



## **Director's Introduction:**

A while ago, I volunteered to write an end of 2009 beginning of 2010 column for *The Torch*. I expected to put together a traditional look back at the accomplishments of the Civil Rights Team Project in 2009, and there were many, with a forward looking focus on the wonderful work that lies ahead in 2010. But yesterday when I arrived home and picked up the mail, I saw that my family had received the latest issue of *Cobblestone*, a fabulous magazine on American history. *Cobblestone* was started by two women from New Hampshire, Hope Pettegrew and Frances Nankin, and was first published in January, 1980. The founders' vision was to make American history fun for kids. The magazine has been true to its original mission, though I suspect there are more than a few adults like me that enjoy it as well.

As the magazine was celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the publishers also decided to do a little looking back before moving forward. However rather than limiting nostalgia to a single article, the entire issue is devoted to writing about the 30 greatest Americans. Lists like that are impossible to construct without somebody thinking a deserving person was omitted, with someone else challenging the selection of a person they find less deserving. Putting all that to the side, the issue is terrific. You will have no problem guessing some of the honorees like Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, George Washington, Susan B. Anthony and other individuals popular in our history text books. But if you are like me, you might be struck by how little you know, if anything, about some of the others on the list.

I want to expose you to four people on the list, two of whom I confess to knowing nothing about, one of whom I know some but should know so much more and another who I add for personal reasons as he shaped the very early years of my legal career.

Let's begin with the two people selected whose names did not even ring a bell for me when I saw them- William Lloyd Garrison and Alice Paul. William Lloyd Garrison was a very outspoken abolitionist. He spent his entire adult life condemning slavery and speaking up for the rights of black Americans. In the 1830's Garrison began to publish



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*The Liberator* to promote his views and to end slavery. Despite multiple death threats and attacks by angry mobs when he spoke, Garrison soldiered on without ever wavering in his commitment to his cause. Garrison continued to publish *The Liberator* until the Civil War ended in 1865. In total, he published 1,820 issues, never missing a single week! The following quote from the inaugural issue of his paper speaks to the need to be forceful when taking on things that are wrong or unfair.

*I do not wish to think,  
or speak, or write, with  
moderation...I am earnest  
I will not equivocate  
I will not excuse  
I will not retreat a single inch  
**AND I WILL BE HEARD.***

Alice Paul was another in the list of 30 with whom I was not at all familiar. Ms. Paul was a suffragist in the early 1890's and dedicated her life to getting women the right to vote. In 1913, Paul and her friend, Lucy Burns, organized the first national suffrage parade on the day before Woodrow Wilson's presidential inauguration. Paul went on to organize many more rallies, parades and conventions and was eventually responsible for submitting a petition to President Wilson demanding that women be granted the right to vote. The petition was 18,000 feet long and contained over 500,000 signatures. After her petition drive was unsuccessful, Ms. Paul organized daily silent protests in front of the White House. Shockingly, her peaceful and silent protests resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of Ms. Paul and many of her supporters. After being imprisoned, Alice Paul refused to eat and went on a hunger strike. In response she was force fed and threatened with commitment to the psychiatric ward; all this suffering the result of standing up for what she believed. It is too easy for us to look back at the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment that gave women the right to vote in 1920 and take that right for granted. However to do that is to dishonor the memory of women like Alice Paul and others who fought long and hard and suffered mightily to bring that change about.

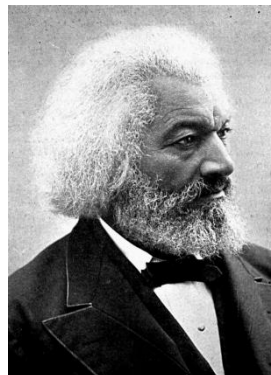
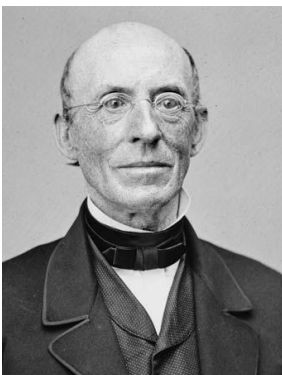
Frederick Douglas also made the top 30. While I studied and know of Mr. Douglas, I learned in a magazine for kids that I did not know that much. Douglas, like many slaves, never knew his birth date or his father. He was separated from his mother at an early age and was never even told when she died. Despite all of these obstacles, Douglas was able to escape from slavery when he was a teenager and become a leader in the movement to abolish slavery in the United States. Frederick Douglas used his extraordinary skills as a writer and a speaker to spread the antislavery message through books, speeches and a newspaper. His autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas, An American Slave*, opened America's eyes to a first person tale of the horror that was American slavery. Like most great civil rights advocates, Douglas did not rest after Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Instead, he encouraged black Americans to enlist in the Union Army. Douglas also did not rest after



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the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment officially eliminated slavery. He knew there was more to be done to insure that blacks secured the right to vote and did not have to live under a system marked by injustice and inequality. Douglas worked on these issues for the rest of his life teaching us that the struggle for true equality is never-ending.

Now to the entry that strikes a very personal chord with me, Cesar Chavez. Cesar Chavez was another American hero from the humblest of origins in terms of personal wealth and privilege, who went on to change the lives of millions. Cesar adopted the view espoused by Gandhi and Dr. King that change could be brought about through nonviolence. Throughout his life, Cesar worked tirelessly to improve the lives of some of our country's poorest and most mistreated workers, migrant laborers who toil on farms throughout the United States. Cesar took on a legal system that denied farm workers the protection of minimum wage laws, laws related to health and safety in the workplace and the right to organize to form unions. Even though laws were enacted to keep farm workers from living in decent housing, earning a livable wage or organizing to improve their wages and working conditions, Cesar and others successfully organized workers despite brutal opposition and created the United Farm Workers. Like all of the other civil rights struggles we have looked at, Cesar's success in organizing some farm workers marked an advance in the struggle but not the ultimate accomplishment. Cesar learned, just as William Lloyd Garrison, Alice Paul and Frederick Douglass did, that securing some change does not mark the end of the civil rights journey. That point was driven home to me when I worked as a lawyer for migrant farm workers in New York from 1980 until 1989 and saw some of the same working and living conditions that Chavez had been protesting.



So as we begin 2010 and another year in the Civil Rights Team Project, what can we take from the stories of these great historical figures? One thing that is clear is that greatness can and does come from all quarters. One does not have to be born rich or powerful to bring about real change. People born into slavery, poverty and other circumstances where we might not think success would be possible have brought about some of the most significant changes in our country's history. All of us who work for social justice and true civil rights equality have the ability to effectuate change. We have the passion and we have the commitment. We need to look inside ourselves and inside of our civil



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rights team members to find the spark that ignites that change and when we find that spark we need to nurture it and let it become the flame that illuminates the change we want to see and need in our schools, our communities, and our world. The spark becoming the torch is the CRTP.

Happy New Year.

Thom Harnett

\* \* \* \* \*

And thank you, Thom! In terms of providing that spark, here's what you can expect from this month's edition of *The Torch*:

**Civil Rights Teams in Action:** The first year team at Hall-Dale Elementary defines civil rights in the hallways, writes and illustrates a book, and creates a skit. And they're just getting started...

**Activity Ideas:** One holiday catalog and a pair scissors gets students started on an activity about media.

**Pop Culture Winners and Losers:** As usual, no connecting thread between a Sprint mobile network ad, an ugly handbag, the glorious achievement that is *Precious*, and some terrible advertising for *A Single Man*.

**FA Issues:** How can we better build a sense of community within the Civil Rights Team Project?

**Relevant Resources:** Two documentary films look at adolescence. Bring popcorn.

**Upcoming Events:** Some excellent Martin Luther King Day celebrations headline an active winter season of events.

Brandon Baldwin – Newsletter Editor

*This newsletter is written and distributed by the Civil Rights Team Project, a state-wide program under the auspices of the Maine Office of the Attorney General. The mission of the Civil Rights Team Project is to increase the safety of high school, middle school and elementary school students and to reduce the incidence of bias-motivated harassment and violence in schools.*

**Janet T. Mills—Attorney General**

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**Brandon Baldwin—Schools/Curriculum Coordinator**



## Hall-Dale Elementary Is Making It Happen



How much can you really expect from a first-year team?

That was the question I had in my head on the very short drive to visit the civil rights team at Hall-Dale Elementary School. It can be hard going for first year teams, as they essentially have to learn on the go.

Well, the Hall-Dale team is certainly going. I noticed one of their first projects almost immediately upon entering the school. There were large photos of civil rights team members with word bubbles coming out of their mouths. Inside the word bubbles were personal definitions of civil rights and what civil rights teams do in schools. It was immediately apparent that this was a team making a real effort to be seen.

One of the first questions I asked them during their team meeting was the purpose of these posters. They gave all the right answers:



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- Let the school know that we have a team: create publicity.
- Educate people about what civil rights are, and what the civil rights team does.
- Let the school know who is on the team.

Great start: for the meeting, but also for the team. This is a great early-year project, and it effectively takes the bulletin board concept and spreads it all around the school. It's impossible to ignore.

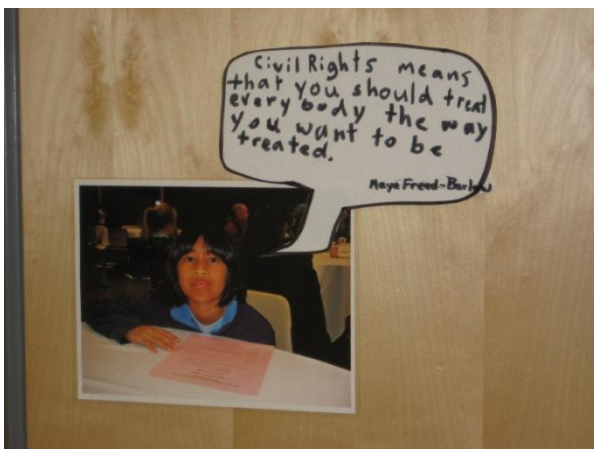
Speaking of impossible to ignore, I couldn't help but notice the wonderful-looking book on the side table during the meeting. It featured large, colorful, and carefully drawn crayon illustrations with typed text. Faculty advisor Peggy Mansir explained how the book came into creation. Students were motivated to take their partially-completed PSA and turn it into something more. Community advisor Ellen Freed was an integral part of this process.

The introduction to the book, titled *Problems for Billy*, lays out the book's history and purpose:

This story and illustrations were the result of our team's discussion about the kinds of discrimination most prevalent in our school community. Most team members agreed that discrimination based on behavioral disability is an issue of concern. This book is our team's response to an identified need. Team members hope that this effort will help to make Hall-Dale Elementary School a safe and welcoming place to all.

This is perfect. The team's book project is addressing an issue they see in their school.

In terms of process, the book is truly a group effort. The text is student generated, as are the pictures. Each page comes from different contributors.



One of the wonderful picture/word bubble combos you'll find in the halls of Hall-Dale Elementary School



A page from the book *Problems for Billy*



This is only the beginning of what this team is doing. They are currently in the process of changing their hallway displays. The word bubbles coming out of civil rights team members' mouths will offer suggestions of what students can say when they witness hateful/hurtful words and harassment. This is a great way to keep these displays fresh and relevant, but also a simple and effective way to deal with a myriad of issues.

The team is also working to get their book published and handed out to teachers for use with students. The storyline in *Problems for Billy*, where a student with autism is teased by other students but then defended by an intervening ally, is also the basis of a skit. They have plans to record the skit and create a movie, utilizing the talents of a friend of a parent volunteer who works for MPBN and members of the Hall-Dale High School civil rights team.

We applaud Peggy Mansir, her co-advisors Jodie Bennett, Ellen Freed, and Julie Sipser, but most of all the fourth and fifth graders on the civil rights team for their impressive work and ongoing efforts to be an active presence in their school. We look forward to seeing what this team does as they get older and gain experience!

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In other CRTP team news, check out the recent article from *The Republican Journal*, featuring the civil rights teams from Belfast and Searsport District High Schools:

<http://waldo.villagesoup.com/news/story/civil-rights-teams-empower-students-to-create-better-school-climate-for-all/296729>

## Activity Idea: Putting Holiday Catalogs to Use!



The holiday shopping season means that your home has probably been bombarded with an almost obscene amount of catalogs. This activity actually puts those catalogs to use!



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Start off with a homework assignment for your students: bring a shopping catalog to the next civil rights team meeting. (And since some of them will inevitably forget, have them bring two or three catalogs so that everyone is covered.)

At the meeting, make sure each team member has a catalog. (You could probably put them in pairs for this, too.) Give each team member a pair of scissors. Their instructions are simple: starting from the beginning of the catalog, cut out all the heads they can and set them aside. (And rather than wait for everyone to finish, we recommend setting a time limit for this, 5-10 minutes, enough so that they have a good number of cutout heads for the next part.)

This next step is where this becomes a civil rights activity. For their catalog, have them separate the cutout heads into racial categories. The easiest way to do this would be separation into white and POC (people of color). There is also the optional step of preserving these results by gluing or taping the heads onto poster-sized paper, complete with the name of the catalog.

With *some* of the catalogs, a distinct trend will develop: a disturbing lack of diversity.

Have students look at the results for all the catalogs and consider the following questions:

- What do you notice about race in these shopping catalogs?
- Are there any patterns, or does it vary by catalog?
- Why do you think some catalogs lack racial diversity? Does this make sense to you?
- What effects do you think it might have for companies to publish racially diverse catalogs? What about catalogs that lack racial diversity?

This is an incredibly easy and highly engaging hands-on activity that you can do with your team. It can be a real eye-opener, pairing well with our fall training session on “Media Matters” in getting students to see issues of institutional racism.

And if you’re thinking that this activity idea is brilliant... you should know that it’s not an original idea. I took the idea from someone who used the Skymall catalog on an airplane in a similar fashion. You can see the original source material at:

[www.blog.ni9e.com/archives/2007/02/skymall\\_liberat.html](http://www.blog.ni9e.com/archives/2007/02/skymall_liberat.html)





## Pop Culture Watch: December

The Pop Culture Watch is where we offer our opinions on what's going on in popular culture from a civil rights perspective!



### The Biggest Civil Rights Movies of the Year

Disney creates its first black princess. James Cameron creates an epic tale of human colonization. And we've got nothing to say?

We haven't been to the theaters yet to see *The Princess and the Frog* or *Avatar*, and so we'll reserve judgment until we do. A few quick thoughts, though:

- *The Princess and the Frog* is getting good reviews, including "movie of the year" honors from *Time* magazine.
- *The Princess and the Frog* is not a commercial monster. The film isn't coming to close to other animated films in terms of box office gross. It makes you wonder about white audiences and their willingness to see films about people of color.
- Why, why, why does *Randy Newman* do the songs for a movie about African-Americans in New Orleans?
- *Avatar* portrays colonization in a negative light, and actually gets audiences to root against humans and for an alien race.
- The film doesn't go all the way, though. The main character is still human.
- A lot of online commenting and blogging ignores the racial aspects of the story. The "It's just a movie" defense is all over the place.

Apologies for not having more to say about these important films, but Brandon wasn't especially enthusiastic about seeing a Disney film or wearing 3D goggles last month.



## Irregular Choice Makes a Bad Choice

The negativity here isn't for the hideous handbag made by British shoe company Irregular Choice. It's for the bag's name: Squaw Shopper, featuring a whimsical indigenous theme with the bag's print.

It should seem obvious that in an era when we are actively removing the word *squaw* from geographic place names, you just don't use the word in the naming of your products. The word is offensive, a slur against Native American women.

(There is a very popular misconception that it refers to female genitalia, a civil rights urban legend that began with a discussion of the word on *Oprah* in 1992. This is incorrect and has been disproven, but the word is still offensive because of how it's used in a derogatory way, regardless of its origin.)

This is all part of a trend in pop culture where racism and racist language are considered ironic, the perception being that since it's 2010 and we're so beyond racism, we can make jokes about race, because *everyone knows we're not really racist*. Ha, ha.

It has been called *hipster racism*. The problem with hipster racism is that it's still racism, and even though it's 2010, we're not beyond racism. There's just nothing hip or ironic about using a racist slur in marketing a handbag.



## Sprint Goes Against Easy Gender Stereotypes

This commercial has been on air for months, but sometimes you don't notice how good something is until you get beaten over the head with the alternatives.

Let me explain. The holiday season brings an inevitable glut of gender stereotyping with gift-giving guides and commercials. We may not notice it, but it's ubiquitous. Go to any



website and you'll discover recommended gifts based on gender. Because, you know, all guys want fishing equipment and all women want jewelry.

Commercials often fall into this trap. Perhaps you saw the caroling Best Buy employees this year, recommending massive flat panel televisions that "guys can stare at frozenly" and the newest cell phones for chatty women. Because, you know... guys are lazy and women just can't stop talking.

Well, in a non-holiday commercial, Sprint goes against one of the most prevalent gender stereotypes around. Have you ever noticed that the obsessive sports fan is always presented as male? Not in a recent Sprint ad for its Next network, which features a trash-talking Pittsburgh Steelers fan named Tracie, and doesn't call special attention to the fact that she's a woman. She's a sports fan first, unfortunate, given the success of the Steelers this season, but great for fighting stereotypes.



## **The Greatness of *Precious***

Some films get so much advanced hype that they simply can't live up to your heightened expectations. I had major concerns that *Precious* might fall into this category, as I've eagerly awaited its arrival here in Maine since it wowed critics and audiences alike at the spring and summer film festivals.

But *Precious* is a great film.

And from a civil rights perspective? While *Precious* is not a film about civil rights, it has much to offer. Most notably, it is a film about black people, written, directed, and produced by black people. But it's also a film about women, as only one male character plays a significant role. And it's about poor people, living on the outskirts of the American Dream. These are *all* great rarities in today's Hollywood.

Most important, though, is the character of *Precious*. This film dares to paint a sympathetic and positive portrayal of an obese, HIV-positive, dark-skinned girl struggling to make it in Harlem. While Mo'Nique is getting all the headlines for her portrayal of an abusive mother, the real acting gem in the film goes to unknown Gabby Sidibe for her performance in the title role.



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There is so much that is right with this film that it can't possibly be covered here. It may sound utterly depressing, but at the film's core is a dark sense of humor and a hopeful voice in *Precious*. Hers is the voice of so many of our students, looking for guidance and help in navigating their way out of a troubled childhood. Ultimately, *Precious* reaffirms that all-important idea that individuals can make a real difference.

Go see it.



## Advertising Campaign for *A Single Man*

Let's be clear here: we haven't seen this film yet. The problem isn't the film itself, but the advertising for it.

How come? The film has been described as a gay drama (whatever that means). The main character, played by Colin Firth, is gay, as are two other prominent characters. Julianne Moore plays his best friend.

But the film's poster and previews downplay the gay and make it seem like the Firth and Moore characters are romantically linked. You don't have to be particularly media savvy to figure out why they might do this. (And by the way, some previews of *Brokeback Mountain* did the same, although you'd have to live underneath a rock not to know that the characters in that film were gay.)

It almost feels like the film itself is in the closet, unable to identify itself for what it really is. Come on.



## **FA Issues: Building the CRTP Community**



We are currently in the process of collecting and organizing feedback from our fall trainings. (If you haven't yet responded to the e-mails we sent out in December before vacation, please do!) There's one thing we've noticed in the feedback collected so far that we consider especially important. At the faculty advisor trainings, many of you speak well of the opportunity these trainings offer for you to meet and exchange ideas with other faculty advisors.

We experience this same phenomenon with our students at the fall trainings and the spring conference. They may not have the same motives that faculty advisors have in meeting new people, but the benefits of seeing that there are like-minded students committed to the same cause all across the state are immeasurable.

The jellybean activity from the fall FA trainings highlighted the concept of collective intelligence and how groups are better able to tackle difficult problems than individuals. A recent example from the world of mathematics highlights this. Timothy Gowers, a world-renowned mathematician, was struggling to prove the Density Hales-Jewett Theorem. As an experiment, he decided to post a challenge online by encouraging people to tackle the theorem in the comments section of his blog. The comment thread



could be read by everyone, and everyone could then offer ideas through their own comments. Six weeks later, through hundreds and hundreds of posts, the group has proven the theorem. The collective intelligence of the group was able to accomplish what the brilliant mathematician could not.

Most civil rights teams are the brilliant mathematician, trying to tackle complex problems individually. The collective intelligence of the hundreds of other civil rights teams around the state is largely untapped. We're not operating at peak capacity, and our challenge is to tap into our potential, make connections, and create a Civil Rights Team Community. Our question for this month, then, is:

How can we better build a CRTP community, where faculty advisors and teams are working collaboratively?

Here are some of our ideas, and in the spirit of collaboration, we stole most of them from you:

### **1. Organize meetings/events within your district.**

If your school district/union/regional conglomerate has multiple civil rights teams, get them together! The multi-age nature of these events is powerful. The younger students get to look ahead and see a future of civil rights team involvement through graduation. The older students see that their work extends outside the walls of their school and affirms their status as leaders.

### **2. Invite other civil rights teams to your events.**

You can invite other teams to come to your events. They might pick up some great ideas while they are there. But you can also invite other teams to participate in your events. If you're having a Diversity Day, why not invite other civil rights teams to conduct a workshop session? It's a great project for the teams, and gives them an authentic audience.

### **3. Put something together with other teams.**

This takes some work in terms of coordination, but we're happy to offer assistance. For the Martin Luther King Day celebration at Bates College, we have five civil rights teams coming together to offer a workshop showcasing what civil rights teams do in our schools. We're excited about this group venture, including teams from elementary, middle, and high schools. We are helping with the organization, and hope that it might serve as a model for future collaborative projects.



#### **4. Use technology.**

Time and budgets are major constraints. We know and understand this. A way to get around these constraints is through the use of technology. Put your civil rights team on Facebook. Make friends with other civil rights teams. Start up a regional civil rights team blog project. Simply have teams communicate with other teams. Or... go online to our Moodle site and start using the interactive, community-building features there.

#### **5. Come up with your own ideas.**

We know that we don't have all the answers. The more we can effectively build community, the more answers we'll have. Increasingly, we want to create a network of shared information and ideas between faculty advisors and civil rights teams. We know that you love the fall trainings and the spring conference because of the opportunities they provide for collaboration. We know that many of you ask us what other teams do to address issues and problems. We know that the most-read section of *The Torch* is the one that features information about what other teams are doing.

We all value collaboration. When we engage in it, we see the benefits. We know that it's important. What we don't know, though, is how many great ideas

it seems like we all want more opportunities for collaboration. We know how important it is, but what we don't know, and what we'll never know if we don't actively engage it, is the untapped potential the CRTP has.



#### **How can we build more of a Civil Rights Team Project community?**

Get online and contribute to the discussion:

<http://civilrightsteams.org/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=40>

(This is a direct link to the discussion forum. All you have to do is click on the link, give your username and password, and it will take you directly to the forum. Hit reply and offer up your opinions! We're continually trying to make this easier and easier.)

The ultimate irony is that by posting online, you will be building the CRTP community. You are the change!



## Relevant Resources: Documentaries on Adolescence

Maybe it's because Michael Moore proved with *Bowling for Columbine* and *Fahrenheit 9/11* that documentary films can be commercially successful. Maybe it's because worldwide audiences are tuning in to real life drama every week with unscripted reality television. Maybe it's because Netflix has democratized movie viewing, making thousands of titles available to everyone across the country.

Whatever it is, documentary filmmaking is enjoying its finest hour. Feature-length documentary films are available on virtually any topic: including adolescence.

Two recent and very different documentaries look at the issue of adolescence: *American Teen* and *Billy the Kid*. *American Teen* has all the slick production value and amped-up drama of an MTV reality show, but it's the low-key, made in Maine *Billy the Kid* that better understands adolescence.



*American Teen* came out in the summer of 2008 and clearly had commercial ambitions. The film's story is culled from thousands and thousands of hours of footage, and follows four central characters through their senior year of high school in Warsaw, Indiana. The film tries very hard to frame each of these characters as types. The promotional materials label them as the jock, the geek, the princess, and the rebel, and even pose them in a *Breakfast Club*-style poster.

It's unfortunate that the film limits its characters in this way, as you get the feeling that the filmmakers are manipulating what's shown on screen to best reflect these labels. What ends up on screen seems a bit shallow and self-important, a slick attempt to somehow define adolescence as epic struggle. This is not to say that there *American Teen* doesn't have some value. There are some powerful moments caught on film, including a five minute clip of cyberbullying we've been using in some of our in-service work. With cameras rolling on so many high school students, it's inevitable that they're going to get some good footage to work with. It's too bad they didn't make more of an





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effort to better understand their characters, and avoid making sweeping and ultimately formulaic observations about adolescence.

*Billy the Kid* better understands adolescence for the simple reason that it doesn't try so hard. Rather than make a film about adolescence, the filmmakers make a film about an adolescent: Billy, the 15-year-old high school student who gives the film its name. Billy is very much the outsider, isolated and socially awkward. He receives special services at school, but we never learn what his official diagnosis is. (It sure *seems* like Asperger's syndrome, though.)

This is to the film's credit. It plunges you into Billy's life without any sort of background information. You end up understanding Billy by spending time with him, and not through some label you can attach to him. Billy is just Billy.

There is great temptation to feel sorry for Billy, but he's ultimately quite charming. He seems to set himself up for ridicule, but we never see it on camera. It seems like Billy is accepted for who he is and mostly left alone.

Where the film captures the essence of adolescence, without necessarily meaning to, is in Billy's attempt at romance with a girl working in the local diner. First love is always confusing, for everyone: we all went through this. While Billy is the ultimate outsider, we can identify with him.

Adolescence is not high drama. It may *feel* that way, but it's not characterized by game-winning shots in the big games, prom dates, weekend parties, scandals, or rites of passage. But *American Teen* falls into the trap of portraying adolescence as a series of big moments. The characters and events may be real, but the film sure feels scripted.

Adolescents would probably enjoy *American Teen* more than *Billy the Kid* because adolescence feels like high drama. Interesting, because *Billy the Kid* is actually the better film, and better understands what adolescence is really like; ironic, considering that its focus is someone who, on the surface, is so different from ourselves. Ironic, too, in that the film with the big budget and national exposure is trumped by the little picture made right here in Maine.

*Billy the Kid* is ultimately an uneventful film, but bigger isn't always better. Looking back, it's impossible not to see that Billy embodies everything we remember about adolescence. We were all outsiders once.

See the films' official websites at:

[www.americanteenthemovie.com/](http://www.americanteenthemovie.com/)

[www.billythekiddocumentary.com/](http://www.billythekiddocumentary.com/)



## Upcoming Events:



### **January 18: Martin Luther King Day events**

**Portland, Holiday Inn by the Bay, MLK Youth Breakfast, 8:00 am-12:00 noon**

[www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=43675878371&index=1](http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=43675878371&index=1)

**Lewiston, Bates College, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm**

<http://home.bates.edu/views/events/upcoming/>

(This includes a CRTP workshop, featuring some of our teams, at 1:20.)

### **January 25-29: No Name-Calling Week**

This excellent program from GLSEN highlights the damaging effect that words can have on individuals and the overall school climate. Check out their extensive online resources, including lesson plans, kits, and poster contests at:

[www.nonamecallingweek.org](http://www.nonamecallingweek.org)

### **January 28 and 29: *Hairspray's* Broadway National Tour**

Portland, Merrill Auditorium, 8:00 pm, tickets are \$45+

For more information, visit <http://portlandovations.org/shows/2009-10/hairspray/>

### **February 11: USM Martin Luther King Celebration**

Portland, University of Southern Maine, 4:00-7:00 pm



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More information next month... we are definitely looking for area civil rights teams to offer short presentations about what we do in schools. Contact Brandon if you and your team are interested!

## **February 12: Forum on Malaga Island**

Portland, USM, Luther Bonney Hall, Gerald E. Talbot Lecture Hall, 6:00 pm

A multi-disciplinary panel will discuss Maine's shameful history with Malaga Island, where, in 1912, the island's mixed-race population was forcefully evicted so that developers could build a vacation resort in Phippsburg. Come learn about this important part of Maine's history.

Sponsored by the Portland Branch of the NAACP.

For more information, call 253-5074.

## **February 27: *Ugly Ducklings* Screening and Panel Discussion**

Portland, St. Lawrence Arts Center, 7:00 pm, free

*Ugly Ducklings* is a film and free kit available about bias-based bullying and harassment of gay and lesbian youth. This event includes a screening of the documentary film, live scenes from the play, and a panel discussion including the playwright Carolyn Gage, director Cathy Plourde, and creative consultants Lyn Mikel Brown and Megan Williams of Hardy Girls Healthy Women.

## **April 26: Maya Angelou at the Augusta Civic Center**

Augusta Civic Center, 7:00 pm

The University of Maine at Augusta's Student Government Association is bringing renowned poet/author and civil rights activist Maya Angelou to Maine!

Tickets are \$25 and available by calling 1-877-862-1234 or visiting the UMA Enrollment Services Center in Robinson Hall.

For more information on this event, call 621-3133.