

Smart People are supposed to know what Diversity means. Back when we all signed up and got our cards it was on that long list of things that we signed off on, including Liberal Education, Tolerance, Civic Responsibility, and the Divine Right of the Tenure Line. Turns out that Diversity is not a “count” noun like tree or unicorn but instead one of those abstract nouns like mashed potatoes. How many mashed potatoes you got there on your plate? Dunno, but I got ‘em. It seems ridiculous, then, to try define diversity. But it seems maybe more ridiculous *not* to try.

So here you have the themed issue “Diversity and Affirmative Action.” Nobody pretends to arrive at a definition or a final conclusion, but everyone in here takes a risk. And if Risk wasn’t on that long list of things we all signed on for, then I think it’s time to tear up our cards and start a new club.

Thanks to Maria Cimitle for pitching the idea for this issue, which arose from the debate surrounding the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 2) and its implication for our community. It seems clear that Grand Valley is taking this moment as an opportunity to consider what it means to commit to diversity, and I hope this issue will serve as a resource as we try to understand that commitment.

Special thanks go to David Pilgrim, who generously gave us access to his article, and to Jacqueline Moikeha who provided us with the images that accompany the text.

Danielle Monroe took her own risk in agreeing to write her candid article about her experiences as a Multicultural Assistant. I’d also like to thank her for her work during her internship. Among her many responsibilities, she took the lead in producing and laying out David Pilgrim’s essay. I’ll miss her input, and wish her success after graduation.

I’m happy to have work by my Writing department colleagues Ander Monson and Nicole Walker, a hirsute Yooper and a Utahn respectively. Talk about diversity.

Thanks finally to our visiting writers from this past year, Michael Martone, Sharon Olds, and Sonia Sanchez for their generosity in allowing us to reprint their work here.

—Chris Haven, Editor

Submissions for *Grand Valley Review* will be reviewed on a continuing basis. We welcome any work that reflects the broad interests of our campus community. We are still determinedly accepting submissions for the special issue: Community and the Academy. What role does—or should—a university play in the life of the surrounding community? Vice-versa? Deadline: September 17, 2007. Submit work by campus mail to my office in LOH 345 or as an email attachment to: havenc@gvsu.edu. To subscribe, send your name and address to be added to our list.

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