

FALL / WINTER 2020



**MGRUBLIAN
CENTER FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS**

ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIRTUALLY



Due to rising cases of coronavirus in L.A. county, Claremont McKenna College held classes virtually for the fall semester. Despite constantly changing circumstances, our students' unwavering dedication to human rights held steadfast. In addition to hiring a group of passionate students to help with the Center's operations, the Mgrublian Center was also able to sponsor many virtual panels and fellowships.

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2020-21 MGRUBLIAN STAFF

In the fall of 2020, the Mgrublian Center selected eighteen student employees dedicated to bettering the world. Hired for the academic year, these students take on various tasks, such as assisting professors with human rights-related research, managing task forces, identifying grants, hosting career panels, securing key speakers and more. An additional team of students, the "Justice League", also work as legal research assistants with a local LA-based human rights lawyer.



2020-21 Student Assistants (left to right)

Taleen Berberian '24 – Newsletter contributor, Armenian programming support

Tallan Donine '21 – Student Manager, programming

Eris James Elliott '22 – Research Assistant to Professor Heather Ferguson, Middle East Studies

Sydney Heath '22 – Programming, Social Media Manager

Lucie Kapner '22 – Research Assistant to Professor Wendy Lower, Holocaust Studies

Miriam Farah '23 – Liaison with Claremont Canopy, Arabic translations

Y e Macias '22 – Task force, programming, Unchained voice leadership

ela Mejia '22 – Research Assistant to Professor Sarah ski

Neff '21 – Digital resources, e, and newsletter contributor

2020-21 MGRUBLIAN STAFF



Caroline Phillips '22 – Liaison with Claremont Canopy, Immigration task force leadership

Michelle Ramirez '23 – Liaison and research support with the Abaunza Group

Maya Shah '22 – Newsletter Editor, programming

Hailey Wilson '22 – Research Assistant to Professor Heather Ferguson, Ani Project



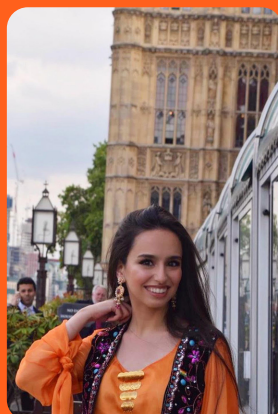
THE JUSTICE LEAGUE

2020-21 Justice League
(below, left to right)

Trevor Anderson '23

Shreya Chatterjee '22

Daniela Corona '23 **Yara Ismael '22**
Jaelin Kinney '21 **Jasmine Perales '23**



2020-21 RESEARCH FELLOWS

The fellowship program provides students with the opportunity to conduct research of their own choosing and design under the guidance of a faculty advisor. Research fellows spend the academic year diving deep into a human rights, Holocaust, or genocide studies project while benefiting from the resources and networks the Center has to offer. Fellows also receive a modest stipend to offset research expenses. This year the Center is pleased to support four students as they pursue their guided human rights research projects.

Maya Shah '22 Maya is a CMC junior on the pre-med track dual majoring in PPE/film. She is completing a fellowship with Alison Marouk- Coe, and the working title of their project is "Human Rights and Chronic Illness: COVID Long-Haulers." Maya believes that a doctor's most important quality is empathy, and she strives to become a doctor that understands her patients' feelings. She is specifically interested in patients with chronic illnesses, and is very excited to research how the medical community is handling the growing population of COVID-19 long haulers. In addition to completing this research fellowship Maya works as the Mgrublian Center's Newsletter Editor-in-Chief. She also works as an economic journalist at the Lowe Institute, a physics tutor, and a researcher in the Solomon-Lane Lab.



Alison Marouk-Coe '22 Ali is a junior, majoring in Philosophy and Public Affairs (PPA) with a sequence in Ethics. She has been struggling with chronic health issues since beginning her CMC journey, which has led her to engage with human rights problems within the medical field as well as with disability policy. She began to pursue these interests earlier last summer as a Dunbar Fellow, by creating a documentary showcasing the challenges currently faced by people with chronic illnesses. She also completed an Appel fellowship during her freshman year on the nature of immersive empathy and exploring strategies that can be applied at school and in the workplace. She pursues her broader interest in human rights issues as co-president of the Amnesty International task force.

2020-21 RESEARCH FELLOWS

Joelle Min '24 Joelle is a first-year student at CMC hoping to pursue either Public Policy or PPE. Currently, she is located in Santa Clarita, CA, and is eager to head to campus soon. The working title of her fellowship research is "The Imperial Weaponization of Women's Bodies: Exploring the Intersection between the Censored History of Puerto Rican Compulsory Sterilization and South Korean Comfort Women." Her faculty advisor is Albert Park.



Anna Choi '23 Anna is a sophomore at Pomona, potentially majoring in Sociology and Mathematics. In late 2019, she conducted anthropological research on Hong Kong demonstrators and their tactics through interviews and observation of the protests.

The result was an ethnography of militant Hong Kong protestors focused on their motivations to use force, with emphases on each individual's sense of agency, as well as the fluid, temporal nature of protest roles. Behind each image, every protestor doubles as a pacifistic demonstrator, a sympathetic onlooker, or an office worker who happened to pass by. And over time, protestors' tactics, strategies and rationales evolved with experience and growing limitations.

This year, Anna hopes to consolidate the theoretical foundations of her observations. Sociological/anthropological interpretations on Hong Kong-mainland relations, the use of force, perspectives of violence, and protest tactics in leaderless movements would provide depth to the field research. The past year was undoubtedly one marked by popular social movements, and no matter one's stance on each issue, study of these events is unarguably necessary for us to understand the societies we live in.

A CALL TO END THE ABUSE OF MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS IN INDONESIA

BY NADINE ZAHIRUDDIN



Carika is a 33-year-old woman living with a mental illness who now sells rice and tempeh (fermented soybeans) at a roadside stall.

Until nine years ago, Carika was shackled in a cramped goat shed, unable to stand and move around. She was forced to eat, sleep and defecate all in the same spot. Carika's family struggled with the lack of access to mental health services, and therefore was forced to lock her up for four years. Her desperate calls for help were completely disregarded and considered a part of her illness.

Her story is a remarkable change compared to those who have suffered from being put in pasung – the act of chaining people with mental illnesses in confined spaces. Carika is only one out of the 57,000 people in Indonesia who have been subjected to this inhumane and cruel treatment at least once in their lives. Although the Indonesian government banned the practice of pasung in 1977, the practice still exists, especially in rural areas with no access to mental health resources.



According to a Human Rights Watch report in 2018, 12,800 people in Indonesia are shackled and locked up in confined spaces [1]. In the absence of government regulation and monitoring, not much has changed in faith healing centers and rural areas where people are tortured and stripped of their humanity. The stigma surrounding mental illness in Indonesia is the main reason why the practice of pasung still exists. Due to the lack of education and overall resources for mental health, mental illness is thought to result from a spirit possession or a curse [2], and people living with mental illnesses are often shunned by their family members. Without these resources, families are forced to turn to faith healers and shamans for 'alternative' treatments such as herbal remedies, vigorous massages by traditional healers and forced listening of Quranic recitations [3].

A CALL TO END THE ABUSE OF MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS IN INDONESIA

(CONTINUED)

When there are no other alternatives, families believe that their last best option is to shackle their relatives with mental health problems. A 2018 survey from the Indonesian Psychiatric Association (PDSKJI) showed that around 9 million Indonesians live with mental illnesses [4], but it is difficult to get an accurate number, especially in the rural areas of Indonesia.



Today, there are only **43** mental hospitals in Indonesia, of which are unsanitary and overcrowded [5].



Six out of thirty-four provinces in Indonesia do not have any mental hospitals at all [6].

population of almost 300 million people. The overall lack of discourse on mental health and the resulting stigma in Indonesia prevents those with a mental health issue from getting the treatment they need.



A CALL TO END THE ABUSE OF MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS IN INDONESIA

(CONTINUED)

This is why the Indonesian government needs to be better at offering humane alternatives, provide access to mental health services and start the conversation on mental health in Indonesia. Without these services and governmental support, many with psychosocial disabilities will remain in chains and locked up in institutions, desperately waiting to be set free. For now, there are a few ways to help these people who remain shackled and isolated from the outside world. Spread awareness on the gross violation of human rights that has been going on for far too long under the Indonesian government. Start the conversation on mental health, and only then will more people join the discourse. It was this same media attention and mounting public pressure that helped Carika gain her freedom. Today, Carika is still in the process of healing from her years of torture and abuse, but she is free. More people can be like Carika too if we do what we can to help them. We cannot afford to turn a blind eye to those who need our help. If we won't help them, who will?



Photo Credits:

- 1) <http://www.andreastarreese.com/disorder>
- 2) <https://realitarakyat.com/2017/11/14/akibat-tidak-punya-uang-berobat-ibu-dua-anak-ini-terpaksa-di-pasung/>
- 3) <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/free-from-pasung-human-rights-for-the-mentally-ill#/>
- 4) <https://kalsel.antaranews.com/berita/109892/wali-kota-banjarmasin-bereaksi-terhadap-14-kasus-pasung>
- 5) https://sumbar.antaranews.com/nasional/berita/1129908/odgj-pasung-masih-banyak-ditemukan-di-cianjur?utm_source=antaranews&utm_medium=nasional&utm_campaign=antara news
- 6) <https://radarkudus.jawapos.com/read/2018/10/13/98490/keluarga-sengaja-pasung-odgj-dikenakan-denda-ini-penjasannya>

Footnotes:

- [1] <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/03/20/living-hell/abuses-against-people-psychosocial-disabilities-indonesia>
- [2] <https://www.vice.com/en/article/nnknx8/pasung-indonesian-shackling-imprisoning-suffering-mental-illness-schizophrenia>
- [3] <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/10/02/indonesia-shackling-reduced-persists>
- [4] <https://www.thejakartapost.com/life/2020/03/17/untold-stories-seeking-the-truth-about-mental-illness.html>
- [5] https://www.huffpost.com/entry/watch-thousands-treated-f_b_9517576 [6] <https://pusdatin.kemkes.go.id/resources/download/pusdatin/infodatin/InfoDatin-Kesehatan-Jiwa.pdf>

STIFLING DISSENT

BY MAYA SHAN



Amnesty International member Shania Sharma gave a presentation on October 1 about the Indian government's actions to stifle dissent following the recent passage of a discriminatory immigration bill. In 1967, India passed the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, which gives the government the power to arrest anyone who disrupts or intends to disrupt the sovereignty of India. The government does not require evidence to arrest someone they claim to be in violation of this law— they can do so based on their suspicion.

In effect, the Indian government can eradicate rights to freedom of speech, to assemble peacefully, and to form associations or unions (1). In practice, this has translated to government-sanctioned tear gas, unjust imprisonments, and beatings. Last year, India passed the Citizenship Amendment Act, a law that fast-tracked citizenship for immigrants from neighboring countries, excluding Muslims. Student protests broke out across the country in response to this blatant discrimination, only to be met with harsh retribution. For example, on December 15, 2019, the students of Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia University tried to protest the bill. In response to the peaceful protest, the police used tear gas on the students (1). Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in March, the Indian government has taken advantage of the crisis to arrest many students and activists, such as Safoora Zargar and Umar Khaid.

Ms. Zargar (pictured at right) was accused of conspiracy by the government and delivering an inflammatory speech in February that incited the riots in New Delhi (2). She was kept in jail for two and a half months while the virus raged in the country, particularly in the prisons. Especially horrifying considering she was pregnant, putting her and her baby at high risk (2).



STIFLING DISSENT

BY MAYA SHAN



Rya Jetha (PO '23) said, "Shania's presentation came at a time when Indian politics were especially overwhelming — Amnesty International had just been kicked out, Rahul Gandhi had been arrested whilst on his way to Hathras, and Umar Khalid (pictured at left) had been indicted a few weeks earlier. Unsurprisingly, the lack of international attention toward Indian events made the situation even more upsetting. It was very comforting to find a small space of Claremont students discussing these events and making an effort to stay informed amidst a coordinated crackdown on the free press across India."

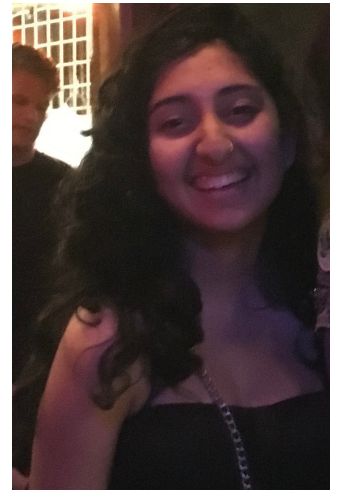
Footnotes:

<https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/how-india-is-silencing-its-students/>
<https://scroll.in/article/964348/the-fight-to-free-pregnant-student-activist-safoora-zargar-is-a-battle-for-indias-very-soul>

Pictures:

- 1) <https://scroll.in/article/964820/what-can-india-do-to-combat-police-brutality-and-bias>
- 2) <https://scroll.in/latest/965441/delhi-violence-pregnant-jamia-student-safoora-zargar-arrested-in-april-granted-bail>
- 3) <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/coronavirus-in-india-maharashtra-govt-plans-to-release-5000-prisoners-to-decrease-congestion-in-jails/story/398755.html>
- 4) <https://www.opindia.com/2020/03/umar-khalid-jnu-tukde-gang-delhi-riots-muslim-caa-nrc-violence-trump-visit/>

Shania Sharma pictured at right

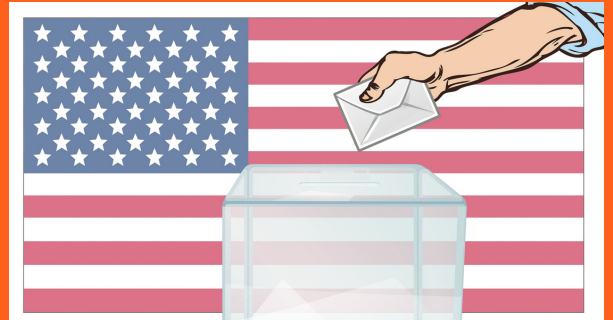


AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

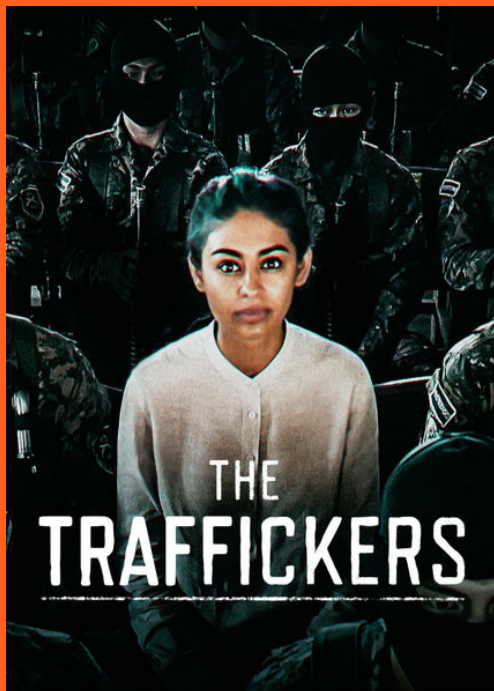


TASK FORCES

Student-led human rights task force groups address current national and global human rights problems and are a great way for students to be involved with the Center on a volunteer-basis and to focus on a campaign of their choosing. Below are some of the task forces and events they hosted.



Every Vote Counts (EVC) is a non-profit nonpartisan organization aimed at increasing voter turnout and civic engagement among college students. Most CMC students are actively engaged and informed during elections. However, this election cycle was unique in the sense that many CMC'ers were not physically on campus, which fosters a civically engaged environment. Furthermore, there were many hurdles potential voters encountered when trying to vote. The point of the task force was to share information about registering to vote, especially if you moved during the pandemic, and voting by mail. By not being on campus, many students lost the opportunity to discuss the election with peers outside of their social circle. ASCMC and DOS asked professors to lighten the workload during Election Week and asked them to hold discussions in the classroom. Understandably, civic engagement is at its peak during an election, but the hope is that people are up-to-date on policies by their elected officials. By working with the McGrublian Center for Human Rights, EVC's chapter at CMC hopes to ensure that students will be civically engaged during their entire four years at CMC.



Unchained is a student-led task force that raises awareness of human trafficking issues, both locally and globally. Unchained creates a space for dialogue within the CMC campus about human trafficking issues. In the fall semester we hosted a screening of "Organs for Sale" from *The Traffickers*, focused on organ trafficking. In addition to watching it, we held a discussion where we reflected on the film. Because of our collective wants to hear from an international perspective about human trafficking, we are trying to bring in guest speakers and possibly create a human trafficking awareness video. For the spring semester, we intend to host a training session on how to identify human trafficking. We are also open to any event ideas that students would like to see Unchained host. This year we have created an [anonymous form](#) where students can share any event ideas or any topic they would like to learn more about. We hope you can join us for our upcoming events!

A poster for the show *The Traffickers*

1915 NEVER AGAIN

BY TALEEN BERBERIAN



On September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan launched an attack on the Republic of Artsakh, a de facto independent state where over 95% of the population consists of Armenians. Azerbaijan's fight for Artsakh's land resulted in the destruction of towns, such as Stepanakert and Shushi (shown to the right). Artsakh, also known as Nagorno-Karabakh, is a territory that has long been disputed between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Right now, with the help of Turkey, Azerbaijan is sending mercenaries from Syria and Libya in order to kill Armenians and take over Artsakh. This attempt to ethnically-cleanse all Armenians of Artsakh brings back painful memories to descendants of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

From April 24th 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million Armenians were killed by the Ottoman Empire. Every year, on April 24th, I have attended marches, chanting "1915 Never Again" and "What do we want? Justice. When do we want it? Now." Armenians and their allies have spent over a hundred years asking the US government to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and hold Turkey accountable. Now, our worst nightmare has come true: history repeating itself with another Armenian Genocide. On October 23rd, 2020, the Genocide Watch issued a genocide emergency on the indigenous Armenians of Artsakh. On October 15th, 2020, I marched from Pasadena City Hall to the Pasadena Armenian Genocide Memorial.



The city declared that it stands with the Armenian-American community and apologized for the aggression occurring on the people of Artsakh. As an Armenian-American, I feel I must use my privilege to spread awareness about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and advocate for peace. I urge everyone, Armenians and non-Armenians, to help in any way possible. Donate to the Armenia Fund (www.armenianfund.org), go to marches, and spread awareness. If you want to learn about more ways to help, please visit <https://anca.org>. The atrocities that occurred in 1915 must never happen again.

SHOULD SEX WORK BE DECRIMINALIZED? A PANEL ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

BY YVONNE MACIAS AND SYDNEY HEATH



On October 14th, the Mgrublian Center for Human Rights and the Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies hosted a virtual panel with experts in Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation. The six panelists came from a variety of organizations including the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Sanctuary for Families and United for Respect. They all work to end human trafficking through either grassroots advocacy, legislative and policy work, or by working with survivors of the sex trade.

Ane Mathieson (pictured above), program director for the EMPOWER Center at Sanctuary for Families, began by breaking down two important models that attempt to combat sex trafficking. The first is the Full Decriminalization model. This model would effectively make prostitution legal under the assumption that the sex industry will self-regulate as a result. However, the panelists explained that the domino effect of full decriminalization can lead to an increase in sex trafficking.

"Countries that have full decriminalization models in place show the same consequences", explains Mathieson. "More men buy sex; more women and children are trafficked from poorer nations and communities to meet the demand for paid sex; sex buyers and traffickers perpetrate high rates of violence against people in the industry; organized crime controls both the legal and illegal sex markets; and brothel owners conspire with traffickers to fill their brothels..with primarily women of color and members of the LGBTQ community". Additionally, full legalization of prostitution encourages countries to promote the buying and selling of sex because they profit off of the industry. This causes the sex trade industry to grow significantly.

The second approach, which the panelists believe to be the most effective way to combat sex trafficking, is the Equality Model. This model criminalizes sex buyers, pimps and brothel owners, while simultaneously decriminalizing the people who are bought and sold in the industry. *"The Equality Model is a combination of three equally important components," explains Mathieson. "It provides comprehensive social services to survivors to help them exit and heal from the sex trade; it employs a community education campaign to teach men about the harms caused by sex-buying; and it changes the laws to reflect that prostitution is gender-based violence".*

TWO MODELS:
FULL
DECRIMINALIZATION
AND
EQUALITY MODEL

SHOULD SEX WORK BE DECRIMINALIZED? A PANEL ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CONTINUED)

Panelists Cristian Eduardo (pictured below) and Esperanza Fonseca (pictured right) described the sex trade industry as “someone with privilege coercing someone who is marginalized”. Laura Ramirez, Program Coordinator at Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and core organizer with Af3irm, describes the sex trade as the “intersection between patriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy”. Students asked what they could do to combat sex trafficking.

Ms. Ramirez replied: “Even though it may be terrifying, [being an outspoken advocate for abolishing the sex trade] is one fundamental way a student can raise awareness on this issue. Even if you are the only person voicing this opinion, the people around you are still going to hear it.” Additionally, when it comes to grassroots activism and organizing, Laura explained, “It would be so important to redirect feminism to be more pro-woman as opposed to pro-male entitlement.”



“Lastly, the panelists explained how joking about entering the sex industry, which has been happening increasingly with the recent boom of OnlyFans, a subscription service where people can exclusive content from creators on the site, can minimize the issues and situations people who are forced into this industry face. It can “sanitize the trauma, coercion, and pretend that OnlyFans is a way to resist poverty and better yourself.”

The panel was extremely informative and eye-opening for those who attended. If you would like a recording of the panel event, send an email to ymacias22@cmc.edu. Thank you to the Mgrublian Center and the Keck Center for hosting this event.



HUMAN RIGHTS CAREER PANEL

The Mgrublian Center hosted two human rights career panels during the fall semester. The goal of these panels was to promote awareness about jobs in the human rights field among 5C students. Each panel featured professionals in the human rights field who shared their experiences and answered students questions.

Panelists for October 2nd 2020

Susan Bissel (pictured to the right) was the Global Lead for UNICEF's Child Protection work. Dr. Susan Bissell is a Senior Fellow and Visiting Scholar, Harvard FXB Center for Human Rights. She joined UNICEF headquarters in 1987. Susan was appointed global lead for UNICEF's Child Protection work in 2009, until 2015. She then became the Founding Director of the Global Partnership and Fund to End Violence Against Children. Susan currently sits on the Board of Cure Violence Global. Additionally Susan is on the Advisory Board of Global Child, and is the Executive Producer of Heart of the Matter, a film series examining human trafficking and the global migration crisis.



Jeremy Stein (pictured to the right) is the executive director of Connecticut Against Gun Violence. Jeremy's expertise in gun violence prevention stems from his more than 23 years of experience as a litigator. Jeremy saw the need for more community based initiatives and was the chief attorney for the DC Juvenile Drug Court, an initiative that established an alternative to incarceration in our nation's capital. Since taking the helm at CAGV, the organization has been instrumental in the historic passage of four gun laws in just two years.



Robert Bilheimer, (pictured to the right), President of the non-profit organization Worldwide Documentaries, and 2019 recipient of the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice. In 1989, Robert was nominated for an Academy Award for Cry of Reason, a feature-length documentary that profiles the South African anti-apartheid leader Beyers Naude. Robert has made two other films – A Closer Walk, about the AIDS pandemic, and Not My Life, about human trafficking. He is currently working on a short film at the US-Mexico border, about the challenges faced by asylum seekers.



HUMAN RIGHTS CAREER PANEL



Charlie Grosso (at left) is the founder and executive director of Hello Future, a non-profit that teaches digital literacy to refugees. She has traveled to 80+ countries, working as a writer, documentarian, filmmaker and consultant specializing in strategic management and program design for social enterprises, tech/media companies and NGOs. Hello Future is the culmination of her lifelong passion for innovation and social justice.

Panelists for November 3rd



Barbara Davidson (at left) is a three-time Pulitzer Prize and Emmy award-winning photographer/ director best known for her work on victims of gang violence in Los Angeles. A staff photographer at the Los Angeles Times until 2017, Barbara spent much of the past decade photographing women and children trapped in a culture of poverty and guns.



Kate Flatley (at left) is the founder and Executive Director of the Women's Justice Initiative and a lawyer with ten years' experience working for nonprofit organizations.



Pamela Yates (at left) is an American documentary filmmaker and human rights activist. She has directed films about war crimes, racism, and genocide in the United States and Latin America, often with emphasis on the legal responses.



Adotei Akwei (at left) is the Deputy Director for Advocacy and Government Relations for Amnesty International USA. He rejoined AIUSA in 2010 after serving as the Senior Policy Advisor for CARE USA. Prior to joining the Government Relations team in Washington DC, he served as the Regional Advocacy Advisor for CARE's Asia Regional Management Unit.



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For more information, please visit <https://human-rights.cmc.edu/>

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