

TREK NEWS

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Looking Ahead: Trek 2006

Things are finally settling down in the Trek 2006 planning department, and here's where we're going and who is in the leadership line-up.

Bangkok: **Janet Balasiri** returns for her third time directing the Trek in Bangkok, as well as helping to direct the Asia Trek Orientation and Debrief in Manila.

Cairo-Sudanese: **Kristen Leber** staffed this Trek in '05 and returns this year to direct her first Trek team.

Dhaka: **Ray and Danielle Curtiss** direct their first team, bringing back this Trek which was started in 2004.

Kolkata: **Joel and Krista-Dawn Kimsey (and toddler Judah)** return for their third time directing the Trek to Kolkata, as well as helping direct the Asia Trek Orientation and Debrief.

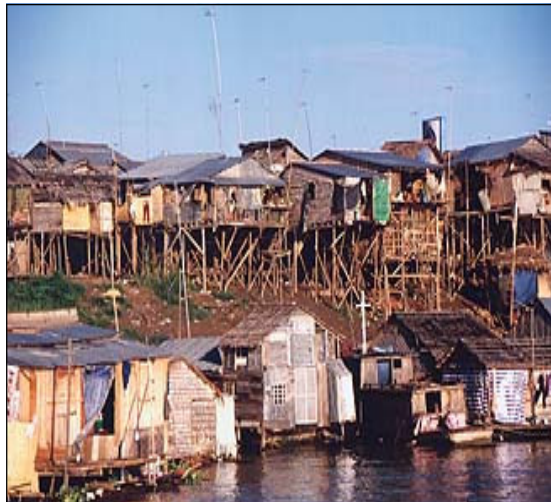
Lima: **Tammy Evans and Julie Helwig** are first-time directors pioneering this new Trek partnership with AGEUP, the IFES movement in Peru.

Manila: **Jess Delegencia, Joey Fung and Francis Chen** repeat their 2005 Trek leadership team in Manila. Jess is also helping to direct the Asia Trek Orientation and Debrief.

Mexico City: **Elizabeth Sargent, Chizu Shimizu and Nick Caric** are bringing their many combined years of Trek experience to direct this team.

Phnom Penh: **Fred Ngo** is a first-time director developing this new Trek site.

LA Orientation and Debrief: **Heidi Williams** returns for her third (and final) year in this role



Houses on the banks of the Tonle Sap river in Phnom Penh, Cambodia—our newest Trek city. Phnom Penh is home to over 1 million people, nearly 200,000 of whom live in informal settlements such as this neighborhood. (Statistics courtesy of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme)

Trek 2006: Be Involved

Pray: We always need intercessors! Pray for a specific team or for the Trek in general. If you'd like to receive Trek updates to pray for, please email: trek@intervarsity.org

Give: We all remember the highs and lows of fundraising. Help out a student with a financial gift to the Trek.

Volunteer at Orientation or Debrief: Set up meals, navigate airport runs, experience the joy all over again...June 19-24, July 17-20, or July 31-August 4 we need volunteers to help with the logistics of Trek Orientation and Debrief in Los Angeles. If interested, email jfeldkamp@intervarsity.org

Go on the Trek again: Why not?

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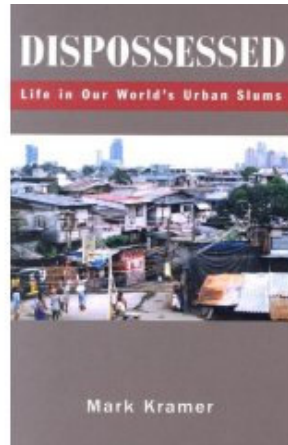
WORDS

The church has put itself on the side of the poor and has assumed their defense. This means that the church incarnates itself in the world of the poor, proclaims a good news, gives hope, inspires a liberating praxis, defends the cause of the poor and participates in their destiny. A Christian who does not wish to live this commitment of solidarity with the poor is not worthy of the name Christian. What marks the genuine church is a word...burning like the word of the prophets.

— Archbishop Oscar Romero, martyred in El Salvador in 1980

Book Review: *Dispossessed: Life in Our World's Urban Slums*

Mark Kramer coached a number of us through the first few years of online Trek journals, challenging us to keep it brief but honest, to provide snapshots of people's lives in urban slum communities without either romanticizing poverty or overemphasizing despair. Now, with the same eye of hopeful realism, he written a 200-some page book full of the stories and statistics of life in slums while digging deeper into the nature of urban poverty and its causes. Five of the original six Trek cities are featured here, and Mark (with the aid of a few student helpers) did some of the research and interviewing during the Trek 2002.



"By leading us into the homes and hearts of urban slum dwellers, Mark Kramer also opens up to us the complex histories of nations and their relationships in a global world. The stories are disturbing. But they give us hope for a better world." —Most Reverend Luis Antonio Tagle, Bishop of Imus, Philippines

Just released in January 2006, *Dispossessed* is available online through Orbis Books (the publisher), Fuller Seminary, The New Social Worker Online, or Amazon.

Simple Living: a spiritual discipline for Lent*

For the past twenty years, Alternatives for Simple Living has produced calendars with a thought-provoking Scripture, action or meditation point for each day of Lent. Themes of the different seasons have included: The Joy of Discipleship, Hunger, the Spirit of Simplicity, and many others that challenge us to consider ways that our faith, culture and lifestyle intersect. While this year's calendar does not seem to be available yet, there are archives going back to 1986 at the following website:

<http://www.simpleliving.org/Archives/Lent/LentCalIndex.html>

(Sorry about the long link...it's well worth the trouble of copying and pasting the address into your browser!)

One sample tip (from 2005):
Read Luke 8:4-8. Walk or bike rather than driving whenever possible. Give 25 cents for every mile you drive in the next two days.

**Lent is the 40-day period leading up to Easter, which is traditionally a time of repentance, fasting and prayer. This year it begins March 1.*

RetroTrek: a journal entry from Ama (Cairo I, July 20, 2003)

I remember my first day at APE and how much I raved about it. It was a great day. Well since then, my days have been less than great, but better than horrible. The one huge obstacle in the way of establishing relationships with the women I work with at APE is that I don't speak Arabic. Arabic happens to be a really big obstacle because the women converse the whole time they are making rugs. I assume that they talk about work, their families, their husbands, and their plans for the weekends.

It seems like the women are really close and close friends talk about those

things. Well, I can't engage because no one speaks English. Being the only person in the room who can't speak Arabic is alienating. So I have spent most days sitting and completing my given task in silence.

Miraculously, God spoke to me during this time of alienation. He allowed me to experience the pain of being a foreigner in a non-English speaking country. Not being able to ask for the basics like the bathroom or communicate beyond my name is so difficult. The way these women treat me sometimes is how Americans treat foreigners most times. I know that my patience runs thin when I

meet someone who speaks broken English.

Well God has definitely humbled me. The thin patience that I show is not what I received at APE even in the midst of the mockery. God is really good. I love how he puts me on the receiving end of my sin to show me how painful it really is. Do I dislike the women in the rug room at APE? No. But I am self-consciousness around them always wondering if they are talking about me. If they aren't talking about me, I find myself praying that they don't.

What's New: "Slum Communities in the Developing World" track at Urbana 06

The missionary image remains trapped in the pre-urban, tribal world. The movie, *End of the Spear*, will hopefully reveal something of the true heart of missions - to go to the hard places, at great personal cost, out of a true and pure love for Christ and a passion to see his Kingdom come to earth. But the image of today's missionary is less about those who might find themselves traipsing through a jungle of vines and trees and more about those who find themselves walking the corrugated tin jungles of the slum community. Urbana 2006 will feature a track, limited to 500 delegates, who want to explore what it means to see the Kingdom come more fully to our world's slum communities. What will it take for the people of God to become a blessing to the one billion slum-dwellers of our world? What challenges and opportunities exist in our

world's high poverty neighborhoods? What do we as God's people have to learn from brothers and sisters living in informal urban settlements? These are some of the questions explored in the track we have titled, Slum Communities of the Developing World.



Track participants will live together in the same hotel and have access to mission agencies that focus on ministry to slum communities. We will experience the same Urbana program as other delegates, but will set up a series of seminars which are geared to urban ministry. Issues like prostitution, housing, water, and street children will be examined. Mornings will be shared together in Bible study and evenings in prayer and processing the day. We expect this track to fill quickly so urge Trek participants who plan to come to Urbana to register early.

www.urbana.org

Featured Partner: Samaritana

Samaritana Transformation Ministries is a non-profit, non-denominational organization committed to sharing and living out the Gospel among Filipino women caught in prostitution, in partnership with other members of the Body of Christ.

Samaritana began as an informal group of women sharing an apartment together...praying, visiting and befriending women in the bars of Manila

Inspired by Jesus' example, Samaritana reaches out to modern-day Samaritan women. By offering them community, friendship and accompaniment, these women are also slowly freed up to be who they truly are, as people loved just for who they are, regardless

of their backgrounds, and valued for who they can yet become as they begin to trust in themselves and others and as they renew and pursue their dreams and aspirations.

More information can be found at:
www.samaritana.org

The Editor's Corner: Want My Job?

Yes, I'm serious. After six years with the Trek and over three working in the Global Projects Office, my time with InterVarsity is coming to an end. In August my (as of April 1!) husband and I will be moving to the Middle East as missionaries with Servant Partners, starting a new season in my commitment to loving and serving the urban poor.

But obviously with my departure there comes a few questions: what about the Trek, and the 40+ other Global Projects that go every year? Who is going to work with the IV staff and volunteers who direct all those teams, helping them sort out finances and plane tickets and plan training for their students? Who's going to plan and lead Trek Orientation and Debrief, bless and anoint people into long-term commitments, write the Trek newsletter?

It could be you. This is a full-time-plus job with a lot of variety in responsibility: there's administration (being financially responsible for an annual budget of over \$1 million—and all the paperwork and policies that entails), teaching (cross-cultural training, speaking to student groups, training staff to lead teams), representing IV in the broader missions community at conferences and interacting with other organizations, being aware of (and sometimes responding to) international crises that affect our teams, consulting on travel arrangements and illness and team conflict. And, of course, writing the Trek newsletter.

So if that sounds like something you'd be interested in, give me a call! 608-443-3690. It's not as scary as it sounds... Peace, Heidi



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The Global Urban Trek was born out of one overriding conviction—to raise up flesh and blood followers of Jesus to incarnate the gospel to the urban poor...Jesus Christ is the only answer to the question of despair. The arrival of God's Kingdom is good news. It is full of hope, and that kind of hope is not conveyed very well through a program, it is conveyed through living creatures. People to take up residence alongside the despairing. The Trek is essentially about opening up an opportunity for some of us to go and spend our lives among the poor as his couriers of hope.

Where They Are Now...Jerry Lee, Manila, '02, '03 & '04

After three summers in the slums and garbage-villages of Manila, I came back to the States and started on the ground floor of corporate America - working at a large consulting firm in Boston. The question from the Trek that has stuck with me is: how do I live Pastor Efren/Father Ben's/Viv Grigg's *justified* life every day in the working world? Specifically, how do I best steward the resources and opportunities God has blessed me with? It hasn't been an easy process - there really is an inherent tension and competition between the Kingdom of God and the empire of America. But by way of my struggling to establish financial accountabil-



In addition to three summers in Manila, Jerry also went to Kolkata, India with his church this past December.

ity with friends, wrestling with guilt after an expensive night out, trying to overcome laziness and apathy to keep my heart near the poor, I feel like I've come to the beginning of the answer. It's only by God's Grace and by depending on Him that my heart, attitude and actions can be

changed. I feel like coming back from the Trek, I had an agenda of how I would impress my co-workers and friends by my righteous life and witness, but it's been the humbling reminder of my need for God that I've found myself reflecting on.

We're on the web!
www.globalurbantrek.org