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structure. The violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (40). This distinction provides a useful framework to understand the global phenomenon of violence against women (VAW). The dominant discourse surrounding women's experiences of violence is consistently framed as a direct form of violence perpetrated by pathological individuals from "deviant" families and oppressive cultures who inflict physical and psychological harm on women. This conceptualization ignores a wider pattern of systemic inequality and marginalization that disadvantages women and constrains their agency.

Over the past few decades, VAW campaigns have focused on providing services to victims of direct forms of violence such as intimate partner violence, rape, female genital mutilation, etc. through awareness, legislation, advocacy, and psychological services. While such intervention is extremely important, it is increasingly viewed as symptomatic relief from the consequences of structural oppression. Rather than an exclusive emphasis on the personal and interpersonal solutions, there should be a simultaneous focus on challenging the existing social order that perpetuates inequality and oppression of women. According to UN estimates, one in three women are victims of gender-based violence. It is the largest cause of injury and death to women, higher than deaths due to cancer, malaria, and war. More than 75% of the world's illiterate adults are women. Every 90 seconds, a woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth. Women make up 80% of all refugees and displaced people. Women account for only 16% of legislators in national parliaments. Finally, women are rarely represented in formal processes that aim to end violence and initiate peace. Overall, women are structurally disadvantaged when it comes to access to education, income, health, power, and decision-making. This structural inequality causes and promotes the more direct forms of violence that women experience.

In order to address the paucity of structural perspectives in mainstream understandings of violence against women, it is important to highlight the important contributions by feminist scholars. First, feminist researchers have argued that it is important to understand that oppression has no hierarchy. There are few pure oppressors and pure victims (Collins 2000), and we all are complicit to some degree to the various forms of violence and oppression in our society. Second, violence experienced by women is systemic and institutional and takes the form of a whole range of injustices such as extreme poverty, sexism, racism, colonialism, and other inequities whose legacies and realities cause equal or more harm than direct forms of violence. Third, we need to raise awareness of the experiences of women from various backgrounds--such as women with disabilities, immigrant women, LGBTQ women, etc.--to legitimate that violence is experienced differently by different groups of women and that gender is not the only reason behind their marginalized status. In other words, the women's movement needs to move beyond a focus on women's issues and fight actively against all forms of oppression. Finally, feminists argue that all forms of violence are gendered, and they emphasize the need for all resistance and peace movements to incorporate more gender awareness into their actions and campaigns.

Cited Works

- Collins, P. H. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). NY: Routledge.
- Galtung, Johan (1969). Violence, Peace and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol 6 (3), pp. 167-191.
- Anjana Narayan** is an Associate Professor of Sociology at California State Polytechnic University Pomona. Her areas of interest include race, gender, ethnicity, and migration. She is co-author of *Living Our Religions: Hindu and Muslims Asian American Women Narrate Their Experiences* (2009) and co-editor of *Research beyond Borders: Interdisciplinary Reflections* (2012); and *The Living Gandhi* (2013).

Ahimsa Student Club hosts A Dialogue with Donna Hill Tolerance in a Segregated State

January 30, 2017



Donna Hill taught at the Cleveland Humanities Magnet High School for more than three decades where she developed and

taught social studies curriculum that introduced students to important global issues, nonviolence philosophy, and the culture and history of the United States through the lens of class, race, and gender. She was a ahimsa fellow in the 2005 inaugural Institute hosted by the Center for K-12 educators on the theme of nonviolence and social change.

IN MEMORIAM



With much sadness we note the passing of **Mr. Pravin Mody** (1940–2016), one of the most enthusiastic and leading sponsors of the Ahimsa Center. He lived a great life, supporting many educational and humanitarian causes in U.S. and in India. His active engagement with ahimsa programs and initiatives will be sorely missed.

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ABOUT THE AHIMSA CENTER

Established in 2003 in the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, the Ahimsa Center is focused on interdisciplinary teaching and learning about nonviolence and its practical applications at personal, interpersonal, societal, national, and international levels. Educational and outreach initiatives of the Center facilitate an understanding of ahimsa as a positive force informing the ways of thinking as well as living.

The Center provides an institutional forum to innovatively serve and foster synergistic interactions among many important stakeholders in higher education, K-12 education, and the community at large.

Educational initiatives of the Center, such as the interdisciplinary Minor in Nonviolence Studies on our campus, help students understand nonviolence and nonviolent social change at intellectual and practical levels and in a global context.

To integrate in the K-12 curricula an interdisciplinary understanding of nonviolence and nonviolent social change, the Center has launched a fellowship program for the K-12 educators and offers summer institutions for them. Finally, for the benefits of the larger community, the Center organizes conferences, symposia, lectures, dialogues, workshops, and special events focusing on a deeper understanding of nonviolence as a way of life.

The Center is playing a pioneering role by fostering a vision in which each individual is an important player in the building and sustaining a culture of nonviolence. It is a vision for cooperation and collaboration among fellow human beings on the basis of mutual respect, trust, and self restraint. It is a vision where one sees that any violence inflicted on others is a violence inflicted on oneself.

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India@Seventy International Conference Building a More Inclusive Democracy Cal Poly Pomona, November 3-5, 2017

Join us in the celebration and deliberation of India's seventy years as an independent nation. And there is much to celebrate—above all, India's democracy, the

world's largest and the most diverse, which not only remains solid and secure at the political level in spite of the challenges it has encountered since its inception, but has also ushered in substantial progress on many fronts. And yet, in what seems like a real paradox, serious concerns about the future of democracy in India are readily discernible. The goals of this conference are to:

- Confirmed Conference Speakers**
- **Amit Ahuja.** Associate Professor of Political Science, UCSB
 - **Rajni Bakshi.** Author & Gandhi Peace Fellow at the Gateway House, India.
 - **Rajmohan Gandhi.** Author, Peace-builder, and Grandson of the Mahatma.
 - **Akhil Gupta.** Director, Center for India & South Asia; Prof. of Anthropology, UCLA.
 - **John Harriss.** Professor, School of International Studies, Simon Fraser University.
 - **Niraja Jayal.** Professor, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, JNU, India.
 - **Devesh Kapur.** Director Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI) and the Madan Lal Sobti Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania.
 - **Prakash Kashwan.** Assistant Professor, Political Science, University of Connecticut.
 - **Aishwary Kumar.** Assistant Professor of History, Stanford University.
 - **Vinay Lal.** Professor of History & Asian American Studies, UCLA.
 - **Vijay Mahajan.** Founder of BASIX Group for promoting the livelihood of the poor.
 - **Karuna Mantena.** Associate Professor, Political Science, Yale University.
 - **Eleanor Newbiggin.** Senior Lecturer in History, SOAS, University of London.
 - **Anastasia Piliavsky.** Fellow and Director of Studies in Social Anthropology at Girton College, Cambridge University.
 - **Aruna Roy.** Social and Political activist, Founder of the movement leading to the Right to Information Act in India.
 - **Ornit Shani,** Senior Lecturer, Modern Asian Studies, University of Haifa, Israel.
 - **Prerna Singh.** Mahatma Gandhi Assistant Prof of Political Science, Brown University.
 - **Mrinalini Sinha.** Alice Freeman Palmer Professor of History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
 - **Ananya Vajpeyi.** Associate Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, India.

- Examine the dynamics of popular commitment to democracy and the roots of disillusionment with it;
- Explore the ways of strengthening democracy through radical innovations in the delivery of public goods;
- Identify strategies for actively engaging various stakeholders in the actual workings of democracy aimed at making it more inclusive in nature; and
- Deliberate on larger questions such as: Given the challenges democracy faces in today's world, what are the lessons *for* India? And given India's unique experiences as the world's largest and most diverse democracy, what are the lessons *from* India?

Around the world, democracy today faces a crisis of confidence. By properly marshalling the power of deliberation among its rich and extraordinary diverse population, India can build a truly inclusive democracy at home and also help resurrect faith in democracy abroad.

For more information contact: tsethia@cpp.edu or visit:
<http://www.cpp.edu/~ahimsacenter/conference/India@Seventy.shtml>