

## **BANDANA PURKAYASTHA'S ACCOUNT ON PAKISTAN TRIP**

**NOVEMBER 2014**

Bandana Purkayastha was invited to the International Conference on 25 years of UNRC and the State of Child Rights in Pakistan. The conference, organized by the Department of Sociology, Qaid-I-Azam University, was attended by students, faculty, administrators, activist/NGOs, and policy maker. Purkayastha was invited to deliver an address on Theoretical Approaches on Child Rights during the plenary session. The other plenary session speakers were: Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, MNA National Assembly, Barrister Zarullah Khan (Special Secretary to the Prime Minister, Pakistan); Ms. Habiba Salman, coordinator of CRM Pakistan, Mr Stefano Gatto, Deputy Head of the European Union delegation, and Vice Chancellor Professor Eatzaz Ahmed, Qaid-i-Azam University. The subject of my talk was about theoretical approaches to studying child rights. Purkayastha spoke about interlocking systems of oppression and power imbalances, and the challenges of gathering data on causes--the structures that lead to the violation of child rights--instead of primarily tracking negative outcomes.

Farhan Naveed Yousaf (a recipient of AIPS grants and Fulbright fellow to the Department of Sociology, UCONN) and Purkayastha also met with the Fulbright alumni relations officer to present a copy of their new book on human trafficking in Pakistan.

On Friday, Nov 21 Purkayastha delivered a lecture on Human Rights in the US. The subjects Purkayastha drew upon are mainly from the co-edited collection Human Rights in Our Own Backyard-emphasizing the role of groups that organize to claim human rights. Since Dr. R Zakar's interests are on interpersonal violence, we were able to discuss this topic separately. Purkayastha also met and discussed topics of interest with Dr Mujahid Kamran, Vice Chancellor, University of the Punjab.

On Monday, Nov 24th, Purkayastha delivered a talk on Negotiating Ethnicity: Experiences of South Asian Americans, focusing on the constructed and multilayered nature of ethnicity. Purkayastha's audience-faculty and students-were particularly interested in the idea of the children of migrants from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan who try to find commonalities to create the South Asian ethnic layer. Purkayastha also toured the library on South Asia and talked with Dr Umbreen Javaid (Director, South Asian Studies Institute) and the affiliated faculty on topics focusing on Southern Asia.

In Lahore, Purkayastha was able to meet and talk with a number of government officials and NGO leaders to become better acquainted with the work that is being done to support women. These talks included conversations with activists and leaders who have set up and manage shelters and rehabilitation programs for women.