investigator.

Our lives—both professionally and personally—are multi-faceted, complex affairs that resist categorization as much as any living, evolving thing. Our ISD program is leveraged upon the understanding that education, goals, and vocations are far from static. If you're looking for a graduate program with customization, depth, and flexibility.

It's been such a treat to contribute to a program I so admire—one I could have easily found myself joining under different circumstances. ❖



Jess Macy, ISD Program Assistant

A chronic nomad, Kansas City native Jess Macy has settled in Chicago after stints in Toledo, OH and Prague, Czechia. She is an MFA candidate in Creative Writing and Publishing at DePaul.

Finishing what she started

How Stephanie Kanter found opportunity amidst a global pandemic

Jess Macy

It's been 17 years since Stephanie Kanter was last in a classroom.

After earning her B.A. in Philosophy, Kanter began her master's degree in the

ISD program in the early 2000s. Sometimes, life intervenes. Kanter had to put her degree on hiatus.

What finally brought her back?

"The pandemic! When I left

the program, I had completed all the coursework and even did the first draft of my thesis, which is on a totally different subject than I am now. I opened a business and life took over. I became a mother and I worked—and then the pandemic hit, and everything screeched to a halt. I thought, 'Well, why don't I finish that thesis?'"

"I didn't finish my second draft of my thesis the first time around," Kanter says, "literally there probably wasn't a single day over the course of 17 years that I didn't think about finishing it."

The transition back to university life wasn't without its challenges, though, especially in the face of a global pandemic. "It's been a much slower haul than I had initially thought it would be," she explains, "I've been out of practice, and I still have to juggle a bunch of different things, but the pandemic had a silver lining. In a situation like this, I'm kind of grateful."

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Kanter's

interests evolved over the last two decades. She decided to toss her original thesis and start on something enormously relevant to her profession.

"For the last 20+ years I've been working in nonprofit in a variety of different areas, but all of them have focused on disability: disability rights and disability sport. I really hunkered down in disability. I'm a person with a disability, and it's really where I've spent most of my time for the past 26 or 27 years."

The inherent flexibility of ISD's program allowed for Kanter to drastically switch her concentration. "The new subject matter is really an outgrowth of what I've been doing for the last 15 years, and that's disability in sport. A piece of that is working at a program which brings people in from all over the world who are using sport to address injustices and working to empower people with disabilities in their community."

"I'm consulting with a woman in Zambia who is preparing to launch a

wanted to take a narrow look at a couple of different people's experiences in their cultures and how they define disability in the disability body." As part of her thesis, Kanter interviews athletes with disabilities, focusing primarily on the intersection of their culture's perception of their disability and their sports participation.

"How does that intersect with their culture? Does that intersection have an impact beyond just themselves—does it impact their community? And, if so, is that a form of diplomacy?"

Fundamentally, the ISD program's approach to areas of study reflects how Kanter views the world at large. "Everything is a nice web of ideas. I don't think anything exists in a silo. For me, interdisciplinarity really means making connections between different subjects and areas of studies or ideas. Disparate topics intersect, particularly in real life."

So far, Kanter's return has been just as rewarding as it was 17 years ago. "I



wheelchair basketball clinic in the capital. We're in the process of trying to ship 6 wheelchairs over there. It's been the highlight of the past 15 years of work I've done. I've gotten to travel. I've visited Brazil and Tunisia for disability inclusion, but the opportunity presented itself by way of sport.

Kanter's work shaped her new thesis, which is about disability across culture. "I

wouldn't have come back had it not been, and it wouldn't have haunted me, if it hadn't been such an exceptional experience the first time around. I'm so glad to have an opportunity to work at my pace and complete the degree. Reflecting back on my experience, it was always more than I'd expected it to be." ❖

Surveying life (and art) on a grayscale

How complexity enhances focus and spurs discovery

Aaron Vague

A.P. Vague is an adjunct faculty member in The Art School at DePaul, as well as a graduate student in the Interdisciplinary Self-Designed Program. Vague's artistic practice utilizes sound, photography, video and drawing, transforming our belief and faith in images.



What is your academic background?

I study Art & Art history. As a practicing artist, I've always believed in research-based approaches to artistic practice, and I want to explore this further in my studies at DePaul.

What is your work background?

I'm an educator who has worked with students of various ages from middle school through adulthood.

How did you go about planning your degree course list?

I wanted to explore topics that I'm not already an expert in - in working toward a degree, I want to absorb the broadest range of knowledge that is practical and hear from a large community of diverse voices.

What disciplines, schools, or programs are in your degree schedule?

Most of my classes are related to

international studies and media studies. There is a significance crossover in the work that I do, where art can be discussed in terms of critical social theory and other similar disciplines.

How have you navigated the COVID-controlled academic year? What were your challenges? Any happy surprises?

In my experience, artists have generally stepped up and worked hard to make things happen despite the difficulties of working through this time. A year ago I expected galleries and other community efforts to simply pause or shut down, but thankfully that hasn't happened. Programming in visual art has been vibrant, experimental, and collaborative in new ways that give me hope for a time after the pandemic is behind us.

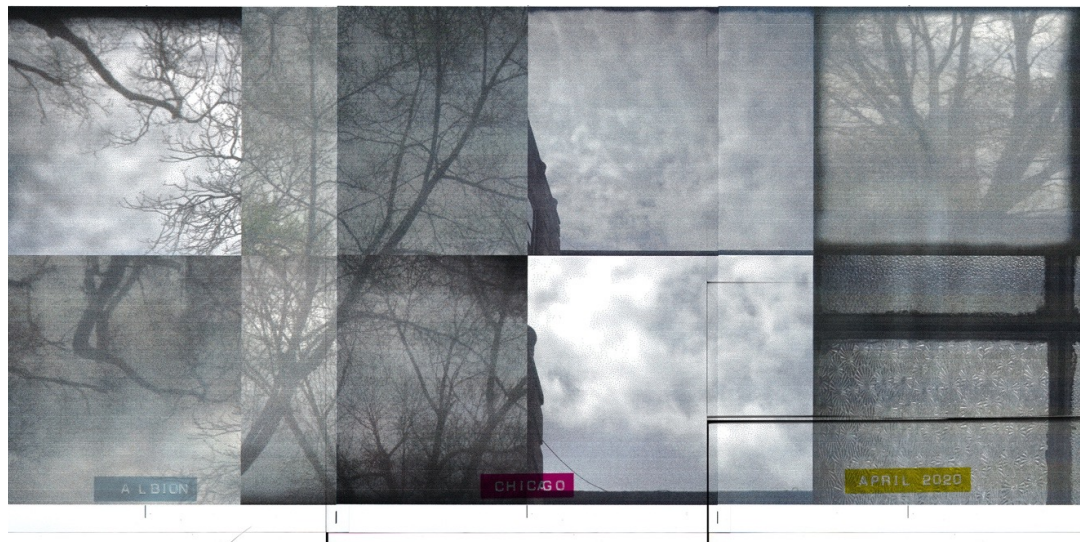
things in terms of grey areas and complicated examples can reveal new ideas that keep me looking for more.

If you've started to think about your capstone project, could you give us an overview?

I'm working on producing a small-scale academic conference that includes innovative methods for scholarship. The logistics of this are of course complex, so the results are still yet to be determined.

What does "interdisciplinary" mean to you as a student and a scholar?

It means that my interests can be explored from multiple angles. There might be a tendency to think of the term "interdisciplinary" as evidence of a lack of focus, but in my case it's the opposite. The ideas and ways of thinking that interest me most can be found in a variety of



What are you most fascinated by? What captivates you in your academic, personal or professional life? (Or all three!)

I love ambiguity. That may sound impossibly broad, but one of the things that makes me keep working through art and theory is that there is always more to learn and understand. Thinking about

academic categories, and being able to be a part of many of them only enhances the focus of what makes my work what it is.

How do you feel about DePaul's ISD program?

Everyone has made this experience incredibly special, even when working through a strange period of graduate studies. ❖

CommunityProfile

What it means to be seen

After years feeling overlooked, Aspen Gatz talks about finally finding her niche

Jess Macy

Aspen Gatz is in a hotel room in London when I interview her. (Via Zoom, of course.) For Aspen, the COVID pandemic brought Chicago directly to her apartment

in Los Angeles, while also allowing her to move up in her California-based company. “I was scouring Chicago for jobs, but I couldn’t really find anything, and I was

begging my job to let me stay and work remote. They let me, but they weren’t thrilled about it.”

The pandemic intensified, and DePaul University transitioned to online course offerings. With the shift into a virtual space, Gatz’s problems were solved. “By doing school remotely and working full-time, I can still financially support myself, which was one of my biggest stresses. I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for COVID,” she says.

Gatz’ early career in higher education proved itself challenging. “I went to the University of Arizona-Tucson. I loved it, but I had no idea what I wanted to do. I was undecided for my first semester. My first year was rough. I was failing everything because I was in the wrong programs.”

Gatz felt the desire for a program that addressed all of her interests, even before she knew about

interdisciplinarity. “I really wish there’d been a program like [ISD] in undergrad, mainly because there are students who go into college with an idea of what they want to do, but there’s no academic program that covers it. That’s how people take on double, triple majors because they feel like they need all these different things, and they spend way too much money.” She laughs. “God bless the triple majors.”

Eventually, Gatz found her home in Communications Theory. She supplemented her major with a double minor in fiction and poetry. “The first two years were definitely rough, mainly because I hadn’t found my passions. It’s really hard to commit yourself to some-

something that I wasn’t, especially at Arizona. I looked the part; I walked the part. I was in a sorority. I had long blond hair. Professors would write me off. They seemed to be thinking: ‘Oh, there’s no hope for you. We’ll just get you through class, and then we’ll just get you through the next one.’ I actually had a desire to learn that was overlooked for so long.”

DePaul’s ISD Program—and Dr. Gitomer—saw something different. They saw potential. For the first time in her academic career, Gatz feels seen. “My professors, like Dr. Gitomer, see me as an academic. He looked past my records and saw in my proposal that, this girl, she was overlooked,

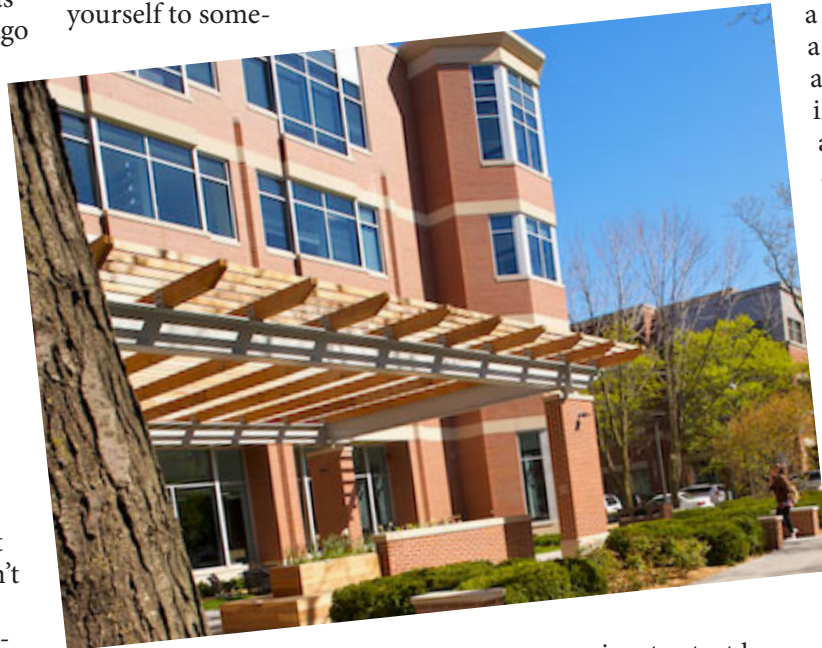
and she deserves a chance. I had a 4.0 last term, and I’m surprising myself—I’m actually really smart. So, I think what gives me energy is being recognized for my potential. That’s a first for me.”

Gatz currently works for Pollen, a company in the entertainment space. She

aspires to start her own company in the very same area.

“I want to curate human experiences that offer customizations in the entertainment industry. Basically, I want to plan experiences that reside within experiences that are personalized to the individual. I’m also a writer, so now I’m using multiple

continued



thing you aren’t passionate about.”

Once Gatz found a program that suited both her needs and her interests, she settled in.

Something nagged at her, though. Gatz never quite shook the feeling that she had fallen victim to stereotyping. “There was a long period of time in academia where I was labelled as

Beyond the invisible knapsack

How interdisciplinary initiatives can start conversations

Megan Renner

In the Fall of 2019, the DePaul University Women's Center and Office of Multicultural Student Success (OMSS) launched "Project 100 Days of Challenging White Supremacy." This interdisciplinary initiative was designed "to foster critical conversations within the university to challenge white supremacy, systemic whiteness, and structural racism, and to lift up many forms of resistance and resilience in re-

sponse." DePaul staff, students, and faculty contributed one hundred powerful messages that were shared on Instagram and Tumblr in the first half of 2020, including reflections, art, poetry, and resources that compel us all to learn, reflect, change, and act.

Since that initial 100 days, of course, the urgency of challenging white supremacy has only grown and deepened. To facilitate the project's ongoing contribution to this critical dialogue and action, all posts have been compiled and formatted into an accessible, user-friendly platform at tinyurl.com/project100flippingbook. Those within and beyond the DePaul

community are invited to deeply engage with the content—to read, reflect, grapple, share, start conversations, and build on the posts for our own scholarship and activism.

The post reprinted below was contributed by ISD student Megan Renner for Day 15 of 100. Megan will complete her DePaul Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies in June 2021, with certificates in Critical Ethnic Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, and Adult Education. Her Capstone project "What's White Supremacy Got to Do with It?" focuses on an analysis of the many ways that white supremacy manifests in nonprofit

The intentional (un)learning journey

Megan Renner

Nowadays the concept of white privilege is widely recognized, if still resisted. Many have acknowledged their privilege, unpacking "invisible knapsacks" and examining their contents. Too often, however, this is where the effort stalls...with feelings of guilt and/or helplessness impeding further action.

It's possible to get "unstuck" by following the lead of scholar-activists who challenge us to think about white supremacy in more complex and nuanced ways. It's time to repack our knapsacks—first discarding what doesn't serve our anti-racist goals—and restart our glitching navigation apps. We must prepare for the fact that the learning journey ahead will be lifelong, and it will not be easy. We may not have turn-by-turn directions, but there are some guiding principles and "guideposts" that can help us find our way...

Looking back

We must first look with fresh eyes at the path we've traveled—how race was made, adapted, and used in different

phases of history to rationalize systems of domination that normalize and produce racial inequities.

Looking inward

We must also examine our own pasts: our unavoidable socialization into "white supremacy culture." Although we didn't consciously choose this, it will take an intentional, ongoing effort to unlearn the ways we have been conditioned to cooperate and collude with white supremacy.

Calibrating our compasses

Even the most commonly used words elicit different meanings and bring up unspoken assumptions and feelings. It's critical that we're all heading in the same direction with shared definitions anchored in shared values.

Escaping the quicksand

In one of its most successful evolutionary moves, racism redefined itself as a false dichotomy. We keep getting sucked back into dividing people into either good/innocent/not-racist ("one of the good ones") or bad/guilty/racist. Not only does this erase our human complexity, but it also makes it "effectively impossible for the average white

person to understand—much less interrupt—racism."

Giving up our patches

Once out of the quicksand, it's now clear we can't just affix an "anti-racist" patch to our knapsacks, describing a fixed identity. We must constantly ask ourselves: "How am I working to disrupt racism in this context?"

Charting our courses:

Individually, white people go through several identity stages as we deepen our awareness of our relationship to race. This is not a smooth, simple, or linear path, so it's important to cultivate empathy and minimize judgment.

Looking ahead

As we re-imagine the future, it is clear that we've reached a fork in the road. We can "follow the yellow brick road" of awareness, accountability and action towards transformation...or fall back into the swamps and deceptive mazes of continued refusal and avoidance. It's a choice we will need to make over and over, again, every day for the rest of our lives. ❖

InterdisciplinarityApplied

LOOKING BACK

"Time and again, powerful and brilliant men and women have produced racist ideas in order to justify the racist policies of their era...to redirect the blame for their era's racial disparities..."

– Ibram X. Kendi,
Stamped from the Beginning

LOOKING INWARD

"...examine the ways in which our dominant or majority culture conditions our minds and hearts to accept as normal that which, with cultural blinders off, we would see clearly as destructive dominance."

– Tema Okun,
The Emperor Has No Clothes

CALIBRATING OUR COMPASSES

"To be a racist is to constantly redefine racist in a way that exonerates one's changing policies, ideas, and personhood."

– Ibram X. Kendi,
How to Be an Antiracist

ESCAPING THE QUICKSAND

"The opposite of living in a world of false binaries is practicing integration—the act of bringing together all the parts of ourselves..."

– Brené Brown, *Dare to Lead*

Megan Renner, Founder & Executive Connector of Heart-Head-Hands Consulting & Coaching

Megan is a veteran nonprofit executive turned "pracademic", offering consulting and training to nonprofit organizations and coaching for nonprofit leaders; her specialized practice areas include governance, coalition building/collaboration, and policy advocacy. She is passionate about dismantling the roadblocks of white supremacy along the journey towards transformative individual learning and organizational change. When not connecting the dots between radical inclusion, collective impact, and adaptive leadership, she performs in a women's dance group, sings show tunes while baking, and trains with her adorable terrier athletes.



GIVING UP OUR PATCHES

"We can be a racist one minute and an antiracist the next. What we say about race, what we do about race, in each moment, determines what—not who—we are."

– Ibram X. Kendi,
How to Be an Antiracist

CHARTING OUR COURSES

"You can't get to courage without rumbling with vulnerability."

– Brené Brown, *Dare to Lead*

LOOKING AHEAD

"Since my learning will never be finished, neither will the need to hold me accountable."

– Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*

www.heartheadhands.net

touchpoints in my own writing to create fictional worlds for my potential clients. My goal is to create the embodiment of a fictional world. I want to really push those limits of what is possible.”

Gatz has been very deliberate with the construction of her program. She is aiming for an accumulation of material that will directly result in an investor proposal for her start-up company. Her course list falls under three umbrellas: business entrepreneurship, creative writing, and psychology. “I’ll soon need to go through my first round of funding. I’m planning on using my thesis as proof that what I’m doing will work. The research will show that my idea can function. That’s why it is super important that I get it right, not only to pass and get out of school, but because this will be something I present to future investors.”

Ultimately, it’s Gatz’s ability to continue working at Pollen paired with her ability to take classes remotely that

have had a transformative effect. She is able to marry practice with theory. “I would not have the opportunity to go to DePaul and do the job that I’m doing now if it weren’t for COVID. I’m thankful for the experience of having both,” she says.

I ask her what she thinks of when she hears interdisciplinarity. She hardly pauses. “Freedom. Only because I had a very specific experience in undergrad of feeling confined and labelled. Like: ‘Okay, this is what you have to do.’ And I think that’s why I did so poorly in undergrad. Interdisciplinarity gives me the freedom to define my own degree and not let the degree define me.” ❖

In our next issue ...

The Gentile-Fotis Endowed Scholarship Fund for ISD students

Meeting the ISD Advisory Board:

Lisa Poirier
(Director)

David Gitomer
(Advisor)

Hugh Bartling
(School of Public Service)

Kelly Kessler
(College of Communication)

Jess King
(College of Computing & Digital Media,
School of Cinematic Arts)

Christie Klimas
(Environmental Studies, College of
Science and Health)

Susan McGury
(School of Continuing & Professional
Studies)

Sanjukta Mukherjee
(Women’s & Gender Studies)

Alex Papadopoulos
(Geography)

Alyssa Westring
(Kellstadt Graduate School of Business)



Adult Student Affairs

[studentaffairs.depaul.edu/
adultstudentservices](http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/adultstudentservices)

Alumni Association

alumni.depaul.edu

ASK Network

ask.depaul.edu

The Career Center

careercenter.depaul.edu

Course Catalog

sr.depaul.edu/coursecatalog

Digication

depaul.digication.com/

Financial Aid

[depaul.edu/admission-and-aid/
financial-aid](http://depaul.edu/admission-and-aid/financial-aid)

Financial Fitness

financialfitness.depaul.edu

LAS Grad Students Service

[las.depaul.edu/student-resources/
graduate-student-support](http://las.depaul.edu/student-resources/graduate-student-support)

Course Catalog

sr.depaul.edu/coursecatalog

ISD Blog

gradselfdesign.com

Office for Academic Advising

oaas.depaul.edu

Student Life

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