



COURIER

Provoking Thought and Encouraging Dialogue on World Affairs

THE STANLEY FOUNDATION | NUMBER 82 | Winter 2014

Searching for a Safe Climate Future

INSIDE:

Anchee Min's Honest Self
Marshall Islands and Climate Diplomacy
Upholding the Responsibility to Protect

Photo by Ami Vitale

A Life of Compassion, Respect, and Love

By Keith Porter, President

There are many good things I can say about working for the Stanley Foundation. Among them is our all-volunteer board still populated primarily by descendants of our founders, C. Maxwell (Max) and Elizabeth Stanley. They challenge the staff to excel, and they serve as cheerleaders for the good work we try to do in the world.

Taking the family involvement for granted is often too easy, but I was snapped back to reality by a phone call last month from our corporate secretary, Betty Anders. She was calling to tell me the unbelievable news that one of those board members, Sarah Stanley, had died suddenly the day before. Sarah left behind a husband, Lou, and their three children.

I was in New York City, attending a meeting of the steering committee of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, a group of organizations from around the world dedicated to preventing genocide and mass atrocities. As I spoke to Betty, it struck me that I was standing on a street corner just a few blocks from where Sarah's grandfather, Max Stanley, had died in 1984. He and Elizabeth started the foundation in 1956 to "seek a secure peace with freedom and justice" for all citizens of the world. Max's son Richard has served as chair of our board since his father's death, and Richard's daughter Sarah was part of a third generation of family guiding the foundation.

The memorial service for Sarah was the most fulfilling celebration of life I have seen. There was laughter and a real effort to share the essence of Sarah. I was intrigued to find that Sarah's involvement in world affairs through the foundation was complemented by love and compassion shared through her church and other groups intended to lift up the most disadvantaged in her Minnesota hometown.

The service was a call to all who knew Sarah that they had no choice but to carry on with her efforts, at all levels, to create a better world. I recalled my stunned reaction to the phone call a few days earlier: for a moment, I was unsure what to do next. Then it occurred to me that Sarah would want me to go back inside, resume the strategizing on ending the scourge of genocide, and continue the work of the foundation to meet the vision of the family.

In his 1983 address at the University of Dubuque, Max Stanley described the path forward to a more peaceful world. He said:

"Wisdom and intelligence, cooperation and coordination, innovation and determination are all necessary, but they are not enough. We need greater compassion. Understanding, respect, and love are needed to accommodate our differences and unite our efforts to enhance the livability and grandeur of this tiny ball spinning in space."

There's no doubt that granddaughter Sarah lived those words.



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Cover photo: Two Bangladeshi villagers stand in flood waters. Some in this Southeast Asian coastal country are fleeing their homes as extreme weather events are changing the local landscape. (Photo by Ami Vitale)



Best-selling author Anchee Min as pictured on the cover of her latest book, *The Cooked Seed*.

A Brighter Future

An Interview With Award-Winning Author

Anchee Min



Anchee Min endured three years of physical, mental, and emotional abuse in a labor camp during China's Cultural Revolution under the command of Chairman Mao Zedong. She lived to tell about it in her memoir *Red Azalea*, written shortly after her arrival in the United States in 1984. The book won the Carl Sandburg Literary Award and was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year.

In the ensuing years, Min has written several books of historical fiction, including *Empress Orchid*, which was a finalist for the British Book Awards. Her newest books are *Pearl of China*, a well-researched perspective on the childhood of Pearl Buck, and *The Cooked Seed*, a sharing of her life in the United States.

Since 2007, the Stanley Foundation and Women's Connection, an eastern Iowa nonprofit, have partnered to present the International Women Authors Series. Featuring international female authors, the series is designed to encourage knowledge and learning, broaden horizons, and open hearts and minds to the global community. Min is the speaker at the November 2014 event.

In a recent interview with the foundation, Min discusses cultural values, dignity, and her role as a writer.

The Stanley Foundation (TSF): How has your perspective on human value, dignity, and spirit changed since you left China and came to the United States?

Anchee Min: It changed completely. I was born in China but discovered myself in America. Living in America has taught me who I was (or was not). For example, as I was learning English from a children's program on TV, *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, I was moved to tears when Mr. Rogers

said, "Your best gift is yourself, your honest self." It had never occurred to me that "myself" had any value. I was also not a "cooked seed," as I was described in China, meaning that I could never "sprout." This "discovery" changed my perspective.

TSF: What does it mean to you to be a global citizen?

Min: It means responsibility and contribution. So much has been given to me, much should be expected of me. You do things to contaminate or heal the world. I lived in China for 27 years and 29 years in America; I know Chinese and Americans lack understanding of each other at the grassroots level. To be a global citizen means to help build understanding and connection.

TSF: What cultural values do you think are essential for global peace and security?

Min: We are more similar than different. It is essential to get the world to see that. For example, a mother would want a good future for her child no matter what culture you're from. But when a child was taught, as the way I was taught, for example, that Americans were pure evil and they meant nothing but destruction, the child would grow up and become a terrorist. Peace and security depend crucially on the perception of the minds where



A Chinese government propaganda poster from the Mao era declaring, "Chairman Mao is the everlasting red sun in our hearts." (Corbis/Ric Ergenbright)

there is severe isolation and deprivation of education and information.

TSF: In a 2005 preface to *Red Azalea*, in reference to the Communist Party of China, you say, "The record of history is set by powerful people." Do you think, as a writer, you have a political role to play? If so, what is it?

Min: I do think I have a role to play when my books have been published, become best sellers, and have been translated into 32 languages. I am given a platform. As a writer, I live to reflect my society. I consider it my job to promote nobility and strength in humanity.

TSF: Our world is ever increasingly interconnected. What impact do you see this having on how the Chinese people view their history and see their future?

Min: The impact is immeasurable how Chinese people would view their history and see their future. I think grassroots Chinese are still struggling with the trust issue;

they obey authority, but it doesn't mean they trust authority. It's a healthy thing. It's the beginning of the nation's self-discovery. Questions, doubts, and general distrust of their leadership are signs of political maturity. When people start to think for themselves, it is the power itself. It means the end of dictatorship and the beginning of democracy. A brighter future.

TSF: If you think about yourself at the end of your life, what mark do you think your work will leave on the world?

Min: I don't know how to best answer that. Maybe what I had told my daughter Lauryann about what my memoirs *Red Azalea* and *The Cooked Seed* were about would fit: "Mommy made a lot of mistakes, and Mommy has done her best to fix them."

Resource

More information about the International Women Authors Event, November 14, 2014. www.stanleyfoundation.org.



A house flooded by high tides stands next to a small lagoon near the village of Tangintebu in the central Pacific island nation of Kiribati. Kiribati consists of a chain of 33 atolls and islands that, like the Marshall Islands, stand just meters above sea level. With surrounding sea levels rising, Kiribati President Anote Tong has predicted his country will likely become uninhabitable in 30 to 60 years because of flooding and contamination of its freshwater supplies. (Reuters/David Gray)

Six Feet Above Sea Level

Marshall Islands and Climate Diplomacy

By David Wei

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is a five-hour flight southwest of Hawaii, deep in the Pacific Ocean. With over a thousand islands spread out across 24 coral atolls, the country averages 2 meters, or 6 feet, above sea level. This June, officials from the US Federal Emergency Management Agency arrived to assist the northern atolls with a prolonged drought, only to be stranded when storms flooded the airport in Majuro, the capital.

Foreign Minister Tony de Brum's response was, "Welcome to climate change."

As one of the four lowest-lying atoll nations in the world, the Marshall Islands, not surprisingly, has made climate change a top diplomatic priority. Through two decades of United Nations negotiations on climate change, it has stood shoulder to shoulder with 40 other states in the Alliance of Small Island States to champion the ambition the world needs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the climate impacts we all face. Over these two decades, the small island states have remained negligible emitters and among the most vulnerable to climate impacts. What has changed is the rapid carbon-fueled industrialization of the emerging economies. We must decarbonize further growth to hold global warming down.

Leaping Forward Together

The need for climate diplomacy is a recognition that the international system is failing to adequately address climate change. Although the science becomes ever more clear and ever more dire, international interest in climate change ebbs and flows, culminating in political moments when countries can leap forward together. The last such moment, at the Copenhagen Climate Conference in 2009, failed to produce a new global climate treaty to succeed the Kyoto Protocol. The next such moment, at the Paris Climate Conference in December 2015, may be our last chance to do so.

We urgently need collective climate action. Last year, global greenhouse emissions jumped 2.3 percent, to a record 40 billion tons. Although every country has a seat at the UN table, in practice, some countries carry more weight than others. China and the United States alone account for 45 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. If you treat the European Union as a single emitter, the top 15 emitters account for roughly 75 percent of global emissions. Many of the climate impacts caused largely by these 15 emitters are hardest felt in the other 150 countries of the world.

Putting Climate Change at the Center

As a result, climate diplomacy is bilateral and plurilateral as much as it is multilateral. The United States and China established a Climate Change Working Group last year that exchanges information and fosters cooperation on national climate action. The Major Economies Forum, composed of the 17 biggest emitters and a mere handful of observers, meets several times a year to hash out difficult issues. The Marshall Islands is committed to ensuring that climate change is a central message of every diplomatic encounter, whether bilateral, plurilateral, or multilateral, and to taking this message into every forum possible.

The great risk in Paris is that the big emitters will reach an unambitious agreement that everyone else cannot live with. For the lowest-lying states this is literal. The Marshall Islands risks becoming uninhabitable from sea-level rise

unless the Paris agreement shifts the world from our current path toward over 4°C (7.2°F) of warming to far less than 2°C (3.6°F) of warming. This will require global carbon neutrality by the middle of the century. The Paris agreement must put in place the ladder on which we can climb toward this goal, rung by rung, with countries returning to the table frequently to add to their commitments.

Leadership From All

This September, the government of the Marshall Islands held the first National Climate Change Dialogue, which included town hall-style meetings. Everyday Marshallese reported witnessing climate impacts in their own communities. They understood the existential threat that climate change posed to their land and their country. And in spite of their own negligible emissions, they felt responsible and motivated to reduce them.

This astonishing leadership by those least responsible for the climate crisis is mirrored in the messages Marshall Islands diplomats are carrying into the international climate negotiations. Small island states are far from expensive fossil fuels but rich in renewable energy resources like solar, ocean, and wind. This is what makes them natural leaders of the global energy transformation needed to halt climate change. In 2008, the Marshall Islands government was forced to declare a national economic emergency when the price of oil spiked while 90 percent of energy was generated from imported diesel. Since then, the country has chosen a different path, solarizing 95 percent of its vast outer island communities and feeding solar energy into the grid in major population centers.

The UN climate negotiations have long been stalled by “you go first” posturing from the big emitters, each fearful of economic disadvantage. Leading by example, small island states like the Marshall Islands aim to break this deadlock and to call for more ambition wherever they have a seat at the table. From the Port Victoria wind farm in the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean, to the new waste-to-energy plant in Barbados in the Caribbean, small island states are prepared to show the way to a safe climate future.

David Wei is the UN representative for climate change and sustainable development at Independent Diplomat, a nonprofit that provides diplomatic advice and assistance to governments, political groups, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. Wei's work focuses on diplomatic and legal advice to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and other small island states in the international climate negotiations.





Matching Words With Deeds

The UN Dialogue on the Responsibility
to Protect

By Keith Porter

A soldier at the Kanyabayonga base of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in June 2014. The mission's mandate includes protecting civilians, humanitarian personnel, and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence. (UN Photo/Sylvain Liechti)

Humanitarian crises in Syria, South Sudan, Ukraine, Gaza, the Central African Republic, and elsewhere fill today's headlines. In some of these places, political violence has already led to mass atrocities and genocide, and others are at risk. Meanwhile, the rest of the world seems capable of providing only inadequate and unequal responses.

At the Stanley Foundation, one of our main areas of work involves preventing this kind of political violence before it becomes a reality. In 2011, a foundation policy brief written by Professor Alex Bellamy articulated how inequality, resource mismanagement, political exclusion, an absence of the rule of law, and an unprofessional or corrupt security sector are often the preconditions to genocide and mass atrocities. This past summer we were pleased to see much of the international community embrace the long-term, more structural approach to preventing these crimes we've been advocating for.

Inhibitors to Atrocity Crimes

Every year since 2009, the UN secretary-general has released a report on implementation of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). R2P is the internationally recognized norm that says each nation has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide and mass atrocities and that the international community has a collective responsibility to prevent and halt these crimes as well. The annual report is then followed by an informal dialogue with the member states of the United Nations General Assembly.

This year, the report and the dialogue centered on exactly the kind of preventive measures that have animated the Stanley Foundation's work for the last several years. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, "Indeed, the responsibility to protect is closely intertwined with a responsibility to prevent."

Ban's report indicated that there are "specific inhibitors that enable States to address the early signs of crisis that could lead to the commission of atrocity crimes." These are:

- A professional and accountable security sector.
- Impartial institutions for overseeing political transitions.
- Independent judicial and human rights institutions.
- Capacity to assess risk and mobilize early response.
- Local capacity to resolve conflicts.
- Media capacity to counteract prejudice and hate speech.
- Capacity for effective and legitimate transitional justice.

International Assistance and R2P

Days before the General Assembly's informal dialogue on R2P, the Stanley Foundation, along with the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, and the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect convened an expert panel to further explore the practical implications of mass atrocity and genocide prevention.

At the event, Lawrence Woocher, senior atrocity prevention fellow at the United States Agency for International Development, focused his remarks on the role of development practitioners in preventing mass atrocities. For Woocher, "mass atrocities represent the antithesis of development" as they destroy human and physical capital, cause mass displacement and humanitarian emergencies, and disrupt productive social and economic activity across

all domains. He believes that successful development—broadly conceived—helps “inoculate countries against mass atrocities.”

Woocher outlined several steps development practitioners should take to bolster mass atrocity prevention:

- Recognize and communicate the risks of mass atrocities to better inform their own programs and broader actions taken by domestic and/or international actors.



An UN Peacekeeper interacts with a woman resident and a community-policing volunteer at a Darfur camp for internally displaced persons. Interaction at the local level alerts peacekeepers to early warning signs that can lead to violence. (UN Photo/Albert González Farran)

- Respond to escalating atrocity situations with life-saving humanitarian assistance, as well as support programs to help halt spiraling violence.
- Support recovery from mass violence to reduce risk of recurrence and support overall development prospects through programs focused on rebuilding social cohesion and transitional justice—including accountability, reconciliation, and trauma healing.

Panelists also tackled audience questions on an array of issues, including how to enhance early warning systems for prevention and how best to ensure that development actors and the international community are credible. “Credibility,” said Woocher, “comes from consistency.” This includes repeated messaging in both the public and private spheres. Allison Giffen, senior associate and codirector of the Future of Peace Operations Program at the Stimson Center, added that providing dispute resolution for intercommunal violence and working with communities to recognize what is happening on the local level can bolster early warning efforts.

Consensus Consolidated

The dialogue at the General Assembly carried forward this theme of prevention while also underscoring the growing international understanding of and support for the R2P norm. The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect published a summary of the dialogue that included these highlights:

“This year’s dialogue consolidated the global consensus on the Responsibility to Protect, with the overwhelming majority of member states continuing to focus on the operationalization of R2P as opposed to debating its theoretical foundation. Most speakers shared practical examples of building partnerships to effectively uphold [their prevention] responsibilities. A large number of states reiterated the importance of developing national capacity, as well as the principle of ‘do no harm’ in the provision of support to states. . . .

“The vast majority of member states reaffirmed their commitment to R2P and the trend of less strident opposition from ‘R2P skeptics’ continued in 2014. . . .

“Many member states raised concerns with the increasing number of situations where civilians face mass atrocities and the urgent need for the international community to respond more effectively in upholding its protective responsibilities. The ongoing situations in Iraq, Syria, Central African Republic, and South Sudan were cited. Many member states emphasized the need for the international community to match words with deeds when prioritizing prevention and the protection of civilians from atrocities.”

Prevention Before Killing

While this growing consensus among states on both individual and collective responsibility for prevention of genocide and mass atrocities is very encouraging, there is a need to translate this consensus into real action for the prevention of these crimes and the protection of vulnerable populations.

Taking all of this into account, the Stanley Foundation’s work in this area is driven by the belief that mass atrocities and genocide are preventable and that all states should work to prevent atrocities as early as possible, even before the first killing.

Halting ongoing atrocities is crucial, but preventing atrocities is far better.

Keith Porter is president and CEO of the Stanley Foundation.



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CONSIDER THIS...



Founder of the Stanley Foundation C. Maxwell Stanley.

“The problems we face are global in proportion, but their solution begins with individuals. I challenge each of you to think and act as global citizens and to commit yourselves to educating your friends, family, associates, and students for a greater sense of responsibility concerning this fragile planet we call home.” *cms*

—C. Maxwell Stanley
Excerpt from a speech titled “Global Citizenship”
Delivered on April 27, 1983, at the University of Dubuque