

Book on Swaminarayan Hinduism released at Columbia Journalism School

OUR BUREAU

New York

Over 200 guests came to the Columbia Journalism School, New York City for the book release program of *Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation, and Identity*. The event was hosted and moderated by Jack Hawley, Professor of Religion, Columbia University.

Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation, and Identity has been edited by Raymond Brady Williams, Professor Emeritus, Wabash College, and Yogi Trivedi, Adjunct Professor, Columbia Journalism. Containing twenty chapters, this volume shares ground-breaking research on the Swaminarayan Sampraday—one of the fastest growing Hindu devotional communities in the world today—by contributors from a range of disciplines, including art history, performance,



literary history, and anthropology. Contributors to the book range from those within the Indian tradition, those not within that

tradition, Indians who are not Hindus, and scholars from Africa who are not practicing Hindus but studying the religion, and other

categories. This publication will make a significant contribution to the study of Hinduism and South Asia.



Texas Woman Finds Charity to Help Indian Orphans Thrive

SEEMA GOVIL

Austin, TX

In May, 2000, Caroline Boudreaux of Austin, TX seemed to “have it all.” She was just 30 years old, working in TV advertising sales and making more money than she ever imagined possible. Yet she remained deeply unhappy and unfulfilled.

“I drove a nice car, lived in a beautiful condominium and led an active social life. Still, I felt so empty inside,” she recalls. “I felt like I was being wasted. I knew in my heart that I had a higher purpose that I wasn’t fulfilling.”

Inspired to make a change, Caroline quit her lucrative job and took a year-long trip around the world with her best friend. Her yearlong sabbatical was not intended as a way to find that higher purpose, but find it she did.

While visiting a small, rural village in India, Caroline was invited to the home of a local family that had taken in over 100 orphaned children. She was stunned by what she witnessed there.

“I had never seen an orphaned child before in my life. Every single one of them was bald, and their clothes were tattered and absolutely filthy,” Boudreaux recalls. “Some were malnourished and some were puffed out, but all of them had empty looking eyes. And they were all vying for our attention, asking for a hug from us or to touch our hands. There were so many, and every single one was precious and perfect, desperately in need of love, attention—someone to care. I knew I had to do something.”

After witnessing such harsh realities faced by orphans in the developing world, many of whom suffer greatly from hunger, disease, and a lack of love, Caroline Boudreaux founded The Miracle Foundation on Mother’s Day in 2000. The Austin TX-based nonprofit is dedicated to empowering orphans to reach their full potential by revolutionizing the way orphanages are run, worldwide (starting in India).

Caroline’s work with Miracle has become her life’s work. For sixteen years, she has tackled foreign barriers, recruited a world-class board and staff, and enlisted the help of hundreds of business people, doctors, donors and volunteers to fix a broken system.

“Caroline is living proof that one person really can make a difference,” said Nivedita DasGupta, India Country Head for The Miracle Foundation. “I have witnessed, first-hand, what happens when the Miracle Foundation begins partnering with a children’s home here in India. Suddenly, the kids are given healthier food, clean water, clothing, high-quality healthcare, and an excellent education. Un-



der Caroline’s leadership, we are empowering children at our children’s homes to be the best that they can be and to truly thrive.”

To date, Miracle Foundation has given 2,000 orphans in 22 orphanages a childhood that would have otherwise been impossible. What’s more, the children grow up in a happy, healthy, loving environment and can look forward to a future that includes vocational training or even a college education.

Miracle transforms struggling orphanages from barely surviving to totally thriving and empowers them to transition their care from one characterized by “warden and inmate” to “family and child.” Orphanages that partner with Miracle are provided with paired funding and capacity-building trainings to provide a better quality of care for their children. They receive various kinds of help to bring their operations up to a high standard – from house-mother training to computers loaded with accounting software.

Caroline couldn’t be happier or more fulfilled, in her “second act” career!

“I now have everything money can’t buy,” she says. “I have this great mission and great work now. It’s given me something so powerful to do.”

Miraculously, people of all ages, from all walks of life, and from all socio-economic backgrounds have joined Caroline on this journey. Over the years, hundreds have come to India to meet the children The Miracle Foundation supports, and many more have become monthly donors and are financially committed to the charity’s work.

“I hope your readers will be inspired to get involved in our important work. It’s so much fun to make a difference, especially for children who truly need and deserve it. Become a monthly sponsor and help us fund the recurring expenses at our homes. Your support will absolutely change an orphan’s life and I’m pretty confident it will change yours as well.”

Asia Society Texas Center’s Fundraiser brings in more than \$1 Million



OUR BUREAU

HOUSTON, TX

Houston’s global community, including the crème de la crème of the bayou city’s business, political and society circles, gathered Wednesday evening (March 9) for Asia Society Texas Center’s Tiger Ball 2016, celebrating contemporary Korea. A record crowd of more than 700 guests strolled into the grand Chevron Gala Pavilion, named for the event’s presenting corporate sponsor. Reception hosts, Kathy and Glen Gondo, welcomed the throng of guests into the grand tent with tantalizing sushi, provided by Sushic, the Sushi Company. While Taiko drummers with Memorial Jumbo Group performed, guests flowed from a magnificent tent into the world-class Yoshio Taniguchi-designed building, where volunteers modeling Jasmine Shinhyo Park’s stunning traditional gowns greeted them as they entered the Faye Sarofim Grand Hall to enjoy the Yeesoogyung exhibition. Then, it was on to a lavish dinner catered by City Kitchen. Patrons finished the evening with dancing and an auction in which they bid on once-in-a-lifetime experiences including throwing out the first pitch at a Houston Astros game to sparkling diamond earrings and luxurious travel and dining packages.

Gala Co-Chairs, Lou Ann and Alexander C. Chae and Susan and Michael K. Jhin, and guests honored Asia Society Texas Center’s Board Chairman Edward “Eddie” R. Allen III and wife Chinhui Juhn. Asia Society’s Executive Director Bonna Kol and Joni Baird of Chevron presented the honorees, Eddie and Chinhui, with the Tiger Ball 2016 award



for their continued support of Asia Society.

Among the supporters in attendance were Anne and Albert Chao, Y. Ping Sun and David Leebron, Andrea and Bill White, Isla and Thomas Reckling, Claudia and Roberto Contreras, Lily and Charles Foster, Margeret Alkek Williams, Joanne Herring, Phoebe Tudor, and Asia Society’s grand patron Nancy C. Allen.

The \$1.2 million raised by Tiger Ball 2016 benefits exhibitions and programs, which promotes mutual understanding between the U.S. and Asia and strengthens the partnerships of all of Houston’s diverse communities.

Next year, Tiger Ball 2017 celebrates the magnificence of India, honoring long-time supporters Sushila and Durga Agrawal, who were also in attendance last night. To inquire about 2017 sponsorships, please contact Sadhavi Chauhan at Schauhan@AsiaSociety.org.

With 12 locations throughout the world, Asia Society is the leading educational organization promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among the peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States. Asia Society Texas Center executes the global mission with a local focus, enriching and engaging the vast diversity of Houston through innovative, relevant programs in arts and culture, business and policy, education, and community outreach.

