

Macalester's 17th Annual International Roundtable

St. Paul, Minn. - Macalester College presents its 17th annual International Roundtable titled, "My Sister's and Brother's Keeper? Human Rights in the Era of Globalization," Thu. - Sat., Oct. 7 - 9, 2010, in the Ruth Stricker Dayton Campus Center, John B. Davis Lecture Hall, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, Minn.

The roots of the recognition of the sacred value of other human beings are as old as the ancient edicts of major religious revelations as well as the birth of secularism. For instance, Hinduism and its texts, stress the obligation to feel for, in a selfless fashion, the pain suffered by others; the Torah underscores the central imperative that accompanies the axiom that each human being is a unit of an indivisible family; Buddhism asserts solidarity with each person in the face of life's painful tribulations; Christianity teaches the pivotal value of empathy and service to others; Islam emphasizes mercy and the inviolability of life; and the perspective of modern secularist thought has congealed around "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights," whose core is a firm stand against discrimination of all types.

Notwithstanding such rich and widely distributed ethos, both the deep past and, more relevantly, the contemporary epoch are replete with cruelties that have jettisoned and continuously defied those capital religious and secular instructions. Moreover, if our phase of globalization is typified by a dense interlocking of universalism *and* difference, the challenge of defining, promoting, and protecting the rights of others becomes even more complex.

With this backdrop, the Roundtable discussions will revolve around the following questions:

- What are the *main* human rights concerns for the 21st century?
- What are the primary forces (and contexts) responsible for (congenial to) these issues, and why?
- In what specific ways could human rights be advanced and by whom?

This year's participants include:

• **Philip Alston**, the John Norton Pomeroy Professor of Law, New York University School of Law and, for 2010–11, the James Barr Ames Visiting Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, whose talk is titled "*Of Witches and Robots: Combating Unlawful Killings in the 21st Century.*" (4:30 p.m., Thu., Oct. 7).

• **Rebecca Cook**, chair in International Human Rights Law and co-director of the International Programme on Reproductive and Sexual Health Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, whose talk is titled "*Structures of Discrimination.*" (9:30 a.m., Fri., Oct. 8).

• **James von Geldern**, professor and chair, Russian Studies, and professor of International Studies, Macalester College, whose talk is titled "*International Criminal Justice: Growing Pains or Incurable Contradictions?*" (1:30 p.m., Fri., Oct. 8).

The Roundtable will conclude with a discussion featuring **Philip Alston, Rebecca Cook, and James von Geldern.** (10 a.m., Sat., Oct. 9).

The Roundtable begins at **4:30 p.m., Thu., Oct. 7**, with opening remarks by Macalester President **Brian Rosenberg** and James Wallace Professor and Dean of the Institute for Global Citizenship **Ahmed I. Samatar**. Additional speakers include **Macalester faculty, staff, and students.**

The Macalester International Roundtable is held every October on campus. A community-wide intellectual forum, the Roundtable explores crucial global issues with prominent international scholars who are also commissioned to write major papers that are presented at Macalester and published in the *Macalester International Journal*.

Previous Roundtables have featured:

- 1994 The International Community and the Emerging World (Dis) Order
- 1995 Literature, the Creative Imagination, and Globalization
- 1996 The Divided Self: Ethnicity, Identity, and Globalization
- 1997 Nature, People, and Globalization
- 1998 Globalization and Economic Space
- 1999 Contending Gods: Religion and the Global Moment
- 2000 International Feminisms: Divergent Perspectives
- 2001 The Body: Meditations on Global Health
- 2002 Prometheus's Bequest: Technology and Change
- 2003 Complex Contradictions: African, American, and Middle Eastern Perspectives
- 2004 America and Global Power: Empire or . . . ?
- 2005 Quixotic Offspring: The Global Legacy of *Don Quixote*
- 2006 The United Nations Organization (UNO): What Future?
- 2007 The Musical Imagination in the Epoch of Globalization
- 2008 Whither Development? The Struggle for Livelihood in the Time of Globalization
- 2009 Global Environment: The Eleventh Hour?

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 1,958 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism and civic engagement.

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