

Understanding East Indian Cultures

June 28, 1971

Present were: Mrs. Joslin Bohanec
Dr. I. Desai
Mr. Homi Engineer
Mr. Joe Richardson
Mr. Kehar Sekhon
Miss Marjorie Smith

Unable to come were: Mr. Mohinder Gill
Dr. G.S. Gill
Mr. G.S. Neel

(At a meeting on June 16, the above were appointed to carry out the details of plans for a second series to be held in the winter, 1972.)

The meeting was concerned with decisions regarding the intended audience and purpose of the series, topics and format of the meetings, dates and length of the series.

1. Intended Audience and Purpose

It was decided to focus again on a program for professionals in education, health and welfare, with the ultimate goal of helping East Indian children to become more adequately integrated into Canadian society.

It was particularly noted that teachers of New Canadian classes which are composed largely of East Indian youngsters, should be especially encouraged to attend.

2. Format for the Course

There will be four evening two-hour sessions (7:30 - 9:30 p.m.) held from mid-February to mid-March, 1972. Exact dates depend on availability of films to be used. Wednesdays are the preferred evening.

The series will be as follows:

- i. An introductory film (either "India '67" or "Writings on the Sand") to be followed by a short explanatory general session and then division into four discussion groups to elicit questions for future meetings under the following headings:
 - a. Nutrition and health.
 - b. Education.
 - c. Social and cultural life.
 - d. Other topics.

- ii An evening of concentrated discussion in the four groups noted above. Each group will have a resource person with special knowledge of the subject, a discussion leader and some Indian persons who can speak from their own experience.
- iii Film evening: "The World of Apu" (feature film, almost two-hours in length). The showing will be specially advertised in the community so that professionals, East Indian residents, and others interested may attend as well as the course participants. (A sheet suggesting special points to watch for in the film and cards on which to note questions may be given to the course participants at the previous session for use in this one.)
- iv General Assembly and Panel: Resource persons from the discussion groups would address themselves in turn to productive questions from those submitted during preceding meetings, so as to deal with important issues in brief, concise talks. There could be time for brief periods of questions from the floor to elaborate further on the issues.

3. Coordinators for Discussion Groups

- (a) Nutrition and Health, Dr. G.S. Gill with Dr. I. Desai as resource on nutrition.
- (b) Education, Mr. Gyan Nath.
- (c) Social and Cultural Life, Professor Joe Richardson.
- (d) Other Topics, coordinator to be appointed.

It is hoped that Mr. Mohinder Gill will be the general chairman for the series.*

Each coordinator will be responsible for the meetings of his interest group, drawing in other persons to assist in planning and to serve as resource persons (a coordinator may also be a main resource person).

It was suggested that coordinators might provide information in printed form (to be reproduced by the Center for Continuing Education) to cut down on the amount of time necessary for presenting information in the groups.

It might be advisable before the series to have a meeting of the discussion leaders and main resource people, along with the coordinators. Because of insufficient time, we were unable to do this in the last series. It would provide for a better understanding of the purpose of the program, and also help each contributor to understand his role.

* Mr. Mohinder Gill has accepted.

The emphasis in the groups should be on the present experience of children and families, including whatever from previous experience is now influencing the present. The films will provide for an overall understanding and appreciation of culture and family life etc. in India.

Publicity: There was agreement that there should be more adequate newspaper publicity for the program. Someone will be asked to take charge of this.

Publicity about the program will be appearing in the Center for Continuing Education's Spring Brochure, (issued before January 1). Announcements will be sent to schools, public health and social work agencies, in the Vancouver area, as well as to ministers and others likely to have a special interest, in S.E. Vancouver.

4. Next Meeting

The larger planning group will be invited to meet with this small planning committee in late October, or early November, when there will be reports from the coordinators and further discussion of plans. M. Smith will make arrangements for rental of the films.

NOTE:

Coordinators will enlist committee members to assist in planning their particular aspects of the program. These sub-committees will meet with Marjorie Smith in November. To date, the following have agreed to act on sub-committees:

(1) With Dr. Richardson: Mr. I. S. Kohaly

(2) With Mr. Nath: Mr. Dave Jhooty
Mr. G. S. Neel
Mr. Kehar Sekhon