

The South Asian Studies Council

Annual Gandhi Lecture

featuring

AJAY SKARIA

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UNCONDITIONAL EQUALITY: Gandhi's Religion of Resistance

Followed by a Panel Discussion with

LEELA GANDHI

Brown University and

UDAY SINGH MEHTA,

City University of New York

Unconditional Equality examines Mahatma Gandhi's critique of liberal ideas of freedom and equality, and his own practice of a freedom and equality organized around religion. Liberal traditions usually affirm an abstract equality. For Gandhi such equality is an "equality of [the] sword" – both because it excludes those presumed to lack reason (such as animals or the colonized), but also because those included lose the power to love. Gandhi professes instead a politics organized around dharma, or religion. For him, the "religion that stays in all religions" is satyagraha (passive resistance). Sometimes working against the grain of Gandhi's explicit formulations, this book explores how Gandhi conceives religion, and suggests that satyagraha (passive resistance) offers us the resources to think a politics of absolute or unconditional equality.

Ajay Skaria teaches at the University of Minnesota. His most recent book is *Unconditional Equality: Gandhi's Religion of Resistance*. His previous publications include *Hybrid Histories: Forests, Frontiers and Wildness in Western India* and, as one of the co-editors, *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. 12. He is currently working on a book about Ambedkar.

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Room 203, Luce Hall, 34 Hillhouse
southasia.macmillan.yale.edu

