

## Convention plans progress...

In our Spring 2000 newsletter we announced plans to establish an Advisory Council, a Conference Planning Group, and Student Associations to form the basic organizing structure of the white antiracist convention. However, some questions were left unanswered. What would be the role of these groups, and how would people be selected for each group?

We have decided to establish a Steering Committee to take on this task, with the following specific duties:

### **Steering Committee - Duties:**

- Appoint members to the Planning Committee and Advisory Council
- Confirm and authorize participation of individual student groups
- Devise the broad structure and strategy leading up to the White Antiracist Leadership Conference

- Draft and approve a statement of purpose

The Steering Committee presently consists of Sandra Bernabei, Charley Flint, Jeff Hitchcock and Judith Katz . We are working on devising the “broad structure and strategy” by taking a look at the duties of the Advisory Council, the Conference Planning Group, and Student Associations. We have not had time to fully discuss and approve a first-round plan, but we are working from a draft that promises to emerge as the plan. Suffice it to say we simply need to give it more time and thought, and will be meeting face to face on August 23 to do that. If all goes well, we should have a plan available for the fall. In the meantime, our work in process consists of the following draft statement of duties:

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**See *Convention*, back page**

## ... while book falters

When it comes to the Center’s new book, *Unraveling the White Cocoon*, there is both good and bad news. The good news is that the book has sold out the publisher’s stock. The bad news is that printing more copies is very problematic at the moment.

The book was written by yours truly, Jeff Hitchcock. It has always been my intention that it benefit the Center, both financially and in terms of increased visibility. When we were looking for a publisher, I was the person doing the search. Initial inquiries to agents led to a dozen rejections, and so I went with what I could find, believing it was

important to make the book available as soon as possible. Some of the material is dated, and our need to have the book “out there” is pressing. Consequently, when I found a publisher of college texts through a close personal contact, it seemed a good match. The publisher was not prestigious, and the requirements as I understood them, called on us to do a lot. Still, it seemed worthwhile.

The publisher required that Charley Flint and I personally guarantee to purchase all remaining unsold books after a period of 2 years. This

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**See *Book*, page 3**

# Center's web site renovations soon to be revealed

Back in 1996 the Center decided to establish itself on the World Wide Web. As a small organization with few resources and no track record, that was one of the few ways we could reach the audience we sought. People interested in a critique of white culture in the interest of developing a multiracial society are hardly concentrated in any one spot, which makes local organizing difficult. But they do appear consistently in many isolated spots across the country, and the web has proved the best medium for reaching out to this group. Of all our methods of communication, our web presence has had the greatest impact.

Over time, however, our initial site grew old and technology quickly moved beyond our capability. Today our web site looks hopelessly out of date.

But we're moving to change that. Thanks to the efforts of Center member and volunteer, Scott Barrett, we soon will launch an updated version of [www.euroamerican.org](http://www.euroamerican.org). Scott has been working for about a year to redesign and recode the content of the old web site to give it a more contemporary look. And it's not just looks. We've moved to a new hosting company that provides more capability, and the underlying design of the site now puts us in a position to build in interactive and database features.

These will take time to program, but unlike last year, we now have the system capability to do it. Look for our new version to appear sometime late this summer or early this fall. And please share with us our appreciation for Scott for his dedication to this project.



**Center for the Study of White American Culture, Inc.**

The *Membership Newsletter* is a publication of the Center for the Study of White American Culture, Inc. sent exclusively to its members 4 times per year. The Center for the Study of White American Culture is a multiracial organization whose mission is to define and examine white United States culture and to address its role in, and impact on, the greater American culture.

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## **M**embers - new and renewing since last issue

### **Students**

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### **Advocates**

Jacqui Mace

## **Book, from page 1**

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requirement limited the size of the print run according to our willingness and ability to pay. I also had to provide camera-ready copy. The design and typesetting were entirely my own work. Still, this did not seem like a bad deal. We were not in a position to bargain, with my being an untried author with a new book on a subject few people, including the publisher, understand (the book is often classed with “minority studies,” for instance, when it really should be classed with “majority studies”).

All through the process it was my understanding that when we had managed to sell out the first print run, we would then have the right to have the book published by and with whomever we could make arrangements. Self-publishing would have been one viable alternative. I read and signed two documents. Prior to signing I explicitly asked the publisher’s representative what would happen when the first print run sold out, and I clearly understood that the publishing rights would be ours when the first print run sold.

As clichés would have it, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and publishing is a brutal business. Without imputing motives or assigning intent to any person, it nonetheless took place that when meeting with the publisher’s representative following the printing of the book, I again questioned him carefully about the publishing rights. It was then, and only then, that I learned that it was his opinion that his company had all publishing rights to the book forever. In effect, we cannot take the book to another publisher. Needless to say, I was in shock. But it seemed a moot issue if we didn’t sell the books from the first printing. Our obligation to do that was clear, and if the book did not sell, it would not matter much who had the rights anyway. So I focused on selling the book.

Our print run totaled 577 copies. We were obligated to sell 500, and the remainder were available for review and promotional copies, or additional sales. At this moment the publisher’s stock is all but gone. When I checked 2 weeks ago they had 9 copies. The Center has purchased a supply for future use, but most copies did in fact sell to the general public. We have met our obligation and the book has sold out.

Now we come to the matter of a second printing. The publisher asked how many books we

would like to print for the second run. I explained that we believed the book had proved its marketability and Charley and I are no longer willing to personally underwrite their risk by guaranteeing to buy out future print runs. I did not recall any expectation that we would continue to underwrite the book, but I wanted to be clear. Apparently, however, the expectation was there. Since we do not have a captive classroom audience to buy the book, the publisher expects us to underwrite their risk. They are reviewing the situation and have promised to get back to us.

Clearly we have a problematic situation. There are other concerns as well on matters of copyright, the publisher’s ability to market the book, and my ability to properly interpret contracts so that they are in the Center’s best interest.

We certainly have not given up on the book. We believe in it and we are gratified by the response of readers. We believe it’s important to have another printing and we believe there are many, many more people who would like to buy and read the book. We feel an obligation to make it available.

At the same time, it’s clear to me that I don’t know enough about publishing to evaluate a contract and be sure it says what I think it says. As representative of the Center, I need third-party expertise to help in that process. Something broke down the first time around, and simply repeating that process again seriously compounds the error. Third-party advice, needless to say, is either very, very expensive, or it takes a long time to obtain. I am now checking into alternatives.

So, with regret I have to acknowledge it may be a while before a second printing takes place. There is even a possibility, heaven forbid, that there will never be a second printing, though we will do whatever reasonable to see that does not happen. We thank members for their support in helping us sell the first print run, and we will keep you advised as to progress on this matter.

## **Convention, from page 1**

### **Advisory Council - Duties:**

- Concur with the Statement of Purpose drafted by the Steering Committee
- Give credibility, visibility, and legitimacy to the Convention by being publicly identified as a member of the Advisory Council on letterhead, brochures, Convention web site and similar communications
- Provide recommendations and advice about the Convention process
- Serve as a mechanism to secure funding
- Provide names and contact information of other activists who might support the Convention

### **Conference Planning Groups - Duties:**

- Organize among activists and organizations to do the following:
  - Raise awareness of the existence and purpose of the Convention
  - Develop local, regional and national support for the Convention
- Arrange logistical support for Convention operations, e.g. meeting space, communications, media relations, etc.
- Obtain resources, such as funding, volunteers, and meeting places to support the Convention effort
- Develop a timeline, and specific policies and practices for organizing around the Convention
- Give focus and feedback on Convention planning to the Steering Committee
- Organize local, regional and national events such as:
  - preparatory gatherings and meetings leading up to the Convention
  - local and regional events simultaneous with the Convention
  - follow up local and regional meetings and conventions carrying on and publicizing the work of the national Convention

### **Student Associations - Duties:**

- Encourage the involvement of students in the Convention
- Provide input to the Convention process on issues of concern to students

- Encourage the development of student campus groups who support white antiracist activism
- Arrange logistical support for Convention operations, e.g. meeting space, communications, media relations, etc.
- Obtain resources, such as funding, volunteers, and meeting places to support the Convention effort
- Develop a timeline, and specific policies and practices for organizing around the Convention

We are thinking of encouraging the development of several conference planning groups varying in size from local to national. This will give people room to select a level of participation where they feel most comfortable. Some may be interested in organizing in their local or citywide area. Others may have a statewide focus and others a national focus.

We are looking at a two year process leading up to the convention. The first year culminates with the meeting of the White Antiracist Leadership Conference in 2002. The following year we will hold the Convention itself.

This first year can be characterized as getting the word out and bringing people together to work on the process. The second year can be characterized as building the response. We want to develop a plan for advancing white antiracist practice, and thereby antiracist practice generally, using the Convention as a vehicle. Last, we have to consider follow up, after the Convention event.

### **What can members do?**

- Send donations, payable to Center for Study and earmarked for the "white antiracist convention." A small number of donations have already been offered, for which we are grateful.
- Share our plan with potential supporters and representatives.
- Advise us of people whom we should contact regarding our plan.
- Think of how local organizing efforts might develop ad hoc organizations or events that can tie into the Convention process.