

March 3, 2009

WESTWORD

WEB EXCLUSIVES

Documentary filmmaker speaks to film classes

by Mary Basic
Staff Writer



Filmmaker Nikki Brake speaks to an Images class. Photo by Mary Basic

Guest speaker Nikki Brake spoke to Images film classes on Feb. 13 about films, especially documentary films.

“I’m really interested in films with human life and real emotions,” Brake said

Brake, an acquaintance of Principal Kaine Osburn, was invited to the school to speak with the Images classes. Images teacher David Klingenberg said that he was excited by Brake’s visit because it is hard to get someone from the film industry to share experiences.

“It is always great to have someone come to speak to the class,” Klingenberg said. [Many people] don’t know how much hard work goes into [filmmaking], Klingenberg said.

Brake talked about several films, including *A Bronx Tale*, *West Side Story*, *Fight Club*, *A Beautiful Mind*, *The Sixth Sense*, *Seven*, *The Usual Suspects*, *Taking Lives*, *The Robin Hood Murders*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Dark Knight*.

“She put a face on movie making,” Klingenberg said.

Brake analyzed one of her favorite movies, *Dangerous Liaisons*, starring John Malkovich, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Uma Thurman.

“[The movie] deals well with male and female relationships [and] how love can make you evil,” Brake said.

Brake is currently taking classes in documentary film training and is making a new documentary film about a group of people going to Africa from all over the world.

“[She is] somebody who puts a lot of hard work into making a very short little film,” Klingenberg said. “She would film for hours and hours and maybe get only get 40 seconds of film. Students learned that a lot of work goes into movie making. I find any kind of documentary interesting,” Klingenberg said

Brake has made one documentary film about her aunt who was murdered.

Images is a senior English elective.

“Think of it as film study,” Klingenberg said. “Teachers teach students how to read a book, but almost no one teaches how to ‘read’ a film.”