

Peace and Conflict Studies Program

Humanities and Western Civilization Program

The University of Kansas



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Program Events

Last spring, the program was pleased to host distinguished scholars in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies. In March, **Cecelia Lynch**, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of California, Irvine, offered the presentation “Turning the Lens Inward, Tensions in Christian Ethics on Violence in the 20th Century.” In April, **David Barash**, Professor of Psychology at the University of Washington, gave the annual Peace and Conflict Studies Lecture

titled “Payback: Why we Retaliate, Seek Revenge, and Redirect Aggression . . . And What We Can Do About It.” Stay tuned for more details about our PCS lecture next April, when we will welcome **Simon Dalby**, who is Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University. Dr. Dalby will speak on issues related to security and the environment.

New Faces/ New Roles

We are pleased to introduce some new faces to the PCS program! This fall, three new members joined the PCS steering committee: Drs. Christina Lux, Shannon O’Lear, and Kathryn Conrad, all of whom are active researchers in topics related to Peace and Conflict Studies.

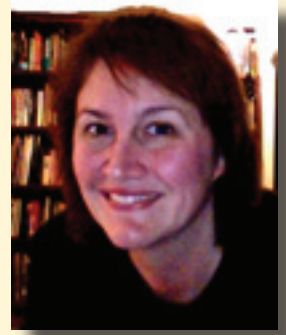
Christina Lux is Assistant Director of the Kansas African Studies Center. Dr. Lux’s research focuses on contemporary literature of peace and conflict (1975-present) from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean. She has secondary interests in multilingual North American literature and the translation of race and gender. She has published on Ahmadou Kourouma’s novel *Allah is not Obligated*. Dr. Lux also works as a poet and translator of literary texts.



Dr. O’Lear at the University of Amsterdam in September, where she gave a talk on her research about

Shannon O’Lear is an Associate Professor at the University of Kansas. She has appointments in the Department of Geography and the Environmental Studies Program and is affiliated with the university’s Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. She teaches courses on Environmental Policy, Environmental Geopolitics, Geopolitics of Russia & Eurasia, Geography of Genocide, and Introductory Human Geography. Her region of research is the South Caucasus. She has published articles on border issues in the South Caucasus, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, territorial conflict, and genocide. She recently completed a book titled *Environmental Politics: Scale and Power* with Cambridge University Press. Dr. O’Lear is a Board member on an Armenian Partnership Project with the Kansas National Guard, and she regularly gives briefings at the Air Force Special Operations Command Center at Hurlburt Field, Florida. She has received a Kemper Teaching Award and has served as a Faculty Fellow at the Center for Teaching Excellence.

Kathryn Conrad is Associate Professor in KU's English Department. Her interest in peace and conflict studies arises from her study of the literature, culture, and politics of Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Although her research and teaching spans the UK and Ireland and the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries, much of Professor Conrad's research in recent years has focused on the changing political landscape in Northern Ireland. Among other topics, she has explored the implications of photography in Northern Ireland, particularly regarding the popular photojournalistic and tourist practice of photographing political wall murals, in order to suggest the ways in which the Northern Ireland political environment has been shaped, and reproduced, by representational technologies. She has also used public sphere theory to consider alternatives to the "two-community" model of politics that dominates Northern Irish political discourse. More recently, she has become interested in the politics of surveillance. Like much of her work, it has arisen out of her research in Northern Ireland, but it has brought her to cyberspace to explore the risks surveillance and dataveillance poses to biological bodies. Students in the PCS program will likely be interested to know about Professor Conrad's work with Queen's University, Belfast and the Office of Study Abroad to make the QUB Irish Studies summer program available for KU undergraduates. She describes it as a "wonderful, multidisciplinary program that helps students understand Ireland through the lens of Northern Ireland and particularly the history of the "Troubles."

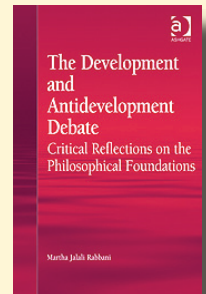


Marike Janzen, lecturer in the Humanities and Western Civilization Program as well as in the PCS program, is now also serving as PCS coordinator. As coordinator, Dr. Janzen will advise students seeking a minor and graduate certificate in the program, and work with PCS director, Sandra Zimdars-Swartz, on program-related administrative duties.



Faculty Research Updates

Congratulations to **Martha Rabbani**, lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies, on the publication of her book, *The Development and Antidevelopment Debate: Critical Reflections on the Philosophical Foundations* (Ashgate Press, April 2011). Dr. Rabbani's work offers a critical investigation of both modern "development and anti-development" discourses, and offers solutions for moving beyond what she views as their unproductive requirement of "non-interference" towards the possibility of establishing "relations of universal inclusion and global friendship."



Congratulations to **Cristian Dmitriu**, lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies, who received a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship from the National Scientific and Technological Research Council of Argentina in May, 2011. Dr. Dmitriu studies global justice theory from a philosophical perspective, and is especially interested in the ethics of international finance. With the support of this fellowship, he plans to research the connection between the concept of odious debts and accounts of collective responsibility. Odious Debts are debts that are not binding for the citizens of a nation, because rulers used them for private purposes. Dr. Dmitriu tries to show that such debts are not binding by clarifying the conditions that need to exist in order for a group to be collectively responsible for what their rulers did in their name. In his research, he will also try to understand the implication of odious debts in broader theories of global justice, such as those that explore the duties that wealthy countries have to poor ones, or philosophical accounts of human rights.

This past summer, PCS colleagues engaged in international peace-building projects. At the invitation of the U.S. State Department, **Christina Lux** served as a Cultural Envoy to Brazzaville, Congo from June 6-18, 2011. Dr. Lux led intensive workshops on writing peace and conflict for 37 Congolese youth (writers, actors, activists, and students). The International University of Brazzaville generously hosted the group for the first week of the workshop and the U.S. embassy hosted the group for the second week of sessions. Dr. Maryemma Graham, the author Véronique Tadjó, and the editor Angela Ajayi skyped in to Brazzaville for Q + A with the participants. On the final day, the group participated in a service-learning project at the Brazzaville School for the Deaf. Since Dr. Lux's departure, she has maintained a virtual writing workshop and the participants are preparing to publish a book-length volume of their writing.



In July, 2011, **Martha Rabbani** led a three-day workshop on “Education for Peace and Nonviolence” at the Dr. Masoud Jalali Educational Center in Aracaju, Brazil. The initiative had support from the Department of Education’s “Commission for the Prevention of Violence in Schools,” which helped to facilitate the attendance of 82 public school teachers and principals at the workshop. A primary aim of the event was to explore how theories of non-violence could inform educational methods.

For more information on Dr. Rabbani's work in Brazil, see <http://www.aracaju.se.gov.br/index.php?act=leitura&codigo=46644>



What are they up to now?

We are always delighted to learn what PCS alums pursue after they earn their minor or graduate certificate in the program. **Andrea Kalish**, who received a graduate certificate in PCS in 2010, is now continuing her graduate studies with the hopes of working in the field of peace and conflict studies. Andrea writes, “The PCS grad course I took at KU was a highlight of my graduate studies, and it was what inspired me to pursue further studies in the humanities. In addition to studying for a J.D. at KU Law, I am also a Master's student in the Global and International Studies program at KU. While in the PCS program I focused my studies on the establishment and rehabilitation of identity and its legal conception in post-conflict situations. The PCS program inspired me to continue my studies, with an emphasis again on post-conflict development, and in particular, on the nexus of post-conflict social, legal and environmental rehabilitation.”

Send us your news! Messages can be directed to Marike Janzen, mjanzen@ku.edu

Offered by the Humanities & Western Civilization Program, Peace & Conflict Studies is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to the study of human conflict. It examines the origins and nature of conflict within and among societies and the various ways in which humans address conflict. Through academic coursework and the possibility of practical experience, Peace & Conflict Studies offers students a concentrated program of study of one of the most central and urgent human issues: the causes and consequences of human conflict and the achievements and possibilities of building peaceful and equitable forms of social existence. An undergraduate minor in Peace & Conflict Studies was inaugurated in the spring semester of 2003.

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