

Report on Dr Bonnie Zare's Special Lecture and Workshop

A special lecture and a workshop was conducted by Dr Bonnie Zare and her excellent team of students from Virginia Tech at the invitation extended by Binoy Bhushan Agarwal to visit Aryabhata College for an international collaboration. The Department of English hosted the special lecture on 15th January 2019. For this occasion, the lecture was delivered on Toni Morrison, the much acclaimed American novelist, whose powerful writings on slavery, gender and race have been a source of hope and courage for many across the world.

The event was jointly held by the Department and the Gender Sensitizing Committee of Aryabhata College in collaboration with Virginia Tech (USA). Pointing to its rich potential the Principal of the College, Dr Manoj Sinha, in his opening remarks said, 'special lectures like these would enrich our understanding on the issues concerned by virtue of having multiple perspectives by academics from universities across the world'.

Dr Zare is an Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Virginia Tech. Her research focuses on discourse of identity, feminism and activism in contemporary India and in South Asian women's fiction. Her articles have appeared in Women's Studies International Forum, International Journal of Cultural Studies and the Journal of Commonwealth Literature, among others. In 2008, she founded the 'Keep Girls in School' Project which helps support low-income girls in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Her lecture for the day was titled 'Bodies in *Beloved*: Eroding White Supremacy through Embodied Knowledge'. In this, she was joined by Hayley Oliver who also presented a paper on 'Ownership, Personhood and Love: an analysis of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*'.

Under Dr Zare's supervision, the Virginia team members namely Alana Calhoun, Eryn Peters, Hayley Oliver, Ashley Mattson, Payton Johnson, Jordan Faulkner, Kelsey McGregor and Rebecca Sutton conducted the workshop on bystander intervention program to prevent gender and sexual violence. The members of the Gender Sensitizing Committee of the College also put up a striking performance that portrayed different shades of gender based violence both in domestic and public spaces which was much appreciated by the audience including the American guests.

Overall, the lecture and the workshop witnessed full participation and much appreciation from students and faculty alike. Taking cue from its remarkable success effort is on to host more international guests for special lectures in the days to come.

Binoy Bhushan Agarwal
Assistant Professor (English)
Coordinator (Special Lecture)

