

Hopkin Summary

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This last long weekend, I went to Washington, DC to visit to do a campus tour of George Washington University, and John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Ultimately, even though I tried to make some better connections with Miliken School of Public Health (at GW), my best experience was connecting with a friend at John Hopkins.

Miliken

I arrived to a campus tour of GW and found that it was organized by a general graduate admission office at GW and the rep who provided the tour didn't even go by Miliken (which is a couple blocks away). While it was great to really understand GW as an urban campus in the city of DC. However, I found the admissions people within the actual building to be pretty unhelpful and they were unable to connect me with a student on the spot (I expected this)

DC

I happen to come to DC and stay with a couple who one guy I have known a long time and the other is a community organizer in the Radical Faeries and I have known **of** for a good 10 years now. Eric Eldritch (the community organizer) has been organizing a pagan/Radical Faerie ritual for 19 years called Red Dragon (originally Red Dragon Feast). I have dabbled in some of the pagan rituals before through the Faeries and am well versed in how those rituals work out. Admittedly I see myself as a "utilitarian" Faerie who likes to keep my ritual simple yet not showy, but the other organizers of the ritual handled the "showy" parts. The ritual is organized around the intention of creating magic for the cure of "blood-borne" illnesses including HIV/AIDs.

Serendipitously, this year at Creating Change the organizers of the rituals had a workshop that was shut-down, mid-session, by some activists who called out the possible cultural appropriative (of Asian cultures) aspects of the ritual. The organizers had for the last few years had used iconography that was of indicative of Asian cultures's representation of Dragons. While the organizers are of Wiccan

and celtic driven traditions, they had though they wer being more inclusive of these cultures with this iconography.

This change had led to the further critique of the ceremony as being very white-centered and white-organized, not including many people of color. I don't see myself as a expert in this work, but, being a Greener feel moderately versed in equity issues and could provide expertential perspective along with others. While Eric had acquired "sign-off" of this ritual, I clarified that sign-off is not good enough of a receipt to mollify criticisms that the ritual itself was appropriative. I spoke in ritual of trying to address the equity issues of the city, where the participants were not a representative group of the city's overall population, being only 45% white, while the ritual participants were 80-90% white historically. I pointed that this could be addressed better by the ritual planning and invitation.

There I did make a connection with one former researcher who now serves as a ombudsman and investigator in a couple scientific societies around sexual harassment and gender bias. She amazingly worked with the precursor to HVTN and even know Wakefield, one of the mentors I worked with this summer. She did give me her card and she asked me to follow-up to see if she can connect me to a few GW student/grads from Miliken.

Baltimore

I actually visited baltimore twice, once on Saturday I went out with Twist to check-out the Baltimore Eagle. It was really interesting to visit the central part of the city at night and it really helped prime me to open my eyes to the complexity of the city. In the neighborhood we visited (which is technically charles village) it was relatively run-down but not excessively squalid or scary.

On Monday morning, I came into the city to visit my friend Chris Nelson. We had known of each other a few years sharing multiple connections. Chris is a doctoral student at the Bloomberg School inside their environmental health and engineering department. His particular interests are three areas:

1. public health of indigenous people north of the polar circle.
2. Fisherman's occupational health
3. The transfer of disease from seafood and fish populations to people

He previously has worked in Greenland working with remote outposts and settlements both as a researcher and a nurse, his undergraduate occupation. He also had worked extensively in Alaska with the Indian Health Service as a grant-writer and nurse.

He took me around the city after I got off at Camden station and we went and got breakfast from a cool, old-school diner in station north. We talked about what to do honestly I hadn't really thought through what we were going to do. Through

our conversation though I quickly spilled the beans of my own ambition and undergraduate research, he automatically gave me the “your asking doctoral level questions” and asked if I had considered applying to Hopkins.

Consider, Hopkins is #1, in ranking, in founding, size and funding. It is the top school in its field. I had been very sheepish about actually looking at it since its reputation was so well known.

After some prodding, I agreed to more than a simple tour of the place but also to sit in on his journal club. He also wanted to take me around and talk to a few of the people he knew well that were doing work similar to mine or knew people who were doing similar work. I met a few people and got a decent amount of contacts of people that I really should get to know and reach out to.

During journal club, they were reviewing an enviro epi article analyzing the Agricultural Health Survey, a long-term observational cohort study for the connections between non-hodgkins lymphoma, AML and () and Round-up/Gr(). The article was fascinating after I got to sit in on the wall and hear a room full of student and professors discuss at length the complexity of the methods, the details of the results and the editorial that accompanied the article. I was lucky to see that a group of experts, professor at Hopkins, get in a argument/discussion about multiple technical attributes of the article. It was great to see experts in their field really share different opinions and work through them in such a scholarly way.

The article itself was inconclusive statistically of any correlation of