



Dining for Women

***MC Preview
January 2008
Northern Pakistan***

When I was a little sort of girl and I would see a gentleman or a lady (from outside)... I would run away and hide my face. But after I graduated from the Korphe School, I felt a big change in my life. I felt I... could go before anybody and discuss anything.... And now... I feel that anything is possible. –Jahan, CAI alumna

News of the assassination of former Prime Minister of Pakistan and democratic leader Benazir Bhutto came while I was writing this. Many throughout the world felt that Bhutto was the best hope for instituting democracy in Pakistan and limiting extremism. As the world waits to see what will happen next in Pakistan, as many mourn the death of the first internationally prominent Muslim woman political leader, Central Asia Institute will continue its mission to educate girls, to create more potential for women's leadership. Let's hope and support efforts to ensure that Bhutto's vision of a democratic Pakistan free of terrorism and poverty and Jahan's optimism will rule the day in the end.

Our Program Fact Sheet gives a basic overview of Pakistan as well as CAI. For continuing updates, concise analysis and more background on the developing situation in Pakistan, see the BBC website @ http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6653475.stm

What to Expect in This Month's Making Connections

DFW last supported CAI in July 2006. Since so many of you have joined us since then, this month's *Making Connections* repeats some material from the 2006 edition.

FYI: The Situation of Women in Pakistan's North Country

We'll examine how law and custom intersect to create impediments to Pakistani women, especially in the remote North. We look particularly at the concept of *purdah* and practices associated with it.

Recommended Book

Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Fight Terrorism and Build Nations... One School at a Time* (Viking Penguin, 2006). Easy enough this time—we have the remarkable story of the founding of CAI. The book is now out in paperback as *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace One School at a Time* (Penguin 2007). Mortenson insisted that the subtitle be changed. Find out more at <http://www.threecupsoftea.com/>. The book has become a remarkable story in itself recently. Due to the support of women's groups, book clubs, and independent

booksellers, it's become a bestseller with multiple weeks on the *New York Times* booklist. It's also received critical acclaim as *Time Magazine's* Asia Book of the Year.

Socially Responsible Shopping

Welcome to Carolyn Mayers, our new socially responsible shopper. Her first month was something of a challenge, but Carolyn managed to find two sources for beautiful fair-trade crafts made by women's cooperatives organized and supported by Habitat Integrated Pakistan. Among the options (in a wide price range) are handmade textile purses, quilts, pillows, dolls, clothing, and other items. The focus on textile art is especially appropriate for us this month. You might notice the word "ikat" in CAI's web address. It refers to traditional types of silk weaving and symbolizes the binding strength of the communities that CAI serves.

<http://www.thehabitat.org/organization.htm>

http://www.fairtradequilts.com/kuchi_turkmani_bedspreads.htm

Dining with Women

Some wonderful dishes from/inspired by Pakistan and a tribute to a DFW inspiration.

Voices

Here we raise up the voices of women from the pages of *Three Cups of Tea*. While written by CAI founder Greg Mortenson and a male co-author, it is ultimately the story of Pakistani women, their hopes, their determination, and how they inspired Greg to feats much higher than climbing mountains.

CAI and Other Resources

Caveat: CAI is growing by leaps and bounds and is in the midst of a media blitz. This means its very small (mostly volunteer) staff is drowning in requests for publications, mailings, etc. So if you wish to order items from CAI directly, please do so as soon as possible. Given the lag time I've had in communications with them, I can't assure you that you'll receive responses or mailings promptly. Fortunately there are some excellent resources for chapter meetings that can be accessed on-line, easily, and immediately.

1. See CAI's website at <http://www.ikat.org/> for its (quite lengthy) downloadable brochure and other information. Brochure at <http://www.ikat.org/publications.html>
2. In July of 2007, journalist Karin Ronnow and photographer Deirdre Eitel traveled with Greg Mortenson to Pakistan and Afghanistan. They subsequently published several eloquent articles and moving photographs in a series called "Journey of Hope" featured in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle. Some of you may receive copies of the series (published a glossy magazine) from CAI in time for your meetings. If you do, please share it with members; it is quite powerful. But if you don't, I encourage you to see the articles and photos on-line at <http://bozemandailychronicle.com/pakistan/pakistan1.php> You'll need to click on the links there to the individual articles. Each article is accompanied by a slide show. The main image in each slide show is downloadable if you'd like to try printing it on photo paper for showing in your meeting. Unfortunately, the other images in the slide shows are not. The Journey of Hope calendar, which contains many of the photos with captions, is available from CAI for \$15.

3. Several high-resolution downloadable images from CAI projects are available at <http://www.gregmortenson.com/photos.php>

4. Last March, journalist Maria Hinojosa interviewed CAI founder Greg Mortenson on the PBS radio news show NOW. You can read the interview transcript, play it, or download it onto your computer: <http://www.pbs.org/now/news/309.html> It's about 15 minutes long and an excellent introduction to CAI's work and why it's so important. I can't recommend it enough for playing in your chapter meetings.

5. Greg Mortenson joined Marsha as a Today Show alum this past November. The interview (with Ann Curry) is preceded by a video report by John Larsen from CAI project sites. You can see them (after the annoying commercial) as well as read an excerpt from *Three Cups of Tea*, at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21883828> Click on the photo to view the video. Unfortunately the video quality of the interview isn't very good. (The Larsen report is fine.) For a slightly improved but shortened version of the interview, see <http://jezebel.com/gossip/notag/when-you-educate-a-girl-you-educate-a-community-324841.php>

And Also...

CAI has an initiative aimed at educating and involving American children in its mission called "Pennies for Peace." If you'd like to know more, perhaps get your kids or grandkids or a school/community group involved, see <http://www.penniesforpeace.org/home.html> for more information and excellent resources. A DVD about Pennies for Peace is also available from CAI. Jennifer Sipes, CAI Operations Director will send it to you without charge if you contact CAI directly (cai@ikat.org or go to <http://www.ikat.org/contact.html> for address/phone).

Chapter Program Ideas

1. If you receive Journey of Hope via mail, display or pass it around so that members can see the photographs. You might choose a few photos that you find particularly moving or illustrative of CAI's work to discuss in the meeting. You'll find captions for most and further explanation in the articles that you can summarize briefly. This might work particularly well with the photos of specific women or girls that accompany their stories. It always helps to put a face and story on a project. If you don't receive a copy and your group is small and can gather around a computer screen, you might show one of the slide shows in the online version of Journey of Hope (see link above in #2). Or, set up a computer so that members can view it themselves as they arrive.
2. Print out a few images from Mortenson's website (see #3 above) on photo paper to post or pass in your meeting. You'll find short captions there as well that you can attach to the photos.
3. I know many of you will want to use that Today Show interview in your meetings, but I'm going to try to change some minds about that. It's good (except for the video quality and format size), but the NPR radio interview is much better. It's my recommendation for the best resource for communal listening in your meeting. It doesn't have the visual component, but I think listening to Mortenson

- is compelling enough without it. And it offers far more substantive information as well as interesting anecdotes than the Today Show segment. Enlist a couple or three people beforehand to listen especially carefully and jot down things that they find particularly interesting to raise for discussion after listening. If yours is an antsy group, pass around some of the photos mentioned just above while the interview plays.
4. Have individual members read the quotations in *Voices* aloud for the group. It might lead to an interesting discussion about how women participate in or take charge of their empowerment even in situations in which men appear to have all the control or do the “rescuing.” And it would be nice to hear more directly from some of the women involved in CAI after listening to Mortenson.
 5. *New Year’s Resolution?* Please encourage members to read the Fact Sheet and Making Connections before your meetings. That’s part of our own empowerment, of taking responsibility for our own education, and of being part of a community of women world citizens. There is an enormous amount of misunderstanding about Islam and women—and an equally enormous amount of controversy. *MC* aims this month to enlighten about some of it. Given the crisis that Pakistan is currently in, it might be particularly appropriate this month to ask someone in the group to prepare to update everyone a bit on what’s happening using the Fact Sheet and the BBC resources mentioned above.
 6. And of course, have some Pakistani food—and some tea since that’s how CAI got started.

Heads Up for Next Month

DFW will be supporting the Fistula Foundation’s work in Ethiopia next month. This is the second of our projects associated with BlogHer. FF is featured in “A Walk to Beautiful,” a full-length documentary that has already won prestigious awards and will air on PBS’s NOVA in April. There is a 10-minute trailer for the documentary that you can view on the FF website: <http://www.fistulafoundation.org/> FF has a few DVD copies of the trailer (not the documentary) which it is willing to send, on a first come first serve basis, to larger (over ten members) chapters. (Smaller chapters might view it from the web). If you want a copy, please contact Terry: terry@fistulafoundation.org or 1-866-756-3700 and allow at least a week’s time for processing.