“So much of what is best in us is bound up in our love of family, that it remains the
Clinton claimed that, "Most of all, the government of Nigeria needs to get serious about protecting all of its citizens… and ensuring that every child has the right and opportunity to go to school." This urgent request came from a political leader in a country that uses standardized test exams to determine how many prisons to build, a place where many foster children end up. While every child has the opportunity to attend public school in America, foster children are more likely to struggle in school and drop out of high school because of emotional trauma. With a lack of education and severe emotional issues, these children are more likely to commit a crime and end up in prison. In fact, one in five women in prison have lived in a group home or foster home, making foster care the biggest determining factor of incarceration.

Hillary Clinton also stressed concern that the Nigerian girls may be sold into slavery and trafficked for sex. In the United States, sex trafficking is a multibillion dollar industry. Foster children are typical targets for sex trafficking because they are more likely to run away, need money to survive, and are accustomed to having other people control decisions about their lives. In the United States, between 100,000 and 300,000 children are trafficked annually. Where is the search party for these children?

One of the most basic human rights that can be taken away in the United States is the right to family. After my niece was sent to foster care, my mother received a letter in the mail explaining that she was no longer a grandparent, meaning I too was no longer her aunt. More than 129,000 children are considered “legal orphans” because their parents’ rights have been terminated. In fact, new laws have been passed so that the process of termination happens sooner than it used to. While I do acknowledge that some children do need stability and cannot get it in their home lives because of abuse and neglect, many families are having their rights terminated because of poverty-related issues.

Now, almost six months later, with my family’s rights terminated, I am unsure of when I will see my beautiful niece again. Although the circumstances are different in Nigeria, this experience has allowed me to understand the grief that comes with family separation. Because of this, I sympathize with the Nigerian mothers. We are waiting for the return of our loved ones together.


“One of the most basic human rights that can be taken away in the United States...is the right to family.” Shanelle Morris, ’16
Of the world’s powers, the United Nations (U.N), reigns supreme. The prestige of world leaders coming together to discuss and decide upon the course of global initiatives is an event, when one considers the true power this body owns, to drastically change the course of world history. The U.N. has been key in organizing global resistance to human rights threats, such as Apartheid in South Africa, and have consistently provided leadership in bringing awareness to and organizing alleviating measures for issues that go from war crimes to reproductive health, from refugee to children aid.

The guiding tenet that motivates all U.N. actions, however, is the simple regard for those entities of life that all people deserve. When the organization holds true to this priority, they can function as the greatest, most powerful, and most pervasive advocate of human rights the world has and probably will ever know.

With this in mind, the Model United Nations was created in order to allow students everywhere the opportunity to interact with realities from which global issues are derived. In Model UN, the human rights aspect is debatably purer than in the real setting, as the club is relatively devoid of political pressures. This is the beauty of the organization: it allows young people to practice finding suitable solutions to global problems while respecting regional beliefs. The hope is that delegates learn how to think in this manner in all situations, thus spreading effective decision-making that is geared toward addressing humanity as the highest priority not only throughout the conferences and the time they spend in Model UN but also in their future careers and lives.

The crown jewels of Model UN proceedings are the conferences, where delegates get the chance to showcase their abilities and ideas. Conferences are structured around some very specific committees that deal with similarly specific issues. The largest and most common one is the General Assembly, in which delegates debate issues of comprehensive importance that usually involve goal-setting for all countries. For example, in 2015, the General Assembly at the National MUN in New York will discuss several topics including “Eliminating Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances.” This is one of the more direct addresses of human rights that these committees deal with, but it is indisputable that every issue is steeped in the goal of providing baseline human rights to all people. The Department of the Economic and Social Council, for example, has subcommittees that deal entirely with the issues from “Mainstreaming Youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda” to “Fostering Sustainable Development Practices through Gender Equality.” One subcommittee, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, has as its priority, “prevention, protection and international cooperation against the abuse of new information technologies to abuse and exploit children.”

Of the committees mentioned above, not one is exactly the same in its focus in terms of the discipline that it addresses. Some committees have economic priorities, while others focus more on gender or race relations, but their common thread is the goal of efficiently setting and enforcing baseline human rights that may be threatened by arising events.

That is why, when preparing for conferences, our delegates, above all else, are prepared to find legitimate answers to questions like “how should United Nations agencies and organizations address the issue of maternal mortality in relation to cultural and social differences concerning pregnancy and childbirth?” and “how do we aid and encourage nations to implement their own strategies during times of economic strife as a result of natural disaster?” These are not easily answerable questions, especially when considering the multitude of viewpoints that result from global cultural precedents, but they are necessary to maintaining and even increasing the level of human rights that exist on the international stage. As Trinity Model United Nations seeks to address these issues, it maintains the defense of human rights at the highest level.
HUMAN RIGHTS Signature Courses

York Prison Series — Our Signature Series!

These courses are taught at the York Correctional Institution in Niantic, CT and enrolls both incarcerated women and up to four Trinity students by permission of instructor. The York Prison Series began as an initiative approved by the Dean of Faculty’s Office to offer credit-bearing courses at the York Correctional Institution, the only women's prison in Connecticut.

HRST—251: Marginalization and Migration (Spring 2014)

In recent years, we have witnessed a renewed awareness of social inequality in the United States as well as globally. While some have suggested that these realities are "natural" elements of the human condition, others insist that such gaps in power between individuals and governments are the result of consciously devised public policies and institutions. In this class, we will look at some of the political, economic, and artistic manifestations of social marginalization and the closely linked phenomenon of migration. We will analyze how such realities might be generated or constructed by the society's more privileged social actors.

HRST—252: Issues Gender Power Expression (Spring 2015)

In this multidisciplinary course, we will discuss the ways in which women, but also men, confirm, engage, and sometimes subvert the gendered expectations of their cultures. By studying a variety of art forms and writings from across a span of historical periods and global societies, we will examine the kinds of power and expression that can become embedded in gendered identity.


This semester’s study will look at life behind the razor wire—what are the human rights issues that emerge in the world of the incarcerated? Included in our investigation will be the question of the death penalty, the notion of rehabilitation vs. punishment, gender-specific issues and the impact of the arts on prisoners and the institution of prison.

The Trinity Human Rights Program York Prison Series—our Signature Series—will continue to grow. We hope that you will take advantage of these courses to enrich not only the lives of those whom you will touch behind the wire, but yours as well.

"Each of those brave women...courageously shared detailed, emotional and intimate stories....And they took me with them, every step and tear of the way....It was foundation-shaking.” Dr. Chanley M. Martin, MD, JD, for Signposts.
NEW COURSES FOR SPRING 2015

The Human Rights Program continues to grow! We hope that you will take advantage of these courses being offered in the Spring.

AMST—263: American Civil Rights Movement: Questions of urbanization, employment, racism, politics, violence, non-violence, Black Power and the notion of “race blindness” will be considered.

AMST—346: Sexuality Nation Race Gender: Examine how cultural production generates and sustains “normalcy” and abnormality in a variety of representational arenas in the U.S.

AMST—409: Race, Gender, Global Security: Recent events have focused attention on questions of race, gender, and the militarization of police. Open to AMST majors, or by permission of instructor.

AMST—409: Equality and its Discontents: Explores America’s ambiguous relationship with the concept of human equality in cultural, political, and legal terms. Open to AMST majors, or by permission.

ANTH—227: Intro to Political Ecology: Ecology and the environment are affected by larger political, social, and economic forces, so we will broaden the analysis to include wider spatial and temporal scales.

ANTH—244: Borderlands of East and Southeast Asia: As governments attempt to control borders and restrict cultural practices, borderland peoples of East/Southeast Asia are struggling for livelihoods.

ENGL—117: Intro African American Lit Part II: In addition to discussing issues of race, nation formation, diasporic identities, class, gender, and sexuality, we will identify/trace recurring ideas/theme.

ENGL—238: Latin American Novel in English and Spanish: Looks at contemporary Latin American novels of politics, violence, gender confusion, and other desperate situations written in Spanish and English.

ENGL—301: From Aristotle to Queer Theory: Read critical theories from Platonism to feminism and queer theory, and apply these to selected texts by Shakespeare, Keats, Austen, Conrad, and others.

ENGL—404: Women and Empire: Examines women’s involvement in and relationship to British imperialism in the 19th and 20th centuries.

HIST—213: Modern Jewish History: Topics include the Haskalah, the development of Zionism, the interwar period in Eastern Europe, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel.

HIST—224: Gender in Brazilian History: Debates and demands carried by LGBT, feminists and other movements in Brazil who are dedicated to equalizing the rights of people will be discussed.

HIST—233: (Re)Connecting the Black Atlantic: Slavery in the U.S. relied on a highly racialized society, one that formally institutionalized a racial code; slavery in Brazil was less formalized, but no less racial.

HIST—235: Colonialism in the Americas: Examine the complex world that the Spanish Conquest destroyed, and explore the “New World.”

HIST—320: Gender/Masculinity Latin America: Address discourses of sexuality and gender in Latin America and the Caribbean between the 1870s and the 1970s.

HIST—332: African Nationalism & Decolonization: Topics such as nonviolent civil disobedience, armed guerilla struggle, nationalist thought, postcolonial state formation will inform the ways in which we seek to understand the end of European colonial rule.

INTS—220: Writing the Body in Arabic Literature: Students will investigate topics related to writing the body, sexuality and love, the ethics and aesthetics of morality, homosocial relations, sexual performances, and homoerotic practices.

INTS—235: Youth Culture in the Muslim World: This course examines the impact of youth and youth culture on personal, social, and political expression in a variety of Muslim communities around the world.

INTS—245: Latin American Film and Human Rights: This course has the dual purpose of examining important human rights issues in Latin America and questioning the role of film in making visible, critiquing, or even sustaining the structures that lead to human rights violations.

JWST—206: Arab/Israeli Conflict: An examination of the dynamics of the Arab/Israeli conflict, especially since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

NESC—350: Neuroethics: The concept of personhood, particularly as it relates to those with dementia and the persistent vegetative state, will be emphasized.

PBPL—377: Law, Gender & Supreme Court: Introduces students to contemporary gender issues as they have been treated both in the law and in the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court.

POLS—104: Intro: International Relations: This course examines issues and concepts such as the balance of power, the nature of warfare, human rights, overpopulation, global environmental devastation, etc.

POLS—332: Understanding Civil Conflict: This course surveys the many causes and consequences of civil conflict and civil war.

PHIL—228: Animal Rights, Human Response: In an effort to explore this and related questions this course will serve as a philosophical investigation into the essence of non-human animals.

PSYC—218: Special Education: How are children labeled (or mislabeled) as having learning and developmental disabilities, autism, or attention deficit disorder?

PSYC—365: Cognitive Social Neuroscience: We will consider topics such as substance abuse, discrimination, child development, and mental illness.
Wally Lamb Introduces This New Work About Incarcerated Women

Hartford, Conn. (October 2, 2014)—Judy Dworin Performance Project opens its 25th anniversary season with “In My Shoes,” to be performed on one night only at Hartford Stage (50 Church Street) on Monday, December 8, at 7:30 p.m. (with a snow date of December 15).

Bringing the authentic voices and real-life experiences of women from prison to the stage, this spirited, soul-searching performance piece asks, “What would it be like to be in my shoes?” With startling clarity and compassion, “In My Shoes” examines choices and twists of fate that lead to incarceration. It also tells of perseverance and hope, atonement and redemption found in walks during “time in;” the pathways out of prison; and what it means to be truly free.

“In My Shoes” integrates movement, spoken word and song and is performed with warmth and wit by six women who have reentered Connecticut communities from York Correctional Institution. Two are members of Women on Our Own, a singing-spoken word group that electrified audiences at the 2013 Hartford appearance of Piper Kerman (author of “Orange is the New Black: My Year in a Women’s Prison,” inspiration of the popular Netflix series). All of these women are sojourners towards new, rewarding lives. They are joined by the Ensemble of the Judy Dworin Performance Project, which has won multiple awards in its 25 year history.

Few have had the opportunity to see the work that Judy Dworin Performance Project develops with women inside the York prison compound in Niantic. Governor Dannel P. Malloy did last summer, and said to those serving time, “In your writings, in your speech, in your dance, in your overall performance—you reflect the humanity that is within each of you and within a broader society…Congratulations on your success in this performance.”

A post-performance talk led by Dworin with the performers will invite audience questions and discussion of criminal and social justice, strengths-based intervention programs in penitentiaries, and the role of the arts as agents of change.

Introducing the show is guest Wally Lamb, the best-selling novelist who, like Dworin and her teaching artists, is an instructor at York Correctional Institution. He says Dworin’s work “excites, moves, and educates audiences, and enhances the public’s understanding of the complicated equation of crime and punishment in America.”

Dworin’s dance-theater works are known for compelling social commentary and warm humanism. Cutting across boundaries of gender, geography, and governmental decree, she testifies for those whose voices have been stilled or muted by history and social injustice. While presenting challenging and difficult questions, her dance-theater works convey inspiring stories of perseverance, transcendence, and hope.

General admission to “In My Shoes” is $25, for seniors and “Let’s Go Arts” members $15, and for students with ID $10. A pre-performance reception starting at 5:30 p.m. features a meet-and-greet with author Wally Lamb. Only 100 tickets for this event, including hors d’oeuvres, beer and wine, and reserved seating for the performance, are available for $75 per person. To purchase tickets, visit judydworin.org or call (860) 527-9800.

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EVENTS

A VOICE OF FEMINIST RESISTANCE IN HONDURAS
WITH KARLA LARA AND HIBRIDOS JAZZ
Join us for an evening of music and politics!
Singer, Feminist, and Political Activist Karla Lara will Speak and Sing about the Struggle for Political and Social Justice in Honduras.
Honduran Human Rights Songs will be Performed!
Tuesday, November 18, 2014
7:00pm—9:00pm
Mather Hall, Washington Room

HUMAN RIGHTS: THE RIGHT (CAREER) CHOICE?
A FEW WORDS OF CAUTION FROM A VETERAN
A Common Hour Discussion with Maryam Elahi, Trinity’s First Human Rights Program Director
Maryam Elahi is President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. She had previously been the founding director of the Human Rights Program at Trinity College in Hartford, establishing the first undergraduate college Human Rights Program in the United States.
Tuesday, December 2, 2014
12:15-1:30
Hallden Hall North, Grand Room

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Daniella A. Salazar, Class of 2017
Our Sincerest Appreciation to all who have contributed to this issue.
The “Red Flag Campaign” is designed to alert students to eight key behaviors that signal intimate partner violence. The eight behaviors are: emotional abuse, coercion, excessive jealousy, isolation, sexual/physical assault, blaming the victim for inappropriate behavior, stalking on the part of the perpetrator and stalking on the part of the victim.