Welcome to the 2017/2018 Academic Year

At the end of the 2017 calendar year we look back on our last year and forward to the rest of the 2017-18 year together. The calm of summer allowed us to plan for a full academic year, build new partnerships, and hone in our goals.

Due to popular demand, we are offering the Interrupting Privilege seminar again this year. Every quarter a cohort of students and alumni meet for intergenerational discussions on difference and equity. They attend lectures, plays, and workshops together throughout the quarter.

We are using the interviews recorded during our StoryCorps partnership for listening parties that engage our community in radical listening. We are also using the data we accrued in a burgeoning research project on racial listening and telling.

This May we will be hosting the fourth annual Race and Media Conference. The Conference is made possible by the generous support of Microsoft. In addition to scholarly presentations, we will showcase the work of our Collaborative Project Scholars, have networking sessions for community organizers and activists, and host a reading of Lisa B. Thompson's latest play Underground.

The associate directors and I have been busy reformatting our Communication, Power, and Difference class so that it is engaging, informative and impactful to undergraduate students.

Below are additional details of dates and locations. I hope to see you there.

Ralina Joseph, Ph.D.
Director
Save The Date:

Jan. 10, Prof. Khalil Gibran Muhammad Lecture “How Racial Criminalization Underwrote America’s New Deal,” Organized by Simpson Center & WISIR | Kane 210, 7 pm

Jan. 16, BLACK HISTORY 101 MOBILE MUSEUM: ’68, Organized by CCDE | Mary Gates Hall Commons, 8 am – 4 pm

Jan. 17, Prof. Megan Ming Francis Lecture “Equity & Difference: Rights,” Organized by UW Graduate School | Kane 120, 7:30 pm, Registration Required

Feb. 20, Interrupting Voices Listening Party, Organized by CCDE | Kane 225, 5:30 pm, Registration Required

May 10-12, Race and Media Conference, Organized by CCDE | Ethnic Cultural Center, Registration Required

Ongoing Student Programs

Tuesdays:

Real Talk Tuesdays, graduate student lunches in CCDE (CMU129), 11:30-1 pm | in partnership with GO-MAP

Fridays:

Real Connection Fridays, undergraduate lunches in CCDE (CMU129), 11:30-1 pm

Visit our new website: ccde.com.washington.edu

Read stories written by our students, listen to our Interrupting Voices audio clips, and sign up for our listserve.

Follow us on Twitter @uwccde and Facebook, search UW Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity.

Want to get involved with CCDE research or community work?

Contact us at ccde@uw.edu
One afternoon in the Odegaard Library, students and community members of the UW Center for Communication, Difference and Equity’s *Interrupting Privilege* class gathered to listen to recordings of discussions between individuals who had been asked: “When was the first time you experienced discrimination?” The event was part of UW Doctoral Candidate Anjuli Brekke’s dissertation, which focuses on audio storytelling and “exploring the affective political potential, in terms of opening spaces for dialogue across differences of telling, listening and sharing personal narratives, both online and within situated communities.” In addition to the students, project participants referenced in the recordings were also in attendance.

*StoryCorps*, a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people, originally recorded these interviews.

The audio clips ranged from 4 to 5 minutes in length, and were each accompanied by an image projected in front of the audience of those speaking. Topics included the Importance of Representation, Regional Experiences of Racism, and Race and Gender. Project participants were given the opportunity to provide context for these stories, which sparked additional conversations during and after the event. Storytellers included a young girl in the south, a female police officer, an aspiring vocalist, and a UW student, among others.

Professor Ralina Joseph, director of the CCDE, also led a communication exercise called “Serial Testimony.” Students were paired together and asked to finish the phrase “privilege is…” They
then took turns, speaking for a minute while their partners were asked to actively listen. They were then tasked with finishing the phrase “interrupting privilege is...” using the same technique.

As the evening came to a close, the general consensus was that the only way the event could have been improved was for it to have been longer. At times the room was silent during the event, save for the voices of the storytellers. At other times, the space was alive with laughter and warmth. The event was a truly radical way to spark conversation and practice deeply engaged listening.

“The listening party was, to me, a perfect encapsulation of a CCDE project,” said Dr. Joseph. “It grew out of a collaboration with our partners in the alumni association, the graduate school, undergraduates, and the greater Seattle community. Everyone in the room had an opportunity to learn about, and practice the skills of, radical listening: it was a skills-building event. I am so grateful to all those who participated and shared their stories, as well as those who worked on bringing the project to the CCDE.”

By Olivia Hall | CCDE Communication Specialist

KUOW played some of the clips during the month of December; you can hear the clips on kuow.org, search for “Communication, Difference, and Equity.”

To listen to all the clips, visit our website: http://ccde.com.washington.edu/interrupting-voices/

Here’s what our Interrupting Privilege students have been writing. Visit the blog.
https://interruptingprivilege.wordpress.com

Microaggressions: Mighty Consequences
By Jasmine Louie, Interrupting Privilege Student

I remember the first time I experienced a microaggression first-hand. As I typed away at a computer station at my local public library, I noticed an adult male with a flustered look on his face seated at the adjacent computer station. He soon glanced over at me and beckoned for technological assistance, “Because your type is good with computers.” Stunned by his choice of words, “my type” repeated in my head like a broken record. I quickly categorized myself in groups to which I belong, to determine what type he referred to—I am female, a teenager, and Asian. After deciding to take over his computer, I sheepishly nodded as the man proceeded to say that almost every Asian person he has met has excelled at mathematics and technology. I felt like an entirely different species.

Although initially bewildered by his words, I believe this man is not a bigot, but a person who lacked the consideration to interact appropriately with those from diverse racial backgrounds. Far too often, people do not fully understand the weight of their words referencing stereotypes as if they were factual, especially these brief, everyday indignities. However, microaggressions make a lasting impression on their victims. As a person skillful in areas of literature and social studies over mathematics and science, I find myself questioned by others who expect me to fit the “superior at math” mold cast for Asians; I felt inferior for not fitting a bleak generalization placed upon my ethnic group. Although I feel as if I am fighting an ongoing battle against prejudice and microaggressions, I have trained myself to view situations from every perspective; if this situation were to reoccur, I would tactfully explain that labels feel limiting. However, I am still learning how to appropriately inform others—I fear that I will grow tired of having to explain myself; this racial battle
“Change the smaller worlds, make larger systematic changes” A Microaggressions Workshop

By Marcus J. Johnson, PhD Student

On December 6, 2017 undergraduate students and alums begin to gather on the second floor of the Husky Union Building at the University of Washington. Throughout the quarter, students and alums engage questions of privilege through public lectures, workshops, and plays around the UW campus as part of Interrupting Privilege, a course developed and instructed by Professor Ralina L. Joseph and co-facilitated with CCDE Assistant Director Gina Aaftaab, PhD student Mia Lawrie and student facilitators Eve Rickenbaker and David Alvarez. This evening is special because students have prepared to lead the workshop on microaggressions. Professor Joseph opens with a few warm words and acknowledgments framing the concept of interrupting privilege. Joseph poses a powerful question asking, “How do we change the smaller worlds around us, in order to make larger systematic change?” With this question in mind student facilitators revisit a series of community norms agreed upon by students and alumni. The community norms help shape the space and open dialogue for meaningful engagement through discussion and deep listening. Groups of undergraduate students provide a roadmap of how microaggressions function. In this action-oriented workshop, the pairs of students begin to delve deep by defining microaggressions, what is problematic about microaggressions, why we should interrupt microaggression and most importantly, how to respond to microaggressions using their toolkit.

Often microaggressions are racialized or gendered and occur in subtle ways but the impact can be long lasting. The student presentations highlight how subtle and impactful verbal or non-verbal microaggressions can be. Concluding the presentations students form into their community groups to begin the workshop. Each table is labeled with a number ranging from 1-9 and approximately two alumni and three students who work as a team. Each table has a different themed microaggression ranging from “Myth of Meritocracy” to “Colorblindness” in which the groups read the aggression and possible response. Responses range from “Paraphrase/Reflect” to “Redirect.”

While students lead the discussion, community members practice listening and responding to questions. As a participant and observer, the shared personal narratives of being a victim or offender of microaggressions emphasize the significance of this workshop. Some of the stories are shared for the first time and most of the group members did not have a way of naming the experience. Based on our collective experience we choose a few of the personal narratives shared and develop ways to respond based on the toolkit.
We put the experiences on one side of a piece of white paper and the response on the other side. Using Twitter, each group photographs and uploads the microaggression and response. With each group’s tweets uploaded, we reconvene in a larger group and share the experience and response. The shared narratives challenge you to travel back in time and work through a deep painful experience; the microaggression-toolkit verifies the experience is real and provide a non-confrontational way to address them when they take place.

The CCDE strives to be a space where our community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni gather to promote greater equity. Through research collaborations, networking opportunities, action-oriented classes, mentorship programs, and community engagement we engage in dialogue to think critically about race and its intersections, to interrupt privilege, and ultimately to change the structures of power around us.

If you are interested in supporting our work, contact us at CCDE@uw.edu.

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