

School of the Americas Poitier to visit

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become surrounded by countries overrun with Communists. In 1984 the school was relocated to Fort Benning, Georgia.

The film detailed atrocities orchestrated and perpetrated by School of the Americas graduates; a catalogue of rapes, murders, and genocides — so many that the SOA has been nicknamed the School Of Assassins.

In 2000, under public pressure, the military officially closed the SOA.

In 2001, the military officially opened the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. WHISC operates on the same site as the SOA, and teaches the same curriculum, but with an optional course in human rights.

"Nothing changes at the SOA," said Phares.

Phares was quick to point out that not all members of the military support the SOA; in fact, "many ... are embarrassed by it," she said.

She pointed to a list of atrocities on the board. "This is an embarrassment. They like to see themselves as 'the good guys,' not as human rights violators."

"Most U.S. citizens haven't a clue [about the SOA]. If they did, I imagine they'd be quite upset," said Phares.

She urged attendees to spread the word and take action. "We need those letters," she said, encouraging students to pressure their congressman into supporting H.R. 1258, a resolution which

would close the SOA for good.

And then there's protesting. "You don't have to get arrested, just being there's enough," Phares said, recalling Vera Brown and Robbie Hilton-Smith, two Guilford students who served six and three months jail time, respectively, for trespassing onto SOA grounds during last year's annual protest.

Their sentences began in May; Brown was just released this past week.

"It was a heavily discerned decision of theirs that they put a lot of spiritual energy into," said Amnesty co-coordinator Will Robinson.

"I thought [Phares'] presentation went very well, though it was definitely coming from a one-sided perspective. She did an effective job of demonstrating why the SOA is still something to be concerned about and why our presence is still needed," said Robinson.

From Nov. 21 to Nov. 23, thousands will rally at Ft. Benning, Georgia, in protest.

Again, Guilford College students will be among them, including first-year Erin Burns.

"If more Americans were aware of the atrocities committed by School of the Americas graduates, I definitely think there would be more widespread resistance to the school. It is important to educate people about both the government and the protesters' perspectives, and then let them decide whether to support the SOA themselves," said Burns.

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made his Hollywood debut in the 1950 film *No Way Out*.

From then on, Poitier consistently performed in critically acclaimed and racially charged films.

His power in the cinema made him a figure in the African American civil rights movement, which was in full swing early in his career. The 1963 film *The Lilies of the Field* made him a Hollywood superstar and earned him an Oscar for Best Lead Actor. He was the first African American to do so.

He continues to win awards from prestigious film organizations for his lifetime of achievement.

Poitier used his acting skills as a means of social activism.

Consistently playing in controversial films, he has delivered larger-than-life performances as a proud and

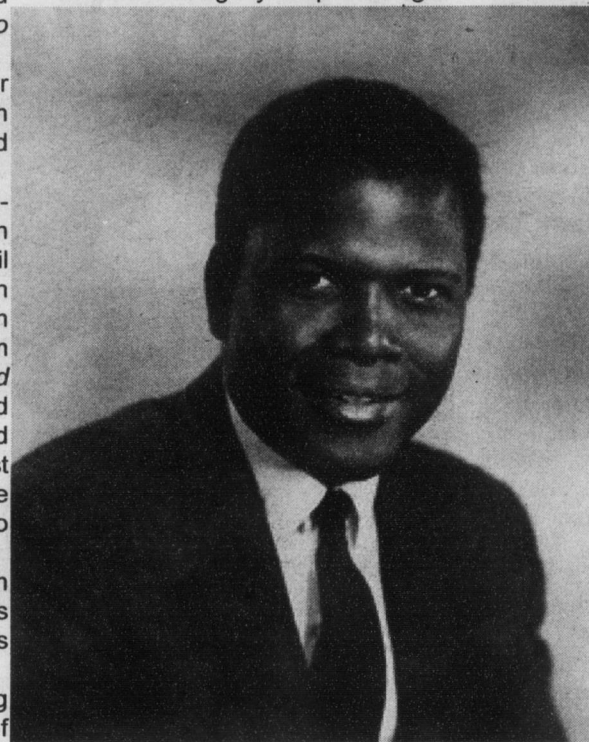
intelligent African American who can stand strong and maintain dignity despite being

Night which will be shown Nov. 19 at 7:30 p.m. in Bryan Jr. Auditorium.

Poitier's visit to Guilford College ranks as one of the most anticipated events for students and faculty alike.

"He is a very powerful actor," said first-year Matt Steere. "Whatever he speaks of is going to be powerful."

Though not the tireless film star he has been, Sidney Poitier continues to stand as a figure and landmark in American Cinema. He is



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end in the truest sense of the word. Poitier does so in *In the Heat of the*

Eyewitness to the Middle East lecture series

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the Middle East and get involved by taking trips or supporting groups seeking peace with justice.

Rabbi Koren gave the first lecture and spoke about his visits to Israel and the tense living situations there, especially for Palestinians.

"He seemed like a friendly guy," said first-year Jini Kades, "but he wasn't there to talk about some of the more specific issues people were asking about."

Some students felt there was not enough variety in the speakers' perspectives. "A half truth is a whole lie," said first-year Isaac Regenbogen.

Peggy Gish spoke on Nov. 11 about her trips to Iraq

before, during, and after the U.S. war. She spoke of how horribly U.S. soldiers treat Iraqis. She included a story about a family she met who told her that U.S. soldiers came to their house mistakenly but still took their sons anyway.

"It's interesting to hear a perspective of someone who's not directly involved in conflicts," said first-year Erin Burns.

Sophomore/junior transfer student James Barnett said, "I chose to attend because I'm interested in the work Christian peacemaker teams do and how they manage to work toward peace using non-violent means as opposed to the means used by U.N. peacekeepers."

Carter said, "We hoped that people would get a sense of the intensity of the issues and focus at bringing peace to the region."

"Make informed choices and speak out," said Peggy Gish. "Try to work at shaping what happens. Sometimes that means speaking out on behalf of people in specific countries who don't really have a voice, like Iraq or Palestine."

Art Gish said, "The history of sending soldiers into bad situations to make them better is not a very good history."

"We need to find nonviolent ways of dealing with the world's problems, and we want to get students to think about different possibilities."