

**A
PUBLICATION
OF THE
STUDENT
PERSONNEL
ASSOCIATION
(SPA)**



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[http://www.uw-spa.org/
calendar](http://www.uw-spa.org/calendar)

Frontline

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FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Well, it looks like we are having a typical Wisconsin winter... full of snow, cold, and economic woes. While we all feel the brunt of many of these issues (with letters from the governor stating freezes), I try to take solace in the fact that the snow tends to mute all the background noise that we generate. My



Nancy Kujak-Ford

brother-in-law from AZ finds snow to be his arch nemesis, but it brings a sense of peace that reminds me of reading Frost poetry with a hot cup of co-coa. With that in mind, I hope that SPA can be that comfort or retreat that you need to in order to continue on your wintery work path.

I encourage to you get involved with a committee or to attend one of our socials. I can guarantee that you will meet a friend face with an encouraging smile. Even if you do not

have time to leave your chaotic desk or demands, please send me (nmkujak@wisc.edu) or an exec member a quick email on ideas how SPA can be the source you need to keep you grounded. I hope that your hurried holiday season is full of times peace, togetherness, and laughter.

Nancy



**Save the Date for the SPA Conference:
March 6, 2009**

Friends, we are planning a highly-interactive, fun and informative conference for March. Everyone who attends will receive numerous takeaways they can use in the workplace and beyond. There will be time to get acquainted with peers you haven't met yet and to better know peers you have met before. There will also be workshops, information sharing, and some 'recharge' for the batteries.

Please plan on attending -- we need you to make it a success for all of us.

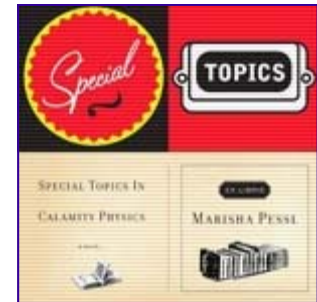
Dave Black
President-Elect

Book Review by Ann Dingman

Special Topics in Calamity Physics, by Marisha Pessl

I was recommended this fiction book by my boss, a former book store owner and avid reader. It is a long book – over 500 pages – but worth the time investment. Blue Van Meer, the protagonist and narrator, is a teenager whose widower father is a college professor. Blue and her father travel from city to city for visiting faculty positions. They settle for Blue’s senior year in a town in North Carolina. At her private high school, Blue forms a relationship with a group of popular kids and their teacher. Alongside Blue’s application to Harvard and her father’s dating life, a mystery ensues. The striking feature of this book is the literary references. Pessl sprinkles her writing with references to books and films, and each chapter heading is a book title. She also includes “visual aids,” which are, according to Blue’s father, an additional element of good writing.

Though the constant annotations can get somewhat tedious by page 400, it was a clever device that helped me get to know Blue’s personality. Special Topics is a dense but enjoyable read.



SPA’s “Careers in Student Affairs” Event by Raul Leon

The SPA Career in Student Affairs event was held this past month. As someone that had the pleasure to take part in the planning and participate in the event, I was left with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was impressed by the degree of cooperation and willingness of fellow colleagues to share their experience in student affairs with powerful, inspiring, and eye opening professional anecdotes. On the other hand, I enjoyed and learned so much about what practitioners in this campus do in areas such as housing, judicial affairs, study abroad, equity and diversity, academic advising and more, that I cannot help feeling disappointed when the turn out of the event was low and so many students and professionals interested in exploring student affairs could have benefited from this informal but productive conversation. I am looking forward to next year's event, and I can't wait to learn from all talented individuals that make SPA a unique organization.



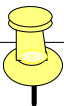
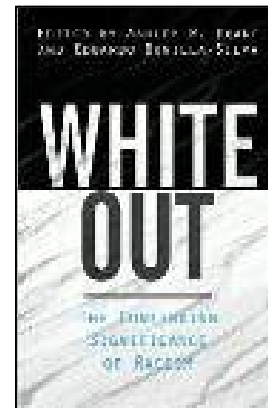
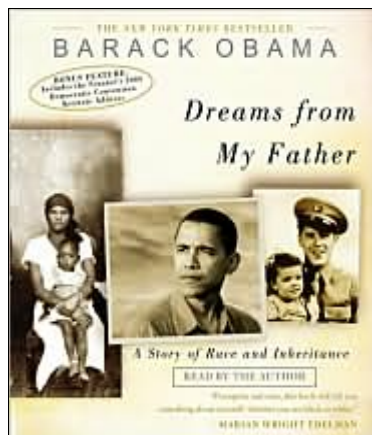
[UW-MADISON STUDY ABROAD NUMBERS JUMP TO TOP 10](#)

(Click [here](#) to read the article)

Join the SPA Book Club

The SPA Book Club is off and ... reading! This spring there will be two consecutive book club groups. The first will be reading *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* by Barack Obama. *Dreams from my Father* was chosen due to the general interest in President-Elect Obama. The second group will read *White Out: The Continuing Significance of Racism*, edited by Ashley Doane and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva. The SPA Book Club Committee chose *White Out: The Continuing Significance of Racism* because Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, a former UW-Madison graduate, recently spoke on our campus during the fall Diversity Forum. His keynote address simultaneously informed, challenged and inspired forum participants to learn more and do more regarding organizational racism. There is much interest in continuing the conversation he so effectively started in September 2008.

Through the generous support of the UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity via the Campus Reading Seminar on Racial/Ethnic Topics Grant, SPA is excited to be able to provide books to participants at no cost. The book club will be meeting on Fridays between 11:30 – 12:30pm, Memorial Union, TITU. The first group will run January 30 – February 20 and the second group will run March 27 – May 1. Currently there are 23 participants signed up but others are always welcome. If you are interested in participating or would like more detailed information, please contact Heidi Lang at helang@wisc.edu.



Read this article from The Chronicle
“When Does Provocative Student Expression
Become Too Threatening?”
by LAWRENCE WHITE:

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v55/i16/16a02801.htm>

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If you have not filled in our survey yet, please do so at
[https://websurvey.wisc.edu/survey/TakeSurvey.asp?](https://websurvey.wisc.edu/survey/TakeSurvey.asp?AI=I&SurveyID=34L5o5KI2p32L45)

[AI=I&SurveyID=34L5o5KI2p32L45](https://websurvey.wisc.edu/survey/TakeSurvey.asp?AI=I&SurveyID=34L5o5KI2p32L45)

Thanks for helping us to be of better service to you!!



We hope to see you at our
Events in 2009

Thursday January 8th, Noon
SPA Forum

Location: Memorial Union, Rosewood Room
Thomas Eggert, Associate Director and advisor for The Center for Business, Environment & Social Responsibility at UW-Madison, will speak. His talk will focus on the development of sustainability programs on campus.

Friday, March 6th, 8 AM –4 PM
SPA Conference
Location: Pyle Center

**A HAPPY
NEW YEAR**

Cooperation, Commitment, Community, and Camaraderie Since 1956