

The Open University seminars were conceived as forums in which an intellectual who was also a scholar or knowledgeable professional would begin by reporting his/her work and its implications for Armenians, with the express purpose of drawing in the knowledge, thoughts and experiences of those present. Typically, an Open University Program consists of a presentation in the morning, a lunch break, and a seminar discussion of the topic in the afternoon. A representative selection of these seminars is listed below.

Armenia & Caspian Oil Politics

Henry Huttenbach, City College of New York. Columbia University, November 7, 1996.

The Construction of Gender Issues in Armenian American Communities

One way culture is transmitted is through the family. The role of women is absolutely in the center of preservation and perpetuation of tradition. However, if a tradition or culture does not evolve and becomes too narrowly defined, what happens to the community as a whole and to women in particular, when women feel they cannot abide by or uphold a tradition which they feel locks them out or denigrates them? Is there a double standard for men as opposed to women?

Arlene Avakian, Professor of Women's Studies, University of Massachusetts-Amherst. MIT, April 13, 1996.

Diasporas within the Diaspora: Case Studies from Cyprus and Kessab

Susan Pattie. Tufts University, March 30, 1996.

After Independence: Diasporas and Homelands — Predicaments and Opportunities in the New Armenian World Order

Khachig Tololyan, Wesleyan University. Tufts University, February 24, 1996.

States, Nations and Diasporas in the New World Order

Khachig Tololyan. 1991.

Armenian-North American Literature and the Possibility of a Diaspora Culture

Lorne Shirinian, Professor of English Literature, Collège Militaire Royal du Canada. New York, October 28, 1989, Toronto, February 24, 1990 and Montreal, March 5, 1991.

Democratization in Armenia

Since February 1988, Soviet Armenian political culture was the focus of world attention and community discussion. One of the central topics of debate was the process of democratization in Armenia—its characteristics, architects, mechanisms, long-term goals, and limitations.

Nora Dudwick, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. New York, Columbia University, Dec. 2, 1989.

Inter-generational Effects of Genocide: From Collective Mourning to Personal Identity

Shake Topalian, Institute of Contemporary Psycho-analysis. Toronto, November 11, 1989.

A Sociologist Looks at Armenia: Class and Everyday Life

Levon Chorbajian, University of Massachusetts-Lowell. Tufts University, October 21, 1989.

Educating for the Future in Armenian Schools

Hagop Der Garabedian, University of LaVerne and Armine Proudian Der Garabedian, Fontana School

District, California. Los Angeles, October 14, 1989.

Recent Political Developments in Soviet Armenia

Pakrat Edilian, Yerevan State University. Boston, April 15, 1989 and New York, April 22, 1989.

The Style of Reactive Symbolism in Armenian Diaspora Politics

It is a commonly held view that Armenian political life since the Middle Ages has been polarized. In the modern era too, tensions amongst the three “national” political parties have not subsided. What are the causes of the polarity which pervades all dimensions of Armenian political life? What are the consequences of such a situation? What kind of political behavior does this result in? What are the major characteristics of such behavior? What style of ideology does this entail?

Stephan Astourian, UCLA, Long Beach. Cambridge, MA, March 18, 1989 and Toronto, March 25, 1989.

Legitimacy and Democracy in Armenian Life

Jivan Tabibian, Western Behavioral Science Institute. New York, Columbia University, December 3, 1988.

Cultural Pluralism and the Question of Ethnic Integration in the Armenian Community of Montreal

Garo Chichekian. Montreal, December 3, 1988.

Armenian Issues and the Non-Armenian Media: Assumptions, Practices, and Alternatives

Since February 1988, Armenian issues in general and the question of Karabagh were the focus of continued media attention by the non-Armenian media in North America and throughout the world. At no other time in recent memory have so much sustained information and commentary been generated by the non-Armenian media about a series of related events which had far-reaching consequences, not only for the Armenian community, but also for much larger developments in the world. What patterns of interpretation were evident in the presentation of Armenian issues in general and the question of Karabagh in particular? How have the processes of news gathering, packaging, and dissemination reinforced these patterns? How have Armenian organizations attempted to make inroads in the media and to evaluate successes? What do these evaluations reveal about community structures and modes of collective action? Are there alternatives to the existing situation?

Lucy Danielian, Dept. of Communications, State University of New York, Albany. Toronto, November 19, 1988 and Cambridge, MA, Dec. 2, 1989.

The Armenian Diaspora in a World of States

Hratch Zadoyan, Dean at Queen's College of the City University of New York and Professor of Political Science. Montreal, November 17, 1988.

Ethnicity and Political Development in the Armenian Diaspora

Nikola Schahgaldian, RAND Corporation. San Francisco State University, October 29, 1988.

The American-Armenian Community and the Status of Women: Dilemma or Opportunity

Arlene Avakian, Professor of Women's Studies, University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Boston, January 23, 1988, Montreal, June 4, 1988 and Toronto, May 20, 1989.

The Lebanese Conflict: The Role of the Armenian Community

Nubar Hovsepian / Gerard Libaridian. Montreal, April 9, 1988 and Toronto, May 14, 1988.

Gender, Politics, and Ethnicity in an International Perspective

What is the concept of gender differences, and what are the various approaches to political feminism? What are the international issues facing women in developing and developed countries? How do the concepts of gender difference and political feminism relate to ethnic, religious, and racial minorities in general and to

Armenian women in particular?

Eliz Sanasarian, University of Southern California. San Francisco, January 16, 1988.

Genocide and Ideologies of Economic “Development”

Rhoda Howard, McMaster University. Toronto, November 28, 1987.

Past and Present in Armenian Art

This seminar elicited an often heated debate over the political, cultural and emotional ramifications of such questions as, What is Armenian art? Do we herald it as “Armenian” simply because it repeats the traditional styles and motifs to which we have been exposed in the past? Is there room for another kind of Armenian Art? Is change acceptable? Do our community’s expectations oppress the modern artist?

Nora Nercessian, Professor of Art, Harvard University. Toronto, April 11; New York, May 16, 1987.

Concepts of Power: Perceptions and Measurements

Richard Dekmejian, University of Southern California. Los Angeles, February 21, 1987.

Leadership and Authority in the Diaspora

Khachig Tololyan, Professor of English Literature, Wesleyan University. New York, January 24; Boston, March 14; Montreal, September 26; and Toronto, October 3, 1987.

Conflict and Change in the Armenian Community

Gerard Libaridian, Co-founder and Director of Zoryan Institute. Toronto, January 10; New York, March 21; Boston, April 4, 1987.

Foreign Policy in a Diasporan Setting

Hratch Zadoian, Dean at Queen's College of the City University of New York and Professor of Political Science. Toronto, December 13, 1986; New York, February 14, 1987.

Nation-states and the Diaspora

Gérard Chaliand, École Normale d'administration. Cambridge, MA, November 8, 1986.

The Crisis of Legitimacy

Garbis Kortian, University of Montreal. San Francisco, October 18, 1986; Los Angeles, October 25, 1986; and Boston, February 7, 1987.