Upcoming Events

November 8, 2010: International Studies Scholars Lecture Series 2010-11
Speaker: Dr. Ellen Kennedy
November 8 – Classroom Building 129 @ 5:00
'Never Again' Must Mean 'Never' – Genocide Prevention and Action

Please see full list of speakers and dates below

November 16, 2010 (NOTE NEW DATE):
Arun Gandhi
“Lessons Learned from My Grandfather: Non-violence in a Violent World”
4-5:30 pm Public Lecture – Fine Arts Main Stage
Reception to follow

Announcements

◊ Coming in November: Call for Proposals for Social Justice Oriented Research Support. Call is forthcoming from the SJRC. The Center anticipates supporting 4-7 proposals for up to $4000 each for 2011. If you would like to have this call sent to you directly, when it becomes available, please email the Center at: sjrc@uwyo.edu.

See Scholar at a Glance, in this Newsletter, to read about Christine Rogers Stanton’s work supported via this research support initiative.
Event Information

_Arun Gandhi_, peace activist and proponent of non-violence.

Gandhi. Few names in world history evoke such powerful images of integrity, courage, social harmony, and - perhaps most of all - hope. Arun Gandhi carries within himself the same guiding principles as his grandfather, the legendary peace-maker and spiritual leader, Mohandas K. Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi.

Growing up in apartheid South Africa as a person of Indian heritage meant racial confrontations with both blacks and whites. As a young boy, Gandhi was beaten up by black youths for not being black and by white youths because he was not white. Filled with rage and plotting to avenge his beatings, he subscribed to Charles Atlas bodybuilding magazines so he would have the strength to fight back. When his parents discovered the reason for their 12-year-old son’s sudden fascination with exercise, they decided that a visit to his grandfather was in order.

What followed was an 18-month stay with one of the world’s great leaders that would give him the keys to the powerful philosophy of nonviolence, and help shape the foundation for his life’s work. It was a dangerous and exciting time, as Mahatma Gandhi was leading the people of India in their revolutionary, nonviolent struggle for independence from British rule.

After leading successful projects for economic and social reform in India, Gandhi came to the United States in 1987 to complete research for a comparative study on racism in America. In 1991, Gandhi and his late wife, Sunanda, founded the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, which is now headquartered at the University of Rochester, New York. The Institute’s mission is to foster understanding of nonviolence and how to put that philosophy to practical use through workshops, lectures, and community outreach programs.

A speaker of international acclaim, Gandhi has spoken before hundreds of colleges and universities, and corporate and civic organizations. His unique talents and cross-cultural experiences have brought him before governmental, social, and educational audiences in countries all over the world, including Brazil, Croatia, France, Ireland, Italy, Holland, Lithuania, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Nicaragua. Arun Gandhi is a cultural treasure, offering firsthand insights into one of history’s most influential leaders.

_Bio provided by Keppler Speakers._

Arun Gandhi’s visit is co-sponsored by the Indian Student Association and the Department of Theatre and Dance.
International Studies Scholars Lecture Series 2010-2011
Tentative Schedule of Events in Wyoming

Speaker: Dr. Ellen Kennedy, Interim Director, Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, University of Minnesota; Founder and Executive Director of World Without Genocide

Presentation Title: ‘Never Again’ Must Mean ‘Never’ - Genocide Prevention and Action
Locations: Laramie (November 8 – CR 129@ 5:00; LCCC (Nov 9th), EWC (Nov 10th) Fine Arts Auditorium@7:00 p.m.), Casper (Nov 11th)

Speaker: Bill Harney, Elder for the Wardaman People of Australia
Topics: Aboriginal worldview, indigenous peoples, & traditional cultural perspectives
Locations: Rock Springs, Riverton, and Powell (Jan 31-Feb 3); Cheyenne (Feb 8); Laramie (Feb 11); Casper & Sheridan (Feb 14-17)

Other speakers/lectures are still to be scheduled. Contact Jean Garrison for more information at 766-6119 or garrison@uwyo.edu or check out their webpage for upcoming events http://www.uwyo.edu/INTSTUDY/

Upcoming Conference ~ Call for Proposals

Conference on Religion, Human Trafficking, and Modern Slavery
April 1-3, 2011 in Denver, Colorado is the first in a new series of bi-annual academic and community gatherings on the subject of globalization. The series is sponsored by the University of Denver/Iliff School of Theology Joint PhD Program in Religious and Theological Studies. The 2011 event will be held in co-operation with the University of Denver Office of Special Programs and Conferences and DU's Human Trafficking Clinic.

You are invited to submit a proposal for one of three types of sessions:
* Academic papers/symposia
* Workshops and demonstrations
* Panels/poster sessions/presentations

All proposals should be sent electronically to DUlliffConference@gmail.com. Proposals must be received no later than Nov. 15, 2010, after which they will be reviewed by the conference program committee. Program notifications will go out in the first week of January, 2011.

For more information on how to submit specific types of proposals, we invite you to go to our website at http://www.denverconference.net/call.htm.
Highlighted Book

Congratulations to Margie Zamudio, Caskey Russell, Francisco Rios and Jacqueline Bridgeman on their recent publication: Critical Race Theory Matters--Over the past decade, Critical Race Theory (CRT) scholars in education have produced a significant body of work theorizing the impact of race and racism in education. Critical Race Theory Matters provides a comprehensive and accessible overview of this influential movement, shining its keen light on specific issues within education. Through clear and accessible language, the authors synthesize scholarship in the field, highlight major themes and assumptions, and examine strategies of resistance and practices for challenging the existing inequalities in education. By linking theory to everyday practices in today’s classroom, students will understand how CRT is relevant to a host of timely topics, from macro-policies such as bilingual education and affirmative action to micro-policies such as classroom management and curriculum. Moving beyond identifying problems into the realm of problem solving, Critical Race Theory Matters is a call to action to put into praxis a radical new vision of education in support of equality and social justice.

Highlighted Research

Better Together: Research Findings on the Relationship between Racial Justice Organizations and LGBT Communities – (Press Release)--A new, landmark study on the relationship between racial justice organizations and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities finds the lack of resources, funding, and community support are obstacles to engagement. The study was produced by Applied Research Center (ARC) in partnership with the Arcus Foundation.

There are damaging perceptions about LGBT communities and racial justice groups, specifically that LGBT identity and politics are for white people and that communities of color are disproportionately homophobic. "These myths harm LGBT communities of color and continue to be perpetuated by divisive, politically motivated platforms such as the Proposition 8 Campaign," says Rinku Sen, President and Executive Director of ARC.
"Better Together" is a result of surveys and interviews with more than 80 organizations and 30 key leaders, based on the premise that significant numbers of LGBT people are of color and comprising an important part of the racial justice constituency. The report focuses on current engagement efforts, perceived barriers, potential opportunities, and key recommendations for advancing work in this intersectional area. Said Sen, “When racial justice groups, including those focused on LGBT people, take on the intersection of race and sexuality, they can build enduring political power to make the policy and practice changes that improve communities nationwide.”

Download the full "Better Together" report here.

Highlighted Films

Award Winning Bruno Film Series: Burma, Tibet, Nepal, Cambodia, Thailand

OPEN STUDENTS’ MINDS TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN ASIA
- the trafficking of children from Burma into Thailand's sex industry
- the fierce resistance of young Buddhist nuns in Chinese-occupied Tibet
- the optimism of survivors living with the stigma of leprosy in Nepal
- the struggles of Cambodians rebuilding their lives after genocide and war
- a death ritual in Tibet that challenges our relationship to our physical selves

SAMSARA: Death and Rebirth in Cambodia documents the Cambodian's efforts to reconstruct a shattered society in a climate of war, bringing a humanistic perspective to a country in deep political turmoil. To view a clip: http://www.brunofilms.com/samsara.html


SACRIFICE: Child Prostitutes from Burma examines the political and economic forces and the intensely personal stories involved in the trafficking of Burmese girls into prostitution in Thailand. To view a clip: http://www.brunofilms.com/sacrifice.html

LEPER: Life Beyond Stigma reveals the myriad stigmas and misunderstandings that surround a disease that marks the bodies and lives of rural Nepali villagers. To view a clip: http://www.brunofilms.com/leper.html

SKY BURIAL: A Tibetan Burial Ritual documents the offering of bodies of the dead to vultures; a final gesture of generosity to living beings. Merging with the sky replaces the... To view a clip: http://www.brunofilms.com/sky.html

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The longer I teach, the more I realize I have yet to learn. This recognition led me to my dissertation work, which focused on learning from Native community members as a means to explore teacher thinking about decolonization in the reservation bordertown where I taught and lived. One central message binds together the many lessons I learned throughout the project: To truly learn, we must listen to the “cultural Other” (Montecinos, 1995) throughout all we do as teachers and scholars.

Learning from participants is at the heart of both social justice scholarship and responsive teaching pedagogy. Historically, educational institutions privileged dominant culture interpretations and teaching practices over Native story-experience. Educational research has also reinforced colonizing perspectives given its tendency to focus on quantitative methods, which often discount the interpretation, insight, and experiential narratives of Native participants. In order to center the Native community in my work as a scholar and a teacher, I utilized community-centered participatory research, which recognizes the interconnectivity of Indigenous communities and actively strives to center that community within the research process. I worked with elders, leaders, teachers, friends, and former students throughout all phases of the process, from planning to data analysis to reporting.

The project focused on the story-experiences of four Native community members who had attended the same reservation bordertown school where I worked. As they shared their story-experiences, the participants identified the most important aspects of their stories, articulated several lessons for teachers, and guided the analysis of my own story-experience. The participants’ resulting lessons, for both educators and scholars, emphasized the importance of:

- connecting to the Native community in appropriate and meaningful ways,
- honoring the history and potential of Native peoples,
- confronting the differences between traditional ways of knowing and dominant culture expectations, and,
- providing options and opportunities for Native peoples.

These lessons guided interpretation of my reflective journaling, thereby offering a decolonizing lens to critique thinking and practice both in bordertown schools and in educational scholarship. In addition to my self-reflection of pivotal moments from my teaching at the bordertown school, I shared my stories with the participants and listened to their interpretation of my thinking and practice. This part of the process was especially powerful—and painful. I realized that while I often worked to advance social justice in small ways in my own teaching, there were many times that I fell short of walking the talk of genuine critical pedagogy.

For teachers, administrators, and community members, this process holds potential in terms of guiding school-community partnerships. Too often, schools determine the process of school improvement without extensive input from that community. If community members are able to guide the investigation of teacher thinking and practice, we may be able to better connect teachers—especially those teachers who are
members of the dominant culture—to communities of the “cultural Other” in respectful and collaborative ways.

One of the most important messages that emerged from this project is that scholars—even those with a critical, social justice focus—shape, and therefore alter, the story-experiences of our participants. In several cases, I found myself thinking, “Wow, this story is really important,” only to hear from the participant that the story was not as meaningful as another I had overlooked. Without the interaction and collaboration between the participants and myself, the “lessons,” and their subsequent application, might have materialized differently. Potentially, I would have gravitated toward lessons that aligned more naturally with my practice. As a result, I might have missed the real learning.

References


Membership

As always, the Social Justice Research Center would like to facilitate continued growth of our presence on campus. One way this is made possible is by promoting further expansion of membership to the Center. You can help us in our endeavors by encouraging others to join as affiliates and associates at our homepage: http://www.uwyo.edu/sjrc/.