

October 2007

The City Thinks: Hotel Rwanda, Lessons Yet To Be Learned

City Thinks Overview

- * Expert Speakers
- * Book and Issue Discussion Groups
- * Movie Screenings
- * Student Essay Contest
- * Peace Craft Project for Kids

Schedule of Events

(For more details, see page 2.)

10/7	Kick off Reception with Professor Eric Reeves, MFA
10/9	Discussion of "An Ordinary Man", Central Library
10/10	Screening of "Hotel Rwanda", Central Library
10/11	Discussion of "An Ordinary Man", AIC
10/11	Screening/discussion of PBS Documentary, "Ghosts of Rwanda", Elms College
10/13	Screening of "Hotel Rwanda", Forest Park Branch Library
10/14	Discussion of "An Ordinary Man", Elms College
10/15	Presentation by medical volunteer Sam Grodofsky on Rwanda's current situation
10/15	"Hotel Rwanda" Screening and Discussion Group, WNEC
10/16	"Hotel Rwanda" Screening and Discussion Group, The Renaissance School
10/17	Discussion of "An Ordinary Man", Forest Park Library
10/18	Lecture and discussion with Presidential Medal of Freedom Winner Paul Rusesabagina



A Program of the Springfield Public Forum and Springfield City Library with Funding from the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation

The City Thinks: Greater Springfield Considers the Issue of Genocide in Africa

The pathology of genocide haunts mankind. In recent memory, tragedies such as the Holocaust and mass killings in Bosnia, Armenia, Cambodia, Rwanda and now Darfur, among others, illustrate humanity's continued descent down this brutal path. This October, the Springfield Public Forum, in collaboration with the Springfield City Library with funding provided by the Davis Foundation, presents a two week program which considers the topic of genocide in Africa.

Exploration of this complicated topic is highly relevant as the international community's response to the Darfur crisis continues to be slow and insufficient. Questions of history, responsibility, geopolitics and race relations come into play in analyzing ethnic cleansing in our times.

The City Thinks activities will include movie screenings, book and issue-discussion groups, a student essay contest and presentations by notable expert Professor Eric Reeves and medical volunteer Sam Grodofsky. The two week program will culminate in a speech by Paul Rusesabagina, the Rwandan man who sheltered and ultimately saved over 1200 Tutsis and moderate Hutus during the Rwandan genocide. His courage has been recognized internationally, including the award of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Additionally, Mr. Rusesabagina's story has been portrayed in his memoir, *An Ordinary Man*, as well as in the Academy-award nominated movie, *Hotel Rwanda*.

Join residents of the city and the region, learn more about this important issue and discuss what you think!



"If nobody can find it within themselves to stand outside the group and find the inner strength to say no (to genocidal acts...people) will continue to commit atrocities..."
Paul Rusesabagina

"An Ordinary Man": The Heart of The City Thinks

Paul Rusesabagina's memoir of his experience in Rwanda before, during and after the massacre in 1994 is the backbone of **The City Thinks** for 2007. In a starred review, *Publisher's Weekly* writes "For former hotel manager Paul Rusesabagina, words are the most powerful weapon in the human arsenal, for good and for evil, as was the case in the spring of 1994 in Rwanda. Over 100 days, some 800,000 people were slaughtered... Rusesabagina — inspiration for the movie *Hotel Rwanda* — used his facility with words and persuasion to save 1,268 of his

fellow countrymen, turning the Belgian luxury hotel under his charge into a sanctuary from madness... The humble hotel manager not only illuminates the machinery behind the genocide but delves into Rwanda's complex and colorful cultural history ...the understated elegance of Rusesabagina's simple and straightforward prose lends the story added vividness.

Publishers Weekly (Copyright Reed Business Information, Inc.)

COPIES OF *AN ORDINARY MAN* AND RELATED BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY.

PLEASE VISIT
WWW.SPRINGFIELDPUBLICFORUM.ORG OR
WWW.SPRINGFIELDCITYLIBRARY.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

All events are free to the public. Visit www.springfieldpublicforum.org or www.springfieldlibrary.org for more information.

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
10/9-10/20	DROP IN	“The Power of Words:” Peace-focused craft activities for children	Children’s rooms, Springfield City Library and Branch libraries
9/7-9/26	ON-GOING	Essay contest, 9/7-9/26, Winners announced October 5th with readings at the October 7th The City Thinks Kick-off event	Classes and individuals invited to participate. Judging by panel of experts and educators. Forms and rules available online at www.springfieldpublicforum.org and at all Springfield City Libraries.
10/7	2-4 p.m.	Kick off lecture/reception, with Darfur Activist and Professor Eric Reeves and student essay contest winners	Davis Auditorium and Blake Hall, Museum of Fine Arts, The Quadrangle, 21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA
10/9	6 p.m.	Book Discussion Group, “An Ordinary Man”	Springfield Central Library Community Room, 220 State Street, Springfield, MA (lower level)
10/10	6 p.m.	Screening and discussion of <i>Hotel Rwanda</i>	Springfield Central Library Community Room, 220 State Street, Springfield, MA (lower level)
10/11	7 p.m.	Book Discussion Group, “An Ordinary Man”	American International College, 1000 State St, Springfield, Sokoloski Tower, Facilitated by Professor Kim Hudson
10/11	7 p.m.	Screening and discussion of PBS Documentary, <i>Ghosts of Rwanda</i>	Elms College, 291 Springfield St., Chicopee MA, Theater, Alumni Library Facilitated by Professor Scott Hartlbay
10/13	12 p.m.	Screening and discussion of <i>Hotel Rwanda</i>	Forest Park Library, 380 Belmont Ave., Springfield
10/14	2 p.m.	Book Discussion Group, “An Ordinary Man”	Elms College, 291 Springfield St., Chicopee MA Alumnae Room, Dooley College Center, Facilitated by Professors Scott Hartlbay and Kent Alexander
10/15	6 p.m.	“The Will to Make a Difference: International Medicine in Rwanda”. Presentation and slides by medical volunteer Sam Grodofsky.	Springfield Central Library Community Room, 220 State Street, Springfield, MA (lower level)
10/15	6 p.m.	Screening and discussion of <i>Hotel Rwanda</i>	Western New England College, 1215 Wilbraham Rd., Springfield, Sleith Hall Room 100 Facilitated by Professor Jean Marie Higiroy
10/16	6:30 p.m.	Screening and discussion of <i>Hotel Rwanda</i> especially geared for middle and high school students	The Renaissance School, 1170 Carew St., Springfield, auditorium
10/17	6 p.m.	Book Discussion Group, “An Ordinary Man”	Forest Park Library, 380 Belmont Ave., Springfield
10/18	4 p.m.	Student discussion group with Paul Rusesabagina (limited space available)	Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place, One Monarch Place, Springfield
10/18	7:30 p.m.	Concluding Event: Lecture and discussion with Paul Rusesabagina	Springfield Symphony Hall, 34 Court St, Springfield

“The 20th century taught us how far unbridled evil can and will go when the world fails to confront it. It is time that we heed the lessons of the 20th century and stand up to these murderers. It is time that we end genocide in the 21st century.”

Rep. Allyson Schwartz

D-Pennsylvania



Reader's Guide to *An Ordinary Man*. Discussion Questions

1. Rusesabagina writes that "a false view of history is a toxin in the bloodstream." How have you witnessed this in your own life or other situations? Is there such a thing as a completely true view of history?
2. The culture of hate enabled Hutu murderers to think of themselves as victims because "the person whose throat you do not cut will be the one who cuts yours." Where do you think that sentiment arises from? How do you think it can be counteracted?
3. Rusesabagina describes how he would listen to absurdly racist radio debates. Though he loathed the opinions expressed, he found the shows fascinating. Why do you think people are drawn to media sources that they disapprove of?
4. When you see a man like Rusesabagina (or Oskar Schindler in the film *Schindler's List*) save lives by paying bribes to government agents, does it change how you look at the role graft plays in society?
5. How does Rusesabagina use the "Rwandan No" as a way to critique first his own culture and then the international community?
6. Given Rusesabagina's experiences, what do you think the future holds for Rwanda?
7. What different choices do you think you would have made if you had been in Rusesabagina's position?
8. What effect do Rusesabagina's accounts of the actions of the United Nations and the United States have on your impression of either?
9. Do the horrors described in the book make you look at African countries, or other involved nations, differently?

Questions from:

http://www.bookbrowse.com/reading_guides/detail/index.cfm?book_number=1816

The City Thinks: Student Essay Contest

“Consider the U.S.’ response to the genocides in Rwanda and Darfur. What patterns do you see with the U.S.’s outreach to help the “other”? What lessons learned in Rwanda should be applied to Darfur? What is our responsibility to help now in Darfur and to prevent further genocides from occurring?”

Tell your city what you think! Answer the question above in a maximum of 750 words. The essay contest guidelines are as follows:
 * The contest is open to any student age 12-21, with 3 judging categories: middle school, high school and college level.
 * Essays must be submitted by 5 p.m. on September 26, 2007 in both electronic and paper format. Please see the rules and guidelines for complete information.
 * Complete guidelines and forms are available at your local library or at www.springfieldpublicforum.org.

How You Can Help: Rwanda and Darfur

- Learn more. Visit www.sudanreeves.org, www.hrw.org, or www.refintl.org.
- Email President Bush and other elected representatives urging them to take action. For a sample letter, visit www.act.darfurgenocide.org. For a list of email addresses, visit www.house.gov/writerep/ or www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm.
- Organize or attend an event to raise awareness and encourage action. Visit www.darfurgenocide.org or www.stand.org for more information and ideas.
- Write a letter to the editor. For ideas, visit <http://www.darfurgenocide.org/localideas.php>
- Attend the national conference of STAND, A Student Anti-Genocide Coalition Sept. 29-30 in Washington D.C. (www.standnow.org).
- Raise money. Hold a bake sale, car wash, video screening or discussion group and contribute to relief in Darfur or Rwanda.
- Call 1-800-Genocide to be connected to your elected officials for free. This hotline also provides talking points for your call.
- Go to www.dreamfordarfur.org for ideas on how to encourage China to do more to protect civilians and humanitarians in Darfur.

ORGANIZATION NAME

WEBSITE

Columbia University’s Earth Institute's Millennium Project
 The International Rescue Committee
 Africare
 Save the Children
 Orphans of Rwanda
 Partners In Health
 Barefoot Artists/JeffHEALTH (Helping to Link Africa to Health)
 UNICEF

www.unmillenniumproject.org
www.theirc.org
www.africare.org
www.savethechildren.org
www.orphansofrwanda.org
www.pih.org
www.barefootartists.org
www.unicef.org

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The City Thinks is a new collaboration between the Springfield Public Forum and the Springfield City Library with funding from the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation and support from local schools and colleges. The goal of the program is to provide area residents the opportunity to consider a pressing issue of our times through education, discussion and other activities.

One of the few surviving lecture series in the nation that is still offered at no charge to the public, the Springfield Public Forum brings an incredible array of nationally-known experts and commentators to our community. This year, we are thrilled to expand our educational efforts in presenting **The City Thinks** in collaboration with the City Library. For information on our entire 2007 season, please visit www.springfieldpublicforum.org.

For nearly 150 years, the Springfield City Library (www.SpringfieldLibrary.org) has provided public library service to area residents. Using state-of-the-art technology, the Library provides free and easy access to information and the opportunity for lifelong learning through a variety of programs and services. We are pleased to be able to work with other community organizations to implement city-wide activities that engage a broad cross-section of the community.

Special Thanks:

The Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation, funders of The City Thinks	Merrie and Lyman Wood, for sponsorship of Paul Rusesabagina's speech
Guest speakers: Professor Eric Reeves, Sam Grodofsky	The Museum of Fine Arts and the Quadrangle
College partners: AIC, WNEC, Elms College	The Renaissance School, an Expeditionary Learning School
<i>The Republican</i> Newspaper	Edwards Books

Additional Resources: Check your local library!

Rwanda Information

1. Dallaire, Romero. Shake Hands With The Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda. Carroll 7 Graf, 2004.
2. Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda. PBS Paramount, 2005.
3. Gourevitch, Phillip. We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda
4. Mamdani, Mahmood. When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda
5. Rusesabagina, Paul. "Darfur: In Sudan, The World Ignores Rwanda's Lessons." The Wall Street Journal Opinion Journal. 9 Apr. 2006 <<http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110008204>>.
6. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/>: Human Rights Watch information about Rwandan genocide
7. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/africa/2004/rwanda/default.stm: BBC New article on 10th anniversary of Rwandan genocide
8. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5228070>: NPR clip: Poetry reading, Blood of Rwanda
9. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/evil/>: Resources from PBS and Frontline on Rwanda
10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Rusesabagina: Wikipedia information about Paul Rusesabagina

Darfur Information

1. Cheadle, Don and John Prendergast. Not On Our Watch: The Mission to End Genocide in Darfur and Beyond.
2. de Waal, Alex and Julie Flint. Darfur: A Short History of a Long War
3. Marlowe, Jen et al. Darfur Diaries: Stories of Survival
4. Power, Samantha. A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide.
5. Prunier, Gerard. Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide
6. Reeves, Eric and Michael Brassard. A Long Day's Dying: Critical Moments in the Darfur Genocide.
7. <http://www.sudanreeves.org/>: Sudan Research, Analysis and Advocacy
8. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3496731.stm> BBC Overview of Darfur Situation
9. www.savedarfur.org/: Information and activism about Darfur
10. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/linkset/2006/05/08/LI2006050801047.html>: Washington Post information about Darfur