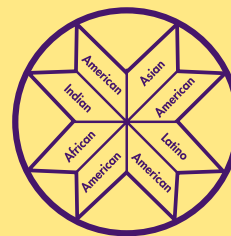


Ethnic Diversity Newsletter



DEPARTMENT OF ETHNIC STUDIES

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1 — SPRING, 2007

Faculty Accomplishments.....p. 2	Sustainable School in S. Africa (cont.).....p. 5
Mahkato Wacipi & Mount Rushmore.....p. 3	Ethnic Studies and Nepali Dance.....p. 6
Faculty Perspective: Sustainable School in S. Africa....p. 4	Nepali Dance, Ethnic Studies Picnic & Editors.....p. 7

A Letter from the Chair

Luis Posas, Ph.D
Department Chair of Ethnic Studies

The Department of Ethnic Studies has completed the evaluation aspects of the Program Review process. According to the external reviewer the department stands on a “solid footing.” Presently, we are working on the final details of the strategic plan for the next five years which will include some of the Program Reviewer’s recommendations. Additionally, the external reviewer sees our department playing a significant role in the future when “the changing demographics in the state in general and southern Minnesota in particular will require MSU to play its part [in higher education]...” He trusts “that the department of Ethnic Studies will play its part in this endeavor.”

The most challenging goal in the five-year plan is the successful proposition of an American Indian Studies Program to be housed in the Department of Ethnic Studies. During the 2006-2007 academic year, Professor Elden Lawrence received course reassignment to develop a Master Plan for an American Indian Initiative that involves elements of recruitment and retention of American Indian students, and the restoration of American Indian cultures. Dr. Lawrence is coordinating the efforts with a Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. They receive support from a committee formed by the Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Dean of Institutional Diversity, Assistant Director of American Indian Affairs, Chair and a Faculty member of the Department of Ethnic Studies, Faculty of American Indian heritage, and a representative of American Indian students.

The successful implementation of the American Indian Studies Program will ultimately depend on the support from the University and leadership in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. We believe that the program has already garnered that support. First, the American Indian Initiative is the product of a conversation between the Executive Director of Diversity and Multiculturalism and statewide American Indian faculty and staff. Second, the Academic Affairs convocation at the start of the academic year announced the creation of the American Indian Studies Program as a priority goal for MSU during the current year. Third, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Academic Affairs Office provided the funds for course reassignment with the purpose of allowing a faculty member to design a proposal for the Master Plan, and the organization of the American Indian Studies program. We hope to continue with the support in the implementation stage of this initiative.

Thank you.



Faculty Accomplishments & Recognitions

- **ALLEN, WAYNE** (2006) published a book review of Piers Vitebsky's *The Reindeer People: Living with animals and spirits in Siberia* in *Siberica*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 160-162.
- **ALLEN, WAYNE** (September 15, 2006) presented "Traditional Tools for Teaching" at the Mahkato Wacipi (Mankato Powwow) Education Day in the Dakota Wokiksuye Makoce (Land of Memories) Park, Mankato, MN.
- **ALLEN, WAYNE**, **Louis Schwartzkopf** and **Mandojana, Julio** (October 2006) presented "Oil and Involution: Relating Populations, Limiting Resources and Populations, Limiting Resources and Population Crashes," to the Department of Economics Forum.
- **DARBOE, KEBBA** (July 2006) completed the editing and reviewing *Alienated: Immigrant Rights, the Constitution, and Equality in America* by Victor C. Romero (ed), 2005. New York, New York: New York University Press
- **Kawabata, Eiji** (September 2006) published *Contemporary Government Reform in Japan: The Dual State in Flux* by Palgrave/Macmillan.
- **Laverny-Rafter, David** (2005-2006) was on sabbatical leave to conduct research on the social and travel impacts of Minneapolis' new light rail transit line on residents living within walking distance of the rail stations.
- **Laverny-Rafter, David** (May 2006) presented "Neighborhood Sensitive Transit: Evaluating the Impacts of the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit System on Residents" at the Annual Research Conference on the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies in St. Paul, MN.
- **Laverny-Rafter, David** (November 2006) presented "Neighborhood Sensitive Transit: Evaluating the Impacts of the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit System on Residents" at the Annual Conference of the American Evaluation Association in Portland, OR.
- **LAWRENCE, ELDEN** (September 15, 2006) was featured in an article about the Indian Christians in the Dakota Conflict of 1862 in the Mankato Free Press.
- **LAWRENCE, ELDEN** (September 23, 2006) presented on the Dakota Conflict in the Wood Lake Battlefield Symposium.
- **LAWRENCE, ELDEN** (October 14, 2006) presented his book *Peace Seekers* at History Author Day at the Dakota County Historical Society in St. Paul, MN.
- **Mackie, Paul** (2006) developed Honors in Social Work Readings (SOWK 492 - 03) as an on-line course using Desire To Learn (aka: D2L) technology to provide an in-depth education to Title IV-E social work students' understanding of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978.
- **Mackie, Paul** (October 28 – 30, 2006) presented "Understanding Educational and Demographic Differences between Rural and Urban Social Workers" at the 24th Annual Association of Baccalaureate Program Directors (BPD) Conference in Los Angeles, CA.
- **Mackie, Paul** (In Press) will publish "Understanding Educational and Demographics Differences between Rural and Urban Social Workers" in the *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*.
- **POSAS, LUIS** (2006) published "Guestworkers" in *Immigration in America Today: An Encyclopedia* by James Loucky, Jeanne Armstrong and Larry J. Estrada (eds), Pp. 162-166, Glenwood Press.
- **Slocum, Fred** (2005) will publish "The Southern Strategy" in the *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, 2nd ed. forthcoming in 2007.
- **Slocum, Fred** (2006) will publish "Southern Politics" in the *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, 2nd ed. forthcoming in 2007.
- **Slocum, Fred** (2006) published "Political Participation" in *Immigration in America Today: An Encyclopedia* by James Loucky, Jeanne Armstrong and Larry J. Estrada (eds), Pp. 254-257, Glenwood Press.

*CAPITALS indicate Ethnic Studies Faculty
Upper and Lower Case indicate Ethnic Studies Program Faculty*



34th Annual Mahkato Traditional Wacipi Powwow

The powwow took place from September 15th -17th in Land of Memories Park, Mankato, MN.

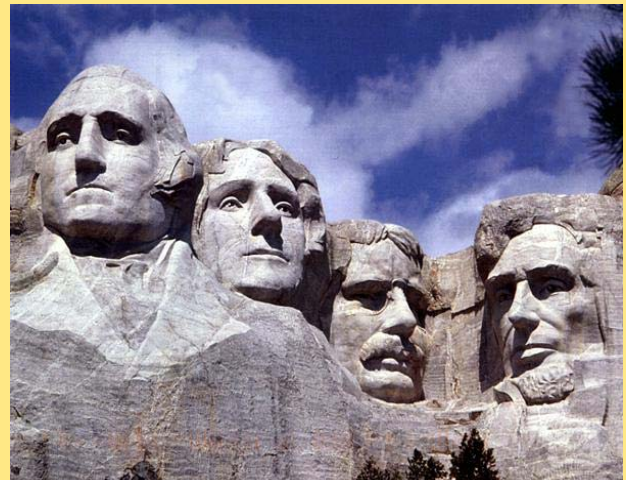
Photograph of the opening ceremony.

Mount Rushmore

Megan Marsurka, Student of First Year Seminar

Located in the Black Hills of South Dakota, Mount Rushmore could be considered one of the greatest attractions to visit in the United States. The memorial was built to symbolize the United States' first 150 years as a nation (Mount Rushmore Information Directory, 2001). The memorial includes the faces of President George Washington, President Theodore Roosevelt, President Thomas Jefferson, and President Abraham Lincoln. This amazing and unique tribute has inspired people to "think big" for many years and will continue to do so in the future.

The sculptor of Mount Rushmore hoped that ten thousand years from now when archaeologists came upon the four presidential heads, they would gain an immediate and graphic understanding of American civilization (Taliaferro, 2002, p. 1). Mount Rushmore symbolizes memorable times in our country's history and stands for American ideals. For this reason, it is important to preserve and protect the monument for the future generations who will visit this work of art.



Mount Rushmore.

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/print/mountrushmore.html>

Before the times of computers and lasers with their abilities to detonate explosives on command, a sculptor used their knowledge and labor to carve the heads of the four presidents out of granite (Wilkerson, 2004). More than 800 million pounds of stone were removed from the mountain while carving and the project took about fourteen years to complete (Mount Rushmore Information Directory, 2001). Much hard work was put into the creation of Mount Rushmore and since this work has been finished, thousands upon thousands of visitors have come from all different parts of the country and world to visit this amazing monument year after year.

A New Sustainability School in South Africa: Implementation of a Community Resource Management Program (CRMP)

Wayne E. Allen, Ph. D.
Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies

Dr. Scott Fee, Chair, Interior Design and Construction Management, and I have been invited to participate in the establishment and design of a new university in the community of Knysna in a Black Township in South Africa. Eden Campus at Knysna in the District of Karatara, South Africa is now a reality (please visit their website at www.edencampus.co.za/home.htm). Buildings that are currently inadequate, as well as a site, have been secured and classes are already being delivered, albeit with insufficient resources. Courses currently offered are accredited by Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth, 160 miles east of the location of the new school.

Our role is to assist in the physical design and construction of the new school using sustainable construction practices, as well as in future curriculum development that has a sustainability focus. The underlying philosophy, mission and praxis of this new university entail teaching and applying sustainable practices in the areas of construction management, eco-agriculture, eco-tourism, and cultural resource management.

To accomplish this, we will begin by employing a novel approach to sustainability questions first developed in indigenous communities in the Canadian north known as a Community Resource Management Program (CRMP) (Freeman 1981, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992; Freeman & Carbyn 1988)). CRMP is a successful approach with a proven track record that was developed in the 1980s and implemented in indigenous communities in northern Canada in the 1990s. Successful funding, development and implementation of such programs have been ongoing in indigenous communities the Canadian north since then.

In a nutshell, this sustainability approach requires the collection and archiving of indigenous cultural practices as a foundation for developing a sustainable CRMP that meets contemporary institutional needs for the indigenous community in question. Implementing a CRMP requires the application of a new methodology, also developed in the Canadian north in the early 90s, known as Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Ryan & Robinson 1990, 1996; Gwynne 36-37; Whyte 1991; Perez 1997; Bernard 1998: 69; Greenwood & Levin 1998; Ervin 200: 199-210), as well as a methodology for active learning developed by me and my students known as ACCEPT – A Community-based Cultural Exchange Program for Tolerance. Both PAR and ACCEPT require active indigenous community input and involvement in collaboration with faculty and students at all levels.

The purpose of our involvement is to visit the site, establish a base of operations as well as a rapport with members of the community and the school, and lay the groundwork for subsequent trips that will involve MSU faculty and students. We have a letter of invitation from the Rector of the school and as soon as we arrive we will proceed with the collection of traditional cultural data that will provide the basis for the development and sustainable implementation of the CRMP at the Eden Campus, as well as in the surrounding community of Karatara.

The community of Karatara is in a rural Black Township in the Knysna Region of South Africa. The economy of the community and surrounding region is for all intents and purposes agricultural. The population of the local school is indigenous African. Members of the African population in the surrounding region are in dire need of educational, as well as many other types of social services. The descendants of 19th Century European immigrants have recently been relatively progressive in their tolerance, understanding and acceptance of their African neighbors, especially since the dismantling of the system of apartheid, and this is one of the reasons this site was chosen for this project. With that said, though, there are still problems of ethnic misunderstandings, stereotyping, intolerance, discrimination, and occasionally violence that typify this and other rural South African indigenous communities.

The faculty and the students at Minnesota State University, Mankato (MSU) will be designing and implementing, in conjunction with members of the community, a CRMP accompanied by an intra-community cultural learning exchange program that will be the foundation for promoting cultural understanding that will facilitate successful curriculum design and implementation, as well as in the design of the university's physical structure. The program requires participatory action research and is modeled upon the philosophy of foreign exchange programs, with the novel twist that cultural exchange will occur within a single community between members of the Eden Campus and MSU students who visit the campus under the auspices of the MSU Study Abroad Program.

Our research embodies an ongoing recognition that there is a significant need for an applied approach to the problems facing contemporary African communities. An applied approach that is participatory for members of the local population and experiential learning by doing for MSU students represents an interdisciplinary approach that can address the significant issues and challenges facing Africans listed below, as well as immerse both African and American students in a collaborative applied learning process.

(cont. on following page)

Sustainability School in South Africa (cont.)

Significant issues our research will attempt to address are:

- Post-colonial and post-apartheid governance and educational curricula
- The formation of a new African Union and a New Partnership for Africa's development
- An attempt to resolve uncertainty in contemporary African issues through interdisciplinary science and technology, and existing political, cultural, and economic frameworks

To do so one must document needs in the following areas:

- The Ecological Dimension
 - Water scarcity
 - Land degradation, the depletion of soils and deforestation
 - Food scarcity
 - Loss of biodiversity
- The Economic Dimension
 - The inequality gap – the highest inequality in the world is in South Africa
 - Employment and economic opportunity
 - Economic mismanagement
 - Excessive consumption and consumerism replacing sustainable indigenous economic practices
- The Social/Cultural Dimension
 - Urban drift and poor living conditions
 - Conflict over resources and access to jobs
 - Epidemic diseases and over-crowding
 - Educational backlogs and poor skills base
 - Loss of traditional knowledge, both ecological and cultural
- The Political Dimension
 - Ineffectual governance
 - Corruption and misuse of state resources
 - Despotism
 - The privatization of public resources and services
 - Lack of attention to human rights, especially indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights

The project is important for two main reasons. First, it has pedagogical importance because it represents an integral field research component in a new collaboration that immerses undergraduates and graduates in applied research on sustainability issues. Students learn about philosophy, theory and practice in the classroom; and then they are given the opportunity to assist in the design and implementation of an actual community-based cross-cultural research project that will have observable and measurable outcomes. Students work closely together in research teams in project design, data collection and analysis, and in program implementation and monitoring. Students construct project outlines and “concept maps,” and they also construct and maintain annotated project portfolios. There are several student assessment and evaluation methods employed by the faculty, including “memory matrices,” “pro and con grids,” surveys of student opinions, and testing at the beginning and end of their participation in the project. The objective is to promote and facilitate both field-based and service learning in an applied research setting.

Secondly, our project is of both local and international importance because it is theoretically grounded in scientific knowledge on the experiential aspect of attachment/bonding formation and its role in sustainability issues, as well as social contact theory. There is a long history of success in American foreign exchange programs where strong attachments and lasting bonds are formed between students and their host families in foreign cultures. And at the same time our project is uniquely novel in its intra-community design and implementation. It is our prediction that this pilot project will have real and lasting consequences on both cross-cultural communication and racial tolerance within the host community. The implications for a successful project of this type are profound for the vast majority of communities in the United States and South Africa, whose populations are ethnically and linguistically diverse. Programs could be developed nationally and internationally where students of diverse ethnicities would be cultural ambassadors within their home communities. They would live with one another's families – i.e., host families with differing ethnic identities from their own – where they would learn from and teach one another about their distinctive life experiences and cultures. It is our belief that our students could become our world's leaders in promoting and facilitating tolerance and acceptance if given the appropriate structure and opportunities. Also, this pilot project will demonstrate that such an approach is relatively low cost and yet highly effective at promoting acceptance and tolerance, and therefore could be seen as a novel and effective experiential educational program that could easily be implemented in any ethnically diverse community in either South Africa or the United States.

Ethnic Studies and Nepali Traditional, Classical, and Folk Dance

Mridusha Shrestha, Major of Ethnic Studies

My name is Mridusha Shrestha and I am an Ethnic Studies major, with a minor in Dance. I am from Kirtipur, Nepal, a suburb (not in the Western sense) of Kathmandu. I have been studying in America for over three years now, and I hope to graduate next year. Afterwards, I intend to apply for graduate school at MSU and earn my MS in Ethnic Studies, focusing on *ethno-choreography* as my research topic.

I have been studying dance for eighteen years (I am twenty-two years old), with three years of that study being here in the U.S. I also taught dance in Nepal for four years before coming to America. I want to take this opportunity to thank my parents for sending me to America to further my studies. Without their support, as well as that of my older sister Manisha, who is also a student at MSU, I would not have been able to face all of the challenges I have been confronted with while being an international student and a woman of color here in the U.S. I also would like to extend my gratitude to the Ethnic Studies Department for their guidance and the strong support that has been bestowed upon me in the last three years.

In Ethnic Studies, we students focus on four main areas: race, religion, ethnicity, and gender. Cultural dance oftentimes embodies aspects of three out of the four of these identity factors – ethnicity, religion, and gender. In fact, dance is living expression of these identity factors, and deconstructing traditional cultural dance can be most instructive for under-

Nepali Traditional Dance

The traditional dances of *Charya Nritya*, or dance as a spiritual discipline, are a sacred dance tradition that goes back more than a thousand years in Nepal. While not widely known and originally performed in secret by certain castes initiated into meditative practice, this dance form still survives and is now being shared in suitable environments -- those approved by one's guru -- including cultural, educational, and meditation oriented settings.

In expressing the nature of the deities, the dancer's energy often shifts from tenderness and warmth to ferocity and imposing intensity, depending on the god the dancer represents. Soft and gentle movements in this dance reflect the strength of the Goddess's energy, which is embodied in the compact body of the dancer. The "transformed movement" is sculpted by the dancer into a kind of fluid poetry in motion, with the basic steps having become codified over time.

Important factors in understanding the nature of these dances is that they were not and are not intended for entertainment purposes, but rather for the dancer as a vehicle to self-actualization – a form of meditation and prayer.

Nepali Classical Dance

Classical dance is an extended version of the traditional dance. In this genre the emphasis is on an important historical era. Classical dance is born out of an inner urge to conceive, realize, express, and experience the beauty of the nature of the dance. In this dance style, like all others, the function of any art is dependent on the physical material or the medium utilized. Nepali, as well as Indian, Classical Dance uses the body as the medium or instrument whereby the mind is allowed the greatest facility for creativity.



Traditional Dance

(cont. on following page)

Ethnic Studies and Nepali Dance (cont.)

Proper posture and positioning of the feet gives rise to efficient and effective movement. The dancer should learn to feel and control the distribution of body weight on the feet as per the movements. The main goal is to move with minimum strain on the limbs but at the same time maintain flexibility and maximum efficiency.



Nepali Folk Dance

Nepali Folk Dance

Folk dances are reflective of the day-to-day activities of the people. It is one of the main cultural pastimes of the community. Generally, Nepali Folk Dances are performed at large social gatherings, sometimes to mark festivals or other aspects of cultural heritage. In this regard, then, it is a dance vocabulary that is full of life energy and sensuality. There are different types of folk dances representing different tribes in Nepal – for example, *Sorathi*, *Ratyauli*, *Tamang Selo*, *Jhyaure*, *Maruni*, *Newari*, *Kauda*, *Bhojpuri*, etc. All these different peoples have folk dances that have their own rhythmic movements, accompanied by their own different regalia. As such, these dances capture and embody the traditional values of the diverse folk societies within which they exist.

Hips and torsos are always moving and swaying rhythmically to the beat of the *Madal* (Nepali drum), with arms upheld and hands flicking at the wrists. Nepali folk dance is upbeat and joyfully presented.

Both female and male dancers lip-sync the folksong while dancing, which is a convention that helps to narrate the story of the song.

3rd Annual Ethnic Studies Picnic

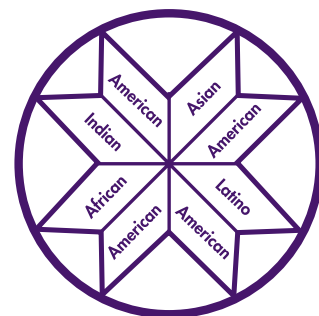
A collaborative picnic of the departments of Ethnic Studies, Sociology and Women's Studies was held on Saturday, September 23rd. A day of great food, many laughs and an overall enjoyable time between the students, faculty and their families was had by all.



Newsletter Editors

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- Wayne Allen, Associate Professor*
- Kebba Darboe, Assistant Professor*
- Maricela DeMirjin, Assistant Professor*
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MISSION STATEMENT

“The Department of Ethnic Studies, an interdisciplinary program, is academically committed to promoting multicultural and ethnic knowledge, skills and values both within and outside the United States and to preparing our students for effective participation in the culturally diverse global community.”