

Journal of the Student Personnel Association at Indiana University

2023 EDITION

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Student Personnel Association at Indiana University

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Letter From the Editors: Where Do We Go From Here?

Olivia Copeland, Gillian Dauer, William B. Walker, Jr.

With great excitement, we present the 2023 edition of the Journal of the Student Personnel Association at Indiana University (SPA at IU Journal). This publication is a collection of scholarly work related to higher education and student affairs (HESA) written, edited, and published by students and alumni of the master's and doctoral HESA programs at IU. 2023 marked an exciting time in HESA and IU history as the campus once again bustled with energy. This year was not without its challenges, which have led student affairs practitioners to contend with the question of "purpose." They have asked themselves, their colleagues, and their students to look within and envision the future of higher education. How do we take what we learned and create something better?

The history of the SPA at IU Journal embraces this question. Its first edition was published in 1967, featuring articles on various topics that provide current students with a time capsule on relevant issues in student affairs throughout history. The SPA at IU Journal also helps record significant milestones in the programs' histories. For instance, in the 2023 edition, we are pleased to announce that Dr. Vasti Torres has been named Interim Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. Dr. Torres' previous role, alongside her faculty appointment, was as Executive Associate Dean at the School of Education. In this new role, Dr. Torres will be spearheading work supporting students through all stages of their college careers. Last year, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) found new leadership under interim co-directors Drs. Cindy Ann Kilgo and Jillian Kinzie. This year, NSSE conducted a national search for its new director. Finally, we also wish to recognize the election of Dr. Danielle DeSawal as the Bloomington Faculty Council president for next year. Dr. DeSawal is the second Bloomington Faculty Council president hailing from the School of Education in its history.

Last year, we highlighted changing social contexts interacting with the work of higher education professionals. The wave to ban Critical Race Theory and legislation such as Florida's "Don't Say Gay" bill has escalated, with the continuation of book-banning efforts and other means to control classroom teaching. In 2023 thus far, 340 anti-LGBTQ+ bills—the majority impacting transgender and nonbinary people—have been proposed in state legislatures. In reaction, President Biden's administration put forward an amendment to Title IX, prohibiting the categorical ban of transgender athletes in K-12 and collegiate athletics. The amendment draws criticism for allowing a gray area, opening the door for gender policing on the local level. Last year, we mentioned the leaked draft opinions overturning *Roe v. Wade*. Since last year's publication, *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned, returning the issue of abortion access to the state and local levels. Meanwhile, higher education has seen a dramatic unionization effort. Faculty and graduate student workers from California to Michigan to New Jersey have displayed a historic push for issues like pay equity. They are ultimately engaging in a larger conversation about the corporatization of higher education. Each event has significantly impacted our field, often overlapping with each other vis-à-vis privacy issues and federal funding limits. We maintain our commitment to publishing scholarship on the experiences, needs, and triumphs of marginalized communities in higher education.

Now three years out from the first U.S. cases of COVID-19, it is clear that virtual and distance learning is here to stay. As an editorial team, we found the tools developed during this time to be vital to our development and publication of the SPA at IU Journal. Our practice of offering digital training for the journal review board and prospective authors gave us the flexibility to reach potential authors and reviewers we otherwise would have missed. The SPA at IU Journal continues to be a developmental process for all students involved, and we aim to further extend this opportunity through digital means. We are proud to share the scholarly collaborations and conversations of the IU HESA community in this edition.

Keeping the changes from years prior, our submission categories were broader and allowed a greater variety of manuscripts to be submitted. These broadened categories encouraged various submissions from which thematic elements concerned with diversity, equity, and the greater campus community emerged. The editorial board saw these overarching threads through the lens of the national conversation. We are proud to present this year's theme, "Considering the Purposes of Higher Education and Student Affairs." The 2023 edition marks the sixth year we have included a Contemporary Issues and Opinions section where we feature editorial-style writing. Pieces in this section of the 2023 edition provide diverse opinions, from race-based admission to addressing student-athletes' needs. This edition also includes multiple featured articles exploring different communities within higher education and their specific experiences and needs. We also have the pleasure of publishing multiple scholarly papers which explore contemporary conversations about affirmative action, graduate student experiences, and socio-cultural conversations.

The editors of the 2023 edition of the SPA at IU Journal would like to sincerely thank the authors who participated in this edition of the journal and those who served on the journal review board. Without the collective efforts of the review board and the authors, the 2023 edition would not have come to fruition. We would like to thank our advisor, Dr. Lucy LePeau, for supporting and challenging us as we sought to make changes and additions to the journal. All parties mentioned put in months of dedicated service to the SPA at IU Journal each year to uphold the HESA legacy of scholarship. We are indebted to your commitment.

In the following pages, we include an interview with Dr. Eddie R. Cole about the current climate of higher education and his musings on our theme: "Considering the Purposes of Higher Education and Student Affairs." We would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Cole for his time and insights. Dr. Cole was an editor of the SPA at IU Journal 2008 and 2009 editions. That said, we would also like to thank the previous editors of the SPA at IU Journal, on whose shoulders we stand and whose legacies we wish to protect.

Lastly, the SPA at IU Journal would be impossible without the continued support of the Student Personnel Association at Indiana University, our generous alumni, and additional resources from the HESA program. With this support, the SPA at IU Journal can provide a unique opportunity for master's, doctoral, and alumni HESA students to experience the publication process and showcase their scholarship. Our gratitude goes beyond words. With that, we are proud and excited to present to you the scholarship in this year's Journal. Please enjoy the 2023 Journal of the Student Personnel Association at Indiana University!

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“The future of all colleges and universities is on the line right now”: A Chat with Dr. Eddie R. Cole

Olivia Copeland, Gillian Dauer, William B. Walker, Jr.

Abstract

The editors of the 22-23 edition of the SPA at IU Journal interviewed Dr. Eddie R. Cole, acclaimed author, scholar, and former Journal editor. This brief chat seeks to create a retrospective look on the role of higher education in addressing and creating injustice, as well as considering the role that student-led publications have in the future of field.

Keywords

History, higher education, Black intellectual thought

In considering our own contribution to this year's journal, we felt that it was an important time to reach back through the history of the journal and hear from one of our previous co-editors to connect the past and present of higher education. We decided to speak with Dr. Eddie Cole, an alumnus of the Indiana University Ph.D. program and former co-editor for the SPA at IU Journal. Eddie R. Cole, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Higher Education and History at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Cole has received numerous grants and fellowships in support of his study of leadership, race, and social movements in higher education, including the Spencer Foundation, the Institute for Citizens and Scholars, and the National Academy of Education. Dr. Cole regularly uses his knowledge to engage in public scholarship, writing for the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, and others as well as appearing on many networks as a commentator, such as BBC and MSNBC.

We explored questions about Dr. Cole's own work, the relationship that student affairs has to different communities who have been marginalized by higher education, and the role of student-led publications in the future of higher education. We share our conversation below and also offer commentary, reflection, and explanation in the form of footnotes to draw connections between Dr. Cole's thoughts, articles appearing in this year's journal, history, and current issues in higher education. We encourage readers to engage with and think deeply about the insights provided by Dr. Cole, just as we did during this interview.

Will: Dr. Cole, you are the author of the acclaimed work, *The Campus Color Line*.¹ What was the motivation or drive behind this work? What do you hope readers get out of your book?

Dr. Cole: So, I'm from Boligee, Alabama. I attended a public high school, which had an all-Black enrollment and across the street from my high school was a predominantly white private academy. As a teenager, I was not thinking deeply about segregation and race and education. I was sort of normal where I was from, it just is what it is growing up in West Alabama. So, the remnants of segregation was still there, even in my lifetime. But as I got older, through more formal levels of higher education - first going to Tennessee State University, a Historically Black University,² and then coming to IU - I noticed along the way, all of my educational experiences have been shaped by decisions made by educational leaders in the past. And so, I started to reflect on my high school experience, thinking of local school leaders in rural Green County, Alabama, and this impact on education decades later. I imagined the sort of impact that college presidents had had on the broader, larger system of higher education.

So that was my motivation, asking questions about the Black past as seen through higher education. Trying to think deeply about the role that college presidents and university champions have played in shaping racial policies and practices, and the ramifications of those practices. And that's my hope that readers take from it, that much of our built environment within higher education is not by coincidence. A lot of this is a result of intentional decisions made by leaders decades before now. And we are living in the remnants of those decisions.

¹ *The Campus Color Line: College Presidents and the Struggle for Black Freedom* was published by Princeton University Press in 2020 and can be found at most major booksellers.

² Tennessee State University, in its current form, comes from a 1979 merger of the former University of Tennessee at Nashville and Tennessee State University. The former Tennessee State University was founded as the Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School in 1909, opening its doors in 1912. Though the school underwent several changes, the most notable being the first obtainment of accreditation in 1946 and the attainment of land-grant university status in 1958. The TSU offers over 70 different degrees, with graduate studies first being authorized in 1941. 2022 marked its 110th year of operation.

Gillian: So, our next question is more about current events. We've seen a lot of conversation about the purpose of higher education and who higher education is supposed to serve, particularly in light of societal injustices. So, in your opinion, how can student affairs and higher ed professionals avoid complacency? And what about researchers?

Dr. Cole: Great question. In many ways, this is where I get to be critical of higher ed programs. Right? In many ways, our higher ed programs prepare people who unknowingly may perpetuate and maintain the status quo in higher education.³ And for too many decades, that's been the case. A perfect example is when we think about history - what we know or how we remember what we don't know. A big part of affairs programs is understanding campus traditions, and tradition is built within higher education. But something that I've come to think so much about is - what do we even know about the origin point around some traditions?⁴ And how maintaining and celebrating some traditions, actually, in so many ways, maintain some of the things that we probably should have done away with for quite some time. And some things we've just accepted, we just accept many of these traditions.⁵ And so, in a lot of ways when we think about who higher education is for, who it's designed for, who it has historically been for - that hasn't been the majority of people.^{6, 7} And any sort of fundamental you know, higher ed 101 course, foundations of American higher education, give us so many of those reminders. And we see right now we look at current events: the Supreme Court case decision is coming up very soon around affirmative action,⁸ and many other court cases and legal battles,⁹ and state level pieces of legislation that are coming through. It's a reminder that higher education is a key point in shaping American society. Because otherwise so many elected officials and others wouldn't be as deeply concerned.

And because higher education is such a key focal point, our education programs need to think deeply about what we're doing in our role in shaping how future practitioners, scholars and the like are maintaining those systems. You are entering the field at what I think is an incredibly crucial point in higher education. The future of all colleges and universities is on the line right now - what it will look like. I can't recall a more pressing moment in my career to where the college itself was under attack. And so, the work that we do within academia is so incredibly urgent right now. And this is a battle between power, which is really what my book is about. On the surface level, my book is about college presidents and how they dealt with race. But in reality, it really is a book about power, and how systems of power operate and are maintained by people in positions of power. That's what is really at the heart of *The Campus Color Line*.

³ Feldman's (2023) article on LGBTQ graduate student socialization in this year's edition asks similar questions.

⁴ As an example of examining traditions, Reyes and colleagues (2023) use their manuscript in this year's journal to explore questions about how to resist traditional cultures of drinking on campus by providing practical, meaningful resources.

⁵ Delehanty (2023) also offers insights into how to adopt recent changes to a "traditional" way that higher education has operated - the name/image/likeness of student-athletes.

⁶ Lam's (2023) work on sense of belonging in this year's journal challenges us to reframe how we think of what belonging is in higher education.

⁷ Similar to Lam (2023), Baker and colleagues' (2023) exploration of Black women graduate students' sense of belonging also asks critical questions of whom higher education actually serves.

⁸ Stephens (2023) explores affirmative action policies in light of legal questions in this year's journal.

⁹ Askew's (2023) examination of Indiana University's graduate student strike in this year's edition draws connection to long-standing questions about unionization in higher education, which has seen more recent legal battles.

And we're seeing that power dynamic unfold again, right now, in 2023. Probably for the first time since maybe 1963.¹⁰ And so, this is a heck of a time to enter the field. And every state is slowly planting a flag about where it lands in this battle that is happening. More states are leaning right, saying "here's what it is, and we're gonna take control of our colleges and universities." But even California is planting a flag and saying "we're gonna lean left." And it's a very interesting dynamic because faculty, administrators, staff, students, are sort of stuck in the middle of the political battle, the social battle. Even in California, I mean, UCLA is the most applied to university in the United States - 50,000 applications per year. You know, it's ridiculous to be a public university that has to reject that many people, just because it is no space. But the current governor is saying that UCLA has to admit more. And so, as a faculty member, even though you say like, "I get it. Yes, more access." But I'm like, "we don't have the capacity for more access." And so, you see on both sides.¹¹ You say "wow, this is more liberal California saying this, 'let's open up higher education even more.'" And then places like, say, Florida is just trying to strictly narrow what is taught, who gets admitted, who can teach there. And we're all in between as practitioners and scholars. So, we have to get out of our offices and actually get out and do something.

Olivia: Touching on this a little bit more, what role do scholars have to play? You talked about these preparation programs. I'm curious, as a scholar yourself who's doing a lot of this fundamental, important work of uncovering that history and bringing it into the larger conversation, where do you feel like researchers have to consider or push forward in avoiding being complacent?

Dr. Cole: Researchers have to think deeply about social context. Oftentimes, we'd like to look at sort of participants in qualitative studies or the numbers in quantitative studies and just sort of step back and say, "well, here's what the data tells us." But in reality, there's so much happening that shapes how a participant responds to an interview question, or even who even has the mental capacity to reply to a survey. I mean, that alone, just how we build our research, is shaped in a certain way that doesn't take into account for basic context.¹² I always like to tell this story when I'm flying around the country given talks that people ask me about my college decision-making process. And I always like to tell people that I grew up less than an hour from the University of Alabama. But my predominantly Black hometown, we had our own social history of that campus, and it wasn't the place that I wanted to go to school.¹³ And that, again, that's not captured in research because we sort of just take sort of the student experience at face value, and just move on with our studies. But that's a lot of context around how we even think about the world who gets recruited where and who doesn't go in another place. And so, researchers have to think like that. I like to say that whether you are a historian

¹⁰ This was the year of the Higher Education Facilities Act, which offered more Federal aid to universities than had ever before been given. Concurrent to this moment were campus protests about injustice affecting many communities, couched in the broader Civil Rights Movement and other social justice movements happening in this decade.

¹¹ A similar question of campuses choosing a side is brought about in this year's journal by Downey (2023), who explores the question of what should be done with campus police departments considering larger calls for abolishment and/or reform.

¹² In an additional manuscript for this year's journal, Feldman (2023) encourages similar questions about context and other factors when it comes to assessment, particularly in trying to adequately capture LGBTQ populations.

¹³ Dr. Cole discusses more of this social knowledge and his hometown in an [interview given for Literary Hub](#), which the editors highly recommend giving a listen.

of higher education or not, you have to take account for history because it's shaping your study in real time.

Olivia: I think that's a fantastic, evergreen reminder for everyone trying to do any kind of research in higher education and even beyond. This is actually related to our next question. As a well-respected scholar deeply engaged in the production and dissemination of research, what role do you see student-led journals like this one having in our field and being a part of this conversation?

Dr. Cole: Student thought, student researchers are so incredibly important because, to a certain extent, you're not fully influenced by the state of the field just yet. And that's, that's sort of a beautiful place to be. Being new and being wide open to what questions you want to ask, what questions you can ask, and having the venue to produce those thoughts and, you know, publish those thoughts. That's actually kind of cool, because after you're in this for 10, 20, 30 years, there's some things that you have to be more conscious about - you probably just want to accept this as the norm. And a fresh group of students are going to come along and ask the basic question of "why?" And there's something super cool about being a student, being involved with a student-run journal, that can sort of challenge the norms of the field and can ask the basic questions that people more established have come to accept as regular. And so, I think that's sort of the advantage of being a student, and there's some things you don't know and there's some things that you won't know. And there may be some things considered basic that you may overlook, but at face value, you're at a great advantage at this point. Because now you're just consuming information you're coming into the field with a vantage point that I simply don't have.

The journal means or, for me, meant a lot. It started my career and I imagine for you, it's going to mean a lot of starting your career.¹⁴ You know, as you fast forward to getting deeper into your career. This is hard, for me, it's hard to believe this is year 10 as a professor. So, you know, think in your mind 10 years ago - what you were doing, where you were. I was a professor then and I'm one now, right? But yeah, starting off, it showed that I had the basic entry point into what research was like, how to do it, how to get published. And so, I always, you know, appreciate the opportunity and so that's why I'm having this conversation.

Do you still print the name of the previous editors into every issue?

Olivia: Yes!

Dr. Cole: That's funny because I was the very last name when I was there. So now, if I look back, I'd be like "Wow, look at how many editors have come since me!"

Will: Thank you for that response. I am curious, where do you see the field going in terms of the critical questions and research that folks might have to get into some of this uncovering of the critical components that are not being discussed in the field?

Dr. Cole: I think the work you all are doing and certainly will do will push. It's almost like, at a certain point, it's like a natural cycle of advancement in the field. Thinking about historiography, some questions that I asked and write about, I think they feel obvious to me. But if people weren't doing that work 30 years ago. And it isn't as if the archival material

¹⁴ Dr. Cole was co-editor of the journal in 2008 and 2009.

wasn't there 30 years ago. This is sort of the questions that people ask, you know, are different now. And so, you're gonna ask really good, critical questions, and I think more people are asking critical questions.¹⁵ And the cool thing about it is when you think about working at so early 90s, those might have been critical questions for that time. So, as we learn more as we make more connections across the field, in other fields, new things will emerge.

So, I'm really excited about Black higher education history because of technology. There's some things available now that you simply couldn't get your hands on a few decades ago. So I spent half the morning looking through historic newspapers because all of it is digitized on ProQuest at this point. And if you were doing this work with someone like James Anderson who wrote his famous book in 1988, *Education of Blacks in the South*,¹⁶ there's no way that Anderson could have been able to assess all those things. So, I think as technology makes things more expansive, as information gets quicker, as sort of different pain points come to you across social media from via Tik Tok, IG [Instagram], and you just start seeing connections - that's actually going to be helpful. So that's where we're going.

Olivia: I think you've had a really interesting throughline for some of the things you've said, about this interrelationship between scholarship and practice. That's a very common topic we have in our field in particular. What kind of future can you see for the relationship between scholarship and practice?

Dr. Cole: I can speak to my time as a graduate student. It seemed like you sort of chose a path and you went down that path, right. So, I had classmates who were you know, practitioners and classmates who had practice experience and even myself, worked in residential life a little bit. And so, you did that. But in that day-to-day troubleshooting, you don't lean on scholarship. You just don't. You get some of that in your classes. But, you know, when there's an issue on campus, you have a meeting, try to figure out what the resources are to try to solve a problem but you don't have the time or rarely just sit back and say, "Well, what's the national perspective? Has anybody ever studied this before?" You might have you know, something long term and then in the moment, right, and so, we see these things going in two different directions. And researchers are researchers, we talk to each other a lot, right? So, that's a another problematic aspect of this.

So, here's where I get to think about the Black intellectual tradition, which I think might be relevant to anyone trying to think about how to elevate voices and think differently about how we do work. Somebody asked me to do something a couple of weeks ago, somebody called me a public scholar, public intellectual. Something like that. And I thought, "that's ridiculous." But maybe it is, maybe it isn't. Because the work that I'm doing right now, the history I'm working on - not the current book, but the next few books - get into Black

¹⁵ Within this year's edition, Walker and colleagues (2023) critically examine the realities of what many consider to be an old phenomenon with a new name – staff burnout in higher education.

¹⁶ James D. Anderson, Ph.D. is an Edward William and Jane Marr Gutgsell Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. His seminal book, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, received much acclaim upon publication, receiving numerous awards including the American Educational Research Association outstanding book award in 1990.

thought. And you think about a W.E.B. DuBois,¹⁷ or a Carter G. Woodson,¹⁸ and all these other famous Black thinkers that we've had. And they wrote essays for The New Yorker, the Atlantic Monthly. They did these public talks. I mean, that's been the case since Frederick Douglass,¹⁹ since the 1800s. And so, part of always being sort of a formal academic, at least as a Black academic, has been "How do I take my formal training in scholarship and articulate it to the masses, to the people who actually deal with it every day who are in practice, who are trying to figure it out." And so that's what I think that's the ideal connection, right? Yeah, I can write a book. But do I actually go talk to other people who write books, which is important? Do I go talk to people who are like trying to do this? And so even earlier this year, I've spoken to an institute for college presidents, 300-400 college presidents. They do it every day. If I'm gonna write about race and college presidents, how I can actually talk to them, assuming they're not going to read a 300 page book.

Olivia: I think that's an interesting reflection. At the center of the current collection of publications that we'll be putting out this year is really this question of "how we get at what higher education is supposed to achieve, what we want it to achieve, and for whom?" Your reflection really rings true to these questions.

We sincerely thank Dr. Cole for the time and insights he shared with us. Just as he did with us, we hope Dr. Cole's words can spark critical questions, inspire hope, and instill pride in the work that the SPA at IU Journal has published for decades past and decades to come!

¹⁷ W.E.B. DuBois, Ph.D. is considered a leading figure in the Black intellectual movement. The first to African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University, DuBois is considered the primary founder of modern American sociology and was one of the founding members of the NAACP. DuBois rejected popular notions of complete integration to white society and compromise for African Americans, which he explored further in his seminal collection of essays, *The Souls of Black Folk*. He forwarded the idea of "double consciousness" – the struggle that African Americans face when trying to be true to themselves while facing the dominant white society.

¹⁸ Carter G. Woodson, Ph.D., also a leading figure in the Black intellectual movement, is often attributed as the founder of Black studies and is credited with establishing Black History Month in 1926. He was the second African American to receive his Ph.D. from Harvard University. Woodson was a dean at Howard University and West Virginia State College in the 1910s and 1920s. His primary focus as a historian was that of the Black past and the role that education had played in miseducating Black people in America. His works include *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*, *The Negro in Our History*, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, and many others.

¹⁹ Frederick Douglass was a monumental figure for African American people in the 1800s. After having escaped slavery in 1838, he quickly became involved in abolitionist work. He was a prolific orator and writer, with his most famous work being *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written By Himself*. He also was a vocal suffragist, fighting for the rights of African Americans and women.