



# Institute of World Culture

## IWC September 2007 Newsletter

### Finding Courage



Carolyn Dorrance (above)

At the IWC Seminar on August 25th, six presenters offered examples of *Courageous Women of Conscience*. The variety of time, place and purpose reflected in the lives of the women presented did not obscure some common observations about their courageous use of conscience. Anne Hutchinson, Jeannette Rankin, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mary Parker Follett, Aung San Suu Kyi, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and our very present participant, Fariba Enteshari, all demonstrated similar qualities in facing challenges to their goals. Creative thought with commitment to principles was the starting point of their endeavors. Since conscience is founded upon a knowledge of right and wrong, its use requires the thoughtful application of ethical principles such as non-violence and tolerance in very hostile situations. These women showed that the courage to confront corruption and authoritarian institutions is nourished by ethics.

Seminar participants agreed that this use of the mind must be combined with a deeply felt empathy for human beings, and indeed for all of life. The lives of the women presented showed that they cared for others and envisioned a better society than the one in which they lived. Extreme human suffering was not inevitable, as is sometimes argued by those lacking in courage. Whether they faced the brutality of a military dictatorship, as did Burmese activist Suu Kyi, or



the deadness of organizations that Mary Parker Follett sought to reform, women of courage and conscience inspire others with a spirit that is vital, creative, universal and all-pervasive. Thereby, they defy stereotypes of weakness and provide leadership and for some, a teacher or guide provided the wisdom or method for choosing what needed to be done. Fariba Enteshari (shown at left) described how the Sufi poet Rumi gave

metaphors and stories that helped her find a way through three alien countries and the study of difficult scientific subjects in foreign languages until she found a surprising calling as a teacher of Sufi texts. Sowing seeds of spiritual reformation in a very material universe is a challenge she shares with the grand Russian lady of the 19th century, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. We learned that becoming a voice of universal recognition of many religions, mythologies, philosophies and scientific approaches requires the courage to withstand the attacks of those seeking uncritical protection of dogmas and self-serving, authoritarian institutions.

The accomplishments of dauntless women provide a rich and flourishing source of inspiration, such the days when Anne Hutchinson stood alone in a Massachusetts court defending her understanding of the Bible. Whether standing up for religious liberty or saying no to war, as Jeannette Rankin did, these fearless pioneers of conscience inspire us to seek the instantiation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* that Eleanor Roosevelt successfully promoted in the face of formidable opposition from self-interested governments. In keeping with the Institute of World Culture's aim "to honour through appropriate observance the contributions of men and women of all ages to world culture," surely our best means of honouring these courageous women of conscience would be to emulate them by finding our own courage.

~ Carolyn Dorrance, President of the Institute of World Culture

## **COMING EVENTS**

### **ANNUAL MEETING & BRAINSTORMING**

#### **for the 2008 Program**

**Saturday, September 15**

**7:30-9:00 pm**

**Concord House, 1407 Chapala Street**

The following letter is an invitation to Institute members to attend the annual meeting and brainstorming session. If you would like to become a member, the cost is \$35 annually (please see "Membership" at the end of the newsletter for details). If you are not a member, but have suggestions for the program, please send them to [carolyn@worldculture.org](mailto:carolyn@worldculture.org), or mail to IWC, Concord House, 1407 Chapala St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101, Attn: 2008 Program. A suggestion form is attached.

Dear Members,

On **Saturday, September 15, at 7:30 pm**, members are cordially invited to the Institute of World Culture's annual brainstorming session. Our theme for 2008 centers on "the imaginative use of the spiritual, mental and material resources of the globe," from Aim 7. As a group of highly innovative thinkers and doers, the Institute's membership has always generated a program of tremendous cultural breadth and depth. We are counting on you again this year to help the IWC Board develop the 2008 program.

Kindly consider a program offering that you yourself could contribute to, from a seminar to a book forum, from leading an outing to presenting a film. Share with us a talent, a life-long interest or area of expertise that you have already cultivated. We have members whose talents and knowledge are too well hidden and could benefit all the rest of us!

Alternatively, you could choose a topic that you would like to pursue and present to us, even if the subject matter is not one in which you have formal training in academia or the professional world. Your education at the Institute uniquely qualifies you to take up a new study, examine the topic from a culturally-rounded perspective, from a deeper than merely intellectual basis. You can thereby make a presentation that shows the topic's relevance to world culture and demonstrates its application to a richer human experience of life.

If you haven't given a presentation at the Institute for several years, or perhaps ever, please consider doing so. Remember that the Institute is devoted to lifelong learning. Everyone who has made a presentation at the Institute over the years has invariably found their educational growth to be profound. So challenge yourself, and treat the rest of us!

We also need your help in finding outside speakers to visit the Institute and or cultural events that we might attend. Many fine speakers and outings have been chosen in years past. It would be particularly helpful this year if you could contact your suggested speakers in advance to get a sense of their interest in making a presentation to the IWC and the time of year when they might be available. Many calendars of 2008 cultural activities exist. Your research into specific events and dates of availability would be appreciated. The Institute is returning to the practice of planning the entirety of next year's activities before the close of this year.

We look forward to and count on your contributions to next year's program planning.

Sincerely yours,  
Renée Tillotson, IWC Board Member

## **Seminar: *Developing Deep Democracy***

**Saturday, September 22**

**2:00-5:00 pm**

**Concord House, 1407 Chapala Street**

**Presenters: Drs. Philip Grant and Maurice Bisheff**

A multi-faceted dialogue will explore how the inner development of individuals can help create an ethical, sustainable and democratic community. Drs. Philip Grant and Maurice Bisheff will lead discussion and review the concept and possible development of "deep democracy." Current readings will be distributed, and contributions encouraged from all seminar participants so that a vision of the "society of the future" may emerge. Contact Maurice Bisheff at 455-9552 or [maurice@west.net](mailto:maurice@west.net) for more information and copies of the readings selected.



(Left) Photo of those who decided TO BE...at Hamlet at the Old Globe Theater in San Diego on the IWC outing in August.

## **Study Groups**

All meetings take place at Concord House, 1407 Chapala St., Santa Barbara

### **A Republic of Reason**

**Monday, September 10 and 24**

**\*\* Note change of meeting day\*\***

**8:00-9:30 pm**

Discussion of Al Gore's new book, ***Assault on Reason***, continues with a focus on Chapters 7 & 8. The possibilities of constructive and effective citizenship will be explored. Contact Carolyn

Dorrance at 967-1055 or [carolyn@worldculture.org](mailto:carolyn@worldculture.org) for more information.

## **Stories and Poems of Transformation**

**2nd Thursday, September 13**

**8:00-9:30 pm**

The use of **comedy** to highlight the **challenges of human experience** will be the focus of study this month. Participants are encouraged to bring an example of how a poem or story contributes to transformation through the use of

comedy. Contact Joseph Miller at 967-7263 or [Daylight137@msn.com](mailto:Daylight137@msn.com) for more information.

## Inspiration in Contemporary Music

**4th Thursday, September 27**

**8:00-9:30 pm**

The theme of this month's class is **Joni Mitchell on art and poetry**. Conversation about the aims and musical styles of this singer-songwriter is supplemented by listening to the music of the artist. Contact Gerry Kiffe at 376-2852 or [gerry@gardensoft.com](mailto:gerry@gardensoft.com) for more information.

## In September

### Anniversaries

- 3rd *Code Napoleon* 1807
- 4th Pindar 518 BCE  
Chateaubriand 1768
- 6th Jane Addams 1860
- 7th August Kekule 1929
- 8th Robert Fludd d. 1637
- 9th Luigi Galvani 1737  
Leo Tolstoy 1828
- 10th Charles Sanders Peirce 1839
- 14th Dante Alighiere d. 1321
- 16th Tintoretto 1518
- 17th Queen Elizabeth I 1533
- 18th Tulsidas 1532  
Samuel Johnson 1709
- 20th Romulus, founder of Rome 756 BCE  
Alexander the Great 356 BCE
- 21st Louis Joliet 1645  
Kwame Nkrumah 1909
- 22nd Michael Faraday 1791
- 24th Paracelsus d. 1541
- 25th Dmitri Shostakovich 1906
- 26th T.S. Eliot 1888
- 28th Confucius c. 551 BCE  
Friedrich Engels 1820
- 29th Euripides 480 BCE  
Miguel de Unamuno 1864  
Enrico Fermi 1901
- 30th Jalal al-din Rumi 1207

## **Observances**

### *September*

- 2nd Adoption of a new calendar 1752
- 3th Labour Day
- 8th World Literacy Day
- 10th Grecian calendar begins 312 BCE
- 13th Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)  
Ramadan begins  
Dedication of Jupiter temple (Roman)
- 15th Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)  
Respect for the Aged Day (Japan)
- 16th Discovery of Saturn's moon *Hyperion* 1848
- 17th Citizenship Day  
Discovery of Saturn's moon *Mimas* 1789
- 21st Ancient Egyptian Persian, Phoenician New Year
- 22nd Yom Kippur (Jewish Day of Atonement)  
Blessed Rainy Day (Bhutan)
- 23rd Autumnal Equinox  
Discovery of Neptune (Galle & d'Arrest) 1846
- 28th American Indian Day
- 30th First photograph of nebula in Orion 1880

## **More about the IWC**

### **Website**

Please check the Institute website for more information on the year's 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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. For those of you wishing to make an enduring contribution to IWC, have you considered providing for IWC in your estate plan or gift planning?

### **Volunteer Efforts**

The Institute offers its programs by means of voluntary efforts.  
Please contact [carolyn@worldculture.org](mailto:carolyn@worldculture.org) if you wish to volunteer.