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Now in its sixteenth year, The History Lecture Series never fails to attract big crowds who are drawn to the interesting and thoughtful discussions on offer from distinguished department faculty. Over the years the series has tackled a diverse range of topics from local Seattle histories (2016), to historical revolutions (2017).

2018’s series, Speaking Truth to Power: Protest and Dissent in Modern History, promises to be no exception.

Mark Twain is reputed to have said ‘History does not repeat itself, but it rhymes’ and the Department of History is committed to revealing these rhymes by using historical events and analysis as a lens to explore some of the biggest questions facing our own society. The lecture series has proved one of the most exciting platforms for this.

This year’s theme is informed by the current climate of political activism in an increasingly agitated and divided nation, and aims to trace connections between historical and contemporary movements and struggles. What lessons might the activists of today learn from those in the past who have stood up to power in the name of social justice?

As usual, the series will feature four talks. Anand Yang, Historian of Asia and South Asia, will kick things off on January 10th with a lecture
on Mahatma Ghandi, which will pinpoint the influence of his nonviolent ideas and methods on future generations.

Next, on January 17th, Laurie Marhoefer, Historian of Nazi Germany, will make her debut at the lecture series with a talk on popular protest in Nazi Germany, focusing on the challenges, but also successes of activism under an authoritarian system. She asks the question, if even a brutal dictatorship can be responsive to public protest, what does that tell us about the power of protest itself?

The following Monday, January 24th, Arbella Bet-Shlimon, Historian of The Modern Middle East and last year’s recipient of the University of Washington Distinguished Teaching Award, will take to the stage for an engaging discussion on the Arab Spring, and the often disappointing results of this recent upsell against authoritarian rule in the Middle East. She will examine these events through the history and many meanings of dissent in the modern Middle East.

Finally, Joshua Reid, Professor of Native American History, will close things out on January 31st with a lecture on the historical roots of indigenous activism in the era of Standing Rock. Professor Reid will frame this recent protest in the context of Native Americans decades long struggle for sovereignty.

Tickets are now available! The History Lecture Series is sponsored by the Alumni Association and tickets can be purchased through their website. This event always sells out quick so be sure to get yours soon.