

**165:197 International Development (3 S. H.)**  
Section 13: Indian Human Rights Movements

December 27, 2009 – January 15, 2010

**Instructor** of the course is Rex Honey, Professor of Geography and International Studies at the University of Iowa. One of the founders of the UI Center for Human Rights, Prof Honey is a political and cultural geographer. His research, which has taken him to all six inhabited continents, addresses cultural struggles over human rights. His South Asian experience includes participation in Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad to India in 2003 and Bangladesh in 2007.

The course will be based at our **sponsor's** site Visthar ([www.visthar.org](http://www.visthar.org)), a secular, autonomous institution committed to building just, democratic, equitable and sustainable communities, through advocacy and academics, in the bustling south Indian metropolis of Bangalore. Students will address Indian approaches for resolving social conflicts and addressing social injustice. Central to the course will be a case study of human rights violations inherent in the *Devadasi* system, an ancient tradition subjecting daughters of a particular community in servitude. Visthar includes a program for helping the victims of such subjugation to lead normal lives. Students in the course, in addition to learning about social justice movements in India, will work the victims of *Devadasi* system by assisting them with their studies, including English, and socializing with them, including playing board games, listening to music, and exploring possible options for their futures.

With its long history of social protest against British rule, India has a proud tradition of social protest and social movements. This course will examine social protest and social movements in India historically and currently. The course will, for example, trace the development of Gandhi's non-violent civil disobedience and its successful implementation against the Colonial Rule, then examine efforts since Indian independence to improve the lives of the downtrodden.

The course will involve field trips in the Bangalore area, readings of such Indian social justice tracts as the writings of Gandhi, and conducting an individual study of a subject chosen by the student.

Student performance will be assessed on the basis of written and oral presentations of the pilot research project - 50%, discussions of the readings and lectures - 25%, interactions with those rescued from *Devadasi* system - 25%.