



The Fifty-fifth Annual

Conference on World Affairs

"The Power of an Idea"

Richard Rodriguez Keynote Address

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ramsay Thurber
Tel 303.492.2526
Fax 303.492.3934
E cwapress@colorado.edu
<http://www.colorado.edu/cwa>

55th ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON WORLD AFFAIRS **ANNOUNCES RICHARD RODRIGUEZ KEYNOTE:**

"The Great Brown World"

(Boulder) – March 28, 2003 – “I write about race in hope of undermining the notion of race in America,” says **Richard Rodriguez**, the celebrated essayist, commentator and author of *Brown: The Last Discovery of America* (2002). Rodriguez uses the color “brown” as a metaphor for in-between states of being and as a symbol of non-linear experience. In the opening keynote address to the Fifty-fifth Conference on World Affairs (Monday, April 7, 12 noon, Macky Auditorium, University of Colorado Boulder campus), he will make the case that the American historical and contemporary conceptualization of race is rudimentary as well as psychologically and culturally damaging. The speech, as with all of the other over 200 CWA events during the week, is free and open to the public.

In addition to *Brown* (2002), Rodriguez is the author of *Days of Obligation: An Argument with My Mexican Father* (1992), a philosophical travel book concerned with the moral landscape separating Protestant America and Catholic Mexico. *Days of Obligation* was a runner-up for a Pulitzer Prize in nonfiction in 1993. His acclaimed memoir of a scholarship boy, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez* (1982), remains controversial for its skepticism regarding bilingual education and affirmative action and is read in many colleges and high schools.

For more than ten years, Rodriguez has appeared as an essayist on *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*. His televised essays on American life were honored in 1997 with a George Peabody Award.

Every year in April approximately 100 participants representing a wide range of backgrounds gather on the University of Colorado's Boulder campus for the Conference on World Affairs. The *New York Times* refers to the CWA as "a week-long extravaganza of discussion and debate" with over 200 non-academic, cross-disciplinary panels, plenary sessions and performances attended by an audience of about 40,000.

For further information, feel free to contact Ramsay Thurber at 303.492.2526, or e-mail the Conference on World Affairs at cwa@colorado.edu . The full CWA schedule and a biographical listing of all our participants are now online at: www.colorado.edu/cwa

- ### -