

Dr. Archibald W. Singham to serve as keynote speaker for a series of lectures sponsored by Third College

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Dr. Archibald W. Singham, Professor of Political Science and Chairman of the Caribbean Studies Program at Howard University in Washington, D.C., will serve as the keynote speaker for a series of lectures that will launch a new literature program in the Third College at the University of California, San Diego.

Singham, one of the foremost Third World political theorists, will talk on "Changing Definitions of the Third World" at 4 p.m. Monday, February 3, the Humanities-Library Auditorium on the Revelle College campus. The lecture is open free to the public. A reception for Singham, to which the audience will be invited, will follow.

The lecture is the first of a series planned to inaugurate a new Literature and Society major in the Third College. The major, specifically titled "Literature and Society in the Third World," was developed by the College to correspond with its emphasis on the education of students from economic, cultural and racial minority groups and the study and alleviation of contemporary social problems.

According to Sherley Anne Williams, Assistant Professor of Literature and chairman of the planning committee which established the major, many Third College students have ties, through historical origins or contemporary concerns, with the so-called Third World countries. The increasing significance of these countries in the world today makes their study a natural addition to the university curriculum.

"Ethnic literatures in the United States have traditions and histories which are linked with general American literature, but are also related through their preoccupation with the experiences of oppression and the struggles for liberation, with other literatures from the Third World," Miss Williams said.

"We call our major 'Literature and Society' because each course will blend an interpretation of the literary text with an appreciation of the cultural and historical milieu in which it was created," she said. "Much traditional literary study, particularly at the undergraduate level, emphasizes the study of the text and leaves out all other factors which influence its creation. Unless a student majors in one of the early periods of literature, his course of study does little to involve him in the complex social, cultural, historical and political factors which very often have significance for the interpretation of the text."

Another committee member, Sylvia Wynter, Professor of Literature, pointed out that changes which took generations to achieve in the Western world now take place abruptly in the Third World, often in the span of a single lifetime.

"The mass migration of traditionally rural peoples across both time and space, bringing them into the cities and the Twentieth Century, is perhaps the single most important process of the second half of this century," Miss Wynter said. "It gives rise to a literature which chronicles the anxieties, struggles and alienations of large masses of peoples.

"This kind of literature, while inheriting established devices and forms from Western literature, makes use of these devices in complex new ways to record a new experience. A study of this literature demands an interdisciplinary approach and that is what the Literature and Society major is all about," she said.

Students in the new major will concentrate on a specific Third World literature and select additional literature courses which deal with the comparative and contrastive aspects of other literatures. The major requires the students to take 10 to 11 upper division literature courses and four to five complementary courses in the humanities, fine arts and social sciences.

Professor Singham served for 10 years as professor of political science at the University of the West Indies before being named associate professor of political science and anthropology at the University of Michigan in 1970. He moved to his present position at Howard University in 1972.

Singham, born in Rangoon, Burma, in 1932, received a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan in 1959. He has taught at the University of the West Indies and the University of Manchester, England, as well as Michigan and Howard. His contribution to the study of the Third World has been considerable. He is the author of "The Hero and the Crowd in a Colonial Polity" published by Yale University Press in 1968, and "The Politics of Counter Revolution in the Caribbean", published in 1974, in which he explores the structure of the state in newly independent societies.

Singham served as an International Education Scholar from Ceylon in 1951-52 and as a Simon Research Fellow at the University of Manchester in 1963-64. He is a member of the British Political Studies Association, the Association of Caribbean Scholars, the American Political Science Association, and the International Political Science Association.

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