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Women, Reconciliation, and Peacebuilding: Lessons from Rwanda

Jennie Burnet, University of Louisville

In the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, Rwandan women faced the impossible—resurrecting their lives amidst unthinkable devastation in a society torn by genocide. Haunted by memories of lost loved ones and of their own experiences of violence, women rebuilt their lives and traversed dangerous emotional and political terrain to emerge as leaders in the country's reconstruction and reconciliation. Women's central role in post-genocide reconciliation was not a foregone conclusion. In the face of opposition from community leaders and even the government, women activists made conscious decisions to restore relationships and to build peace.

Drawing on extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Rwanda over the past 18 years, anthropologist Jennie Burnet explores the lessons learned from women's roles in peacebuilding in Rwanda.

Wednesday, March 26, 2014
5:30 p.m.
Hughes-Trigg Student Center, Ballroom East

This lecture is free and open to the public.

Jennie E. Burnet is an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Louisville. Her research focuses on women's roles in peace-building and democratization and on the long-term consequences of gender-based violence in conflict. Her book, *Genocide Lives in Us: Women, Memory & Silence in Rwanda*, published in 2012 by the University of Wisconsin Press won the 2013 Elliot Skinner Award from the Association for Africanist Anthropology. Her research has appeared in *Politics & Gender*, *African Affairs,* and *African Studies Review*.