

HUMANITARIANISM AND ITS GHOSTS: RESPONDING TO FAMINE IN SOMALIA

The 2011 famine in Somalia killed tens of thousands of people, created hundreds of thousands of refugees, and has further destabilized the volatile Horn of Africa region—with aftereffects that pose continuing local and global risks. Yet, and perhaps because of the complexities of responding to this major humanitarian crisis, very little attention has been paid to it in the United States.

Please join us for a discussion with scholars, policy analysts, and aid workers to learn about this famine, its consequences, and on-going efforts to provide humanitarian relief. Students interested in careers in human rights activism or humanitarian aid work are particularly encouraged to attend, since panelists will speak to the practical side of activism and aid work as well as providing informal historical and political commentary. Refreshments will be served.

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE

KEN MENKHAUS, Professor of Political Science at Davidson College, is the author of over 50 books, articles, and reports on Somalia and the Horn of Africa. He is an experienced consultant for the UN and the US government on conflict in the region, having served as special political advisor in the UN Operation in Somalia from 1993-4 and as visiting civilian professor at the US Army Peacekeeping Institute in 1994-5. He has worked to raise awareness about the recent famine through his position as Senior Fellow at the Enough Project, an NGO dedicated to ending genocide, among other venues.

GARTH MYERS, Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of Urban International Studies at Trinity College, has published extensively on colonialism, governance, development, the environment, and urban space in Africa. His most recent book *African Cities: Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Practice* (2011) features an analysis of Western and African visions of the Somali capital of Mogadishu, in order to contest dominant imaginaries of the city at play in the 1993-4 military humanitarian intervention and after. Before coming to Trinity College, he was director of the African Studies Center at the University of Kansas.

AMY SLAUGHTER, Chief Operating Officer for the NGO RefugePoint, has worked in the field of refugee protection and assistance for fourteen years. Prior to arriving at RefugePoint, she was Director of the US refugee processing program for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society in Vienna; she has also worked for the State Department's Reception and Placement Program in the US and as a consultant for UNHCR's Resettlement Section in Geneva. She has a Master's degree in human rights from Columbia University. Among its many initiatives, RefugePoint has worked in the Dadaab (Kenya) refugee camp and runs an urban care clinic in Nairobi that has been assisting Somalis forced into Kenya by the famine.

Kerry Bystrom, Assistant Professor of English and Director of the Research Program on Humanitarianism of the Human Rights Institute, will moderate the discussion. This event is co-sponsored by the Human Rights Institute and the Research Program on Humanitarianism of the Human Rights Institute at the University of Connecticut.

For more information, please contact Kerry Bystrom (kerry.bystrom@uconn.edu)