Gandhi’s Global Legacy International Conference

Organized by:
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Conference Planning Committee:
Dr. Veena Howard, Department of Philosophy
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Co-Sponsors and Partners:
Department of English
Department of Communication
Department of Art and Design
University Business Center
Interfaith Group of Bakersfield
United Hindu Coalition of Central California

Generously Supported by:
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If you need a disability-related accommodation or wheelchair access information, please call 559,278,2621. Fresno State is a Smoke Free, Vape Free, and Tobacco Free campus.

Conference artwork is an adaptation of Albert Haro’s award-winning Gandhi’s Global Legacy poster. Student Gandhi Posters Exhibition, the Dean’s Gallery, Music 184

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“Peace will come when Truth is pursued, and Truth implies justice.”

—Gandhi
Mohandas K. Gandhi dedicated his life to confronting insidious forms of violence and developed strategies to create a just, nonviolent, and sustainable world. On Gandhi’s 70th birthday, Albert Einstein remarked, “Generations to come, it may well be, will scarce believe that such a man as this one ever in flesh and blood walked upon this Earth.” Seventy years after his death, Gandhi remains more relevant than ever.

The two-day international conference at California State University, Fresno celebrates Mahatma Gandhi’s life and legacy through intellectual analyses, art exhibitions, and a Classical Indian Music concert. The main objective of this event is to explore Gandhi’s global impact and the relevance of his philosophy and methods for confronting our current challenges.

How would Gandhi approach our modern issues of social and economic inequity, racism, international and domestic terrorism, environmental crisis, and demoralization? What can we learn from his philosophy, strategies, and his missteps as we move forward?

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**Keynote**

**Dolores Huerta** is Founder and President of the Dolores Huerta Foundation. She co-founded the United Farm Workers of America with Cesar Chavez. She is a labor leader and community organizer. She has worked for civil rights and social justice for over 50 years. In 1962, she and Cesar Chavez founded the United Farm Workers union. She served as Vice President and played a critical role in many of the union’s accomplishments for four decades. In 2002, she received the Puffin/Nation $100,000 prize for Creative Citizenship which she used to establish the Dolores Huerta Foundation (DHF). She has received numerous awards: among them The Eleanor Roosevelt Humans Rights Award from President Clinton in 1998. In 2012 President Obama bestowed Dolores with The Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States.

**Nipun Mehta** is the founder of servicespace.org, an incubator of projects that support a gift culture. In his mid-twenties, Nipun quit his job to become a “full-time volunteer” and over the last 15 years, his work has reached millions, attracted more than 500 thousand volunteers, and mushroomed into numerous projects like DailyGood, Awaking Circles, and Karma Kitchen. Among his many prestigious accolades, President Obama appointed him on a council for social change, the Dalai Lama recognized him as an “Unsung Hero of Compassion,” and Germany’s OOOM magazine named him Top 100 Most Inspiring People of 2018. One of his most formative experiences was a walking pilgrimage across India, with his wife. Nipun’s mission statement in life reads: “Bring smiles in the world and stillness in my heart.”
Thursday, October 10

1:00–2:30, PETERS BUSINESS ROOM 191
Gandhi’s Journey from Mohandas to Mahatma
• Documentary: Gandhi’s Awakening
• Discussant: Cynthia Lukas, Film Producer, Writer
• Moderator: Mary Husain, CineCulture Advisor/Instructor, California State University, Fresno

3:00–4:15, PETERS BUSINESS ROOM 191
Keynote I: Applying Mahatma Gandhi’s Principles and Ethics in Business and Society: A Framework For 21st Century Business and Community Leaders
• Ramsey Jay, Jr., Global Investment Management Executive/Strategic Consultant
• Welcome: Dr. Sergio La Porta, Interim Associate Dean, College of Arts and Humanities, California State University, Fresno
• Moderator: Dr. Falon Kartch, Associate Professor, Dept. of Communication, California State University, Fresno

4:30, WALK TO THE PEACE GARDEN

5:00–5:40, THE PEACE GARDEN (NEAR HENRY MADDEN LIBRARY)
Gandhi’s Prayer Meetings: A Way to Connect to the Human Spirit
• Readings and Songs by Students
• Moderator: Sam Wittstruck, Student, Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno

6:00–7:45, SATELLITE STUDENT UNION (SSU)
Keynote Address: Gandhi and King on the “Arduous Beautiful Struggle”: Lessons in Going Forward
• Reverend James M. Lawson, Jr., ‘Architect of the Nonviolent Movement in the US’ (1953–1973); UCLA lecturer
• Reflections by Dr. Mary Elizabeth King, Director, James Lawson Institute; Fellow at the University of Oxford
• Welcome: Dr. Honora Chapman, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Humanities and Dr. Veena Howard, Coordinator, Peace and Conflict Studies, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno
• Moderator: Dr. Francine Oputa, Director Cross Cultural and Gender Center; Chair, the President’s Commission for Human Relations and Equity, California State University, Fresno

Ramsey Jay, Jr. is a Wall Street trained global investment management executive, and strategic consultant for corporations, government entities, and Fortune 100 Board Directors. Internationally, he served as an economic advisor in Ghana on the country’s budget and partnered with the Association of African Universities to create tutorials for accountants. Mr. Jay’s personal mission is “Empowering Dreamers to Become Achievers,” also the title of his best-selling book detailing his 3P’s empowerment methodology, (Possible, Probable, Predictable). He is also a communication strategist, executive leadership coach, and international subject matter keynote/motivational speaker.

Mary Elizabeth King is a prominent scholar of Gandhi and professor of Peace and Conflict Studies. Soon after graduating from Ohio Wesleyan University, she went to work for the U.S. civil rights movement, first in Atlanta and then Mississippi, 1962–65, serving on the staff of the student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Uniquely among the SNCC personnel, she has built her academic specialty on the study of nonviolent civil resistance and is an acclaimed authority on the subject. King has authored five major books in the field and Gandhi’s legacy. Now professor of peace and conflict studies at the UN-affiliated University for Peace (main campus Costa Rica), she is also a Distinguished Rothermere American Institute Fellow at the University of Oxford, U.K.
Reverend James M. Lawson, Jr. is widely recognized as the theoretician and tactician of nonviolence in the American Civil Liberties Movement. He is an activist, minister, and a scholar of the Bible, as well as a living icon embodying the power of nonviolence in securing justice and peace. Rev. Lawson’s major strategic work involved college students who were called to organize and defend the civil rights and defy the inhumane laws of segregation for securing human dignity and equity. Inspired by Mohandas Gandhi’s nonviolent methods in India, in the 1950s, Rev. Lawson led revolutionary sit-in workshops in Nashville, TN. Students from different colleges in the area were drawn to his teaching. Some of the students who were involved in the workshops and the direct-action campaigns against segregation went on to become influential leaders such as John Lewis and Diane Nash. An episode of the documentary, “A Force More Powerful,” illustrates Lawson’s strategies. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. described him as “the leading theorist and strategist of nonviolence in the world.” The movement was successful and resulted in the desegregation of downtown Nashville and became paradigmatic in other American nonviolent movements of the 1980s and 90s. Rev. Lawson has expanded his dedication to nonviolence as a strategy and a way of life by addressing social, racial, and economic inequities. He continues to teach nonviolent strategies for social change in monthly workshops.

jameslawsoninstitute.org
Friday, October 11 Continued

12:20–1:30, LUNCH BREAK

1:30–2:45, CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Session 3–A, Peters Business Room 192

Workshop – Gandhi and Nonviolence: Some Practical Strategies for Peace-building

- Facilitator: Mandar Apte, Director, Cities4Peace, International Association for Human Values, Los Angeles, CA
- Moderator: Dr. James Rocha, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno

Session 3–B, Peters Business Room 191

Mahatma Gandhi in the Age of Globalization: Rethinking his Philosophy and Methods

- ‘Science of war leads to dictatorship...science of nonviolence leads to democracy’: Exploring a Gandhian Approach to Politics in the 21st Century
  Dr. Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Director of the Mahatma Gandhi Center for Nonviolence Human Rights, and World Peace, Hindu University of America, Florida
- Mahatma Gandhi: Interactions with Jainism
  Dr. Shivani Bothra, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Religion and Public Life: Some Gandhian Considerations
  Dr. Sanjay Lal, Clayton State University, Morrow, Georgia
- Moderator: Dr. Ramdas Lamb, Professor, Department of Religion, University of Hawaii Manoa

3:00–4:15, CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Session 4–A, Peters Business Room 191

Gandhi’s Global Impact – Literature and Culture

- Tolstoy and Gandhi: Reflections on Pacifist Nonviolence and Social Obligation
  Dr. Steven Shankman, UNESCO Chair of Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue, and Peace, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon
- Paradoxes and Pacifism: Gandhi’s Legacy in the Writings of Mulk Raj Anand
  Dr. J. Ashley Foster, Assistant Professor, Department of English, California State University, Fresno
- Seeing Gandhi: The Representation of Gandhi in Indian fiction
  Dr. James Earl, Department of English, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon
- Moderator: Dr. Steve Adisasmito-Smith, Professor, Department of English, California State University, Fresno

Session 4–B, Peters Business Room 192

Gandhi’s Methods of Activism: Some Examples

- Gandhian Legacy Carried Forward by Acharya Vinoba Bhave
  Dr. Anshu Vashishtha and Dr. Gita Mehta, Maharishi University, Mumbai India
- Can Gandhi’s Call to “be the change that you wish to see in the world” Provide an Alternate Approach to Contemporary Design Practice?
  Dr. Sanjeev Bothra, National Institute of Design, India
- Gandhi in Conversation with Contemporary Islam: Peace, Pluralism, and Change
  Dr. Amine Tais, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno
- Moderator: Dr. Carolyn Cusick, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno

4:30–5:20, PETERS BUSINESS ROOM 191

Keynote 3: Gandhi 3.0: Bridging the Internet with the Inner-Net

- Nipun Mehta, Founder of ServiceSpace.org, San Francisco, California
- Moderator: Dr. Veena Howard, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, California State University, Fresno

DINNER BREAK

7:30 PM, WAHLBERG RECITAL HALL, MUSIC 183

Classical Indian Music Concert: Melodies of Peace

- Pandit Debasis Chakroborty, Mangalayatan University, India
- Gourisankar, School of Indian Percussion and Music, Texas
- Dr. Lovely Sharma, Dayalbagh University, Agra, India
- Moderator: Prof. Joan Sharma, Department of Art and Design, California State University, Fresno

Student Gandhi Posters Exhibition, the Dean’s Gallery, Music Building