



Institute of World Culture

IWC April 2008 Newsletter

"Everything that man accomplishes or does, that he teaches or wants to learn, must have its right proportion."

Pico della Mirandola

Thinking Locally, Acting Globally

A familiar message inviting conscientious citizenship in a new "world order" is the mantra ***Think Globally, Act Locally***. The suggestion appeals to our ethical sympathies stirred by media images of starvation and violence in far away places and reinforces proclamations of global interdependence as the new reality of life on Planet Earth. Thinking globally is thought to be thinking realistically because it requires us to think holistically and take account of the complex chain of interaction that binds all life. We learn this way when we realize how our health and prosperity depends upon a world-wide system for distributing resources. Thinking globally is seen as an ethical approach to life on earth because global perspectives will evoke recognition of universal principles of justice and motivate us to "do something" for the common good. In addition, thinking globally is attractive because it is free and immediately accessible. Nothing or no one can stop you from using a grand trip of the mind to circumvent the globe.

However, the challenge to thinking globally is, of course, the difficulty of developing knowledge of the world and its web of interdependence. How daunting is this task? How limited is our information? Water shortages created by drought we might understand as a source of a refugee crisis. How do we know that the starvation in Darfur is linked also to the Chinese government which is developing enormous power within the world economy in a way that can affect our ability to secure an automobile loan? Thinking globally is tough and is made more difficult by the unpredictable changes that sweep through the human and natural world in a matter of hours. How can we think out a stable analysis of global reality if its truth can be fundamentally altered by the "breaking news" created in minutes by the actions of a few of its six plus billion human citizens?

Therefore is recommended the value of acting locally. Change your own life style, we are told, and do what you can in your local community. In your familiar orbit of daily life, you can see what to do and more easily muster sufficient power to make the changes that are needed to ameliorate problems. You don't have to be a world traveler or student of world history to be a responsible citizen of the world. Like thinking globally, acting locally is immediately accessible and may be less costly in the use of resources. The challenge is to find ways to make change that do indeed connect to global problems. Helping to maintain a local food bank is commendable and needed, but as we donate our boxes of canned goods are we not simply extending the reach of corporate food giants? Have we tried growing and eating local food? Does biking to work affect the enormous increase in automobile use in China and India? Will acting locally become just another way of cocooning in a parochial righteousness?

(Continued below.)

COMING EVENTS



Can Civil Society Prevail?

Reports from Europe, Kosovo, Iran and Other Nations

Seminar: Saturday, April 5, 2008

2:00 – 5:00 pm

Concord House, 1407 Chapala St, Santa Barbara

Many global and local social change initiatives are being conducted that escape or are distorted by news media sound bytes. **UCSB Global Studies graduate students** will offer us glimpses from many parts of the world about how civil society initiatives are enhancing human well-being despite challenges of the status quo. These students are sharing their first hand experiences as well as their knowledge of development in a global context. Question and answer dialogue will follow the presentations. For information, please contact Maurice Bisheff at 805/ 455-9552.



Dr. Vandana Shiva

Dr. Shiva, a global campaigner for a sustainable planet and recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, will be making several appearances in Santa Barbara.

Friday, April 25, 2008, 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Recreating the Commons in a Globalized World

UCSB Student Resources Building (located between Humanities Bldg., the Events Center, and the Faculty Club)

A short talk and dialogue with UCSB faculty and students.

Park in Faculty Club or Events Center lot. No cost.

Contact BJ Danetra: bjdanetra@bren.ucsb.edu

Seminar: Reclaiming the Commons

Saturday, April 26, 2008

2:00 – 5:00 pm

Concord House, 1407 Chapala St., Santa Barbara

Dr. Shiva, a global campaigner for a sustainable planet and recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, will speak about reclaiming the commons, and give examples of her current work.

Members only. Limited seating/ reservations required. Contact Carolyn Dorrance, 967-1055. Cost: \$10

Saturday, April 26, 2008, 7:30 pm

Peace, Justice and Sustainability

Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library

40 East Anapamu, Santa Barbara

A public talk and discussion. No cost.

Contact Philip Grant: grant45@hotmail.com

Vandana Shiva's lectures are sponsored by SBEEC. Special thanks to the following donors: The UCSB Bren School, The Santa Barbara City College Center for Sustainability, The W.H. Capps Foundation, The Institute of World Culture, La Casa de Maria Retreat Center, & The Institute of Reverential Ecology



Study Group: Poetry and Vision

2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month

8:00 – 9:30 pm, Concord House, 1407 Chapala St., Santa Barbara

We will look at Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*. "*Song of Myself* is by far the greatest poem ever written by an American. At each rereading I feel exhilarated, as if for the first time, by its freshness and breadth of vision, its bodiliness, its high spirits, its astonishing empathy, by the freedom and goofiness and dignity of its language, and, not least, by its spiritual insight. It is a miracle of a poem." – Stephen Mitchell

"My own tribute to Walt would be this: that it is not necessary to read very much of him or very often—once you get the idea. But at least once in any civilized lifetime he is likely to be . . . the most important of all reading. None can foresee when the emergency may arise." – Christopher Morley

The poem is available online at: http://www.princeton.edu/~batke/logr/log_026.html

Schedule of Reading

April 10 Sections 1-15

April 24 Sections 16-30

Please see the IWC webpage to print out a full schedule of readings.

Contact joe@worldculture.org for more information.

Think Globally, Act Locally (Continued from above.)

An impressive application of the prescription to think globally and act locally can be found in the agricultural projects in India supported by Vandana Shiva. These local projects do not stop her dynamic analysis of global interdependence and her continuing critiques of destructive globalization. It is expected that when she speaks in Santa Barbara at the end of this month she will give a cogent update on the current challenges to "eco-sufficiency" on a world-wide scale. Her message of and practical experiments in local self-sufficiency indicate that a deeper and broader type of thinking is now needed at the local level. Those with a well-thought out approach to local sustainability agree. Conservation of resources by individuals is not enough. Comprehensive redesign of the way we provide food supplies, housing, water, transportation, to name a few basic needs, is required if affordable and sustainable communities are to flourish. Stefan Polyzoides, a recent speaker in Santa Barbara (see IWC Newsletter for March) captures this vision of local redesign in the concept of "New Urbanism." Acting locally to be globally responsible is not just the task of the earnest few. Government agencies, banks, architects and builders need to be active partners in rethinking and planning sustainable communities. Whole neighborhoods need to become models of responsible living. Also, citizens need to redesign their psychological expectations of desirable life styles so that they might contribute to greater parity among the world's peoples in the use of resources.

Interesting was the point made by Stefan Polyzoides that in the first half of the 20th century, communities in southern California "naturally" developed in healthy social and environmental patterns. However, boxed in, linear thinking implemented with a blind attachment to the freeway and the automobile destroyed that health. Trapped we became in urban messes magnified by massive dependency on a global economy. Trucks filled with containers shipped from Asia compete for scarce freeway space with commuters seeking refuge in distant suburbs. Both consume millions of gallons of imported gasoline each year. An emerging competition between food and fuel for the grains of the American breadbaskets reinforces the import of food products from South America to be consumed by those who can still afford a nutritional diet. The connection between local and global is so complex and immediate that thinking locally quickly becomes an education in global interdependence.

Thus the effort to rethink our patterns of local living and develop "eco-sufficient" communities can lead to actions that are simultaneously global in impact. We become citizens of the world by becoming citizens of healthy communities. Understanding the principles and facts reflected in local planning can give insights into the principles and facts reflected in the world community. The near enters into the far. Local thinking can provide an effective alternative to the globalization structured by highly centralized organizations pursuing interests in ways destructive to healthy communities.

Carolyn Dorrance, President, Institute of World Culture

Looking Forward: Save Saturday, May 17th, for “Hawaiian Creation Mythology,” a lecture-demonstration, 1:00 – 4:00, at Concord House, and “Hi’iaka: Journey of a Goddess,” a dance performance, 7:30 – 9:30 pm, at Fe Bland Forum, Santa Barbara City College. Kumu Kehaulani Kekoa will give these, in addition to classes and workshops. Please check the IWC website for details about related events.

In April

Anniversaries

- 1st Confucius d. 479 B.C.E.
William Harvey 1578
- 2nd Charlemagne 743
Hans Christian Andersen 1805
Sergei Rachmaninoff 1872
- 3rd Washington Irving 1783
- 4th Martin Luther King, Jr. d. 1968
- 5th Raphael 1483
Joseph Lister 1827
Booker T. Washington 1856
- 6th Ashoka 270 B.C.E.
- 7th William Wordsworth 1770
- 8th Hugo von Mohl 1805
- 9th Charles Baudelaire 1821
- 10th Hugho Grotius 1583
George William Russell 1867
Paul Robeson 1898
- 13th Thomas Jefferson 1743
- 14th Christiaan Huygens 1629
Arnold Toynbee 1889
Shri Ramana Maharshi d. 1950
- 15th Leonardo da Vinci 1452
Leonhard Euler 1707
- 16th Anatole France 1844
Charles Chaplin 1889
- 17th Thornton Wilder 1897
- 18th David Ricardo 1823
- 21st Peter Abelard 1079
John Muir 1838
Max Weber 1864
- 22nd Immanuel Kant 1724
Vladimir Lenin 1870
- 23rd William Shakespeare 1564 & d. 1616
Miguel Cervantes d. 1616
Max Planck 1858

- Serge Prokofiev 1891
24th Edmund Cartwright 1743
25th William the Silent 1533
Oliver Cromwell 1599
Guglielmo Marconi 1874
26th Marcus Aurelius 121
David Hume 1711
John James Audubon 1785
27th Edward Gibbon 1737
Samuel F. B. Morse 1791
Herbert Spencer 1820
28th Kurt Godel 1906
29 C. P. Cavafy 1863 & d. 1933
30th Carl Friedrich Gauss 1777

Observances

April

- 5th British Museum founded 1753
6th Hindu New Year
Robert Perry reached the North Pole 1909
7th World Health Day
12th Yuri Gagarin, First Space Traveller 1961
14th Ramanavami (Rama's Nativity)
16th Abu Simbel Restoration 1966
18th Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
19th Pesach (Jewish Passover)
20th Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)
Theravadin New Year (Buddhist)
Palm Sunday (Orthodox Christian)
Radium isolated by Madame Curie 1902
Earth Day
24th Discovery of micro-organisms by van Leeuwenhoek 1676
Library of Congress established 1800
25th Discovery of DNA structure by Watson & Crick 1953
29th Discovery of electron by J. J. Thompson 1897

General Information

Website

Please check the Institute website for more information on this year's coming programs:
<http://www.worldculture.org>

PRISM Online Community Calendar

PRISM lists member-recommended community events of interest on the IWC website.
If you wish to contribute a listing for a local or regional community event of interest, please e-mail donna@worldculture.org so it can be considered for inclusion in PRISM.

eNewsletter

If you'd like to contribute to the eNewsletter, please send your ideas to gerry@worldculture.org for consideration.

Membership and Donation Information

Individual Membership \$35
Individual Student Membership \$15
Individual Supporting Membership \$70
Individual Sustaining Membership \$350

To join the Institute, please e-mail memberships@worldculture.org.
The Institute of World Culture is a non-profit 501(c)3 educational organization dedicated to the principles of universal fellowship and life-long learning. It relies solely on the support of its members. Donations to the Institute of World Culture are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible.

Volunteer Efforts

The Institute offers its programs by means of voluntary efforts.
Please contact carolyn@worldculture.org if you'd like to volunteer.

Institute of World Culture

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