

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## **UCSB Series Continues to Examine U.S. Plans for New World Order**

Throughout the world, the Bush Administration's foreign policies are stirring impassioned debate.

A series of events designed to contribute to that dialog, "America and the Reshaping of a New World Order: Nominative Implications, Cultural Constraints," resumes Thursday, January 22 at the University of California, Santa Barbara, with a talk by renowned Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

Ngugi, who currently holds the title distinguished professor of English and comparative literature at UC Irvine, will discuss "Moving the Center: Language, Culture, and Globalization" at 4 p.m. in the Girvetz Theater (Room 1004 Girvetz Hall) on the UCSB campus.

The talk is free and open to the public.

Ngugi's appearance of one of 12 events in the series, which is co-sponsored by the UCSB Department of English's American Cultures and Global Contexts Center and the Program in Global and International Studies.

The series is supported by a "Critical Issues in America" grant and administered by the Office of the Provost and the College of Arts and Letters.

The series began in November with a UC-wide faculty roundtable that discussed "America and World Governance: the Cultural Dimension."

It culminates with an international conference, Friday and Saturday April 23 and 24. It includes six other lectures, two film discussions and an appearance by performance artist/writer Guillermo Gomez-Peña.

Born in Kenya in 1938, Ngugi was one of Africa's most influential young writers and scholars of the 1960s and 1970s.

His first major play, "The Black Hermit," was produced by the Ugandan National Theater in 1962.

His first novel, "Weep Not Child," was published to much acclaim in 1964.

Over the ensuing years, he wrote the novels "The River Between" and "A Grain of Wheat" while also gradually ascending to the chair of the Department of Literature at the University of Nairobi.

But in 1977, Ngugi began to attract the unfavorable attention of the Kenyan government with the publication of a series of books and plays by him that took a harsh look at daily life in neo-colonial Kenya.

He was arrested and imprisoned for several years without ever being charged or prosecuted, gaining his release only after Amnesty International brought attention to his case.

After his release, he was forbidden any government work, but continued to live and write in Kenya.

On a visit to Britain in 1982, he learned that he was once again a target for arrest and has lived in exile ever since, first in England and since 1989 in the United States.

In addition to his creative writing, Ngugi has written several acclaimed non-fiction books, including "Decolonizing the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature," "Moving the Center: the Struggle for Cultural Freedom," and "Pinpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams: the Performance on Literature and Power in Post-Colonial Africa."

Other events on the "America and the Reshaping of a New World" calendar are:

- Thursday, Feb. 5, 4 p.m., Campbell Hall. "Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, 9/11."

Friday, Feb. 6, 1 p.m., McCune Conference Room, "Visualizing Cultures: East Meets West, West Meets East."

Both talks are by John Dower, the Etling E. Morrison Professor of History at MIT and a specialist in modern Japan and U.S.-Japanese relations.

His recent book, "Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II," was winner of the Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction, the National Book Award for nonfiction, the Bancroft Prize in American history, the John K. Fairbank Prize in Asian history, and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in history among others.

- Monday, Feb. 9, 7 to 9 p.m., McCune Conference Room, "Documentaries, Docudrama, and World Governance."

Emmy Award-winning writer/producer David Rintels and his wife, Victoria Riskin, a writer/producer and former Writers Guild of America president, discuss the challenge of creating docudramas on world order and the difficulties of writing, producing, and financing serious films.

- Thursday, Feb. 26, 4 p.m., Girvetz Theater (Room 1004), "American Military Power versus Cosmopolitanism?"

Friday, Feb. 27, 1 p.m., South Hall room 2635, "The Study of the Global." Seminar.

Both presentation and seminar feature Mary Kaldor, program director for the Centre for the Study of Global Governance and a professor in the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, both affiliated with the London School of Economics. Kaldor is considered an expert in humanitarian intervention, recent wars in the Balkans, The Transcaucasus and the Middle East, and in wars over oil.

- Friday, April 9, Time and place TBA, "Davis Guggenheim Honors Charles Guggenheim."

Writer/director/producer Davis Guggenheim discusses his father, Charles, one America's greatest documentary filmmakers. Charles Guggenheim's works include

"The Klan: A Legacy of Hate in America," "A Time for Justice," and "D-Day Remembered."

· Thursday, April 15, 4 p.m., Corwin Pavilion, "A Global Measure: Writing, Rights, and Responsibilities."

Friday, April 16, 1 p.m., Engineering Science, "The Global and the Postcolonial: A Conversation with Homi Bhabha."

Both events feature Homi Bhabha, the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of English and American Literature and Harvard University, whose diverse interests range from colonial and post-colonial theory and cosmopolitanism to theories of ethics, psychoanalysis, culture and globalization.

· Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, Corwin Pavilion, International Conference on America and the Reshaping of a New World Order: Normative Implications, Cultural Constraints. The conference features an international cast of scholars and performance artist and writer Guillermo Gomez-Peña.

Further information is available on the series Web site,

<http://acc.english.ucsb.edu/NWO>

Related Links

[Series Web Site](#)

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.