

THE ARTHUR V. MAURO CENTRE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE
AT ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE PRESENTS
THE MLT AIKINS ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION LECTURE



**Pop Culture,
Peace, and Resistance**

FROM
HARRY POTTER
TO THE HUNGER GAMES

A LECTURE FEATURING
DR. SIOBHAN MCEVOY-LEVY

PACS Student Colloquium

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

Room 249, St. Paul's College

MLT Aikins St. Paul's College University Affiliation Lecture

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900	930	Registration / Coffee
930	935	Welcome remarks
935	945	Julie Marie Hyde: Threshold spaces: Liminality and Micropolitics within "Everyday" Peace
945	955	Bonface Beti: Playback Theatre Workshops
955	1005	Preston Lindsay: Peace Literacy
1005	1015	Md Shayeekh-Us Saleheen: Second language (L2) learners' acculturation in L2 environment and culture
1015	1025	Q&A
1025	1045	Short Break
1045	1055	Mathias Awonnatey Ateng: Youth and Political Violence in Ghana
1055	1105	Aziz Rahman: Youth Extremism in Bangladesh
1105	1115	Obasesam Okoi: The Struggles of Young Nigerians: Rising Expectations and Diminishing Opportunities
1115	1125	Q&A
1125	1140	Short Break - lunch is served
1140	1200	Dr. McEvoy-Levy Response
1200	1230	Lunch and informal conversation continues

PANEL ONE

Name: **Julie Marie Hyde**

Threshold spaces: Liminality and Micropolitics within “Everyday” Peace

Drawing upon an intensive case study of micropolitical relationships between students and adults within an inner city Winnipeg elementary school, this presentation will critically assess theoretical discussions of “local,” “hybrid,” and “everyday” peace that have garnered greater academic attention within peace and conflict studies.

Particular attention will be paid to the dynamics of micro-level “liminal spaces” within peacebuilding work – threshold sites that challenge reified boundaries and offer opportunities for empathic connection between parties. While this close examination of “the everyday” provides insight into constructive forms of analysis and practice, it also helps to illuminate the deeply political and power-laden nature of these spaces as well as the relations of affective intimacy within which they are preformed and performed.

Name: **Bonface Beti**

Playback Theatre Workshops

In September 2017, I partnered with Read Threads for Peace Playback troupe and Canada Museum for Human Rights here in Winnipeg to conduct a series of pilot Playback Theatre workshops with a group of 8 refugee youth in exploring their personal experiences and stories of what “home” means for them.

The last event at the CMHR brought together a group of about other 50 community organization members as refugee hosts to exchange their stories with the youth. The objective was to explore possibility for scale-up of this initiative towards promoting community resilience, local integration and building intercultural understanding through use of Playback Theatre storytelling. Jonathan Fox and Jo Salas developed playback theatre in the 1970s (H. Fox, 2007; Salas, 1983)

Name: **Preston Lindsay**

Peace Literacy

One of the largest hurdles to instituting positive peace throughout communities, let alone throughout the world, is peace literacy.

The word, peace, has suffered from some serious overuse. As a result, this overuse has given us consistent ambiguity and miscommunication. Given humanity’s long and trophied history, it’s understandable we would have a bit of trouble here. Thousands of writers, politicians,

businesspeople, tyrants, advocates, religious leaders and devotees have used the word, peace, to mean what they want it to mean, sometimes violently. The problem with this widespread appropriation is that it comes with endless projections and littered histories mixed further with false assumptions and often empty and oversimplified hopes and advertising campaigns.

As a further result of this widespread misunderstanding, each individual now has only a vague awareness of what it may be, but no real insight into what it is. My project is to start treating peace literacy/illiteracy plainly and directly by creating lookbooks/magazines/workbooks and curriculum for folks around world; starting in classrooms across continents.

Our targets for year one and two will be: school districts; students; government offices; artists; civil servants; teachers; academic institutions; and, business communities.

Name: **Md Shayeekh-Uz Saleheen**

Second language (L2) learners' acculturation in L2 environment and culture

It can be taken on that second language (L2) learners' social and psychological integration with the speakers of the second language can be challenging for international students when they study in a second language environment and culture. Culture is an important factor that determines participants' socialization (Andrade, 2006). International L2 learners who study in universities or colleges are caught in a dilemma about the acculturation (Schumann, 1978) in second language culture as well as pop culture and this dilemma leads to an inhibition that creates resistance among them about second language culture and environment. Therefore, many international students like to stay within their own cultural and language groups most of the time and acquire the SL only to the degree that they acculturate.

PANEL TWO

Name: **Mathias Awonnatey Ateng**

Youth and Political Violence in Ghana

Ghana for the past twenty years has become a shining example in the advancement of multiparty democracy in the West African Sub-region. This is partly attributable to the consistent practice of multiparty democracy and the upholding of the rule of law. However, the recent trend of political violence associated with the political system is considered a setback and a threat to the future prospects and consolidation of the country's democratic credentials and the political stability (Aning, Danso and Salifu, 2016). Available statistics point to the fact that political violence is on the increase in Ghana. A total of 480 incidences of political violence were recorded from 2000 to 2016 with 432 fatalities. Comparing years of political activism, in 2008 a total of 11 incidences of political violence were recorded. This increased to 48 in 2012 and then to 123 in 2016 (Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, ACLED, 2016). What

is disturbing in this situation is the fact that these acts of political violence are largely perpetuated by the youth of the country and have become the active agents in that respect (Abdallah and Osei-Afful, 2016). This discussion looks at the factors that drive the youth of Ghana to actively engage in acts of political violence.

Name: **Aziz Rahman**

Youth Extremism in Bangladesh

Muslim youths with non-mainstream educational background have been increasingly vulnerable to radicalism and violent extremism in Bangladesh. In the pre-2006 Islamist militancy context, students and graduates of madrassas (Islamic seminary institutions) with rural, and poor economic background were predominantly involved. In the post 2012 context, youth extremists have been found notably from non-madrassa institutions (private universities and English medium schools) with middle class and urban backgrounds. It is observed that private university and English medium students from economically solvent families are more engaged in internet and social media.

Students and graduates with mainstream (Bengali) education background are rarely radicalized and involved in terrorist activities. It appears that youth extremism is a complex and multidimensional issue that needs to be examined within the interlocking educational, religious, political, and social milieu of the Muslim young people in Bangladesh.

Name: **Obasesam Okoi**

The Struggles of Young Nigerians: Rising Expectations and Diminishing Opportunities

Cross River State, like many states in Nigeria, is experiencing a “youth bulge”; the youth population is increasing significantly in comparison with other age groups, resulting in the large segment of the population being young adults. Currently, around 30 percent of the state population is between the ages of 15 and 34. At the same time, unemployment is increasingly impacting on the severity of poverty and insecurity. The situation is compounded by the accumulation of debt amid a dwindling internal revenue base that has weakened the state's capacity to intervene in the youth sector. What is ignored, however, is the realization that this young generation has enormous potential to become a force for social transformation or a tremendous liability to the state if they are economically disempowered. This paper argues that Cross River State's biggest challenge is its inability to harness the full potential of the youth sector. There is an increasingly urgent need, therefore, to design and implement effective measures for transforming the struggles of young Nigerians through youth empowerment, with a focus on Cross River State.

Dr. Siobhan McEvoy-Levy

Siobhan McEvoy-Levy was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1968. She received her master's and PhD degrees from the University of Cambridge (UK) and a BA Honors degree from the Queen's University, Belfast.



She is Professor of Political Science at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana where she has served as Director of Peace Studies (2006-2012) and Chair of the Political Science Department (2013-2016) and currently holds the positions of Affiliate Faculty, Peace and Conflict Studies and International Studies and, Fellow of the Desmond Tutu Center for Peace, Reconciliation, and Global Justice.

She has written extensively about youth and armed conflict and peacebuilding. Her research centers on young people's political activism and beliefs, and the role of historical narratives, in Northern Ireland and Israel/Palestine, and the USA. Most recently, her scholarship has focused on pop culture and spatial interventions for peace. McEvoy-Levy teaches undergraduate courses in youth and conflict, international relations, activism, art and politics, gender and peace, and constructive conflict resolution in the Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland cases.

Dr. McEvoy-Levy has published four books: ***American Exceptionalism and U.S. Foreign Policy, Public Diplomacy at the End of the Cold War*** (Palgrave 2001); ***Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peacebuilding*** (Ed.) (U. Notre Dame Press, 2006); ***Violence, Truth and Youth*** (with Tristan Anne Borer and John Darby with Foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu - U. Notre Dame Press, 2006); and, most recently in 2018, ***Peace and Resistance in Youth Cultures: Reading Peacebuilding from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games*** (Palgrave). Her most recent book argues that by taking youth-oriented pop culture seriously, we can better understand the local, global and transnational spaces, discourses, and the relations of power, within which meanings and practices of peace are known, negotiated, encoded and obstructed.

