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Newsletter of the Schoolcraft College International Institute (SCII)

# International Agenda

## Like a Magic Carpet Ride: “Focus Middle East” Soars This Fall

“Focus Middle East,” a project launched by our Institute last Winter and culminating this Fall, has forged collaboration between departments on a scale never before seen on our campus.

Our chief goal— to encourage instructors to infuse their coursework with globally relevant new content in the form of presentations, discussions, written assignments, and other activities— is coming to fruition in a heartening, even dramatic way. So far, the International Institute has learned directly of 79 course sections from Winter '04 in which significant Middle East-related material was introduced, much of it for the first time in conjunction with this project. These sections involved 17 different departments, 32 full- and part-time instructors, and roughly 2,000 students.

In addition, our Winter Speaker Series of 11 presentations about the Middle East drew diverse and enthusiastic audiences of between 20 and 80 people each— mostly students, together with others from the faculty, staff, and the general public. These talks delved into far-ranging topics, fascinating and sometimes controversial. They were often followed by lively discussions and questions from the audience. Most of the presenters kindly agreed to be videotaped, and the tapes have become permanent additions to both campus libraries— in fact, they were already in great demand there among students last Winter.

“Clean your ears. Don’t listen for something you’ve heard before”: this line from a poem by Rumi that we are popularizing on our poster this term expresses the spirit of inquiry and curiosity that our work has succeeded in tapping into. The Middle East stands at the forefront of current events, yet Americans have known relatively little about its culture, history, or politics. But after just one semester, this project has heightened campus awareness, sensitivity, and knowledge of the Middle East and of our neighbors around the globe. In classrooms and libraries, in online coursework, and at public presentations, students, faculty, and staff are beginning to come together in collaborative, cross-cultural learning experiences.

This effort furthers the educational mission of the College, especially its goal of internationalizing programs and activities so that students are prepared as citizens and workers who understand the global economy and the many social forces that affect it and are affected by it. It also enhances the local and regional reputation of the College as an institution that has taken the lead in providing innovative, culturally sensitive, and globally aware instruction and programming.

Our initial success unleashes us now to soar to even greater heights. This Fall, the Middle East theme will be brought to a grand crescendo with greater curriculum involvement, a fresh new series of campus presentations, and an afternoon “Cairo Coffeehouse” of cultural performances. Then, in the Winter term, we will kick off a one-year “Focus Latin America” project, and the following year we plan to concentrate on sub-Saharan Africa (the portion of Africa south of the Sahara desert). Our ambitious plans received an encouraging “stamp of approval” last Spring when the Schoolcraft College Foundation awarded a one-year grant of \$2,800 to the International Institute to defray major expenses of this project such as refreshments, advertising, and videotaping.

All instructors this Fall should be creative in finding the ways that you, your students and your colleagues can participate and learn from this project. The article on page 2 will help kindle your imagination. Be sure to communicate your ideas, plans, and suggestions to SCII faculty chair Josselyn Moore. Especially, *Josselyn wants to see her e-mail inbox fill up with examples* of lesson plans, student papers, and other work by you and your students that can be placed for everyone’s benefit in the “Middle East Showcase” section of our website. •

## Courses All Over Campus Are Enriched by “Focus Middle East”

Instructors have found that linking their courses to the “Focus Middle East” project has been a fascinating learning process— for themselves as well as for their students. They report that while it might entail some additional preparation, incorporating such important new materials or perspectives has been not only educational but rejuvenating.

**Sam Hays**, an adjunct assistant professor of English, is one of the many instructors who enriched their courses with Middle East-related materials last Winter. Guided by his curiosity and creativity, Sam developed a list of 36 topics as choices for his composition (English 102) students to write about for their first paper, a “compare and contrast” essay. His student Valerie Mewhorter wrote “How the Middle East Cares for the Elderly in Comparison with the U.S.,” while Nikki Chambo contrasted American and Middle Eastern forms of dating and marriage in her paper “The Dating Game.” Other students compared the messages of Muhammad and Jesus; the sports of Bedouin camel-racing and American weight-lifting; or the cuisines of Lebanon and Poland. To help his students find the information they needed, Sam also

developed a bibliography of resources, as well as a tutorial on the use of Bradner Library’s “Academic Search Elite” database. Students presented their research to the class in April.

**Steven Berg** had his English 101 students write short papers on Middle East issues, while those in English 102 wrote longer research papers that were presented during late March and April. His student Mark Nowak, who is majoring in elementary education and child development, researched the best ways to teach grade-school pupils about cultural differences between the U.S. and the Middle East in a way that counters “environmentally learned bias.” Lisa Pace, a marketing and advertising major, chose to research Dubai, explaining that she had “gained an interest in Dubai ever since my cousin moved there almost five years ago. I have always wondered what it was like and this is a perfect opportunity to learn about it.”

Other English Composition instructors launched similar projects. **Anna Maheshwari** had her English 101 students focus their final papers and their accompanying PowerPoint presentations on topics related to the Middle East. These papers were to be of the argumentative/persuasive type, and Anna reports that the most popular topic was the Arab-Israeli conflict. **Ida Simmons-Short**, in two sections of English 106 (Business Communication), focused most of the semester on the culture and politics of Egypt, and her students wrote lengthy formal reports about that country.

The participation of English instructors and their students in this project was assisted by our collaboration with the **Writing Fellows Program** directed by Steve Berg. Its “Resources to Support Middle East Research Projects” is a website that includes a bibliography of educational materials on the Middle East; helpful and specific guidelines to students who are writing about this region; and other features. The address is <http://www.schoolcraft.edu/fellows/middle>.

**Virinder Chaudhery**, who taught an evening section of “The Art of Being Human” (Humanities 210) last Winter, devoted a unit to Islam, taking up such topics as the ancient heroic epic of ‘Antara; the origin and development of Islam and its relation to other monotheistic faiths; the five pillars of Islam and the associated concepts of love and of *jihad*; the treatment of women in the Qur’an; and the impact of the Crusades on Islamic and Byzantine culture.

**Josselyn Moore**, who routinely discusses the Middle East in her sociology and anthropology classes, devel-

### International Agenda

Editor: Randy Schwartz (Mathematics Dept.)

Founding Editor: Donald Ryktarsyk (Business Dept.)

voice: 734/ 462-4400 ext. 5290

fax: 734/ 462-4558

e-mail: [rschwart@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:rschwart@schoolcraft.edu)

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18600 Haggerty Road

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SCII Faculty Chairperson:

Josselyn Moore (Sociology/ Anthropology Depts.)

SCII Administrative Director:

Interim Asst. Dean Cheryl Hawkins (Liberal Arts Divn.)

The mission of the Schoolcraft College International Institute is to coordinate activities and offerings that promote cross-cultural understanding for the community, students, faculty, and staff. Internationalizing programs and activities will assist participants in acquiring appreciation for the diversities and commonalities of world cultures and global issues providing opportunities for success in an evolving world community.

oped special assignments in conjunction with Focus Middle East. For example, her students in Principles of Sociology wrote short papers on such topics as Islam, ethnic groups in the region, the social background of those who carry out suicide missions, or reflections on student visits to local mosques or interviews with Middle Eastern immigrants. Josselyn provided extensive guidance to help steer students away from common pitfalls like ethnocentrism and stereotyping.

With **Bob Schaden's** encouragement, several students in Human Relations (Psychology 153) did projects on the politics and structure of Middle Eastern society. Some of these were PowerPoint presentations, and in one instance students invited a Middle Eastern guest to class who focused on American perceptions and treatment of immigrants from the region. **Colleen Pilgrim** and her students in General Psychology attended many of the Speaker Series presentations; in class, they frequently found themselves citing information from the speakers to illustrate topics in social psychology, learning, and memory.

Other examples from last Winter convey the breadth of participation:

- **Amy Begnene** (French) discussed the important role of French in the Middle East
- **Andrea Nofz** (Spanish) introduced her students to the Moorish influences on Spanish language and culture
- **John Ray Cox** (Humanities) discussed Middle Eastern influences on contemporary musicians such as the Beatles, the Mahavishnu Orchestra, and the Derek Trucks band
- **Elizabeth Schneider** (Child and Family Services) took up the need for child care providers to be sensitive to cultural similarities and differences with regard to the Middle East and other regions
- **Nancy Harm** (Psychology) used her knowledge of Arabian-horse training to illustrate principles of learning theory
- **Derald West** (Biology) discussed how Middle Eastern culture has affected the genetic isolation and diversity of edible plants and other species
- **Randy Schwartz** (Mathematics) used one-day classroom activities he developed to explore Middle Eastern methods dealing with binomial coefficients, polynomial optimization, and double false position
- **Daniel Conway** (Political Science) devoted lecture, discussion, and written assignments to the history of Iraq, Iran and Palestine because of their continuing importance in U.S. politics.

People's enthusiasm didn't end just because Winter term ended. Many instructors and students continued to

## A Poem from Rumi

*Jalal al-Din Rumi, a famous mullah and poet, was born in 1207 in what is now Afghanistan. This poem has been freely translated by Coleman Barks, and appears in his We Are Three: New Rumi Poems (Athens, GA: Maypop Books, 1987), p. 25.*

We can't help being thirsty,  
moving toward the voice  
of water.

Milk-drinkers draw close  
to the mother. Muslims, Christians, Jews,  
Buddhists, Hindus, shamans,  
everyone hears the intelligent sound  
and moves, with thirst, to meet it.

Clean your ears. Don't listen  
for something you've heard before.

Invisible camel bells,  
slight footfalls in sand.

Almost in sight! The first word they call out  
will be the last word of our last poem.

focus on the Middle East in their Spring and Summer classes. In **Sumita Chaudhery's** Spring section of Children's Literature (English 203), a group of students completed a term project on the region, presenting information about Egyptian mythology, Middle Eastern music and dance, social structure, marriage customs, criminal law codes, etc. Marie Bokor, an English 102 student of **Sam Hays** this Summer, wrote an excellent research paper on "The Armenian Genocide: America Needs to Remember."

We've already gotten some exciting reports of instructors' Fall plans. **Andrea Nofz** is putting together a fact sheet on the Middle East written entirely in Spanish. **Alec Thomson** (Political Science) is having students in his evening section of American Government read a book by a veteran of the 1991 U.S.-Iraq war. He plans to bring his "hybrid" section of the same course to hear Janice Terry's presentation "Arab-Americans and Civil Liberties After 9/11," and to build an assignment around that talk. **Sam Hays** will be asking each student in his online section of English 244 (Introduction to Poetry) to select a Middle Eastern poem and to write an essay analyzing it from an historical, cultural, or colonial framework. Over the Summer, Sam taught himself about the poetic traditions of the region, including those of the *ghazal*, the *qasida*, and the contemporary political poem. •

## Audiences at Middle East Speaker Series: "I found EVERYTHING interesting!"

Our Speaker Series is attracting students, instructors, staff, and people from the community. It has been a reservoir of strength for the overall "Focus Middle East" project.

In the written and spoken reactions of students, what has come through is their excitement to have access to current and first-hand information from a variety of experts on this distant region, and their growing sense of what it is like to engage in a process of life-long learning, when a classroom teacher is not necessarily there to provide direction.

Participants found an especially powerful speaker in Ratib Habbal, an outreach coordinator from the mosque in Ann Arbor. One student wrote afterward, "Ratib was very charming and personable. I enjoyed listening to him speak. It was very informational, and I learned much today." Schoolcraft student Tracy Spiess also spoke about Islam. Her PowerPoint lecture prompted one listener to comment, "It was wonderful. I knew nothing about Islam and found EVERYTHING interesting!"

A packed crowd on April 15 was rapt as English professor Omar Addi, a Moroccan of Berber origin, presented a guided tour of music from the region that he punctuated with some of his favorite sound-bites. One student observed, "Visuals and music were interesting and delightful. Even though the music has no words, it can still be enjoyable. Cultural relativism is very important, including in the areas of music."

Of the talks so far, the one perhaps most "ripped from the headlines" was the one on Iraq by Don Matthews of Oakland University. "The entire seminar was great for me," one student commented about the talk, "because I had no detailed and/or historical knowledge of Iraq and U.S. interactions." Another wrote that the presentation had highlighted a sharp dilemma for

him: "Removal of U.S. troops would likely cause fragmentation of Iraq, but continued U.S. occupancy invites hostility towards the U.S. like 9/11."

There was a much-appreciated activist tilt in the presentation "Empowering Women in Afghanistan" by Toc Dunlap, whose organization has worked for years to provide culturally sensitive education, health care, and training. "Make it longer and more detailed," one student chided after the hour-plus talk, "it was really interesting. How the women and men work together to have their own programs."

Schoolcraft instructors who returned our survey forms also praised the speakers and our overall project, while offering some suggestions for how to take things further. Janina Udrys (Mathematics), who has sometimes brought off-campus friends to the talks, praised the project as "a very worthwhile effort. We need better informed students. Continue with the good work!" Robert Oxley (Social Sciences) commented, "The entire Middle East program was excellent!"

Omar Addi wrote, "I thought the feature presentations this semester were excellent." He suggested that in the future, instructors could devote some class time to framing the issues so that students who attend the talks don't go into them 'cold turkey' but have some general orientation.

Evan Garrett (History) has suggested that future projects culminate with an opportunity at the end of each semester for students and instructors to reflect upon what they have learned in order to deepen the insights gained. This experience might take the form of a reflective paper, a summary discussion or workshop, or a service-learning or other "capstone" project. We encourage you to forward your ideas to us. •

### Winter 2004 Schedule

Wed., Jan. 21 4-5pm, MC-200	Fatih Turkmenoglu, Turkish former CNN correspondent, "The Last 10 Years of Turkey Through a Journalist's Eyes"
Thur., Jan. 29 3-4pm, LA-200	Randy Schwartz, SC Mathematics Dept., "Islam and Mathematics: A Hidden History"
Wed., Feb. 4 3-4pm, LA-200	Tracy Spiess, SC student, "Understanding Islam"
Thur., Feb. 19 6:30-7:30pm, F-350	Diane O'Connell, SC Geography Dept., "International Exotic Rivers in the Middle East"
Thur., Feb. 26 3-4pm, LA-200	Ratib Habbal, Outreach Chair, Islamic Center of Ann Arbor, "Islam as a Complete Way of Life"
Wed., Mar. 10 12-1pm, LA-200	Hani Fakhouri UM-Flint Anthropology Dept. (emeritus), "Cultural and Historical Survey of the Arab World"
Tues., Mar. 16 3-4pm, LA-200	Don Matthews, OU History Dept., "The U.S. in Iraq: Historical Background and Future Prospects"
Wed., Mar. 24 3-4pm, VT-430	Randy Schwartz, SC Mathematics Dept., "From Porridges to Imperial Feasts: Islam and the Foods of North Africa"
Tues., Apr. 6 12-1pm, LA-200	Toc Dunlap, Executive Director, Creating Hope International, "Empowering Women in Afghanistan"
Wed., Apr. 14 3-4pm, VT-430	Carlo Coppola, SC Culinary Mgmt. Dept., "Middle-Eastern Influences in Western European Cuisine"
Thur., Apr. 15 3-4pm, LA-200	Omar Addi, SC English Dept., "Sand and Sounds: A Survey of Moroccan Music"

### Fall 2004 Schedule (tentative)

Thur., Sep. 16 2-3pm, LA-200	Michael Fahy, independent Middle East scholar, "Modernity Blues' in the Middle East"
Wed., Sep. 22 2-3pm LA-200	Hashim al-Tawil, HFCC Art Hist. Dept., "Islamic Art: Historical Development, Visual Presentation, & Iconography"
Thur., Sep. 30 2-3pm, LA-200	Lawrence Pintak, UM Journalism and Public Policy programs, "The Roots of Terror"
Mon., Oct. 4 12-1pm, LA-200	Ron Stockton, UM-Dbn Political Science Dept., "A Profile of Arab America: The Detroit Arab-American Study"
Wed., Oct. 13 10-11 AM, LA-200	Ben Hoffiz, OU Modern Languages and Literatures, "Introduction to Middle Eastern Literature"
Tues., Oct. 19 2-3pm, LA-200	Don Matthews, OU History Dept., "Palestine, Israel, and the Origins of a Conflict"
Wed., Oct. 27 2:30-3:30pm, LA-200	Janice Terry, EMU History Dept., "Arab-Americans and Civil Liberties After 9/11"
Mon., Nov. 1 12-1pm, LA-200	May Seikaly, WSU Near Eastern and Asian Studies Dept., "The Palestinian Refugees and the Use of Oral History"
Wed., Nov. 10 2-3pm, LA-200	Marjorie K. Nanian, SC Political Science Dept., "The Armenian Genocide and its Impact on the World Today"
Wed., Nov. 17 2-3pm, LA-200	Carol Bardenstein, UM Near Eastern Studies Dept., "Gender & Representation in and of the Middle East"
Wed., Dec. 1 DiPonio Rooms	"Cairo Coffeehouse," an afternoon of cultural performances and food.

# Middle East Theme Semester: One Student's Gratitude

by Kathy L. Christensen

*Kathy Christensen, a returning student at Schoolcraft, is raising two daughters and preparing to major in marketing at Wayne State University. She participated in the Focus Middle East project during the Winter semester. In early May she submitted this article to International Agenda editor Randy Schwartz, who had also been her mathematics instructor that Winter.*

If it were simply a matter of seeing one part of our world a little differently, you could guess what impact the Middle East Theme Semester had on my perspective. But it was much more than that. The depth of information I gleaned has cultivated a deep personal appreciation of the people highlighted from this region.

During the semester I attended many of the presentations in the lecture series, sometimes with my children, or else viewed videotaped versions of them later. In addition, in my Finite Mathematics course we had two classroom activities related to the Middle East. A direct result of this is that it has given me a more focused interest in understanding the geography, people and history of our shrinking world. I have used my globe replica of the earth to begin looking at the places mentioned in the various lectures, particularly their proximity to other countries. I have revisited my textbook and notes from a previous history class, and I checked out four books and a tape from my local city library on the topic of Islam.

After becoming more enlightened with respect to the Middle East, I have come to another realization: those who attacked the United States on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 were terrorists, but not Muslims. And listening to the recent 9/11 Commission hearings has been more meaningful due to a better grasp that I feel I now have on the social and political complexities in that region. It has also been a monumental step to be able to view what it means to be American from a non-American point of view.

As I listened to the various speakers I felt as though I could project myself into the way of life they were unveiling. Afterwards, each time I saw women on campus or elsewhere wearing headscarves I was much more appreciative of their appearance. Frankly, I have no trouble understanding the discretion behind this method of dress. Even our Christian Bible states in the book of proverbs, "A beautiful woman without discretion is like a gold ring in a pig's snout." It seems as though Muslims apply the tenets of their religion a bit more faithfully than I/we Christians are currently accustomed to doing.

I have been impacted by more than just these things, however. The level of personal commitment of each person involved in bringing the lecture series to Schoolcraft College has remained in the forethought of my current undertakings and challenged me to raise the bar of my own standards. This has prompted me to take another look at the

opportunities each of us has in affecting positive change in our world.

## Lectures that Opened Eyes

Due to my schedule, the first lecture I was able to attend was "Islam & Mathematics: A Hidden History" presented by my own math professor, Randy Schwartz. While I did have a bit of previous knowledge of this topic, what impressed me most was the depth and clarity of the information given. Metaphorically speaking it was like being on the Titanic and seeing the tip of the mammoth iceberg, but rather than sinking in the depths of "contemptuous viewpoints" fueled by prejudice and misunderstanding, this time the ship stopped and looked deeply into the history of this iceberg of knowledge that will forever benefit humanity.

In addition, it was almost enchanting, for lack of a better word, to hear the flawless pronunciation with which he recited the names, places and terms. This aspect allowed my mind to feel closer to the time and place being presented. It was also the unfamiliar diphthong that forced my mind to become receptive on another level and to a culture that I did not understand.

Previously, I had viewed my instructors pretty much in the isolation of their disciplines: teaching math, etc. Yet here, I could see no reason that my professor was compelled to research and present this topic except for his level of commitment to betterment of humanity. Perhaps, I thought, that is a prerequisite in becoming a community college professor? By the end of that one hour, I considered all educational professionals from a very different point of view. I challenged myself to approach my own undertakings with the same level of excellence.

The other presentations that I attended were also great. The history presented in a lecture like that of Prof. Hani Fakhouri in his "Cultural and Historical Survey of the Arab World" was wonderful—in fact, it was too much for me to absorb in one hour, and a written outline would be good in cases like this.

## Taking It to the Classroom

The Middle East Theme Semester actually made a big difference in my study of mathematics this winter. Mathematics has never been my strong suit. In fact, grade school test results would suggest that I look in other areas in which to excel. Added to my 'doomed to be mediocre, at best' path to learning this subject, I grew up in an era in which mathematics was not strongly emphasized, particularly not for girls.

For me, the Finite Math course began the day I listened to "Islam & Mathematics: A Hidden History." Finally, I could see the rich history and connectedness mathematics

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## One Student's Gratitude *continued from page 5*

had to many areas of life. I vowed to give learning this subject my 300% best shot. At the very least, I reasoned, I would either be better at it or discover what is it that prohibits me from being able to do so. As a result of the extra effort I put forth there is now a marked difference in my ability to work through and grasp concepts that were previously very difficult for me.

Later in the semester, Prof. Schwartz introduced two different worksheets on mathematical contributions from the Islamic world. In Marrakech in the 1200s, Ibn Mun'im figured out how to count the number of ways to form tassels of silk of different colors. We used his work to learn all about binomial coefficients and the arithmetical triangle. Gradually, I submersed myself into the worksheets and found them to be intensely interesting. They were designed with enough examples to guide the student to the point that he/she could go forward and complete the problems with a great deal of independence. In addition, they were consistent with the educational trend of offering historical background as to the origin of techniques and applications included in the coursework.

It has been demonstrated that to think on a multi-cognitive level furthers the creative thinking process. Here I found enough culture description that I almost felt as though I could see the beautiful colors of silk threads used to make the tassels from which the problems were derived. All the while I was intrigued with the realization that these techniques originated from a region previously given little attention yet now of great national interest.

In this day of global hostility as well as global economics, I believe it almost a mandate that all things

possible be done in order to lay the foundation for not merely acceptance but rather an *appreciation* of cultures and people different from those with whom we are accustomed. These two worksheets were a unique step in that direction.

### On to the Fall Semester

I am happy to hear that the Middle East lecture series will continue next fall. I certainly plan to be there again and look forward to additional themes.

I would like to see the art and architecture of Islam presented. I remember seeing such a presentation at the Detroit Institute of Arts as part of my volunteer training there. It was given by Prof. Hashim Al-Tawil, who at the time was teaching at Oakland County Community College. Looking back now, being that it had only been weeks past America's infamous September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, it must have taken a lot of courage for him to walk into the room, let alone speak with pride about his country of ancestry. But I became completely engrossed in his words and the beautiful images he shared through the slide projector. Perhaps you could invite Prof. Al-Tawil to speak here next fall?

While the Middle East is plagued with strife resulting in bombings and death, here at Schoolcraft College the differences in that region have been met with intellectual openness, acceptance and the willingness to better understand the issues at hand. The theme semester has been an effort on the part of Schoolcraft's faculty to enrich the student body's appreciation of other cultures, and I would venture to guess that the majority of students participating have internalized many of these concepts. So, on behalf of those of us who overtly or covertly have benefited from this project, I thank you. •



**Student Kathy Christensen works last February on a Middle East-related activity assigned by her mathematics instructor, Randy Schwartz.**

Photo: Ellen Hochberg

## Newsletter Readers Recommend Bradner Library Books on Middle East

*Books of all kinds— novels, poetry, nonfiction, and more— are an important way for Americans to go beyond the headlines and sound-bites and learn about the culture, history, and politics of the Middle East. Our previous issue featured a dozen recommendations, and since then several extensive bibliographies have been posted in the International Institute public folder and on the Writing Fellows website. Over the Summer, a number of readers of International Agenda mentioned additional favorites of theirs, and we asked them to write a little about these books for the newsletter. The librarians at Bradner can provide further help and suggestions.*

### **Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner***

New York: Riverhead Books, 2003

Bradner Library Call #: PS 3608.0832 K58 2003  
(coming in September)

*The Kite Runner* is the first novel by Khaled Hosseini, a physician who grew up in Afghanistan and came to live in the United States in 1980 when his family was granted political asylum. The novel tells the story of two motherless boys whose parallel lives begin in the same Kabul household, separate during the final days of the Afghan monarchy, and re-converge dangerously during the Taliban regime.

Amir, the son of a prosperous merchant, and Hassan, the son of a servant, are constant companions. Amir, however, does not think of Hassan as a “friend” because of their class separation. Nonetheless, their warm companionship and loyalty seem inviolate until the day of a kite tournament. An incident on this day changes both boys’ lives irrevocably and becomes the fulcrum on which the novel swings.

In winter, when the cold in Afghanistan traditionally closes the schools, boys build kites to fly competitively. Kite string is coated in glass powder so one kite-flier can cut other kites down when strings cross. The kites fly and fight all day, until only one remains. Then, to top off the victory with a trophy, a friend of the winning kite flier tries to out-run all the other boys to find the last, fallen rival.

Khaled Hosseini makes Afghanistan immediate to American readers through the story of the boys, their fathers, and many other vivid characters. Effortlessly, Amir, the upper-class Pashtun kite flier, and Hassan, the outcast Hazara kite runner, seem to embody and represent many aspects of Afghan culture and history. *The Kite Runner* is a well-written novel about fathers and sons, betrayal, and redemption. It is also hard to put down.

– Prof. Faye Schuett  
SC Dept. of English

### **David K. Shipler, *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land***

New York: Penguin Books, 1986, revised in 2002

Bradner Library Call #: DS 119.7 .S476 1986

For those of us who are Middle East watchers, it is sometimes difficult to avoid the stereotypes of both Arabs (and more properly Palestinians living in Israel) and Jews. The Jew according to the Arab stereotype is a brutal, violent, manipulative coward. The Arab viewed by prejudiced Jews is a primitive, vengeful, violent creature. In his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, David Shipler delves into the origins of the prejudices that have been intensified by war, terrorism and nationalism. Shipler, who is an American Jew, was the *New York Times* Bureau Chief in Jerusalem from 1979 to 1984.

What lies at the heart of the Arab-Jewish tensions in Israel is not subjective prejudice but an objective contest for land and power. Shipler examines the two cultures that exist side-by-side. He looks at the process of indoctrination that begins in schools, and he looks at historical conflicts between Islam and Judaism. He examines the breakup of the British-mandated territory of Palestine and how it affected the lives of both Jews and Arabs. He interviews hundreds of Israelis (yes, you have to take into account that there are both Jews and Arabs who reside in Israel). In the revised edition, he interviews the same people he did 16 years earlier, including a retired Jewish military officer and a Palestinian guerilla. Among the most touching interviews are those with a Jewish woman and an Arab woman who have lived in the same building for over 20 years. In 1980, both women said they thought if they could break down and talk to each other, they could probably gain a greater understanding of each other. In 2002, the two women, although still residing in the same building, have still not attempted to talk to one another.

I thought this was a very unbiased book. If you think this is a book that bashes Jews or Arabs, you’re in for a surprise: both sides take knocks and kudos at the same time. You end up feeling for both peoples. As a geographer, I have always puzzled if in fact there was a “right” side. *Arab and Jew* examines the frustrations and hopes of hundreds and suggests that there is an ultimate hope of reconciliation. It’s not a simple matter of one side being right. Both sides have to accept the fact that they have immensely wronged the other. Diplomacy is the only answer.

This book is 596 pages but is a fast read. It is also available as an audiotape, and as a two-hour PBS videotape under the slightly different title “Arabs and Jews: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land.” I show one hour of the video to students in my World Regional Geography classes as a way to spark discussion. The students eat it up.

– Adjunct Prof. Michael Oakes  
SC Dept. of Geography

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**Middle East Books** *continued from page 7***Naguib Mahfouz, *Palace Walk***

New York: Doubleday, 1990

Bradner Library Call #: PJ 7846 .A46 B313 1990

In this story Mr. Ahmad Abd al-Jawad, a Cairo merchant during World War I, struggles to keep his family rigidly barricaded from the world in which he labors and seeks his leisure. In the same way and at the same time, the English are seeking to maintain their colonial dominance over Egypt. Mahfouz's story portrays how this double patriarchy fails to prevent the tide of change from wrecking a carefully constructed artifice. The world gradually seeps into Mr. Abd al-Jawad's domestic palace, as well as into England's colonial dominance. Amina, his formerly subservient wife, dares to venture out and is finally thrown out of the household, while their two daughters and three sons follow their own paths to courage and rebellion. As World War I ends, the 1919 Egyptian resistance begins. The two patriarchal forces, Mr. Abd al-Jawad and England, collide.

Naguib Mahfouz was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, a first for writers in Arabic. *Palace Walk* kicks off his great Cairo Trilogy, which continues with *Palace of Desire* and concludes with *Sugar Street*, taking the Abd al-Jawad clan through World War 2 and the rise of Nasser and nationalism in the 1950s.

– Adjunct Asst. Prof. Sam Hays  
SC Dept. of English

**Paul Lunde, *Islam: Faith, Culture, History***

New York: DK Publications, 2002

Bradner Library Call #: BP 50 .L86 2002

As breathtakingly beautiful color photos glide the reader swiftly from Islam today back through its time of origin, Paul Lunde eloquently presents the Muslim faith, culture, and history from the time of Muhammad to Saddam Hussein's rule. The preface page alone will leave you spellbound.

This book reads quickly yet is very thorough. It also works well as a rapid reference, utilizing an exquisite color-coded directory in which over 40 Muslim countries are briefly categorized in terms of economics, resources, defense, media, education, health, spending, world affairs, people and politics. There is also a chronological overview of major events from Islam's beginnings (c. 600 CE) through the present in 200-year periods, subdividing each period's events into four major geographic locations.

If you have even the slightest interest in globalization from an economical, political or social perspective this book will be well worth reading.

– Kathy L. Christensen  
SC marketing major

**A Flurry of Interest in Books**

"Focus Middle East" has inspired a flurry of reading about the region. This is partly reflected in the pages of this newsletter.

In addition, **Sandra Roney-Hays**, an adjunct assistant professor in social sciences at the College, headed up the formation of GlobalEyzers, a book group for faculty and staff interested in international topics. Last Winter, the group read Abdelrahman Munif's novel *Cities of Salt*, the story of a desert Bedouin community where Americans discover oil in the 1930s. Seven participants discussed the novel over a pair of dinners at local Middle Eastern restaurants. This Fall, GlobalEyzers will be reading Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*, a story set in a Sudanese village on the Nile, exploring themes of colonialism, decadence, and women's oppression. Contact Sandy ([srh.online@comcast.net](mailto:srh.online@comcast.net)) for more information.

Also this Fall, English Prof. **Faye Schuett** is reviving Pageturners, a College book club open to all. The first reading will be *Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life* by the former Queen Noor of Jordan (see *IA* January 2004, p. 8). Contact Faye ([fschuett@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:fschuett@schoolcraft.edu)) for more information.

**Franz Werfel, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh***

New York: Modern Library, 1934

Bradner Library Call #: PT 2647 .E77 V513 1934a

There are many books about Armenia and the genocide of 1915, but the most famous is this novel based on the true story of a heroic Armenian village in southern Turkey by the Syrian border. To escape rampaging Turkish troops, the 5,000 villagers must climb to the top of Musa Dagh (Syriac for "mountain of Moses"). There, they hold off the Turkish army in a siege that lasts some 40 days, echoing the Biblical story of Moses' stay atop a mountain. The villagers are ultimately rescued by the French.

The novel was originally written in German by Franz Werfel (1890-1945), a Jew who had fled Nazi Germany with his wife. Ironically, on the eve of the Nazi holocaust, in 1935 MGM wanted to make a movie based on Werfel's best-seller, but the U.S. State Department intervened and the movie was scrapped. In hindsight, we can only wonder whether the making of the movie might have helped prevent later attempts at ethnic cleansing in Europe.

– Adjunct Instructor Marjorie K. Nanian  
SC Dept. of Political Science



# Multicultural Fair 2004: “A Rare, True Look at the Rest of the World”

by Prof. Josselyn Moore (Sociology and Anthropology)

Measured in terms of both education and fun, the Multicultural Fair 2004, held on Thursday, March 18 in the DiPonio Room from 10 am to 3 pm, was a tremendous success.

First, the numbers: there were 1,200 visitors, a significant increase over last year. Over 130 participants, mostly students, created the displays and performances. This year’s fair featured:

- 27 cultural displays from 26 countries, prepared by Schoolcraft students and staff, their family and friends
- a Language Table demonstrating writing from 19 languages and giving away bookmarks with samples of writing
- 12 performances of song, dance, and music, including the Sally Adams School of Dance and Red Cedar, a group of Native American drummers and singers
- two hands-on cultural demonstrations featuring *origami* and *henna* painting
- snacks from five restaurants representing a variety of ethnic cuisines
- “Passports” handed out at the door, which “travelers” were able to get stamped at each country’s table.

Qualitatively, the fair was evaluated by analyzing visitors’ comments on door-prize drawing slips, student papers from five classes, and feedback from participants during the debriefing party. One of the key goals achieved was to involve international students in a college activity by sharing their culture and making them a significant part of the college community. Of the more than 130 people who were involved in creating the fair, about 90% were international students. The fair gave them an opportunity to use the English language to explain the uniqueness of their culture and country. A Japanese student expressed what the fair meant to him in this context:

I think Multicultural Fair was important in two ways. One is for foreign students, giving them opportunities to meet people who are in the same situation. Through my experience of being an ESL student... I had a tight relationship with people from my country or other countries. Because many foreigners living in the United States left their family and friends in their countries, they need friends to share the same experience. The second is for American people who have little contact with foreign people. Through my experience of living in the United States, I think that foreign people [are] more open minded to foreigners, because they have more chances to know other countries. But if you do not have a chance to know or talk to foreigners, understanding other countries and getting rid of stereotype might not be easy. I think this kind of fairs works as an important role to give people a start of knowing other countries.

Pulling off the fair required the participation of many students on campus, not just international students. Everyone was given the opportunity to volunteer and serve with the pro-

ject. Schoolcraft Ambassadors and staff from the Student Activities Office offered extensive logistical assistance on the day of the Fair. Students from the graduating Honors Class and Honors alumni created the U.S. display table.

This annual fair allows us to extend education beyond our classroom walls by exposing students, faculty and staff to a cross-cultural experience. It creates an opportunity for students to teach other students, as well as faculty and staff, and for the College to mine the wealth of information already available on our campus and in our community, using our students and residents as resources. There was strong support this year from the faculty, bringing the fair into the classroom and making it an educational experience. At least two dozen instructors encouraged their students to participate and attend (in some cases entire classes were brought), and/or created assignments linking coursework to the fair.

Very importantly, especially in light of the events of September 11, 2001, the fair promotes cultural sensitivity and increases participants’ awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity. One student expressed it this way:

It goes without saying that the multicultural fair is important for so many different reasons. Perhaps mostly because it gives us culture-blind Americans a rare, true look at the rest of the world. We aren’t seeing the National Geographic perspective of these cultures, but a perspective from someone who actually lived in it. For many people who have conditioned views of other cultures, shaped by various stereotypes, and what we see in the media this is the only time in the year that we get a chance to see what it is really like in other countries. We see why some cultures do what they do and it helps us not just to accept their differences, but to embrace them. Lastly it has been easy to see the world as an awful place polluted with war, violence and garbage, because that’s all we are shown in newspapers, magazines and on television. It was rather refreshing to visit the fair and see just how beautiful and harmonious the world actually is.

Another student commented:

After going to this fair, I look at my way of living different. I see how other people live all over the world, and I realize there is more to life than what I have thought. The human race is a beautiful thing, and the Multicultural Fair may help people see and understand this... Since September 11<sup>th</sup> I think a lot of stereotyping has been going on. This fair will give everyone a chance to get to know other cultures and hopefully put an end to all of this stereotyping.

The success of this year’s fair was truly a product of a campus-wide collaborative effort, which could be seen within the Multicultural Fair Committee and well beyond it. We were moved by the extraordinary cooperation of offices, groups and individuals from all across campus, as well as the involvement of the extended Schoolcraft family. We thank everyone for their support, and we look forward to Multicultural Fair 2005. •

# April MIIIE Conference in St. Louis: Culture, Conflict, and Curriculum

by Prof. Josselyn Moore (Sociology and Anthropology)

The Midwest Institute for International/ Intercultural Education (MIIIE), of which Schoolcraft College is a member, held its 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on April 2-4, 2004 at the Forest Park campus of St. Louis Community College (St. Louis, MO). There were more than 110 registrants representing 38 schools— about half of the member institutions of MIIIE. Schoolcraft instructors attending this conference included Anna Maheshwari, Ida Simmons-Short and myself.

Nearly 30 sessions (50 presenters) featured a diverse array of topics ranging from particular geographic foci (Turkey, Africa, Middle East, Australia, Czechoslovakia, Japan) and discipline foci (Reading/Writing, Psychology/Sociology, Nursing, Allied Health, Physical Sciences, Math, Business and ESL), as well as the very current issue of conflict (conflict resolution, terrorism, nonviolence). There were also sessions on study abroad/ overseas teaching, grants, pedagogy, and internationalizing the curriculum, especially incorporating cultural competency into our coursework.

It was perhaps no surprise that there were a number of presentations on topics relating to the Middle East, mirroring the efforts of our International Institute's "Focus Middle East" project. Keynote speaker Richard Garfield (Columbia University) delivered a timely and fact-filled talk on "Humanitarian Relief, Development, and Nation-Building in Iraq" based on his recent field experience in that country. Dr. Garfield discussed the types of wars typical after 1950. The approximately 40 ongoing wars in the world right now are generally being fought within nations, not between nations; they cause more civilian than military personnel deaths, and more often from indirect causes (famine, pneumonia, malaria) than direct causes (bullets). Afghanistan and Iraq represent a whole new kind of war for the U.S. because there is such a high and sustained post-war mortality. Especially interesting are the causes of that mortality: homicide, vehicle accidents, decreased visits to health services, damage to health centers and... an epidemic of smoking! In 1998, more civilian and military deaths were due to vehicle accidents (not buckling up— remember George Patton) than to suicide, homicide or war. One of the impacts of these intranational wars is that internally displaced peoples become refugees in their own countries. Many of these internal refugees will be coming to the U.S. and our campuses in the near future.

A number of other presentations were also related to the Middle East:

- In her talk on "Mathematics, Astronomy and Science during the Islamic Civilization, 622-1492 AD," Rihab Sawah (Physics and Astronomy Dept., Moberly Area C.C., Moberly, MO) provided numerous examples

of Arab discoveries and scholarship that easily pre-dated those in the Western world. For example, the heliocentric theory of the heavens was actually already hundreds of years old and widely accepted in the Arab world when Copernicus first proposed the idea in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. As early as the 7<sup>th</sup> Century, Muslims understood that the earth rotates on its axis and revolves around the sun, and they took the earth's sphericity for granted. She also included examples of early Arab scholarship in physics, optics, medicine and pharmacology. Interestingly, Dr. Sawah, herself of Middle Eastern origin, had been teaching her students the traditional Eurocentric version of the history of science until she did this research. She is now rewriting her course materials.

- A session on Middle East Perspectives on Non-Violence and Pedagogy featured a riveting presentation by Dianne Lee (Information Systems Dept. Chair at the host campus) on the violent conflict between the peoples of Israel and the West Bank/ Gaza. Dianne's talk was based on her research and travel in the region as a Catholic peace activist, notably a trip in early 2004 with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). Using videotape and photographs, she presented to us the history of the structural violence in the area.
- Stanley D. Paden (Mathematics Dept. at the host campus) outlined the impact that the Middle East has had on the history of mathematics.

Anna Maheshwari presented a paper on the classroom strategies she has designed to promote cross-cultural awareness. Her presentation, entitled "Internationalizing English Composition Courses," was part of a session on the Development of Cultural Skills in Conjunction with Reading & Writing. In one assignment that Anna described, her students interview two people from different cultures on a selected topic in order to create a cross-cultural comparison. Anna emphasizes that just because in our own culture our way works well for us does not mean that there is not another way of doing things that might also work equally well for others. She also pointed out that it would be a mistake to assume that international students are automatically "globalized."

As the Schoolcraft College representative, I also attended the Annual Meeting of College Coordinators that was convened during this conference.

# NISOD Conference in Austin Sheds Light on Global Education

by Prof. Randy Schwartz (Mathematics)

Along with Gordon Wilson (Prof. English) and Monica Sullivan (Asst. Dean of Sciences), on May 23-26, 2004 I attended the annual International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence, held at the Austin Convention Center in Austin, TX. Here, I want to share some of the lessons that I took home with me regarding the impact of global change and multiculturalism on our role as educators.

This year's conference, with its theme "We're back in the saddle again," included over 230 sessions, virtually all of which incorporated PowerPoint slide presentations as well as some form of active audience participation. The annual gathering is sponsored by the National Institute for Staff & Organizational Development (NISOD) and the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas-Austin (CCLP-UTA).

## Challenges on a Global Scale

In his keynote address "**Teaching and Learning in the Balance,**" Mark Milliron, President of the Arizona-based League for Innovation in the Community College, argued that meeting the challenges of a period of rapid global change requires that we cultivate a sense of looking forward to change and the excitement of "being a rookie every year." This attitudinal shift can only be accomplished through conscious effort, he said. Humans are "hard-wired" not to deal well with change because the brain plays an active, constructive role in perception—it automatically filters out details that don't accord with its habitual and expected patterns and goals. Brain research shows that people who let themselves become overhabituated and "think they know everything" actually suffer brain shrinkage and are increasingly unable to cope with change. Many teachers have noted the value of "becoming a student again" by enrolling in a challenging subject that they have never studied before.

At the same time, Milliron emphasized that the point is not to champion "change for its own sake" but to maintain balance and perspective as a basis for sound innovation. He described seven "balancing acts" that community colleges must be adept at:

**Education that is both teaching-centered and learning-centered.** Teaching and learning are deeply intertwined, and Milliron said that it is incorrect to pose one against the other as a center of emphasis. The recent attention given to learning-centered education has been aimed at restoring balance in all institutions of higher education, not to create exclusively "learning-centered institutions" where students are treated as "customers."

**Opportunities for both "native" and "immigrant" learners.** Milliron made an interesting analogy, saying that the gaping differences among our students with regard to academic preparedness, re-

ceptivity to education, and familiarity with technology is a chasm similar to that separating native from recently-immigrated groups in urban areas. If community colleges are to continue being effective open-door educational institutions, then our curricula must simultaneously address the needs of both "native" and "immigrant" learners in this sense.

**Stability and flexibility of learning options.** Students want and need to be rooted and connected even as they "go out on a limb" exploring educational opportunities. This is why, amid the introduction of more flexible instructional delivery such as distance learning and OE/OE options, there is a continued rock-bottom need for institutional accreditation, ongoing evaluation of all academic offerings, assessment of student competencies, and other elements of a solid educational foundation.

**Local as well as global educational opportunities.** Globalization continues to gather momentum, underlining the importance of an international dimension to our curricula. At the same time, attention to "local" issues via service learning, civic engagement, and community volunteerism remains an important feature of the modern educational landscape. Milliron recommends Thomas L. Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* for its discussion of how the emerging international system is changing the relation between local and global interests.

**Enhancing both the capability and creativity of students.** High-stakes testing of competencies and other forms of accountability, documentation, and certification remain important, but we should also find ways to encourage brainstorming and imagination among our students as a means of dealing with rapid change. Milliron recommends Richard Florida's book *The Rise of the Creative Class* on this question.

**Human-based and technology-based resources.** Digital and other technologies have clearly opened up new realms for education, but an institution that becomes cold and impersonal is doomed. Colleges must rely not simply on technology but on learning communities, resource people, and other opportunities for human interaction.

**Living well but living free.** As a cautionary note, Milliron showed us several websites that are actively recruiting for race-hate groups. The Internet and other mechanisms for "social commerce" have opened up opportunities for many people to learn, to express themselves, and to network with one another, but such freedoms carried too far will lead to a loss of privacy, civility, and justice.

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## NISOD Conference *continued from page 11*

Milliron concluded that at each institution, reaching a proper balance and a reasoned center in each of these spheres will require a give and take between views that may be diverse but are all carefully thought out. For example, an understanding of the proper role of technology can only be arrived at by an ongoing dialogue between its thoughtful critics and its careful advocates. What is unhelpful are “eternal cynics” and “true believers,” both of whom tend to polarize discussion and stifle action.

### Broadening Cultural Vistas

One day at the conference, I focused wholly on attending presentations about reaching out to diverse cultures in order to provide a more inclusive and global learning experience for students.

**“Opening Windows to South Asia in 2003: Community College Fulbrighters in Nepal and India”** was co-presented by Dr. Gene Alan Muller, who teaches History and Border Studies at El Paso Community College (TX), and Dr. Edward J. Valeau, President and Superintendent at Hartnell Community College (Salinas, CA). Muller and Valeau were members of a team of 13 community college educators that made a study tour of India and Nepal in Summer 2003, funded by the federal Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program (SAP). The visit had been postponed from the previous year as a result of political-military friction between India and Pakistan. (Also in 2003, SAP sponsored a study trip to India by a 14-member team of K-12 educators.)

Both Muller and Valeau have made a number of overseas visits in the past, especially to Latin America, as part of their colleges’ efforts to enable faculty to teach about world regions and cultures. Community colleges often have very diverse student bodies, and they also need to train their students for a culturally diverse world and work environment. These students are ill-served if international and cross-cultural studies are restricted to foreign-language classes. At Hartnell a few years back, a campus visit by a troupe of dancers from east India had caused a sensation among the primarily Hispanic students, who had never before had an opportunity to experience an overseas culture at such close range; that visit had prompted the school to form a World Music Institute.

The Fulbright-Hays trip was entitled “India’s Cultural Heritage, Contemporary Concerns, and Challenges for the New Millennium.” The group spent roughly one month in India and one week in Nepal exploring the religious, social, political, educational, and economic circumstances of the subcontinent. Muller passed around to us many craftworks that he’d brought back from the trip, and his slideshow afforded us a glimpse of cities, towns, the countryside, schools, temples, mosques, and palaces and other historic and cultural sites. India makes an especially excellent focus of study because of its own multicultural history, the ongoing challenges that it faces in integrating diverse religious, ethnic, and socioeconomic strata, and its current

role as a crucible of interaction between East and West and between forces of underdevelopment and globalization. (For information about economic trends, we were given copies of the extensive cover story “The Rise of India and What it Means for America,” *Business Week* Dec. 8, 2003.)

Four participants were able to experience and learn about such topics as the relation between rural and urban India; the environmental and social impact of the Green Revolution in agriculture; advances and obstacles in developing the nation’s transportation and communications infrastructure; the social and educational options confronting young women in Madras; and efforts at social reform by Muslim women in Hyderabad. Nepal is a kingdom that is even more gripped by tradition and backwardness, but an armed struggle led by Nepalese Maoists is seriously challenging the government for power. We were told that this insurgency has gathered some popular momentum because it is fighting for the equality of women and for the rights of rural masses vis-à-vis the privileged strata in the capital, Kathmandu.

The lodging, food, and security on the trip were excellent. Participants grew and developed in the course of the tour—and not just by absorbing facts and figures. Preconceived notions are challenged, and ethnocentric, middle-class western biases about “foreigners” begin to be broken down when one travels among them, converses with them, and observes how they live and work: some tour members got over their fear that touching an Indian commoner would bring “germs,” while others were disabused of their contempt for “idol worship.” Information and photos from the trip can be found at <http://www.hartnell.cc.ca.us/president/fulbright/>.

In their 2¼-hour presentation, Muller and Valeau also addressed the purpose, history, and operation of the Fulbright-Hays programs, which were launched by federal legislation in 1961 and are administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The Seminars Abroad Program (SAP) shouldn’t be confused with the Group Projects Abroad (GPA) program, which is another type of funding offered under Fulbright-Hays authorization. In the GPA program, each funding request is made by an entire team of educators who propose to visit a specific nation for joint study and/or curriculum development. At Schoolcraft, GPA applications have been coordinated by our International Institute and its affiliate, the MIIIE, although none involving College personnel have been granted funding so far.

By contrast, an SAP request is made by an individual educator who proposes to visit any one of a list of nations offered by the program that year. Applicants must address how they plan to utilize the knowledge gained from visiting any of the target nations. Then, SAP program officers comb the applications and pull together a team for each nation; they look for seasoned travelers who are flexible, and they aim for diverse teams. After returning from the trip, participants are required to submit a full report of their activities to the Fulbright-Hays office. Muller and Valeau emphasized that while the process is involved and

protracted, it is “doable,” and all of the steps are outlined on the Department of Education website (for SAP, <http://www.ed.gov/programs/iegpssap/index.html>; for GPA, <http://www.ed.gov/programs/iegpssga/index.html>). They encouraged those whose applications are turned down one year to keep trying in subsequent years.

Hartnell C.C. has become involved in assisting India and Nepal in preparing to greatly expand their community college systems, which will be an important factor in the future economic development of these nations. At Hartnell itself, a Faculty Travel Program has also been instituted. In this program, about 10 on-campus presentations are made each semester by instructors who have recently traveled overseas, including in cases where the travel was done on their own as vacation. (President Valeau himself has traveled extensively by bicycle across Europe.)

**“The World in a Term: Internationalizing the Curriculum at Home or Abroad Using Interns, Exchanges, and Professional Development Activities”** was presented by a team from Highline Community College (Des Moines, WA, a suburb of Seattle), which has played a groundbreaking role in various forms of international education. We were told that “everyone at Highline is involved in globalizing the campus, from the top down and from the bottom up.” That includes the Board of Trustees and the Administration, who have mandated that this be a priority; the Human Resources office, whose hiring practices emphasize diversity and which actively recruits new faculty from outside the region; a committed core of faculty members, who incorporate globalism in their courses; an International Students Program, which serves several hundred international students; and a Multicultural/Diversity Student Office.

Mechanisms being used at Highline to advance cross-cultural studies include:

- a nine-course Department of Culture, Gender, and Global Studies (CGG)
- academic partnerships with educational institutions in England, South Africa, Namibia, China, and other countries
- study abroad programs for students, involving short-term visits or longer immersion stays, arranged through a statewide consortium of community colleges
- foreign exchange of instructors, who are placed as teaching interns in host institutions
- faculty professional development opportunities to internationalize the curriculum.

A number of Highline’s study abroad opportunities are arranged under the auspices of the Institute of International

Education (IIE), founded in 1919, which administers many Fulbright, Ford Foundation, and other academic exchange programs for both students and educators. Headquartered at United Nations Plaza in New York, the IIE network now unites more than 830 institutions of higher education in more than 35 countries (visit <http://www.iie.org>).

Foreign-exchange interns placed at Highline are recent graduates from universities in their home countries. They are housed and boarded by volunteer instructors or staff members, who are provided a small allowance for food expenses. Ellen Hoffman of the Department of World Languages shared with us what a difference these interns have made in her department. She introduced to us two of these interns, Cynthia Beobachter from the Polytechnic University of Namibia and Xiaoling Yang from Shanghai Jiao Tong University in China. Cynthia and Xiaoling described their duties teaching German and Chinese (respectively) at Highline, and the ways in which their internships have also helped their own educational and professional development.

Susan Landgraf, Journalism Department Chair, is one of many Highline educators who have made study visits to Namibia and South Africa. She described to us how her overseas trip and the instructor interns have helped in internationalizing her coursework. In Journalism 100, she incorporates a module on Apartheid and the Role of the Media. Students work in small groups to research how domestic and international news media impacted or were affected by the system of apartheid in these two countries, and they summarize their findings in the form of written papers or video documentaries. In Writing 101, she incorporates a Culture Project module. There, students do assigned background readings and library research about various aspects of culture; use e-mail to interview several students at either Polytechnic University of Namibia or SJTU in China; develop and research a position paper on a selected controversial cultural topic; and present their position in the form of a written summary as well as a visual classroom presentation.

#### Cultural Diversity Within Our Borders

Another Highline C.C. instructor, Derek Greenfield, presented a separate session on **“Hip-Hop as Critical Pedagogy”** that I attended. Greenfield is a Sociology instructor and also teaches a section of the course African-American Experience III (CGG 137, see above) focusing on “Hip-Hop and American Society.” He introduced himself by performing some rap of his own, which not only reminded us that white people can rap with the best of them, but gave a taste of how to welcome this subculture into our classrooms.

The rap and hip-hop scene isn’t just about music and dance. It has become a whole language and subculture that serves to spread information, attitudes, and values, furnishing a means of both belonging and of rebellion. Furthermore, it has crossed over to gain the devotion of

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## NISOD Conference *continued from page 13*

young people of all nationalities. Greenfield argues that just as it was a fatal mistake for schools in apartheid South Africa to teach African students in exclusively non-African languages, likewise if this important form of expression is denied in U.S. classrooms, many students will feel “dissed” (disaffected/ disrespected/ disengaged) and their learning will be stunted as a result. This principle has implications not only with regard to hip-hop but other American subcultures as well (see sidebar at right).

At the same time, we want our students to be *critical* consumers of hip-hop culture as well as of every other form of information. Just because a point of view is phrased in a hip way, Greenfield noted, doesn’t mean that it should be exempted from evaluation and accepted uncritically. In this context, it is helpful to keep in mind that hip-hop has undergone a maturing process just as individuals do. Born in the 1970s, in its “toddler” phase hip-hop was playful; in its later “schoolboy” phase it became political; gangsta rap was a “rebellious adolescent” obsessed with lawlessness, drugs, money, etc.; and hip-hop is now entering a more mature “adult” stage, Greenfield argues.

We broke into groups to craft some rap lyrics of our own, and we shared ideas about ways to use hip-hop in our coursework:

- Song lyrics can be analyzed in the classroom, just as are poems, novels, and other types of writing. They crystallize forms of expression, philosophical outlooks, social identities, relations between people, etc. Greenfield guided us in analyzing 2Pac’s “Wonder Why They Call U” as an intervention for self-respect among women, and “Retrospect for Life” by Common Sense (featuring Lauryn Hill) as a study in how poverty disintegrates families. Lyrics can be downloaded from the Original Hip-Hop Lyrics Archive, [www.ohhla.com](http://www.ohhla.com).
- The rivalry of rap artists can be used to model opposing viewpoints. Students can be asked, How might such-and-such a rapper write a song to reply to these lyrics?
- The main points of virtually any classroom presentation can be phrased in the language of hip-hop to make them more accessible to certain students.
- As a mnemonic device applicable even to mathematics and science courses, basic facts and formulae can be phrased with the rhythm and rhyme of rap.

I want to thank Schoolcraft College for providing us the opportunity to attend the NISOD conference and to re-energize ourselves as educators concerned about the whole world. •

## Welcoming Subcultures in the Classroom

In the journal *Community College Enterprise*, a publication of Schoolcraft College, English and History Professor Steven L. Berg has a regular interview feature called “Two Sides of the Same Coin.” For the Spring 2004 issue Steve interviewed two experts on various aspects of diversity in the classroom. One respondent, Pedro Luna, emphasized that even youth subcultures like “goths,” “skaters,” “preps” and “slackers” represent an aspect of cultural diversity that we must welcome and embrace if we are to fulfill our educational mission. Luna is an academic counselor at Syracuse University, and he chairs the Diversity Commission of the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD). He explained,

Each one has an energy within us which is reflected through our interest. It’s very hard to understand an individual’s interest without listening to him or her. Therefore, if you have a “skater,” someone who is passionate about that, this person has something to contribute to the discussion. For example he might say, “The reason I skate is because it’s my way to release my energy.” In order to make a connection with this student, a teacher needs to recognize that skateboarding is how this person gets energized. In order to really promote diversity within the classroom, you need to allow students to express themselves freely, embody the feelings and thinking and ideas they have and relate it to what they’re learning in the classroom from a textbook. Students need to feel included and that they are respected and heard.

## MIIE Fall Conference in Muskegon

SCII chairperson Josselyn Moore invites you to join her in attending the upcoming annual Fall Conference of the Midwest Institute for International/ Intercultural Education (MIIE). The conference will be held October 15-16, 2004 at Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, MI. Tentative scheduling includes sessions covering a wide range of topics including:

- Internationalizing Art-Humanities Courses
- Internationalizing English-Communication courses
- Internationalizing Natural-Physical Sciences courses
- Internationalizing Allied Health courses
- International Security and Global Criminal Activities
- Infusing Global Ethics and Human Rights into courses
- Organizing Successful Study Abroad Programs
- Development of Title VI Grants
- Development of Collaborative Overseas Projects
- Development of Fulbright GPS Grants
- Organizing Successful International Campus Activities.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to consider giving a paper and/or attending the conference. Theo Sypris, MIIE Director, must receive presentation proposals by September 10, and conference registrations by October 8. Application forms and further information will be available shortly at the MIIE website (<http://puma.kvcc.edu/midwest>).

# Resources for Teaching and Learning Between Nations

by Adjunct Asst. Prof. Sam Hays (English)

In her introduction to the essay collection *Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What It Means To Be American* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), editor **Tamar Jacoby** celebrates that multiculturalism has become today's "civil religion" in the United States. She disparages assimilationism and its famous metaphor of the melting pot: "Who wants to be melted down after all—for the sake of national unity or anything else?" (p. 10) A few of the essay titles that piqued my interest were "The American Kaleidoscope, Then and Now" (Herbert Gans), "Assimilation, the Asian Way" (Min Zhou), "Toward a Post-Ethnic Economy" (Joel Kotkin), "Economic Assimilation: Trouble Ahead" (George J. Borjas), "New Americans After September 11" (Michael Barone) and "Goose-Loose Blues for the Melting Pot" (Stanley Crouch).

Another recent collection brings the discussion closer to home by focusing on immigrants from Islamic lands. This volume is edited by **Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad** and **Jane I. Smith**, *Muslim Minorities in the West: Visible and Invisible* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002). I was especially attracted to one of its essays, "Being Arab and Becoming Americanized: Forms of Mediated Assimilation in Metropolitan Detroit" by Gary David and Kenneth K. Ayouby. Their discussion of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century history of the relationship between the Lebanese community and Ford Motor Corp. is intriguing, as is their comparison of the Arab communities of Toledo and Dearborn. A couple of interesting sections of the essay are "The Creation of 'Presbyterian Islam' and the Separation of Mosque and State" and "'Arabaic' and Dearbornites: The Emergence of a Cultural Hybrid in Community Youth."

Creating a climate where such immigrants are accepted and valued plays an important role in people's views regarding multiculturalism and the question of assimilation. The **American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee** (ADC) in Washington has developed a lesson plan on anti-Arab stereotypes that is suitable for use at the high school and community college level. The lesson is available in PDF format at [http://www.adc.org/Lesson\\_plan1.pdf](http://www.adc.org/Lesson_plan1.pdf). We have also placed a copy in the International Institute's folder on the campus server (public drive), at U:\International\Middle East Resources for Faculty\Social Sciences. Two of our Focus Middle East speakers this fall will be addressing issues related to the treatment of Arab-Americans.

A book that my wife Sandy and I purchased late last year and have learned a lot from is **Karen Isaksen Leonard's** *Muslims in the United States: The State of Research* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2003). Ms. Leonard states that the following are the four leading Muslim political journals in the U.S.:

*Muslim Journal*, <http://www.muslimjournal.com/FPage.html>

*Islamic Horizons*, <http://www.isna.net/Horizons/>

*Message International*, <http://www.messageonline.org/>

*The Minaret*, <http://www.minaretonline.com/>

While reading Leonard's book, I also became intrigued with the *Ismaili Shia* branch of Islam and its *imam*, Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, who is of South Asian origin. He has led his relatively

small group of Muslims (estimated at 15-20 million worldwide) in promoting third-world economic development, improved health care, and lofty architectural projects. On "Academic Search Elite," Bradner Library's excellent online research module, I discovered many interesting articles about the *Ismaili*. A number of compare-and-contrast possibilities for English composition students to write about occurred to me: comparing Aga Khan and Pope John Paul, comparing the *Ismaili* with Oxfam (or some other group) in their third-world benevolent work, or comparing the *Ismaili* concept of continuing revelation with the dominant Christian concept of closed revelation or with the Roman Catholic concept of living tradition.

Dr. **Vandana Shiva** is an Indian physicist who transformed herself into an ecologist after seeing the valley in which she had spent her childhood destroyed of its water resources due to commercial logging. She is currently Director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy in New Delhi. Her small book of 150 pages, *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2002), is packed with poetic expression and concrete facts about how natural resources have been turned into commodities, and the terrorist-like impact this has had on our earth. She also had an excellent essay "Values Beyond Price" in the journal *Our Planet* 8:2 (August 1996), its text available on the Internet at <http://www.ourplanet.com/imgversn/82/shiva.html>. There, she argues that the root of the ecological crisis is the reduction of all value to wealth, and the exclusion of compassion and care from human relationships. She uses the tale of *Vishnu Purana* as a way to make the point that greed leads to scarcity and destruction.

Works by the late **Edward Said** have recently been my primary reading focus. A Palestinian-American scholar and a professor of comparative literature at Columbia University, his concerns ranged from the immediate political crises of the Middle East to sweeping critical appraisals of literature and music. "My method is to focus as much as possible on individual works, to read them first as great products of the creative or interpretive imagination, and then show them as part of the relation between culture and empire," he explained in the Introduction to his *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993). That book, a sequel to his earlier *Orientalism*, focuses on the relationship of Western and other literature to imperial domination. Another of Said's classics, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969-1994* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), is a book that I want to start soon, for I suspect that the Palestinians are one of the most denigrated and slighted groups in our contemporary world.

Alongside Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan, a current hot spot of violent conflict in the Middle East is Sudan, the scene of a very serious humanitarian and human rights crisis. Students and instructors who want to understand the conflict there and what underlies it can check out the in-depth piece "Dying in Darfur: Can the Ethnic Cleansing in Sudan Be Stopped?" from *The New Yorker* (August 30, 2004), also available online at [http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/?040830fa\\_fact1](http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/?040830fa_fact1). The article is based on extensive ground-level reporting by its author, veteran journalist **Samantha Power**, who is also Executive Director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard. •

## “Crossing Borders” Telecast

On January 24, 2004 I watched a C-Span television broadcast of “Crossing Borders,” the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual conference of the Key West Literary Society. The conference included a panel of immigrant American fiction writers, and their focus of discussion was the image of America in the world. I wanted to share a few of their comments.

Junot Diaz, author of *Drown*, teaches at MIT and is originally from the Dominican Republic. He said he is troubled by America’s self-image as “The City on the Hill,” in which American citizens see themselves as the chosen people. For that means that there are non-chosen people, and he noted: “What one can do with non-chosen people is endless.”

Eva Hoffman, whose Jewish family came to North America from Cracow, Poland when she was 14, has written the novel *The Secret* and a number of earlier works, including the memoir *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language*. She stated that the American dream is a projection, a fantasy, both from people inside and outside the United States. On the other hand, the counter-projection of America as the Darth Vader of the world is also a fantasy.

David Wong Louie, a Chinese-American writer born and raised in New York, teaches at UCLA. He commented that he equates mobility with transformation, in the sense that America is a place where people believe that they can recreate themselves. However, not all people can. With irony he described Sterling Lung, the main character of his sly coming-of-age novel *The Barbarians Are Coming*. Lung is an immigrant from China who seeks to recreate himself as a French chef. After much hard work and training at the likes of the Culinary Institute of America, in his mind he succeeds in becoming a French chef. The only problem is, the business that hires him wants him to cook Chinese food!

Elizabeth Nuñez, who is from Trinidad and has written *Grace* and other novels, teaches at CUNY Medgar Evers College. She said she believes strongly in the American dream of recreating oneself. She was able to transform herself from an escorted dependent woman in Trinidad to a professional independent American woman. “When my 20-year marriage fell apart here, I got a wonderful new life,” she said. “That would not have happened in Trinidad.” Her motto for America is: “The Americans will do something for you, but always for a price... Whatever you get in America, you have to work for it.”

The panel also included Andrei Codrescu, Bharati Mukherjee, Sandra Cisneros and others. In another segment of the conference, Amy Tan gave an hour-long presentation on her life that was soul-grabbing. More information can be found at the conference website, located at <http://www.keywestliteraryseminar.org/crossingborders/>.

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## Kudos

**Anna Maheshwari** (English) presented a talk sharing her curriculum development in English 102, “Internationalizing English Composition Courses,” at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Midwest Institute for International/ Intercultural Education (MIIE), held April 1-3, 2004 at St. Louis Community College-Forest Park in St. Louis, MO. Also attending the conference were **Josselyn Moore** (Sociology and Anthropology) and **Ida Simmons-Short** (English). See page 10 for Josselyn’s report.

**Josselyn Moore** (Sociology and Anthropology) made a Brown Bag Lunch presentation, “Diversity: Changes, Challenges and the Promise,” for employees at Trinity Health on July 28. Trinity Health is a faith-based (Catholic) health services provider operating in seven states, with corporate offices in Novi, MI. In her presentation, Josselyn addressed the increasing ethnic diversity in the U.S. and the increasing complexity of that diversity. She pointed out that globalization and the multicultural history of the U.S. make it important to learn to work with people from many different cultures. Because false assumptions and misunderstandings can result from people’s cultural generalizations, she offered suggestions for successful cross-cultural communication. Diversity, she explained, presents not only challenges but opportunities, for it can provide us with rich sources of information and adaptive strategies.

In mid-August, **Anna Maheshwari** (English) attended an additional round of International Workshops at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. These annual summer workshops, organized by MIIE, assist participants in developing curriculum modules related to cultural diversity. Several such modules already developed by Schoolcraft instructors are summarized in the collection *Internationalizing the Curriculum, Volume III*, a July 2004 publication compiled by MIIE Curriculum Director Theo Sypris. The book is available for review in Josselyn Moore’s office (LA 521), and an electronic version will be available starting this October. **Anna** contributed “A Multicultural Experience,” a set of individual and small-group activities in which English 101 students learn, write, and speak about issues related to Third World women such as arranged marriage, “bride burning,” the veil, polygamy, birth control, and female circumcision. **Diane O’Connell** (Geography) contributed “Management of International Water Resources,” a module of classroom lecture and discussion material for Geography 212 (Environmental Science) focusing on the Great Lakes basin as a water resource shared by the U.S. and Canada. **Ida Simmons-Short** (English) contributed “Cuban Culture: The New Frontier,” a set of individual and small-group activities in which Business Communication students learn, write, and speak about Cuban values, culture, and history. The book also includes module summaries from earlier years by **William Victor Hill** (German), “German Introductions and Greetings: Their Regional, Social, Political and Religious Implications” and by **Barbara Weiskopf** (Psychology), “Understanding Human Relations As It Affects International Business.”

**Josselyn Moore** (Sociology and Anthropology) and **Randy Schwartz** (Mathematics) wrote an article “Middle East Theme at Schoolcraft” that appeared in the Spring 2004 issue of *Midwest Connections*, the MIIE newsletter. The article summarizes the Winter launch of the SCII “Focus Middle East” project. •