

## Rethink Needed in Virginia Mental Health Services

By Sandra Cheldelin, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty, scheldel@gmu.edu

The tragedy of Seung-Hui Cho's murder and suicide has reverberated across the country, yet many of the responses to Virginia Tech's disaster will not prevent similar incidents from occurring because they fail to address the complexity of the problem—in Virginia and other states—in dealing with persons with mental illness. The current system is deeply flawed and needs fixing.

The recent Virginia Tech Review Panel's report identifies 21 ways in which things went wrong. Fingers are wagged at University officials—administrators, counselors, campus police, Dean of Students—for communication failures, lack of leadership, inadequate record keeping, confusion about possession of firearms on campus, and an inability

to inform the public in a timely and comprehensive manner when such an event occurs. It makes sense that colleges across the country learn from Virginia Tech's incident and put into place appropriate changes to improve organizational systems. [Our university has created Mason on Alert, a website to inform people of internal or external crises.]



Virginia Tech Candlelight Vigil. Photo: Wikipedia.

However, the panel's report and campus changes do not address what we must do when persons with mental illness are in deteriorating phases—as was the case of Seung-Hui Cho.

Mental health providers at Community Services Boards (CSB)—professionals responsible for mental health services in the community—know that our system is not working and asked ICAR last year to

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Commentary

# French and Cumbie Visit ICAR

By Lucy Dorick, Director of Development, Idorick@gmu.edu

Longtime ICAR supporters Drucie French and Steve Cumbie visited ICAR last month to welcome Dr. Andrea Bartoli as the new Drucie French Cumbie Chair in Conflict Resolution. When Drucie and Steve established this Chair at ICAR nearly two decades ago, they became pioneers in providing long-term financial support to the fledgling field of conflict resolution.

“The Drucie French Cumbie Chair is the perfect environment for the growth of integration of theory and practice,” said Dr. Bartoli, who was named to the post in July, 2007 after a two-year search. “I am honored to be working in this capacity and contributing to the study and practice of peacemaking.”

Drucie was chair of the ICAR Board of Advisors and great friend of Ed Lynch. For more than a decade, she was intimately involved in ICAR’s work, familiar with faculty and students, and well-versed in the importance of ICAR’s endeavors. As she and Steve increasingly saw the need

to build the field of conflict analysis and resolution, they generously gave of their time and money to sup-

port the cause. The prestigious Drucie French Cumbie Chair provides funding for a senior-level faculty member in conflict analysis and resolution. Dr. Mary E. Clark was the first ICAR instructor to hold the Chair followed by Dr. Chris Mitchell who served for more than 10 years.

Drucie and Steve are accomplished in their own fields. Drucie obtained her Ph.D. in Mythological Studies from the Pacifica Graduate Institute. She is an author, lecturer, and president of the Foundation for Mythological Studies, an organization focused on creating a “renewed interest in the cultural heritage of mythologies.”

She is also a board member of the Archives and Research Center at the Pacifica Graduate Institute. She serves on the

“The Drucie French Cumbie Chair is the perfect environment for the growth of integration of theory and practice.” —ANDREA BARTOLI, DRUCIE FRENCH CUMBIE CHAIR

Board of Visitors and the Women’s Leadership Council at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Steve is president of NV Commercial,

a commercial real estate development and property management firm in Northern Virginia. He is also president of Metro Realty Group, chairman of NVRetail, and a partner at Corporate Oaks.

In addition to his real estate work, Steve is a commissioner of the Virginia Port Authority and chairman-elect of the INOVA Foundation Board of Trustees. He has served on the boards of Virginia Public Building, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, and Imanco, which provides consulting services to the Inova Health Systems Foundation.

“Drucie and Steve are one of the most generous couples that I know,” said ICAR Director Sara Cobb. “I applaud their early leadership support of the field and am thrilled that Dr. Bartoli received this very distinctive honor.” ■

network



Andrea Bartoli, above, is ICAR’s Drucie French Cumbie Chair.

## Dr. Andrea Bartoli: Excerpts from the Welcome Reception Address

By Andrea Bartoli, ICAR Drucie French Cumbie Chair, abartoli@gmu.edu

ICAR has a long tradition. It might not seem so to many here but for the relatively new field of conflict resolution ICAR is landmark. With rank and prestige comes responsibility. The field is in need of redefinitions, of new conceptual frameworks, of new explorations. No other school or institute is as well placed as ICAR to serve this process well, collaboratively, rigorously, effectively. No other institute has the same reach, history and location. No other institute can count alumni and faculty with a dedicated focus. At a moment in which we are moving away from techniques, the field requires a renewed sense of engagement of other disciplines while developing its own core understanding of how conflict occurs, and of the processes associated with the emergence of peace.

I am convinced that here with so many dedicated colleagues we will succeed in redefining the methods that will help us to generate robust theories and best practices. Peace is not an easy dream: it is a profound desire of the human spirit and a need of multitudes, made poorer by the violence and destructiveness of war. Peace does not come in withdraw, in a fearful fleeing from the dangers of history. Rather it comes from courageously engaging the powerful and the powerful to be, making politics shrewdly, effectively, committingly. ■

# ICAR Launches New Online Forum

## Over 300 ICAR Members Registered

By Paul Snodgrass, Technology and Communications Coordinator, psnodgra@gmu.edu

The new ICAR Community Network and Forum was launched on August 31 and within three weeks, over 300 members of the ICAR community have joined. This new online forum is based upon infrastructure offered by ning.com and features a popular social networking format with robust user generated content. Users are able to share text, photos, videos, and more, in a variety of contexts such as individual user pages, blogs, forum discussions, and within groups.

Groups have been created within the network for the faculty, Graduate Students in Conflict Studies, the alumni chapter, undergraduate program, certificate program, as well as for working groups, projects, specific courses and social activities. In total, there have been 33 groups created so far.

The Discussion Forum features postings by scores of people and includes entries ranging from announcements of events (ICAR and external), courses, grants, scholarships, and conferences to discussions on current events and items for sale. This is the easiest way to spread the word to the ICAR community about almost anything you can think of. Pages created by individuals add a layer of personal connection and help with the matching of names and faces in our growing community. This is also a great way to share stories and experiences about your work and life with people



Above: ICAR Forum Homepage. Lower Left: Calendar. Lower Right: ICAR Groups.



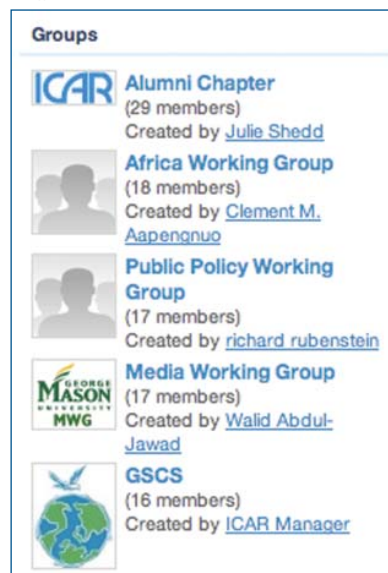
who are scattered across the globe.

The network is searchable, making it easy to find members of the ICAR community with particular interests and specialties. For alumni, it's a great way to find ICAR folks who are practitioners in their area and classmates from previous years.

The ICAR Community Network and Forum hopes to be a digital connection between all of the people, past and present, associated with ICAR who are learning and working in the field or simply want to stay connected. Here is a tally of the total postings so far:

- ICAR Announcements and Upcoming Events (56)
- Discussion (24)
- Jobs (53)
- Grants, Scholarships, and Fellowships (47)
- Conferences and Calls for Papers (15)
- External Events (23)
- Housing and Items for Sale Bulletin Board (4)

Says ICAR's Vanessa Brake of the forum, "As a recent graduate of ICAR I have found the new networking site very useful for keeping in touch with my course mates that have since left the DC area. I have also utilized the network to meet other Alumni, to plan meetings with ICARites who share my interests, to discuss current issues, as well as to connect with faculty. I'm glad that I can still be kept in the loop on ICAR's progress and events, even if I'm no longer a student. It's a wonderful way to keep ICAR as a community, and not just another department of a school." ■



initiatives

# ICAR'S First Annual Alumni Symposium Hosts Two-Day Conference for 100 Attendees

By Julie Shedd, Director, Student Services and Graduate Admissions, [jshedd@gmu.edu](mailto:jshedd@gmu.edu)

## EVENTS

ICAR celebrated its 25th year with an Alumni Symposium gathering over 100 alumni, current students, faculty and staff for two days of panel presentations, discussion and networking. Twelve panels brought alumni practice and experience into the spotlight on topics such as teaching, civic planning, public policy, career development, water conflict and collaborative technologies. Current ICAR faculty moderated each panel made up of two to four alumni or current students, sharing expertise and sparking discussion.

This year's symposium was the first time ICAR had hosted such an event, bringing together alumni of all the different degree programs. After 25 years of excellence in teaching, the ICAR alumni community has grown to over 500 alumni, including graduates from the Master's, Doctoral,



[Pictured left to right] ICAR Professor Susan Allen Nan (ICAR M.S. '95) moderates the Mediating/Negotiating panel at the First Annual Alumni Symposium with panelists Mary Hardiman (M.S. '90) and Bruce Engelbert (M.S. '95). Photo: Ali Erol.

Undergraduate, and Graduate Certificate Programs. Video of the different panels will be edited and put on the ICAR Community forum in the coming months so alumni who were not able to attend the symposium can hear what was said.

The Security and Intelligence panel exemplified the longevity of ICAR's programs. Panelist Suzanne Devlin was a member of ICAR's first cohort, graduating in 1985. Lynn Kunkle was a Master's student in the mid-90's and Tim Adgent represented the 2007 graduating class. These panelists were able to touch on issues and concerns that correspond with the needs of all alumni, from the first to graduate to the most recent.

ICAR's activities and dedication to the local community came out in the Civic and Community Planning panel and the DC

Issues panel with presenters Juliana Birkhoff, Bill Potapchuk, and Gary Willoughby sharing their experiences of working on local community and economic development issues ranging from transportation policy to education reform.

The first day of the symposium also coincided with ICAR's annual Welcome Dinner. A record crowd of over 130 new and returning students, faculty, alumni, staff and friends of ICAR packed Hazel Hall's atrium for an evening of scholarship presentations, welcome addresses, and networking. Dr. Jamie Price, Director of the Shriver Center housed at ICAR was the keynote speaker.

Two new scholarships were inaugurated this year, the Faculty Scholarship represents the

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### Upcoming ICAR Community Events

For more info on events, email [jlock1@gmu.edu](mailto:jlock1@gmu.edu).

**October 14-17:** Partnering for Peace: Transatlantic Concepts for Conflict Resolution in Public Policy

**October 22:** Lynch Lecture, Guest Speaker Lee Hamilton  
6:00-9:00 pm, National Press Club

RSVP: [lynch@gmu.edu](mailto:lynch@gmu.edu)

**October 27:** Development Career Intensive  
10:00-4:00 pm, Truland Bldg, Room 555

**November 8:** Open House  
6:00-9:00 pm, Truland Bldg, Room 555

**November 17:** Security Career Intensive  
10:00-4:00 p.m., Truland Bldg, Room 555

Register: [icarjob@gmu.edu](mailto:icarjob@gmu.edu)

Entire events listing available at <http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>.

## Displacement, Identity and Violence

ICAR News Network: 9/17/07  
By Ali Erol, ICAR Cert. Student

As Iraq grows more violent, there is less attention paid to how the ongoing violence affects how people live, eat, sleep and even breathe. There are discussions about allocating the resources, remapping the borders, making new borders between sectarian groups, displacing people, putting troops here and training Iraqis there, giving money to these groups and cutting money from those and so on. These tactics were employed since the beginning of the war and it is apparent now that they were not so successful. In fact, there are alternative ways to soften the conflict in Iraq without perpetuating sectarian violence.

The *New York Times* article by Sabrina Tavernise [September 17, 2007] covers the rather untouched fields of the Iraq conflict. One can conclude that dividing an entire country neighborhood by neighborhood not only causes trauma in the population, it also makes people associate with a sectarian/ethnic identity they regarded little before. Ripping Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds from their homes, giving them new neighborhoods in which to live, only increases the lack of communication between groups and thus augments a more radical in-group bonding and a more radical out-group hatred. This will only result in an unfortunate but predictable increase of violence.

A perfect example of the



Ali Erol, pictured above, is an ICAR Certificate Student.

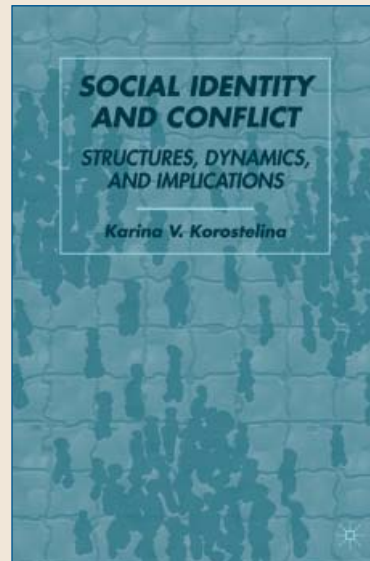
## New Books

### Social Identity and Conflict Structures, Dynamics, and Implications

Palgrave Macmillan Press  
Karina V. Korostelina, ICAR Professor

#### Book Description

This book presents the conception of a system of social identities, including the system's structure, development and dynamics, and explores the influence of cultural dimensions and identity salience on attitudes, behavior, and the structures of consciousness. The "Four C" model of identity-based conflicts provides fresh opportunities for analyses of the role of identity in conflicts and violence.



magnitude of violence that can result from separating and displacing people was found not so long ago in Rwanda. To understand how similar the conditions in Iraq are to Rwanda, one needs only to read Tavernise's stories about people being killed by their neighbors and the hatred generated by such events. The violence in Iraq has already cost tens of thousands of lives while affecting, both physically and psychologically, many more in Iraq and the U.S. As anger and hatred accumulates in displaced communities, the magnitude of the violence may grow bigger as time passes.

What, then, can be done, in order to sooth the trauma and slow down this process of increasing violence? People need to be reminded that they are facing or opposing those who used to be their neighbors, friends, classmates and teammates. The worst way to organize this kind of a reminder, however, is to bring people together without any catalyst and expect them to

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## Recent ICAR Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

### American Paralysis in Iraq

By Dennis Sandole, ICAR Professor  
*The Economist*, 9/27/07

### Biofuels are Helpful but no Panacea for Relieving America's Dependence on Oil

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Student, Rep. Bartlett (R-MD) and Rep. Woolsey (D-CA)  
*The Hill*, 9/27/07

### Congo Must be Wary of Chinese Deals

By Nnena Ahukannah, ICAR Masters Student  
*Financial Times*, 9/25/07

### Pioneers Can Secure Our Future

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Student, and Rep. Bartlett (R-MD)  
*Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 9/13/07

### The U.S., India and the Elusive 123 Deal

By Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Student  
*Foreign Policy in Focus*, 9/07/07 ■

# Ivan Sascha Sheehan Maneshka Eliatamby

Ivan Sascha Sheehan, a visiting professor at ICAR and a recent Ph.D. graduate of the institute, is spotlighted this month for his groundbreaking work in evaluating the effectiveness of U.S. counterterrorism strategies. Despite the proliferation of terrorism and counterterrorism literature, few analysts

This month, ICAR puts the spotlight on one of our Ph.D. students, Maneshka Eliatamby. Born in Sri Lanka, Maneshka was faced with an identity conflict growing up with parents of different ethnic backgrounds: her father, Tamil and her mother, Sinhalese. Her awareness of war came at the early age of just four years old in learning about the war between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam).

Upon arriving at ICAR, one of the first faculty members she met was Dr. Dennis Sandole. Maneshka states that Dr. Sandole “shaped my thinking here [at ICAR]” in that they both share similar interests in understanding the root causes of terrorism.

As a Masters student at ICAR, she pursued her interest of understanding terrorism, especially

female terrorists and women who go from being the victim to the victimizer. “This idea of a female terrorist goes against the stereotypical view of a woman only being the peacemaker,” states Maneshka. Her studies and research are geared towards the understanding of female involvement in collective violence by using the situation in Sri Lanka.

Active in the student community, Maneshka is a founder of the Conflict and Gender Working Group and a member of both the Terrorism Working Group and the South and South East Asia Working Group.

Maneshka’s contributions to the ICAR community and the field of conflict resolution have impressed both her colleagues and faculty. Now an ICAR Ph.D. student, Maneshka continues her research in understanding the root causes of terrorism. “I want to teach and also be practicing in the field. I like the idea of bringing experience to the classroom. I don’t think I would be a good teacher without the practical experience.”

researchers have conducted quantitative research to understand the impact and efficacy of counterterrorism strategies. Dr. Sheehan is among the few.

Last month, testifying in the Senate Russell Building for congressional staff, Sheehan highlighted the conclusions from his forthcoming book by Cambria Press: *When Terrorism and Counterterrorism Clash: The War on Terror and the Transformation of Terrorist Activity*.

In the book (publish date: 11/2007), Sheehan’s analysis begins

by studying events from the War on Terror including the war in Afghanistan, the Iraqi offensive, the capture of Saddam Hussein, and the making public of Iraqi prison photos at Abu Ghraib, and the subsequent correlation they have with the intensity, lethality, and regularity of global terrorism. Sheehan investigates this “cause and effect” relationship by using statistical analysis of longitudinal data which gives strong quantitative legitimacy to his claims. The final product is important in not only providing the largest ever cataloging and organization of terrorism over the past decade (1992-2004) but also because of its implications for US foreign policy.

Additionally, Sheehan teaches a three-credit course on counterterrorism at ICAR, scheduled for the winter and summer sessions. Says Sheehan of the class, “It’s my belief that the multi-disciplinarity of our field provides us remarkable leverage to facilitate discussions between individuals with diverse perspectives and unique expertise, dialogue that might not otherwise occur. As an emerging field we’re fortunate not to be constrained by the dogmas and paradigms of some more traditional disciplines. This allows us to “think outside the box” and develop new and innovative solutions to urgent problems that require attention.”

“The multi-disciplinarity of our field provides us remarkable leverage to facilitate discussions between individuals with diverse perspectives and unique expertise, dialogue that might not otherwise even occur. As an emerging field we’re fortunate not to be constrained by dogmas and paradigms of some more traditional disciplines.”

—IVAN SASCHA SHEEHAN



## Rethink Needed in Virginia Mental Health Services

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convene a series of stakeholder dialogues to identify what is broken and suggest what can be fixed.

Persons with mental illness, family members, police, magistrates, professional service providers and hospital staff—70 in total—participated in a series of meetings and verified that systemic changes need to be made at the local and state levels beginning with clarifying current legal language regarding whether or not an individual poses “imminent danger” to himself or the community. If so, he can be involuntarily committed to a hospital (report available at <http://icar.gmu.edu>).

Participants unanimously said that individuals with mental illness avoid commitment at all costs, as Cho did sixteen months prior to the shootings when he was ordered by a judge to receive involuntary commitment. Involuntary commitment is too traumatic and too demeaning, and families, while often the first to recognize signs of deterioration, cannot commit their adult children. The process reacts to a worse-case scenario while prevention-oriented processes are ignored. Currently, there is no early-warning system that helps detect mental illness crises. Priority is given to emergency response not emergency prevention. Cho’s lack of treatment is an excellent example of this poor prioritization. There was no space in the system for Cho because until the shootings, there was no crisis point.

Participants at our dialogues also agreed on a number of other proposed changes. Legislators must revise the definition, criteria, and scope of law governing the involuntary admissions process so that it addresses all stakeholder concerns, especially the family members. There needs to be a continuum of intervention strategies available and offered earlier, including a variety of outpatient treatment



Sandra Cheldelin, pictured above, is an ICAR Professor.

options. While CSB professionals and hospital providers stand ready to offer more comprehensive services, funding remains an obstacle. Adequate, affordable legal support for family members to ensure the overall welfare of the individual is also needed. Equipped with legal advocacy, the individual may be more inclined to enter the commitment process willingly. Without it, youth like Cho will stay far away.

Guaranteeing public safety and preventing, detecting, and responding to mental illness are no easy tasks. Initiatives have been underway since 2005 to reconsider the laws regarding involuntary commitment, favoring and supporting voluntary treat-

ment in the community or at a hospital. All that is needed is the commitment and resources to support these changes.

Efforts are currently underway to dedicate space in Norris Hall—the “ground zero” of Virginia Tech—as a Center devoted to “the study of international peace and crime prevention.” Of course there is a need in our troubled world to educate people about conflict and alternatives to violence. This is an excellent gesture to the family and loved ones of those who lost their lives. But there must also be processes that detect early warning signals and provide access to alternative psychological services to involuntary commitment. Then we are more likely to prevent another Cho-like tragedy. ■

## ICAR Professor's Book Featured at OSCE

This summer, ICAR Professor Dennis J.D. Sandole made a presentation on his new book, *Peace and Security in the Postmodern World: The OSCE and Conflict Resolution*, at a reception held in his honor by Ambassador Julie Finley, Head of the U.S. Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The event took place at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, Austria, site of negotiations and other meetings of the 56-country OSCE, the world’s most comprehensive regional security organization which helped facilitate the ending of the Cold War.

In his book, Dr. Sandole analyzes responses to questions he put to representatives of the various delegations in 1993, 1997, 1999, and 2004, on (a) the causes of the genocidal wars in former Yugoslavia during the 1990s; (b) lessons learned from those wars and how the international community did or did not respond to them; and (c) how to redesign peace and security in Europe to ensure that such wars—with their implications for global terrorism—never happened again.

In his comments prior to presenting signed copies of the book to each delegation and members of the OSCE Secretariat, Dr. Sandole mentioned that the books were made available by a grant provided by the Office of the Provost at George Mason University Dr. Peter Stearns. ■



## Displacement, Identity and Violence

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communicate verbally. Perhaps, starting on a grassroots level, connecting people through schools, sports and through other means of social exchange can offer an eventual healing process.

In *Bloodlines*, Vamik Volkan gives an account of how an Egyptian and an Israeli confronted each other during a meeting. When the Israeli psychiatrist mentioned to the Egyptian historian that she was scared, the historian did not believe that an Israeli could harbor the same emotions, or could tolerate sharing a sense of victimhood (Volkan, 1997).

This surfaces the known paradigm of dehumanizing and humanizing the other. But rather than a cliché response to severe hatred and violence

among groups, this paradigm tells us how important it is to know that one can share certain feelings with an out-group, such as victimhood, fear, glory and accomplishment. Social activities thus can serve as a catalyst for the sharing of these kinds of feelings and perhaps heal deep scars and reduce ongoing violence. ■



Map above shows partition plan for Iraq.

## ICAR Alumni Symposium

Continued from page 4

commitment of ICAR faculty to continued fund raising to support ICAR students.

The Alumni Scholarship stemmed from the many contributions made by ICAR alumni to the student scholarship fund. Both scholarships were awarded to students with excellent academic records and strong potential for contribution to the ICAR and Alumni communities. Additionally, three ICAR staff members, Erin Ogilvie, Jenny Lock and Deanna Yuille were awarded Achievement awards from George Mason for their outstanding contributions to the community. ■



ICAR Associate Director Kevin Avruch offers remarks at the Welcome Dinner.

Photo: Ali Erol.



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