

**MARC program**

ASU program aims to increase the number of minority students in research careers.

**Islam studies**

Professor sheds light on modern debate.

**Indian law**

ASU's Indian Legal Program grows as tribal law expands.

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# ASU Insight

## ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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2008

### Strength in diversity

## ASU community fosters, reflects diversity in goal of higher education

By Delia Saenz

Along with its enrollment, Arizona State University is growing in diversity. In unveiling the university's strategic plan for diversity a year ago, ASU Executive Vice President and Provost Elizabeth D. Capaldi reinforced the role of inclusion in the New American University goal of knowledge advancement.

As we progress into a highly globalized 21st century, ASU is responding to the acute demand for an education that reflects a broad set of cultures, social and political perspectives, and approaches to learning that is mirrored in the diverse demographic composition of regions throughout the world, as well as Arizona's own growing population.

In building its international faculty and staff; advancing innovative research and curriculum that crosses disciplinary lines; and supplying a vast array of access programs for its growing and divergent student body, ASU is creating a microcosm of today's world and providing students with the opportunities and tools they will need for a successful and seamless transition from the classroom to an increasingly global workplace.

In this special edition of *Insight*, I would like to offer a glimpse of the myriad ways in which ASU's commitment and approach to diversity emerge in our scholarship, teaching and outreach, as well as in the constituents who comprise our workforce. I invite you to think critically about the ideas expressed in these stories; I urge you to compare ASU's ongoing universitywide efforts to your own in making your community more representative; and I ask that you contribute your own efforts to the goal of inclusion at Arizona State University.

### Understanding diversity

The term 'diversity' evokes different images, meanings and sentiments for different people. For some, diversity is associated with increasing specifically the number of women and minority members in the workplace and in the student population. For others, diversity translates into legalistic directives that impose constraints on hiring. And still for others, diversity is a concept that arouses emotions ranging from resentment to excitement.

Diversity is, in fact, complex particularly if we consider that the concept, by definition, captures the 'sine qua non' of a given organization, community or society. A quick perusal of any setting in which we find ourselves – a classroom, an office, a restaurant – surely provides ample evidence of the difference that comprises the human tapestry, a tapestry that we aspire to understand.

Within the university environment, for example, diversity may manifest along numerous dimensions. It can reflect standard demographic attributes such as age, race, gender, class and sexual orientation; ideologies that include political and religious systems of beliefs; disciplinary perspectives and methodologies; and other characteristics related to socio-historical positioning such as immigration status, first-generation status and language proficiency.

It is the overall array of these differences that creates the



Delia Saenz

meaning of diversity for our institution. Our students, faculty, staff and administrators contribute to this understanding of diversity that serves not to characterize individuals, but a complete organization. Therefore diversity is measured by the inclusion of persons who collectively account for a broad range of perspectives, knowledge and talents.

Beyond the differences reflected in the members of our university community, diversity also conveys disparate connotations. Some worry that diversity is incompatible with excellence, whereas others see the two as inextricably linked. Adherents to the former position see diversity as problematic and therefore, are inclined to hire or recruit the usual suspects through the usual processes in an effort to maintain a known trajectory. By comparison, adherents to the latter position might choose to capitalize on opportunities to try something different, to stretch their proverbial boundaries, and to use the synergy to generate new approaches and knowledge.

### Implications of diversity

What does diversity mean for you? What does diversity mean for ASU? At minimum, diversity means exposure to difference, which leads to increased understanding.

For Arizona State University, diversity in our curriculum, research, faculty and student body leads to a stronger higher learning institution that is more equipped for and responsive to a 21st century world.

*Saenz is the vice provost for Undergraduate Education and Institutional Inclusion at Arizona State University.*

## Professor's work hinges on inclusivity

By Steve Des Georges

We're chunky stew.

That's the analogy David Coon uses when he discusses inclusion at ASU, where he is a professor of psychology in the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences.

And, like his fellow ASU faculty members, he is working with his students to bring together the ingredients in a tasty porridge that encourages availability, accessibility and acceptability in their thinking.

"My research and interests are woven into the classroom and lab lessons, and are tailored to meet the unique needs of underrepresented populations," Coon says.

For nearly two decades, Coon has been involved in the development and implementation of community intervention programs serving diverse populations, and in the training and supervision of mental health professionals and trainees to assist distressed older adults and family caregivers.

"One of the key benefits of working with different groups is the opportunity to transfer lessons learned from one group into effective intervention strategies for another," he says.

Coon grew up in Bartlesville, Okla. His family set the groundwork for what would become Coon's life passion.

"My parents, and one grandmother in particular, instilled in me an ethic of care, grounded in social action and social concerns," he says. "At an early age, I was concerned about barriers that were faced by underserved populations. I became aware of the importance of three key considerations: the availability of programs and services, the accessibility of those programs and services, and their acceptability by those who needed them.

"We have different patterns and ways of being in this world. My interest in the discovery of these unique and shared approaches helps guide my work."



David Coon

Coon's family-directed life lessons have come full circle as he guides undergraduate and graduate students through their coursework. He earned bachelor's degrees in foreign service and public affairs, and in linguistics and cross-cultural communication, from the University of Oklahoma, as well as a master's degree in counseling from the university. He received his doctorate in counseling psychology from Stanford University in 1996 and was a postdoctoral fellow in geropsychology in 1997. He has taught at ASU since 2004.

His research is well known and nationally recognized. As a fellow of the Gerontological Society of America, he has provided important information on the adaptability of social and behavioral interventions for Latina caregivers tending to loved ones with Alzheimer's disease. He also is one of the first to systematically look at cross-generation issues in the transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

"David has made fundamental contributions to the field of gerontology," says Marcia Ory, a professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Health at Texas A&M's School of Rural Public Health. "A specific contribution is his testing innovative interventions in diverse settings and populations, thus expanding the current knowledge base. He is an excellent educator (who) continues to motivate students to see the importance of working with older adults on social and behavioral issues."

In his teaching, Coon emphasizes to his students that their thinking must take in multiple perspectives.

"I want them to think critically about what they read, hear and are exposed to, and I want them to think about these things from multiple perspectives and to become excited about it. I want them to be the catalysts in developing and delivering programs that help address disparities in our society."

*Des Georges, with Public Affairs at the West campus, can be reached at (602) 543-5220 or stephen.desgeorges@asu.edu.*

## Preparing students for 21st century challenges

As the university's commitment to diversity and community service flourished, so too did my ability to bridge the divide between ideas and the demands of what the 1970s funk group, the Crusaders, labeled "Street Life" – the life lived by Sly Stone's "Everyday People."

My belief that attitude often reflects leadership fuels my conviction that I must use all resources at my disposal to engender positive change and prepare our students to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Pushing students to think analytically about history will help them discover and appreciate the interconnectedness of the past and present. Since my teaching primarily focuses on civil and human rights, African American history and life, and the intersection of race, class and gender in American history and life, it is vital that I help students develop informed, logical considerations of these often marginalized, misrepresented and highly politicized topics.

I am truly fulfilled when my teaching inspires students to re-conceptualize and grow intellectually.

To educate students about the histories of the marginalized and disinherited of this land without being adversarial, I depersonalize my subject matter. My instruction and public lectures are conducted in a non-threatening manner, as my goal is to educate, not alienate. I stress the connections amongst power, privilege and perception, noting that these factors often render people and their histories nonessential by virtue of their race, class, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexuality.

I also believe that collaboration ignites innovation and progress, which was affirmed in 2008 when I, along with several partners from the City of Phoenix, City of Tempe, Maricopa County Community Colleges, and Maricopa County, was granted the Excellence in Diversity Award by the National League of Cities for our Healing Racism Community Dialogue Series in the Greater Phoenix Metropolitan area.

I seek to make history accessible, absorbing, inspiring and fun. This approach motivates students to embrace learning and critical



Matthew Whitaker

thinking, and to see history from diverse viewpoints. In order to accomplish this goal, I participate regularly in projects involving K-12 grade students and community activities.

These activities assist me in providing "real world" context to the issues I engage in the classroom. Being socially "embedded" in the ASU and Phoenix communities enables me to bring to the classroom evidence that practical applications of historical knowledge can improve lives as well as the quality of life in the very communities that produce many of our students.

I show my students, as historian Gerder Lerner wrote, "why history matters." Students appreciate these connections, and become more interested about learning as a result.

Above all, it is my charge to promote and facilitate the comprehension of and appreciation for history, and to inspire ASU students to learn from the past to help build a more positive future.

My greatest asset as a teacher is my passion for my subject and my desire to help each of my students maximize their potential as human beings, citizens, students and professionals-in-the-making.

I, therefore, teach with eagerness, enthusiasm, intellectual integrity and rigor, and a sense of civic duty.

– **Matthew C. Whitaker** is an associate professor of history in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He is an activist who has worked with religious leaders and policy-makers, and is the author of "Race Work: The Rise of Civil Rights in the Urban West" and "African American Icons of Sports: Triumph, Courage, and Excellence."

His forthcoming book, "Hurricane Katrina: America's Unnatural Disaster" which he co-edited, documents the consequences of apathy, racism, sexism and classism. Proceeds from the book will be donated to Common Ground Relief in New Orleans.

# di•verse

adj. dissimilar, varied; markedly different

Arizona State University defines diversity as the commitment to reflect and explore the varied ideas and approaches, and divergent attitudes and perspectives, of its students, faculty, staff, and leaders and citizens from *all over the world*.

As ASU and the state of Arizona continue to develop, so does the university's reflection of diversity. Through its faculty, research, teaching, student body, programs and initiatives, campus environment, as well as the arts, Arizona State University defines what a 21st century education is – diverse.

## ASU Art Museum reflects modern ideas of identity

Identity is one of the overarching themes in the ASU Art Museum's *The Other Mainstream II* exhibit, as well as a major theme in the landscape of 21st century art.

Both collective and individual identities are being explored in the arts, but what interests me about the content of this exhibition is the revisionist work that is being done with deeply entrenched stereotypes.

There is power in an individual having the opportunity to represent oneself in a manner that subverts traditional stereotypes, giving a voice to previously silenced groups of people. Sometimes this is done overtly and other times more subtly.

The first time I saw the work that would make up *The Other Mainstream II* exhibition, I was struck by the quantity of people gazing back at me from the canvases. Some of them were masked, others in silhouette, some meeting my eyes, others looking somewhere beyond me. There was a salient visual theme, but I wondered about the artists' intentions.

Mickalene Thomas' *Quanikah #2* was one of the works that captured my attention. Thomas' work draws on images of black power reminiscent of the Blaxploitation of the 1970s set against a backdrop of flamboyant decorative patterns that she remembers from her childhood in the 70s. Her oeuvre explores notions of idealized beauty norms, challenging them with her renderings of powerful and seductive figures that reside outside of the mainstream. Even her surfaces, covered with rhinestones and shiny acrylics, entice the viewer to look.



**Mickalene Thomas' *Quanikah #2*, part of *The Other Mainstream II* exhibition on display at ASU Art Museum, probes issues of identity in subverting stereotypes.**



PHOTO BY DIANE WALLACE

Part of the Herberger College of the Arts, the ASU Art Museum is home to an array of international collections. One of its current exhibits *The Other Mainstream II* explores identity's revision of entrenched stereotypes.

Thomas' work illustrates something Toni Morrison writes about in her 1970 novel, *"The Bluest Eye."* In an exemplary scene, the protagonist, Claudia, and sister, Frieda, have an altercation with their white classmate, Maureen, which ends in a storm of hurtful insults. Maureen, defending herself, says that she is cute and that her black counterparts – Claudia and Frieda – are ugly, "black and ugly." The scene ends with a painful and insightful passage about the "wisdom, accuracy and relevance" of Maureen's last words as Claudia muses about the binary reality of her world. If white, rich, well-dressed Maureen is cute, then Claudia – opposite of Maureen in every way – is ugly. Maureen's approval from classmates, teachers and parents is juxtaposed to the disapproval Claudia meets from everyone around her. The chapter concludes with Claudia's realization that the enemy is not really Maureen: "The thing to fear was the thing that made her beautiful and not us."

The "thing" that Morrison writes about is the premise of Thomas' work. *Quanikah #2*, along with many other works in *The Other Mainstream II* exhibition, recants the beauty and power inscribed in the annals of visual culture while creating an alternate representation of identity.

And to me, that is beautiful.

– Lekha Hileman Waitoller is a graduate student of art history and theory at ASU, and is curatorial intern at ASU Art Museum. Waitoller conducted research and assisted in presenting *The Other Mainstream II* exhibition, which includes the painting *Quanikah #2*.

## ASU efforts help minority students access research roles

Nationally, less than 50 percent of minority students studying science, math and engineering graduate with degrees in the sciences. The movement of underrepresented students into research careers also remains well below acceptable levels, despite organized efforts at the national level to channel exceptional students into graduate research.

The obstacles to success for minority students in science are both societal and institutional, and improving the diversity of biomedical researchers is a major national challenge. ASU has addressed the national challenges of retention and training through the creation of the Minority Access to Research Careers Program (MARC) program, funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The program's goal is to increase the number of research-capable students from

underrepresented and underserved groups in research careers in science and math. This program targets juniors and seniors at ASU and is administered by Jennifer Fewell, co-director of the Center for Social Dynamics and Complexity and professor in the School of Life Sciences in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In the program, students receive assistance with tuition and fees, stipends, and support for career development and applications to graduate schools, in addition to travel funds to attend scientific meetings and present their research findings.

For more than 15 years, ASU has been a national leader in training undergraduates in research. As part of this effort, the School of Life Sciences, which houses MARC, has expanded its undergraduate research program and created the School of Life Science Undergraduate Research

(SOLUR) program, serving more than 100 undergraduates across all science disciplines, with some supporting funds from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

"Bringing MARC into this network of undergraduate research training has intensified and added breadth to the program, and boosted services to a larger undergraduate population, as well as enhanced access to resources for curricular and research activities for underrepresented and underserved students," Fewell says.

This year, Fewell received the Patricia Gurin Scholar-Activist Award and Commission on the Status of Women Outstanding Achievement and Contribution Award for her efforts to enhance the lives of women and underrepresented minorities at ASU.

For more information, visit <http://sols.asu.edu/ugrad/marc/index.php>.

## Phoenix Urban Research Lab responds to metro diversity

How would metropolitan Phoenix work – spatially, socially, ecologically – if our architecture and urban design were inspired by local culture and social and geographic conditions? The Phoenix Urban Research Lab at ASU is working on the answer.

By Nancy Levinson

In the decades after World War II, Phoenix grew phenomenally, providing opportunities for families, immigrants, retirees, and sunbirds – and spreading out in every direction into the desert, burgeoning from 17 square miles in 1950 to today's vast agglomeration of 500 square miles and counting.

Yet little of this astonishing urban growth has been responsive to our Southwestern setting, to the extreme heat and fierce sun of the Sonoran Desert, or to the diverse cultures that have settled here. Our air-conditioned buildings are mostly generic constructions – the same mass-produced housing and commercial development you find from coast to coast, with a few gestures toward the "local," like ersatz clay tile roofs or a scattering of saguaros.

Our arterials and expressways are standard-issue highway engineering, wide rights-of ways that take you to fast food franchises and big-box sprawl marcs circled by blacktopped lots sized for holiday parking.

Postwar Phoenix, to put it plainly, is less a desert city than a classic American suburb – car-centric and low-density, and impressively extensive but ultimately a typical example of what geographer Paul Knox, in a recent book, calls "metroburbia."

At the Phoenix Urban Research Lab, in the College of Design, we are pursuing projects that explore how Phoenix can grow in ways that respond to both local conditions and evolving environmental, economic and social realities.

Current initiatives include the creation of comprehensive design and policy guidelines for "Post-Petroleum Phoenix," a framework for beneficial adaptation to reduce our urban dependence on oil; a series of multimodal transit workshops that focus on expanding the potential of buses, bicycles and regional rail; and, along with the Morrison Institute, a strategic report that examines how to incubate a green innovation economy, comprising not simply solar and other energy technologies, but also what environmental economist David Hess calls the "ecological modernization" of existing industries and commercial practices.

None of these projects began with explicit goals for diversity. Yet it is apparent that an agenda for sus-



Nancy Levinson

tainable urban design – for a post-petroleum Phoenix – would transform our desert metropolis.

Climate-sensitive construction that uses solar technologies and high-performance materials; landscape planning that promotes biodiversity, drought-tolerant plants, and rainwater harvesting; multimodal streets, designed not only for cars but also for light rail, with dedicated bus and bike lanes; generous sidewalks, shaded by trees or arcades, that make walking a pleasure (not a peril); and neighborhoods with desirable density that encourage community commitment and nurture local businesses and cultural groups – all these are green strategies that would enhance our capacity to confront the volatile energy economy and other emerging challenges of a rapidly changing global society. And they would produce what we haven't yet achieved – a more diverse, more distinct urban character, a truly contemporary desert metropolis.

Older desert cities, in Africa and the Middle East, that lack the option to flip on the air conditioning have thrived because they learned to accommodate harsh climates and fragile ecosystems. This is not to suggest that we revert to archaic patterns or styles, but rather that we incorporate old wisdom with new information to catalyze creative solutions.

Back in 1950, when Phoenix was 17 square miles, with 107,000 people, it was the 99th largest U.S. city; the 5th largest was Detroit, with 1.8 million

people. Today, it's Phoenix that ranks 5th, and Detroit, having lost half its population, just barely makes the top 10. Back then, of course, when Detroit was making the cars that filled the roads that changed America, nobody would have imagined that the big U.S. automakers, having stuck too long to old models, would now be on the brink of bankruptcy, and that the Motor City would be among the poorest in the country.

It's a pivotal moment for metro Phoenix – a moment to craft brave and forward-thinking strategies to ensure a better future and a more diverse and resilient Southwestern metropolis.

Levinson is the director of the Phoenix Urban Research Lab.



The Phoenix Urban Research Lab, in the College of Design, pursues projects that explore how Phoenix can grow in ways that respond to its local social, economic and environmental diversity.

## Professor explores indigenous film, literature through contemporary lens

Growing up in a small community of about 300 people on the Navajo reservation, or rez, our entertainment was limited. We didn't have television, so my family drove more than 100 miles to watch movies in the little town of Gallup that had two theatres and one drive-in. It was the 1960s, so we watched a lot of Western movies where Indians were the bad guys, and cowboys were the heroes. Watching these films led me to develop a film course, which is probably the first of its kind at ASU.

"The American Indian in Film and Video: Reel or Real?" surveys images of the American Indian in early Westerns to contemporary films made by Hollywood filmmakers and indigenous filmmakers. We watch and discuss how indigenous peoples were imagined in European Primitivism, as the Noble Savage and as stereotypes in the early Westerns, to films made by contemporary Native filmmakers who employ film as self-definition and to communicate

social and political issues.

In the past, guest filmmakers included award-winning Cedar Shertbert and Blackhorse Lowe. I think students find it interesting to compare and contrast how the film industry has constructed Indians from the early films to contemporary films. It's a class where students watch films, discuss and earn credit.

Most of the courses I've developed are outgrowths of my research interests and personal experience, such as *Indigenous Women's Literature and Indigenous Poetry*. These courses contribute to Native Studies and create a place for indigenous literature alongside western literature and ethnic literature. Raised in a "matrifocal" society where there is no such



Laura Tohe

word as feminism, I wanted to develop a course in which indigenous women's voices and issues are not invisible in the dominant society, but a revelation of the complexities and celebration of their lives and communities.

Guest speakers grounded in traditional indigenous culture supplement the texts. Some of these speakers include Peterson Zah, the advisor to ASU President Michael Crow on Indian Affairs; Evangeline Parsons Yazzie, author and professor at Northern Arizona University; and ASU Professor Simon Ortiz.

It gives me great satisfaction to teach these courses. By the end of the semester students tell me how much they've learned about indigenous worldview and in the process, learned about American history through indigenous voices.

– Laura Tohe is an associate professor of English in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

## Media studies offer professor framework for gender analysis

By Peter Lehman

Cultural diversity is inherent in media research as it connects us broadly both within academia and the community.

As a film studies professor and director of ASU's Center for Film, Media and Popular Culture, one of my research areas focuses on representations of masculinity in the media, a tributary of gender studies.

In 2007, a new edition of my book *"Running Scared: Masculinity and the Representation of the Male Body"* was published. The first edition in 1993 was one of the first film studies books to focus attention on masculinity and the male body. That work was deeply indebted to feminist film theory and criticism, and was done as an extension of it rather than a reaction to it.

In the intervening years between 1993 and the present, many scholars have referred to work in these areas as "gender studies," indicating that we cannot really fully study and understand men and the male body, or women and the female body, separate and in isolation.

And the same is true for gay, lesbian and transgender sexuality.

Movies and popular music belong to everyone, and the Center for Film, Media and Popular Culture uses that to reach out to the community with an emphasis on diverse perspectives.

Last year the center organized a special Roy Orbison Tribute event in partnership with the Tempe Center for the Arts. The tribute included a concert comprised of the Truly Lover Trio playing Orbison's music and the ASU Herberger String Quartet performing the world premier of Kim Scharnberg's "Suite on Tunes by Roy Orbison." I situated Orbison's music for the audience in relation to the black rhythm and blues origins of rock and roll and white Western classical music – two musical traditions Orbison bridged.

One of the profound joys of popular culture in our country is its diversity and our exploration of it.

Lehman is a professor of film studies and the director of ASU's Center for Film, Media and Popular Culture in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. His book *"Running Scared: Masculinity and the Representation of the Male Body"* responds to the absence of critical attention to male sexuality in film by bringing representations of masculinity into the spotlight. In his analysis, Lehman investigates the patriarchal culture that keeps the male body out of sight.



Peter Lehman

## Center links ASU to Latino community

ASU's Center for Community Development and Civil Rights works to bridge the gap between the university and Phoenix's surrounding Latino community.

By Barbara Robles

As an economist in the School of Social Work, I joined the Center for Community Development and Civil Rights, under the direction of Raul Yzaguirre and Alex Perilla, because along with the school, it provided deep ties to the community, as well as an opportunity to expand on research that makes a difference and emphasizes service-learning.

Yzaguirre brings his national influence to bear on two issues the center has identified as top priorities for the economic progress of future generations of the surrounding Latino youth community: the Latino Young Male Dropout Project and the American Dream Academy.

The Latino Young Male Dropout Project speaks directly to the pressing issue among all young male populations, but more markedly among Hispanic, Native American and African American males: a high rate of high school non-completion compared to their female peers. As a response to this disturbing trend, Yzaguirre secured funding from the Ford Foundation to explore this topic in an interdisciplinary setting.

The result was many scholars from a variety of backgrounds discussing the accelerated rate of non-completion and what types of remedies would be successful in reducing and, eventually, reversing the rate of Latino male dropouts.

The center's work on this issue taps into the areas of both high school and undergraduate students – an approach that echoes the New

American University mission: community-participatory and socially embedded research that brings to light different voices contributing a variety of perspectives and first-person testimonies.

The American Dream Academy is aimed at creating a "whole-family/whole-school" synthesis for parents with children in the K-12 public school system while cultivating college-bound aspirations in the entire family.

The program acts as a catalyst for parents with children in the public school system who seek to learn more about how public schools operate, what the parental role in children's educational opportunities are, and how best to advocate for one's own children in an urban public school system that can often leave parents feeling alienated and disempowered.

By offering a nine-week module type program that engages parents in their own communities (in both English and Spanish), the facilitators work to keep parents informed of the school's operational systems and culture, and about their children's educational opportunities, performance and aspirations.

What is uniquely "community-engaging" about this particular service-oriented ASU program is that it creates an opening for families who had not contemplated the university as a partner in their children's educational trajectory. By bringing ASU into the communities of families with children in the Phoenix public school system, a university education does not seem as remote, but instead becomes an aspiration goal.

Robles is an associate professor in the School of Social Work.



Barbara Robles

## Islam studies shed light on modern debate

There exists an urgent need for Western academic scholars, and the public in general, to understand and have access to Islamic literatures. Assistant Professor Souad T. Ali is educating her students on the enormous diversity of modern Islamic thought on issues pertaining to governance and the state.

The publication of the book *"Islam and the Foundations of Rule: Research on the Caliphate and Government in Islam"* ("al-Islam Wa Usul al-Hukm: Bahth Fil Khilafah Wal Hukmah Fil Islam") in Arabic in 1925 by the late Egyptian reformist scholar 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq produced a raging debate in Egypt which continues to this day.

'Abd al-Raziq was the first Azhar-educated scholar with the rank of 'alim to declare that "Islam is a religion, not a state; a message, not a government." More than 80 years after its publication, 'Abd al-Raziq's book continues to receive considerable attention, and his controversial ideas are increasingly debated within intellectual, religious and political circles.

The urgent need for an English translation of this work becomes particularly clear when we consider the continuing political upheaval in the contemporary Islamic world and the current resurgence of Islamic 'fundamentalism' or Islamism ideologies.

The Islamist position, held by such figures as Sayyid Qutb, who died in 1966, and embraced by current radical extremists, is in direct contrast to 'Abd al-Raziq's advocacy of the secular state and his separation of Islam and government.

Unlike Qutb, 'Abd al-Raziq presented his arguments through traditional Islamic jurisprudence, utilizing the Quran, Sunna, Ijma' (consensus) and Qiyas (reasoning by way of analogy), in his contention that Islam is a religion, not a political ideology.

As such, there is a vital need for Western academic scholars, as well as public audiences, to understand and have access to 'Abd al-Raziq's work as a major contribution to the modern debate over Islam and politics.

'Abd al-Raziq's work is part of the enormous diversity of modern Islamic thought on issues of governance and the state. Contrary to some claims, such discourses are indeed rich and diverse, and defy any simplistic binary characterizations of "Islamists" versus "secularists."

My teaching at ASU equally provides enormous diversity within the context of Arab and Islamic culture(s). An example of this is reflected in my class "Quran Text and Women." The inclusion of teaching the Quran text in regard to women's rights in Islam is very important. The issue of Muslim women's human rights is the core of this class.

The course deals with Muslim feminist and

women scholars' arguments for the re-interpretation of the Quran by women to challenge male patriarchal interpretations of the text that have endured for centuries. Many Muslim thinkers have long argued that it is not the religion, but patriarchal interpretation and implementation of the Quran that have kept women oppressed in Muslim societies.

Despite much Quranic evidence about the significant place of women, gender reform in Muslim society has been obstinately resisted.

This course addresses arguments made by Muslim female scholars that the Quran gives both men and women equal rights, but has been largely misinterpreted by male interpreters throughout history.

As one scholar has stated, from a Quranic perspective, "a woman is a primary principle in the human pair of male and female," as also evident in the Quranic story of Creation.

What does the Quran specifically say about women? Why has personal status law been the most resistant to reform in Muslim societies? This course examines all these issues including why the authority to interpret 'religious' texts has been exclusive to male religious elites.

The course also highlights Muslim women scholars' argument that nothing will change in the condition of Muslim women, and Muslim society in general, unless women are recognized as having the same authority to interpret the Quran and to discover within its revelations an inherent affirmation of gender equality, as indicated by Cornell Professor Nimat Barazangi, one of the main scholars I teach in this course.

I first introduced this class in 2006, and I thought it would attract a few students given its new nature and diverse subject. However, I was amazed when 20 students from across academic disciplines signed up for the class including several students from religious studies and political science. The course has been a great success, and is a required core course for the Certificate in Arabic Studies.

– Souad T. Ali is an assistant professor in the School of International Letters and Cultures in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Her current research interests include women's rights in Islam, Islam and Secularism, and the disparity between religion and culture in several Arab and Muslim societies. In addition to her forthcoming book, *"A Religion, Not a State: 'Abd al-Raziq's Islamic Justification of Political Secularism"* that reflects a major diversity in modern Islamic thought, her second book in progress focuses on the translation of 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's book from Arabic into English.



Souad T. Ali

## Herberger professor, playwright spotlights role of local community theater

An associate professor in the School of Theatre and Film in the Herberger College of the Arts, Guillermo Reyes' theater productions strive to reflect the Valley's vibrant Latino community.

The young woman stepped forward, holding her script with a quivering hand, and began to read the dialogue in a flat monotone. She could barely be heard. Suddenly, she stopped.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I've never quite done this before." What she was doing was auditioning, and it was an intimidating ordeal. The play was "Los Illegals" by Michael Garces, an up-to-date story about people seeking work in a day labor center in California. The characters express themselves in both English and Spanish; actors are required to speak both languages. The young woman hailed originally from El Salvador. She had no professional theater experience, but a deep yearning to be on stage.

Andres Alcala, the director, tried to make her feel at ease. She finally decided she wasn't an actress. "I'm really more of a singer," she said.

Alcala urged her to sing something. Out of her arose this robust, multi-octave voice that gave life to "America, the Beautiful." The director decided there and then he would add a moment of singing to the play. Once she worked with the director, she even brought to life her actual dialogue. She was both singer and actress.

These discoveries happen every time I announce an audition

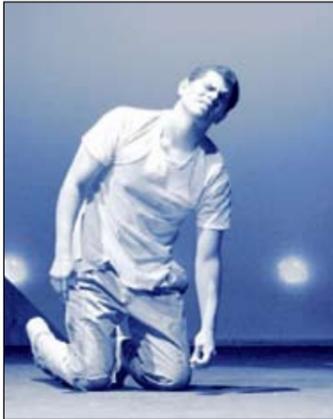


PHOTO BY ANDRES ALCALA

Actor Santiago Rosas in Reyes' production of "Los Illegals."

of color. Also, with Latino actors, issues of accents and fluency, or lack thereof, in both English and Spanish arise. In addition to that, actors cope with their odd jobs, impossible schedules, even lack of papers in some situations. The yearning to shine on stage crosses barriers, and I find myself situated on the front line.

I'm a Chilean immigrant. I've had to cross my own cultural roadblocks, learn English, and more importantly, make my way through creative expression in the adapted language as well. I

for Teatro Bravo, the small community theater company I helm in Phoenix. The budgets are modest, the sets always threadbare, the costumes borrowed. Yet, every production brings with it a moment such as this one. An actor is born, and talent emerges out of America's fifth largest city.

Yet, opportunities for Latino/Latina actors remain rare here in the Valley. I've heard the same from other actors

told myself long ago that every day I would learn a new word that would be added to the old struggle of perseverance. My favorite word for our theater company is serendipity. In the process of putting on a play, a new discovery gets made – it works for me.

But for the Latino actors in Phoenix, my sympathy won't suffice. In order to become professionals, they need to be hired by them. The community effort that I make through Teatro Bravo can barely accommodate need. We have to reject actors as well as anyone else. Along the way, an occasional story arises to remind me of what makes this struggle worth it.

When our company produced "Romeo and Juliet" in the Spanish translation by Nobel Prize winner Pablo Neruda, we cast it locally. Yet, this "local" cast was comprised of actors originally from Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Spain, Puerto Rico and, yes, South Phoenix. Our lead actor, Marcelino Quinonez, hailed from Phoenix's southern barrio via Durango, Mexico. The *Arizona Republic* included him in an article on young, up and coming talent, and subsequently the Actors Theater of Phoenix hired him to play the lead in their spring 2008 production of Bernardo Solano's "Speak Spanish to Me."

I'd like to believe that the opportunities we opened up for him helped build the resumé that got him hired to play the lead in a professional theater company's main stage season. The struggle to create art and engender success begins at home, and it begins in our neighborhoods. I will remember that as I go into yet another audition looming this season.

– Guillermo Reyes

### New social justice degree teaches advocacy

By William Simmons

ASU's innovative new master of arts program in Social Justice and Human Rights is addressing crucial social justice and human rights issues through a broad curriculum, a host of prestigious and influential guest speakers, and top-notch students recruited from across the United States and abroad.

The program, housed in the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, draws on scholars across numerous disciplines and innovative learner-centered curriculum that emphasizes team-taught, problem-based and community-embedded seminars, as well as student internships and the infusion of virtual lectures via video-conferencing from experts around the world.

This unique, hands-on curriculum has attracted a dynamic first cohort of students with a rich diversity of experiences and backgrounds.

"This is the most engaged group of students at the graduate level that I have ever seen," says professor Julie Murphy-Erfani, who teaches the Problem-Based Learning course.

This spring the program will offer its first Community Embedded Seminar course, "Contemporary Slavery and Human Trafficking," which will investigate these issues internationally, nationally and locally in Arizona.

Michael Stancliff, assistant professor of rhetoric, and Fran Bernat, associate

professor of criminal justice, who are co-teaching this seminar, say the course integrates study with the activities of experienced justice workers. Students will engage in field work, training and conversation with local anti-trafficking activists and advocates, and host filmmakers and legal experts.

The slavery/human trafficking course is truly interdisciplinary. Bernat researches criminal law, largely focusing on understanding essential questions that pertain to our constitutional form of government and crime, the study of the fear of crime among the elderly, the nature and extent of youth crime, and the efficacy of social service programs. Stancliff's research focuses on the history of slavery and antislavery rhetoric, African American literature and culture, rhetorical theory, and critical pedagogy.

The social justice degree students have lived or worked extensively abroad on social justice and human rights issues in Afghanistan, Dominican Republic, China, Sudan, Eritrea and Tanzania.

We believe our students will have a major impact on social justice and human rights issues in Arizona, nationally and internationally. They will truly be a force for change as they advance through the program and after they graduate.

Simmons is an associate professor in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

### Indian law program reflects tribal growth, influence

Interest in Indian law is growing as the economic and political influence of the country's federally recognized tribes have expanded. The Indian Legal Program at ASU is one of the leading tribal law programs in the nation. The program educates on how legal systems of tribes differ from that of the U.S. government, and many graduates go on to represent tribes, Indian clients, or the federal government.

*Editor's Note: Annette Nikki Borchardt is a third-year law student at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law and a member of the Indian Peaks Band of Southern Paiute and Northern Ute tribes, which are based in Utah. She grew up in Cedar City, Utah, where her aunt, Geneal Anderson, was the tribal chairperson.*

My aunt led a nation. She played a pivotal role in helping restore my tribe's federal trust status in 1980, and she led the Paiute people for two decades afterward. I adored her. When I was eight, she told me that our people needed Indian lawyers, practicing Indian law to strengthen "self-determination" and to help protect "sovereignty." Although I had no idea what those words or Indian law really meant, I knew that I wanted to be a lawyer when I grew up.

I am currently a third-year law student, and I now understand the meaning of those words and their impact on tribal governance. I also understand the way that Indian law can help tribal leaders as they serve their people. As an Indian Legal Program Scholar, I have had the opportunity to explore the vast subjects within Federal Indian Law. My education, coupled with the years that I informally shadowed my aunt, has helped me gain a well-rounded understanding of the needs and issues affecting tribes and how I might be able to contribute to a positive dialogue toward addressing those needs and



Nikki Borchardt

resolving those issues.

Growing up, my family and my aunt stressed that knowing the traditions of my tribe would give me a strong foundation for my life. My aunt and I used to discuss issues of protecting our elders, ceremonies and our stories. In the end she'd always emphasize that I would need to obtain a higher education if I wanted to help my people. I am

attempting to find the delicate balance in which I can help preserve and protect the traditions of American Indian people through the practice of law.

However, despite wanting to focus exclusively on cultural resources and Indian law, in the past five semesters I have come to understand that there are other issues that overlap with my interest: usufructuary rights, land use, water, religion, natural resources, jurisdiction, intellectual property, constitutional rights and international rights to name a few. My very basic understanding of Indian law is that it's complicated and riddled with many overlapping issues; I understand that it is not so basic at all.

Geneal Anderson passed away on Feb. 4, 2002. The world lost a warrior and advocate, our tribe lost a leader, my family lost part of its heart, and I lost my mentor and friend.

I desire to understand Indian law in a way that will enable me to help tribes and tribal people. This interest and desire to help, to protect, and to further the interests of Indian people is deeply rooted in my core – further, it's tied to memories of my Aunt Geneal.

– Nikki Borchardt received her bachelor and master's degrees in cultural and social anthropology from Stanford University.

### Student reporter gets glimpse of Southwest border issues

ASU's Southwest Borderlands Initiative offers student reporters an inside look at the immigration issue. Cronkite journalism student Megan Martin reports on her experience at the Arizona-Mexico border.

The small blue and white stripes of the wrinkled, abandoned pants were barely discernible through the layers of dirt. It took several vigorous shakes to piece everything together: stripes, elastic waistband, pants – really small pants.

These were the pants of a child, larger than a toddler, smaller than a teen. The volunteers picking up trash in this desolate stretch near the Arizona-Mexico border debated how old the owner of the pants was. Ultimately, we guessed – 11.

When the discussion of the pants died down, they were simply balled up and thrown into a fluorescent green trash bag. But even from inside the bag, I could see the pants. Their imagery had been burned into my mind. How could someone so young be out here? I had no answers but many questions.

As research for my depth reporting class, part of the Southwest Borderlands Initiative, I joined volunteers from the Tucson-based Humane Borders to pick up what immigrants had left behind in their illegal journeys across the border.

As we waited in a nearly full parking lot, we wondered what we might find. Doug Ruopp, the operations manager for Hu-

mane Borders, prepped us and answered our questions. Then we were off in a convoy to the Ironwood Forest National Monument, located outside Marana, Ariz. Over seven miles of rugged road, the convoy made its way through mountains with names like Ragged Top and Sawtooth. When we arrived at the meeting grounds, everyone was issued green trash bags and gloves. Then we split into groups. I chose one that ventured deeper into the desert.

The Ironwood Forest, Ruopp explained, is home to an old mine known among immigrants as Las Minas, as well as power lines which run almost perfectly north and south. These man-made markers help to guide people who have decided to take this route into Arizona.

Ruopp said it's an area where immigrants shed their traveling clothes for ones they believe will look "more American" before they are picked up for transport by their smugglers or "coyotes."

We slowly began our trek into the desert in single file, making our way around trees, over sandy creek beds and jagged rocks. Everyone was silent, whether out of anticipation, fear or reverence. Soon we found what we were looking for as we ventured off the trail – there was trash everywhere.

Water jugs, tuna cans, baseball caps, broken shoelaces, t-shirts and backpacks. With each item found, our curiosity was piqued. Each piece of paper was scoured for information, every pocket checked, every zipper unzipped. No one had been given instructions to do more than pick up the trash, yet each item triggered more intrigue. Who are these

people? Where are they today?

As we ventured further into the desert, the welcoming morning sun turned harsh, and the intriguing outing became more revealing. Heat was taking its toll. Muscles began to ache, and many in the group began to find themselves in the shoes of those we were cleaning up after.

A small step on a jagged rock left my foot throbbing, and each step became more of a struggle. My water supply, which I had thought to be more than enough, was diminished to nothing as the sun beat down. Everyone was tired. We no longer were curious about the lives of these unknown souls, but instead became concerned about our own vulnerability in the desert. On the hike back to the cars, the rocks became larger, the creeks wider and our legs weaker. Three people fell. We hiked less than five miles in four hours. It wasn't particularly hot by September-in-Arizona standards, but it made the reality of the immigrants' journeys all the more evident.

The small glimpse into the world of illegal immigrants left many in the group with altered views. As we struggled with our thoughts and feelings, attempting to drink as much water as possible, I thought of the pants. Soon someone else did, too, raising the issue for discussion. How could pants so small be out here? Do people bring their children with them?

We would never find the answers. But what surely was established that day was that the immigration issue is not merely colored in black and white as many would like to believe. Instead it is blue and white striped.

– Megan Martin is a senior in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.