Karen Engle is Minerva House Drysdale Regents Chair in Law and founder and co-director of the Rapoport Center. Engle publishes and lectures extensively on international law and human rights, with focuses on indigenous and Afro-descendant rights in the Americas, gender, and international criminal justice.

William Chandler is administrator of the Rapoport Center. He manages the everyday logistics of the Center and supervises the fellowship and internship programs. William worked previously as a program manager for an international education organization. He received an MS in International Politics, focusing his research on human rights issues in Mexico.

Ariel Dulitzky is clinical professor of law and director of the Human Rights Clinic. He also directs the Rapoport Center’s internship program. Dulitzky is an expert in the inter-American human rights system and has published on human rights, racial discrimination, and the rule of law in Latin America.

Barbara Harlow is the Louann and Larry Temple Centennial Professor of English Literature and chair of the faculty panel for the Human Rights and Social Justice Bridging Disciplines Program. Her teaching, research, and writing focuses on third world studies, critical theory, prison and resistance writings, and postcolonial studies.

Remembering B Rapoport (1917-2012)

We have dedicated this space, normally reserved for the Directors’ Letter, to the memory of Bernard (“B”) Rapoport, who in many ways was and will continue to be the true director of the Center. When B passed on April 5th, we lost our biggest source of inspiration and insight. Those who knew B know that the Center is but one manifestation of his life-long dedication to academic inquiry and social justice. They also know of his larger-than-life heart, which was as full of anger at injustice as it was of love. B was passionate about eradicating the inequality that manifested itself in an unsustainable society in which, as he put it, “too few have too much and too many have too little.” He once called for people to want more—“more thoughtfulness, more concern about poverty and a more just and intellectually alert society.”

We feel fortunate to have had B in our institutional life since before its inception, always praising us for what we had done while also prodding us to do more. Below are a few highlights of time he spent with us at the Center.

President (then Dean of the Law School) Bill Powers at the inaugural dinner of the Rapoport Center, presenting B with a rare edition of Debs’ and the Poets, signed by Debs while in prison. Debs wrote: “While there is a lower class, I am in it. While there is a criminal element, I am of it. While there is a soul in jail, I am not free.” Photo by Dave Mayfield.

Former Congressman Don Fraser (second from right) and Senator Tom Harkin (far right), who were interviewed by NPR journalist Steve Inskeep (second from left) on human rights, foreign policy, and the role of Congress as part of the Center’s third annual conference. Photo courtesy of Tracy Wahl.

For more on B and Audre, please see our online exhibit at: www.rapoportcenter.org/about/rapoports.php.
In Search of Human Rights in Abra Pampa, Argentina
by Jessica Rosalyn Osorio

Human rights do not exist in Abra Pampa,” he said. These were the words of a community activist, explaining the environmental and health crisis in Abra Pampa, Argentina, a city of 12,000 inhabitants largely identifying as indigenous Kolla. The city has a high rate of lead poisoning resulting from the Metal Huasi lead smelting plant that ceased operations in the 1980s and left behind 60,000 tons of toxic metal.

In the spring of 2011, I was part of the second delegation of the Human Rights Clinic (HRC) sent to Abra Pampa. With other delegation members, I met with the provincial investigator who declared that his work in Abra Pampa was done; federal prosecutors who stated they no longer had jurisdiction in the cases, and staff from the Ministry of Foreign Relations who refused to provide us with more information. The Inter-American Development Bank, which gave Argentina millions for a remediation plan, told us they would look into the situation, and the Secretary of Mining, the individual most directly responsible for implementing the remediation plan, refused to meet with us.

In November, the HRC wrote and translated its second report on Abra Pampa, titled A Generation Poisoned by Lead. The report, a follow up to the 2009 report A Community Ignored. A Generation Poisoned by Lead, was published by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in Washington, DC, drafting archive and admissibility reports on violations of due process with regards to economic rights. In Texas, Ryan Meltzer worked as part of the American Civil Liberties Union’s criminal reform campaign on over-incarceration, solitary confinement, and private prison concerns affecting minorities.

Mackenzie Meador worked with the Paso Del Norte Civil Rights Project, an organization serving indigent clients throughout West Texas and southern New Mexico, conducting research and investigating cases relating to wage claims and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Catherine Wagner spent her summer supporting the Texas Civil Rights Project in Austin, interviewing clients and drafting materials for disability rights, police brutality, and race discrimination cases.

“In this fellowship, justice has not been an austere commandment but a vibrant presence.”
- Will Chambers

For Professor Ariel Dulitzky (coordinator of the fellowship program and director of the Human Rights Clinic), “these placements provide the opportunity for students to explore how their legal education can be practically applied in the human rights field.” These fellowships were made possible by generous support from The Plantehood Foundation; Scott Hendler of HendlerLaw, PC, who donated funds for the Charles Moyer Summer Human Rights Fellowship; the Orlando Letelier and Ronnie Karpen Moffitt Endowed President’s Scholarship in Law; and the Ellie and Wofford Cain Foundation.

For the students involved, the fellowship was an opportunity to “be a continued general lack of interest in Abra Pampa on the part of authorities.”

The same month the Clinic released its second report, the mayor declared that remediation to clean up the metal waste would begin. The announcement came two weeks before James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, was to arrive in Abra Pampa. By the time he arrived, authorities claimed that the remediation was complete. Despite the gesture, the government provided no information as to how residents would be treated for lead poisoning. Indeed, lead poisoning may be the enduring legacy of Metal Huasi.

Although the final outcome of the Abra Pampa saga has yet to be determined, my work with this project allowed me to gain experience researching and advocating for social justice and human rights. I had a number of growth spurs over the course of the year. As Professor Ariel Dulitzky (director of the Human Rights Clinic) challenged me to demonstrate leadership in developing and implementing the advocacy campaign for Abra Pampa. As a student of the Clinic, I found the experience I had been looking for in graduate school. I will use the skills that I developed in years to come as I work to support the rights of peoples that have been marginalized throughout the Americas.

Clinic Releases Report on Procedures of the Inter-American Commission

In July, the Human Rights Clinic published Maximizing Justice, Minimizing Delay: Streamlining Procedures of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The report, which is the result of two years of statistical analysis and interviews, provides a diagnosis of the current backlog and delay in the processing of cases and petitions pending and/or resolved by the Commission over the last 15 years.

There are a number of clinical education opportunities at the Law School that allow students to engage in hands-on human rights advocacy and litigation. Over the past year, clinic students have defended transnational migrants in court, researched the failure of military commissions to satisfy standards under the Convention Against Torture, and advocated on the behalf of asylum-seekers facing deportation.

Immigration Clinic
“Working directly with underserved and vulnerable people who desperately needed our help both filled me with purpose and reminded me why I went to law school in the first place.” – Amelia Ruiz Fischer

Transnational Worker Rights Clinic
“Under the supervision and guidance of the staff attorneys, I drafted pleadings, investigated claims, and negotiated a settlement agreement on a previously stale case. The experience was invaluable; it took the cloak off the real world.” – Santiago Díaz

National Security Clinic
“The Clinic afforded not only a unique perspective on the evolution of the law in this exciting arena, but also hands-on intellectually challenging and fascinating; I completed the course a stronger advocate and legal tactician.” – Jillian Trezza

Fieldwork & Clinics

Students Gain Legal Experience with Human Rights Organizations

José Enrique Morales, a member of the Centro Ayopoy al Trabajador (CAT), works to organize and unionize workers at factories throughout Mexico. In the latest incidence of anti-union violence in the state of Puebla, Morales was kidnapped in May 2012 and tortured the latest incidence of anti-union violence in the state of where he will work with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Tanzania, helped author a petition challenging the constitutionality of aesmenting that, “In this fellowship, justice has not been an austere commandment but a vibrant presence.”
Student Opportunities Encourage Human Rights Advocates of Tomorrow

Over the past year, the walls of the Rapoport Center have echoed with the laughter, debate, and keystrokes of seven undergraduate interns, four human rights scholars, two graduate fellows, and one postdoctoral fellow. Their experiences and backgrounds spanned a wide gamut - from law to history, social work to journalism, government to sociology - but they all had one defining characteristic in common: a demonstrated commitment to human rights.

In the interest of fostering a future generation of human rights scholars and advocates, the Rapoport Center engages undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students in the Center's numerous programs and initiatives. The result has been a cross-generational, inter-disciplinary team of students that, in addition to collaborating on projects and planning events, has enjoyed the opportunity to learn from one another while sharing office space.

Some of the liveliest debates among students took place at the weekly human rights discussions, which engage those working at the Center in the analysis of contemporary human rights issues. Gathered around the conference table, scholars, interns, staff, and faculty have discussed topics such as the ethics of war photography, the universality of religion, and the co-option of the human rights movement.

“I recognize how fortunate I am to be a young person conversations have become an integral part of our students’ experience, and an excellent way to further develop our connection with them and their connection with human rights discourse.”

Undergraduate intern Courtney Lee (Plan II Honors/ Latin American Studies) was grateful for the opportunity to work at the Center during the 2011-2012 academic year. “I recognize how fortunate I am to be a young person

history, especially after meeting Guatemalan human rights advocates for whom this meant so much,” she said.

Batko-Taylor worked collaboratively with fellow scholars Creighton Chandler (History), Nikiya Natale (Law), and Della Sentilles (Law), each chosen for their strong background in and commitment to international human rights. Working together with the Center’s faculty and staff, scholars and interns reviewed submissions for the Working Papers Series (see page 15), helped with planning and logistics for two major conferences (see pages 8-9 and 10-11), and analyzed government documents related to the Texas-Mexico border wall (see page 14).

In June, two graduate fellows joined the Rapoport Center, giving continued attention to ongoing projects and collaborating on new initiatives. Juan Camilo Aguadelo (Ethnomusicology) and Eva Hershaw (Latin American Studies/Journalism) edited and designed this Annual Review, researched crimes against the LGBTI community in Guatemala, and helped plan the Rapoport Center’s next annual conference (see back cover).

“Every year we have the pleasure of working with some of the most talented and committed undergraduate and graduate students on campus,” noted Professor Daniel Brinks (Government; co-director Rapoport Center).


As we witnessed during the “Arab Spring,” digital communications, social media, and mobile devices have revolutionized political dissent and the documentation of political conflict. Integrating digital technologies into ongoing struggles for human rights means that the collection and preservation of electronic evidence, or “e-evidence,” will become increasingly important.

In 2011, The Center for Research Libraries (CRL) commissioned the Rapoport Center (with support from the MacArthur Foundation) to examine how human rights organizations use digital technology to document abuses. CRL asked the Rapoport Center to analyze how e-evidence is evaluated in human rights cases in international courts.

By leveraging its extensive digital holdings and leveraging its extensive digital holdings and the Center’s expertise, the Center produced a report entitled “New Problems in the Use of Electronic Evidence in International Human Rights Investigations and Prosecutions,” with the goal of making it easier for human rights advocates to use digital evidence in court.

The hope is that [the report] will help human rights investigators better ensure the integrity of e-evidence in court.

In September, we presented our preliminary findings at a conference at Columbia University. The feedback was helpful and I enjoyed hearing from the staff and legal counsel at some of the international NGOs involved in human rights documentation. In its final form, the report does not purport to offer a definitive blueprint for what indicates the reliability and authenticity of e-evidence in human rights cases. Rather the hope is that it will provide guidance to those documenting human rights and better ensure the integrity of e-evidence in court.

View the report and other related documents at: www.crl.edu/grenady/electronic-evidence
D during the 3rd Annual Human Rights Fair this past spring, students and faculty from across campus gathered at a table on the West Mall to answer a straightforward question: What are human rights? Their answers, drawn across the table in bright colors, reflected the countless ways that human rights are defined and envisioned.

The Human Rights Student Advisory Council (HRSAC), which organizes the annual Human Rights Fair, is an initiative of the Rapoport Center that connects undergraduate organizations at UT that promote human rights and social justice. After the spring fair, the HRSAC organized a reception to better orient members with the workings of the Rapoport Center and to introduce them to members of the Human Rights Law Society (see below).

In addition to organizing the Human Rights Fair and reception, the HRSAC kept busy this past year by actively supporting the activities of its member groups. When UNICEF held a movie screening and panel discussion on water rights, HRSAC members participated in the event and helped advertise. The group also supported Amnesty International’s “Security with Human Rights” campaign and assisted in the White Rose Society’s “10,000 Roses,” a Holocaust remembrance and genocide awareness project.

At the 2012 Condom Couture event, which was organized by FACE AIDS Austin to raise funds for HIV/AIDS awareness, Rapoport Center–HRSAC liaison Courtney Lee (Plan II Honors/Latin American Studies) sported a dress made of nearly 1,000 condoms. Professor Neville Hoad (English; Rapoport Center steering committee member), emceed the fashion show, which drew a large number of supporters.

“Next year, we hope to continue this momentum with new leadership and new initiatives to support the activities of its member groups. When UNICEF held a movie screening and panel discussion on water rights, HRSAC members participated in the event and helped advertise. The group also supported Amnesty International’s “Security with Human Rights” campaign and assisted in the White Rose Society’s “10,000 Roses,” a Holocaust remembrance and genocide awareness project.”

The Human Rights Law Society Stimulates Discussion and Action

Human Rights Law Society (HRLS) over the past year to raise awareness about local and international human trafficking. Additionally, the HRLS partnered with Refugee Services of Texas and Casa Marianella, which provide support services for immigrants in Austin. Students worked in the Casa Marianella immigration clinic assisting residents and clients in filling out immigration forms, applications for green cards, and other immigration documents.

“We are interested in connecting our legal education to human rights on a broader scale,” said Abby Anna Batico-Taylor (Law and Social Work), Rapoport Center Human Rights Scholar and president of the HRLS. “The HRLS gives students the opportunity to apply their legal skills and passion for human rights work in local advocacy and community engagement.”

“[I] have had the opportunity to meet and interact with like-minded students in a way that would have been impossible without the HRLS.”

- Mark Dawson

Mark Dawson (Law) said that the group was a much-needed outlet during his first year of law school. “I have had the opportunity to meet and interact with like-minded students in a way that would have been impossible without the HRLS.”

Next year, the HRLS is hoping to organize a series of informal discussions to introduce law students to a diversity of contemporary human rights issues.

Rapoport Center Launches Sissy Farenthold Online Exhibit

 Maverick, legend, icon. These are only a few words commonly used to refer to Frances Tarlton “Sissy” Farenthold (UT Law School class of 1949). Often the word “Texas” serves as a modifier that precedes those words. Sissy is well known for her political career in the Texas House of Representatives from 1968-1972, her runs for Texas Governor in 1972 and 1974, her nomination for vice president during the 1972 Democratic National Convention, and her election as the first chair of the National Women’s Political Caucus.

Perhaps less known is Sissy’s work in international human rights. Sissy has spent much of her life and career applying her Texas maverick spirit to global issues, an enduring contribution that the Rapoport Center recently set out to chronicle.

Much of Sissy’s work in the 1980s focused on the international women’s peace movement. During the decade, she visited peace camps in England, Italy, and New York to protest the deployment of missile bases in Western Europe. In 1985, as a result of a partnership with her cousin Genevieve Vaughan, Sissy chaired the Peace Tent in Nairobi, Kenya, at the 1985 U.N. NGO Forum coinciding with the third U.N. World Conference on Women. Earlier that year, she was arrested outside the South African consulate in Houston while challenging the country’s policies on apartheid and attempting to secure an invitation for Winnie Mandela at the Peace Tent. Together, she and Genevieve also traveled to Switzerland and Iceland as members of the Women for a Meaningful Summit (WMS).

These experiences and more are showcased in a new online exhibit launched by the Rapoport Center in May, entitled, “Frances T. ‘Sissy’ Farenthold: Her Work for Human Rights.” The exhibit features a selection of scanned documents from Sissy’s papers, as well as video interviews that Gina Bastone (project coordinator) and Professor Karen Engle (Law, co-director Rapoport Center) conducted with Sissy and Genevieve Vaughan. It was developed in collaboration with the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, which is the repository of Sissy’s papers.

“Gen and Sissy really staged a coup at Nairobi with the Peace Tent … as you will find little documentation for it, these oral interviews are crucial.”

- Arvonne Fraser

The hope is that the website will contribute to historical knowledge not only about Sissy but about the work with which she was involved. After viewing the online exhibit, pioneering international women’s rights advocate, Arvonne Fraser, said “Gen and Sissy really staged a coup at Nairobi with the Peace Tent, which was a centerpiece at the Nairobi NGO Forum. Those two were the inspiration and funders for it and, as you will find little documentation for it, these oral interviews are crucial.”

Indeed, the response to the site has been so overwhelmingly positive that the Center plans to expand the project to cover other areas of Farenthold’s life and work. Engle looks forward to continuing to work on the project and offering a new generation of students and scholars the opportunity to participate and learn more about Sissy’s life and work. The project is especially important to the Rapoport Center, not simply because of Sissy’s past but because of her ongoing commitment to human rights, represented in part by her role as a member of the Center’s advisory board. “Sissy’s resolute commitment to the advancement of human rights continues to be an inspiration for all the work we do,” noted Engle. “We are honored to have the opportunity to showcase her work in this way.”

The exhibit can be found at: www.rapoportcenter.org/farenthold/
The conference also publicly introduced the partnership begun nearly four years prior between the AHPN, the Rapport Center, the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LILIAS), and UT Libraries, wherein the AHPN designated UT as the repository for its entire digitized contents, and UT pledged to expand public access to the Archive’s materials and advance their use in research and advocacy.

“This information cannot be hidden and it cannot be denied because it is accessible and preserved forever.” —Gustavo Meoño

The week after the conference at UT, a delegation comprised of Karen Engle, Fred Heath, Christian Kelleher (Archivist, Benson Latin American Collection) and Professor Daniel Brinks (Government; co-director Rapport Center), attended an event at the AHPN in Guatemala City to unveil the digital archive to the people of Guatemala and to promote the accessibility of information around the globe. At the event, Brinks commented that “This is a very important moment toward the construction of a new democracy in Guatemala.”

The conference was sponsored by the Bernard and Audre Rapport Center for Human Rights and Justice, the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas Libraries, the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, and the Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional de Guatemala. The conference was supported by the School of Law, the Department of Government, the Department of History, and the Department of Spanish & Portuguese.
Conference Explores the Promises and Pitfalls of Property Rights for the Human Rights Agenda

Are the poor better or worse off when property rights are secure? Should we think of property rights as a hindrance to, or an integral part of, the human rights agenda? Under what conditions can formal property rights advance or impede justice? These were just a few of the questions addressed during the Rapoport Center’s eighth annual conference, “Property Rights and the Human Rights Agenda,” held March 1-2, 2012.

By bringing together an impressive array of scholars from Africa, Latin America, and South Asia, the conference made possible an exchange of viewpoints that arose from many contexts and histories. The conversation uncovered changing conceptions of property, differing views on the role of property rights in disposition and redistribution, and the implications of private titling for poor people in varying contexts. “With such a diversity of participants, the idea was that everyone would benefit from the exchange — to think about issues in ways they had not before,” said Professor Karen Engle (Law; co-director Rapoport Center).

“One goal of the Asia conference was to see how far we could get in sorting out these Latin American and African comparisons,” said Professor Catherine Boone (Government). Boone went on to note that in Latin America there is a long tradition — from the mid-20th century land reform movements to the human rights movement today — of using property rights to redistribute power in society. “Some aspects of the African experience resonate clearly with those in Latin America while others reveal interesting inversions of the Latin American logics and priorities.”

“This conference not only revealed luminously the contested nature of the concept of property, but also provided clear comparative illustrations of how transformation of the dominant model of property can take place.”

- Dennis Davis

Professor Lungisile Ntsebeza (Univ. of Cape Town, South Africa) argued that the strong right to property in South Africa’s constitution prevents the state from addressing the country’s existing unjust distribution of land, and thus tends to harm the poor. In contrast, Professor Sebastian Elias (Univ. de San Andrés, Argentina) maintained that in Argentina, when constitutional property protections are removed, the wealthy have the resources — political, social, and economic — to benefit, while the poor are disproportionately harmed. In response, Professor Daniel Brinks (Government; co-director Rapoport Center) noted, “We need to think about how distributive decisions are made under different property rights regimes. Would the have-nots do better in the halls of justice, arguing for their right to property, or in the halls of parliament or the streets, arguing for redistribution?”

Another series of contrasting perspectives surrounded the property rights of squatters. Professor Priya Gupta (Jindal Global University, India) contended that formal property rights often fail to recognize the full nature of the holdings that poor people value. Under many slum clearing programs, “People lose the right to exist in public space, even when they do not have access to private space. The idea of ‘a human right to property,’” she concluded, “gives excessive protection to property.” In contrast, Judge Dennis Davis (High Court of Cape Town, South Africa) described a case in which the South African courts found a middle ground, using the constitutional right to housing to grant squatters the right to stay on private property while compensating the owner of that property. The contrast suggests that the right to property can, but need not, be hostile to the needs of squatters.

In his concluding remarks, David Kennedy (Harvard University), suggested that an overly rigid notion of property rights is not a helpful tool for expanding human rights. This creates a zero-sum game, he argued, in which one only gains at the expense of another. “The challenge for the field of human rights is to create a non-zero-sum situation where the security of both parties increases.”

Reflecting on the event, Judge Davis added that “This conference not only revealed luminously the contested nature of the concept of property, but also provided clear comparative illustrations of how transformation of the dominant model of property can take place.”

The conference was co-sponsored by the Center for Global Energy, International Arbitration, and Environmental Law, the Department of Government, the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law, the South Asia Institute, the School of Law, the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies - all at the University of Texas at Austin - and by the Institute for Global Law and Policy at Harvard University.

Sebastian Elias poses a question to panelists about changing conceptions of property. Photo by Steph Swope.

Keynote Speaker Carol Rose discusses theories of property at the closing panel. Photo by Steph Swope.
Every year the Rapoport Center hosts a Human Rights Happy Hour Speaker Series with the goal of creating dialogue around a wide variety of contemporary human rights issues. This year’s speakers came from as far as Chile and Argentina to present works in progress so that the participants might be involved in the development of their work. UT faculty members served as respondents for each of the talks. Audio recordings of the talks are available at: www.rapoportcenter.org/events/speaker-series-archive.php

Speaker Series Explores Diverse Topics in Human Rights

Inderpal Grewal
Professor and Chair of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Yale University

“Humanitarian Citizenship and Race: Katrina and the Global War on Terror”

Grewal’s talk focused on the creation of the neoliberal citizen as an individual who has come to replace the state as the main provider for others in need.

Respondent: Barbara Harlow (English); Co-sponsor: Center for Women’s & Gender Studies

Jorge Contesse
Professor and Director of the Center for Human Rights, Universidad Diego Portales

“Inter-American Constitutionalism: The Creation and Internalization of Human Rights”

Contesse discussed new types of legal claims being brought before the Inter-American System and, by way of example, his involvement in a case surrounding the custodial rights of a lesbian mother.

Respondent: Daniel Brinks (Government; Rapoport Center); Co-sponsor: LILAS

Catalina Smulovitz
Professor and Director, Political Science and International Relations, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella

“Legal Inequality and Domestic Violence. Who Gets What and When at the Subnational Level?”

Smulovitz examined the disparities in the level of legal protection afforded to victims of domestic violence among different provinces in Argentina.

Respondent: Ariel Dalitsky (Law; Human Rights Clinic); Co-sponsors: LILAS, Center for Women’s & Gender Studies

Benjamin Gregg
Associate Professor of Government, University of Texas at Austin

“The Social Construction of Human Rights in Africa”

Gregg argued that we should understand human rights as the product of an emerging consensus within a particular political community, rather than as derived from divine or natural law.

Respondent: Catherine Boone (Government)

Henry Steiner
Jeremiah Smith, Jr. Professor of Law, Emeritus, Harvard University

“Muslims in Europe: Multiculturalism, Cultural Clash, Human Rights”

Steiner’s talk examined recent legal debates over the banning of head scarves in France. Pointing to France’s colonial past, Steiner argued that anxiety surrounding the head scarf reflects an attitude that “In France, you’re either French or Muslim; you’re not both.”

Respondent: Kamran Ali (Anthropology; South Asia Institute)

Tara Melish
Associate Professor of Law & Director, Human Rights Center, University at Buffalo Law School, SUNY

“From Monuments to Ladders: Collapsing Social Rights Typologies into a New Enforcement-Oriented Schema”

Melish considered theoretical distinctions in human rights law often used to divide economic and social from civil and political rights, arguing for a new classification schema that would facilitate the enforcement of the former.

Respondent: Daniel Brinks (Government; Rapoport Center)

John Ciociarri
Assistant Professor of Public Policy, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor

“Archiving Memory after Mass Atrocities”

Discussing human rights archives in places as diverse as Cambodia and Guatemala, Ciociarri advocated for what he termed a “foundational” approach to the documentation of mass atrocities in societies emerging from civil war, state collapse, or morale.


Partnerships between the University of Texas (UT) and community organizations in the Austin area might seem to provide obvious benefits to both parties. In the best scenarios, students acquire on-the-ground experience while advancing the goals of local organizations. Yet, there are some additional and complicating factors to consider. What does it mean to have a reciprocal relationship between UT and the community? How can UT adequately prepare students to work in communities? And, one of the biggest challenges: How can UT promote coherence in these partnerships on a semester timeline?

In March, Dr. Rick Battistoni, a professor of Political Science and Public and Community Service Studies at Providence College and a member of the board of trustees of the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation, led a community engagement workshop to address some of these concerns. Co-sponsored by the Rapoport Center and the Bridging Disciplines Program of the School of Undergraduate Studies, the workshop brought together UT faculty from a variety of disciplines who include community engagement in their courses, along with a few of their students. The purpose of the workshop was to spark a campus-wide discussion in which those individuals working with community partners could share successful strategies and discuss opportunities for improvement.

Participating student Gloria Delgadillo (Communication Studies & Human Relations), a senior in the Bridging Disciplines Program, found the workshop invaluable as she looks forward to a career in the non-profit arena. “I realized that community engagement is an extremely delicate practice; we should always be mindful of the impact we may be having on the community.”

Rick Battistoni. Photo courtesy of Providence College.
Working Groups Collaborate on Human Rights Efforts

When the FBI showed up at Ricardo Dominguez's research lab at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) in 2010, the allegations were quite serious. The United States belived Dominguez was using public funds to create treasonous technology. The technology? A GPS cell phone network that helps individuals cross the treacherous desert surrounding the US-Mexico border. Dominguez’s response: this is not technology; this is art.

Dominguez is an associate professor at UCSD and a co-founder of The Electronic Disturbance Theater, a group that developed virtual-sit-in technologies in 1998. The technology; this is art.

The technology? A GPS cell phone network that helps in avoiding border controls. Dominguez talks about his work as an "artivist." Photo by Courtney Lee.

The Health and Human Rights Working Group was one of the Center’s three ongoing working groups. The Health and Human Rights Working Group, which was formed to raise awareness of the relationships between health and human rights, kept especially busy this last year with a number of projects related to the global HIV/AIDS pandemic.

With support from the UT Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, the Working Group kicked off the year by hosting human rights advocate Tsegaye Jackson Kaguri, the author of A School for My Village: A Promise to the Orphans of Nyaka. Collaborating with the Center for Health and Social Policy at the LBJ School of Public Affairs, the Working Group also hosted Dr. Bonnie Maldonado (Stanford University), a Professor of Pediatrics and Health Research, who detailed the inherent challenges of being born into the world with HIV/AIDS - a disease almost entirely avoidable with modern therapies.

On December 1st, the Group hosted its 5th Annual World AIDS Day Conference with support from FACE AIDS and the Department of English. This year's keynote speaker, Kane Race (University of Sydney), spoke on the conference's theme of AIDS, Health, and Criminality, while Guli Fager (HealthPromotion Resource Center) presented studies on the misconceptions and practices of sexuality by college youth.

"With the [Human Rights and the Arts] workshops, we are attempting to build a space for intellectual, theoretical, and critical exchange.” - Luis Cárcamo-Huechante

The Health and Human Rights Working Group also held biweekly meetings to discuss conceptual and theoretical debates concerning health and human rights. "The Health and Human Rights Working Group brings together people from different backgrounds to engage in an interdisciplinary discussion about the intersection of health issues and human rights both nationally and internationally," noted Matt Flynn, Rapoport Center Post-doctoral Fellow in Health and Human Rights.

The Border Wall Working Group continued to work with undergraduate and graduate interns to sift through the large pile of documents related to the construction of the Texas-Mexico border wall that the Working Group received from the Department of Homeland Security as the result of a Freedom of Information Act request in 2008.

Azat and Akhtiyor (left to right): Matt Flynn, Charlotte Nunes, and Neville Head. Photo courtesy of Matt Flynn.

Affiliated faculty and graduate students may join an existing working group or propose their own by contacting the Center. We welcome your participation and your ideas!

Working Paper Series Showcases Cutting-Edge Human Rights Research

Now in its second year, the WPS published nine papers in 2011-2012 from legal scholars as well as from literary scholars, an anthropologist, and a sociologist. The papers addressed reparations, amnesty, poverty, health, women’s rights, armed conflict, human rights archives, and the human rights movement.

The process of publishing the WPS has provided a way for graduate and professional students to work with each other and UT faculty to engage in the study of human rights. “The opportunity to contribute to the WPS and work with both the interdisciplinary faculty-student editorial board and with contributing authors has been a unique learning experience,” noted PhD candidate Amina Zarrugh (Sociology), head of the editorial committee. “I have appreciated most the intellectual atmosphere we have sought to promote, which is one of critical engagement from the time of paper review to publication.”

In addition to publishing, WPS editors also collaborate with Sao Paulo-based Sur: International Journal of Human Rights by editing the English translations of their articles, which are primarily written in Spanish and Portuguese. Through this partnership, the WPS hopes to expand human rights dialogue across linguistic borders. Read and comment on WPS papers at: blogs.utexas.edu/rapoportcenter/wp

Congratulations to Genevieve Renard Painter, winner of the 2011 Audre Rapoport Prize for Scholarship on Gender and Humans Rights for her article “Thinking Past Rights: Towards Feminist Theories of Reparations.” Painter is a doctoral student in Jurisprudence and Social Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, where her work focuses on reparations for survivors of violent conflict. The paper is published online in the Center’s Working Paper Series (see above) and also on the Center’s website. The competition’s judges, which include distinguished scholars from UT and abroad, selected Painter’s paper in an anonymous contest that received more than 30 submissions from nine countries.

In her paper, Painter argues against the dominant conceptions of reparations as individual rights, symbols, or processes. Instead, she develops an approach to...
Petroleum Art Exhibit Provides Inspiration

The suite that houses the Rapoport Center, the Center for Global Energy, International Arbitration, and Environmental Law, and the Center for Women in Law doubled as an art gallery for much of the past year. The beautiful and bright panels of Extra Virgin Petrus Oil, a series by Mery Godigna Collet, have provided decor and stimulated conversation in the suite’s hallways and conference room. Over 50 guests, from both inside and outside the law school, attended a reception on June 13 thanking the artist for her work.

Godigna Collet is one Venezuela’s most notable visual artists today. Her work, much of which is characterized by the use of natural fibers as a vivid commentary on the environment, has been featured in museums and galleries throughout Latin America, the US, and Europe. The exhibit was comprised of three pieces titled Pure Energy, Sweet Oil, and MV Solar I. It highlights our comprehensive relationship to petroleum through the medium of oil itself. The fluidity and depth of each canvas are fixed behind a glossy finish that invites reflection. Interrupting the smooth surfaces are patches of sugar cane or vegetable fiber interspersed throughout-out the pieces.

At the reception, Professor Karen Engle (Law; co-director Rapoport Center) noted how the artwork literally “framed our year,” from being featured in our property rights conference to inspiring everyday appreciation that brought together the work of the three centers. “Not only does the work address issues of our dependence on oil as an energy source and on the human rights consequences of that reliance, but it does so from the perspective of a female artist.”

The exhibition in collaboration with the Petroleum Museum in Midland, Texas, and, after its stay at UT, was headed to Nina Torres Fine Art and the International Art Fair, both in Miami. Although the collection has moved on, Mery graciously donated a panel from Pure Energy to the centers for permanent display.

Learn more about Mery at: www.merygodignacollet.com

Donors & Sponsors

Ambassador ($5,000 or more)
The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation
Mery Godigna Collet
Orloan L. and Ronnie Karpen Moffitt Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Law
The Planetlad Foundation
UT Center for Global Energy, International Arbitration and Environmental Law
UT School of Law
UT Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies
Advocate ($2,000-$4,999)
Mike Morton & Critical Path Strategies
UT Department of Government
UT Libraries
UT Strauss Center for International Security and Law
Supporter ($500-$1,999)
Robert D. King
Judson Wood, Jr.
Harvard Law School Institute for Global Law & Policy
UT Department of History
UT Dolph Briscoe Center for American History
UT South Asia Institute
Contributor ($100-$499)
Margaret A. Eubank
Frances T. Farenthold
Audrey Hendricks
Karen Holst
Bobby R. Harman
James M. Phillips
Thomas E. Quigley
Melinda B. Rahabals
Philip F. Ricketts
Jody E. Schechter
Della G. Salas
John B. Wallace
Ira Yates
UT Center for Women’s and Gender Studies
Friend ($1-$99)
Alice C. Bailey
Carolyn N. Carter
Kelly D. Davis
Gregory S. Kraus
Kerry Williford
Jill R.玑
Joshua D. Pleitz
Happy J. Rahman
Timothy C. Shaw
Shannon G. Sims

Alumni Spotlight: Parisa Fatehi-Weeks

Rapoport Center alumni are an important part of our growing network as they graduate and move on from UT. This year, we are spotlighting Fatehi-Weeks, a 2005-2006 Rapoport Center alumna who is currently working as a staff attorney at Public Advocates Inc. in San Francisco, CA. Her job is to ensure that California’s climate change reform delivers benefits rather than burdens to low-income communities and communities of color in California.

It was at the Center, during her time as a law student at UT, that Fatehi-Weeks began to understand the intersection of human rights study and practice. “It had the opportunity to facilitate collaborations among Center-affiliated faculty, even if they worked on very different issues,” she said. “I benefited from observing the ways in which they wove academics and the practice of human rights law together.”

After her time as a Human Rights Scholar, she served on the City of Austin’s Commission on Immigrant Affairs and the Day Labor Community Advisory Committee. After graduating, she clerked for Federal District Judge D. Gilmore of the Southern District of Texas. We are happy to have Parisa in our alumni network and encourage other Center alumni to stay in touch!

Parisa Fatehi-Weeks, Photograph courtesy of Parisa Fatehi-Weeks.

Thank You to Our 2011-2012 Steering Committee Member

Susan S. Heinzelman, English, Center for Women’s & Gender Studies
Clement Henry, Government
Richard H. Hays, Religious Studies
Heather Hindman, Asian Studies
Barbara Hinse, Law
Neville Howd, Anthropology
Kristen Hogan, Center for Women’s & Gender Studies
Juliet Hooks, Government
Gary Jacobsen, Government
Robert Jensen, Journalism
Derek Jinns, Law
Christian Kelleher, Benson Latin American Collection
Robert King, Linguistics
Alan Kuperman, Public Affairs
Jennifer Laurin, Law
Mark Lawrence, History
Jeffrey Leon, Philosophy
Samantha Levinson, Law
Ray Marshall, Public Affairs
Troy M. Myers, History
John McKiernan-Gonzalez, History
Robin Moore, Ethnomusicology
Forest A. Noey, Social Work
Naomi Paik, American Studies
Kathleen Panoff, Texas Performing Arts
Gabriela Polito, Spanish & Portuguese
Jonathan Pratter, Tarlton Law Library
Joe Randel, Texas Performing Arts
John W. Rankin, Law
Judith Rhedin, Texas Performing Arts
Greichen Ritter, Government
Bryan R. Roberts, Sociology
Sharmila Rudrappa, History
Christine E. Schmidt, Engineering
Megan Seaham, History
Seonhal Shingavi, English
Stephen Stepnick, Ethnomusicology
Christen Smith, Anthropology
Shannon Speed, Anthropology
Denise A. Spellberg, History
Jordan Steiker, Law
Paula M. Strong, Anthropology, Humanities Institute
Gerald Torres, Law
Rebecca M. Torres, Geography & the Environment
John H. Vargas, Anthropology
David W. Voel, Public Affairs
Lyn Wiltshire, Theatre & Dance
Zipporah Wiseman, Law

17
THE YEAR TO COME

HUMAN RIGHTS HAPPY HOUR SPEAKER SERIES

September 25, 2012

JAMES GIBSON, Sidney W. Souers Professor of Government and Director of the Program on Citizenship and Democratic Values, Washington University in St. Louis

“Elected Judges: The Surprising Effects of Campaigning on Judicial Legitimacy”

October 16, 2012

MALA HTUN, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of New Mexico

“Politics of Inclusion: Women, Afrodescendants, and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America”

October 23, 2012

CLIFFORD CARRUBBA, Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for the Study of Law, Politics, and Economics, Emory University
MATTHEW GABEL, Professor and Associate Chair of the Department of Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis


November 6, 2012

JONATHAN MILLER, Professor of Law, Southwestern Law School

“Borrowing a Constitution: The U.S. Constitution in Argentina and the Heyday of the Argentine Supreme Court (1853-1930)”

November 13, 2012

KEITH BANTING, Professor of Political Studies and Policy Studies and Queen’s Chair in Public Policy, Queen’s University

“Is There Really an International Backlash Against Multiculturalism Policies? New Evidence from the Multiculturalism Policy Index”

CONFERENCES

December 1, 2012

World AIDS Day Conference

The sixth annual World AIDS Day Conference will explore various aspects of the global HIV/AIDS pandemic.

February 28 - March 1, 2013

Annual Conference

“Impunity, Justice and the Human Rights Agenda”

This conference will bring together scholars, human rights advocates, and policy makers to assess critically the human rights movement’s focus on anti-impunity.