

DIVERSITY

2008-2009

Lecture Series XIV



Ray Suarez – October 8, 2008

Journalist, Author, Correspondent

"Media, Politics and Washington: An Evening with Ray Suarez"

With more than twenty-five years of varied experience in journalism, Ray Suarez, one of the most respected news anchors in Washington today, continues to make major contributions to the public understanding of the stories shaping America today. Ray Suarez is the Senior Correspondent for PBS's *News Hour with Jim Lehrer* and was previously host of NPR's nationwide call-in news show *Talk of the Nation*. Suarez thinks that the media is the best tool by which people can voice their opinions about those who govern. On top of his work on the public airwaves; Suarez has taken to chronicling the American condition on the page. His much talked-about new book, *The Holy Vote: The Politics of Faith in America*, takes an in-depth look at the intersection of politics and religion in this country, while also examining the increasing polarization between Red and Blue States.



Amy Dickinson – November 12, 2008

Author, Syndicated Columnist, NPR Commentator

"Aging in the 21st Century"

Amy Dickinson's voice and narratives are heard and seen in numerous mediums. As a columnist her *Ask Amy* column for the *Chicago Tribune* is syndicated in over 200 newspapers nationwide. She is a regular panelist on *Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me*, carried on 400 NPR stations, and has been featured on NPR's *All Things Considered*. Her work focuses on family life and parenting, often drawing from her experiences as a single parent and member of a large extended family. Dickinson is a distant relative of Emily Dickinson; her family has lived in her hometown of Finger Lakes, New York continuously since the revolutionary war. "Life in my hometown was like growing up in Lake Wobegon, only with worse weather and high unemployment." She continues, "My great grandfather was warden of Sing Sing prison and my great uncle ran off to Europe and joined the circus when he was 40."



B. D. Wong – December 3, 2008

Tony Award-Winning Actor, Author, Activist

"Racial Self-image and the Model Minority Myth"

While perhaps best known to many as forensic psychiatrist Dr. George Huang on NBC's *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, B.D. Wong is also an author, Broadway actor, and accomplished speaker. Wong feels that living day to day in the trenches of his challenging career as an actor, (a vocation in an industry fraught with rejection and racism) has forced him to not only empower himself and his own self esteem, but it has caused him to be even more facile and articulate about the issues of racial self-image, race-based rejection, Asian-American parental pressure, and the "model minority myth." In June 2003, Wong released his first book, *Following Foo: The Electronic Adventures of the Chestnut Man*, a memoir about the personal drama that he and his partner endured on their path to parenthood "involving a surrogate, an egg from his partner's sister and identical twins born 13 weeks prematurely and needing months of intensive care."



Prince Cedza Dlamini – February 4, 2009

Humanitarian, Social Entrepreneur

"Global Forgiveness and Connectedness"

Cedza Dlamini is an impassioned humanitarian, social entrepreneur and visionary. His vision is to create a unified global order by establishing global networks of young leaders working collectively to address world problems, such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, hunger, and illiteracy. He travels the world to help young people recognize their connectedness to each other and their power to change their surroundings. As the grandson of Nelson Mandela, he carries on the activism and investment in community leading him to expose young people to the leadership and professional skills they need in their communities. He founded the Ubuntu Institute for Young Social Entrepreneurs, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nation's eight point strategy to eradicate poverty, hunger and disease in Africa.



Shannon Brownlee – March 11, 2009

Author, Economist, Health Care Analyst

"Debunking The Myth of Poor Care for American Veterans"

Shannon Brownlee is a Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation, and a former writer for U.S. News and World Report. The New York Times named her best-seller *Overtreated: Why Too Much Medicine is Making Us Sicker and Poorer* as the #1 Economics Book of the Year. Shannon Brownlee examines the unprecedented influence that "fee-for-service" care is having on America's public health—and sets myth from reality in examining the successes and failures in our ever-changing health systems. As debate surrounds the availability and quality of care for American soldiers and veterans, Shannon shares the story of the Veterans Health Administration—which has gone from a picture of all that was wrong with American health care, to a symbol of all that can be right. Bucking the traditional systems, the VHA is working with providers and veterans to create collaboration towards a more efficient and effective model.

For more information, please call (616) 234-3390.

- Free and open to the public
- On-campus parking \$3.00
- Lectures begin at 7 p.m. at Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain NE
- A book signing will follow Suarez, Dickinson, Wong and Brownlee lectures.

Bob and Aleicia Woodrick
Diversity Learning Center
Grand Rapids Community College