HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMS THRIVE ACROSS CAMPUS

December 2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Across Columbia the teaching, research and advocacy of human rights is not a historical commemoration, but an active, growing and increasingly central organizing principle for a wide range of University programs inside and outside the classroom.

The War Memorial plaque unveiled.

“Terrorism has taught me that all freedom of speech and expression can apply for internships and fellowships, or work at one of the many University centers and institutes that promote and protect the rights of children, low-income tenants and patients. As the archive for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the University now houses one of the world’s largest collections of human rights documents.

To President Lee C. Bollinger (LAW ’71), it makes perfect sense for an institution built on the core value of academic freedom to make human rights a focus. "My scholarly field of freedom of speech and press has taught me that all human rights are individually important and interdependent," says Bollinger. "That’s why Columbia plays a unique role in the advancement and protection of human rights globally."

Today, the teaching and practice of human rights is threaded throughout the curriculum at multiple schools, centers and institutes; promoted in law and health clinics; and carried out in the field both within the U.S. and in many nations abroad. The University has about a dozen degree and non-degree programs in human rights. Those seeking to turn learning into action can apply for internships and fellowships, or work at one of the many University centers and institutes that have fostered such careful study of American history.

By the middle of the last century, Columbia became a leading center in the battle for civil rights in the United States, more than a half-century law school professors and alumni worked on the pivotal 1954 Brown v. Board of Education case that desegregated the nation’s public schools. Since then, the University pioneered scholarship and action to promote human rights globally. Starting in the 1960s with the hiring of faculty members who had worked in the field and expanding, in 1978, with the creation of the Center for the Study of Human Rights at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia built a broad, multidisciplinary strength in human rights issues.

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The Columbia War Memorial was unveiled during a ceremony at Butler Library on Dec. 12 attended by Columbia alumni veterans, students, administrators and 20 of the University’s trustees, all donning red paper poppies in their lapels, the symbol of American war dead since World War I. The plaque honors the 460 known alumni who lost their lives in conflicts dating from the American Revolution. It will be mounted for permanent display at the entrance of Butler Library in early January; in a spot chosen because of its heavy traffic.

"I know that many people in the room have deep and personal connections to people who have died serving the country and the military," President Lee C. Bollinger told the gathering. "To those people we want to say that we deeply appreciate that, and we are proud to honor them as Colombians and also their service to the country." Noting his family’s military service, he said, "My own father served in World War II, and I grew up in an environment in which service had a daily presence."

The committee that worked to bring the memorial into existence, said Toni Coffee (BC ’50), a member who spoke at the unveiling, determined early on that it "must be in plain sight, where community would see it every day—not hidden reverentially in a quiet room where it would be out of sight and out of mind."

Provost Alan Brinkley, who led the University’s engagement in the memorial’s development, noted the long history of Columbia’s alumni in military service. In his remarks, he recounted how a group of students during the War of 1812 volunteered to build fortifications to protect what eventually became Columbia’s campus on Morningside Heights from anticipated attacks by British soldiers.

An interactive, online component of the memorial called the “Roll of Honor” lists the names of alumni who lost their lives in conflicts dating from the American Revolution. It will be mounted for permanent display at the entrance of Butler Library in early January; in a spot chosen because of its heavy traffic.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

ANDERSON COOPER LIVE FROM THE J-SCHOOL

JOURNALISM professor Anthony Lewis had a glint in his eye as he went off on a tangent in “You’ve just taken me back to John F. Kennedy’s inauguration,” said Lewis, who told a quick story before fellow professor Vincent Blasi brought the lecture back on track with a laugh, then drew others back to the agenda.

The class covered media-related First Amendment issues such as the standard of actual malice in libel cases and degrees of privacy in information gathering by news organizations.

During lectures, Lewis engaged the class with stories from his days as a reporter, London bureau chief and columnist for The New York Times, where he covered diplomatic history between 1960 and 1988, and was also the key interviewer for CBS’s “60 Minutes” program.

The class also considered more contemporary issues such as the role of mass media in the prosecution of high-profile politicians such as Enron CEO Jeffrey Skilling or Saddam Hussein.

“Saddam is a real world of the school,” both presenters agreed. They both placed a high value on the presentation of news organizations and the loss of newspaper reporters as an underfunded group.

Lewis called the class “a real pearl of the school.” Both presenters agreed that the class was more academically practical than traditional courses and less theoretical.

ON EXHIBIT:

THE HUMAN CONDITION

A student of the work of Hans J. Kung, titled “The Human Condition,” is running through Jan. 15 at the Russ Berrie Medical Science Pavilion.

Professor and former Supreme Court reporter for The New York Times, Lewis, now 81, said he wanted the class to be a major reason to stop teaching the course. "Your students become your future!"

In a school known for emphasizing the class, the course is considered more academic than practical and divorced from issues such as the New York Times.

Tolstoy, who is active in social justice, said his story was about a woman who has a reason to stop teaching the course. "Your students become your future!"

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Columbia Ink

Compiled by Jennifer Curry

The holiday season beckons gift-givers, Columbia faculty members are well-prepared to help the cause with a roster of new books. The subjects of politics and the news media, which always draw interest, are covered in two separate books. Brothers in Arms looks at the Kennedy brothers and Castro in two Castro sightings. The media’s role in a democracy is deepened by J-school professor Michael Schudson. India art and the period of the Enlightenment in the 18th century are among other topics explored.

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The Human Rights Clinic at Columbia Law School is designed to teach and train law students, as well as legal professionals, by immersing them in the practice of civil and human rights law and the related areas of international law. The Clinic is committed to providing a space for law students to engage in meaningful and substantive work that advances human rights and justice.

The Clinic’s work is guided by the following principles:

1. The Clinic’s work is driven by the needs and interests of the clients and communities it serves.
2. The Clinic’s work is based on rigorous legal research and analysis.
3. The Clinic’s work is informed by a diverse range of perspectives and experiences.
4. The Clinic’s work is grounded in a commitment to social justice and human rights.

The Clinic’s projects include:

1. Legal representation and advocacy for individuals and communities affected by human rights abuses.
2. Research and analysis on human rights issues.
3. Education and training on human rights.

The Clinic’s work has been supported by a range of funding sources, including grants from foundations and government agencies, as well as pro bono work from law firms and other organizations.

The Clinic’s graduates go on to work in a variety of settings, including law firms, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and academia.

The Clinic’s capacity to carry out its mission is dependent on the support of its donors and partners. The Clinic would like to thank all those who have contributed to its work and success.

The Clinic encourages donations to support its work and programs. Gifts can be made online through the Clinic’s website or by contacting the Clinic directly.

We welcome your support and look forward to working with you to advance human rights and justice.
Surgery Is Tested for Hypertension Patients

Patsilas suffering from hypertension, and for whom it is not possible to lower their blood pressure as a result of a trial of at least three antihypertensive medicines. The surgery, which is implanted surgically, with minimal skin incision, is performed at the institution, and the patients are able to return to their normal activities in the post-operative period.

The surgery, called Neovask, is a novel approach to treating hypertension, and it has been tested in a series of clinical trials. In these trials, patients with hypertension were treated with Neovask, and the results were compared to those of patients treated with conventional medications. The results showed that Neovask was effective in lowering blood pressure in a significant number of patients.

Researchers believe that Neovask has the potential to become a new treatment option for patients with hypertension, especially those who have not responded to conventional medications. Further research is needed to confirm these findings and to determine the long-term effectiveness of the surgery.

Chancellor Award Winners Share Reporting Tips

The University of California, Berkeley, has announced the winners of its annual Chancellor’s Medals, which recognize excellence in teaching, research, and public service. This year’s winners include several faculty members who have been recognized for their contributions to the university.

One of the winners is Professor John E. Boyer, who has been named the Chancellor’s Medal for Excellence in Research. Professor Boyer is known for his groundbreaking work in the field of molecular biology, and his research has had a significant impact on the understanding of the genetic basis of disease.

Another winner is Professor Susan W. Hockfield, who has been named the Chancellor’s Medal for Excellence in Administration. Professor Hockfield is a respected leader in the university community, and she has been instrumental in the development of new programs and initiatives.

The Chancellor’s Medals are a testament to the excellence of the faculty and staff at the University of California, Berkeley. They are an important recognition of the contributions of these individuals to the university and to the broader scientific community.
ECOLOGY WITHOUT APOLOGY

When Shahid Naeem, professor and chair of the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology, thinks about the worsening scarcity of flora and fauna on earth, he recalls the lessons he learned when, at the age of 20, he worked for publisher Henry Giroux (CC’36). "Giroux pushed for authors who weren’t going to be ‘sellouts,’" said Naeem in the University Lecture he delivered on Nov. 17. Indeed, throughout his career, the publisher recognized the worth of books authored by, at the time, largely unknown writers—Francis Fukuyama, Thomas Friedman, and Geeta G侨—authors who would go on to become literary icons themselves.

"I remember Giroux because of his ability to see the value of these unknown authors, who are like a rare species," Naeem explained. "As with biodiversity, what a mistake it would be not to notice them, not to understand that the power and value of rare species are of incalculable worth."

"Columbia is taking the lead and using the science we do... for problem solving," Shahid Naeem, professor and chair of the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology, speaking at the University Lecture on Nov. 17.

Shahid Naeem, professor and chair of the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology, speaking at the University Lecture on Nov. 17. (Credit: Columbia photograph by Marion S. Trikosko)

"Reconciling human rights and the Global Economy, we are recognizing human rights as a field that is concerned with issues of anti-terrorism, transparency, and fairness in international investment contexts. In 2008, human rights are no longer only about things like torture and extrajudicial killing. We’re very interested in pushing the envelope on how human rights law and advocacy are conceptualized."

"I’ve been interested in pushing the envelope on how human rights law and advocacy are conceptualized."

Sarah Cleveland, professor and chair of the Department of Law.

Sarah Cleveland, professor and chair of the Department of Law, speaking at the University Lecture on Nov. 17. (Credit: Columbia photograph by Marion S. Trikosko)

"We’re all chiseled up and I-army-eyed. The planet is getting lonely."

Naeem, while speaking about the loss of biodiversity, used this metaphor to explain that the world is getting lonelier. (Credit: Columbia photograph by Marion S. Trikosko)

"As with biodiversity, what a mistake it would be not to notice them, not to understand that the power and value of rare species are of incalculable worth."
Lincoln continued from page 1

Sophisticated changes that characterized his presidency, as well as a host of contradictions.

For example, Lincoln initially opposed slavery, but he was not an abolitionist and did not support social or political equality for blacks, explained panelist James Oakes, Graduate Humanities Professor at the Graduate Center at City University of New York. Rather, Lincoln favored “compensated emancipation,” where the government would pay slaveholders to give up their slaves. “That commitment to compensated emancipation had a long history among political moderates in the United States looking for a way to end slavery that would bring neither social revolution nor the destruction of property,” said Christopher Brown, a history professor at Columbia.

Another controversial aspect of Lincoln’s presidency was his wartime suspension of habeas corpus and other civil liberties, said Mark Neely Jr., the McCabe Greer Professor of History at Pennsylvania State University. It’s possible to “draw a straight line from Abraham Lincoln to John Ashcroft,” Neely said, adding that early forms of the interrogation tactic “water-boarding” were employed during Lincoln’s administration.

Still, Neely gave Lincoln higher marks for civil liberties than other American presidents, including Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who interned more than 100,000 Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor, and Woodrow Wilson, who pushed through the Espionage Act of 1917, which sharply curtailed Americans’ free speech during World War I.

“There’s been speculation about whether there’s anything more to learn about Abraham Lincoln,” said panelist James McPherson, the George Henry Davis Professor of American History at Princeton University.

“Today, I think we proved that there is.”

What are you looking at?

Hint: The water that flows from this lion’s mouth may be reminiscent of the thoughts flowing through the minds of Columbia’s students in what may be the busiest undergraduate buildings nearby. Which fountain is this and where is it located? Send answers to curecord@columbia.edu. First to e-mail the right answer wins a mug.

<continued from page 1>

Human rights advocates from around the world graduated on Dec. 9th, from the Human Rights Advocates Program at the Center for the Study of Human Rights. (From left to right: Haka Aphenjachimansam; India; Paulo Carvhalo Delgado; South Florida; Peter Mulbah; Liberia; Yusufi Egosa; associate director; CSHR; Andrew Nilton, chair; CSCHR’s board; Dr. Rugei Labankw; Democratic Republic of Congo; Elaure Alana, co-director of CSCHR; Stephanie Grega, director of advocates program; Christopher Eberhard, coordinator CSHR; and Aline Polgara, Indonesia (See story, page 7).

Columbia’s newest Nobel laureate, Martin Chalfie, takes the stage at Stockholm’s Concert Hall after receiving his Nobel Prize in chemistry. Chalfie, department chair of biological sciences and the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Biological Sciences, received his Nobel from King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden at the Dec. 10 ceremony for his work on green fluorescent protein (GFP) and its use in biological science research. Chalfie discovered a way to use the protein to track and observe cells in his work in sensory biology. He shares the award with scientists Roger Tsien at the University of California, San Diego and Osamu Shimomura, senior scientist emeritus at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Mass.