Resources for Teaching/Learning about Burma and the Karen

SEAP Lending Library Resources

Search our newly digitized lending library to borrow items:
http://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/resources-educators.

You can either pick up items at the SEAP Outreach office, 640 Stewart Ave., Ithaca, NY, or we will mail the requested materials to you and all you need to do is drop them off/mail them back. In addition to borrowing DVDs, videos and books from our library, we also have culture kits available including several Burma/Myanmar kits. These kits contain a wide range of items, from maps, posters, and clothes to rice cooking implements, local currency and stamps, and puppets that will help bring your teaching about Southeast Asia to life.

* indicates refugee-related resource

Most useful resource
Refugees from Burma: Their Backgrounds and Refugee Experiences from the Center for Applied Linguistics.  http://www.culturalorientation.net/learning/populations/burmese

Background and Information on Burma
Burma and the Burmese: a historical perspective, Eric S Casino. Includes lesson plans.
Lonely Planet Myanmar (Burma) (Coutry Guide), Robert Reid and Michael Grosberg
* Restless souls: rebels, refugees, medics, and misfits on the Thai-Burma border, Phil Thornton
From the land of green ghosts: a Burmese odyssey, Pascal Khoo Thwe: Memoir of a Karenni, who was involved in student uprisings in Burma.
* Current Realities and Future Possibilities in Burma/Myanmar: Options for U.S Policy
* Burma Deception, Cynthia Jervis, about civil war, foreign investments and displaced persons in Burma
Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know
Burmese by Ear: or Essential Myanmar, John Okell
*Fertility and Reproductive Health on the Thai- Burma Border, Cynthia Maung and Suzanne Belton
* Changing Borders: reportage from our Mekong
Beyond Borders, Johanna Son
Crossing Borders, Johanna Son
Opening Borders: Reportage from Out Mekong, Johanna Son
Bustling Borders: Reportage from Our Mekong, Johanna Son

Pictorial Works
Burma: Rivers of Flavor, Naomi Duguid, cookbook, travelogue, culture, beautiful photographs
Burma: Frontier Photographs, Elizabeth Dell with John Green’s photographs
Burma (Evergreen Series) by Jean Yves Montagu
In search of Burma, Caroline Courtauld
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* Karenni: The Forgotten War of a Nation Under Siege, Dean Chapman: Black and white photos of Karenni in the refugee camps (the Karenni are another minority group, related to but not to be confused with the Karen.)

* Damned by Burma's Generals: The Karenni Experience with Hydropower Development - From Lawpita to the Salween

Flavors of Burma (Myanmar): Cuisine and Culture from the Land of Golden Pagodas, Susan Chan

* Forced to Flee: Visual Stories by Refugee Youth from Burma, Erika Berg

Stories and Sketches of Myanmar, Khin Myo Chit

Myanmar Native Orchids, University of Yangon: Department of Botany

Dancers and Musicians of the Burmese National Theater

*We came from Vietnam: Text and black-and-white photographs describe the efforts of a Vietnamese refugee family to adjust to life in Chicago, Muriel Stanek

Videos & DVDs

Burmese Water Festival Vocal Music and Dance - VHS

Gita Luling Maung Koko: Songs and Selections: Performances of traditional vocal and instrumental music, dialogue and puppet theater, performed by a vocalist, pianist and a semi-traditional instrumental ensemble. Concludes with photos of Maung Koko, other Burmese performers and visiting foreign musicians, including Duke Ellington and Count Basie.

Opium Warlords: Episode 1: White Powder Opera; Episode 2: Warlords; Episode 3: Politicians: Episode 1: Shows the internal struggles of the Hong Kong police over the most effective drug strategy: to permit drug traffic and thereby contain it; or to attempt to eliminate it, with the almost certain result that it will continue underground.

Episode 2: First inside report ever made of the Southeast Asian narcotics business. Filmed in guerilla-held opium-producing regions of Burma, where rival armies betray and ambush each other's convoys, in a desperate struggle for control of the opium trade.

Episode 3: Documents the attempt to implement an innovative strategy in the war on opium. The strategy is blocked by the ineffective response by U.S. officials.

Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Myanmar: Describes the daily life, ordination and monasteries of Buddhist monks and nuns in Burma

Silence and Fear by L. Desclozeaux. This moving film demonstrates clearly the extent of the Burmese people's sacrifice during their 1988 uprising, which attempted to replace the ruling military government with democracy. Footage shows the leader of the democracy movement, Aung San Suu Kyi, winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, exhorting people all over the country to live in "freedom from fear". The film also includes interviews with a student activist, a Buddhist monk, and a doctor who treated student demonstrators wounded by government soldiers. Includes some graphic scenes of wounded and murdered student activists, which drive home the cost of this struggle for democracy in Burma.

Burma - Lost Memories- VHS: This video investigates claims that the Burmese government is guilty of exploiting its people to the point of socio-economic ruin. Shot clandestinely in its entirety, the viewer is led on a tour by Burmese refugee Maug Maung Yan deep into Burma.
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*Democratic Movement in Rangoon* – VHS: Television coverage of the August 1988 riots in Rangoon.

*Burmese Cultural Dances* – VHS: Demonstration of traditional Burmese Dance, characterized by movement on four parts of the body—feet, hits, head, and hands.

*Kyan' kale mha nhc' yo' thai (Two People on a small island)*-VHS: A love story about a man and a woman stranded on an island.


*Pagan (Raw Footage)* – VHS

*Pagan: Ancient City of Burma* – VHS: Natural scenery and Buddhist pagodas of Pagan.

*Pyui Kui mo'n 'rhn' lim' prn' ko (A Ladies Man Leaves the Monastic Order)*- VHS: A comedy about a ladies man who fulfills his obligation to the Buddhist monastic order and then lives a wild life.

*Dona mre mah pha* – VHS: A Burmese propaganda film, which attempts to defame a Kayin insurgent group.


*Victims of Evil Social System* –VHS: Interviews with insurgent army officers, including alleged Burmese military intelligence agents, and alleged victims of torture at the hands of the Burmese military. Produced by the All-Burma Student Democratic Front.

*Burmese Military Torture*– VHS: Raw footage showing methods and victims of Burmese torture among the Karen.

*Glimpse at the Literary Scene in Burma* – VHS: After beginning with an overview of the Burmese culture, including religious festivals, the film focuses on the custom of inviting writers to village literary festivals.

*U Kuio Kui Krie 'a thump' Pat' ti (Biography of U Kui Kui Krie)*- VHS: Love story about a high ranking government official and a working class woman.

*Tourist Burma* – VHS: A travelogue.

*Mandalay* – VHS: Documents the history, customs, and arts of the nineteenth century capital of the kingdom of Burma.

*Burma June/July 1994 (Raw Footage)*: Raw footage of Karin villages in Burma, with interviews of intellectuals, farmers, and Buddhist monks concerning various freedom fronts.

*Burmese: The Riots of August 1988 (Raw Footage)*:

*Dan' da yi (One of the Many Stories)*-VHS: A Burmese feature film depicting the life of a university students in Mandalay. A romance featuring a character who completed a degree at Cornell.

*Death Railway: Battle of Burma*: From a series, "Great Battles of War". Horrific story of Japan's construction of the Burma Railway, which was constructed by Asian slave labor and Allied
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prisoners of war. More coverage on the Australian prisoner of war suffering; less coverage on the Asian slave labor.

* Forty Million Hostages-VHS: A BBC documentary from the Everyman Series. This film concerns the persecution of minority ethnic groups by the repressive Burmese regime.

* Last Stand: Kachin of Burma (Raw Footage)-VHS: Documents the struggles of the Kachin insurgent army to free Burma from an oppressive military regime. Includes interviews with freedom fighters and scenes of Kachin village life. Short segments have been shown on British Television. A full length documentary may be produced in the future.


Return of a Freedom Fighter
San ' km' muei (rains of the water Festival)-VHS: A two generation romance beginning with a girl from a rich Mandalay family who falls in love with a musician. Filmed against the backdrop of the Water Festival and beautiful Mandalay scenery, the movie features Burmese music and dance.

Spirit of Asia VII: Burma: Haunted Land-VHS: Part of the series, "Spirit of Asia." This film traces the influence of the Ramayana epic and other aspects of Indian culture throughout Southeast Asia. This episode examines the origins and complexities of Burmese culture. Illustrates the influence of beliefs on the arts- the pervasive influence of the Ramayana and spirit beliefs in this Buddhist land.

Memoirs, Oral Histories and Biographies
* Nowhere to Be Home: Narratives from Survivors of Burma’s Military Regime, compiled and edited by Maggie Lemere and Zoe West

Burma Chronicles, memoir, travelogue and graphic novel, Guy Delisle

Letters from Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi

Maps and Posters
Map of Burma – Burma Culture Kit #4
Fruits Poster (Burmese/English/Sgaw Karen) – Burma Culture Kit #5
Nutritional Poster – Burma Culture Kit #4

Burmese and Sgaw Karen Alphabet, Numbers and Vowels – Burma Culture Kit #2

Dictionaries and Karen-language books
Pocket Burmese Dictionary: Burmese – English, English – Burmese (Periplus Pocket Dictionaries)

Drum English-Karen Student Dictionary, Drum Publications
I Wonder Why the Wind Blows and Other Questions About the Earth (in Karen), Drum Publications

Folk Tales
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A Wonderland of Burmese legends, Khin Myo Chit
Burmese monk’s tales, Maung Htin Aung
Folk tales of Burma, Maung Htin Aung
Make-believe tales: a folk tale from Burma, Joanna Troughton
Shan’s lucky knife, Jean Merrill
The Wise Washerman, Deborah Froese

For Kids
Rebel, Allan Baillie
Children of the World: Burma, Takashi Morieda
Countries of the World: Myanmar, Pauline Khng
Burma: Enchantment of the World David K. Wright

Objects for use in teaching or for displays:
Burma Culture Kit #1: Items include: An assortment of men, women, and children's clothing and shoes. Includes formal and casual attire for men and women. School uniforms for children. Over ten examples of clothing items

Burma Culture Kit #2
Items include: a green Kachin bag, a red Karen bag, a green Shan bag, a Myanmar magazine, two Myanmar cartoon magazines, a Karen alphabet poster, a minorities calendar, a traditional dress poster, two plush Karen dolls (male and female), a blue Karen women's robe, a women's white Karen dress, a red Karen men's robe, a brown Karen Men's robe, a white Karen Women's shirt, two Karen men's shirts, a Karen stole, a Karen head band, a Karen textile, ten small wooden dolls that represent the different national tribes of Myanmar, a Karen calendar, a Karen Baptist church banner, a Karen key chain, and a pamphlet on minorities

Burma Culture Kit #3
Items include: School uniforms (girl and boy), school tags, miniature Myanmar shoulder bag, two Burmese shoulder bags, a framed university plaque, a Myanmar magazine and two Myanmar cartoon magazines.

Burma Culture Kit #4
Items include: Ithaca- Burmese Democracy Day poster, a Myanmar banner, two maps of Burma, an assortment of traditional painted wall hangings, a large Burmese flag, nutritional poster, and a democracy poster.

Burma Culture Kit #5
Items include: an assortment of Myanmar postage stamps, indigenous fruits poster, paper and coin currency, thanaka, a Yuzana pickled tea box, a mini wooden lunch box, a calendar, to Burmese greeting cards, two pairs of flip flops, a Burmese shoe box, a traditional male Gaung Baung and its case.

Burma Culture Kit #6
Items include: three wooden puppets, a multicolored fan, three Pyit Taing Taung dolls, a framed picture of a woman playing an instrument, and three lacquer plates with traditional motifs.
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Web Resources

SEAP’s Karen Book Project: Karen children’s books from the Cornell Echols Collection will soon be available online with permission from the publisher. If you’d like access in the meantime, we can send via Dropbox. To request, please email outreach@einaudi.cornell.edu
  a. https://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/burnakaren-project
Drum Publications: texts in Karen, available for download
Karen Human Rights Group: www.khrg.org
The Outer Voices Project
The Open Society Institute: Burma Project/Southeast Asia Initiative:
Myanmar UNICEF, bilingual kids’ books:
  b. www.burmalibrary.org
  c. www.stolaf.edu/people/leming/