

Third EOU Mini-Conference

Proposed Title: Remaining Awake in Eastern Oregon

Coming: Thursday, April 21

With a visit and speech by
George Mehaffy, Director of the American Democracy Project,
Wednesday, April 20

About the Mini-Conference

Higher education is rapidly changing, as visions of the college on the hill removed from society give way to a the college as public square, or open range, where many people come together in a spirit of public problem solving. This year's mini-conference will model the new work of universities by fostering university-community collaborations. We will focus upon issue areas such as sustainable economics, environmental stewardship, hunger and food security, diversity and education. A series of roundtables showcasing the work of community partners and EOU students, faculty and staff, will frame discussions of adding to current projects and partnerships, developing new ones, and working toward consensual solutions. We are now searching for volunteers to help plan and lead the conference; please let us know if you'd like to be involved. Contact: Rob Davis, rdavis@eou.edu, 962-3560.

About the Student Mini-Conference

This year, the student portion of the mini-conference will expand as a three-day series of workshops, events, and opportunities organized by the themes of eco-feminism, diversity and community service. Events on Thursday, April 21, will include an Environmental Service Fair on the quad and a series of workshops by community partners, faculty and students to engage the campus and community in environmental issues. Saturday, April 23, will include a series of Earth Day activities such as tree planting with the United States Forest Service and a composting workshop with the La Grande Master Gardeners and the La Grande Air Quality Commission. This event will conclude with a community Earth Day Celebration at the Forest Service office on Highway 30.

About George Mehaffy and the American Democracy Project

The American Democracy Project is a multi-campus initiative that seeks to create an intellectual and experiential understanding of civic engagement for undergraduates. The goal of the project is to produce graduates who understand and are committed to engaging in meaningful actions as citizens in a democracy. George Mehaffy is Vice-President for Academic Leadership and Change of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. See his Powerpoint on the American Democracy Project at <http://bronze.ucok.edu/AmericanDemocracyProject/highlights.htm>

Remaining Awake

Our proposed title is adapted from the sermon "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution" given by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C., March 31, 1968. The full text of the sermon is available at <http://www.yonip.com/main/peace/revolution.html> and elsewhere on the web. Here are excerpts:

There can be no gainsaying of the fact that a great revolution is taking place in the world today. In a sense it is a triple revolution: that is, a technological revolution, with the impact of automation and cybernation; then there is a revolution in weaponry, with the emergence of atomic and nuclear weapons of warfare; then there is a human rights revolution, with the freedom explosion that is taking place all over the world....

Now whenever anything new comes into history it brings with it new challenges and new opportunities. And I would like to deal with the challenges that we face today as a result of this triple revolution that is taking place in the world today....

First, we are challenged to develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone, no nation can live alone, and anyone who feels that he can live alone is sleeping through a revolution. The world in which we live is geographically one. The challenge that we face today is to make it one in terms of brotherhood....

Secondly, we are challenged to eradicate the last vestiges of racial injustice from our nation. I must say this morning that racial injustice is still the black man's burden and the white man's shame....

There is another thing closely related to racism that I would like to mention as another challenge. We are challenged to rid our nation and the world of poverty. Like a monstrous octopus, poverty spreads its nagging, prehensile tentacles into hamlets and villages all over our world. Two-thirds of the people of the world go to bed hungry tonight....

I want to say one other challenge that we face is simply that we must find an alternative to war and bloodshed. Anyone who feels, and there are still a lot of people who feel that way, that war can solve the social problems facing mankind is sleeping through a great revolution. President Kennedy said on one occasion, "Mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind." The world must hear this. I pray God that America will hear this before it is too late, because today we're fighting a war....

We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice....

