



BOSTON COLLEGE

CHRIJ

Center for
Human Rights
and
International Justice

www.bc.edu/humanrights

Center sponsors popular Conversations on “Race” and Racism series

The Center sponsored a three-part series, “Conversations on ‘Race’ and Racism,” during the fall semester. Realizing that racism is an element that permeates institutions of all kinds in our society, these very well-attended lunchtime discussions were led by faculty and administrators from Boston College and beyond to discuss race and racism on university campuses and in society at large, and how to begin to address it.



Photo courtesy of BC Media Technology Services

In introducing the series at the first event, Center Associate Director Daniel Kanstroom, while reminding that the problem of racism in the US did not simply end with the election of President Obama, helped frame the initiative, stating:

“Human rights work is never easy, but sometimes, perhaps it is easier to conceive of it as something that is primarily needed in faraway or foreign places. This, I think, is a self-delusion that we should resist strenuously. We should also recognize that the most difficult human rights problems to solve are often the ones that people think are already solved, and such problems, especially problems of structural or institutional racism and sexism, are especially uncomfortable for many people to deal with as they force us to look hard and critically at ourselves, our underlying assumptions, and our own bias.”

Tough Choices: Teaching about Race, Gender and Class Oppression on a Predominantly White Campus

On October 30, C. Shawn McGuffey and Lynn Johnson opened the series speaking on the challenges they face teaching on a predominantly white campus. They began with an educational framework in which they highlighted the social constructions that a professor must confront regardless of subject. McGuffey, BC Associate Professor of Sociology and African & African Diaspora Studies, noted that teaching is not simply imparting information to one’s students, but also how one frames it in a social context. The distinction between core and elective courses creates a power dynamic that informs students about what is integral to understanding society and what is additional, or optional. When courses on race and racism are categorized as electives, students see the courses as unnecessary in the hierarchy of subject matter. However, McGuffey insisted that race and racism are integral to understanding the foundation of relationships and constructions in the US and therefore integral to a liberal education. He and Johnson, BC Professor of History, were excited to have the opportunity to co-teach a core course on race, class, and gender during the fall 2015 semester, but shared past challenges they had teaching to a predominantly white student body. For example, Johnson

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ABOUT US

The Center for Human Rights and International Justice addresses the increasingly interdisciplinary needs of human rights work through academic programs, applied research, and the interaction of scholars with practitioners. The Center’s Director is David Hollenbach, S.J., University Chair in Human Rights and International Justice. Associate Directors are Law School professor Daniel Kanstroom and Lynch School of Education professor of Community-Cultural Psychology M. Brinton Lykes. Mr. Timothy Karcz is the Assistant Director.

CHRIJ Review Contributors: Daniel Quick and Eleanor Vorys

Center Notes & Events

Selected stories and events the Center hosted in collaboration with other Boston College departments and groups in the Fall 2015 semester.

Notes:

- » The Center recently released a new report, in English and Spanish, on its website entitled “Migrant Families & Language: ‘... The person who speaks two languages has double the value.’” The report was completed as part of the Center’s Documenting Migrants’ Intergenerational Experiences with English Language Learning towards Improving Access, Multilingualism and Community Advocacy Project. This Participatory Action Research sought to understand the experiences of Latino/a migrants in accessing English for Speakers of Other Languages courses. The purposes of this research were to accordingly adapt current services to better meet the needs and demands of their communities; to understand the implications of within-family-language-barriers for familial members’ wellbeing and integration into the community; and to use research findings to develop community actions to inform policy and programming around service delivery for these populations. Find the report on the Center’s Resources page at www.bc.edu/humanrights/resources.
- » Center Director David Hollenbach, S.J., received the *Civitas Dei* award at Villanova University on Nov. 18, 2015. An article adapted from the lecture he delivered upon receiving the award, entitled “The Rights of Refugees: Who is responsible for people forced into flight?,” was featured as the cover article in *America* magazine’s January 4-11, 2016 issue.
- » The Center is looking for two BC undergraduate interns for the summer of 2016. Application deadline is February 29. See the Center website for details.
- » The Center is once again offering summer research grants to a select number of BC undergraduate and graduate students in 2016. Application deadline March 8. Details available on the Center website.

Events:

- » On **October 20, 2015**, the Center co-sponsored a event organized by BC’s Gabelli Presidential Scholars entitled “Mass Incarceration: Missing in America,” in which spoken word artists addressed the epidemic of mass incarceration in the US.
- » On **October 28, 2015**, the Center co-sponsored an appearance of the Alta Gracia Speakers Tour, featuring workers from the Alta Gracia apparel company in the Dominican Republic, which pays its workers a living wage.
- » On **November 2, 2015**, the Center co-sponsored a screening of the documentary “Doctors of the Dark Side,” which investigated the ethics of psychologists lending their expertise to the US government to assist in the torture of detainees.

Center AD Lykes Named Co-Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Transitional Justice*; Center to Serve as Journal’s Institutional Home



Effective January 1, 2016, Center Associate Director Brinton Lykes is a new co-editor of the *International Journal of Transitional Justice*. The journal publishes high quality refereed articles in the rapidly growing field of transitional justice, which it defines as “the study of those strategies employed by states and international institutions to deal with a legacy of human rights abuses, and to effect social reconstruction in the wake of widespread violence.”

As part of Lykes’ appointment, the Center and the Lynch School of Education will enter into a five-year commitment to the journal, providing institutional and individual support, with the Center facilitating annual meetings of the journal’s editorial staff. The journal’s experts in transitional justice, along with Special Issue editors, will also present their work at Boston College to further disseminate their work to faculty and students seeking deeper understandings of the complexities of the many dimensions of transitional justice. The first such meeting will be held at BC in March 2016.

To read the full press release, see www.bc.edu/humanrights/news/lykes-ijtj.

Race and Racism Series (continued from pg. 1)

mentioned that her longstanding history course on the “Wild West” was comprised of mostly white male students expecting to focus on Hollywood’s depiction of America’s West. However, the course covered European colonial expansion to the west, the Native American genocide, and racial dynamics involved in Asian and Mexican immigration. Continual student dissatisfaction was reflected in posterior course evaluations that contained comments such as, “too much on women and minorities.” She said that uncomfortable information can often be met with resistance and noted that this is a crucial challenge for junior professors without the protection of tenure. McGuffey reiterated the dilemma of having to arrange challenging information in a manner that is comfortable and pleasing to an audience. When the audience is predominantly white, such as the student population at BC, it can be difficult to present information regarding race and racism, as he mentioned professors in other universities disciplined for presenting information reported as uncomfortable by some white students. McGuffey also showed how a number of studies indicate that students are predisposed to determine aptitude and credibility of a professor based on race. Ultimately, they discussed how students of different races, classes, and genders need different things based on their experiences before reaching college, and an integrated classroom can occasionally make it difficult to meet all student needs. McGuffey distinguished that while white students generally need initial awareness and knowledge of racial issues, students of color generally are already cognizant of them and just need a language and a space to express their feelings and emotions about them. He emphasized that professors must ask: ‘Who are we teaching?’ and ‘Who makes up our classroom?’ to help meet these specialized needs and challenges.

Fighting Racism by Modeling Inclusion: Reflections of an African-American Dean

On November 5, Boston College Law School Dean Vincent Rougeau led a conversation in which he shared his experiences as an African-American and as a dean, and how those experiences have shaped his perspective in his work. He began with the assertion that creating inclusive communities requires generosity of spirit and willingness to dialogue from a perspective that does not assume one correct way of being. This willingness, he said, must come from recognition that new members of a community may have something to add, which also implies the possibility of change in that community. He regarded this as the most important marker of meaningful membership in a community, the sense that one has a place in shaping the direction of a community through participation. Concretely, Rougeau highlighted the law school’s introduction of the position of Assistant Dean for External Relations, Diversity, and Inclusion as a major step. He argued that this position, and the authority and respect it carries, signals to prospective students, members of the BC community, and outside observers that BC is not only aware of these issues, but also actively prioritizes finding solutions. He asserted that communities and institutions that do not foreground issues of inclusion and diversity have the effect of empowering one group of people over another; even without explicitly excluding particular groups, failing to remove barriers to meaningful participation is tantamount to disempowering them. Ultimately, Rougeau argued that inclusion has a thoroughly pragmatic quality, allowing a law firm, for example, to better respond to the needs of a potentially diverse group of clients through representation of diverse experiences on its staff. While he acknowledged the competing pressures faced by an institution like BC Law, he expressed confidence in the work BC has done in the past and optimism for the BC community’s ability to adapt and grow in this area.



Critically Engaging White Privilege Towards Institutional Change

On December 5, Center Associate Director M. Brinton Lykes and Alice McIntyre, Professor of Elementary Education at Hellenic College, concluded the series with this conversation on white privilege and institutional change. Professor McIntyre first described her personal history growing up in Boston in the 1970s, in midst of the racial strife of Boston’s busing crisis. She explained that, despite neither of her parents teaching her to be racist, the prevailing social climate of the time led to tensions and distance between white communities and communities of color. She pointed to a turning point in her life during the busing crisis in which a parent in a news report insisted that busing was an issue of “rights of the students,” and McIntyre having an epiphany that she was talking exclusively about the rights of white students



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Panel Discussion Takes on the Syrian Refugee Issue



On September 23, the Center hosted a presentation from Associate Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Australia, Maryanne Loughry, RSM; BC Professor of Social Work Westy Egmont; and BC School of Theology and Ministry student Daniel Corrou, SJ, titled “The Syrian Refugees: Are They Just a European Crisis?” Corrou began, describing his time spent as a Jesuit stationed in Lebanon as the Syrian Civil War began and resulting wave of refugees started to enter Lebanon. He explained that the entry of refugees into Lebanon was preempted by the movement of substantial numbers of wealthy Syrians into Lebanon, followed by ever-growing numbers of refugees living in what he called “the crevices” of cities like Beirut. Because of Lebanon’s

decision not to place refugees in camps, refugees improvised living situations wherever they could in the city. Further, Corrou explained that the lack of centralization in camps meant that refugee aid efforts were much more ad hoc and improvised, with groups like the Jesuit Refugee Service finding refugees wherever they could and attempting to provide for their basic needs. He commented that the centralization and structuring of refugee care also politicized the issue, as limitations starting being placed on refugee placement and movement, and the nature of refugee care started to shift into longer-term planning, given the uncertain timeline of the conflict in Syria,

Professor Loughry then described the situation on the ground in Syria, using information from members of the Jesuit Refugee Service currently working in the nation. She explained that even Catholic Relief Services, a humanitarian aid agency that would otherwise be working in Syria, did not currently have anyone there because of issues at the border, making the JRS’s work all the more important. Loughry highlighted that, in addition to the estimated 4 million refugees who have fled from Syria, the country also has approximately 7.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), people who have been forced to relocate within Syria as a result of the conflict. Many IDPs currently living in Syria depend on local aid organizations, and the biggest shortages are of drinkable water and fuel for generators. One JRS official stationed in Damascus reported an average of 16 hours of blackouts daily and access to drinkable water only every few days. Loughry also pushed back against the characterization of the situation as a European refugee crisis, clarifying both that the vast majority of Syrian refugees remained in the Middle East (Turkey and Lebanon, primarily) and that the real crisis is the ongoing conflict, rather than the refugees themselves.

Professor Egmont then elaborated on the role and contributions of the United States in the crisis, underlining the complexity of the situation by reminding the audience that the 4 million Syrian refugees represent only a portion of the 11 million total refugees worldwide. He explained that much of the tension regarding the involvement of the United States stemmed from the need to respect the existing international process of refugee resettlement and care, by which more than 50% of the total resettled refugees worldwide have been resettled in the United States. He argued that resettlement represents the third option for aiding refugees, being a less ideal solution than resolving the conflict generating refugees or integrating refugees into the countries they arrive in, and that more needs to be done to meet the needs of refugees overall. At the same time, he expressed confidence that the United States could easily double its current refugee population without issue, explaining that doubling the refugee population of Massachusetts from 2,400 to 5,000 would be a change that the vast majority of people would never even notice. Overall, Egmont argued that the US and international community needs to do more to support agencies like the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the World Food Program, two massively underfunded groups doing the most direct work in aid of refugees.

Racism Series *continued from page 3*

in her statement. Further, she noted the problem of what the parent called “white talk,” the ways in which white people engage with each other around issues of race in ways that avoided self-criticism. She explained that her position at Hellenic College has afforded her the ability to directly integrate anti-racist practices into her program, and that this centered around helping education students engage directly with the communities in which they teach. Professor Lykes then discussed the Zulu idea of “ubuntu,” which she interpreted as recognition of the fact that we as individuals co-create each other. In the context of anti-racism, she explained that this means that when institutions and society limit the opportunities available to certain groups, they limit the opportunities available to the whole of humanity. Lykes highlighted the conflict that arises from differing definitions of what racism is and how it works, as well as the importance of working to create new systems and practices at the same time that we protest current flawed systems and conditions. Finally, she emphasized that people with privilege need to work to open themselves up to conversations about that privilege, which will be essential before we can begin to resolve the issues.

The series was co-sponsored by BC’s African and African Diaspora Studies; the Department of Counseling, Developmental and Educational Psychology at the Lynch School of Education; and Psychology and the Other.

Summer Research Grant Reports

The following are summaries of research findings from last summer's undergraduate recipients of Center summer research grants. These students will present these findings at the BC Undergraduate Research Symposium on March 18, 2016. The application deadline for summer 2016 grants, for both graduate and undergraduate students, is March 8. See Center website for details.

Ricardo Alberto, International Studies, A&S '16

"Boom Bye Bye': Jamaica's Ongoing Struggle with Homophobia"

Alberto's research explores the social, political, and legal roots of the ongoing problems of anti-LGBT discrimination and homophobic violence in Jamaica. Beginning with an analysis of homophobia in Jamaican dancehall and reggae music, Alberto goes on to describe the attitude of prejudice that exists in Jamaican culture and government. He highlights the importance of anti-LGBT Jamaican legal structures, which stop short of explicitly criminalizing LGBT identity, but that illegalize homosexual conduct in a broadly interpreted sense and refuse hate crime protections

for LGBT people. Yet despite the environment of prejudice and oppression that LGBT people face in Jamaica, Alberto notes grassroots and international support from organizations like the Jamaican Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals, and Gays, and Human Rights Watch, as well as from groups like the so-called "gully queens" in Jamaica, are rallying together to provide support and protection to these vulnerable populations.



Austin Bodetti, Islamic Civilizations and Societies, A&S '18

"What Peace Means for the Oppressed: Documenting the Human Rights of Malays in Southern Thailand"

Bodetti traveled to Bangkok and Southern Thailand to investigate the roots and development of the conflict between the Thai government and the Malay Muslim population of Southern Thailand. He explores the atrocities committed by both sides of the conflict, as armies and police forces comprised primarily of Buddhist Thai soldiers participated in the oppression and violation of rights of Malay Muslims, who responded with violent insurgency. As Bodetti explains, decisions on both sides escalated the conflict, with Muslim insurgency tactics rather than civil resistance inciting

government response, with the government's use of counterinsurgency tactics rather than cooperation or protection of rights only further contributing to an environment of sectarianism. Overall, he implicates both sides in the continuation of the conflict, and ultimately argues that the government has failed in its responsibility to uphold the human rights of all Thai citizens.



Max Blaisdell, International Studies, A&S '16

"Right to Community: Experiences of Alienation in Young Immigrant Populations in France"

Blaisdell's research draws from his time spent in Paris studying the links between French Islamophobia and the lived conditions of religious and ethnic minority groups of Paris. Blaisdell explains that French prejudices against Muslims (and other minority groups assumed to be Muslim) lead to the assertion that Islamic values are fundamentally incompatible with the secular republicanism of French society. This perceived distance creates an environment in which even French citizens by birth who are Muslim are given the label of "immigrant," and simultaneously struggle to integrate into

a society that blames them for their failure to do so. Far from simply interpersonal disputes, these prejudices substantially impact employment, housing, and legal protections for French Muslims. In his research, Blaisdell examined the ways that this prejudice affects the lives and conditions of French Muslims, and found that the peripheral regions of the city popular with immigrants also get substantially less attention in terms of public investment or general upkeep.



Yoonhye "Linda" Kim, International Studies, A&S '17

"Anti-Discrimination Law, LGBTQ Rights and Jesuit Spirituality: A Comparative Study in the US"

Kim conducted interviews and research to determine the factors contributing to the decision by Jesuit universities to add sexual orientation and gender identity to school non-discrimination policies. In her research, she identified four major influences in this decision-making: state and federal regulations, support movements among students, supportive university administrators, and appeals to Jesuit values and teachings. Kim noted that, although private universities are not required to follow state regulations regarding

non-discrimination, many schools update their policies to remain on a level with their public peers. Further, although the decision-making structure at most universities involves a wide variety of offices and individuals, many of Kim's respondents identified the university president as the administrator whose support most influences the outcome in these cases.



WomenCrossDMZ: A Report Back from a Historic Walk in the Koreas for Peace and Reunification

Photos courtesy of BC Media Technology Services



On September 16, the Center hosted a presentation from Center Associate Director Brinton Lykes and BC Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Center Affiliated Faculty Member Ramsay Liem on the current situation between North and South Korea. In May, Lykes participated in WomenCrossDMZ, an event for International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament, in which 30 women from 15 countries crossed the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea. Along with clips from Liem's 2013 documentary, "Memory of Forgotten War," and "Crossing," a forthcoming film about WomenCrossDMZ, Lykes shared her experiences on this trip, as well as some of the reflections it inspired regarding her own work.

As Lykes explained, the women involved in WomenCrossDMZ walked in an effort to call attention to the long-lasting and unsettled nature of the conflict, which unofficially began in 1945 and has not been resolved by a treaty in 70 years. In addition, they hoped their crossing would serve as a reminder to the world of the many Korean families left separated by the war, and the importance of women's inclusion in peace summits in the Korean peninsula. Clips from Liem's documentary recounted the history of the Korean War, as well as the often-ignored occupation of South Korea by the United States for four years prior to the official declaration of war. Historian Bruce Cumings describes how, for many Koreans, the war began years before its official declaration, with US military occupation and suppression of South Korean leftist movements leading to guerrilla war between South Korean leftists and the US military.

Lykes also described the impact of the experience from an academic perspective, explaining that the trip helped her to challenge the dominant discourse of trauma common in analysis of conflict areas, and direct interactions with the people affected by the conflict helped to push back against psychological perspectives that relegate local populations to the status of victims. She highlighted the particular influence played by the United States in the war, discussing both the "globalization of US-driven structural racism," and the role that the US plays in militarizing conflicts in countries around the world. Finally, Lykes shared some of her reflections on the type of activism this trip represented, especially given the involvement of famed feminist author Gloria Steinem and several past recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. Calling this an example of "grasstops activism" she described the peculiar combination of grassroots collective action with the privilege and access to power afforded by the fame and notoriety of some of the women involved in WomenCrossDMZ.

Cuba & the US: Tides of Change

On October 13, the Center welcomed Ariel Dacal Díaz, a popular educator from Cuba, to discuss the implications of the newly reopened relationship between Cuba and the United States and the historical roots of the tensions that have long characterized US-Cuban relations. The event was coordinated in collaboration with Witness for Peace, a grassroots organization advocating for peace in Latin America. Beginning with the history of Cuba following independence from Spain, Dacal Díaz explained that conflict arose when the United States attempted to exert political and economic influence over revolutionary Cuba in a manner that many Cubans perceived as exploitative. He then highlighted the Cuban revolution's gains in terms of including black Cubans, women, and rural people more directly in the political process. At the same time, he identified some of the problems that arose in socialist Cuba when a small group of people began to make decisions based on their perception of the best interests of the entire country. Describing the changing relationship between the US and Cuba, Dacal Díaz emphasized the importance of mutual learning and discussion about different ways to live and structure society, rather than either side imposing their vision of what works best on the other. He admitted that although Cuba does not have all the answers in terms of its path forward in this new relationship, he also felt strongly that there are many things about Cuban society that the US and other countries would do well to learn from.



Book discussion: *The New Bostonians and The New Deportations Delirium*

On November 16, 2015, Marilynn Johnson, BC Professor of History and author of *The New Bostonians: How Immigrants Have Transformed the Metro Area since the 1960s*; and Center Associate Directors Brinton Lykes, BC Professor of Community-Cultural Psychology, and Daniel Kanstroom, BC Professor of Law, co-editors of *The New Deportations Delirium: Interdisciplinary Responses*, joined the Center to discuss their new books.

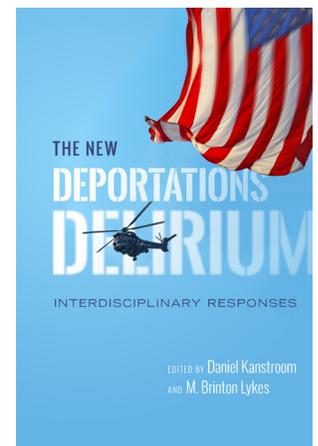
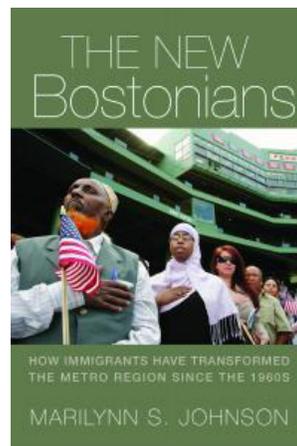
In her presentation about *The New Bostonians*, Professor Johnson explained how the Immigration Act of 1965 had a fundamental impact on the demographics of the United States as a whole, with a particular focus on how that demographic shift has changed the face of the city of Boston. As a result of the 1965 Act's abolition of the earlier national origins quota system and the introduction of preferences for skilled laborers and family reunification, the demographic makeup of cities like Boston changed in terms of race, ethnicity, class, and labor skill level.

In her presentation, Johnson argued that this demographic shift had a profound impact on Boston's makeup, as immigrants moved into and revitalized neighborhoods and industries across the city, replacing or supplementing the existing populations. At the same time, even as new immigrant communities formed an integral part of the social and economic landscape of Boston, they also faced substantial obstacles in the form of nativist or racist sentiment, economic inequality, and the impact of international politics on the reception of different immigrant groups. Johnson's presentation raised the provocative reality that the fruits of immigrant-supported economic growth are not often shared equally with the immigrants that create it, as they face growing costs of higher education, a lack of affordable housing, income inequality, and entrenched forms of racism and segregation that have made it substantially more difficult for the newest waves of immigrants to improve the opportunities available to their children.

Next, Lykes and Kanstroom presented their new book, *The New Deportations Delirium*, which they described as an interdisciplinary investigation into the central contradiction at the heart of the modern immigration regime in the United States: how a nation that prides itself on being an open society, supportive of diversity and protective of the rights of non-citizens can simultaneously produce a deportation apparatus that Kanstroom repeatedly described as unprecedented in human history. In their search for insight into this paradox, Kanstroom and Lykes enlisted the perspectives of a variety of academics and professionals for their book, which includes contributions from an immigration judge, an administrator of immigrant detention facilities, lawyers, activists, and social scientists, among others.

With these broad perspectives, *The New Deportations Delirium* seeks not only to explain the how and why of our growing deportation trend, but also to empirically examine the impact of deportation (both in threat and in practice) on the lives of immigrants in the US. Lykes highlighted that the Center's contribution to the book focused heavily on participatory action research in immigrant communities, and affirmed the importance of finding ways to prioritize the personal narratives and experiences of individuals in these situations, rather than allowing academic concerns or hypotheses to subsume the individual.

Following these presentations, the event concluded with questions and a discussion that revolved around the contemporary relevance of immigration and the immigrant experience, colored by the recent focus on immigration in presidential campaigns and debates. All three presenters maintained the importance of immigrants in the US economy and society, as well as the unique and complicated nature of the relationship between the US and its immigrant populations, including discussion about the links between immigration issues and the growing problem of mass incarceration.





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Upcoming Spring 2016 Events



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

***Human Rights and Judicial Independence
in Guatemala***

With **Claudia Escobar**, former
Guatemalan judge and current Scholar
at Risk at Harvard University's Radcliffe
Institute for Advanced Study.

12:00 PM • Boston College,
McGuinn Hall, Room 521

RSVP at bc.edu/humanrights/events



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9

***Book Discussion: The Catholic Church
and Argentina's Dirty War***

With Gustavo Morello SJ, Assistant
Professor of Sociology at Boston College,
and author of *The Catholic Church and
Argentina's Dirty War*.

12:00 PM • Boston College,
McGuinn Hall, Room 334

RSVP at bc.edu/humanrights/events

Visit BC.EDU/HUMANRIGHTS for the latest information and events or to view videos of past events.



Join the CHRIJ listserv to receive news and reminders of CHRIJ events via email.
Go to BC.EDU/HUMANRIGHTS/MAILINGLIST or scan the code on the left
and simply enter your email address to join.