

# WHITMAN

MAGAZINE



## Shared Humanity

Students team up and take on ethical dilemmas  
in a unique course at the state penitentiary

SPRING 2020

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

# Community Efforts in Face of Crisis a Source of Pride for Whitman

I HAVE WRITTEN in past columns about my appreciation for the rhythm of the academic calendar. Typically the second half of the spring semester ramps up with excitement and activity, accompanied by a bit of anxiety and fatigue. I've experienced this rhythm as a student, a faculty member and an administrator. The various emotions associated with this time of year, while challenging, have become predictable.


This magazine, with its months-long production calendar, was produced with that reality in mind. And while I hope you enjoy the stories and news we have to share from the first half of the year, I couldn't let the magazine go to print without acknowledging the profound ways in which our world, and our campus, have changed.

On March 9, in an email to the Whitman community, I outlined the principles we would follow in responding to the crisis as we moved forward. By March 12, the situation had changed so dramatically that we pushed ahead with our announcement that we would move to online learning following spring break. From March 9 through March 18, we sent a message every day, culminating in the March 18 message announcing that we would not be able to hold our traditional commencement ceremony on the date set in May. And then, on March 30, we "returned" from spring break with all classes taught remotely. That's a period of three weeks. I've joked that sometimes it takes those of us in academia that long to decide where to put the commas in a sentence; we're not known for our speedy response time.

But, faced with a challenge of unprecedented size and scope, the Whitman community came together in truly remarkable ways to advance our mission of student learning. Faculty leadership, with Alzada Tipton at the helm, provided strong and consistent guidance to their colleagues who were shifting their classes to remote-learning formats. Our student affairs team continued supporting students as they decided where to spend the remainder of the semester, while also building out virtual programming to help those students, wherever they landed, maintain a sense of belonging. Kazi Joshua and Thomas Witherspoon and their staffs worked together seamlessly to make sure all students continued to feel supported by the college. Our fundraising team, led by Steve Setchell, reached out to our donors and friends to check in on them and share our deep appreciation for their support. We received consistent praise for our communications to faculty, staff, students and parents, efforts that were guided by Josh Jensen's team. And, Josh's admission group created virtual visit days for our admitted students in the class of 2024 who could no longer visit campus and stayed in constant contact with that important group of prospective Whitties. Peter Harvey's finance group worked to figure out how to manage our current financial challenges while also modeling what all of this might mean for future budgets. His physical plant and human resources staffs were central to keeping all of us safe and productive. I could not be more proud of the leadership team with whom I work every day and all members of this community who have pulled together during this time of crisis.

Of course, there are still many unknowns. As I write this, nobody knows how long this crisis will continue or how it will impact student enrollment. My most optimistic, hopeful self believes we will be back together on campus in the fall, but I don't really know that. What I do know for sure is that we will remain true to our mission focused on student learning and to our sense of what makes our Whitman community so special.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Murray  
President



# WHITMAN MAGAZINE

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## CLASS NOTES

To submit, go online to [whitman.edu/classnotes](http://whitman.edu/classnotes).

## WHITMAN MAGAZINE

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## FEATURES

- 12** **WON'T SOMEONE THINK ABOUT THE CHILDREN?**  
Associate Professor Erin Pahlke joins psychology researchers to ask how much children really understand about politics.
- 18** **COMING TO THE TABLE**  
A Whitman College philosophy course at the Washington State Penitentiary teams up incarcerated and campus students to find solutions to ethical dilemmas.
- 28** **A BURNING PASSION FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT**  
Sam Perkins '17 spent a year traveling on a Watson Fellowship studying how countries deal with natural disasters. Now he uses that knowledge, and his years as a firefighter, to help international communities prepare.
- 32** **OFF AND RUNNING**  
Cross country star Whitney Rich '20 finds room to explore her passions — from running to medical translation to the environment.

## INSIDE EVERY ISSUE

ON BOYER AVENUE .....	2
SPACES .....	8
CLASS NOTES .....	38
SYLLABUS .....	48

## SPOTLIGHT

FACULTY: JACQUELINE WOODFORK .....	6
STUDENT: ANDY BURNSTEIN '20 .....	10
ALUMNI: HEATHER WRIGHT '99 .....	36

**EDITOR'S NOTE** In response to the impact of COVID-19, Whitman Magazine will not publish in September. We will bring you a combined fall issue and Annual Report of Gifts in November.

**ABOVE** Activist Angela Davis speaks to a full auditorium in Cordiner Hall on Feb. 19, 2020, to launch the 2020 Power and Privilege Symposium. Read more about the event on Page 2. Photo by Shane Prudente.

2020 POWER AND PRIVILEGE SYMPOSIUM

## Activist Angela Davis Calls for Justice and Transformation

THE WHITMAN COLLEGE AND Walla Walla communities welcomed Angela Davis to Cordiner Hall with a standing ovation Feb. 19, 2020.

As the keynote speaker for the 2020 Power and Privilege Symposium, Davis used her address to look broadly at systems of inequity and injustice, while also sharing her own story and her work in the prison abolitionist movement.

She called on the audience to acknowledge the systemic injustices that are perpetuated in institutions — from prison to education — and to realize that issues like racism cannot be extracted without also dismantling the systems that make them possible.

“There can be no diversity and inclusion without transformation and justice,” Davis said. But that transformation and justice expands beyond issues of race. Standing up against racism, she said, also means standing up against xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, sexism and ableism.

The message resonated with the audience, who snapped fingers frequently in agreement.

The theme for this year’s Power and Privilege Symposium was “Building Bridges.” It’s a difficult task, Davis noted.

“Building community is not easy,” she said. It is made more difficult by the existing structures in society that perpetuate injustice.

But Davis’ message was one of encouraging activism and hope. She reflected on how her own spirit was buoyed during her incarceration in the 1970s on murder charges. Before

finally being acquitted, Davis faced the possibility of the death penalty.

“When I first engaged with the fact that I was facing the death penalty, the overwhelming emotion was fear,” Davis said. “However, as the movement to free me grew ... that solidarity overshadowed the fear. I did come to realize that even if I was sentenced to death, I would not be alone. ... I would be accompanied by thousands and millions displaying collective courage.

“That is why we organize,” Davis said. “The collective is our source of power and courage.”

The Davis lecture set the stage for the rest of the symposium, which continued the following day with nearly three dozen presentations led by students, faculty and staff, discussing topics from mental health issues faced by people of color and representations of the LGBTQIA+ community in media; to examining Greek life at Whitman and issues faced by faith-based communities.

The diversity in both topics and presenters reflect the student-led organization’s theme.

“One of my goals as the executive director was that we go out into the Whitman community and engage with different parties, and let as many people — no matter how polarized or how different their departments are — get involved,” said Jordon Crawford ’21, executive director of Power and Privilege. “We have so many different facets of Whitman coming together. We wanted to make Power and Privilege reflective of every single community on



SHANE PRUDENTE

Angela Davis speaks with students at a book signing on Feb. 19, 2020.

# Mellon Grant Fosters College Collaboration

Whitman College received a \$900,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the Northwest Five Consortium's initiative "Revitalizing the Humanities in the Pacific Northwest through Community Engagement." Whitman received the funding on behalf of all the Northwest Five Consortium (NW5C) schools, which also include Lewis and Clark College, Reed College, the University of Puget Sound and Willamette University.

The four-year grant will enable continued collaboration among the five institutions and

builds on previous successes such as the NW5C Supporting Faculty of Color Workshop at Reed College in 2018, said Provost and Dean of the Faculty Alzada Tipton. Meanwhile, the consortium will expand into new areas of community engagement, both within each school's respective local community and across the Northwest.

"I am especially pleased that the consortium plans to focus on issues relevant to the region, including indigenous communities, immigration and migration, the environment,

and incarceration," said Tipton, the grant's principal investigator. "The approach to these issues will involve community partners as full collaborators, which will further enhance our relationships with these organizations and individuals. This is an ideal opportunity for Whitman to expand on much of our existing work in deeply meaningful ways."

In 2017 the Mellon Foundation awarded Whitman an \$800,000 grant, titled "Diversifying the Curriculum through Community Engagement."

campus — not just students of color, communities of color, but majority communities also."

The Power and Privilege Symposium was born of a call from Whitman students to see the college commit to addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. The first race symposium was held in November 2006 and led by faculty. Its current iteration — which is organized entirely by students — began in 2012. The college cancels classes for the annual event to allow all faculty, staff and students to participate.

The "Building Bridges" theme was important to Crawford; he knows that discussions of equity and inclusion aren't always easy — or comfortable.

"I think in order to build bridges effectively, we need to come together," he said. "I want people to come. I want people to listen attentively. I want people to participate. I want people to be uncomfortable. I want people to not be afraid."

Davis' lecture and the symposium sessions called community members to action. Davis encouraged the audience to go beyond advocating for change and envision an ideal future.

"We can't simply be opposed, we have to have a vision for what we want, what kind of society we want," she said.

Movements begin small, she said, effecting change in the communities that can be most impacted by it.

"There are so many ways to contribute to social justice. So many ways to challenge power and privilege," she said.

## FACULTY & STAFF NOTES

### PUBLICATIONS

**Professor of Chemistry Frank Dunnivant** recently published a research study, "It's a small (coal-polluted) world, after all," in *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*, a journal of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry. The study suggests that coal-burning activities in the Asia-Pacific region have influenced environmental conditions in the Pacific Northwest.

**Associate Professor of Chemistry Mark Juhasz and Austin Kamin '20** reported the discovery of a new molecule that has the potential for use in improved lithium-ion batteries. An article describing this research was recently published in *Inorganic Chemistry*.

### AWARDS

**Professor of Politics Aaron Bobrow-Strain** was awarded the 2019 Pete & Hedda Reid Service to Walla Walla Award, presented Dec. 4 at the

137th annual Chamber of Commerce Community Awards Banquet. The award was given in memory of Kyle Martz '07. Laura and Carl Peterson Endowed Chair of Social Sciences and nominator Keith Farrington accepted the award on behalf of Bobrow-Strain, who was on a book tour. Fitness Facility and Club Sports Director Michele Hanford accepted the award on behalf of Martz's family.

**Senior Adjunct Assistant Professor of English & General Studies Johanna Stoberock** received the 2019 Artist Trust/Gar LaSalle Storyteller Award, which honors "an outstanding literary artist working in fiction." Stoberock's most-recent novel is "Pigs" (Red Hen Press).

### IN MEMORIAM

**Associate Professor of Art Rick Martinez** died Jan. 26, 2020, from a longstanding health condition. Martinez taught and mentored painting students at Whitman

for eight years. He arrived in 2012 and was promoted to associate professor in 2016. His work was featured in group and solo shows at galleries in Houston and San Antonio, Texas, as well as in Portland, Oregon, and Sacramento, California.

### RETIREMENTS

Whitman College is honored to recognize the career achievements of the following retiring faculty and staff. Thank you for your service to the Whitman community.

- **Julie Charlip**, professor of history
- **Keith Farrington**, Laura and Carl Peterson Endowed Chair of Social Sciences and professor of sociology
- **Walter Froese**, controller
- **Kenneth Kern**, electrician
- **Patti Moss**, division assistant, Division III
- **Dan Park**, director of facilities
- **Norbert Rossi**, studio music instructor
- **Betty Waggoner**, administrative assistant, Hall of Music

## ATHLETICS

# Coronavirus Cuts Short Spring Seasons for Blues Athletes

IN MARCH, WHITMAN COLLEGE athletes participated in the first meet of the college's new NCAA-recognized distance track program in McMinnville, Oregon.

It was a strong showing — with eight runners qualifying for the Northwest Conference Championships. Unfortunately, the inaugural meet was also the last of the season, as the NCAA announced March 12 the suspension of the remainder of the winter and spring seasons in response to the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak.

It was a heartbreaking turn of events for the college's scholar-athletes. The women's basketball team was in the process of traveling to its Sweet 16 match up for the NCAA Division III basketball tournament when the decision was made.

Baseball, lacrosse, golf and tennis were also impacted by the cancellations. The men's basketball season ended during the first round of the tournament in early March.

The women's swimming team finished its season strong, claiming its fourth consecutive Northwest Conference title at the championship in mid-February. Swimming coach Jenn Blomme was honored with the Northwest Conference Coach of the Year award. The men's team earned third place in the championship.

In spite of the disappointment of the season ending early, Whitman Athletics remains excited to add distance track to its roster of sports. The college formalized its nontraditional cross country season as an NCAA-recognized distance track program in February.

The program makes it possible for

Whitman's runners to compete in national championships without adding additional coaching staff or expenses for the college, Athletic Director Kim Chandler said.

For several years, Whitman's cross country team has been holding a nontraditional five-week training season each spring, led by coach Scott Shields '91 and assistant coach Neal Christopherson. The training also included three intercollegiate outdoor track meets. Members of the cross country team have been pushing to have the spring training recognized as a distance track program for several years.

Whitman won't be reviving a full track and field program, Chandler noted, and the team will train at community facilities. Distance track runners participate in events that are 800 meters and longer.

## CAMPUS COMPACT AWARDS

# Students Honored for Their Campus and Community Engagement

THREE WHITMAN COLLEGE STUDENTS were honored this spring for their outstanding contributions to the college and the greater Walla Walla community through the Campus Compact Presidents' Civic Leadership Awards and Newman Civic Fellowship programs.

Andy Burnstein '20, history, of Redmond, Washington, received the Outstanding Civic Leader Award and Lia Beatty '21 of South Bend, Indiana, received the Emerging Civic Leader Award. Zidane Galant-LaPorte '21, a sociology major from Redmond, Oregon, was named this year's Newman Civic Fellow.

The honors are given by Whitman College as part of its membership in Campus Compact, a nonprofit



Andy Burnstein '20

dedicated to helping colleges educate students for civic and social responsibility.

This year's nominees are students who have passionately pursued social justice work in areas that are meaningful to them. Beatty gained recognition last year for her involvement with Eye to Eye, a national organization that supports people with learning disabilities. She also works with the Walla Walla Valley Disability Network and is a council member for the National Center for Learning Disabilities.

Burnstein is the social justice coordinator for Whitman Teaches the Movement, bringing social justice and civil rights education into K-12 schools throughout Walla Walla. As part of that work, he redesigned



Lia Beatty '21

the third-grade curriculum for the program. He also completed an internship at the Jewish Heritage Museum in Washington, D.C., and is active in leading social change conversations at Whitman.

The yearlong Newman Civic Fellowship emphasizes personal, professional and civic growth for students who have already demonstrated a capacity for leadership and large-scale problem-solving. Galant-LaPorte was nominated for the award in recognition of her volunteer work. For the past two years, she has organized the college's SCORE pre-orientation program for incoming students and has been deeply engaged in issues of food access and security.



Zidane Galant-LaPorte '21



WHITMAN COLLEGE ARCHIVES

## CURRICULUM

# First-Year Writing Program Recognized for Student Success

**Associate Professor Lydia McDermott listens to students during a writing class. McDermott helped craft a new writing assessment, which was recognized for its success last fall.**

WHITMAN COLLEGE IS CELEBRATING the success of its first-year writing assessment program, which received the inaugural Beacon Award for Excellence in Student Achievement and Success from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities last fall.

The program began two years ago, crafted by Charles E. and Margery B. Anderson Endowed Professor of Humanities Dana Burgess and Associate Professor of Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse Lydia McDermott, who also serves as director of the college's Center for Writing and Speaking.

McDermott and Burgess created the assessment program when they saw the need to offer additional writing support for incoming students, particularly international students or those for whom English is a second language. They recognized that some of these students were struggling in the first-year Encounters program in what seemed a "sink-or-swim" model for success in academic writing.

An additional challenge was that not all

faculty who teach in the first-year program were trained in providing writing instruction, McDermott said.

"The reality that we kept coming up against is that most faculty don't feel equipped to teach writing at a more basic level," McDermott said. "They feel equipped to grade writing and assign writing, but not to teach specific skills related to writing."

To address the disparity in writing abilities, Burgess proposed offering an assessment to all incoming students to see who could benefit from additional writing instruction, and expanding the college's offerings of its language and writing course.

The first group of students was assessed in September 2017. In the first year, 60 students took the course, and improved their score by an average of 4.5 points, compared to 1.6 points for those students who did not take the course.

In 2018, the difference was even greater: The 77 students enrolled in the writing course improved their score by 5.4 points on average, compared to 1.5 points for those who didn't take it.

"It's been more successful than we'd hoped," McDermott said, with instructors seeing the biggest gain in students' abilities to craft thesis-driven arguments supported by evidence. "That's the primary goal of the course, so I'm happy that's where people are improving the most."

The program required significant investment from the college. Before the writing assessment program began, Whitman offered only two sections of its language and writing course, serving about 30 students. This fall, there were 10 sections, with 150 seats total.

This fall, the college will retire the Encounters program and roll out a new first-year curriculum, as well as revised distribution requirements for general education. An emphasis in writing abilities will remain a critical component, and the first-year writing assessment will continue to serve a role. The college is also offering professional development to faculty members who would like additional training in how to teach writing skills.

"I think this program is successful because it is driven from the ground up by faculty and staff who are truly committed to helping students become better writers," said Kendra Golden, associate dean for Academic Affairs. "Everyone involved participates because it improves the writing of under-prepared students and sets them up for success for the rest of their college career."

# A Holistic Approach

AS AN ADVISOR AND HISTORIAN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JACQUELINE WOODFORK WORKS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND SEE CONNECTIONS

BY SAVANNAH TRANCHELL

**“I think I was maybe born a historian. I’ve always been interested in things that happened in the past and wondering how they came to be.”**

JACQUELINE WOODFORK — associate professor of history

JACQUELINE WOODFORK DOESN'T JUST want to talk with her advisees about history. Or even class planning. Or life after college.

She also wants to hear about their current lives and get to know them, and for them to get to know her.

Like in 2018, when she had several advisees who played for the Whitman College baseball team. She filled her car with other students and drove everyone over to Borleske Stadium so they could cheer on their classmates.

“The players were really happy that people came out to see them,” said Woodfork, an associate professor in Whitman’s Department of History. Those are the types of relationships and connections she tries to develop with all of her students.

“It’s about recognizing that college is not solely about the academics — there’s a lot that we learn outside the classroom,” she said. “It’s also about seeing another side of somebody. It’s interesting, when you see a student in class, and then you see them performing in a play or playing in a baseball game. You appreciate people as whole beings and not just academic beings.”

Her efforts to develop relationships with her pre-major and major advisees doesn’t go unnoticed by her colleagues. In spring 2019, she received the George Ball Award for Excellence in Advising.

“Professor Woodfork has proven to be an invaluable mentor and role model for students, especially to students of color,” said Provost and Dean of Faculty Alzada Tipton during the award ceremony. “She is described as simultaneously compassionate and demanding, striving to help students reach their greatest potential.”



## UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE THROUGH THE PAST

For her part, Woodfork enjoys the investment she gets to make in students as she guides them through their majors and academic careers. She also knows firsthand the value of good advising. As an undergraduate student studying French at Middlebury College in the late 1980s, her own advisor pushed her to take a history course, igniting a lifelong passion for the subject.

“I think I was maybe born a historian. I’ve always been interested in things that happened in the past and wondering how they came to be,” she said.

Woodfork specializes in African history, specifically Senegal during World War II





and modern Francophone West Africa. She has a master's and doctorate in history from the University of Texas at Austin. She came to Whitman in 2006 after teaching at Loyola University in New Orleans.

Woodfork combines her love of history and French in her work, and is currently working on a book about WWII veterans and the ways in which they came to “feel French.” A future project examines the histories of African prisoners of war in Germany.

“I find my field and I find what I do to be incredibly interesting. It's cultural military history, which I think for a lot of people raises eyebrows,” she said. “I work with veterans for their understanding of how the

military treated them and how that affected not only their time in the military, but their outlook on things. I do archival work and I use oral sources as well, so putting those two together has led to some really interesting ways of being able to look at their pasts.”

Woodfork views history as an incredibly valuable major for Whitman students, particularly those who are interested in earning advanced degrees.

“Being a history major doesn't mean you have to become a historian. It's a perfect pre-law major,” she said. “There's so many ways in which history is helpful. Sometimes it's helpful to remind students that there are myriad ways in which they can use what they have learned academically.” **W**

**Associate Professor Jacqueline Woodfork teaches history, with a focus on Senegal during WWII and modern Francophone West Africa.**




## Allen Reading Room

Here's a space where quiet is the cost of admission. In fact, around campus, the Allen Reading Room, on the first floor of Penrose Library, is often referred to as the "Quiet Room."

"It's just incredibly inviting," says Dalia Corkrum, director of the library. "It's a place you can really settle in to read or study." And students self-monitor the noise level, Corkrum said. "They want it quiet, and they respect the space, the materials and each other."

The room contains three collections: current issues of newsstand magazines; books by Whitman authors (faculty and alumni with academic titles); and shelves of bound theses dating back to the 1890s. Today, the thesis of record is digital, but students can still choose to have a bound copy live on in the reading room.

This space also inspired a uniquely Whitman tradition. One late night, an anonymous, sleep-deprived Whittie created the Allen Reading Room Challenge — a notebook to be written in by the last-standing student in the room. Years of challenge notebooks are stored in the Penrose archive.

Part of a library renovation in 2000, the Allen Reading Room was named for a gift from the Paul G. Allen Charitable Foundation. Allen's sister, Jody Allen '80, majored in theater. 

PHOTOS BY SCOTT BURNER







PHOTO BY HALEY WILKERSON '22

# Learning to Pop the Bubble

ANDY BURNSTEIN '20 WANTS MORE STUDENTS TO GET INVOLVED IN THE WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY

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BY SAVANNAH TRANCHELL

GRADUATING SENIOR ANDY BURNSTEIN '20 has advice for Whitman College students coming behind him: Get involved in the community.

Register to vote in Walla Walla. Give back through local organizations. Be part of the city and culture.

“Many Whitman students feel separate from the community, which is really unfortunate,” Burnstein said.

Popping the “Whitman bubble” has been a common thread throughout Burnstein’s time in Walla Walla. As an incoming first-year from Redmond, Washington, he participated in the SCORE preorientation program, which focuses on community service, and later became a leader.

“It just really made me fall in love with Walla Walla, it really inspired me to keep doing service,” he said.

## STUDENT BECOMES TEACHER

During his first two years at Whitman, Burnstein also became passionate about Whitman Teaches the Movement (WTTM), which brings age-appropriate civil rights and social justice lessons to students in K-12 schools in Walla Walla. In WTTM, the history major found a program that blends his interests.

“It was a combination of so many things I care about — community service, social justice, education, history,” he said. “It was great because you get to be so intentional about the lesson that you teach.”

For 2019-2020, Burnstein served as co-program leader for WTTM, and worked to revamp curriculum for the third-grade lesson.

That was particularly rewarding, because Burnstein didn't see the children's book in the existing lesson as adequate. “The book we used very much felt like all white people need to do is be nice — and that's not really enough.”

This year, third-graders at Green Park Elementary heard a lesson based around the book “We Came to America” by African American artist Faith Ringgold. The book uses beautiful illustrations to show the various ways people have come to America — from slavery to escaping religious persecution to modern immigration, as well as indigenous populations.

“It's a deceptively simple book, but when you get right down to it, it's actually very hard to define ‘country’ or define ‘race’ for a third-grader,” Burnstein said. The lesson taught the students about the social constructions of race, and the stereotypes that pair with it.

“It was great to celebrate the diversity of the classroom, and see how the class understands that their peers come from diverse backgrounds — and that's a good thing,” he said.

In fall 2019, Burnstein and his co-leader Ameliz Price-Dominguez '22 expanded the WTTM curriculum even more by taking lessons into the Walla Walla Juvenile Justice Center. They began by teaching one lesson at the center every week. They hope that part of the program continues in the future.

Burnstein was recognized for his service to the community with the Outstanding Civic Leader Award through the Students Serving Washington Awards program, a division of the nonprofit Campus Compact. Campus Compact helps colleges educate students for civic and social responsibility.

## “You're here for four years. That's a long time. You should care about the place where you live. I think it's that simple.”

ANDY BURNSTEIN '20, history

## USING HISTORY TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD

Burnstein chose to major in history after enrolling in Robert Allen Skotheim Chair of History David Schmitz's course on Vietnam. Schmitz served as Burnstein's pre-major advisor.

“I liked history in high school, and I heard Prof. Schmitz was a big deal. So, I was like, ‘If he's such a big deal, I might as well take the class because it's hard to get into,’” he said. “Then I just really fell in love with history.”

History serves as a way to understand the world, and cuts through the fog people use to obscure the truth, Burnstein said.

“It's such a human major. You're really studying people and their motivations,” he said.

Burnstein was able to get a closer look at history in the summer of 2017 as an intern for the Washington State Holocaust Center for Humanity. Burnstein's grandmother survived the Holocaust, and as a child, he appeared in a video the center produced. During his internship, funded by the Whitman Internship Grant, Burnstein worked to create an encyclopedia of local Holocaust survivors and liberators.

After graduation, Burnstein plans to make the world better by participating in the political process. In the summer of 2019, he campaigned for presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who he has met twice. That fall, he worked to do voter registration in Walla Walla.

## 'YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT THE PLACE WHERE YOU LIVE'

This spring, Burnstein led a Power & Privilege Symposium session with other student volunteers from Student Engagement Center programs. Their session focused on “popping the bubble” and building bridges in the community.

It's a point he feels strongly about.

“There's the stereotype that Whitman students go off and ski every weekend. And

that's fine — skiing's great,” he said. “But you're here for four years. That's a long time. You should care about the place where you live. I think it's that simple.”

He wants to see more students at Whitman get involved, not only in service programs or political activism, but also because he believes Walla Walla is a great community to live in.

“I really hope that any students who come to Whitman in the future will come not just because they love Whitman, but also because they realize there's something special about Walla Walla,” he said. “Where else do you get to run in to people you genuinely care about and enjoy seeing every day? It's a rare thing in life, I think.” **W**



Andy Burnstein '20 got the chance to meet Sen. Elizabeth Warren as a volunteer for her presidential campaign in summer 2019.

**WE'RE  
MOVING  
TO CANADA**



# Won't someone think about the children?

Associate Professor Erin Pahlke joins psychology researchers to ask how much children really understand about politics — and how we can help make the rhetoric less frightening

BY SAVANNAH TRANCHELL

**BUILD A WALL  
AND KEEP  
THEM OUT**

**IT'S THE  
ECONOMY,  
STUPID**





**LOCK HER UP!**

**IMPEACHMENT**

**BLACK PEOPLE  
CAN'T BE  
PRESIDENT**



**WOMEN CAN'T  
BE PRESIDENT**

**FAKE NEWS**



PHOTOS COURTESY ISTOCK

**BUT WHAT  
ABOUT THE  
EMAILS?**



**IS MY FAMILY  
GOING TO BE  
DEPORTED?**

**As the United States enters the final months of a heated presidential election, the rhetoric around candidates, policies and politics in general continues to grow louder.**

**SEND  
THEM  
BACK!**

**WHAT  
ABOUT  
RUSSIA?**



# THEY LOOK DIFFERENT FROM ME.

There's one audience — absorbing much of the noise — that pollsters and pundits are ignoring this political season for a very simple reason: They aren't old enough to vote.

That got Associate Professor Erin Pahlke and a group of colleagues curious: What exactly do children know about politics and the U.S. political system?

"In psychology, you've got a growing body of literature that's looking at adult political attitudes and development, but there's this assumption that you don't study kids in politics because kids aren't paying attention to politics," said Pahlke, who teaches psychology at Whitman College.

## Two historic elections

Pahlke and a group of researchers challenged this assumption with two studies on children during the 2008 and 2016 election years.

The group was led by Pahlke's graduate advisor, Professor Rebecca Bigler at the University of Texas at Austin. Pahlke, Bigler and Meagan Patterson, now an associate professor of educational psychology at the University of Kansas, conducted the first study in 2008.

In 2016, they repeated the study, expanding the group to include researchers from the University of Kentucky and University of Texas at Tyler. For both studies, children ages 5 to 11 were interviewed before and after the election. The 2016 study included 187 children from five different locations. In Walla Walla, Pahlke was assisted in her data collection by Whitman College students.

Both elections included historic moments: The first African American and the first woman presidential candidates. They also were both marked by increasingly negative rhetoric.

In 2008, Pahlke said they were interested to see how children would respond to seeing an African American candidate win — or lose — the race, and what they'd attribute that result to. The majority of children knew that Barack Obama would be the first black president, Pahlke said. In 2008, the vast majority of children (89%) also knew that a woman had never been president. In 2016, the percentage that knew a woman hadn't held the office dropped to 65%.

"There are some parents or teachers who argue, 'Oh that's a good thing. It's a good thing if kids don't know that a woman has never been president.' But it isn't that positive," she said. "The kids are going to figure it out at some point. And then the question is, will they have an explanation for why?"

In the 2016 study, only 25% of children attributed the lack of women presidents to discrimination. The other 75% attributed it to gender stereotypes.

"You hear kids saying, 'women aren't strong,' or 'women aren't confident.' Or they'll cite women's traits or their behaviors, like that women must not read as many books," Pahlke said. "And then you get some percentage of kids who say women just don't want to be president. And those are all explanations and attributions that are problematic."

## Kids are paying attention

The 2016 study was published in the September 2019 issue of *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development* under the title "Toward a Developmental Science of Politics." In it, the authors argued that more attention should be paid to how children develop political ideas.

The research showed that despite people's assumptions that children aren't paying attention to politics or don't care, they really are picking up a great deal of information from the world around them, whether that's overheard from the adults in their lives, news from the radio or TV, or conversations from the playground.

"My biggest takeaway from this research is that children are more perceptive and capable of understanding complex topics than we give them credit for," said Marianne Kellogg '17, a psychology major who worked as a research assistant for Pahlke in 2016. Kellogg assisted with testing the initial research measures for validity and reliability and conducted some pre-election interviews.

For the latest study, the researchers found that the majority of children knew the names of candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, but they did not understand the election process.

"Some kids thought Trump got to be president because he had an airplane with his name on it," Pahlke said. "They knew there was voting involved, but some thought that judges got to make the final decision. They don't understand the system entirely."

Most children are not receiving education about the U.S. political system until high school, but Pahlke's research shows they would benefit from it much earlier. Parents can make an impact by including their children in the voting process.

"We should be taking them when we drop off our ballots, and talking to them about the voting guide," she said.





**“We should be taking them when we drop off our ballots, and talking to them about the voting guide.”**

Associate Professor Erin Pahlke

## Politics, fear and ‘the wall’

In recent years, U.S. voters have become more polarized. According to studies by the Pew Research Center, since 1994, the average partisan gap has increased from 15 percentage points to 39 percentage points across a range of issues. Even within the parties, splits of opinion are found among age, income, gender and racial lines.

That polarization can result in increasingly negative rhetoric, which can be scary to children.

The researchers saw how political comments — even the type of comments parents might make casually — translated into real fear that reached across all races.

“A lot of kids were really scared about ‘the wall.’ Some heard Trump was going to put guns by the wall and shoot people. Some of them were really scared because they thought friends and family members would have to leave the country,” Pahlke said. Others were afraid they would have to move: “Their parents had said, ‘If Trump is elected, we’re leaving the country.’”

It’s important for parents to realize the weight even off-handed comments or jokes can have on kids.

“Saying things like, ‘Oh, we’re just going to move to Canada’ — for a kid, if they hear that, they’re like, ‘Oh, I’m going to lose all my friends and this is going to be terrible,’” Pahlke said. “It’s important to talk to kids about their fears and say, ‘yes, some of this might happen,’ and help them understand the way that systems work.”

Kellogg agreed, and said participating in the research helped her see the importance of tackling difficult conversations with children.

“Young children are able to understand prejudice and discrimination; it is our responsibility as adults to start conversations and engage kids in discussions about topics such as racism, sexism, xenophobia and privilege — no matter how uncomfortable we may be navigating these topics,” said Kellogg, who is currently a research coordinator in a psychology/behavioral science lab at the University of Washington. “We need to do the work to educate kids about people who are different than them, and how their words and decisions have a lasting effect on others. Kids watch and listen and learn — let’s put in the effort to make sure they are learning values we can be proud of, and that they become active members of their communities.”

**AM I GOING  
TO LOSE ALL  
MY FRIENDS?**

**I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING.**



GO BACK  
WHERE  
YOU CAME  
FROM!



CLOSE THE  
BORDERS



AM I SAFE?

## Parents can make a difference

It's important for everyone who works with or has children to remember how much kids are capable of picking up, Pahlke said. Schools can help by introducing political curriculum at an earlier age, and teaching young children about the electoral process.

But it's also important to teach children about discrimination, to help them understand why a woman or a person of color may not have had the same opportunities as a white man. Children in late elementary school can understand issues of racism within systems, Pahlke said. Younger children are capable of understanding that external differences don't impact a person's value, and hearing about examples of discrimination. Building that educational foundation can help children navigate the complex topics that come up during elections, she said.

"There are attempts to get kids to understand a little bit about elections. The research suggests that we need to do a better job," she said. "We need to figure out a way to get kids informed and engaged in the topics."

Pahlke tries to apply her research at home with her two children, ages 11 and 8.

"When we voted in the local election, I sat down with my 8-year-old and we looked through the voter guide, and looked at the ballot, and talked about how you make decisions and then how the system works," she said.

Pahlke also watched some of the primary debates with her children, and talked about the different policies and how a person would decide whether to support one candidate over another. They also had questions about the impeachment of President Donald Trump.

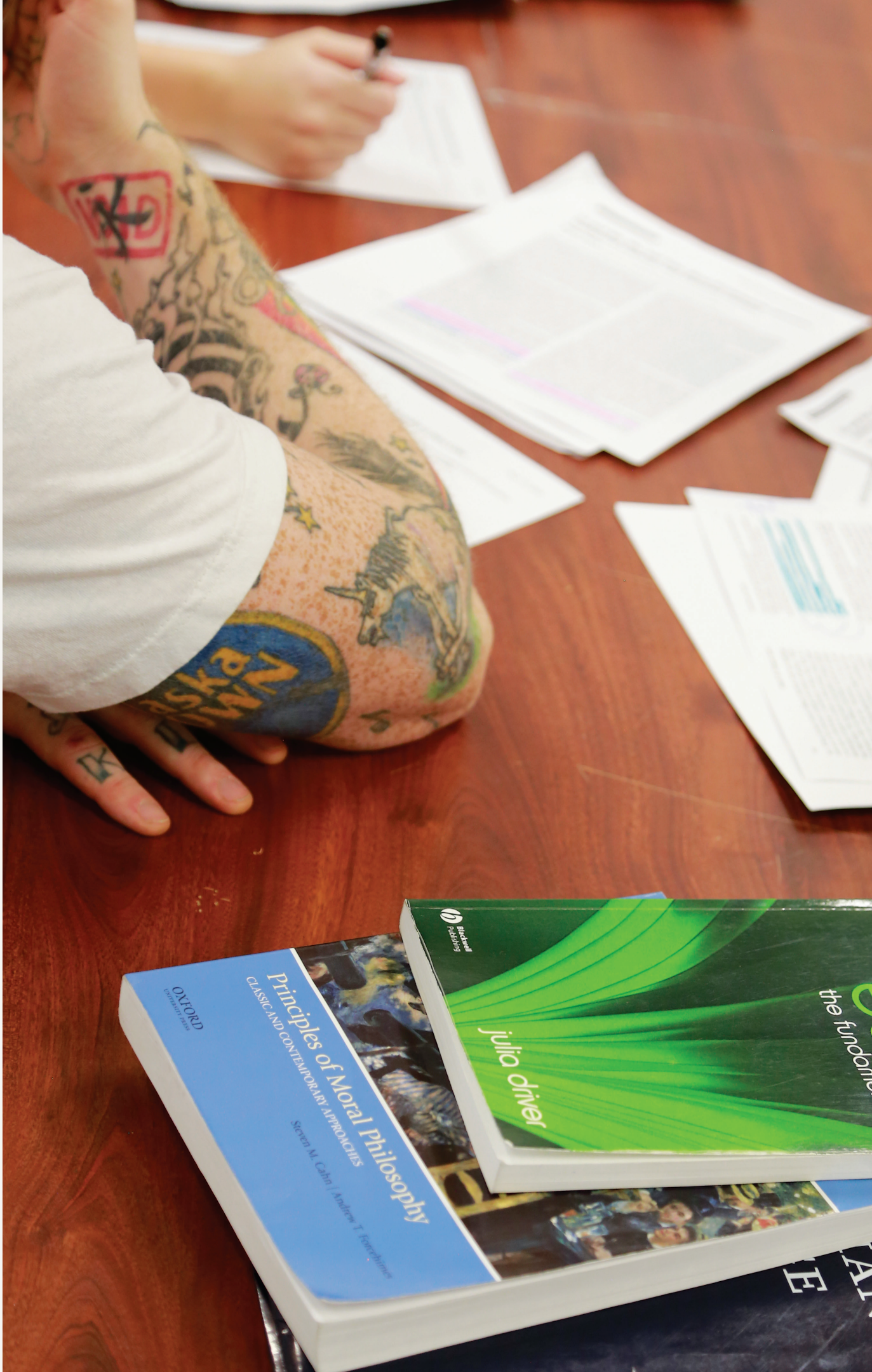
"They're overhearing everything. They heard a little bit about it at school," she said. "Part of it is not to just talk at them, but to have a dialogue back and forth. It's hard to know what kids' questions are and what kids' misperceptions are."

Her goal is to help her children understand how to think about issues, not necessarily to reinforce her own beliefs and opinions. She hopes other parents will focus on teaching critical thinking skills.

"It's important to try to help kids understand, 'I really don't like this perspective, but here's why it is that some people might feel this way.' This approach doesn't sanction perspectives that we as parents strongly disagree with, but it does help children understand why people might hold different beliefs," Pahlke said.

She admits it's challenging work for any parent.

"There's a certain extent to where you're just like, I want to protect my kid from the rhetoric. I'm tired of it. I want a break and I don't want my kid to have to deal with this. I don't want to have to deal with the tough ugly questions regarding bias that you see," she said. "But they're paying attention — so we have to talk to them about it." **W**





# COMING TO THE TABLE

**A UNIQUE  
COLLABORATION  
CREATES  
AN ETHICS  
CLASS LIKE  
NO OTHER**

---

BY MARGIE REECE '93  
PHOTOS BY KATHRYN FARRELL '95

ON A CRISP,  
DARK NOVEMBER  
EVENING,  
16 WHITMAN  
COLLEGE STUDENTS  
TRAVEL TO THE  
WASHINGTON STATE  
PENITENTIARY  
(WSP) WITH THEIR  
PROFESSOR AND  
COURSE ASSISTANTS.





It's a journey they've made each Tuesday since the beginning of the fall semester.

They drive the 2 miles from their beautiful campus to the outskirts of Walla Walla. They pass by the original, historic brick penitentiary, with its manicured lawn and white fencing to a parking lot on the north side of the institution — the main entrance to a modern prison made up of more than a dozen nondescript concrete block buildings that now house all but the minimum-security inmates at WSP.

Once the students arrive, they know the drill. Like seasoned travelers at a small airport, they line up for security. They remove their coats and place their schoolwork in large plastic trays for screening. They've left most their things, including their phones and keys, behind or locked in tiny lockers.

A correctional officer pats down each student before they proceed through a metal detector. Next, they line up to hand over their ID to another officer who gives them an electronic visitor pass in exchange. Everyone in the group must be processed through this checkpoint before they can be escorted into the prison.

Once "inside," they're actually outdoors. Before the students and teaching team reach the small chapel that serves as their classroom, they must pass through numerous wide and well-lit fenced corridors topped with endless rings of razor wire.

The grounds are quiet during the dinner hour as they pass by housing, medical and specialty units, clearing 11 locked gates and doors along the way. On the long walk, they talk with each other

**"Bringing these groups and individuals together allows us to have types of conversations and form a type of community that simply wouldn't exist otherwise."**

**— Mitch Clearfield, senior lecturer of philosophy**

about their studies, workloads, professors, friends, plans — college stuff. When they reach their destination, another officer stands ready to check their names on a list before they can enter their makeshift classroom.

It's well into the hour, and there's still more to do before their class can start.

They work together to move the chapel pulpit and chairs aside. They carry in tables from an adjacent storage room and set up two rows of four tables with four chairs at each. Two students sit down at each table. And they wait.

Sometime in the next 15 minutes or so, if all goes as planned, the rest of their classmates will arrive. This particular evening, 14 Whitman students from another walk of life arrive from inside the penitentiary. The room is immediately charged with new energy. The "inside students" — a diverse group who range in age from early 20s to well over 50 — carry Whitman folders and enter the room with smiles and warm greetings. They eagerly join their groupmates, the "outside students," at their respective tables.



"It means a lot to be viewed as another student, peer, and to help the group, not to be just another inmate." — Marty, an inside student pictured, left, with Liv Liponis '22, a philosophy and psychology major from Brentwood, New Hampshire.

Finally, Philosophy 219: Case Studies in Applied Ethics can begin. Today's topic for small group discussions is a charged and heavy one: the use of drones to take out suspected terrorists.

It will be about two hours before the two groups say goodbye for another week — and there's important work to be done in the meantime.

## MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS ACROSS DIFFERENCES

Senior Lecturer of Philosophy and General Studies Mitch Clearfield designed the Whitman course. He wishes that we, as a society, could have more settings like these eight tables — places where people from different backgrounds and views can come together to have meaningful and productive conversations about things that matter.

"Our society is increasingly polarized. As a result, we seldom discuss values with others who don't already share our perspectives," Clearfield said. "I think that's a serious problem, for at least two reasons. First, that leads to bad decision-making processes, where people or groups do whatever they want without serious engagement with others. Second, it leads to bad decisions, because they're made without considering all of the relevant information, ideas and perspectives."

In his course, students work in groups of four, with two students from each institution, on ethical issues, such as the drone case. Clearfield adapted the cases from Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl competitions, put on by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. The end of the semester wraps up with a public forum where the groups present their work.

Before the fall semester students ever met, they had to apply for the class and be carefully vetted by Clearfield, WSP, and course assistants Becky HaneyNixon, a counselor at WSP, and Kathy Farrell '95, who has experience working in corrections and helping released offenders re-enter society.

To be considered for the class, the inside students — some of whom are serving life sentences — had to demonstrate good behavior and meet other criteria. The outside students were interviewed and passed background checks. The teaching team wanted to be sure that all the students were committed and were there because of an interest in the content and in growing as thinkers — not because of the novelty of the class and setting itself, Clearfield said.

## EXPLORING ISSUES FROM EVERY ANGLE

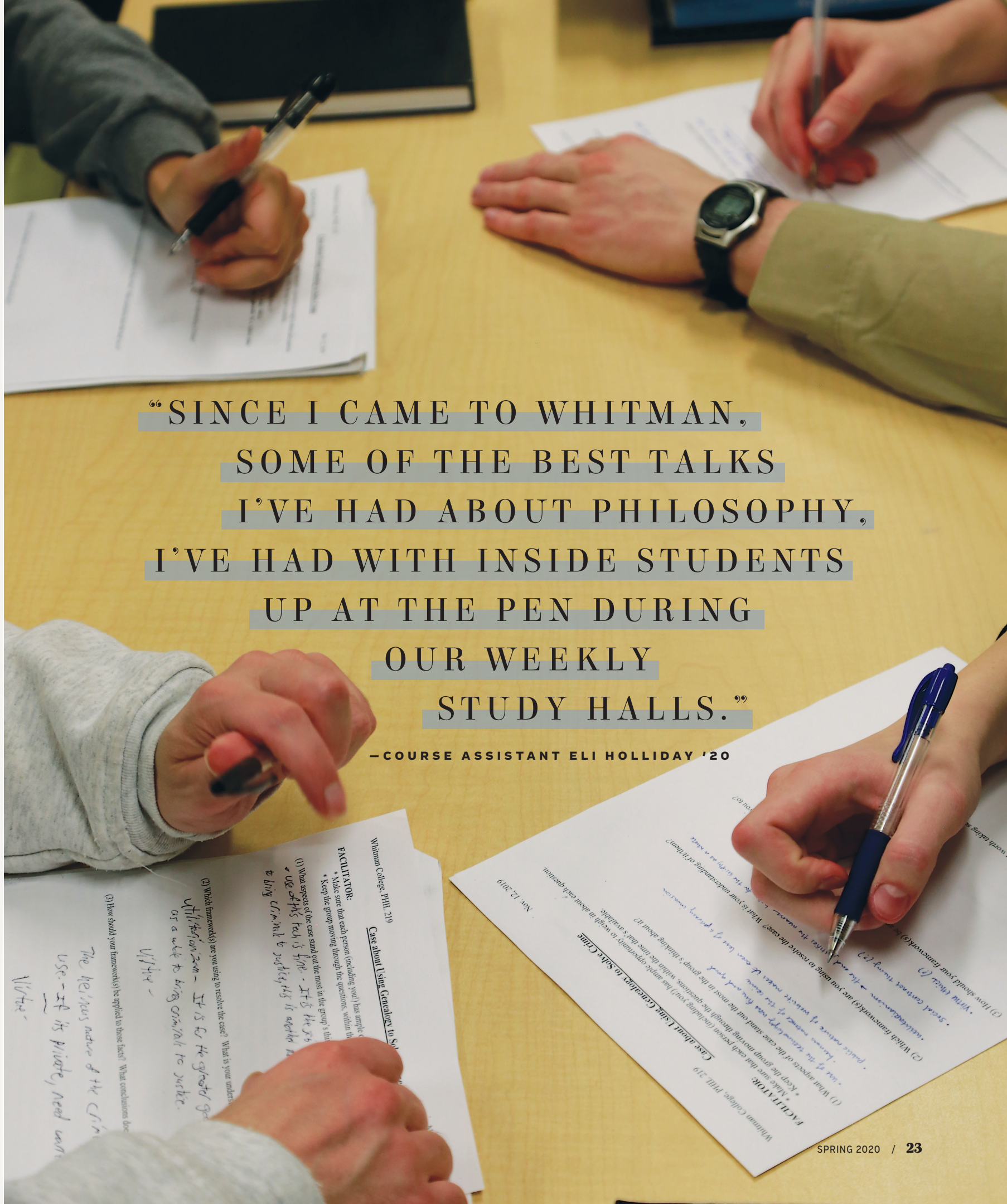
In PHIL 219, students learn to scrutinize controversial issues, and they develop thoughtful dialogue skills that lead to greater understanding and better conclusions. It's a unique learning opportunity that Clearfield said he can't replicate in a campus classroom.

"Bringing these groups and individuals together allows us to have types of conversations and form a type of community that



“SINCE I CAME TO WHITMAN,  
SOME OF THE BEST TALKS  
I’VE HAD ABOUT PHILOSOPHY,  
I’VE HAD WITH INSIDE STUDENTS  
UP AT THE PEN DURING  
OUR WEEKLY  
STUDY HALLS.”

— COURSE ASSISTANT ELI HOLLIDAY '20



simply wouldn't exist otherwise," he said.

It didn't take long for the novelty of the setting to fade away and the content and conversations to become what mattered, said a number of the outside students when asked about their experience.

"It's not just a cool class that happens at the prison. It's my ethics class," said Grace Dublin '21, a sociology major from Boston, Massachusetts, who served as a course assistant for the fall class. Dublin took the course last spring.

"In my head, I had worked up all these ideas of how jarring it would be to be in the prison and it was far less jarring than I anticipated," said Susanna Williams '20, a sociology major from Burlington, Washington. "It surprised me how easy it was to just dive into the curriculum."

Each team unpacks the ethical dilemmas from different perspectives, recognizing biases and uncertainties and exploring solutions based on research and ethical principles from philosophers. Those ideas and points of view often come as the students grapple with questions: What facts do we have? What's unclear? What makes one action right and another wrong? What decisions or actions are the most moral? Which do the least harm? Which do the most good? What might help? What can we agree on?

During class, Clearfield and his teaching assistants observe and pull up chairs at various tables to help push the discussions forward. The students discover early on that there's not an easy answer for these complex issues. "We really try to stress creative problem-solving," Clearfield said.

"It's about having a greater understanding of the whole issue," Williams said. "We tend to get caught up in what others think. 'Everyone in my family thinks this, so I'll think it too.' In a class like this, you get to go and interrogate that."

Clearfield's students — inside and outside — all seem to grasp the value and magnitude of the experience.


"I value the students for having the courage to come and challenge us in ways we don't experience in here," said Allen,\* an inside student. "This class has helped me grow and challenge ideas in very many ways."

Allen first learned about the class from his cellmate, who took it in the spring. This course has inspired many discussions back in their living units, the inside students said.

"We talk about the cases a lot in my unit," said Kieth, an inside student. "At first, we discuss the actual cases, but then the conversation moves to how these frameworks are seen in how the prison and society has handled us. Then, most precious of all, we begin to take a tentative look at our own ethical framework and how we chose to do the things we have done in our lives."

## SHARED HUMANITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

**F**or Clearfield, having an ethical approach to the course was intentional and mattered deeply. He wanted all his students to be and feel like equal partners in the class, and they were all held to the same high Whitman College academic standards. Whitman has offered



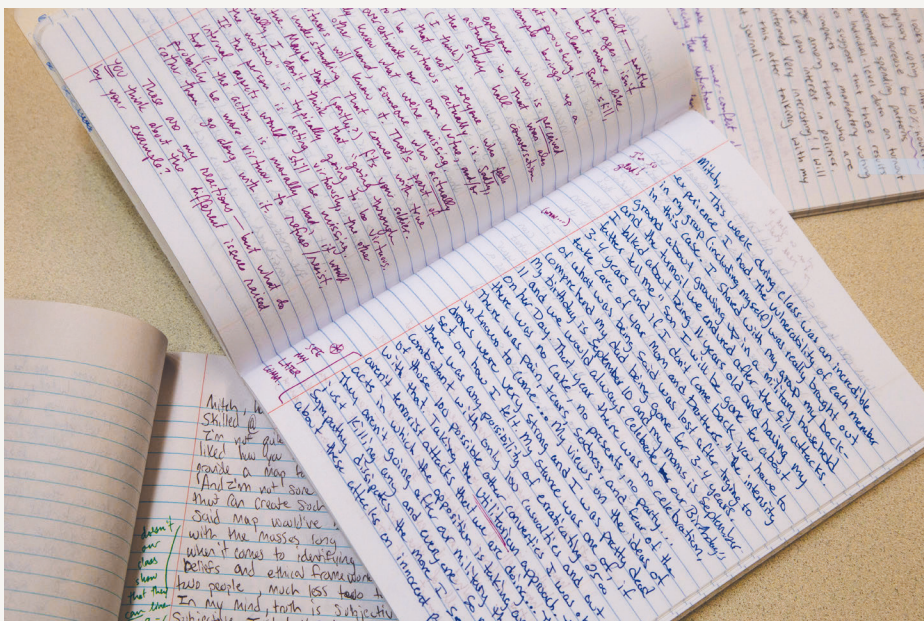
Over the course of a semester, PHIL 219 students worked in small teams to find consensus on ethical cases, including mandatory voting and the legalization of recreational drugs.

courses in the penitentiary for several years, and Clearfield took over as program organizer in 2019.

"One of the most important things about this class is that it, in and of itself, was ethical," said Nick Rapp '20, an environmental humanities major from Louisville, Colorado. "Mitch did everything he could to make the workload as even as it could possibly be. I think having the class be so equitable for both sides and providing access in that way is very humanizing."

That equity is reflected in how the work is shared, the language used to refer to the participants, as well as access to Clearfield. Outside students are able to visit him for assistance on campus during his office hours. To give inside students the same opportunity to talk and get help, every Saturday afternoon during the semester, Clearfield and the course assistants held a

\*Class participants who are incarcerated at Washington State Penitentiary are being identified only by their first names.



From inside student Reed's weekly journal:

*"I certainly never expected philosophical conversations about current affairs would ever shake my foundation and shift my way of thinking ... but it has! I am 100% pro mandatory voting! What!?! It may not seem like a big deal to you, but trust me, it is. I've NEVER been pro mandatory anything. Just saying. So, in short, thank you. Thank you for making this class happen. Thank you for caring."*

## A SHARED MISSION: IMPROVING LIVES AND COMMUNITIES

**W**hitman College courses have been unique in bringing campus students to Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) to participate in the classroom, said Rob Jackson, an associate superintendent at WSP. But education certainly isn't novel at the prison.

"WSP and Walla Walla Community College also have a long history of creating educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals," Jackson said. Courses at the prison range from high school equivalency to diverse vocational training, including HVAC, carpentry and graphic design. Some men earn associate degrees from the community college during their time at WSP.

"Research shows that the more education offenders get the less likely they are to return to prison," Jackson said. "By encouraging people's success and lowering the reoffending rate, we're supporting the Department of Corrections' mission and helping protect our communities."

"We really value our partnership with Whitman College," Jackson said. "These classes wouldn't be possible without people like Mitch [Clearfield], Becky [HaneyNixon] and Kathy [Farrell] and the support of President Murray and her leadership team."



Rob Jackson



"Of all the classes I've ever been in, it's the one I'll remember the most, and it's definitely the one that I think has changed me the most as a person," said Nick Rapp '20, an environmental humanities major from Louisville, Colorado (pictured, left). "I think it spoke to the true nature of the liberal arts — what education is supposed to be."

"I thought we were just going to sit and learn, but we not only learn, we grow as people," said Anthony, an inside student (pictured, right). "It has taught me to be more open-minded when listening to other people's views. And it's created a hunger to pursue and accumulate all that my mind can handle."

study hall at the prison. As part of their grade, outside students kept digital journals that Clearfield replied to weekly. His inside students wrote their journal entries in notebooks that he collected and replied to with his own notes.

Students were also expected to gather and consider research on the topics. Outside students took the lead collecting the research online or from Penrose Library, often printing it out and providing it to Clearfield to take to study hall. From there, the study baton was passed to the inside students whose role it was to read the research and report back to their groupmates on what they learned. The shared workload was managed by the teams themselves, who held one another accountable.

"It means a lot to be viewed as another student, peer, and to help the group, not to be just another inmate," said Marty, an inside student.


This shared accountability went deeper than the workload, said Nicki Caddell '22, from Petaluma, California. "Inevitably, a class like this makes anyone think back about their own decisions and life situation. In that sort of way, I think it equalizes the playing field," she said. "This isn't just a class with inmates who have faced ethical decisions, we're implicated by that, too. I think that's been the case for all of us."

## HUMAN CONNECTION AMID HARD REALITIES

**N**ear the end of each class session, Clearfield asks everyone to form a circle with their chairs. It's a closing ritual that his students look forward to and appreciate. Together, the larger group is like a winning team in a locker room — bonded, exhilarated and feeling good about the difficult work they've done. Around the circle, they take a few minutes to share thoughts and laughs.

It's usually a correctional officer who ends each session by reminding the group it's time to go.

And those tables that the outside students originally set up? Again, there's equity in the equation. When all is said and done, the inside students take the tables down and put the chapel back together while their classmates are escorted out of the facility.

"I do hope that the students have gained understanding of the ethical frameworks. I do hope that they have made progress in addressing these very pressing, practical issues. I sincerely do," Clearfield said. "But I think even more important than that is the value of how we functioned together and the kind of community we were able to create. I really hope the class can serve as a model that we can all draw on when there's a need to come to the table for deep and meaningful conversation." 

*Philosophy 219: Case Studies in Applied Ethics was supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The grant has helped Whitman College innovate the curriculum and promote community engagement.*



## RELATIONSHIP STATUS: IT'S COMPLICATED

**A** class as intricate as PHIL 219 requires collaboration between institutions, tricky logistics and necessary ground rules. For example, outside students are discouraged from researching the criminal backgrounds of their classmates. Inside students are told they may share their stories if they're comfortable with that. Some of those stories do come out — particularly when it is relevant to the discussion, said Mitch Clearfield, senior lecturer of philosophy at Whitman.

Mutual respect and following policies are expected. One of those is a policy of no contact between incarcerated individuals and outside students after the end of the course. Clearfield and his team are looking for people who show the maturity and thoughtfulness to accept those terms.

"Even recognizing that going in doesn't change that saying goodbye is really hard," Clearfield said. "It's exactly the same thing that makes the class so valuable and also the end so hard — that bond, that community. All I can do is encourage that at the onset, support people at the end and hope that everyone thinks it's worth it."

"Sometimes, it's been kind of hard to go through your normal day and week," said Jesse Zaslove '22, a philosophy major from Seattle, Washington. "You become very aware that nobody else in your life thinks about these people who live so close to us. And yet, like for me and for anyone in the class, they are really meaningful people in our lives."

For Clearfield's students serving time, an overwhelming sense of gratitude was often expressed. "This class, these wonderful courageous students, have played an outlandish role in our lives by just being willing to be our friends," said Kieth, an inside student. "I will never, ever, ever forget them and what they, Mitch and Whitman College have done for us."

A man with blue eyes and a slight smile is wearing a black quilted Patagonia jacket and an orange beanie. He is standing in front of a large, rusted metal wall. The background is slightly out of focus, showing some greenery.

Sam Perkins '17 dedicates his career to fighting — and preventing — growing environmental hazards around the globe.

# A BURNING PASSION FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

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BY SAVANNAH TRANCHELL

# WE'VE ENTERED THE ERA OF THE MEGAFIRE.

Catastrophic blazes covering more than 100,000 acres have increased drastically. The devastating fire that burned across Australia last fall covered more than 12 million acres. In 2017 and 2018, California saw the most destructive blazes in its history — more than 450,000 acres burned in the July 2018 Mendocino Complex.

And as global temperatures rise, the risk of large fires does, too.

“Over the past 40 years, fire seasons in the United States have been getting hotter and dryer — with more frequent and higher intensity fires,” said Sam Perkins '17. “It’s really unfortunate, what’s happening, but it’s the new normal.”

Perkins is an Idaho-based smoke-jumper for the U.S. Forest Service, and before that served on an Interagency Hotshot Crew based in Prineville, Oregon. But he also has a more global perspective to fire management. After graduating from Whitman College with his degree in sociology-environmental studies, Perkins received a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship and spent a year traveling the globe exploring how other cultures approach the environmental uncertainty of natural disaster.

He used his Watson experience to launch work as a consultant for nongovernmental agencies (NGOs), nonprofits and government agencies to develop and refine disaster preparedness efforts.

“I wanted to figure out a way that I could make my passion fit with my professional and global ambition,” he said.

## A PASSION BORN IN WALLA WALLA

Perkins came to Whitman as a soccer player but had to leave the field after injuries. Another student encouraged him to fill his time as a volunteer firefighter. He was accepted to the Walla Walla Fire Department’s training academy. He also pursued an associate’s degree in fire science from Walla Walla Community College, which gave him background in leadership, fire investigation and suppression.

As a volunteer firefighter, Perkins was motivated by the Blue Creek Fire in 2015, which burned more than 6,000 acres in Walla Walla County.

“While it was a big threat to the community and this ecosystem, the community response in retrospect was really about the environmental factors rather than social ones. What I was most curious about was how the local population adapts to living in this fire-prone region,” Perkins said. Associate Professor and Garrett Fellow Alissa Cordner served as Perkins’ major advisor, and encouraged him to explore the social and community dynamics of wildfire. Much of Cordner’s research surrounds the sociology of risks and disasters, especially wildfire in the Pacific Northwest.

“I wrote my senior thesis on how the community learns to live with this natural hazard, which ultimately motivated how I spent my time during Watson,” Perkins said.

As a Hotshot crew member, Perkins has spent the last few years responding to the largest and highest priority fires

in North America. He will be starting his new role as a smokejumper in the spring of 2020, first completing an intensive training academy to learn the skills needed to parachute out of airplanes into active fire situations.

## TAKING LOCAL TRAINING GLOBAL

Perkins’ passion is for combining his practical knowledge as a firefighter with the academic foundation he built as a Whitman student to positively impact global communities.

“Here in the Western United States, we’re at the forefront of global fire management,” Perkins said. But that century-long history has created policies that often create roadblocks for new ideas. “It’s a great privilege to play a key role in an agency with such tremendous impacts, but it can be a challenge to take big risks when working to create innovative solutions with a long-term focus. Whereas during my experience in the developing world, agencies are eager to adopt new and innovative solutions, on a smaller scale of course.”

So far, he’s worked with agencies in Nepal, Australia, Chile, Peru and Japan.

“The emerging issue with a lot of regions in the world is they’re experiencing a consistent frequency of natural hazards for the first time in their history, which is creating serious future impacts” Perkins said. “In Nepal and north India, they’re dealing with an emerging wildfire issue with few resources set in place to address it.”

In Nepal, he worked with the Ministry of Forests and Environment and the Nepal army to develop local fire protection militias and to create preparedness, response and recovery

# “BEING ABLE TO SEE THAT BIG PICTURE IS SOMETHING THAT WAS HUGELY IMPACTED BY MY TIME AT WHITMAN.”

— SAM PERKINS '17

plans for wildfires and future hazards in the area. He also worked to create an emergency alert system to allow rural residents to report issues, and assisted with educational programs to train rural communities in the sustainable use of fire in land management practices while accommodating suppression and prevention efforts when necessary.

## A CONTINUING EDUCATION

Perkins tries to combine his knowledge of natural disasters with local expertise, while also being mindful of structural inequalities in government and development work.


“I don’t own a fraction of the knowledge of the local populations when it comes to their land and history,” Perkins said. In his international work, he uses methodologies he learned at Whitman such as human-centered design and participatory action research to create solutions centered around local needs.

His unique blend of liberal arts and

fire training creates opportunities for him to make connections between science, technology, climate change and social justice that has led to success.

“Being able to see that big picture is something that was hugely impacted by my time at Whitman,” he said.

He also plans to continue pursuing education and training opportunities to further his ability to make a global impact. Ultimately, he’d like to pursue a graduate degree in international environmental policy.

“My goal would be to help empower vulnerable groups to develop social and ecological resilience during an era of increasing environmental uncertainty. That could be through strengthening national and subnational policies, developing collaborative response practices, or simply educating the public about how to best live with the trouble,” he said. “The impacts of climate change are felt disproportionately throughout the world and I’d really like to be on the right side of the narrative moving forward.” 



Sam Perkins '17 has worked for several years as a Hotshot firefighter, responding to the largest and highest priority fires in the Northwest.



PHOTOS COURTESY SAM PERKINS









# off and running

Cross country star Whitney Rich '20 finds room to explore a career in medical translation and passions for the environment and running at Whitman

BY KIRSTEN TELANDER  
PHOTOS BY AARON GRUBB

**“h**oy voy a hablar sobre cómo empezar un encuentro de interpretación.”

Today, I am going to talk about how to begin an interpreting encounter.

In a sun-filled classroom in Olin Hall, Whitney Rich '20 spent spring semester guiding her fellow Whitman College students as they explore the subject matter that has already become her career: medical translation.

Rich, a Spanish major and geology and politics minor from McMinnville, Oregon, served as the student consultant for the course Translation:

Healthcare and Language, led by Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies Nico Parmley.

It's not her first time in the course: She took it as a first-year student and discovered a passion for the work.

“I knew I wanted to study Spanish at Whitman, but I had no idea where it would take me and the translation course was the start to it all,” Rich said.

Rich continued to hone her interpretation skills by volunteering in the evenings at the College Place SOS Health Services clinic, which provides health care to individuals without health

***“she completely immersed herself ... she had a career before even graduating.”***

— Nico Parmley, associate professor of Hispanic studies



Above: Whitney Rich '20 runs to the finish line during the Division III Women's Cross Country Championships held at E.P. Tom Sawyer State Park on Nov. 23, 2019, in Louisville, Kentucky.

Far right: Whitney Rich '20 served as a student consultant in Associate Professor Nico Parmley's medical translation course this spring.

insurance. She's also worked closely with the Department of Hispanic Studies, serving as a writing fellow for two courses and screening films for the department, before becoming Parmley's student consultant this spring.

The student consultant program connects students with faculty seeking to improve their courses.

"I picked Whitney because she is just a responsible and amazing human being, one of my brightest and most engaged students," said Parmley, who is also chair of Hispanic Studies. "She completely immersed herself in the department and really went for it."

This spring, Rich also worked as a medical

interpreter at the Family Medical Center in Walla Walla, a position funded through the Student Engagement Center's Whitman Internship Grant. She is working toward her official certification in medical translation. The work feeds her interest in patient advocacy and patient rights.

"She had a career before even graduating," Parmley said.

The Department of Hispanic Studies isn't the only place where Rich will leave her mark on Whitman when she graduates this spring: She also made headlines as a cross country runner, placing fourth in the nation in 2019 despite running on a broken foot. She also helped bring an NCAA-recognized distance track program to the college, and is proud of her experience as a "Westie," the unofficial title given to participants in the Semester in the West Program.





## coming to whitman

**r**ich knew she wanted to pursue a liberal arts education at a small college, but as a high school track and cross country star, Whitman wasn't on her list.

"I immediately thought no way because there wasn't a track team," Rich said. But her aunt encouraged her to take a closer look, and she finally agreed to visit. "I met the cross country team, and I was sold. Everyone was so excited that I was visiting and just so happy about their school," Rich said.

It helped that the Walla Walla community is reminiscent of McMinnville.

"I just felt at home," she said.

In the end, Whitman was the only college she applied to. In addition to the

strong cross county program, led by head coach Scott Shields '91 and assistant coach Neil Christopherson, another major draw was the Semester in the West program, directed by Miles C. Moore Professor of Politics Phil Brick, who also teaches in environmental studies.

"I went to an information session as a prospective student and knew that's what I wanted to do," Rich said. "I've always been drawn to experiential learning and that's what Semester in the West is all about — learning from people who are actually doing what they are teaching."

The competition was stiff, but in the end, Rich was one of 21 students selected and she spent over 90 days camping in the field and traveling over 8,000 miles to learn from the people who are shaping the American West.

Rich was so taken by her time in the

program that she will serve as field manager for the Fall 2020 trip, where she'll be responsible for managing the field kitchen and teaching students to cook from recipes she has compiled.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I get to do again," she said.

Rich has kept a strong passion for environmental studies, and added as many related courses as she could to her curriculum. Her interest led to an internship at the Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership.

"I feel like at some schools, you get fast-tracked into one thing, but at Whitman, I was able to combine environmental studies and Spanish, interpreting and water management. You'd think 'how do those go together?'" Rich said. "I had the chance to explore it all." **W**

# Bringing the Pieces Together

HEATHER WRIGHT '99 LOVES THE COLLABORATION AND CHALLENGE OF LIFE AS A VOLCANOLOGIST

BY TARA ROBERTS



PHOTOS COURTESY HEATHER WRIGHT

WHEN INDONESIA'S MOUNT AGUNG started showing signs of unrest in 2017, Heather Wright '99 flew to the site to help.

Wright worked with American and local scientists who analyzed seismic signals, set up new instruments and gathered information to help the Indonesian team decide how to respond to the waking volcano.

It was challenging and nerve-wracking, but ultimately a rewarding experience.

"This was a crisis, and we needed to bring all these pieces together. We needed to focus on our mission," Wright said. "I got some really great feedback after that trip that made me feel valuable and very valued by the team, and that feedback was a lot about bringing people together."

Wright is a research geologist with the Volcano Disaster Assistance Program, a partnership between the U.S. Geological Survey and USAID's Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance. Based in Vancouver, Washington, the program works to prevent volcano-related tragedies by collaborating with scientists and public officials around the world.

Wright is quick to emphasize that her job is nowhere close to a Hollywood depiction of a scientist scooping lava out of an active volcano.

While her work sometimes means flying across the globe to respond to a threat, it also involves meeting with global colleagues for trainings and workshops, or spending time in the lab analyzing rock and soil samples to better understand the big-picture geology of volcanoes.

Wright isn't driven by the perceived risk of life as a volcanologist — she promises her young daughters she'll stay safe out in the field. But she is inspired by other rewarding aspects of the job.

"I like the curiosity and the question-answering part of things," Wright said. "I like meeting new people and feeling like I'm contributing something."

## GRATEFUL FOR COLLABORATION AND MENTORS

In July 2019, Wright's contributions were recognized by the federal government, which awarded her one of its highest honors for scientists, the Presidential Early Career Award for Science and Engineering.

Wright said she's humbled and excited for the opportunities the award creates to work with other researchers. For example, she'll soon be part of a panel discussion about the future direction of research on subduction



Above: Heather Wright '99 stands in front of Ubinos, a volcano in Peru, during a period of explosive eruptions in 2015. Left: Wright prepares to take a helicopter flight over the Lower East Rift Zone lava flow in Hawaii in 2018.

zones — places where one tectonic plate slides under another.

Receiving the award also makes Wright feel thankful for the people who have supported her over the years.

"I think I got where I am through a series of amazing advocates," she said.

At Whitman College, Wright earned a bachelor's in geology with minors in astronomy and Spanish. At an internship at NASA shortly after graduating, she worked with Sue Sakimoto '89, a fellow Whitman alumna who helped Wright start visualizing her path as a scientist.

Sakimoto praised Wright for her enthusiasm, curiosity, dedication and capability.

"She is one of those obvious rising stars — talented and hard-working scientists that are also great communicators," Sakimoto said. "As a mentor, you always really hope those students make it through the system. Women have an uphill battle in the sciences, and seeing a deserving one doing well is gratifying."

At Whitman, Wright worked closely with her advisor, Patrick Spencer, professor of sedimentation and paleontology, and her senior thesis mentor, Kevin Pogue, professor of structural geology.

For her thesis, Wright traveled to Pakistan with Pogue in the spring of 1998. The experience was culturally enlightening for Wright, but also gave her scientific perspective when the research didn't go as planned.

"It really prepared me for what has turned out to be a great lesson in science,

which is being flexible in a lot of different ways, collecting good data and not being so set in the picture of the outcome you want," she said. "Really, that's science. Starting with good observations and then seeing where the story takes you."

## A LOVE OF THE OUTDOORS

Her passion for the outdoors also helped set Wright on her career path.

As a child, she loved camping and being outside while growing up on Whidbey Island, Washington. She remembered hearing stories of weekend adventures from Whitman students, and it's one of the things that drew her to the college.

Wright started as a physics major but the interdisciplinary nature of geology appealed to her. She discovered the program was packed with outdoor enthusiasts, and field trips were often part of the curriculum.

She also took Whitman's outdoor leadership class, ran a marathon, and learned to rock climb, telemark ski, whitewater raft and play ultimate Frisbee.

Tackling these physical challenges prepared her for her future as a scientist — including the times she has to travel across the world to help her fellow scientists prepare for potential disaster.

"Every new experience has presented a new challenge," she said. "At Whitman, I learned that trying new things gets easier and challenging experiences can be rewarding." **W**

# Class Notes

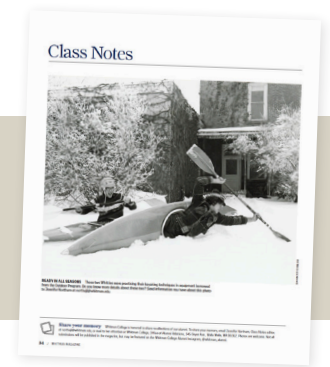


WHITMAN COLLEGE ARCHIVES



The Class of 1970 says, "We're going to miss seeing you on campus this spring, but we look forward to celebrating together in the future!" In lieu of a shot of the class in cap and gown, please enjoy these photos of their 10th and 40th reunions. Send your favorite memories and photos of commencement to Jennifer Northam, Class Notes editor, at [northajl@whitman.edu](mailto:northajl@whitman.edu), or mail to her attention at Whitman College, Office of Alumni Relations, 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

**WHO WAS IT?** Winter issue's kayaking picture: **Jessie Broda Richmond '82** wrote, "I am quite sure the person in the left kayak is **Steve Nyman '81**. Steve was from Alaska, and loved the outdoors. He used to have mock saber battles swinging from the outdoor stairs of Douglas Hall. My husband, **Scott Richmond '81**, believes the person in the right kayak is **John Fleck '81**." **Beth Beaulaurier Walsh '83** confirms the identification of Nyman and adds, "My brother **Rich Beaulaurier '82** was in the same Winterim class where they built kayaks." **Philo Lund '76** thinks the kayaker on the right is **Juan Lubroth '79**. Let us know it's you, second snow kayaker! Email information about the photo to [northajl@whitman.edu](mailto:northajl@whitman.edu).



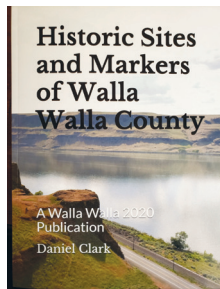


## 1950s

**Maggie Savage '58** moved from the Pacific Northwest to Prairie Village, Kansas, following the loss of her partner, Sharon Wootten.

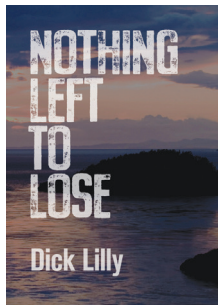
## 1960s

**Claire "Mimi" Caldwell McLaughlin '61** was inducted into the Northshore School District's Wall of Honor. The wall, located at Pop Keeney Field in Bothell, Washington, recognizes staff and volunteers for their service to the district. McLaughlin was recognized for more than 50 years of service.



**Dan Clark '65** has published "Historic Sites and Markers of Walla Walla County," containing descriptions, photos and maps of 40 sites. The book also includes interpretive signage at 20 historic sites, more than 280 historic residences and buildings, and a list of all county properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Gordon Tobin '65** was the featured lecturer for the 2019 annual meeting of the American Association of Plastic Surgeons in Baltimore, Maryland. His talk, "Future or Frankenscience: the long quest for skin-bearing transplants, and the ethics problems unleashed," explored the current status and ethical challenges in transplantation of limbs, faces, uteri, genitalia and other non-vital organ transplants.



**Dick Lilly '65** has published "Nothing Left to Lose," a mystery novel set in Seattle. The story follows Eric Falconer, former journalist turned true crime blogger, through a story of drugs, wealth, power and murder. Lilly was involved with Seattle media and politics for more than 40 years. He continues to write for online publications and occasionally a Seattle Times op-ed.

**Esther Hartglass Camuti '67** and her husband, Victor, have retired and moved to Bunker Hill, West Virginia. Visitors are welcome and promised a great wine crawl.

**Tim Dickel '68** is retiring from Creighton University after 43½ years as a professor of education (counseling and educational psychology). In addition to teaching, he held positions as chair of the education department and dean of university college and summer sessions. He plans to travel with his wife, Gail, spend time with their family and indulge in hobbies.

## 1970s

**Jack Bridwell '71** retired Dec. 1, 2018, after working for almost 47 years in the airline industry. He first worked as a ramp/ticket agent and station manager for Cascade Airways in Walla Walla. Last year, Bridwell and his wife, Rita, moved to Sequim, Washington, and now spend time bicycling the Olympic Discovery Trail and hiking in Olympic National Park.



**Skip Novakovich '69** was inducted as a member of the board of directors for Printing Industries of America, the world's largest nonprofit graphic arts trade association. Novakovich, along with his wife, Shannon, owned and operated Esprit Graphic Communications Inc., in Kennewick, Washington, for 30 years.



**Patsy Bates Mattingley '70** was part of a group of Whitties and spouses who traveled to Croatia and Bosnia. Pictured in Sarajevo from left to right: **Christine Reuhl Barden '71, Drew Barden '69, Sally Stroud '69, Charlie Chadbourn, Doug Dance '69, Karen Gross Dance '69, Dave Mattingley and Mattingley.**



**Share your memory** Whitman College is honored to share recollections of our alumni. To share your memory, email Jennifer Northam, Class Notes editor, at northajl@whitman.edu, or mail to her attention at Whitman College, Office of Alumni Relations, 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362. Photos are welcome. Not all submissions will be published in the magazine, but may be featured on the Whitman College Alumni Instagram, @whitman\_alumni.



**Linda Kurfurst King '77** retired and moved from Seattle to Talking Rock Ranch in Prescott, Arizona, with husband, Jason. At 5,300 feet of elevation, they enjoy four seasons including 277 sunny days per year and their rescued dog loves the walks without rain gear.



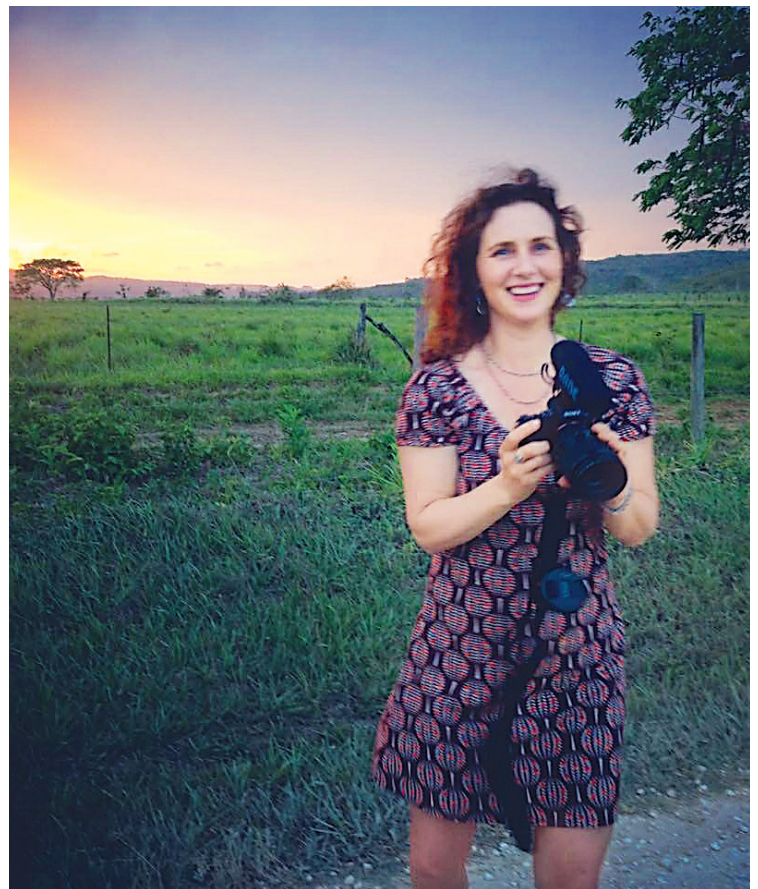
**Dave Gingerich '79** gave a TED Talk as part of TEDxMSUDenver on "The Future of Humanity - Homo Sapiens to Spacelings." His presentation posits that space exploration and human space flight have one goal: for all human beings to escape Earth while we can and take our next evolutionary step to living entirely in space.



**Mary Deming Barber '78** received the Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to the Public Relations Society of America (PSRA) at its annual conference in San Diego, California. The award recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions in advancing PRSA and the professional development of its members. An accredited communications veteran with more than 40 years of experience in public relations, Barber has counseled clients throughout the West. Pictured: PRSA Chair Debra Peterson, Barber.



**Flick Fornia '80** was re-elected to the Board of Directors of the Society of Actuaries. He continues his work as president of Pension Trustee Advisors in Greenwood Village, Colorado.



**Alexandra Lexton '85** finished her third film, but first as director, writer and producer. "The Lure of this Land" had its world premiere at the Mill Valley Film Festival in San Rafael, California.



**Kirk Adams '83** earned his doctorate in leadership and change from Antioch University. His dissertation was titled "Journeys through Rough Country: An Ethnographic Study of Blind Adults Successfully Employed in American Corporations." Adams is president and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind in Arlington, Virginia.



**Danielle Garbe Reser '97** won Exponent Philanthropy's 2019 "Outsized Impact" Award, announced on Oct. 3 in St. Louis, Missouri. The national award recognizes an individual whose style of philanthropy is achieving greater than expected impact. In January, Garbe Reser stepped down from her position as CEO of Sherwood Trust in Walla Walla and announced her candidacy for a Washington 16th Legislative District Senate position.



**Drew Pearsall '07** has joined the firm of Ogden Murphy Wallace in Seattle, where he will focus on various facets of litigation, including matters related to personal injury, professional liability and project liability. He earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Washington School of Law.

**Cliff Brown '72** is a senior technical advisor for the Africa division of the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative in Washington, D.C. He manages programs in Francophone Africa and Liberia.

**Eric Pryne '72**, a retired journalist, was elected in November as one of five commissioners of the Vashon Health Care District on Vashon Island, Washington. Voters approved the district to provide financial support for threatened health care services on the island.

## 1990s

**Naomi Fisher '90** is now semi-retired from library consulting and has moved to Astoria, Oregon, with her partner, Glen.

**Perry Dozier '91** announced his run for a 16th Legislative District Senate seat in Washington. Dozier operates farms in Franklin and Walla Walla counties and is a former two-term Walla Walla County commissioner.

**Rob Simison '95** was sworn in as mayor of Meridian, Idaho, in January for a four-year term. Simison served for 12 years as the previous mayor's chief of staff. Simison, his wife, Jenny, and their three children live in Meridian. Their oldest, Ethan, will be attending Whitman in the fall as a member of the Class of 2024. Simison is a former member of the Alumni Board, a former class representative for Annual Giving and a current member of the committee for his 25th reunion.

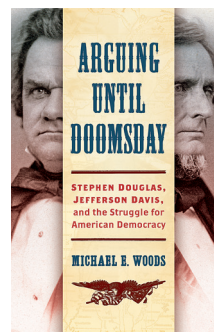
## 2000s

**Katey Schultz '01** released "Still Come Home" through Loyola University Maryland's Apprentice House Press. This novel follows her award-winning first book, "Flashes of War." Both examine personal stories of the War on Terror. Schultz lives in Burnsville, North Carolina.

**Lena Boesser-Koschmann Pace '02** was promoted to deputy chief of operations and policy for the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. She previously served as a regional law enforcement specialist in Denver, Colorado. Pace relocated earlier this year with her husband, Devin, and their dog, Stella.

**Michael Woods '07** has published "Arguing Until Doomsday: Stephen Douglas,

Jefferson Davis and the Struggle for American Democracy," by the University of North Carolina Press. Portraying the political and personal rivalry between Stephen Douglas and Jefferson Davis, "Arguing until Doomsday" paints a clear picture of the inner workings of the Democratic Party before and during the Civil War. Woods is an associate professor of history at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia.



**Jessie Runnoe '08** joined Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, as a tenure-track assistant professor of astronomy and physics.

## 2010s

**Ross Eustis '11** was recently featured in the San Francisco Chronicle for one of his side projects, Slow & Steady Records, with co-founder Steven Lugerner. Slow & Steady is designed as an alternative to self-releasing projects, providing support of graphic design, promotion and booking. Eustis is currently working in the Bay Area for the SFJAZZ Center.



**Submit a class note** Whitman College is pleased to highlight the accomplishments and updates of our alumni. Submissions to Class Notes are limited to 50 words. Updates should highlight news from the past calendar year and may include career updates; publications; honors, awards or appointments; or other significant life changes you would like to share with the Whittie community. Send your submission to alumni@whitman.edu, by mail to Whitman College, Office of Alumni Relations, 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362, or online at whitman.edu/classnotes. All submissions will be edited for content, length and style.

# Marriages/Unions



Wynne Auld '09 to Nicholai Smith, Sept. 13, 2019, in Girdwood, Alaska. Pictured: Sylvia Imbrock '08, Emma Wood '08, Auld and Kate Greenberg '09.



Beth Levin '14 to Carew Haug '14, Oct. 13, 2019, at the Lake Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley, Washington. Pictured from left: Lauren Vorona '15, Rosie Midget '15, Helen Marshall '15, Brynne Haug '12, Sean Cole-Jansen '15, Levin, Haug, Kaitlin Harrison '18, Sam Chapman '15, Morgan Dienst '15, Jacob O'Connor '16, Anneka Sonstroem '18, Amanda Lu '14, Dani Langlie '15, Sean Nagle-McNaughton '16, Beverly Li '14, Sam Schonfeld '12 and Tao Large '14.

# Births/Adoptions



To Ben Dinsdale '05 and Anne Conners '08, a daughter, Leda Opal Dinsdale, born Nov. 6, 2018.



To Dave and Kirsten Hagfors Millar '06, identical twin sons, Martin and Anders, born Dec. 24, 2019.



To Rob '07 and Jenny Schwartz Munday '05, a son, Alex, born November 2018.



**Submit a photo** We love to celebrate with you! Submit a photo of your ceremony or family addition to be featured in Whitman Magazine. Announcements can be submitted to [alumni@whitman.edu](mailto:alumni@whitman.edu), by mail to Whitman College, Office of Alumni Relations, 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362, or online at [whitman.edu/classnotes](http://whitman.edu/classnotes). Be sure to identify everyone in the photograph, as well as alumni relatives, for birth announcements.

# In Memoriam

## 1930s

**Elizabeth Light Anderson '37**, Nov. 1, 2019, in Alhambra, California.

## 1940s

**Gilbert Goodman '40**, Sept. 23, 2019, in Camarillo, California. He married **Virginia Charters '41** in 1942 and they raised two children. Goodman served in the U.S. Air Force for 30 years, retiring with the rank of colonel. He was preceded in death by his wife in 2011.

**Marian Harris Evans '44**, Oct. 23, 2019, in Kirkland, Washington. After Whitman she earned her teaching degree from San Jose State University, then married John Evans in 1950. They raised four children. Evans was preceded in death by her husband and a brother, **William Harris '33**. Survivors include four daughters and 14 grandchildren.

**Carol Pence Johnson '44**, Oct. 14, 2019, in La Costa, California. She married Oliver Johnson in 1946 and together they raised four children. She was preceded in death by her husband and a sister, **Lorraine Pence Frint '64**. Survivors include a sister and four children.

**Donald McMurchie '44**, Sept. 9, 2019. He took a leave of absence from Whitman to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. McMurchie married

**Doris Winkleman '47** in 1948 and had three sons. He earned his Juris Doctor from Stanford University and practiced in Sacramento, California. He opened the law firm of Files and McMurchie in 1952, now named Leneahan, Lee, Slater, Pearse

and Majernik; he retired from the firm in 1992. McMurchie was responsible for the creation and administration of many of Sacramento's recreation and park districts. He served as co-chair of his 40th reunion. McMurchie was preceded in death by his wife and his brother, **Jack McMurchie '53**. Survivors include his three sons; five grandchildren; a sister, **Eileen McMurchie Macbeth '52**; sister-in-law **Carolyn Vester McMurchie '54**; niece **Susan McMurchie '82**; nephew **Brad McMurchie '84**; great-nieces **Kathleen McMurchie '15** and **Grace McMurchie '15**; and a great-nephew, **Simon McMurchie '20**.

**Robert Herman '45**, Oct. 31, 2019, in Los Gatos, California. He attended Whitman as part of the V-12 Naval training program and served in the U.S. Navy in Portland, Maine. He married Alicia in 1952, and they raised four children. Herman earned his medical degree at Northwestern University in Chicago. After establishing a practice as a pediatrician in Palo Alto, California, he earned a degree as a child psychiatrist. He served as head of child psychiatry at Kaiser's San Jose Medical Center and practiced at Kaiser's Santa Clara facility, as well as Santa Clara County. Preceded in death by a son, Herman is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son.

**Alice "Lovely" Lovett Parsons '46**, Sept. 28, 2019, in Shelton, Washington.

**Eugene "Duane" Clayton '47**, Oct. 21, 2019, in Richland, Washington. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. Clayton met **Charlotte Goodnow '47** at Whitman and they married the summer after graduation and raised three children. He

earned his doctorate in physics at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon, then took a job at General Electric in Richland. Clayton became the manager of Battelle's Plutonium Critical Mass Laboratory, retiring after 22 years. He received the 1992 Alumnus of Merit Award for his contributions to his field and community. Preceded in death by his wife and two sons, he is survived by two children, a grandson and a great-granddaughter.

**Elizabeth "Betsy" Willis Lawrence '47**, Nov. 27, 2019, in Sammamish, Washington. She met **William Lawrence '47** at Whitman and they married the summer after graduating. They raised three sons. Lawrence earned her Master of Library Science from the University of Maryland in 1968 and worked in the public library system in White Plains, New York, then served as head of circulation and automation at the Ann Arbor, Michigan, public library from 1974 to 1986. The couple retired to Bainbridge Island, Washington, where she volunteered for several regional libraries. Lawrence was preceded in death by her husband. Survivors include her three sons.

**Richard Robb '47**, May 22, 2018, in Bothell, Washington. He served in the U.S. Army during WWII and attended Whitman for one year. Robb married Marilyn Braunn in 1948, and they had two children. He had a long career in grocery store management, retiring as controller in 1993. Preceded in death by his wife, survivors include a daughter and a son.

**Allane Waters Deutsch '49**, Jan. 30, 2019, in Santa Barbara, California. She earned her Master of Social Work from the University of California-Berkeley in 1960, and worked for the Red Cross and Mt. Zion Hospital in San Francisco. She married David Deutsch in 1962 and they raised two sons.

**Vincent DeVore '49**, Oct. 24, 2019, in Yakima, Washington. At Whitman, he met and married **Janet Freimuth '47** in 1947; they lived in Walla Walla while he finished his degree. They had four children and eventually settled in Yakima. After a brief career at National Cash Register, DeVore earned his education degree from Central Washington College in Ellensburg, Washington. He taught for 20 years at Franklin Junior High and coached track until he retired in 1982. The DeVores traveled extensively until health issues kept them closer to home. Preceded in death by his wife, survivors include four children and six grandchildren.

**John Faucette '49**, June 9, 2019, in Carson, California.

**Roger Johnson '49**, July 31, 2019, in Daytona Beach, Florida. He served in the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, then worked for General Electric at the Hanford site in Richland, Washington. Johnson married **Nancy Stier '53** in 1955 and they raised three daughters. The family moved to Florida where he worked for General Electric. He founded his own company in 1974, running self-service car washes and marketing equipment and supplies. Survivors include his wife and three daughters.

## 1950s

**Donna Mae Ince Pitluck '50**, Oct. 6, 2019, in Sherman Oaks, California. After Whitman, Pitluck earned a Master of Library Science from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1956. She married Stanley Pearce in 1957 and they had a son; they later divorced. She married Stanley Pitluck in 1972 and they had two children. Pitluck earned a master's degree in elementary education from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles in 1973 and she was head librarian at Los

Angeles Mission College from 1975 to 1994. She volunteered extensively for her church in retirement. She is survived by her husband and children.

**Mary Harvey Richardson '50**, Oct. 31, 2019, in Spokane, Washington. After Whitman, she studied at the University of Oregon in Eugene, eventually graduating from the Tobe Coburn School of Fashion in New York City. There she met Fred Richardson and they were married in 1950. The couple lived in Cuba, Bermuda, Venezuela and Guatemala, returning to the United States in 1970. They settled in Spokane and raised four children. Preceded in death by her husband and a sister, **Janice Harvey Price '40**, her survivors include her children and extended family.

**Winnifred Collier Ringhoffer '50**, Dec. 28, 2019, in Mountlake Terrace, Washington. After Whitman, she earned her master's degree in musicology and certificate in voice performance from Boston University in 1952. After teaching a year of public school music in Baker, Oregon, she married **Stephen Ringhoffer '48** and relocated to Walla Walla. She briefly taught vocal music in the Walla Walla school district before devoting many years to the Whitman College music department as a voice instructor. Ringhoffer performed in many productions throughout the community and volunteered for numerous causes. After retiring in 1994, she continued to serve in national and state music teacher associations, and was co-chair for her 50th reunion. Ringhoffer received the 2015 Sally Rodgers Award for Lifelong Achievement from the Alumni Association. She is survived by three daughters, including **Myra Ringhoffer Eisert '80**.

**Arlene Erickson Taylor '50**, Dec. 21, 2019, in Benson, Arizona. At Whitman, she met **Lowell Taylor '50** and they

married after his graduation. Together, they raised five children. The family lived in seven different states and Taylor found volunteer opportunities wherever they were. Preceded in death by her husband and a son, her survivors include two sons and two daughters.

**Frank Garrett '51**, Dec. 20, 2019, in Wilder, Idaho. He served in the U.S. Navy, and married Dorothy Gard in 1948. Garrett managed the family fruit orchards and cattle operation. Survivors include two sons.

**Alice Copp Smith '52**, Oct. 11, 2019, in Bellevue, Washington.

**Jody Kamm Prongay '53**, Dec. 20, 2019, on Bainbridge Island, Washington. After an early career in hospitality, she moved to Seattle where she served as a social worker for the YMCA. Married to David Prongay in 1962, the couple lived in Huntsville, Alabama, and Houston, Texas, while he worked for the Apollo Program. In 1977, they returned to Bainbridge Island where Prongay had a 35-year career as a real estate broker, retiring in 2005. She was a founding member of the Housing Resource Board of Bainbridge Island, a patron of many charities including Bainbridge Performing Arts and the Bainbridge Art Museum, and served as an officer and member of Kiwanis International. She served as an associate class representative for Annual Giving and was a committee member for two reunions. She is survived by her husband; daughters **Kamm '85** and **Vickery**; son **Robert '88**; and three granddaughters.

**Alan Wilkie '53**, Aug. 27, 2019, in Sun Lakes, Arizona. He married **Marilyn Carlstrom '53** in 1954. Wilkie was an orchestra director for the Clover Park School District in Tacoma, Washington, and conducted the Tacoma Junior Symphony for 13 years. Upon his retirement to Arizona, he was a member of the

Chandler Symphony Orchestra. Wilkie served as co-chair of his 45th reunion. Survivors include his wife; a son, Kurt Wilkie; a daughter, **Michelle Wilkie '79**; and extended family including **Todd Wilkie '90**.

**Jocelyn Schilling Cox '55**, Dec. 23, 2019, in Portland, Oregon. She married William Cox in 1961 and spent her career as a writer for the West Coast Lumberman's Association. Cox served as a longtime associate class representative for Annual Giving. Survivors include her husband, a brother and two sisters, including **Marilyn Schilling Payne '59**.

**Terrence Townley '56**, Oct. 17, 2019, in Ellensburg, Washington. After Whitman, he served in the U.S. Army in Korea. Townley eventually settled in Olympia to work for the Washington State Employees Association. He married Catherine Turner in 1968 and they raised two daughters. Townley retired after 27 years with the Department of Transportation, then returned to the workforce as a damage assessor for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Preceded in death by his wife, survivors include two daughters and three grandchildren.

**Robert Collins '59**, Sept. 26, 2019, in Tucson, Arizona. He married **Sandra Waters '59** in 1959. Collins earned both a master's and doctorate in health education at the University of Oregon and was a teacher and administrator for more than 40 years, ending his career as director of a graduate program in health education in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of Washington. In 2000, Collins retired to Saddlebrooke, Arizona. He was a class representative for Annual Giving and served as co-chair of his 50th reunion. Collins is survived by his wife of 60 years, Sandy; two daughters; three grandchildren; and a brother, **Daniel Collins '69**.

## 1960s

**Beverly Eddy Hawes '60**, Nov. 21, 2019, in Meridian, Idaho. After Whitman, she taught elementary school and worked for First Security Bank in Boise. She married Rodney Hawes in 1959 and they raised six children. Hawes was a dedicated member of her church and volunteered throughout the communities where she lived. After 45 years in New Canaan, Connecticut, the couple retired to Idaho.

**Jim Martine '60**, Sept. 21, 2019, on Bainbridge Island, Washington. He married **Sylvia Smith '60** following their graduation; they raised three daughters. Martine spent four years in the U.S. Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia. The family settled in Seattle and he had a long career in printing, including the establishment of the Instacolor print shop. Martine was a class representative for Annual Giving and co-chair of his 40th reunion. After retirement, the couple taught in China and remote villages of Alaska. Survivors include his wife and three daughters.

**Kristin Bailey Henry '61**, Dec. 7, 2019, in Bellevue, Washington. She married Ken Henry in 1965 and they raised two sons. Henry worked in the public schools, tutoring struggling students at Seattle Academy of Arts and Science and privately. She earned her Master of Fine Arts at Pacific Lutheran University at age 71 and after a life spent writing, had several poems and pieces published in a variety of periodicals. Survivors include her husband and two sons.

**Diane Powers Burke '63**, Sept. 11, 2019, in Seattle. She married **Ronald Burke '61** in 1963 and they raised two children. Burke earned her teaching degree at the University of Washington and taught middle school for 20 years. Preceded in death by her husband and a son, she is survived by a son.

**Robert Hackett '64**, Nov. 21, 2019, in Yakima, Washington. After Whitman, he earned a law degree from the University of Oregon in Eugene. Hackett served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star. He took a position in the prosecuting attorney's office in Yakima, eventually becoming a Superior Court Judge in Yakima County. Hackett retired in 2009. He was married to his first wife, Mickey Morrow, from 1973 until her death in 1995. Hackett was later married to Mardi Uhlmann for 22 years. He was a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity and served on his 40th reunion committee. His survivors include his wife and five stepsons.

**John Lewallen '64**, Nov. 1, 2019, in Philo, California. After Whitman, he spent a year in India as a Fulbright Scholar and volunteered in Vietnam, providing humanitarian aid. He returned to California as a peace activist and environmentalist. He married Eleanor Leventhal in 1970 and they raised three children. They were known for their activism and established the Mendocino Sea Vegetable Company, harvesting, drying and marketing wild edible seaweed. After losing his first wife to cancer, Lewallen married Barbara Stephens in 2005. Survivors include his wife, a daughter, two sons and a stepson.

**William Tobin '65**, Aug. 2, 2019, in Vashon, Washington. After Whitman, he attended the University of Washington in Seattle and Willamette Law School in Salem, Oregon. Tobin joined the Peace Corps and lived in Venezuela, then volunteered as a poll watcher in Mississippi in 1968. He moved to Vashon in 1971 and practiced law for more than two decades. Tobin spearheaded a movement to preserve the area's rural/agricultural character that successfully established several organizations dedicated to that goal. He used his law experience to fight

back against local polluters and injustices against the Nisqually Indian Tribe. In 1989, Tobin received the E.B. MacNaughton Civil Liberties Award from the ACLU of Oregon.

**Robert Boardman '66**, Oct. 7, 2019, in Longview, Washington. He had a varied career, including early information technology for Canadian Pacific Railroad and the Alaskan pipeline; real estate in California; distribution management for Riviana Foods in Houston, Texas; and trucking along the East Coast. In retirement, Boardman self-published two science fiction novels, volunteered for the Greater Houston Food Bank and the Lighthouse for the Blind, and joined the Mount St. Helens Hiking Club in Kelso, Washington.

**Paul Searby '68**, Sept. 28, 2019, in Olivenhain, California. After Whitman, he earned a degree in business from Claremont Graduate University. He started his own computer and business management company, Computerware, in 1976 and worked there until his retirement in 2007.

## 1970s

**Christine White Wilson '70**, Sept. 22, 2019, in Las Vegas, Nevada. After graduating, she moved to Washington, D.C. Wilson was a successful real estate agent there for more than 20 years. She married Garth Wilson and they had a son. Later, Wilson married Tom Kearney. She was devoted to rescuing mistreated or orphaned cats and dogs, particularly supporting D.C.'s Feline Urban Rescue for decades. Her survivors include her husband, her son and three siblings.

**Jean Davis-Johnson '72**, Dec. 8, 2019, in Spokane, Washington. She earned

a master's degree in art history from the University of Washington and her Juris Doctor from Lewis and Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon. She married Stephen Johnson in 1972 and gave up her law practice to be a full-time mother to their three sons. Davis-Johnson donated her time to support local education, art and music organizations in various capacities, and was a member of the Whitman Spokane Steering Committee. Survivors include her sons, **Greg '02**, **Tim '04** and Eric; her brother, **Paul Davis '69**; and extended family including niece, **Lisa Johnson Neel '05**.

**Shirley Eichelberger '73**, Dec. 5, 2019, in Springfield, Oregon. She was a teacher and worked as a legal secretary. Eichelberger married Alan Elizondo in 1982; they later divorced. She moved to Valdez, Alaska, to work during the construction of the Alaska

pipeline and eventually settled in Fall Creek, Oregon. Survivors include her sister, nieces and nephews.

**Douglas Burton '77**, Sept. 25, 2019, in Eagle, Idaho. He earned his master's degree from the University of Idaho in Moscow, and worked as a fish pathologist for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for more than 30 years. Burton married Patricia Wager in 1995 and they raised two daughters. He is survived by his wife and daughters.

**Margaret Davis Bartlett '78**, Sept. 19, 2019, in Corvallis, Oregon. She married Bruce Bartlett in 1979 and they raised two children. Bartlett earned her master's degree in physical therapy from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1983, and she established a private practice in Corvallis in 2000. Survivors include her husband and children.

## 1980s

**John Atwill IV '83**, Dec. 16, 2019, in Vancouver, Washington. He married Kim Lehman in 1988, and they raised two daughters. After 10 years of teaching he moved the family to Phoenix, Arizona, and became a pilot. He started by flying a radio DJ around the skies of Phoenix and eventually became a captain at Federal Express. Atwill enjoyed restoring classic Mustangs, scuba diving and skiing. Survivors include his wife; daughters Shelby and Sarah; mother **Sally Rodgers '63/'74**; father **John Atwill III '62**; stepmother Laura Hull; brothers **Geoff '85**, Tim and **David '89**; and stepbrother Eric Hull.

**Brian Cohee '86**, Oct. 27, 2019, in Shoreline, Washington. After Whitman, he earned his master's degree in geology from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and a doctorate

in geophysics from Stanford University in 1996. Cohee's computer knowledge and problem-solving skills led to a career in information technology, including positions as chief technology officer with Seattle start-up Mixpo, and Corbis Holdings. He was married to **Shelby Hunsinger '84** for 26 years. Survivors include his three daughters; sister **Lynne Cohee '83**; brother-in-law **Matt Smith '83**; and nephews **Mitch Smith '17** and **Nathan Smith '20**.

**Kenneth Ames '88**, Oct. 27, 2019, in Tehachapi, California. He earned his master's in geology from the University of Idaho in Moscow, and his doctorate in hydrogeochemistry from the University of Washington in Seattle. Ames had a career in environmental services that included teaching at the Environmental Training Institute and management at Ramboll Environ consultants. Preceded

in death by his mother, **Janet Haltom-Ames '58**, survivors include his wife, Claudia Solt-Ames, and three children.

**Kathleen Hitchcock '88**, Aug. 25, 2019, in Zillah, Washington. She finished her undergraduate degree at Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Idaho, and earned her law degree at the University of Idaho in Moscow. Hitchcock worked as deputy prosecuting attorney for many years and served as a judge in several communities. Survivors include her son, mother, sister and two brothers.

## 2010s

**Robert Brothers '17**, Dec. 11, 2019, in Seattle. A geology major at Whitman, rocks, fossils, and gems were his passion. Survivors include his parents and fiancée, Serra Vargas.

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WHITMAN COLLEGE



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# September 24-27, 2020

# Whitman Leaders



**Hedda Jorgenson Reid '49**, Dec. 19, 2019, in Walla Walla. At Whitman, Hedda met **Pete Reid '49**; during their senior year, she was the homecoming queen and he was the student body president. The Reids were married the winter following their graduation, celebrating 67 years of marriage before his death in 2017. They spent their lives in Walla Walla, and Pete worked at Whitman for 61 years. The couple became fixtures in the community and the face of Whitman for many years.

A homemaker who raised four sons, she had a gift for entertaining, hosting many Whitman and family gatherings with grace and apparent ease. Reid was a member of PEO, St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Delta Gamma sorority. In 2009, the Whitman College Town-Gown award was renamed The Pete and Hedda Reid Service to Walla Walla Award.

Survivors include her sons, **Jim '73**, **Tom '80**, Bill and Dan; 12 grandchildren including **Curt Reid '10**, **Maggie Reid Hodges '10**; and five great-grandchildren. Donations in her memory may be made to the Pete and Hedda Reid Scholarship Fund at Whitman College, 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla WA 99362.



**Nancy McKay Burton '53**, Oct. 26, 2019, in Shoreline, Washington. She met **Paul Burton '51** during a college ski trip when his Chevy slid into an icy ditch. They were married in 1955, and lived in Alaska where he served as a U.S. Coast Guard officer based on a ship in Ketchikan. They raised four children in Lake Forest Park, Washington, and Burton volunteered extensively, serving on county and statewide commissions, including as the first woman on the King County Planning Commission. Her work focused on planning for the future of Washington. Burton's transition from professional volunteer to career professional started in 1975. She worked for the Seattle School District as a facility planner and policy analyst for 15 years.

Nancy loved her Whitman College experience and contributed to the college throughout her life. During her 15 years on the Board of Overseers she pushed for improved diversity on campus; she served as chair from 2003-2005 and was named Overseer Emerita in 2005. Burton also served as co-chair of the Whitman Alumni Fund. She received the 2010 Gordon Scribner Award for Distinguished Service.

Burton was preceded in death by her parents **Richard, class of 1916**, and **Effie Duff McKay, class of 1917**, and brother-in-law **Alfred Clise '43**. Survivors include her husband; son **Robert '84**; three daughters, including **Jean Burton Over '82**; grandchildren, including **Katherine Burton '15**, **Stephen Over '11**, **Clayton Over '16**; and sister **Joyce McKay Clise '44**.



**Mark Anderson '78**, Nov. 13, 2019, in Walla Walla. A Walla Walla native, Anderson graduated in 1978 with a degree in studio art. Together with his wife, Patty, he opened the Walla Walla Foundry in 1980, which has become a contemporary art production facility that works with hundreds of renowned artists and is recognized as one of the premier fine-art casting facilities in the world. The Andersons established Foundry Vineyards in 2003. Their vision for the winery came from his love of art and community, merging the fine arts with the artistic expression of winemaking. Pieces of the old Sherwood Center "fortress" make up the walls to the sculpture garden located at the winery.

Anderson contributed his expertise and time to the community he loved through his volunteer activities. He served as a member of Whitman's Board of Overseers, President's Advisory Board and Art Advisory Committee, as well as the City of Walla Walla's Public Art Committee and the Blue Mountain Arts Alliance / ARTWALLA. He was a founding member of Shakespeare Walla Walla, founding member of the Walla Walla Piano Group and a managing partner of the GESA Power House Theater. Anderson served as an art instructor at Walla Walla Community College and Walla Walla University, and was the director of Whitman's Sheehan Gallery after his graduation. He was appointed by the governor as a commissioner of the Washington State Arts Commission. He received the 1993 Pete Reid Award for Young Alumni from the Alumni Association

and was selected as 2015's Man of the Year by the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Survivors include his wife of 43 years; daughter, Lisa; son, Jay; and two grandchildren.



**Jean Henkels**, Sept. 24, 2019, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Henkels and her husband, John, established the John and Jean Henkels Chair of Chinese Languages and Literatures in 1987. John served on the Whitman Board of Overseers from 1986-2001. The endowment enabled the first Chinese language study professors to come to Whitman from China. Their support led to the creation of a permanent position for a professor of Chinese.

Henkels graduated from Manhattanville College in New York City. Jean and John and their 12 children moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. The Henkels traveled extensively, visiting most countries of the world, including Cuba in the 1950s; apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa; China; the deserts of the southwestern United States; and the mountains and rivers of the Great Basin in her own backyard. Henkels was a benefactor of causes throughout the world including missions, the arts and academia.

Survivors include her husband; her 12 children, including **Mark '80** and **Diane '86**; and 23 grandchildren, including **Max Henkels '12**.





**Nancy Cronon Ball**, March 7, 2020, in Walla Walla. Ball graduated from Oberlin College in 1948 and studied at Yale Divinity School. She came to Whitman in 1960 with her husband, longtime professor of religion and counselor George Hudson Ball, and their four children. The Balls hosted "cell group" conversations in their home and mentored countless students over their five decades of service to the college.

Nancy Ball was a consummate educator, earning her education credentials at Whitman and teaching in Walla Walla Public Schools from 1969 to 1986 — the last seven years of which she spent establishing and teaching in the Explorers Program for academically gifted students. She also taught briefly in the Education Department at Whitman and taught English at Yunnan University in Kunming, China, for one year.

The Balls were generous donors to Whitman over their lifetimes and were especially committed to supporting international students. Nancy Ball was also an exemplar of active and engaged citizenship in the Walla Walla community and beyond, and was an avid hiker, skier, traveler and gardener. In 2016, fellow community volunteer Mary Hooper Meeker established the Nancy Cronon Ball Scholarship at Whitman to honor her service to the college and community. Gifts to the fund may be made in Ball's memory online or by mail to Whitman College.

Ball was preceded in death in 2012 by her husband of 62 years and is survived by her children: Alan Ball, **Sarah Ball Teslik '74**, Larry Ball, Eric Ball, and their families.



**Nadine and Robert Skotheim**

**Nadine Vail Skotheim**, March 30, 2020, Port Angeles, Washington. Nadine was a leader who served the Whitman College community with warmth, grace and humor during the tenure of her husband, President Emeritus Robert "Bob" Allen Skotheim, from 1975-1988.

Nadine was born in Sumas, Washington, on May 25, 1934, to Dean and Esther Vail. She grew up in Sumas, Seattle and Vancouver, Washington. She earned a degree in comparative literature from the University of Washington in 1955. While Bob pursued his academic career, she raised their three children. When Bob was named provost and dean of the faculty at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 1972, she took on what would become a defining role for her: presiding over official residences and administrative relations at academic institutions. At Whitman, she flourished in the role of first lady and became an admired and valued mentor to generations of governing board members, volunteers, alumni, faculty, staff and students. Her

influence continued as Bob moved on to lead the Huntington Library and Occidental College. In 1988, Whitman recognized Nadine's contributions with an honorary degree, as did Occidental decades later, making her the only college president's spouse to receive two honorary doctorates.

Generations of alumni and volunteer leaders admired and valued Nadine's many contributions to Whitman. In addition to the Robert Allen Skotheim Chair of History established in President Skotheim's honor, the Skotheims helped establish three endowments at Whitman: the Sivert O. and Marjorie Allen Skotheim Lecture in History named for Bob's parents; the Dean and Esther Vail Scholarship Endowment named for Nadine's parents; and the Robert and Nadine Skotheim Scholarship Endowment. Bob served as an overseer for a decade after his retirement as president and Bob and Nadine continued to visit the college regularly, providing advice and mentorship to governing boards, college

presidents, faculty and staff for more than three additional decades.

Nadine was committed to her family and friends throughout her life. In the Skotheims' retirement on Bainbridge Island and then Port Angeles, Washington, she read fiction extensively, knitted all manner of apparel for family and friends, and pursued connection with people of all kinds. "Bringing people together, putting them at ease, and accepting them open-heartedly were her hallmarks and her great gift," remarked her family.

Nadine is survived by her husband of 66 years; their children Marjorie (Erik), Kris (Meghan), and Julia; and eight grandchildren: Mali (Rafael), Peter, Kris, **Benjamin '13**, Madeline, **Max '15**, Julian, and Rebecca. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, there will be no memorial service at this time.

The family has indicated that remembrances may be made to the Nadine and Robert Skotheim Scholarship Endowment at Whitman College.



### **Submit an obituary or in memoriam**

Whitman College offers its condolences to the family and friends of our departed Whitties. Obituary information can be submitted to [alumni@whitman.edu](mailto:alumni@whitman.edu), by mail to Whitman College, Office of Alumni Relations, 345 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362, or online at [whitman.edu/classnotes](http://whitman.edu/classnotes).

ECON 220

# Game Theory

4 CREDITS | HAZLETT/NIGAM

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Students learn to describe real-world situations of strategic interaction. They use the tools of game theory to help explain the interaction between “players” — how individuals make decisions when they know their actions will affect the choices others make.

*The founders of game theory were*



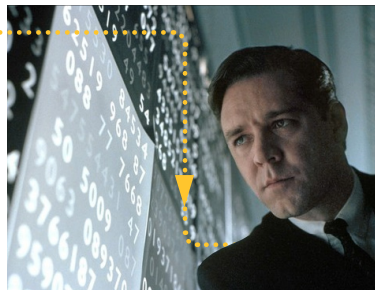
a mathematician,  
**John von Neumann,**



and an economist,  
**Oskar Morgenstern.**

*In 1944, they were together at Princeton having both fled fascism — von Neumann from Hungary and Morgenstern from Austria. The pair conceived a groundbreaking mathematical and economics theory based on games of strategy.*

One of the 1994 Nobel prize winners was American **John Nash** for his work on the mathematics of game theory.



The 2001 Academy Award-winning film **“A Beautiful Mind”** chronicles the lives of Nash and his wife, Alicia, as they struggled with his mental illness.

GAME ON!

**“STUDENT ATHLETES OFTEN DO REALLY WELL IN THIS CLASS. THEY’VE BEEN THINKING STRATEGICALLY FOR A WHILE.”**

DENISE HAZLETT  
Hollon Parker Professor of Economics and Business

COURSE DESCRIPTION

***Game theory is the science of strategy***

*— the study of strategic decisions made by mutually interdependent individuals. This course emphasizes the roles that information and reputation play in determining outcomes. Practical applications include hostile takeovers, labor strikes, predatory pricing, property issues and voting paradoxes.*

**ABOUT THE PROFESSORS:** Hollon Parker Professor of Economics and Business Denise Hazlett has a doctorate in economics from the University of Minnesota (1992). She joined the Whitman Department of Economics that same year. While at Whitman, she has developed — and published articles about — classroom experiments that give her economics students hands-on experience with concepts such as inflation, investing and employment contracts. Hazlett is on sabbatical for the 2019-2020 school year. In her absence, the spring semester course is being taught by Pulkit Nigam, visiting assistant professor of economics from the University of South Carolina.

“In 1994, I planned to propose to my colleagues that we add game theory to our curriculum,” said Hazlett. “Just before our department met, the committee that awards the Nobel Memorial Prize for economics announced that **for the first time ever, the prize was going to game theorists.** I figured that was a good sign — and I’ve been teaching the course since 1995.”

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— *Anthony Nevoso '20, Economics*

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## Video Snapshot



**EXPRESSING HIS CULTURE** Marcus Amerman '81 is a unique melding of culture and circumstance. He blends his Choctaw-Irish heritage with influences of Hopi and Umatilla, topped off with a Whitman College fine arts education, to create photo-like beaded images that challenge traditional Native American styles. "The type of beadwork I do, it's a combination of Western realism and Indian color and geometry, so it's a melding of cultures — just like I am. It's natural for it to come out of me," Amerman said. Read more about Amerman and watch a video of his bead creations at [whitman.edu/magazine](http://whitman.edu/magazine).

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