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## And Now A Word From...

By: Cynthia A. Wood

No Abstract

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THE KENAN INSTITUTE FOR ETHICS  
**KIE CONNECTION**

## Consensus-Building & Appreciative Inquiry

**M**ention consensus as a goal to pursue and you'll hear the refrain that usually it's just not possible. The reasons are varied: Group members often hold steadfastly conflicting views. Differential power within groups creates a stumbling block to finding common ground. Consensus-building is such a long and complicated process that it would take a curriculum of its own just to enable people to try it.

But picture this—a city council, often characterized as dividing along racial lines, crafting a statement about how they as a council intend to behave. Or how about a group of professional women from across departments and disciplines articulating how they will contribute within a university setting? Fantasy? No, it's *appreciative inquiry*, a facilitation process that's meeting with remarkable success in building consensus quickly, collaboratively and effectively.

Appreciative inquiry (AI) gives participants a chance to recognize and articulate shared values because it seeks to focus only on what's positive and valued by individuals in the group. Applying the time-tested steps used in conflict resolution, participants partner to identify an experience they value highly, summarize their experience in one word, and practice reflective listening as stories are shared within the group. Generating words and ideas recorded by a facilitator, the members then use stickered dots to vote for the words and ideas they find most impor-

tant. Group editing engages everyone in drafting a statement of intentions, values, or visions. Through it all, the work is surprisingly non-confrontational.

With training in appreciative inquiry from a local dispute settlement center, I have facilitated AI with a number of diverse groups, and I can confidently say that if a group is willing to commit three hours of undivided attention, and follow the process correctly, AI works. You can get almost any group of individuals to write a statement exemplifying the best of what each values, but it means taking a leap of faith and convincing those in the room to take that leap with you.

What seems to make AI work, really work, is that it doesn't just focus on what people hope for, but rather relies on the best of what people have actually experienced within their roles or organizations. Through informal (and intimate, if you will) dialogue with their partners, everyone begins to appreciate what those around them most value and wish for within the group. This reliance on communicating actual experiences coupled with partnered dialogue makes the development of new ideas possible and the goal of crafting a statement through consensus achievable.

In my experience, AI has worked beautifully with a small trade association, a professional women's group, a neighborhood association board, 140 Rotary Youth Leadership Award winners, an international high school in

Venezuela, a group of young filmmakers from across the country, and the administrative staff of an academic department. In closing, I'd like to share how another AI session really stands out as unique in its ability to create consensus.

Troubled by an increase in crime along their borders (crime particularly targeted at a newly emerging Hispanic population living on the fringes of these neighborhoods) three neighborhood associations in Durham formed a loose-knit coalition eager to identify specific problems and get city officials to help. Concerned that things would deteriorate into wrangling over individual issues at best and a shouting match at worst, the leadership took a gamble on a piece of the AI process. Almost 150 concerned neighbors each contributed one wish for improving their neighborhoods. These wishes were grouped according to category of problem they addressed. With 25 elected and appointed officials watching, the group then set about voting for those issues they thought were critical priorities. Once seven key areas were identified, individuals physically divided into groups and brainstormed next steps for following through on each priority issue. The spirit in the group was inspiring, invigorating and energizing. People talked about what they achieved for months afterwards, and the city devoted time and resources to tackling the issues raised.

The next time you hear that consensus-building is too tough to try, steer the nay-sayers toward appreciative inquiry. Consensus is just around the corner.

*Melanie Mitchell*

For more information on AI, see inside flap.

**April TBA**  
Symposium on  
*Commercialization in  
Genomics: A Blessing or  
a Curse?* with the Center for  
Genome Ethics, Law, and  
Policy and the Kenan  
Institute for Engineering,  
Technology, & Science

**May 1**  
**North Carolina Educators  
of the Year (NCCEY)  
Awards Banquet**  
  
At the Department of  
Public Instruction,  
Raleigh, NC

**May 30-June 2**  
Conference  
*The Content of Our  
Character: Ethics Across  
Generations*

# Calendar

## And now a word from...

*In the wake of September 11, images of destitute Afghans have filled American television screens. Many who never thought about development before now feel we should do more to help poorer countries. This is an understandable reaction. But help initiated in response to such images contributes to making much development part of the problem rather than the solution, because it assumes that people in the “third world” are “underdeveloped” victims who need us to save them.*

*Often the images shown of people in poorer countries are of starving women and their children. This is a common picture presented by international relief organizations dependent upon our sympathy for much-needed funds. But what does it suggest about people in these countries, especially women? Not that they are competent and creative individuals, but that without our help they have nothing.*

*Traditional development is based upon this assumption, and therefore tends to deliver “help” in top-down actions by experts from economically rich countries. The damage done by this approach is difficult to calculate. Indigenous knowledge, local autonomy, and diverse cultures are often sacrificed in the name of “development.” Those being developed commonly have little choice in the matter, in part because they are defined as helpless.*

*Recently, international agencies have placed new emphasis on the participation of the poor in their own development. This is not as good as it sounds. Agencies still have the power to decide what will count in evaluating development. They don't have to listen to participants who say “you are doing a bad job” or “this project is destroying our culture, get out,” because they are not accountable to those they purport to serve. This lack of accountability is partly justified by our imagining a “third world” populated by people we see only as deprived.*

*Major efforts are needed to relieve world poverty. But development must be controlled by the people it affects if it is to do any good. We must demand not only that more resources be devoted to these efforts, but also that development institutions be accountable to the people of the developing world, who are the best agents of change in their own lives.*



Cynthia A. Wood is Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Appalachian State University.

[See next page, Answer This.]

Cynthia A. Wood

If you'd like to share your point of view (in 350 words or less!) email us at [kie@duke.edu](mailto:kie@duke.edu). We reserve the right of refusal for submissions.

## PEOPLE &

### LAWRENCE BLUM

(Advisory Board member) published *I'm Not a Racist, but... The Moral Quandary of Race* with Cornell University Press in November 2001. Blum is Professor of Philosophy, Liberal Arts and Education at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

### ALEXANDRA LEDBETTER GILPIN (T '01,

former LEAPS member) received the Duke Humanitarian Service Award at the 2001 Duke Founders' Day ceremony in October. Sponsored by the Student Religious Activities committee, the award is given annually to a member of the Duke community whose service to others and simplicity of lifestyle warrant special recognition.

**ELIZABETH KISS** (Director), along with Advisory Board members James Joseph and Gary Pavela, participated in a symposium on *Liberal Learning and the Challenge of Uncommon Values* held in Washington, D.C., in January, sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Elizabeth will present at the 11th Annual Meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics in Cincinnati, February 28-March 3; deliver a paper on restorative justice on March 22 at McGill University; and give the keynote address at a conference entitled

An increasingly popular new phrase around college campuses these days is **service-learning**. Service-learning is a pedagogy that brings community needs, student inquiry and faculty expertise together as a tool for fostering civic responsibility, ethical inquiry and student intellectual growth and personal development. As a former student of service-learning and as a university instructor utilizing the tool in my own courses, I know that service-learning is a profound and dynamic tool for engaging students and faculty in the “real” world and in their own learning. If you're a faculty member, how can you determine if service-learning is a good match for your teaching?

# Service-Learning

## Getting Started

First, determine your motivations for wanting to teach a service-learning course, and then consider what you know about this teaching methodology. Are others in your institution incorporating this pedagogy? If so, find out how they do it. If not, seek out resources. (See suggested web resources below.) The next step is critical in determining whether service-learning is a good match for your class: consider your course goals and think about how and if service-learning can help meet those goals. Do the goals of ethical and moral

development relate directly to your class? If your choice of readings and assignments does not clearly establish connections between ethical inquiry and the coursework, then your students are unlikely to make those connections either.

Now you're ready to find a placement site for your students. Many campus departments and organizations may already have longstanding relationships with community agencies and an awareness of community needs. Ask your community service center, office of community or student

affairs, or career placement center for help. After finding an appropriate community site, establish guidelines for the placement: What does the agency need and how will that mesh with what students can commit to? How can the agency prepare students to work with their clients or staff? What about transportation? What protocol will be used when problems arise?

Since structured reflection distinguishes service-learning from community service, you'll need to set aside three or four periods during the term for reflection. Peer education can be integrated into the service-learning experience as well by having trained student facilitators lead reflec-

**Web resources:** <<http://www.nicls.coled.umn.edu/>> *National Service-Learning Clearinghouse*  
<<http://www.compact.org/faculty/>> *Campus Compact*  
<[http://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/service\\_learning/Links.htm](http://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/service_learning/Links.htm)> *Duke Service-Learning links page*

## PLACES

*In Search of Wisdom: Liberal Education for a Changing World* at Mt. Holyoke College on April 4-6, sponsored by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

### MELANIE MITCHELL

(Assistant Director) was appointed in November one of three co-chairs of the newly formed Executive Committee of the Governor's Character Education Advisory Committee (GCEAC), working with schools, universities, and community-based initiatives. Melanie will travel to Pittsburgh March 7-9 to participate in the National Middle School Association's 11th Urban Conference on Middle Level Initiatives, *The Successful Urban Middle School: Closing the Achievement Gap*.

### ALY SATTERLUND

(Community Liaison for Service-Learning) will participate in the North Carolina Campus Volunteers Conference at Elon University on February 20.

### DIANE WARYOLD

(Program Director for Academic Integrity) will present programs entitled "Academic Integrity Primer" and "Critical Competencies of Judicial Officers" at the Association for Student Judicial Affairs International Conference, being held February 8-11 in Clearwater Beach, Florida.

# Fulfilling our Mission

## A Case Study in Moral Deliberation

### OUR WORDS, OURSELVES

It began on the afternoon of September 11th, when a faculty colleague phoned asking the Kenan Institute to try to help the Duke community make sense of the tragedy. Like so many others around the world, we were groping for a constructive response—trying to help by donating blood and money, but also struggling to discern what had happened and what ought to be done.

The next morning, I learned that a multicultural student group, Spectrum, was considering writing a statement to appear in the *Duke Chronicle*, and contacted them to see if we could collaborate. That afternoon, a small group of faculty, administrators, and students gathered to brainstorm a text. The following morning, I began circulating the draft text via email, inviting individuals and groups to sign it.

What happened next surprised me. Signatures poured in—and so did comments, suggestions, and disagreements. I received nearly 50 detailed responses by email, phone, fax, or in person. A group of senior administrators interrupted a meeting to call me and argue over the wording of a paragraph. Student organizations and campus units devised voting strategies to determine whether or not to sign on. At times, emotions ran high: some people denounced the statement for being too hard on America, while others argued the exact opposite. People championed a call for immediate military action or, conversely, for a nonviolent approach. One group engaged in a complex discussion about the differences between *justice*, *vengeance*, and *punishment*.

Given our time constraints for revision, I struggled to balance a commitment to principle

and to consensus. Some signatories dropped out for principled reasons; others who had been reluctant signed on. People offered surprising solutions to moral impasses. The final result was, of course, a messy compromise. But several signatories offered eloquent defenses of moral compromise and of the value of supporting a consensus statement even if one did not agree with every word.

Ultimately, the statement was signed by 146 individuals and 46 organizations. Group signatories ranged from Auxiliary Services to Students against Sweatshops, from the Dance Program to the Philosophy Department, and individual signatories represented every corner of the university, from high-level administrators to the Intrafraternity Council, from Arts and Sciences, Divinity, Engineering, Law, and Human Genetics to Billing and Collections.

The statement's true value lay in how it sparked an iterative process of collective moral deliberation. Afterwards, people remarked on how participating in that process not only helped them personally, but strengthened their vision of what we stand for as a university community. "Discussion of issues in a respectful, committed, challenging, thoughtful and generous way is what teaching is all about," one wrote. Promoting moral deliberation on campus is at the heart of the Kenan Institute's mission. But such deliberation is also essential to sustaining the integrity of democracies in challenging times. In a small way, our statement contributed to both of these efforts.

*Elizabeth Kiss*

tion sessions. Finally, determine how you will assess and evaluate your students' experiences: How will the agency provide feedback to you and your students? How will you provide feedback to the agency? When the course is completed, evaluate. What have you, the placement site, and your students gained? How could service-learning have been more successfully integrated?

Service-learning takes time and commitment, but if it is well integrated within and appropriate to a course's structure and content, and if it is coupled with well-planned and facilitated opportunities for reflection, service-learning can and will change the community, the campus, and the faculty and students who participate.

*Aly Satterlund*

## ANSWER THIS

Questions developed from Paula Hoy, *Players and Issues in International Aid* (Kumarian Press 1998).

1. In terms of percentage of GNP contributed to development, where does the U.S. rank among the 21 member nations of the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation's Development Assistance Committee?  
a. 1st   b. 3rd   c. 12th   d. 21st
2. What percentage of the U.S. federal budget goes to foreign aid of all kinds?  
a. 35%   b. 15%   c. 5%   d. 1%
3. What percentage of the total U.S. aid budget goes toward basic health care abroad?  
a. 30%   b. 17%   c. 3%   d. .3%
4. Which two countries receive nearly a quarter of all U.S. foreign aid?  
a. Haiti and Benin   b. Congo and Ethiopia   c. China and Russia   d. Israel and Egypt

Answers to all are (d).

Professor Cynthia Wood's research explores the intersections of gender and development, Latin American economics, critical development studies, and postcolonial feminist theory. Her essay "Authorizing Gender and Development: 'Third World Women,' Native Informants, and Speaking Nearby" appeared in the Fall 2001 issue of the journal *Nepantla: Views from South*, published by Duke University Press.

# Finding Out More About Appreciative Inquiry

Though KIE's experience with Appreciative Inquiry has just scratched the surface of its possibilities, management consultants have been using AI for the past 14 years in a variety of ways. Credited with creating Appreciative Inquiry, Dr. David L. Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University published with Suresh Srivastva an article "Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life" that launched the movement and set the stage for the many variations of this consensus-building process.

To find out more about AI, to read scholarly articles, and to get a sense of the multitude of ways AI has been used, check out the following:

Assembled by Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD, a source for web links related to Appreciative Inquiry

[http://www.mapnp.org/library/commskls/appr\\_inq/appr\\_inq.htm](http://www.mapnp.org/library/commskls/appr_inq/appr_inq.htm)

Another site linked directly to centers promoting AI

<http://www.new-paradigm.co.uk/Appreciative.htm>

There's even an on-line newsletter!

<http://www.aradford.co.uk/pagefiles/01newsletter.htm>

The Taos Institute recently held a conference, *Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry*, with Jane Watkins and Bernard Mohr, January 26-February 1, 2002. To find out about the conference and about a series of books focusing on the appreciative process, check out their website

<http://www.taosinstitute.org/>

These resources should provide a wealth of information to help you explore the depth of AI's possibilities.

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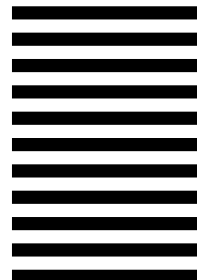
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This statement, in response to September 11th, is described in *Fulfilling Our Mission*.

## ***Pulling Together in the Face of Terror: An Invitation to the Duke Community***

As members of the Duke University community, we, in unity with others around the world, are experiencing shock, sorrow, and anger at the cruel acts of terrorism committed on September 11th. We grieve for those who were murdered, injured, and traumatized, and for all the families, friends, and loved ones whose lives have been shattered. No one in this country remains unaffected by the horrific events in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. They remind us of our vulnerability, a new and frightening lesson for many of us who have never experienced the insecurity people face in some parts of the world.

There are no easy solutions in defending ourselves against terrorism. The days and months ahead will test the wisdom of our leaders and the integrity and strength of our democracy. But they will also test our individual humanity and our community closer to home. Recognizing this, we affirm our commitment:

- To seek tangible ways of helping the victims of this terrible attack, by donating blood, money, and other resources, and by comforting grieving community members;
- To steadfastly oppose any tendency, in ourselves or in others, to stigmatize, scapegoat, or dehumanize the members of any group or the adherents of any religion, and to speak out when we perceive or experience such behavior;
- To seek and support punishment of the perpetrators and their accomplices, not in a spirit of indiscriminate vengeance but in a spirit of resolve to defend freedom;
- To strive, in everything we say or do, to uphold the ideals of democracy and of our common humanity, including human rights, freedom, the rule of law, and concern for the vulnerable;
- To appreciate our human diversity and work to build a community of civility, mutual respect, and mutual understanding.

We call on all members of the Duke community to join us in these commitments. We cannot undo the pain and horror of September 11th, but we can help shape its moral legacy.

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AREA(S) OF INTEREST (CIRCLE THOSE THAT APPLY):

K-12

UNIVERSITY

COMMUNITY

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# With Kids in Mind

Like it or not, our actions and our choices communicate a great deal to the children in our lives about how one should behave. Video games, television programs, and their merchandise tie-ins communicate to children that conquering others through the use of force is acceptable behavior. Good children's literature can communicate the opposite. The books we choose to read to or with five- to eight-year-olds can set the stage for talking about how we act.

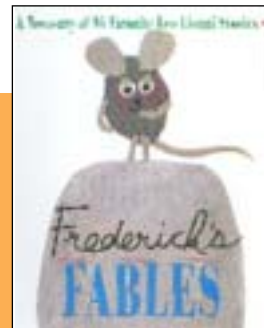
For decades, the work of children's author and illustrator Leo Lionni has served as a starting point for conversations that can lead children to think about their actions. Leo Lionni's paper-collage animals delightfully animate his picture book stories and focus on dilemmas that confront young children on a daily basis—being truthful, feeling jealous, wanting to belong.

Understanding one's value and developing a sense of self-respect and respect for others is beautifully expressed in a number of Lionni tales. *A Color of His Own* opens the door to an intriguing conversation about how we feel when we see ourselves as different from or similar to everyone around us. Though this story represents a chameleon that is continually changing color, conversation can be focused around the many differences that permeate the lives

of those around us. In *Frederick*, as all the members of a mice colony are working hard to prepare for the coming winter, the title character Frederick is seen to be loafing, but insists that he is working "gathering sun rays for the cold, winter days." No one is happy with Frederick until the long cold dark days of winter eat away at the reserves and resources of the mice colony and then Frederick begins to reveal his stored memories. As Frederick shares his stories, the others begin to question their earlier assumptions and come to value Frederick's contributions as they learn that words, images, and poetry can nourish us just as much as material things.

The importance of honest communication is explored in *Six Crows*, unusual for a Lionni fable because a human character interacts with the animals. Here a farmer battles with a bunch of pesky crows, each side concocting ways to frighten the other, with losses to both. It takes a wise owl to suggest that the crows and the farmer get together to talk out their differences and, though this is difficult at first, in the end they reach harmony and agreement.

*Swimmy* is a tiny black fish in a school of red ones who ultimately learns (and teaches the others) that collectively they can accomplish more than they each could alone. The value of work-



From *Frederick's Fables* by Leo Lionni, copyright ©1985 by Leo Lionni. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf Children's Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

ing collaboratively is echoed in *The Alphabet Tree* when single letters learn to form simple words and then connect together to create a message of peace that is presented to the President—a beginning lesson in civics, if you will.

Dr. Robert Coles, author of *The Moral Intelligence of Children*, has said that a child starts absorbing lessons even in the first year of life, and continues to do so thereafter. Reading Lionni's stories (available at your public library) can provide a rich field of topics to be explored in the most basic way. Asking a simple yet complex question such as "Has this character hurt someone?" can launch a valuable conversation about behavior with younger kids—something it's never too early to begin talking about.

Melanie Mitchell

*Frederick's Fables: A Treasury of 16 Favorite Leo Lionni Stories*  
ISBN: 0679888268 ©1997  
176 pp with color illustrations  
Ages 5-8  
Publisher: Alfred A Knopf



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